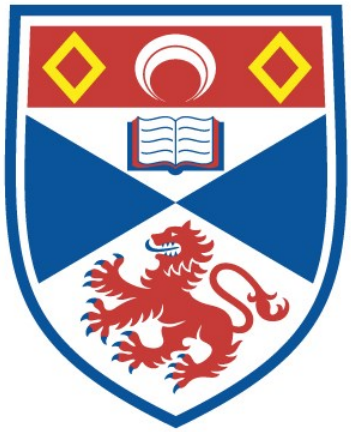
THE HOLY SPIRIT AND PRAYER IN THE LETTERS OF PAUL

Jesse D. Stone

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



2023

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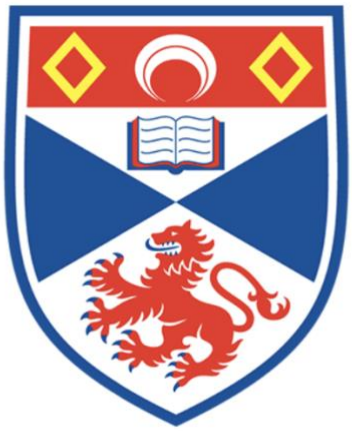

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Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

at the University of St Andrews

April 2023

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ABSTRACT

The present thesis is the first monograph-length study of the pneumatic prayers in the letters of Paul. Paul mentions three experiences where the spirit inspires prayer: the Abba cry (Gal 4.6; Rom 8.15–16), prayer in tongues (1 Cor 14.14–15), and the spirit's intercession (Rom 8.26–27). While each of these passages has received substantial attention from previous generations of Pauline scholarship, their precise meaning and significance remain contested. Even more controversial is their potential relation to each other. This thesis aims to propose a taxonomy for these pneumatic prayers based on their shared descriptive features and common connections to other aspects of Paul's theology. Descriptively, I argue that Paul describes pneumatic prayers as common and perceptible experiences of inspired speech for early Christians. Theologically, I contend that Paul believed pneumatic prayers signified the eschatological time in which believers live and bore witness to believers' new glorified filial status as they participated in the prayers and worship of heavenly beings.

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PREFACE

The topic of how Paul understood the spirit's relationship to prayer is one that readily came to mind when I considered applying for a doctoral program at the University of St. Andrews back in the Fall of 2016. The subject was a natural fit for me as someone who grew up in a Pentecostal church that both discussed and regularly practised what they referred to, using Paul's language, as "praying in the spirit." Additionally, my greater interest in the formation of early Christian pneumatology — too broad a topic for any thesis — made it necessary to narrow my research focus to an overlooked aspect of that pneumatology. It was not until I was in St. Andrews, however, studying both the ancient primary sources and the many debates around these texts in the secondary literature that my enthusiasm and excitement for the topic of pneumatic prayer developed into a passion. The present thesis is the product of that passion, and it is my hope that the results reflect the four-year labour of love that led me to read this facet of Paul's theology and spirituality in a fresh way.

My gratitude for Professor N. T. Wright, who has been a wonderful supervisor and guide throughout the doctoral process, is difficult to express. It was his work on Christian Origins and the Question of God that opened my mind to the excitement of New Testament scholarship for the first time, since it was in reading those works that I realized one could be a dedicated scholar of the New Testament while remaining openly concerned with questions of Christian theology.

Despite his considerably busy schedule, especially as he navigated retirement from St. Andrews and a transfer to Oxford, Professor Wright has always made time to talk with me or provide feedback whenever I have needed it, down to the very last moments before submission.

I am very fortunate to have had the support of so many dear friends and family over the last few years while working on this thesis. My family has been an ongoing source of support since the very beginning of this project. I am also grateful for my many good friends and work colleagues. I would not have been able to devote the necessary time to this project were it not for the kind patience of the leaders at OneHope, a ministry for which I am privileged to work. The leaders and members of Westmore Church of God in Cleveland, TN have been an ever-present reminder of what it means to be zealous for the πνευματικά and the love that gives them so much power. The project also would not be what it is now without the many conversations I foisted upon scholars around me, including my friends Ethan Johnson, Kevin Snider, David Johnson, and Chris Kugler, as well as Chris Thomas and Rickie Moore, two mentors whose faith and scholarship exemplify an integration that is beyond words.

Most of all, I am grateful for the support of my wife and children. My wife Samantha has been a constant source of encouragement, and I have always counted on her clever wisdom to help me navigate my way through periods of intense difficulty. Additionally, my two incredible children, Silas and Ava, have been a needed reminder of what's most important in life. Their love and joy have sustained and carried me through critical junctures on the way to completing this project.

Jesse D. Stone
Easter Sunday (April 2023)

1. PNEUMATIC PRAYER IN PAULINE SCHOLARSHIP

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Paul describes the relation of the Spirit to prayer with some detail in Romans 8.26–27 and 1 Corinthians 14.14–15. To this list, one could add the parallel texts in Galatians and Romans which relate the reception of the Spirit to the cry, "Abba, Father" (Gal 4.6; Rom 8.15–16).[1] The aim of the present thesis is to provide a clear taxonomy of these pneumatic prayers in Paul's letters.[2] I will do this by examining each of the passages mentioned above in two ways. First, I will present a historical description of the pneumatic prayers, showing what sort of experiences these prayers were and comparing them to similar kinds of religious experiences in antiquity. Second, I will show how pneumatic prayers relate to Paul's theology.

[1] Defining "prayer" in antiquity has proven contentious in scholarly literature on the subject. Chapter 2 below will provide an overview of suggested definitions, including the one I will be using for the present thesis, along with several examples of ancient evidence to support that definition. I will also there provide my reasons for understanding these pneumatic experiences as prayers.

[2] In this thesis, I will use the plural "pneumatic prayers" to refer to *the various experiences* described in the passages outlined above, because I do not assume that these prayers were the same in each case (see below). The singular "pneumatic prayer" will be used to refer to *the topic* or *theme* in Paul's pneumatology to which these passages, as I will suggest, bear witness.
Because of space limitations, I will not be working in detail with the reference to pneumatic prayer in Ephesians 6.18 or other New Testament (hereafter NT) references to similar phenomena (e.g., Jude 20). Although I personally embrace the Pauline authorship of Ephesians, I know many scholars would disagree with this position. Therefore, I have chosen to base my investigation on pneumatic prayer texts in the undisputed letters.

Until now, no full-length study on this facet of Paul's spirituality has been produced.[3] While interest in the study of early Christian religious experience has increased,[4] along with a recognition that such experiences contributed to the production of theological beliefs, few scholars have devoted considerable attention to the pneumatic prayer passages in Paul's writings.[5] Additionally, despite the growing body of literature on Paul's pneumatology, the subject of the Spirit's relationship to prayer has failed thus far to receive sustained attention.[6] It would appear, then, that we have a lacuna in the study of Pauline pneumatology and early Christian pneumatic experience. However, before attempting to address this lacuna, I need to justify my position that pneumatic prayer is a legitimate topic one might explicate in a study of Paul's theology and

[3] Fee 1994, 866, refers to the lack of attention given to Paul's life of prayer as "one of the more remarkable incongruities in Pauline studies." A similar point is made in Wright 2009, 3. It is somewhat ironic, therefore, that Fee goes on, immediately following this astute observation, to devote a mere three pages to the topic in what is still the most comprehensive treatment of Paul's pneumatology to date. It should be noted that scholarly treatments of Paul and prayer exist — e.g., Wiles 1974; O'Brien 1977; Stendahl 1980; Gebauer 1989; Longenecker 2002; Crump 2006, 197–251; and Carson 2014 — though none of them expound the topic of pneumatic prayer with any detail.

[4] On the importance of experience for early Christian beliefs and practices, see Dunn 1975; Johnson 1998; Berger 2003; and Hurtado 2000; 2014. A group of scholars at the Society of Biblical Literature annual meeting, known as "the Experientia Group", has produced papers covering a range of topics in the study of religious experience at the time of early Judaism and early Christianity. These are published in Flannery, Shantz, and Werline 2008 and Shantz and Werline 2012. An overview of trends in the study of religious experience in early Christianity can be found in Batluck 2010.

[5] A noteworthy exception would be the renewed interest in Paul's so-called "mysticism", dating back to key figures like Bousset 2013 [1970], 153–210, and Schweitzer 1998 [1931] but expressed afresh in recent decades by Meier 1998; Luz 2004; and Peerbolte 2008. The study of Paul's mysticism almost always includes at least some comments about his experience of the Spirit, particularly those experiences that might be labelled charismatic in nature (tongues, prophecy, visions, revelations, etc.), but pneumatic prayer as a topic is rarely acknowledged. A variety of scholars today acknowledge the importance of considering Paul's own religious experiences for understanding his theology. E.g., Engberg-Pedersen 2008; Shantz 2008; Johnson 2020, 193–223. Several studies have focused particularly on the importance of Paul's Damascus experience for his theology, especially since Kim 1981, but see also Segal 1990, 34–71; Griffith-Jones 2004, 78–88; and Wright 2018, 47–54. The significance of Paul's Damascus experience for his pneumatology is expounded in Fee 1997.

[6] The two major works which have set the standard for contemporary research on Paul's pneumatology are Horn 1992a and Fee 1994. Despite their dramatic differences, both Horn and Fee attempted a comprehensive account of Paul's pneumatology. In the nearly thirty years since their publications, many more narrowly focused studies have been produced. Space constraints forbid a full bibliography here, but several monographs are worth noting, including Fatehi 2000; Ndubuisi 2003; Philip 2005; Bertone 2005; Christoph 2005; Tibbs 2007; Yates 2008; Scott 2009; Williams 2009; Konsmo 2010; Rabens 2013; Keener 2016; Robinson 2016; Córdova 2019; Ferguson 2020; and Foster 2022.

spirituality.[7] It is, therefore, important to offer some defence for my decision to read these four texts (Rom 8.15–16, 26–27; 1 Cor 14.14–15; Gal 4.6) alongside one another.

1.2. CAN THESE TEXTS BE READ TOGETHER?

There are clear links between the four pneumatic prayer passages that justify an investigation into their shared features, whether theological or phenomenological. Taken together, these links provide an impetus for endeavouring a taxonomy of pneumatic prayer in Paul's letters. That taxonomy will then be presented and defended in the remainder of the thesis.

The clearest link among the four pneumatic prayer texts is between Galatians 4.6 and Romans 8.15. The first and most obvious connection between the texts is the cry, "Abba, Father."[8]

> Ὅτι δέ ἐστε υἱοί, ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν κρᾶζον· **αββα ὁ πατήρ** (Gal 4.6).
>
> οὐ γὰρ ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα δουλείας πάλιν εἰς φόβον ἀλλ' ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας ἐν ᾧ κράζομεν· **αββα ὁ πατήρ** (Rom 8.15).

This experience of the Spirit is only mentioned by Paul in Galatians and Romans, and it finds no attestation elsewhere in early Christian literature.[9] The use of the Aramaic term אבא, which Paul transliterates and translates in Greek (αββα ὁ πατήρ), is noteworthy in letters written to Greek-speaking communities.[10] Other connections between Galatians 4.6 and Romans 8.15 include the

[7] I have in mind the example of Gaventa 2007, who raised similar questions at the outset of her study concerning maternal metaphors in Paul's letters.

[8] At this point, we need not concern ourselves with the meaning and significance of the cry. I will consider those questions more thoroughly in ch. 3.

[9] One possible exception would be Mk 14.36, where the same expression (αββα ὁ πατήρ) comes from Jesus at Gethsemane, but the Spirit is unmentioned. It could be that Mark puts into the mouth of Jesus a cry that is already well known among early Christian communities.

[10] Mussies 1984 draws attention to many instances of Hebrew and Aramaic terms finding their way into the Greek texts of the early Christian movement.

verb κράζω, the language of sonship to describe believers, and the portrayal of the cry as an experience that follows from reception of the Spirit.

	Use of κράζω	Gift of Sonship	Reception of the Spirit
Gal 4	**κρᾶζον**· αββα ὁ πατήρ (4.6)	ἵνα τὴν **υἱοθεσίαν** ἀπολάβωμεν (4.5) ἐστε **υἱοί** (4.6a) τὸ πνεῦμα **τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ** (4.6b)	**ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς** τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ **εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν** (4.6)
Rom 8	**κράζομεν**· αββα ὁ πατήρ (8.15)	οὗτοι **υἱοὶ θεοῦ** εἰσιν (8.14) πνεῦμα **υἱοθεσίας** (8.15) ἐσμὲν **τέκνα θεοῦ** (8.16)	**ἐλάβετε** πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας (8.15)

These connections have led nearly all interpreters to conclude that Paul refers to the same experience in both Galatians 4.6 and Romans 8.15.[11] The most obvious disparity between the passages is the difference in subject for the verb κράζω. Whereas in Romans 8.15, Paul says of believers, "we cry" (κράζομεν), in Galatians 4.6 it is the Spirit who does the crying (κρᾶζον). This distinction led Werner Bieder to argue that Paul had two different prayers in mind, one of the Spirit and one of believers.[12] Bieder's conclusion, however, is prematurely drawn, with the only evidence cited being the difference in grammatical subjects. The similarities observed so far make it much more likely that Paul does have the same experience in mind, and it is his understanding of inspired speech that enabled him to attribute the same experience to believers or the Spirit or both. In sum, the various connections between Galatians 4.6 and Romans 8.15 that have been established here serve to justify an examination of their shared characteristics as pneumatic experiences. With these connections between Galatians 4.6 and Romans 8.15 established and in mind, we can turn next to consider the links between the Abba cry and the Spirit's intercession (Rom 8.26).

[11] E.g., Wilckens 1980, 138–39; Käsemann 1980, 228; Dunn 1988, 460–61; Fee 1994, 410; Byrne 1996, 250; Martyn 1997, 392; Jewett 2007, 498; de Boer 2011, 266; deSilva 2018, 356–57; Keener 2019, 347–48; Wright 2021, 271.

[12] Bieder 1948, 25.

Several points of correspondence between Romans 8.15–16 and 8.26–27 demonstrate that the two experiences were likely viewed by Paul as similar sorts of pneumatic phenomena. Four pieces of evidence stand out especially. First, there is the simple proximity of the two pneumatic experiences in Romans 8. Second, there is the use of αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα in 8.16 and 8.26, a unique expression in Paul's writings. Paul uses the pronoun αὐτό to modify the noun πνεῦμα elsewhere in his letters, but always in the attributive position.[13] Only in Romans 8.16 and 8.26 does he place αὐτό in the predicate position. Paul, thus, gives his audience good reason to draw a connection between the subjects of both experiences. In 8.16, "the very Spirit" by whom believers cry out to God as "Abba, Father" bears witness to their new filial status. In 8.26, it is also "the very Spirit" who makes intercession on their behalf amid present weakness. Third, with this similarity between the subject in both texts, we should also note a similarity between the verbs. Both passages use σύν-compound verbs for the actions of the Spirit.[14] We can display these two similarities as follows.

Rom 8.16	**αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα**	<u>συμμαρτυρεῖ</u>	τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν
Rom 8.26a	τὸ πνεῦμα	<u>συναντιλαμβάνεται</u>	τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ ἡμῶν
Rom 8.26c	**αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα**	ὑπερεντυγχάνει	στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις

Fourth, the two experiences of the Spirit mirror each other by manifesting in speech directed to God.[15] In other words, they are similar kinds of pneumatic experience. However, one final piece of exegetical evidence reveals Paul's intention to connect the two experiences more explicitly.

[13] 1 Cor 12.4, 8, 9, 11; 2 Cor 4.13; 12.18.

[14] There is a concentration of σύν-verbs in Romans 8.16–28, including συμμαρτυρεῖ (8.16), συμπάσχομεν (8.17), συνδοξασθῶμεν (8.17), συστενάζει (8.22), συναντιλαμβάνεται (8.26), and συνεργεῖ (8.28). On the relation of the σύν-verbs to the Spirit, see Fee 1994, 562, 589; Jewett 2004, 200; Eastman 2014, 113–15.

[15] Dunn 1999; Eastman 2014, 113.

Paul begins Romans 8.26 with the adverb ὡσαύτως, thereby tying the action of the Spirit to some prior action already mentioned in Romans 8. Many scholars have argued that the adverb refers either to the groaning of creation and believers in 8.22–23[16] or to the sentence immediately prior in 8.25.[17] A strong case, however, has been made by a minority of scholars that the adverb ὡσαύτως refers not to 8.25, nor to 8.23, but back to 8.15–16.[18] This interpretation of ὡσαύτως deserves more consideration than it has often received. As Geoffrey Smith has pointed out in his work on ὡσαύτως,[19] in the LXX and NT the adverb is most often used to connote (1) similar or related actions performed by the same subject,[20] (2) similar or related actions performed by different subjects,[21] or (3) the same action performed on different objects.[22] Given these patterns for using ὡσαύτως, as well as comparable adverbs like ὁμοίως, we should ask whether the dominant perspectives concerning the antecedent of ὡσαύτως in Romans 8.26 still make sense.

The problem is greatest for those who take 8.25 as the antecedent since neither similar actions nor similar subjects are in view. Those who take the groaning of creation and believers from 8.22–23 as the antecedent of ὡσαύτως enjoy slightly more plausibility because of the shared

[16] A view defended by many, including Sanday and Headlam 1903, 213; Lagrange 1950, 211; de Goedt 1972, 29; Cranfield 1975, 420–21; Kuss 1978, 642; Wilckens 1980, 160; Dunn 1988, 476; Byrne 1996, 270; Wright 2002, 598; Bertone 2003, 64; Lohse 2003, 249–50; Hultgren 2011, 325; Berry 2020, 292.

[17] The view held by Murray 1959, 310–11; Osborne 2004, 215–16; Jewett 2007, 521; Porter 2015, 170; Schreiner 2018b, 434; Moo 2018, 545; Thielman 2018, 407; Vollmer 2018, 157–66.

[18] Those who defend this view include Fee 1994, 576; Smith 1998; and Kruse 2012, 351. Other scholars, such as Wilckens 1980, 161–62 and Szypula 2007, 314–15, acknowledge the close parallels between Rom 8.15–16 and 8.26–27, but do not argue for 8.16 as the referent of ὡσαύτως in 8.26.

[19] Smith 1998, 33.

[20] 1 Chr 28.16; Tob 12.12; Sir 49.7; Matt 20.5; 21.30; Luke 22.20; 1 Cor 11.25.

[21] Ex 7.11, 22; 8.3, 14; Deut 12.22; Josh 6.8; Jud 15.5; 2 Macc 2.12; Prov 27.15; Matt 25.17; Mk 12.21; 14.31; Luke 13.5.

[22] Lev 24.19; Deut 15.17; Josh 11.15; 2 Macc 7.13; Matt 21.36.

references to groaning and the Spirit. However, the differences between the texts, especially regarding the verbal action, make the position less likely. Whereas 8.23 uses the verbal form στενάζω, in 8.26 the noun στεναγμός is used. The primary verbal action in 8.26 is συναντιλαμβάνομαι. If we consider the three primary uses for ὡσαύτως reviewed above, none of them hold if the referent is the groaning in 8.23. This leads us to reconsider the possibility that ὡσαύτως is being used to refer to the last activity of the Spirit mentioned by Paul in 8.15–16. In this case, we have the same subject (τὸ πνεῦμα or αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα) and σύν-compound verbs for the actions performed by the subject. Given the parallels between the Spirit's activity in 8.15–16 and 8.26–27 reviewed above, it becomes more likely that ὡσαύτως is cementing the connections between these two pneumatic prayers.

Taken together, the use of ὡσαύτως in Romans 8.26 and the four connections between Romans 8.26 and 8.15–16 reviewed above justify my decision to investigate the shared features of these pneumatic experiences under the topic of pneumatic prayer. With connections between three of the pneumatic prayer texts now established, we turn to consider the last remaining passage: 1 Corinthians 14.14–15

The inclusion of 1 Corinthians 14.14–15 in an analysis of pneumatic prayer makes natural sense because Paul describes praying in tongues explicitly as "praying by the Spirit" (προσεύξομαι τῷ πνεύματι, 14.15). However, as support for my decision to analyse 1 Corinthians 14.14–15 alongside the other two experiences covered so far, I will show its parallels to the other pneumatic prayer texts.

First, there is a clear parallel between the experience of praying in tongues in 1 Corinthians and the Abba cry in Romans and Galatians. The Abba cry is an experience of God's Spirit that manifests among believers in a form of speech. One of Paul's major concerns in 1 Corinthians 12–

14 is helping the assembly in Corinth gain a better understanding of the nature and purpose of the various πνευματικά (12.1) that involve speech, especially prophecy and glossolalia and their role in public worship.[23] In 1 Corinthians 12.3, Paul states that the confession Κύριος Ἰησοῦς happens only when one is speaking ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ. Similarly, in Romans, the Spirit is the one ἐν ᾧ believers cry out to God as "Abba" (Rom 8.15). Thus, both passages speak of the Spirit producing inspired prayers in and through the mouth of the believer.

The links between glossolalic prayer in 1 Corinthians 14.14–15 and the Spirit's intercession in Romans 8.26–27 have long been noticed, though their significance and meaning are disputed. The question some have explored is whether Romans 8.26–27 is a subtle reference to glossolalic prayer. While several scholars have defended a glossolalic interpretation of the Spirit's intercession,[24] most readers have opposed this view.[25] For the purpose of this section, I only wish to note the links between these two passages that justify their inclusion in the present thesis.[26] Two such links are mentioned by Fee.[27] First, in both 1 Corinthians 14.14–15 and Romans 8.26–27, it is the Spirit who prays *through* believers. Second, in both passages, the believers who pray under the Spirit's inspiration *do not know what the Spirit is saying*. One does not need to accept Fee's conclusion that both experiences are glossolalic to acknowledge these parallels, but their existence is enough to warrant further investigation into the shared features of these pneumatic experiences.

[23] The purpose of 1 Corinthians 12–14 will be examined in greater detail in section 4.2 below.

[24] Gunkel 2008 [1888], 80–81; Stendahl 1980, 244; Käsemann 1971, 128–33; 1980, 240–41; Macchia 1992; 1998; Fee 1994, 579–85; 2000, 110–13; Bertone 2003; and Menzies 2016, 135, 139–46.

[25] Cf. Goltz 1901, 89–122; Cranfield 1975, 423–24; Obeng 1980, 219–28; O'Brien 1987, 70–71; Morris 1988, 328; Dunn 1988, 478; Barrett 1991, 158; Fitzmyer 1993, 518–19; Wright 2002, 599; Schlatter 1995 [1935], 191; Gieniusz 1999, 222–24; Jewett 2007, 523; Keener 2009, 107–8; Matera 2010, 203; Hultgren 2011, 325; Kruse 2012, 352; Longenecker 2016, 733–34; Bird 2016, 281; Moo 2018, 545–48; Schreiner 2018b, 536–38.

[26] I take up the question of whether Paul is referring to glossolalia in Romans 8.26–27 in ch. 5.

[27] Fee 2000, 111.

In summary, we have good reasons to think that pneumatic prayer is a theme in Paul's writings and one which is a legitimate object of investigation. The various links noted above between all four of these passages justify my decision to read them together in order to endeavour a taxonomy of pneumatic prayer in Paul's writings. Of course, I am not the first to see or attempt to explain some of the similarities between these passages. The next section will review the history of scholarship concerning pneumatic prayers in Paul.

1.3. REVIEW OF SCHOLARSHIP

The purpose of the following survey will be to summarize and assess the works of key figures who have contributed to our understanding of these pneumatic prayer texts in order to better situate the present thesis within the landscape of Pauline scholarship. The survey is divided into six sections, each focused on the work of a scholar who has attempted a more complete understanding of the pneumatic prayer texts in Paul. Each section will summarize the contribution made by these various authors and offer an assessment of their work to prepare the way for the present study.

1.3.1. Hermann Gunkel

The study of pneumatic experiences among early Christians is frequently traced back to the work of the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*,[28] and especially one of its founding figures, Hermann Gunkel.[29] His deceptively short but dense *Büchlein* set the stage for subsequent

[28] On the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, see Boers 1999, 2:383–87; Kümmel 1972, 245–80; von Bendemann 2013. For a review of the pneumatological research conducted by the *Schule*, see Frey and Levison 2017, 4–18.

[29] Pfleiderer 1873 [ET 1877] anticipated many of the conclusions of the *religionsgeschichtlich* perspective.

generations of scholarly research into the development of early pneumatology.[30] In particular, Gunkel's work established three methodological points which proved influential. First, Gunkel made a distinction between the pneumatology of the primitive Christian community, governed mainly by popular conceptions of πνεῦμα, and Paul's view.[31] Second, Gunkel viewed the study of early pneumatology as an investigation into the perceived effects of πνεῦμα on believers.[32] As a definition for the concept of "Spirit" in the apostolic age, Gunkel said, "It is the supernatural power of God which works miracles in and through the person."[33] Finally, concerning the background of early Christian pneumatology, Gunkel privileged Jewish sources over Greco-Roman ones.[34]

Concerning pneumatic prayer, Gunkel began his investigation into early Christian experiences of the Spirit with glossolalia, which he labelled "the Spirit's most striking and characteristic activity."[35] Gunkel interpreted the primitive Christian conception of the Spirit in almost entirely enthusiastic terms, where ecstatic experiences became the definitive and

[30] The English translation was published in Gunkel 1979 and subsequently reprinted in 2008. Citations of Gunkel throughout this section will be taken from the 2008 reprint. On the significance of this work for subsequent pneumatological research see Levison 2009, xiv–xxii, and Philip 2005, 6–9.

[31] This feature of Gunkel's work is also found in earlier works such as Pfleiderer 1877, 200. A more nuanced approach to the relative uniqueness of certain aspects of Paul's pneumatology vis-à-vis primitive Christianity can be found in Hunter 1961, 90–97.

[32] Gunkel 2008, 13–14.

[33] Ibid., 35. A similar view was articulated later by key figures such as Bousset 2013 [1970], 161, who said, "the Pneuma is the completely supernaturally regarded divine power which seizes man in ecstasy and makes him capable of miracles," and Bultmann 2007, 1:153, who claimed that πνεῦμα is "the miraculous divine power that stands in absolute contrast to all that is human."

[34] Gunkel 2008, 13. Though Gunkel's view of early Jewish belief, shaped as it was by Schürer's 1882 work, *Die Predigt Jesu in ihrem Verhältnis zum Alten Testament und zum Judentum*, lead him to conclude that first century Judaism was characterized by *a lack of pneumatic activity* or phenomena. The English version of Schürer is now revised and reprinted in Schürer 2014. This forced him, in turn, to rely on the Old Testament rather than early Jewish literature from the Second Temple period. Gunkel's choice to overlook the early Jewish sources was later corrected in Volz 1910.

[35] Gunkel 2008, 30. It is to be emphasized that Gunkel viewed glossolalia as a very common phenomenon in primitive Christian communities.

characteristic marker of pneumatic activity and authority.[36] When he turned to Paul, Gunkel also considered the Abba cry as well as the groans/intercession of the Spirit. Regarding the Abba cry, Gunkel said it was viewed as proof that Christians were truly children of God because of the undeniably Spirit-wrought character of the cry as an ecstatic utterance.[37] These words were "prayers uttered in ecstasy, in which not the person but rather τὸ πνεῦμα προσεύχεται," leading him to say, "what must be involved here is glossolalia or something similar."[38] Regarding the Spirit's intercession, Gunkel claimed that these groans were "glossolalic-ecstatic outbursts which, because they are expressed by the Spirit himself, are used by Paul as an objectively valid proof for the reality of the blessing of salvation."[39] Thus, Gunkel viewed pneumatic prayer as an ecstatic experience connected primarily to the gift of glossolalia. The role of the believer in the experience is a passive one.

Gunkel was also quick to note the ways that Paul's pneumatology diverged from the popular views of πνεῦμα operative in Hellenistic circles. For example, Gunkel argued that "Paul disparages glossolalia"[40] and "almost totally excludes glossolalia" from Christian worship.[41] Gunkel summarized the distinction between Paul's view of the pneumatic and that of the earliest Christian communities in the following way:

> The community thus regards as pneumatic what is extraordinary in Christian existence, but Paul what is usual; the community what is individual and unique, but Paul what is common

[36] On the ecstatic nature of the experience, Gunkel says, "In glossolalia the individual is overwhelmed by a powerful force that has taken total possession of him. In such situations he is passive. He himself is no longer agent; instead, something alien has come over him and added to his independent, personal life." Ibid., 31.

[37] Ibid., 80.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid., 81.

[40] Ibid., 85.

[41] Ibid., 86.

> to all; the community what abruptly appears, but Paul what is constant; the community what is isolated in Christian existence, but Paul the Christian life as such. And this yielded a totally different, infinitely higher evaluation of Christian conduct.[42]

For Gunkel, Paul developed early Christian pneumatology in a positive manner by moving the realm of the Spirit away from the ecstatic and towards the mundane or ordinary.

> The gifts of the Spirit in the apostolic age have vanished, though in isolated Christian circles something similar may perhaps be observed to this day. But we can also do without these miraculous gifts. For even now we daily perceive other activities of the Spirit in our life. Even for us, the Christian is a miracle of God.[43]

Thus, for Gunkel, pneumatic prayer was a more important and common feature of worship within the pre-Pauline Christian communities, and while Paul might have acknowledged the legitimacy of these experiences, the pneumatic prayers themselves bore little significance for his primary pneumatological concerns.

Gunkel's framework for the development of early Christian pneumatology, in which pre-Pauline Christians favoured the enthusiastic elements of the pneumatic, including pneumatic prayer, while Paul downplayed them, proved influential for future scholars, but it lacks evidential grounding.[44] Our earliest and strongest evidence for the presence of experiences like these in early Christianity come to us from Paul himself, and he nowhere gives the impression that they should be set aside in favour of a pneumatology of the ordinary, as Gunkel suggests. Instead, because the evidence comes to us from Paul's own writings, we must ask how he thought about these experiences and how he related them to his broader theological understanding.

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[42] Ibid., 96.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Gunkel's developmental perspective mirrors that of Pfleiderer noted above. It is also taken onboard by later prominent figures such as Bousset 2013 [1970], 163, and Bultmann 2007, 1: 154, 159–60, 161.

1.3.2. Ernst Käsemann

Ernst Käsemann famously emphasized the influence of Paul's apocalyptic eschatology on his pneumatology.[45] For Käsemann, early Christian debates over pneumatological questions, especially between Paul and the earlier Hellenistic communities, could be explained by their conflicting eschatologies.[46] In particular, Käsemann believed that Paul was continuously struggling against Jewish-Christian nomism on the one hand and Hellenistic enthusiasm on the other. This latter group is typified in the Corinthian congregation, who believed they "have overcome the ultimate trial" and "boast of having attained the angelic state."[47] Against these enthusiasts, Paul constructed his own pneumatological emphases, not only in his Corinthian letters but also in Romans 8, where his eschatological vision combined the present power and operation of the Spirit among God's people with the reality of present suffering and future hope for a revelation of liberty and glory.

In the study of pneumatic prayer, Käsemann is noteworthy for presenting a unique case for reading Romans 8.26 as an instance of glossolalic prayer. He began by noting the uniqueness of the passage itself: "There is hardly anything comparable with these verses in the New

[45] "We have a better overall view of the development of early Christian pneumatology and now understand that *it was the very eschatological understanding of the Spirit which first allowed earthly manifestations of supernatural power and wisdom to be stressed*." Käsemann 1971, 123 (emphasis added). Cf. his classic essay on early Christian apocalyptic in Käsemann 1969,108–37. For an assessment of Käsemann's understanding of "apocalyptic", see Wright 2015, 145–50; Davies 2016, 9–12; Frey 2017b, 503–8.

[46] Käsemann 1969, 88. The explanation of these competing eschatological visions and their implications for the development of early Christian theology are laid out in his essay, "The Beginnings of Christian Theology." See Käsemann 1969, 82–107.

[47] Käsemann 1969, 106. It is difficult to stress how serious Käsemann believed the threat of enthusiasm was, both for the early Church and in his own time. "Ecstatic practices tend to split a community rather than to further it," Käsemann said, adding, "The theological and practical conquest of enthusiasm was the first test to which the young church was exposed, and nothing less than its whole existence and future depended on its mastery of this problem" Käsemann 1971, 123. One of the great achievements of the theologians of the NT, as Käsemann put it elsewhere, is that they "warded off the dangers of enthusiastic congregational piety from the theological inheritance handed down to them." Käsemann 1969, 104.

Testament."[48] Käsemann's investigation into the meaning of this text started with the observation that the intercession of the Spirit was a sign from which Paul came to the conclusion that Christians shared in a weakness that kept them from knowing what to pray καθὸ δεῖ (8.26), which he equated with praying κατὰ θεὸν (8.27). This led Käsemann to conclude that the sign of the Spirit's intercession must have been external and visible to the Christian community as a whole.[49] He then turned to consider the charismatic quality of the groans, concluding that they were ecstatic utterances familiar to the enthusiasts Paul sought to correct.[50] If Paul was referring to an ecstatic cry, similar but not identical with the cry αββα in 8.15, then the description of the cry as ἀλάλητος demands an explanation. Because Paul did not use this word elsewhere, Käsemann turned his attention to what he considered the closest conceptual parallel, the ἄρρητα ῥήματα of 2 Corinthians 12.4. In the latter case, ἄρρητα refers not to unspoken words but "unspeakable" words because they are veiled by heavenly mysteries communicated in heavenly languages. This comparison justified Käsemann's dual contention that the reality behind Romans 8.26 was (1) an ecstatic experience which (2) was recognizably such even though it could not be communicated or grasped in human language. From this observation, Käsemann argued that the only authentically Pauline parallel to the phenomenon of "praying in the Spirit" is 1 Corinthians 14.14–15.[51] Käsemann, thus, concluded, "the 'sighs too deep for words' of our passage are also simply glossolalic utterances."[52]

[48] Käsemann 1971, 127.

[49] Ibid., 129.

[50] Ibid., 130.

[51] Other potential NT parallels cited in both the article and commentary include Eph 6.18; Jude 20; and Rev 22.17. Käsemann 1971, 130; 1980, 240.

[52] Käsemann 1971, 131.

Käsemann then went on to explain the significance of Romans 8.26–27 for understanding Paul's theology of glossolalia. "This is what takes place in the glossolalic cries. They are not the song of the angels, as the Corinthians suppose. They are rather the proof that believers still have to join in the choir of the depths, which can still be heard by unredeemed creation."[53] In other words, according to Käsemann, Paul constructed a theology of glossolalia by taking the chief sign of early Christian enthusiasm and turning their interpretation of its significance upside down: "[W]hat enthusiasts regard as proof of their glorification, [Paul] sees as a sign of lack. Praying in tongues reveals, not the power and wealth of the Christian community, but its ἀσθένεια."[54] Käsemann concluded that Paul's argument in Romans 8 undermined the enthusiasts' theology of glory and called them to exchange the imaginary realized eschatology they had constructed for themselves for a theology of hope formed during the messianic woes that govern the present age, even in the context of communal Christian worship.[55]

Unlike Gunkel before him, Käsemann was able to positively relate at least one of the pneumatic prayer texts to Paul's theology. His insistence that these experiences be related to the apostle's eschatological vision has been an important step towards better understanding these enigmatic texts. However, his interpretation also bears some significant problems. For example, Käsemann's reconstructions of the historical background for earliest Christianity is highly questionable. As Frey summarizes,

> Neither the separate stages of development from the Palestinian to the Hellenistic community, nor the 'Hellenistic enthusiasm' as a characteristic of the Corinthian theology stand up under a more scrutinized historical view of the texts. Käsemann's categories are often inspired by the later history of theology—not least from his own experiences in the

[53] Ibid., 134.

[54] Käsemann 1980, 241.

[55] Ibid., 242.

> struggle of the church within the Nazi period and in his later conflicts especially with the Pietists or the proto-evangelical *Bekenntnisbewegung* of the 60s and 70s.[56]

Käsemann's insistence on a supposed conflict between Paul and early Hellenistic enthusiasts in texts like Romans 8 also causes him to downplay or overlook entirely the positive role that the pneumatic prayers, such as the Abba cry and the Spirit's intercession, play in bearing witness to the glorified filial status of the believer.

1.3.3. Werner Bieder

One of the first scholars to write exclusively about pneumatic prayer in Paul's letters was Werner Bieder. In a 1948 article entitled "Gebetswirklichkeit und Gebetsmöglichkeit bei Paulus", Bieder attempted a full synthesis of the pneumatic prayer texts in Paul to comprehend the apostle's understanding of the Spirit's work in prayer. Beginning with the Abba cry texts in Romans and Galatians, Bieder noted that receiving the Spirit of adoption is articulated by Paul as a prerequisite to Christian prayer in general.[57] Observing the similarities between both texts, Bieder asked whether the same prayer was in view, i.e., the prayer of believers when/after they have received the Spirit. He argued, uniquely, that the two passages should be kept distinct from one another. There is, he says, "a not insignificant difference" between the two passages, pointing primarily to the fact that in Galatians it is the Spirit who cries "Abba" while in Romans it is believers who cry.[58] In Galatians, he argued, the Spirit is portrayed as the one crying out, with believers filling

[56] Frey 2017b, 506–7. Cf. the similar point in Wright 2015, 185.

[57] Bieder 1948, 25. Translations of Bieder's article are my own.

[58] Secondarily, Bieder distinguishes the two texts based on his analysis of the verb κράζειν. Unlike Gunkel, Bieder concludes that Paul's use of κράζω does not point in the direction of glossolalic speech for two reasons. First, he says, Paul nowhere uses this verb in 1 Corinthians 14 to describe the practice of glossolalia. Second, the resultant cry, "Abba, Father", is an intelligible one, something one cannot say of glossolalic speech. Instead, he argues, the verb κράζειν primarily expresses "die intensive Gemütsbewegung des Beters." Ibid., 26.

the role of those who hear the proclamation.[59] "Thus the church in all its members is called by the Spirit to the mysterious proclamation of the Father's name."[60] The truth of the divine fatherhood is one revealed to Paul and early Christians by the divine Spirit. "According to Paul, the name of the Father and thus the Father in heaven himself is not available to Christian man, but to the divine pneuma. According to Paul, it is the ministry of the pneuma to lend this name to Christians for use in confession and prayer."[61] It is in response to this revelation of the Father's name that believers then cry "Abba" for themselves (Rom 8.15).

From here, Bieder transitioned to a consideration of Romans 8.26–27. "If the pneuma establishes the possibility of prayer to man, it must be concluded that man as such, apart from the pneuma of Christ, is not suitable for prayer."[62] This is confirmed, Bieder argued, in Romans 8.26, where the ἀσθένεια of believers reveals itself precisely in their inability to pray καθὸ δεῖ. Not only are people incapable of calling upon God as Father apart from the Spirit, they are also unable to formulate their prayers under the divine will.[63] Bieder connected the στεναγμοὶ ἀλάλητοι with the groans of creation and believers in 8.22, 23, saying, "the pneuma itself also takes part in the groans of the world," appearing as "the leader of the great cosmic chorus of groans."[64] This "kenosis of the pneuma"[65] is eschatologically loaded since the Spirit is calling for the time of coming

[59] Ibid., 26–27, appeals to Grundmann 1966, 901–2, who notes that the verb carried proclamatory connotations in John's Gospel (John 1.15; 7.28, 37; 12.44).

[60] Bieder 1948, 27.

[61] Ibid., 28.

[62] Ibid., 29.

[63] Ibid., 30–31.

[64] Ibid., 31.

[65] A phrase Bieder notes might be too daring. Ibid., 32.

redemption, just as are believers and creation. The *unaussprechlich* nature of these groans means they cannot be repeated by humans, like the ἄρρητα ῥήματα of 2 Corinthians 12.4.[66] Thus, Paul does not know the content of the Spirit's *Erlösungsschreien*; he only knows, by revelation, that the Spirit issues forth this cry in groans.[67] Regarding the Spirit's intercession specifically, Bieder said, "The pneuma does not help the praying person directly, but indirectly. It does not instil the right words, so that bad prayer becomes right prayer, but intercedes for the hearing of the wrong words…. There is no 'influxus spiritualis' and no 'oratio infusa'."[68] With this interpretation, Bieder excluded a glossolalic understanding of this passage.

Regarding glossolalic prayer in 1 Corinthians 14, Bieder was interested mainly in the role of the νοῦς. Praying in tongues, he said, is a specific form of prayer in which the human νοῦς is deactivated.[69] This ecstatic form of prayer, in which it is impossible to distinguish between the divine and human spirit, stands in stark contrast to "praying with the mind" (1 Cor 14.14–15).[70] Ultimately, Bieder believed the significance of glossolalic prayer was minimal. For example, he said, "We must not allow pneumatic prayer to merge into ecstatic prayer."[71] In glossolalia, the focus is on what the Spirit works *in* humanity. By contrast, in the "Abba" cry and the inarticulate groans, the focus is on what the Spirit is doing *for* humanity. This latter form of prayer, which Bieder believed could be connected to praying τῷ νοΐ was preferred. As the Spirit works to renew

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid., 33.

[69] Ibid., 34.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid.

the human νοῦς, part of that renewal entails a growing awareness of the believer's access to God in prayer by the Spirit and a recognition of their inability and unworthiness to pray.[72] For Bieder, pneumatic prayer is not the degrading of humanity into a mere channel for the Spirit's prayers. Instead, the Spirit's work in prayer is aimed at elevating humanity "to the dignity of the responsible praying human who is justified by the entering work of the pneuma."[73]

While Bieder was one of the first to tackle the question of how the Spirit was related to prayer in Paul's writings, his own conclusions leave plenty of room for critique and further development. For example, Bieder asserts that pneumatic prayer is the ground for the possibility of all Christian prayer, but this assertion appears to be more theologically motivated than exegetically based. Paul might have thought that all Christian prayer finds its basis in the work of the Spirit in the life of the believer, but one will need to do more than Bieder to show how texts like Galatians 4.6 and Romans 8.15 support this view. Alternatively, it could be that Paul conceived of pneumatic prayer merely as a different sort of prayer, rather than as something more fundamental or primary than normal Christian prayer. Additionally, Bieder's insistence on separating glossolalic prayer as something utterly distinct from the Abba cry and the Spirit's intercession should be reconsidered in light of the connections between all of the pneumatic prayer texts noted above. Like several of the German scholars in the early twentieth century already mentioned, Bieder shared a suspicion of glossolalia as something not fully at home in Paul's pneumatology or spirituality.

[72] Ibid., 35.

[73] Ibid., 40.

1.3.4. James D. G. Dunn

James D. G. Dunn's work on Pauline theology spanned a lifetime, but many of his convictions about pneumatic prayer in Paul remained consistent.[74] Dunn argued that while most prayers for Paul were spontaneous and situational, some were understood as being inspired by the Spirit.[75] These inspired utterances could occur in two forms, distinguished by what Dunn labelled a *charismatic* consciousness and an *ecstatic* consciousness on the part of the individual praying.[76] The distinctive feature of the former over the latter is that, while both allow for "the consciousness of being moved upon by divine power," it is charismatic consciousness that also participates in the inspired act willingly, with full awareness and acceptance of the inspired words and actions as one's own.[77] Dunn used Romans 8.15–16 as an example of this charismatic distinction.

> The assurance of sonship is not a conclusion or inference drawn from the fact that the community says 'Abba.' It is rather an inner confidence borne in upon the believer by the consciousness that it was not simply he himself and of himself that had cried 'Abba' (κράζομεν — Rom. 8.15); the word was something given him, uttered through his lips by the Spirit (κρᾶζον — Gal. 4.6).[78]

This charismatic consciousness, according to Dunn, is illustrated again by Romans 8.26–27.[79] This text, Dunn argued, shows how Paul conceived of the two sides of charismatic consciousness: "*the*

[74] See Dunn 1970; 1975; 1988; 1998; 1999.

[75] Dunn 1975, 239.

[76] Dunn subsequently divides his analysis of the pneumatic prayers in Paul along both lines by giving prayer (Rom 8.15–16, 26–27; Gal 4.6) and glossolalia (1 Cor 14) distinctive headings under the broader category of "inspired speech" in his examination of Paul's pneumatology (Dunn 1975, 239–46). Thus, despite the depth and value of Dunn's work on these texts, he still insists, as so many others have, on maintaining a distinction between these pneumatic prayers rather than seeing the various things that hyperlink these texts to one another (see section 1.2. above).

[77] Dunn 1975, 241.

[78] Ibid., 240–1.

[79] Dunn rejects the interpretation of στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις as "wordless stammering of ecstasy" for two reasons. First, the interpretation does not cohere with Paul's claim that glossolalia is a spoken (heavenly) language (1 Cor 13.1; cf. 14.2). Second, Dunn expresses doubt at the Roman situation Käsemann and others envision, in which the enthusiastic abuse of glossolalia in Corinth was also present in Rome. It should be noted, however, that Dunn does not object in

consciousness of human impotence and the consciousness of divine power in and through that weakness."[80] In his later Pauline theology, Dunn claimed this "astonishing feature of Paul's pneumatology…could never have been derived from a theoretical or purely doctrinal concept of either Spirit or conversion. It can only be explained out of the depths of personal experience." For Dunn, the experiential quality of pneumatic prayers like the Abba cry and the Spirit's intercession is important for understanding why Paul came to specific theological conclusions about the filial status of believers and the operation of divine power among God's people.

Glossolalic prayer, according to Dunn, belongs in the second category of pneumatic prayers, those marked by ecstatic consciousness. Here, Dunn made some important distinctions. First, glossolalia is one of the χαρίσματα (along with prophecy) that can be classified as "inspired utterance." Whereas prophecy is a form of inspired utterance disclosed with intelligible speech, glossolalia is better characterized as ecstatic speech inspired by the work of the Spirit, involving "mindless utterance."[81] Second, Dunn distinguished the glossolalia beloved by the church in Corinth, which Paul criticized as excessive, with the form of glossolalia Paul valued and practised with regularity (14.18).

> Paul knows and values a form of glossolalia which is not so 'abandoned' as the Corinthians glossolalia — a glossolalia which can be readily controlled…a glossolalia which is a speaking of actual words (14.19); a glossolalia, that is to say, which was ecstatic only in the technical sense of being automatic speech in which the conscious mind played no part.[82]

principle to a glossolalic interpretation of the στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις. Instead, he argues that the logic behind interpreting Romans 8.26 as *only* a reference to glossolalia is too narrow. Ibid., 241–2.

[80] Ibid., 242, emphasis original.

[81] Dunn 1975, 242.

[82] Ibid., 243.

One of the chief reasons Paul continued to value this form of glossolalia, according to Dunn, was that it functioned as a kind of prayer (1 Cor 14.2), whether sung aloud or merely spoken. If glossolalia is an ecstatic utterance, and the person who speaks is speaking a heavenly language rather than an earthly one, then glossolalia, left uninterpreted, edifies the one speaking because it is a form of prayer.

> *He who experiences glossolalia (or wordless groans) experiences it as effective communication with God*. The prayer which he finds himself unable to utter the Spirit utters through him, giving him the sense of communing with God, the confidence that God knows his situation and needs better than he does himself, the assurance that God's Spirit is directing his course and circumstances.[83]

In the end, Dunn believed that the category of inspired utterances included glossolalia, particularly as a form of prayer, but is not limited solely to glossolalia.[84] All inspired utterances were brought about by the work of the Spirit within the Christian community, but within the category of inspired speech, only glossolalia functioned as an ecstatic form of prayer. His distinction between the *charismatic* consciousness of the Abba cry and the Spirit's intercession (and perhaps even in Paul's form of glossolalia?) and the *ecstatic* consciousness of Corinthian glossolalic speech seems to indicate that Dunn believed the former could be a common experience of all Christians while the latter was unique to only a few, or perhaps only localized in Corinth.

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[83] Ibid., 245 (emphasis original). Despite his disagreement of the glossolalic reading of Romans 8.26–27, it is fascinating that Dunn falls back on the language of Romans 8.26–27 to explain the theology behind glossolalia in 1 Corinthians 14.

[84] Dunn argues that the following texts might contain allusions to glossolalia: Romans 8.26; Ephesians 6.18; Ephesians 5.19 (//Colossians 3.16; 1 Thessalonians 5.19; and possibly 2 Corinthians 5.4. He goes on to say, "But in every case allusion seems to be much more general, probably including glossolalia, but hardly confined to it — charismatic prayer and singing of all kinds (Eph. 6.18; 5.19; Col. 3.16), no doubt engaging the same range of emotions as the *abba*-prayer (Rom. 8.15; Gal. 4.6), but taking a variety of vocal expression, and not simply glossolalia (e.g. the 'Abba' *cry*, and the 'inarticulate groans' of Rom. 8)." (Dunn 1975, 245–6).

For Dunn, the pneumatic prayers in Paul are primarily about achieving effective communion with God.[85] Dunn's work represented an important methodological step in taking the pneumatic prayers seriously *as pneumatic experiences* shared by many early Christians. He was able to show how each prayer served a positive and important function in the spirituality and theology of Paul himself. The Abba cry confirms the believer's sonship, the Spirit's intercession reveals the operation of divine power amidst human weakness, and glossolalic prayer allows for intimate communion with God. What Dunn failed to consider was whether some of these important theological themes are tied to each of the pneumatic prayers rather than just one of them. Additionally, while Dunn did open up the question of how these prayers were experienced consciously by the early Christians, he did not do much comparative work to examine the pneumatic prayers alongside other forms of aberrant prayer in antiquity.

1.3.5. Friedrich Horn

Friedrich Horn's revised *Habilitationsschrift* from Göttingen, *Das Angeld des Geistes,* is the most substantial treatment of Paul's pneumatology to come from a German scholar in the past 30 years.[86] In shape, Horn's project adopts the task of Gunkel's earlier work with important methodological disagreements. Whereas Gunkel sought to privilege the experiential dimension of early Christian pneumatology, arguing that anything like a "doctrine" of the Spirit was a later development, Horn believes that the interdependence of experience and interpretation led early Christians to the theoretical conclusion that they possessed the end-time Spirit.[87] Like Gunkel,

[85] This is summarized in Dunn 1999, 90.

[86] Horn 1992a. While Horn's work has not yet been translated into English, his article on the Holy Spirit in *ABD* provides a condensed summary of his findings on Paul as well as brief segments on other NT texts about the Spirit. See Horn 1992b.

[87] Horn 1992a, 13–24. Horn argues in favour of privileging 'theory' over 'experience' in the early Jewish sources as well. For example, he contrasts the supposed early Jewish belief in a withdrawal of the divine Spirit with the ongoing

Horn also believes that a study of the Spirit in early Judaism is essential as the foreground against which one must read early Christian claims about the Spirit. He analyses texts about the Spirit in both Palestinian and Hellenistic Jewish sources and concludes that the Spirit is conceived primarily as a power for enabling conduct in the last days in the former sources and as a substance of the new life available to God's people in the latter sources.[88]

Horn's book focuses on the development of Paul's pneumatology across the seven undisputed letters, relying heavily on an assumed chronological sequence for their composition. Paul's pneumatology, he argues, can be traced through three distinct phases. First, in 1 Thessalonians, Paul understood the Spirit as that which enabled God's people to live during the eschatological interim as they awaited the imminent parousia of Jesus.[89] In the second phase, represented by 1 Corinthians, Paul wrote against pneumatic enthusiasts who believed in the present participation in the heavenly sphere of πνεῦμα. Designating themselves as πνευματικοί, these Christians were marked by distinct theological emphases. For example, they possessed a mystical understanding of baptism as the efficacious means whereby one received the πνεῦμα and was placed ἐν Χριστῷ. Additionally, they highly valued the gift of glossolalia as a means of participating in the heavenly realm. Against this movement, Paul was forced to clarify his pneumatological perspective particularly in light of his apocalyptic eschatological outlook. While

attestation of charismatic phenomena in the early literature, arguing that in this case, the theory carried a weight that could not be shaken by the pneumatic phenomena. Horn 1992a, 34. On this methodological preference for theoretical beliefs over experience, see the critiques in Rabens 1999, 172–73; Philip 2005, 20–21.

[88] Horn 1992a, 26–48. The *substanzhaften* understanding of the Spirit in Hellenistic Judaism and its continuing influence on pre-Pauline and Pauline Christianity is a crucial supposition for Horn's developmental account of Pauline pneumatology. On this, see the compelling critique by Rabens 1999, 169–71, 175–79. Like his German predecessors, Horn maintains a distinction between the Hellenistic and Palestinian pneumatologies, an assumption that was understandable prior to Hengel 1974 but which has since become highly suspect.

[89] "The early Pauline theology stands completely within the horizon of the imminently expected parousia." (Ibid., 429).

Paul affirms their understanding of baptism, Horn argues, he aims to correct their fixation on the new life as transcendent or heavenly by focusing his attention on how the spiritual life manifests itself in physical existence.[90] Likewise, Paul validates the Corinthian experiences of Spirit manifestations in the form of glossolalic utterances, but he corrects their narrow fixation on glossolalia by emphasizing edification as the norm for all diverse forms of charismatic activity.[91] The third phase, represented chiefly by 2 Corinthians (but also by Galatians and Philippians), is characterized by Paul's conflict with a *judenchristlichen Gegenmission*.[92] It is here, in the final phase of development, that Paul expresses what Horn regards as the single best way to capture the apostle's mature pneumatology: the metaphor of the ἀρραβών (Rom 8.23; 2 Cor 1.22; 5.5).[93] Pneumatic enthusiasm and Jewish-Christian legalism, Horn argues, are undermined simultaneously by this concept, since it contains both the present and future aspects of Paul's pneumatological beliefs. Further, in the idea of the down payment Paul was able to conjoin the *Geist als endzeitliche Funktion* and *Geist als Substanz* motifs previously kept separate in Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism.[94] Horn, thus, builds on Käsemann's prior paradigm and fills in its gaps by tying the competing pneumatologies of early Christians to this more detailed schema.

[90] Horn 1992b, 273.

[91] Ibid., 273.

[92] Arguably the most prominent critique of Horn's work is his commitment to a developmental model for Pauline pneumatology *within this reconstructed chronological frame*. Leaving to one side the questionable identification of the opponents in 2 Corinthians with Jewish Christian legalists, the reliance on a late date for Galatians alone, without justification, calls into question the strength of the overall proposal. For a critique of Horn's chronology see Rabens 1999, 174–75; Turner 1996, 105–7; Wedderburn 2004, 145–48; Yates 2008, 5.

[93] Horn 1992a, 389–94.

[94] Ibid., 428–31. The characterization of Paul's developed theology navigating between Hellenistic Christian enthusiasm on one side and Jewish Christian nomism/legalism on the other is reminiscent of Käsemann (see above).

The pneumatology of Romans receives surprisingly little attention in Horn's book. Nevertheless, it is in Romans specifically that Horn believes Paul articulated an understanding of the Spirit as a *hypostasis*, a partner with the divine and mediator between God and the believing community. One of the most significant texts Horn uses to illustrate this developed understanding is Romans 8.26–27.[95] We have already seen how Horn is indebted to the work of Käsemann before him. Like Käsemann, Horn views Paul's argument in Romans 8.26–27 as a critique of the perspective on glossolalia characteristic of *Enthusiasmus*.[96] While acknowledging the many diverging perspectives on the meaning of the στεναγμοὶ ἀλάλητοι, he also concludes that the phrase is best understood as a reference to Paul's critically accepted version of glossolalia, i.e. not as a gift designating present glory or participation in the heavenly sphere but a sign of our presently weak state as believers await their final liberation.[97] With Käsemann, Horn also assumes that the context of the inarticulate groaning is the gathered community in worship. Likewise, he views 2 Corinthians 12.4 (ἄρρητα ῥήματα) as a parallel expression (substantive + verbal adjective with α-privative).[98] However, Horn provides an additional reason against taking ἀλάλητος to mean "wordless" or "mute" by comparing the uses of ἀλάλητος in Romans and in Plutarch's description of the Pythia who is ἀλάλου καὶ κακοῦ πνεύματος οὖσα πλήρης but speaks in a shrill and harsh voice.[99]

[95] Horn also views Rom 5.5 as evidence for the hypostatic understanding of Spirit.

[96] Horn 1992a, 294.

[97] Ibid., 296–97. "War den Pneumatikern in Korinth die Glossolalie ein Zeichen der Erhöhung, so wertet Paulus sie als Zeichen der Schwachheit" (297).

[98] Ibid., 297.

[99] Ibid., 296, citing Plutarch, *Def. orac.* 438B.

In the final chapter of the book, Horn classifies *das Wirken des Geistes* in five ways: (1) *Repraesentatio* (the Spirit realizes God's love in believers), (2) *Testificatio* (the Spirit bears witness that believers are God's children), (3) *Adiuvatio* (the Spirit helps believers in their weakness), (4) *Intercessio* (the Spirit entreats before God for believers), and (5) *Glorificatio* (the Spirit transforms believers to glory). [100] Of special interest for this project is Horn's treatment of the Spirit's work of intercession, especially considering that he devotes an entire section to a work of the Spirit that is only referred to in one text.[101] Because the compound verb ὑπερεντυγχάνειν is not attested in pre-Christian Greek, Horn considers it a Pauline development. More remarkable still, Horn argues, is Paul's attachment of this verb to the Spirit. "This determination of the task of the Spirit as an intercessor for believers before God cannot be derived directly from ancient Jewish precepts."[102] Horn concludes his analysis of this passage by saying it is one of only a few in Paul where the Spirit is conceived as a *hypostasis* acting in cooperation with God and as a mediator between God and believers. "Here the Spirit also appears as a hypostatic entity standing beside God."[103] Pneumatic prayer, thus, becomes important not only as a pneumatological novelty but also as an important stage in the development of early Christian thinking about the Spirit in *personal* terms.

Horn's book, while magisterial in scope, bears many of the same methodological flaws as some of his predecessors, like Käsemann. His developmental framework for understanding Paul's pneumatology depends on too many questionable conclusions regarding the dating of Paul's letters

[100] Ibid., 404–28.

[101] Ibid., 418–22.

[102] Ibid., 420.

[103] Horn 1992a, 422.

as well as assumed reconstructions of conflicts that lay behind them. Moreover, Horn also continues in the fashion of those scholars we have already seen who single out glossolalia as a different sort of pneumatic experience to the other pneumatic prayers attested in Romans and Galatians. Ultimately, while Horn pays some attention to the pneumatic prayer texts in Paul's writings, his reading is underdeveloped, leaving room for a more detailed study of the relevant passages and their potential theological relation to one another.

1.3.6. Oscar Cullmann

Near the end of his life, Oscar Cullmann published a short monograph entitled, *Prayer in the New Testament*. There he included a treatment of prayer in Paul's letters, nearly half of which was devoted to Paul's understanding of prayer and the holy Spirit.[104] He described "the indissoluble link which exists for [Paul] between prayer and the Holy Spirit."[105] Indeed, he said, "Every aspect of prayer has its foundation here."[106]

Cullmann takes as his starting point Romans 8.12–27. This passage, he says, is "the theological foundation" of the relationship Paul believed to exist between prayer and the Spirit.[107] He begins with Romans 8.15 and its parallel in Galatians 4.6, asking how it can be that the believer's prayer to God as "Father" would be taken by Paul and others as a sign that they were a child of God. He notes, "This conclusion by Paul is only possible because he is convinced that the Spirit speaks in our prayers. That the Spirit inspires the name Father in prayer means that God

[104] Cullmann 1995, 72–80.

[105] Ibid., 72.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Ibid.

proclaims us his children."[108] Concerning the distinction between the grammatical subjects in both passages, he says, "[T]his distinction is only a superficial one. For of course the Spirit has to make use of our human language."[109] This unity between the Spirit's action and the action of believers, Cullmann notes, is analogous to Paul's language in Galatians 2.20, where Paul claims that he no longer lives but the Messiah lives in him. Indeed, a major concern for Cullmann throughout this portion of his book is to acknowledge the tension between divine and human agency in prayer while also arguing that, for Paul, there is a mysterious complementarity and unity at play. "'The Spirit itself' (Rom. 8.16) is at work here, but also 'our spirit'. The Spirit itself is the Spirit (the transcendent Spirit) outside us. 'Our spirit' is so permeated and enlivened by this ('it dwells in us', Rom.8.11; 'in our hearts', Gal. 4.6), that the two form a unity."[110]

Cullmann emphasised that while the theme of sonship is the focus of the "Abba" passages in both Galatians and Romans, it is in the Spirit's speaking *through prayer* that this truth is revealed and sustained. "We pray because we are children of God and, conversely, we are children of God because we pray to God as our Father."[111] Against those who want to see in the "Abba" cry not a prayer but a liturgical exclamation, Cullmann noted various uses of the verb κράζω in the LXX and 1 Clement 22.7 that refer to prayer. As a way to explain the use of the Aramaic "Abba" in prayer even among Greek-speaking gentile assemblies, he said, "throughout earliest Christianity the recollection remained alive that Jesus' special consciousness of being Son was expressed in the address 'Abba'."[112] This address "Abba", he says, is something characteristic of all early

[108] Ibid., 73.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid., 74.

[112] Ibid.

Christian prayer.[113] It is, therefore, not right to understand the "Abba" cry as a sound that results from glossolalic prayer, as some have suggested.

In his analysis of Romans 8.26–27 along with 1 Corinthians 14, Cullmann did two important things. First, he highlighted the relationship between the Spirit's intercession through sighing/groans and the "Abba" cry, both of which frame an important series of eschatological claims in Romans 8. Whereas the "Abba" cry establishes the "positive side" of Christian prayer, whereby Christians call upon God by the Spirit in their new relation to him as sons, the intercession of the Spirit in Romans 8.26 draws our attention to the "negative, limiting side" of prayer, in which humans are confronted with their weaknesses and lack of knowledge concerning God's will. Rather than seeing the two forms of prayer as standing in tension with one another, Cullmann brought them together under Paul's unified eschatological vision. "That 'we do not know how to pray as we ought' and that the Spirit itself has to intercede for us is the natural presupposition, consequence and explanation of the statement in 8.15 that 'the Spirit itself' speaks in us when we pray."[114] This is the "double experience" of the Spirit Paul relates to Christian prayer, and the experiences belong together, even though they are distinguished from one another. "[T]his juxtaposition makes itself known in prayer: the attainment of the highest stage of human discourse and the experience of the boundary which still cannot be crossed because of our inadequacy. Despite everything there is only a stammering, a sighing."[115] This, one can say, is the theological

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid., 76.

[115] Ibid., 77.

significance of glossolalia. It is a prayer that Christians experience when "the Spirit seeks to break through by means of human organs, but comes up against their inadequacy."[116]

As with other scholars reviewed so far, Cullmann highlighted Spirit-inspired prayer as an example of divine power at work in human weakness. This led to Cullmann's second important point about Romans 8.26–27 and 1 Corinthians 14: that glossolalic prayer was an important form of prayer enjoyed by early Christians. Glossolalia is declared by Paul to be a legitimate form of prayer (1 Cor 14.2), one which he used outside the context of corporate worship often (14.18), and one can assume that other early Christians embraced the practice for themselves as well. It is, in part, because Paul acknowledges the legitimacy of glossolalic prayer in 1 Corinthians 14 that Cullmann believes Paul to be referring primarily (though not exclusively) to glossolalic prayer in Romans 8.26.[117]

As with Bieder and Dunn before him, Cullmann sought to synthesize the Pauline data on pneumatic prayer descriptively and theologically. While he still concludes that there are important differences between the pneumatic prayers, especially glossolalia and the others, he nevertheless finds some common elements among them. Each pneumatic prayer, according to Cullmann had a positive role to play in Paul's theology and spirituality, including glossolalic prayer. As with Bieder, Cullmann believed that the Spirit was somehow the fundamental key to all Pauline prayer. Thus, the fundamental value of the prayers is still theological in nature, providing the necessary grounding for the Christian's ongoing relation of intimacy with God. While Cullmann's insights

[116] Ibid.

[117] "So it is not as if here Paul had only speaking with tongues in view: the Our Father from which he begins comprises words which can in fact be understood, and all that is said here concerns all prayer generally. But speaking with tongues stands in the foreground in v. 26 because the utterance of the Spirit which takes place in all prayers in this case makes itself known particularly clearly by excluding the human understanding." Cullmann 1995, 79.

continue to prove valuable, the relative brevity of his treatment leaves room for the possibility of a more detailed treatment of the related theological themes impacted by the pneumatic prayers.

1.3.7. Gordon Fee

Gordon Fee's work on Pauline pneumatology continues to hold its reputation as one of the most significant contributions to the subject.[118] Two methodological commitments also distinguish Fee's work from what has come before: (1) his conviction that all the letters attributed to Paul are authentically Pauline and (2) his belief that Paul *presupposed* a Trinitarian understanding of the character and activity of God.[119] Fee thereby stood in stark contrast to Horn and other who see within the Pauline corpus a slow development towards thinking of the Spirit as a distinct hypostasis. For Fee, Paul's experience of the Spirit from the beginning led him to conclude that the Spirit was the very personal and powerful presence of Israel's God.

An important key to Fee's interpretation of Paul's pneumatology is the "already/not yet" eschatological framework that pervades all of Paul's theology. Fee then applies this eschatological framework to an important theological motif noted already in this review of scholarship, the theme of divine power in the midst of human weakness. Fee expounded this theme with greater detail than the authors reviewed so far. He drew special attention to the texts in which the power of God, which Paul so often connected to the work of the Spirit (cf. 1 Thess 1.5; Gal 3.5; 1 Cor 2.4–5; Rom 15.19), enables the Christian life during their already/not yet eschatological existence (Rom 8.17–

[118] The major work is *God's Empowering Presence* (Fee 1994) and his commentary on 1 Corinthians (2014). Also noteworthy are an early article Fee composed on glossolalia (1980) as well as several essays in Fee 2000, especially chapters 4, 8, and 9. In what follows I will be relying mainly on Fee 1994 and his essay, "Toward a Pauline Theology of Glossolalia" (Fee 2000, 105–20).

[119] Concerning the second presupposition, Fee says, "If we are truly to understand Paul, and to capture the crucial role of the Spirit in his theology, we must begin with his thoroughly Trinitarian presuppositions" (Fee 1994, 6).

27; 2 Cor 12.9; Col 1.9–11). The power of God made perfect through human weakness, according to Fee, provides the conceptual context for understanding the purpose of pneumatic prayer.

Noteworthy in Fee's interpretation of the Pauline data is his handling of the relationship between the two most significant passages for the present study, Romans 8.26–27 and 1 Corinthians 14.14–15, because his arguments for seeing both texts as references to glossolalic prayer are almost entirely distinct from those which preceded him.[120] Fee argued, "[O]ne can make the best exegetical and phenomenological sense of the Romans passage if we understand the Spirit's making appeal for us 'with inarticulate groanings' as referring primarily to glossolalia."[121] For Fee, the only explicit example of pneumatic prayer in Paul's letters is prayer in tongues. A more unique insight that Fee brought to the texts came from his attempt to combine exegetical analysis with serious consideration of Paul's pneumatic prayer descriptions *as commonplace experiences within early Christianity*, hence his desire to account for phenomenological language.

Across his many articles and books on the subject, Fee was concerned to emphasize that Paul does not "damn tongues with faint praise."[122] Rather, Fee, quoting approvingly from the work of Banks and Moon, says, "the correct treatment for abuse is not disuse, but proper use,"[123] and the proper use for uninterpreted glossolalic speech, Fee says, is in the context of private prayer. This private use of the gift is something celebrated by Paul (1 Cor 14.18), leading Fee to conclude that Paul would have encouraged all the Corinthians to practice this expression of the χάρισμα.

[120] I will offer an assessment of Fee's argument for a glossolalic reading of the στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις in chapter 5.

[121] Fee 2000, 111.

[122] Fee 1980, 14; 1994, 215, 889; 2000, 45–46, 114; 2014, 636.

[123] Fee 2014, 636; Original quote from Banks and Moon 1966, 285.

Fee's analysis, if true, would have important implications for a Pauline theology of pneumatic prayer. First, it would mean that glossolalic prayer was more common among early Christians than most scholars have thought, especially since Paul could so matter-of-factly refer to the experience in a discourse that lacks the targeted, critical perspective of 1 Corinthians.[124] Second, Paul's reflection on the experience leads him to regard glossolalia not as a sign of spiritual strength or power, but as a sign of the weakness that characterizes the not-yet side of the eschatological timetable. While the Spirit's arrival for Paul means that the future has already broken in upon the present, one nevertheless eagerly awaits its final consummation amid creaturely frailty.[125]

More than any of the scholars previously mentioned, Fee devoted considerable attention to the pneumatic prayers in Paul and argued strongly for their importance in the apostle's theology and spirituality. Nevertheless, there are some shortcomings in Fee's analysis. First, his examination of the pneumatic prayers tended to focus mainly on the meaning and significance of glossolalia in Paul. Much of this was likely the result of Fee's desire to respond to an earlier generation of scholarship which was, as we have seen, suspicious of granting glossolalia a positive role in Paul's own thinking. In any case, Fee devoted far more space to glossolalic prayer, both in 1 Corinthians and Roman 8.26–27 than to the other pneumatic prayer, the Abba cry (Rom 8.15; Gal 4.6). Additionally, because Fee's work was primarily exegetical, he was able to devote considerable space to Paul's own claims about pneumatic prayer. At the same time, he did

[124] Fee does not understand glossolalia to be ecstatic in the sense emphasized by previous scholars. "Prayer of this kind for Paul was not ecstasy; it meant the Spirit's praying through his spirit without the burden of his mind and in conversation with God." Fee 1994, 867.

[125] "Thus our praying in tongues, while evidence for us that we have entered the new, eschatological age ushered in by the Spirit, serves especially as evidence that we are still 'not yet' regarding the consummation of the age." Fee 2000, 119.

relatively little to situate these experiences within the broader context of antiquity. One will search in vain throughout Fee's writings for a detailed discussion of ancient prayer and how the pneumatic prayers might have related to other forms of prayer known from the broader Greco-Roman world.

1.3.8. Some Remaining Questions

One of the major difficulties facing modern interpreters of the pneumatic prayer texts is whether Paul is referring to a single, concrete, and common experience of pneumatic prayer in every text or instead to a variety of pneumatic activities related in different ways to the practice of prayer. The history of scholarship reveals a willingness to read these pneumatic prayers in both ways. For example, in the work of Gunkel and the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, these experiences were viewed largely as variants of glossolalic or ecstatic utterances, but others, such Horn and Dunn, treat glossolalia separately from the Abba cry and the Spirit's intercession.[126]

Of the scholars reviewed above, only Bieder, Cullmann, and Fee have offered anything like a taxonomy of how the Holy Spirit relates to prayer in Paul's thinking and experience. None of these three, however, provided an account of how the pneumatic prayers might have been understood within the broader world of Greco-Roman prayer. Additionally, their theological accounts of pneumatic prayer were largely inadequate, despite some penetrating insights. Bieder, falling in line with his German contemporaries, adopted the perspective that Paul devalues glossolalic prayer in contrast to the more theologically significant Abba cry and intercession of the Spirit. I believe this judgment rests on a fundamental misunderstanding of Paul's critical remarks

[126] For example, Dunn 1975, 239–46, gives prayer (Rom 8.15–16, 26–27; Gal 4.6) and glossolalia (1 Cor 14) distinctive headings under the broader category of "inspired speech" in his examination of Paul's pneumatology, even though Paul clearly viewed glossolalia as prayer (1 Cor 14.2, 14–15). Likewise, Horn's treatment of glossolalia comes in his analysis of the second stage of Paul's pneumatological development within his proposed chronological scheme. Then, in his final chapter, under a section on *das Wirken des Geistes*, Horn separates the Spirit's testimony to the believer's sonship (Gal 4.6; Rom 8.15) from the Spirit's help during weakness and intercession (Rom 8.26–27). See Horn 1992a, 409–22.

on corporate worship delivered in 1 Corinthians 14. Cullmann suggested that the Abba cry is indicative of all Christian prayer rather than a unique charismatic manifestation of the Spirit, but this seems to rest on weak assumptions, and it fails to account for how such an odd Aramaic expression, which is attested only once elsewhere in early Christian literature, could find its way across the empire into multiple gentile Christian assemblies. Fee focused almost exclusively on how pneumatic prayer fits within Paul's eschatological framework as the power believers experience during present weakness. While this is a welcome observation, I intend to show that pneumatic prayer involves more than this.

The second major question that runs through this history of scholarship is whether Paul offered a positive assessment of these experiences for early Christians. The consistent portrait of early Christianity from the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* through Käsemann is one in which Christian communities move from an emphasis on the miraculous, ecstatic manifestations of the Spirit (including pneumatic prayers) to an appreciation of the entire Christian life, especially the ethic of the community, as pneumatic.[127] This shift, so the narrative goes, is due to Paul's influence, leading to the impression that Paul was either content to allow pneumatic prayers to occur, largely since he inherits the practice from the Hellenistic Christian community, or that the apostle was ambivalent about them. There is a clear motivation throughout this period to distinguish Pauline spirituality from any sort of *Enthusiasmus*.[128] Horn embraces this historical picture, primarily through Käsemann's influence, but he goes further by manufacturing a developmental scheme for

[127] The shift might be characterized in different ways — i.e., from Jewish to Hellenistic, from Enthusiastic to Catholic, etc. — but the basic picture is the same. Even Dunn 1975, 345–61, appears to adopt a similar scheme regarding religious experience, but he includes Paul within the earlier, more charismatic period of the first Christian generation. Though see the work of Morgan-Wynne 2006, who catalogues varieties of pneumatic experiences through the second century.

[128] In the mind of these scholars, an early Christian enthusiasm represents as much a threat to Pauline faith as Jewish-Christian legalism. However, both alleged enemies of Pauline theology are arguably historical fictions.

Paul's pneumatology that involves his interactions with competing Christian groups, including enthusiasts, at different stages in his career. With later figures such as Cullmann and Fee, we get a different picture. Cullmann stands virtually alone among the German scholars reviewed above with his more positive assessment of glossolalia in Paul's theology. Likewise, Fee, the only Pentecostal within the group reviewed above, is quick to emphasize the neglected importance of all the pneumatic prayers for Paul's experience and theology. Nevertheless, despite these more positive assessments, the question of how Paul assessed the value of these prayers for early Christian communities remains contested. In particular, Paul's perspective on glossolalia *as a mode of prayer* needs a fresh examination. Additionally, we will need to consider whether the other pneumatic prayers — the Abba cry and the Spirit's intercession — shared similar aberrant qualities with glossolalic prayer. What modern scholars have tended to regard as a scandalous and undignified mode of worship and prayer may have been much more central to the prayer life of the intellectual giant who has informed so much of their theology. These questions bring me to the thesis of the present work.

1.4. THESIS STATEMENT

The review of scholarship above reveals the need for a more complete taxonomy of the pneumatic experiences mentioned our key texts (Rom 8.15, 26–27; 1 Cor 14.14–15; Gal 4.6). Following the work of Eyl, I understand taxonomy to be "the practice of naming and ordering things in relation to other things."[129] Constructing a taxonomy is an exercise in classification. In attempting to construct a taxonomy of pneumatic prayer, I am arguing that these pneumatic experiences share similarities with one another that justify their classification under the name

[129] Eyl 2019, 21.

"pneumatic prayer". By labelling these prayers in this way, I am deliberately classifying these experiences together while distinguishing them from other forms of prayer. By classifying them with one another, I am suggesting that they hold key features in common with one another, some of which also contribute to our ability to distinguish them from other pneumatic experiences and other modes of prayer.

Taxonomic classification of the pneumatic prayers requires saying something about what these experiences hold in common. This will require a careful examination of both Paul's description of the experiences as well as an account of how the apostle relates them to his theology. For Paul, the Spirit functioned as (1) a sign which was experienced in tangible (and, less often, intangible) ways which also (2) signified something of importance about the ongoing personal presence and power of God among his people. Therefore, my thesis will offer an account of both the sign (description) and significance (theology) of pneumatic prayer in Paul's letters. The result is not meant to be an exhaustive classification of pneumatic prayer, much less the final word on the subject, as I will remind the reader in the conclusion. Rather, I believe that by focusing on the shared descriptive features and theological connections of the pneumatic prayers, a better understanding of the pneumatic prayers and their place within Paul's spirituality and theology can be achieved.

1.4.1. Descriptive Features of Pneumatic Prayers

I argue that there are three descriptive features common to the pneumatic prayers in Paul's letters. The first and second features are often noted, though their importance is not always appreciated. I refer here to the *commonality* and *perceptibility* of pneumatic prayer. First, Paul expected his readers to have familiarity with the kinds of experiences about which he wrote because they were common experiences among the early Christians. This position cuts against

those scholars who have argued that some of these pneumatic prayers were more unique to Paul's experience or that the apostle did not view these charismatic manifestations as a common feature of early Christian spirituality more broadly.[130] The second descriptive feature is that these pneumatic prayers are portrayed as vocal or audible, and therefore perceptible, experiences and not as merely inward or silent ones. These were perceptible religious experiences that shared common features with other manifestations of the Spirit's power and presence in early Christian communities.

The third descriptive feature of Paul's descriptions of pneumatic prayer is the role he gives the Spirit in the experience, indicating that the prayer is Spirit-inspired. The pneumatic prayers attested in Paul's letters bear similarities with inspired utterances in the ancient world. However, unlike many Greco-Roman authors, as I will show in the next chapter, Paul grants an agency to the Spirit in pneumatic prayer that is uncommon in antiquity. Additionally, Paul did not believe that the divine πνεῦμα and the human compete for agency in the experience of pneumatic prayer, where the πνεῦμα effectively possesses the one praying. These three descriptive features, I contend, are common to the three pneumatic prayers in Paul's writings (the Abba cry, glossolalia, and the Spirit's intercession), but the descriptive features reveal information only about what sort of experiences pneumatic prayers were. They do not tell us why pneumatic prayer mattered to Paul. For that, we need to consider the way Paul connects pneumatic prayer to his broader theology.

[130] Cf. Ulrich Luz, who says, "However central experiences of the Spirit may be for Pauline Christ-mysticism, it is not the many 'particular' charismatic experiences of Paul — such as speaking in tongues, prophecy, ecstasy, and miracles — that could be described as central to what counts as 'mysticism' in Paul." Luz 2004, 137.

1.4.2. Theological Connections of Pneumatic Prayer

When it comes to these theological connections, I argue three points. First, for Paul, pneumatic prayers function as signs of the eschatological time believers inhabit. As a manifestation of God's Spirit, pneumatic prayers suggest that the time of the end had come near, but they also suggest that the God who governs the end has also come near to reveal himself more fully.

Second, pneumatic prayers signify the glorified filial status of believers with God. Believers are "sons of God", members of God's heavenly household who are destined to share in the glorious rule of a renewed humanity over God's new creation. This status as God's adopted children also implies the kinship of all believers in relation to each other. It is here that we see how pneumatic prayers tie to important Pauline themes, such as union with Christ and incorporation into the body of Christ. In particular, the theme of cruciformity, the believer's conformity to the crucified and resurrected Messiah, takes on a special significance in several of these texts, as I will show.[131]

Third, pneumatic prayers signify participation in the prayers of heaven, including the prayers of God's Son, Jesus. Behind and underneath these important theological conclusions, I show, was a conviction that the prayers which were spoken during these experiences were participation in heavenly prayer with the angelic hosts or even God's own Son. Paul affirms that all who belong to the Messiah and have received the Spirit (the latter being a sign of the former, cf. Rom 8.9b) are enabled thereby to participate in this heavenly worship as members of God's family through pneumatic prayer.

[131] On "cruciformity" in Paul's theology and spirituality, see the important work of Gorman 2001.

1.4.3. Outline of the Project

The argument of this project will proceed according to the following outline. Chapter 2 examines pneumatic prayer in the broader context of Paul's world, especially the world of ancient prayer. As the review of scholarship in the previous section made clear, the question of background for Paul's understanding of pneumatic prayer remains unclear.[132] Therefore, a fresh examination of customary Greco-Roman prayer as well as other forms of aberrant prayer in antiquity will aid my attempt to map the experiences of pneumatic prayer on to the ancient landscape of prayer more broadly (ch. 2). Chapters 3–5 then take up each of the pneumatic prayer texts to demonstrate how they fit within the taxonomy I am proposing. It is here that I will offer the positive exegetical, historical, and theological case for my claims outlined above. I begin with the Abba cry in Galatians 4.6 (ch. 3) before turning to glossolalic prayer in 1 Corinthians 14 (ch. 4) and concluding with the two pneumatic prayers in Romans 8 (ch. 5). Each of these chapters will follow a three-part structure, considering (1) how the pneumatic prayer fits within the broader discourse of the letter, (2) the identification of the three descriptive features outlined above in each pneumatic prayer, and (3) the identification of the three theological connections outlined above to each pneumatic prayer. The thesis concludes in chapter 6 with a synthesis of the Pauline data along with reflections on the implications of this study for further investigation into Paul's pneumatology and the pneumatic experiences of early Christians.

[132] Those who have attempted to contextualize such phenomena in antiquity have focused primarily or exclusively on glossolalia and its potential antecedents. In addition to the scholars mentioned above, see, e.g., Currie 1965; Engelsen 1970; Poythress 1977; Thiselton 1979; Forbes 1995; Hovenden 2002; Tibbs 2007; Eyl 2019. When it comes to the Spirit's intercession in Romans 8, there are a few scholars who have attempted to demonstrate a plausible background for the Spirit's intercession. The two most detailed attempts in this regard are Obeng 1986b and Dodson 2021. Other authors have provided suggestions for biblical echoes or allusions throughout Romans 8.18–27, but none of these proposals elucidates how Paul came to associate the "help" of the Spirit with intercession specifically. See my longer treatment of the background of Paul's Spirit-intercession motif in Stone 2023.

2. PNEUMATIC PRAYER AND PRAYER IN ANTIQUITY

2.1. INTRODUCTION

It is important at the outset of this project to establish a clearer sense of how the pneumatic experiences attested in these passages do and do not relate with prayer as it was practiced more broadly in antiquity. One might understandably challenge whether some of these experiences qualify as prayers in the first place. Does the brief cry αββα ὁ πατήρ (Gal 4.6; Rom 8.15) really constitute a prayer, and would it be recognized as such by Paul or his audience? Can a prayer in antiquity rightly be described as ἀλάλητος or as a στεναγμός (Rom 8.26)? If the Abba cry, glossolalia, and the Spirit's intercession are all taken to be prayers, how might they have been understood in relation to other forms of prayer? Do they bear the characteristics of what one might call "customary prayer" in antiquity, or are these experiences best interpreted as prayers of an aberrant kind?

In this chapter, I establish (1) that the pneumatic experiences in our key texts are best interpreted as prayers, and (2) that these experiences bear qualities in common with one another and in contrast to more customary expressions of prayer, both within Paul's writings and in antiquity more broadly. In comparative study, which is essential to the construction of any taxonomy, one must avoid being quick to label a phenomenon as "unique" in the same way that one must avoid the collapse of important distinctions and differences that can result from

"parallelomania".[1] In this chapter, I seek to model what Jonathan Smith has labelled "a discourse of 'difference'" in comparative study.[2] Accordingly, I am not interested in speculating about any genealogy of influence regarding ideas or practices from Greco-Roman religion to Christianity or vice versa. Instead, my aim is to understand prayer in antiquity more broadly and to apply some classification by comparing what I will label "customary" and "aberrant" forms of prayer in antiquity. Within this comparative analysis, I demonstrate that the pneumatic prayers in Paul, while still a form of prayer, bear some similarities with other aberrant forms of prayer known from antiquity, thereby justifying my classification of them as aberrant prayers. Additionally, there are other qualities held in common by the pneumatic prayers which are notably distinct from the aberrant Greco-Roman prayers examined in this chapter. These are also worth highlighting as I prepare to show the role these prayers played specifically in Paul's theology in the coming chapters.

My argument will proceed in the following way. I first address the challenge of defining prayer and provide an overview of prayer as it was customarily practiced in Greco-Roman religious and cultural circles.[3] Following this, I work through each of our key texts (Rom 8.15–16, 26–27; 1 Cor 14.14–15; Gal 4.6) to show that these experiences are best interpreted as prayers, but also as prayers of an aberrant kind, bearing some similarities (and differences) from other prayers that

[1] Sandmel 1962.

[2] Smith 1990, 42.

[3] In this chapter, I limit my discussion to customary and aberrant prayer from Greco-Roman culture. I do this for three reasons. First, as the apostle to the gentiles, the world of Greco-Roman antiquity was in the foreground not only of Paul's ministry but also in the minds of his predominantly gentile converts. Second, the pneumatic prayers, as I aim to highlight in this chapter, have some features that look more like Greco-Roman aberrant prayer than early Jewish prayers we possess. Third, the constraints of the present project prohibit me from treating the early Jewish and Greco-Roman evidence equally in this regard. I recognize the importance of this Jewish background for understanding Paul's thought. To that end, rather than devoting a separate chapter to the Jewish evidence on prayer, pneumatology, and the like. I will introduce it throughout the thesis at appropriate points and interact with it in the footnotes.

also share aberrant qualities in comparison with customary prayer. By comparing these pneumatic prayers with both common and uncommon forms of prayer in antiquity one can highlight some noteworthy qualities the pneumatic prayers in Paul hold in common. I conclude by drawing attention to three. All of this will support my main contention that (1) pneumatic prayers are prayers but that (2) they are prayers of an aberrant kind with distinctive qualities in common.

2.2. CLASSIFYING PRAYER IN ANTIQUITY

2.2.1. The Challenge of Defining Prayer

One of the greatest challenges facing any study of prayer is establishing a working definition at the outset. At issue here are two problems. The first problem is assuming modern and universal definitions for prayer and imposing those back onto the ancient sources.[4] The second is determining whether one can or should distinguish prayer from related acts of communication that involve humans and the realm of the divine, such as hymns, magical incantations, divination, or even nonverbal gestures practiced in cultic ceremonies. Any boundaries that might have differentiated these modes of divine-human interaction from one another are better taken as porous rather than fixed.

Recent work on Greco-Roman prayer reveals the struggle to find a consensus on the definition for prayer. For example, in his monograph on Greek prayer, Pulleyn says, "prayer for a Greek meant asking the gods for something," echoing the words of Socrates in *Euthyphro* 14c–d.[5] By contrast, Furley broadens the definition for prayer to include hymns: "prayer and hymns are

[4] This problematic approach was exemplified by earlier work such as Heiler 1932, but it can also be seen more recently in works like Zeleski and Zeleski 2005.

[5] Pulleyn 1997, 15.

attempts by men and women to communicate with gods by means of the voice."[6] Kearns simply defines prayer as "words addressed to a deity."[7] Aubriot-Sévin sought to include nonverbal forms of communication within the rubric of prayer as well. Therefore, she looked at "any attempt by which a man either addresses a divinity or tries to appeal to higher powers to obtain a result."[8]

Similarly, regarding early Jewish prayer, a variety of definitions have been proposed, but little consensus has been achieved in the details. Esther Chazon defines prayer as "any form of human communication directed at God."[9] Moshe Greenberg narrows the definition, saying prayer is "nonpsalmic speech to God — less often about God — expressing dependence, subjection, or obligation; it includes petition, confession, benediction, and curse."[10] Judith Newman establishes three criteria for identifying verbal prayer in the early Jewish sources: (1) it is addressed to God by humans, (2) it is not conversational in nature, and (3) it includes address to God in the second person, though third person descriptions of God are possible as well.[11] In his monograph on the practice of daily prayer in the early Jewish sources, Jeremy Penner includes theological considerations into his definition of prayer as "an address to God (or perhaps another being), who is perceived 'as somehow supporting, maintaining, or controlling the order of existence of the one

[6] Furley 2007, 118. This definition also has support from the Platonic corpus, chiefly, *Laws* 700b, where the Athenian stranger states, "one class of song was that of prayers to the gods (εὐχαὶ πρὸς θεούς), which bore the name of 'hymns'", indicating that hymns also qualify as prayer.

[7] Kearns 2010, 89.

[8] Aubriot-Sévin 1992, 24 (my translation).

[9] Chazon 1994, 226.

[10] Greenberg 1983, 7.

[11] Newman 1999, 6–7. Newman comments in a footnote here, "While the definition used in this study refers to verbal prayer, we also recognize that the broadest definition of prayer must include non-verbal forms of prayer" (ibid., 6, n. 9).

praying, and performed with the purpose of getting results from or in the interaction of communication.'"[12]

I would suggest there are at least two major reasons for this ongoing struggle to define prayer in antiquity. First, while most of the ancient evidence for prayer comes to us in textual form, prayer remains a human act, which means it includes nonverbal elements as well, such as time, space, gesture, and the intentionality of the one praying.[13] This last point about intentionality is especially important. Prayer is not merely a matter of *content* or *form* regarding any attempted communication with the divine. It includes the intention of the one who is trying to communicate. If, for example, Paul thinks that the pneumatic experiences attested in Romans 8.26–27, 1 Corinthians 14:14–15, and Galatians 4.6 (//Romans 8.15) are prayers, then we should be open to considering them as such, even if those experiences lack other qualities one might expect in prayer. This leads to the second problem with defining prayer, which is that definitions tend to apply well to what I want to call "customary" forms of prayer, but the boundaries of the practice of prayer — what qualifies as prayer or not — are porous. There are simply too many examples of human actions in antiquity that arguably count as prayer, but which do not meet the definitions being offered.

Without aiming to resolve all the methodological difficulties involved in the study of ancient prayer, the present study will proceed in two main steps. I will first look at what I am calling customary prayers in Greco-Roman antiquity. These prayers are those that most experts on Greco-Roman prayer would agree classify as prayers in the ancient sources. They have a recognizable form that has been identified for over a century, and they represent a good baseline

[12] Penner 2012, 1, n. 1, quoting Malina 1980, 215.

[13] This point is emphasized in Falk and Harkins 2020, 462.

from which to determine what else might count as prayer. However, in order to avoid narrowing the definition of prayer too much at the outset, and risk excluding activities ancient authors would have recognized as prayer, I will proceed with a broad understanding of prayer as a mode of communication between humans and the divine that normally aims at obtaining a result. This broader framework will allow us to establish with greater clarity why some prayers would have been customary and others were still prayers but of an aberrant kind.

2.2.2. Customary Prayer in Greco-Roman Antiquity

In this section, I review what I will call "customary" forms of prayer in the broader Greco-Roman milieu.[14] By "customary", I do not mean to indicate that all Greek and Roman prayers possess a strong uniformity. Rather, my aim is to highlight broader patterns one can identify across the sources, from the level of the words used to describe prayers to their overall structure, purpose, and the context of their practice. From these patterns, one can justifiably assert that for many people in antiquity, the practice of prayer took a recognizable form. There are, naturally, exceptions to the rule, and my own assertion that the pneumatic prayers in Paul are still prayers, though of an aberrant sort, depends on these exceptions. However, before exploring those other abnormal forms of prayer in antiquity, it is important to establish a comparative baseline by reviewing the practice as it was typically described and enacted according to the sources. Therefore, I will begin by reviewing the language typically associated with prayer and move from there to a consideration of the forms, purposes, and settings for prayer in Greco-Roman sources.

[14] This review will, of necessity, be brief. For a more complete treatment of these various topics and more concerning Greco-Roman prayer, the reader should consult several of the works already mentioned — i.e., Aubriot-Sévin 1992, Pulleyn 1997, Furley 2007 — as well as the works of Versnel 1981, 2012, 2015; Graf 1998. On Roman prayer, see especially the recent treatment in Mackey 2022, 291–336.

There are a variety of Greek terms that might be used to describe the act of prayer. The four most common are εὐχή (εὔχομαι), λιτή (λίσσομαι), ἱκετεία (ἱκετεύω), and ἀρά (ἀράομαι).[15] Aubriot-Sévin has tried to make the case for viewing these as four distinct types of prayer, but Pulleyn has shown that εὐχή is best understood as an umbrella term that could be used to describe any number of prayers rather than as its own kind of prayer.[16] It could be that as time went on, the other three terms were used increasingly to describe specific kinds of prayer, whether deferential requests (λιταί), self-abasing supplications (ἱκετείαι), or even curses (ἀραί).[17]

For more than a century now, scholars have attributed a tripartite structure to Greco-Roman prayers: (1) *invocatio*, (2) *pars epica*, and (3) *precatio*.[18] Strictly, only (1) and (3) are needed to construct a prayer, but there are enough examples of prayers containing all three components to justify the schema. The standard example cited is the first prayer in the *Iliad*, the prayer by Chryses, the Trojan priest, to Apollo.

> Hear me, you of the silver bow, who have under your protection Chryse and sacred Cilla, and who rule mightily over Tenedos, Smintheus, if ever I roofed over a pleasing shrine for you, or if ever I burned to you fat thigh pieces of bulls or goats, fulfill for me this wish: let the Danaans pay for my tears by your arrows. (*Il.* 1.37–42).

The *invocatio* (invocation) names the deity being addressed in the prayer. In this case, Chryses calls upon "Smintheus", an epithet for Apollo. The address is normally in the vocative (as here,

[15] See Appendix 2 in Pulleyn 1997, 218–20, which contains additional words commonly used in literary and epigraphic material on prayer. I focus here on the Greek terminology because we know, at the very least, that Paul and his readers knew this language and used it themselves.

[16] Ibid., 59–64.

[17] For more detailed discussions of these terms and the differences between them over time, see especially Aubriot-Sévin 1992, chs. 3–5. See also the more condensed treatments in Burkert 1985, 73–74; Aune 2002, 28–29; Versnel 2015, 447–48.

[18] This tripartite structure has been recognized at least since Ausfeld 1903. One will find different labels given for this tripartite structure, but it is attested across the literature. E.g., Burkert 1985, 74–75; Alderink and Martin 1997, 123–25; Pulleyn 1997, 132; Graf 1998; Aune 2002, 30; Furley 2007, 122; Versnel 2015; Mackey 2022, 308.

Σμινθεῦ), with a double vocative being used in some cases for added emphasis.[19] In addition, one might include in the invocation other epithets for the god(s) being addressed as well as references to the territories over which they rule, as Chryses does here. Socrates refers to this practice of calling upon the gods by various names in *Cratylus* 400e: "we call [the gods], as is customary in prayers, by whatever names and patronymics are pleasing to them, since we know no other."[20] The purpose of the invocation is to acquire the attention of the deity. Within the polytheistic system of the Greeks and Romans, one might call on any number of divine beings when in need, and each of those beings might have multiple names or epithets to which they answer. Once they have the attention of the god, the pray-er can make their petition, though often not before they provide the god with reasons why their request should be heard.

In the *pars epica* (argument), the supplicant provides the reasons for the god to hear his or her prayer. In some cases, the one praying is asking the god to return a favour given in the past (*da quia dedi*)[21], or they promise to give favour to the god in response to answered prayer (*da quia dabo*).[22] In other cases, the prior activity of the god is used to justify calling on them once again to perform a similar action (*da quia dedisti*).[23] As Pulleyn summarizes,

> Whichever sort of prayer one chose, the fundamental issues are χάρις and τιμή. Either one tells the god he is already indebted to you for the τιμή you have conferred on him in the

[19] A few examples of this can be found in the Greek Tragedies. E.g., Aeschylus, *Ag.* 973; *Cho.* 246, 382, 855; Euripides, *Hipp.* 1363.

[20] There are some who have suggested that one of the reasons for lengthier invocations in prayer was an anxiety over ensuring that one was calling on the correct deity. E.g., Burkert 1985, 74. However, Pulleyn 1997, 96–106, argues persuasively that this concern over accuracy in prayer is more characteristic of later Roman prayer rather than Greek prayer.

[21] E.g. Homer, *Il.* 1.37–42, 503–10; 8.236–44.

[22] This form is used most often in making a vow to the gods (e.g., Homer, *Il.* 4.119–21; 10.283–94; 23.192–99). Many of the votive inscriptions left from antiquity likely bear witness to the fulfilment of prayers like these. On these votive offerings, see Van Straten 1981; Depew 1997; Alroth 2010; Malkin 2012.

[23] Homer, *Il.* 1.451–56; 5.115–20; 10.278–82;16.233–48; *Od.* 20.98–101.

> past or else you promise to confer some more τιμή in the future if your request is granted. One can see that the relationship of the Greeks with their gods in prayer as in all other respects can best be thought of as a continuum of reciprocal χάρις extending both forwards and backwards in time.[24]

Kearns draws a similar conclusion.

> [B]y praising the god, goodwill is created and a relationship of reciprocity is built up, things the Greeks understood in the word *charis* and something which was fostered, at its most basic level, by the simple practice of verbally greeting a god whose shrine one happened to pass. The point is central to the Greek view of divine-human relations. Of course the gods were the superior partners, yet it was often assumed that they could enjoy and thus benefit from what humans offered them, just as in human relations an inferior could produce goods or services to benefit a superior…Prayer formulas are quite up-front about this reciprocal arrangement.[25]

This framework of reciprocity provided the context for the one who prayed to justify their prayer to the gods. A reminder of past deeds, the promise of future acts of worship, and the encomium of praise to the gods all provided greater confidence that the gods would hear the most important element of the prayer, the petition itself.

The final component of customary prayer is the *precatio* (or *preces*), the petition being made of the gods. As with prayer today, so also with prayer in antiquity, a person could bring innumerable requests to the gods, whether for victory in battle (Aeschylus, *Sept*. 266–78), safe voyage (Thucydides, *Hist.* 6.32), or general favour in one's undertakings throughout the day (Plato, *Tim*. 27c). In his satirical dialogue, *Icaromenippus*, Lucian imaginatively depicts the variety of prayers that find their way to Zeus on a regular basis.

> The prayers came from all parts of the world and were of all sorts and kinds, for I myself bent over the orifice and listened to them along with [Zeus]. They went like this; "O Zeus, may I succeed in becoming king!" "O Zeus, make my onions and my garlic grow!" "O ye gods, let my father die quickly!"; and now and then one or another would say: "O that I may inherit my wife's property!" "O that I may be undetected in my plot against my brother!" "May I succeed in winning my suit!" "Let me win the wreath at the Olympic

[24] Pulleyn 1997, 37.

[25] Kearns 2010, 89.

> games!" Among seafaring men, one was praying for the north wind to blow, another for the south wind; and the farmers were praying for rain while the washermen were praying for sunshine.[26]

While Lucian clearly intended to mock such petitionary requests as contradictory at times, there is little reason to doubt that his survey of different prayers accurately reflects the sorts of petitions that might have been offered in customary prayer. Lucian is part of a line of philosophical criticisms of petitionary prayer.[27] When Socrates prayed, Xenophon tells us, he would simply ask the gods for good things (καὶ εὔχετο δὲ πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς ἁπλῶς τἀγαθὰ διδόναι), trusting that the gods know better than the one who prays what good things are.[28]

This tripartite structure — invocation, argument, petition — is well represented across the ancient sources. However, as mentioned above, prayer is not merely a matter of form or content. It also includes accompanying ritual acts, nonverbal gestures, and occurs in certain times and spaces.

Prayer in antiquity was often practiced alongside ritual activity, especially sacrifice.[29] Pliny the Elder wrote, "the sacrifice of victims without a prayer is supposed to be of no effect; without it too the gods are not thought to be properly consulted."[30] The conjunction of prayer and sacrifice

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[26] Lucian, *Icar.* 25.

[27] Dorival 2016 traces several of these arguments against petitionary prayer across the philosophical sources. Cf. Mikalson 2010, 43–55.

[28] Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.3.2. Philosophical convictions had an impact on the nature of how some prayed. While customary prayer often included requests for favour or other good things from the gods, the Stoics, for example, appear to have departed from this model of prayer. The most famous example of a Stoic prayer is Cleanthes' Hymn to Zeus, given to us in different forms by, e.g., Epictetus, *Ench*. 53.1; Seneca, *Ep*. 107.11). On Stoic Prayer, see Algra 2003, 174–75.

[29] E.g., Burkert 1985, 73, asserts that there is "no important prayer without ritual: *litai-thusiai*, prayers-sacrifices, is an ancient and fixed conjunction." Pulleyn 1997, 8, says that "prayer and sacrifice are intimately associated." Likewise, Aune 2002, 29, notes, "'prayers and sacrifices' (*litai kai thusiai*) is a traditional fixed expression found in many texts." Cf. Van Straten 1981, 65–67; Beard, North, and Price 1998, 35–36.

[30] Pliny, *Nat. His.* 28.11.

is widely attested.[31] Furley summarizes, "Prayer, one might say, is a multimedia performance, involving sounds, sights, and smells."[32] The purpose of the accompanying ritual activity was, as we have already noted, the maintenance of an going reciprocal relationship with the gods via the bestowal of τιμή and χάρις. As Theophrastus states very explicitly in his work *On Piety*, the purpose of sacrifice is threefold: honour (τιμή), favour (χάρις), and asking for good things (χρείαν τῶν ἀγαθῶν).[33] At the centre of the ritual act is the prayer itself. Again, Furley notes, "[A]ll prelimary and subsequent actions prepare for, and promote, the effectiveness of the petition," and concludes, "Hence we could say that the prayer is the *point* of the ritual; everything else goes toward giving this maximum emphasis and persuasiveness."[34]

One could ask whether the reverse of Pliny's claim is true? In other words, while it would be hard to imagine sacrifice without prayer, could one conceivably pray without an accompanying sacrifice? As we have seen already though, Greek and Roman prayer rests on the assumption that the relation between the gods and humans is one of reciprocity, resting on activities that grant τιμή to the gods, like sacrifice, and bring the exchange of χάρις for the benefit of the one who prays. So, while prayer might occasionally take place without a sacrificial offering, one could not say that it takes place independently of sacrifice.[35] Since this reciprocal relationship involving χάρις

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[31] See, e.g., Homer, *Il.* 1.440–74; 2.410–31; *Od*. 3.435–63; 14.419–38; Thucydides 8.70.1; Lysias 6.51; Plato, *Euthyphr*. 14b; *Leg.* 716d; Horace, *Ep.* 1.16.57–62.

[32] Furley 2007, 122.

[33] τριῶν ἕνεκα θυτέρον τοῖς θεοῖς· ἢ γὰρ διὰ τιμὴν ἢ διὰ χάριν ἢ διὰ χρείαν τῶν ἀγαθῶν. Theophrastus, *On Piety*, fr. 12. The standard edition is Pötscher 1964.

[34] Furley 2007, 120 (emphasis original). Furley adds a few pages later, "the ritual actions and accoutrements are intended to frame and underline the verbal message" (Ibid., 122).

[35] For example, there is some evidence to suggest that citizens would occasionally offer prayers to gods as they passed cultic shrines or statues with no accompanying sacrifice, but even this act would serve as a reminder to the one praying of previous sacrificial offerings and the need for future ones. Aubriot-Sévin 1992, 88, appears to suggest that the mere presence of these sanctuaries or cultic statues would command prayer from those who passed them, but this is probably overstated. See, for instance, the discussion in Pulleyn 1997, 159–64.

and τιμή extends forward and backward in time, it always rests in the background of prayer in Greco-Roman religion. Previous gifts and future gifts to the gods, in other words, are nearly always assumed in the context of prayer within Greco-Roman religion.

Location for prayer could vary. Sacrifice was always accompanied by prayer, so a fair amount of ancient prayer took place in sanctuary settings. However, one might also pray in the home, or while on a journey away from a temple. In terms of the timing of prayer, there are occasional references to praying in the morning and the evening, but these likely have to do with opportune times for offering sacrifices rather than prescriptions for praying daily at set times, as in daily Jewish prayer, for example.[36]

There are not many specific gestures associated with customary prayer in antiquity. Two are often mentioned by scholars. One common way prayer is depicted in iconographic remains, for example, is by showing the one praying with at least one arm raised.[37] Additionally, in cases of fervent supplications (ἱκετείαι), worshippers might kneel before the deity while praying as a gesture of self-abasement.[38]

In summary, this section has presented an overview of the features that constitute customary prayer in Greco-Roman religion. A variety of terms could be used for the act of prayer in antiquity (εὐχή, λιτή, ἱκετεία, ἀρά), and these activities often had a recognizable three-part structure that would include (1) the invocation of the deity being addressed along with any additional epithets, (2) an argument or reason for why the deity should hear the petition of the one

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[36] References to praying in the morning and evening can be found, e.g., in Hesiod *Op.* 335–41; Plato, *Leg.* 887e. Pulleyn 1997, 156–58.

[37] Van Straten 1981, 82, provides several examples from the visuals among the votive offerings. Cf. Burkert 1985, 75; Pulleyn 1997, 189.

[38] Van Straten 1981, 82–83; Pulleyn 1997, 190; Versnel 2015, 450.

praying, and (3) the petition itself. The act of prayer was most often accompanied by other ritual activities, especially sacrifice, as part of a larger system of relational reciprocity between the gods and their worshipers. These features constitute what I am referring to as "customary" prayer in Greco-Roman antiquity.

2.3. PNEUMATIC PRAYER AS ABERRANT PRAYER

2.3.1. Are the Pneumatic Prayers Actually Prayers?

Having reviewed the customary qualities of prayer in Greco-Roman religion, I now turn to consider the pneumatic prayer texts in Paul. In this section, I want to answer whether the pneumatic experiences attested in our key texts are rightly interpreted as prayers. To do this, I will examine each experience in turn, beginning with the Abba cry (Gal 4.6; Rom 8.15) and moving on to glossolalia (1 Cor 14.14–15) and the Spirit's intercession (Rom 8.26–27). Of primary importance throughout this section is the language Paul uses to describe these experiences.

2.3.1.1. The Abba Cry as Prayer. Three pieces of evidence favour interpreting the Abba cry in Galatians 4.6 and Romans 8.15 as a prayer. In this section, I will look at each of them, showing that they favour my reading of the Abba cry as a prayer. I will also conclude by considering potential objections to reading the Abba cry as a prayer.

The first piece of evidence favouring my reading of the Abba cry as a prayer is the verb Paul uses for the act itself: κράζω. Interestingly, in his survey of prayer vocabulary in Paul, Longenecker fails to include any mention of κράζω.[39] To be sure, Paul almost exclusively uses the

[39] The omission is particularly striking, because Longenecker cites both Gal 4.6 and Rom 8.15 with respect to Paul's encouragement of his readers to pray to God as "Abba, Father." See Longenecker 2002, 224. Κράζω is likewise omitted from Hunter 1993, 729–30.

verb in the pneumatic prayer texts (Rom 8.15; Gal 4.6).[40] Nevertheless, the use of κράζω in contexts of prayer has a rich history in the Jewish scriptures. Throughout the LXX Psalter, the verb is used to refer to crying out to God, especially in moments of distress. Take, for example, the following texts.

> You listened to the voice of my petition (τῆς δεήσεώς μου) when I cried out to you (ἐν τῷ κεκραγέναι με πρὸς σέ) (Ps 30.23).
>
> O Lord, I cried to you (ἐκέκραξα πρὸς σέ), listen to me; pay attention to the voice of my petition (τῆς δεήσεώς μου) when I cry to you (ἐν τῷ κεκραγέναι με πρὸς σέ). Let my prayer (ἡ προσευχή μου) succeed as incense before you, a lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice (Ps 140.1).

In both texts, the author makes explicit that they are bringing a prayer (δέησις, προσευχή) to God *when they cry out* (κράζω) to him. Elsewhere, throughout the Psalms, the use of κράζω for a kind of prayer is made clear by the fact that it is directed toward God. The Psalmist will cry "to the Lord" (πρὸς κύριον)[41], "to God" (πρὸς τὸν θεόν)[42], or "to you [God]" (πρὸς σέ),[43] always expecting an answer from God in return. In some of the Psalms, κράζω is used for prayer without these prepositional phrases.[44] Outside the Psalms, the verb is also used in contexts that imply prayer. For example, throughout the book of Judges, the children of Israel are said to "cry out to the Lord", who hears their prayer and responds by delivering them.[45] In most of these cases, κράζω is being used to translate the Hebrew verbs קרא or זעק/צעק**,** which mean "to call" or "to cry out", and both

[40] The one exception to this is Romans 9.27, where it is used to describe the speech of the prophet Isaiah.

[41] Ps 3.5; 4.4.; 21.25; 29.9; 65.17; 76.2; 106.6, 13, 19, 28; 119.1; 141.2.

[42] Ps 17.7; 21.3; 54.17; 56.3.

[43] Ps 21.6; 27.1; 29.3, 9; 60.3; 85.3, 7; 87.10; 129.1; 141.6.

[44] E.g., Ps 16.6; 17.42; 26.7; 33.7, 18.

[45] Judg 3.9, 15; 4.3; 6.6, 7; 10.10. Other references to Israel or the prophets crying out to YHWH in distress include LXX Jer 11.11; 40.3; Lam 3.8; Hos 8.2; Joel 1.14; Mic 3.4; Hab 1.2; Zech 7.13; Bar 3.1; 4.20.

of which are also used frequently in the context of prayer.[46] Thus, while the term κράζω can be and is used often in contexts that do not imply prayer, the presence of the term in situations where the cries are being addressed to God normally indicates some kind of prayer is being made. In the case of the Abba cry in Galatians and Romans, the presence of the verb coupled with the speech addressing God makes it highly likely that prayer is in view. This leads directly to the second piece of evidence, the address itself.

Second, αββα is a vocative form followed by the nominative ὁ πατήρ used as a vocative,[47] both of which imply that God is being addressed in this act. We have already noted that the vocative case is often used in the *invocatio* of Greek prayers, with a double vocative being used in some cases for added emphasis. The presence of the vocative in other early Christian prayers, the Lord's prayer being a noteworthy example (Πάτερ, Matt 6.9; Luke 11.2), indicates that early Christians would begin prayers this way as well.[48] In fact, we have one clear example where this formula exactly is used to begin a prayer, which leads to the third piece of evidence.

Third, there is only one other attestation we have for the formula αββα ὁ πατήρ in early Christian literature, and it is in the context of prayer. In Mark 14.36, Jesus prays in Gethsemane and calls upon God in this way before submitting to the will of the Father.[49] In this chapter, we

[46] The heading for the discussion of these terms in Patrick Miller's major study of biblical prayer refers to them as "virtual technical terms for prayer for God's help." See the discussion in Miller 1994, 44–45. These kinds of prayers (prayers for God's help) from the Hebrew Bible are examined in more detail in ibid., 55–134.

[47] Osten-Sacken 2019, 194.

[48] Cf. Matt 26.39, 42; Luke 22.42; 23.46; John 11.41–42; 12.27–28; 17.1b–26 for other examples of prayers that begin with the vocative in this way.

[49] For this discussion, I shall leave the question of possible dependence between Mark and Paul to one side since it does not impact my conclusions. If Mark is dependent on Paul, then we have an early Christian author who believed αββα ὁ πατήρ belonged naturally in a prayer, which supports my case. If Paul is dependent on Mark (or pre-Markan tradition about Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane), then Paul is deliberately echoing a prayer of Jesus and believes that the Spirit enables believers to pray in a similar way. If they are independent of each other, then the only other instance of the phrase αββα ὁ πατήρ in early Christian writing puts it into a longer prayer. In every case, the position that αββα ὁ πατήρ should be read as a form of prayer is supported.

know that the invocation αββα ὁ πατήρ is part of a prayer because the author tells us as much three times (Mark 14.32, 35, 39). Thus, at the very least, we know that αββα ὁ πατήρ can be used to begin a prayer as the *invocatio*, but in the case of Mark 14.36, we have more than just the invocation. We also have the specific request being made (παρένεγκε τὸ ποτήριον τοῦτο ἀπ' ἐμοῦ…). In the case of the Abba cry in Galatians 4.6 and Romans 8.15, we only have the formula αββα ὁ πατήρ. This begs the question: could the invocation αββα ὁ πατήρ *by itself* constitute a prayer, or is the invocation alone insufficient to make this a prayer?

One might understandably object to viewing the cry αββα ὁ πατήρ as a prayer given its brevity. We noted above that customary prayer in Greco-Roman antiquity included three elements: (1) the invocation, (2) the argument, and (3) the request or petition. The argument was not always necessary to constitute a prayer, but could one conceivably view an invocation alone as a prayer? There are two points to make in response to this objection. First, we do possess examples from antiquity of very brief prayers, including some that appear to only give the invocation. For example, in one of his epistles, Horace uses the example of a man who makes a show of prayer when he offers sacrifices but secretly prays outside the hearing of those around him that he will get away with his crimes.

> This "good man," for forum and tribunal the cynosure of every eye, whenever with swine or ox he makes atonement to the gods, cries with loud voice "Father Janus," (Iane Pater!) with loud voice "Apollo," then moves his lips, fearing to be heard: "Fair Laverna, grant me to escape detection; grant me to pass as just and upright, shroud my sins in night, my lies in clouds!"

Of course, Horace is using a hypothetical example to make a larger moral point, but there is a plausibility to the picture he paints, especially in his description of silent prayer as accompanying suspicious motives.[50] In this case, the mere invocation is used for the prayer accompanying the

[50] See the discussion of silent prayer in section 2.3.2. below.

sacrificial ritual. Other instances of very brief prayers in antiquity include the paean, which was sometimes a simple cry, ἰὴ παιών.[51] According to Pulleyn, the cry likely began as a kind of invocation of the healing god, Paian.[52] In addition to the paean, we have other short invocatory cries attested in the sources, including the invocation Ἴακχ', ὦ Ἴακχε or the cry, εὐοῖ.[53] Each of these examples demonstrates the brevity with which some prayers could be offered in antiquity, despite being simple invocations of a divine name or one-word requests.[54] Thus, the brevity of the Abba cry does not serve as evidence against its standing as a prayer.

Second, one could suggest that in some of the cases above, such as the quote from Horace, the invocations serve as a kind of metonym for the entire prayer that would normally be offered under such circumstances. The author simply saves time by including only the invocation, but the reader would understand that the prayer would have been longer. This is possible, but if that is the case, then one cannot raise the brevity of the cry αββα ὁ πατήρ against its function as a prayer. Instead, we can just say that Paul alludes to the invocation of a longer prayer whose content is not given. In sum, we have parallel examples of prayers in antiquity that are both very brief and occasionally involve only the divine invocation. Whether these are taken as genuine examples of

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[51] Examples of the cry can be found in Aristophanes, especially. See Aristohpanes, *Thesm*., 310–11; *Lys.* 1291; *Av.* 1763–65. References to

[52] Pulleyn 1997, 183. An older but still valuable and detailed study of the paean is Fairbanks 1900. A more recent and briefer summary can be found in Bowra and Krummen 2012.

[53] For Ἴακχ', ὦ Ἴακχε, see, e.g., Aristophanes, *Ran*. 316–17. For εὐοῖ, see Aristophanes, *Lys.* 1294; *Thesm.*993–96; Euripides, *Tro*. 326. Strabo, *Geogr.* 10.18, refers to the cry εὐοῖ σαβοῖ as part of a Disonysiac march (cf. Demosthenes, *Cor.* 260).

[54] One might add to these examples another prayer from Paul, namely, the μαράνα θά of 1 Cor 16.22. This prayer, like the Abba cry, is given in Greek but is also a transliteration of an Aramaic prayer. One of the larger challenges associatd with interpreting this prayer is discerning its function independently from or in conjunction with the ἀνάθεμα that immediately precedes. On reading the μαράνα θά as part of the ἀνάθεμα, see Moule 1960 and Black 1973.

prayer or as mere stand-ins for longer prayers, the objection that the cry αββα ὁ πατήρ might not be a prayer because of its brevity cannot stand.

In this section, I have presented three pieces of evidence which, taken together, give greater plausibility to my reading of the Abba cry as a prayer. First, in both passages where Paul describes the Abba cry (Rom 8.15; Gal 4.6), he uses a verb which is at home in the context of prayer in the Jewish scriptures. Second, the use of the vocative αββα with the nominative ὁ πατήρ used as a vocative mirrors the use of the vocative (or double vocative) in Greek prayers as part of the opening *invocatio*, thereby indicating that this is speech directed toward God and therefore can be considered prayer. Finally, the only other attested instance of αββα ὁ πατήρ in early Christian literature comes to us in a context that is undoubtedly an instance of prayer. Taken together, this evidence justifies our classification of the Abba cry as a prayer.

2.3.1.2. Glossolalia as Prayer. A few scholars have rejected the position that glossolalia is a mode of prayer.[55] Some argue that Paul considered glossolalia as primarily worship and praise, while others suggest that tongues functioned as speech like prophecy (directed at people rather than God) which could not be understood if left uninterpreted.[56] In this section, I will respond to their arguments and provide the constructive case for seeing glossolalia as prayer in 1 Corinthians 14.

[55] The definition of prayer, for these scholars, appears to be the act of bringing petitions to God during intercession, or something of that sort.

[56] Schreiner and Schnabel appear to hold the former position. Schreiner says, "Tongue speaking is limited to praise in the NT, not prayer or intercession." Schreiner 2018b, 437. Likewise, Schnabel suggests that in 1 Corinthians "die Glossolalie in erster Linie Lobpreis ist", not "Bitten und/oder Klagen". Schnabel 2016, 251. Cf. Haacker 1999, 168. Interestingly, in his earlier commentary on 1 Corinthians, Schnabel is quite clear that glossolalia *is* primarily a mode of prayer, which would naturally include petitions or intercession as well as praise. E.g., "legt sich doch der Schluss nahe, dass die primäre Funktion des glossolalischen Redens das private Beten, das persönliche Kommunizieren mit Gott ist." Schnabel 2006, 792. The latter position, that tongues is primarily speech directed at people and therefore is not a form a prayer, is defended in Edgar 1983, 171–98 and Thomas 1999, 87–100.

The first major reason these scholars reject seeing glossolalia as a mode of prayer are the glossolalic events in Acts, especially in Acts 2 where speaking in tongues is form of proclamation rather than prayer. However, the assertion that the instances of tongues speech recorded in Acts and 1 Corinthians are identical has several difficulties.[57] Whereas Luke-Acts connects tongues to prophecy (Acts 2.16–17), Paul explicitly distinguishes between them.[58] While Paul argues that the gift of tongues requires a χάρισμα of ἑρμηνεία γλωσσῶν (1 Cor 12.10) for edification in public contexts, Luke-Acts leaves no indication that such a gift was ever exercised or expected when glossolalic speech occurs.[59] The best course for understanding the nature of glossolalia in the Pauline churches is to start with Paul's own text, which, as I will show below, contains ample evidence that glossolalia was practiced as a mode of prayer, not proclamation.

The second argument scholars offer against reading glossolalia as a prayer has to do with Paul referring to tongues as a σημεῖόν…τοῖς ἀπίστοις (1 Cor 14.22).[60] Once again, the parallel with Acts is crucial for these interpreters, since tongues is also referred to there as a sign (Acts 2.19). Just as glossolalia served to confirm the proclamation of Peter on Pentecost, they argue, so also Paul thought that God could provide a confirmatory sign by enabling someone to proclaim the gospel in a language they did not know while in the hearing of that language's native speakers.

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[57] Collins 1999, 456. The point here is not to discount the evidence of Acts entirely but to appreciate the substantial differences between the two descriptions. See the observations made by Stendahl 1976, 116–19.

[58] Acts 19.6 could represent a break from this pattern. The text says that after Paul laid his hands on the Ephesians, ἦλθεν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐπ' αὐτούς, ἐλάλουν τε γλώσσαις καὶ ἐπροφήτευον. It could be that the two actions following their Spirit-reception are meant to be distinct from one another (as Paul distinguishes them in 1 Corinthians), or it could be that ἐπροφήτευον clarifies what they were doing when they spoke in tongues, as with the similar conjunction of verbs (αὐτῶν λαλούντων γλώσσαις καὶ μεγαλυνόντων τὸν θεόν) in Acts 10.46. Probably the construction τε…καὶ should be taken as evidence for distinguishing the verbs as two distinct actions in Acts 19.6. See the discussion in Keener 2014, 2824.

[59] Zeller 2010, 434.

[60] On the significance of the ἄπιστοι and their relationship to the assembly at Corinth, see Lang 2018.

Much has been written about what Paul means when he refers to tongues as a sign.[61] The constraints of the present work preclude me from treating all the relevant questions surrounding the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14.20–25 in this section. Nevertheless, of the various interpretative options that have been proposed for making sense of (1) Paul's quotation of Isaiah 28.11, (2) his use of σημεῖον, and (3) the apparent conflict between 14.22 and 14.23–25, the interpretation proposed by these scholars — i.e. that Paul viewed glossolalia as a positive sign for unbelievers because they would recognize that the speaker is miraculously proclaiming the gospel in a language they did not previously know — is the least convincing of them all.[62]

Stephen Chester has argued powerfully for the need to reconsider Paul's words about glossolalia as a sign in in 1 Corinthians 14.22.[63] He argues that the exclamation μαίνεσθε from unbelievers (ἄπιστοι) when they witness glossolalia is not pejorative, as so many have argued.[64] Rather, based on an examination of divinely gifted madness in Greco-Roman authors,[65] Chester concludes that the exclamation would be a positive one.[66] "Tongues do serve as a sign for

[61] E.g., Sweet 1967; Robertson 1975; Johanson 1979; Grudem 1979; Carson 1987, 108–17; Smit 1994; Forbes 1995, 175–81; Thiselton 2000, 1118–30; Hovenden 2002, 141–48; Ciampa and Rosner 2010, 695–708; Fee 2014, 750–62; Menzies 2016, 109–18.

[62] Most notably, Paul nowhere suggests in 1 Corinthians that those gifted with glossolalia should be using their gift in this evangelistic capacity. Rather, his focus throughout is edification, of the individual and of those present in gathered worship, which could include ἄπιστοι but mainly consisted of believers.

[63] Chester 2005.

[64] This pejorative interpretation is often made plain when μαίνεσθε is translated in English as "you are mad" (KJV), "you are insane" (NASB), "you are out of your minds" (NRSV, ESV, NIV), or "you are crazy" (NLT, CEV).

[65] Plato, *Phaedr.* 244a–45c, 265a–e; *Tim.* 71e–72b. On the blessing of μανία in Greek thought, see Dodds 1951, 64–101; Werner 2011; and especially Ustinova 2018, which is the most recent comprehensive study on the topic.

[66] Forbes 1995 provides a full treatment of all the potential parallels to glossolalia among Greco-Roman texts, and he concludes that there are no parallels to the glossolalia Paul and the Corinthians practiced. Forbes has been criticized for defining the criteria for legitimate parallels too strictly, e.g., by Eyl 2019, 96, n. 29. It is possible to maintain that Christian glossolalia bore some analogy to other forms of prophetic or inspired speech in antiquity while also appreciating differences.

unbelievers in the straightforward sense that they alert the outsider to the presence of divine activity among the Corinthian believers."[67] This interpretation has the advantage of keeping Paul's statement 14.22 consistent with the situation he describes in 14.23.[68]

Chester also provides a convincing explanation of Paul's citation of Isaiah 28.11 in 1 Corinthians 14.21. The key, he argues, is recognizing that Paul cites the text with reference to the Corinthian believers and not the ἄπιστοι as so many commentators have supposed. In Isaiah 28.9, God's people are compared to children who need to be weaned from milk. While they are children, they can only hear God speak to his people in childish gibberish (28.10, 13).[69] In between these untranslatable verses sits the text Paul cites in 1 Corinthians. Paul commands the believers in Corinth, μὴ παιδία γίνεσθε ταῖς φρεσὶν. "The danger the Corinthians face is that of placing themselves in the same position as God's people in Isa. 28.11–12, trapped in spiritual immaturity."[70] The Corinthian abuse of glossolalia and neglect of prophecy puts the assembly in the same position as God's people in Isaiah 28: God speaks to them only in unintelligible ways.

So far, we have seen that both primary arguments for viewing glossolalia as a form of proclamation or prophecy are unconvincing. The major differences between Paul's description of glossolalia and the glossolalic event in Acts 2 make it clear that we should seek to understand Paul's description on its own terms rather than imposing the phenomenon of Acts 2 on to the text

[67] Chester 2005, 419. Gillespie 1978, 82; Roberts 1979; Hays 1997, 238–29; and Johnson 1998, 125, also take the minority view that the response of unbelievers to glossolalia would have been a positive one.

[68] The struggle to relate 8.22 to 8.23–25 is strong enough that Johanson 1979, 193–94, proposed that 8.22 is a statement of the Corinthians' perspective which Paul aims to correct with his own in 8.23–25. This proposal, while offering a solution to the problem, has failed to convince most scholars, who agree that the οὖν of 8.23 rules out such a reading.

[69] Oswalt 1986, 512, n. 36, provides a brief sketch of interpretative options that have been taken for this enigmatic text.

[70] Chester 2005, 443. Lanier 1991, 280, recognizes this shared context for Isaiah and 1 Corinthians, but he still embraces the majority view that tongues serve as a negative sign of judgment.

of 1 Corinthians. Second, some of these authors believe that glossolalia is not a form of prayer because it is speech directed at unbelievers in an unknown foreign language designed to be a sign of God's miraculous power. This interpretation, I have argued, is not a convincing reading of Paul's language in 1 Corinthians 14.20–25. An alternative, more plausible reading was put forward, and this interpretation is compatible with the position that glossolalia was understood as a mode of inspired prayer. We turn now to consider the portions of Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 14 that describe glossolalia most clearly as prayer.

Three statements in 1 Corinthians 14 imply that glossolalia was understood by Paul as a mode of private prayer. In 14.2, Paul says that the person who speaks in tongues speaks to God rather than people. In 14.14–15, Paul refers to "praying in tongues" and equates it with "praying in (my/the) spirit." Finally, in 14.28, Paul says that without someone to interpret, the one who speaks in tongues should be silent in the assembly and "speak to God." In what follows, I will examine how those who reject the notion of glossolalic prayer have attempted to explain these verses and show that their readings are unconvincing.

In 1 Corinthians 14.2, Paul says, ὁ γὰρ λαλῶν γλώσσῃ οὐκ ἀνθρώποις λαλεῖ ἀλλὰ θεῷ· οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἀκούει, πνεύματι δὲ λαλεῖ μυστήρια. Does speaking "to God" imply that glossolalia is a mode of prayer? Schreiner makes the following observation:

> In verse 2 Paul reflects on *uninterpreted* tongues. If a tongue is not interpreted, the tongue is not addressed to people but to God alone, since he is the only one who can grasp the meaning of what is being said. Paul is not necessarily saying here that tongues are restricted to prayer; his point is that the tongue is addressed to God in the sense that no-one else is able to understand what is being said.[71]

[71] Schreiner 2018a, 286.

Likewise, Thomas says, "Neither this spiritual gift nor any other had the purpose of communicating with God, so, to speak to God rather than man through tongues was improper."[72] Both of these assertions assume, primarily because of the glossolalia described in Acts 2, that speaking in tongues refers to speaking in foreign languages unknown to the speaker.[73] Therefore, the one who speaks in tongues when no one is present who understands the language or can interpret it for others *might as well* be speaking to God alone, since only God understands what is being communicated.[74] This reading, however, should be called into question. While Paul is speaking about tongues that remain uninterpreted, he gives no indication that uninterpreted tongues in themselves are problematic when practiced in private settings. In fact, he argues that the one who speaks in tongues can build up themselves (ἑαυτὸν οἰκοδομεῖ, 14.4). In response to this claim, Edgar argues that Paul is making a negative assertion, either that tongues "build up" oneself in a way that creates pride and arrogance or that the very notion of building up oneself contradicts Paul's teaching about the various χαρίσματα in 1 Corinthians 12–14, which are given to build up the assembly.[75] This reading fails on two counts. First, it depends on reading a negative sense into Paul's use of οἰκοδομή/οἰκοδομέω language, but this stance is contradicted by the evidence. All of Paul's uses of οἰκοδομή/οἰκοδομέω in 1 Corinthians are demonstrably positive.[76] The one exception is 8.10, but in this latter case Paul qualifies his use of the verb to make the negative point

[72] Thomas 1999, 87. Cf. Edgar 1983, 188: "Since (real-language) tongues are sometimes understood by men, it is clear that 1 Corinthians 14:2 is not referring to an aspect of tongues that always holds true; it is not an absolute statement of the purpose of tongues. This situation in 1 Corinthians 14:2 holds true only when men are present but do not understand."

[73] I explore in section 4.3.2. below whether Paul's description of glossolalia indicates that foreign languages, angelic tongues, or ecstatic speech are in view.

[74] This same perspective has been taken up recently in Tupamahu 2023, 116–17.

[75] Edgar 1983, 178–86. Cf. Choi 2007, 57.

[76] 1 Cor 3.9; 8.1; 10.23; 14.3, 4, 5, 12, 17, 26.

clear (οἰκοδομηθήσεται εἰς τὸ τὰ εἰδωλόθυτα ἐσθίειν). There are no such qualifications in 14.4, and thus, no reason to think Paul means anything negative with ἑαυτὸν οἰκοδομεῖ.

The second problem with Edgar's reading is that it fails to cohere with Paul's claim to speak in tongues with great frequency (14.18), which he explicitly contrasts with his activity ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ (14.19), suggesting that Paul's own experience of glossolalia was primarily not ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ but in private, and the reason for his thankfulness was his own experience of the gift's self-edifying power.[77] We might ask further, then, why would Paul celebrate a gift of charismatic speech that he exercises in private if the speech is supposed to be directed at other people rather than primarily to God? It is easy to see how an act of prayer would have the capacity to edify the one praying, even if, as Paul says, his mind is ἄκαρπός (14.14).[78] However, given these scholars' apparent conception of what glossolalia is and what it is for, it is difficult to make sense of Paul's positive assessment of its private use.[79]

Paul's opening remarks about glossolalia in 14.1–5 can be read clearly and consistently if we understand that, for him, glossolalia was primarily a mode of prayer exercised in private contexts that has the potential to edify others in public *only if it is interpreted*. The Corinthians, by contrast, might have assumed that what works to edify in private must also work in public, leading them to utilize glossolalia in their gatherings at the expense of intelligible prophecy. Paul aims to correct this imbalance without losing sight of glossolalia's value and proper use.[80]

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[77] Dunn 1975, 245; Fee 1994, 219. Cullmann 1995, 77–78.

[78] Contra Edgar 1983, 180–81, and Thomas 1999, 89, who both suggest that Paul believed only things that can be understood with the mind have the capacity to edify.

[79] Some of these scholars have rejected the notion that tongues could be exercised in private at all. E.g., Edgar 1983, 198, "There is no basis upon which to assume that tongues are for private or personal use"; Thomas 1999, 89, "Paul was emphatic in not advocating tongues or any other gift for the purpose of private use or self-edification."

[80] Thus, when Johnson 1998, 123, says, "[Paul] regards glossolalia as an optional form of prayer, but one which can be abandoned with no great loss," he misses the point of Paul's discourse, which is not primarily to establish the

In 1 Corinthians 14.14, Paul refers specifically to praying in tongues (προσεύχωμαι γλώσσῃ). This, again, suggests strongly that glossolalia was viewed as a mode of prayer, and, if my previous analysis of 14.1–5 is correct, it supports my contention that this is how Paul primarily thought about the phenomenon. In response to 14.14, Schreiner says, "We should not conclude from this verse that tongue-speaking is restricted to prayer. We have one example here of the nature of tongue-speaking, but there is no reason to think, as verse 15 shows, that it exhausts how the gift operates."[81] Verse 15, of course, refers to ψαλῶ τῷ πνεύματι, an action that parallels Paul's claim to pray in the Spirit (προσεύξομαι τῷ πνεύματι). While the latter action is more clearly linked to glossolalia by Paul's use of the same verb (προσεύχομαι), it could be that Paul also thought believers could sing in tongues.[82] Regardless, both examples of glossolalia Paul provides (προσεύχομαι and ψάλλω) refer to acts of speaking to God and not humans, which is exactly what Paul says about glossolalia in 14.2. This cuts against the thesis of Schreiner and others that glossolalia is a proclamation in an unknown foreign language directed at other humans.

Finally, in 1 Corinthians 14.28, Paul says that without someone to interpret, the one who speaks in tongues should be silent in the assembly. He then says, ἑαυτῷ δὲ λαλείτω καὶ τῷ θεῷ. The dative ἑαυτῷ contrasts with ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ in the preceding clause, and most likely functions as

superiority of prophecy or inferiority of tongues, but to expound the differences between them and clarify the way both can contribute to the building up of believers. The same goes for Tibbs 2007, 246, who claims that Paul believed "glossolalia in and of itself is useless and serves no benefit for anyone because it remains incomprehensible."

[81] Schreiner 2018a, 288.

[82] One need not conclude that singing in the Spirit is a form of glossolalic speech like praying in the Spirit. After all, Paul refers to "speaking by the Spirit of God" (ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ λαλῶν) when believers confess Κύριος Ἰησοῦς in 12.3, but that action is not a reference to glossolalia. Thus, there are forms of speaking ἐν πνεύματι (or πνεύματι) that do not manifest as glossolalic speech. The largest point in favour of seeing the ψαλῶ τῷ πνεύματι as singing in tongues is the contrast Paul gives to ψαλῶ δὲ καὶ τῷ νοΐ (14.15b), which mirrors the identical contrast regarding prayer in (14.15a).

a dative of advantage — i.e., "but for himself/herself, let them also speak to God."[83] Thus, even when glossolalia lacks the capacity to edify other members of the assembly, Paul can still encourage its use for the purpose of edifying the one who prays in tongues.

I conclude that the objections from these scholars that glossolalia is not primarily a form of prayer do not stand up to scrutiny. Paul's description of glossolalia as "speaking not to humans but to God" (οὐκ ἀνθρώποις λαλεῖ ἀλλὰ θεῷ) is most naturally read as a reference to speech that is directed to God rather than speech directed at humans that only God can understand without interpretation. Additionally, his description of "praying in tongues" in 14.14–15 indicates that glossolalia is a form of prayer, even in public contexts, where Paul counsels the one praying to also pray for the power to interpret for the benefit of others (14.13). Finally, Paul's guidelines for the public exercise of glossolalia in 14.27–28 indicate that even in contexts where no interpreter is present, the one who prays in tongues can still speak to God for their own edification, provided they do so out of the hearing of the assembly so as not to disrupt its order. All this evidence indicates that Paul thought of glossolalia first and foremost as a gift related to the practice of prayer.[84]

2.3.1.3. The Intercession of the Spirit as Prayer. The notion that the Spirit's intercession in Romans 8.26–27 should be read as a prayer is less controversial than the other pneumatic prayers. The topic of prayer is clearly on Paul's mind in Romans 8.26 as he introduces the Spirit's "help" (a tragically

[83] BDF 188 (2); Fee 2014, 767. Contra Edgar 1983, 190–91, who takes both ἑαυτῷ and τῷ θεῷ as indirect objects. Even stranger is the suggestion of Thomas 1999, 110: "This required the tongues speaker to meditate quietly on what his own mind could grasp of the tongues message that he might otherwise have given publicly…thereby deriving for himself whatever edifying benefit he could." Paul gives no indication that the glossolalist knows what they are saying.

[84] As Klauck says, "Hier und nur hier hat das reine Zungenreden als Reaktion auf das vorgängige Geschenk des göttlichen Geistes seinen legitimen Ort." Klauck 2000, 296. Cf. Carson 1987, 104.

brief translation for συναντιλαμβάνεται in 8.26a) that meets believers at their point of weakness.[85] The γὰρ introduces the particular form of human weakness to which the Spirit brings aid, the weakness of ignorance in prayer: τὸ γὰρ τί προσευξώμεθα καθὸ δεῖ οὐκ οἴδαμεν. The phrasing in Greek makes smooth English translation difficult. The τί serves as the object of the verb προσευξώμεθα. The καθὸ δεῖ ("just as it is necessary"), more commonly rendered "as we ought", modifies the verb προσευξώμεθα. Finally, οὐκ οἴδαμεν provides the main verb and has as its object the entire phrase modified by the article τό. A clunky but accurate rendering of the text would be, "for this, namely, what we should pray as is necessary, we do not know."

Then, with the strong adversative ἀλλά, Paul contrasts the human problem with the divine answer: "the Spirit itself makes intercession for us." Paul's chosen verb for the Spirit's action, ἐντυγχάνω (here in 8.26 with an added prefix, ὑπερεντυγχάνω), is at home in the context of prayer. While the term can carry multiple meanings, most relevant for our study is its use to refer to an appeal or entreaty someone brings before a king[86] or the bringing of an accusation against another before a higher power.[87] It comes as no surprise, then, that the term ἐντυγχάνω can be used also to refer to an act of prayer when God is being addressed as that higher power.[88]

Paul contrasts the ignorance of believers concerning prayer with the knowledge of God, the searcher of hearts (ὁ δὲ ἐραυνῶν τὰς καρδίας). Whereas "we do not know" (οὐκ οἴδαμεν) what

[85] There is some dispute as to the exact nature of the "weakness" Paul speaks of in Rom 8.26a. Either Paul has prayer in mind as the weakness experienced by believers (e.g., Schreiner 2018b, 434–35) or ignorance in prayer is but one example of a much larger weakness characteristic of life in the present age (e.g., Dunn 1988, 477; Fee 1994, 578; Black 2012, 126). Vollmer 2018, 230–61, includes a full review of the term ἀσθένεια in the LXX, extrabiblical literature, and Paul's writings.

[86] 2 Macc 4.36; 3 Macc 6.37; Dan 6.13 (LXX).

[87] 1 Macc 8.32; 10.61, 63; 1 En. 7.6; Acts 25.24.

[88] Wis 8.21; 16.28; Rom 8.34; Heb 7.25; cf. Rom 11.2, where Paul uses the term to describe Elijah's appeal to God on his own behalf and against Israel. See Wiles 1974, 18.

(τί) should be prayed (8.26), the one who searches hearts "knows" (οἶδεν) "what" (τί) the mindset of the Spirit is (8.27). In the face of weakness and ignorance concerning what to pray, the Spirit aids believers by making intercession for them, an intercession that is known by God and is, as Paul says, in accordance with God's will (κατὰ θεὸν).

All of this indicates that Romans 8.26–27 is about a kind of prayer that comes from the Spirit of God. Many questions remain about the exact nature of this prayer, questions which will be taken up in chapter 5 below. For now, it is enough to show that, as with the other two pneumatic prayers, the Spirit's intercession is also best interpreted as a prayer.

2.3.1.4. Summary. In this section, I have examined each of the pneumatic prayers and demonstrated that they are best interpreted as prayers. In each case, the language Paul uses to describe the experience makes the most sense in the context of prayer. However, along the way, I have noted some of the features of these prayers that deviate from customary prayer in Greco-Roman society as well as from how Paul normally speaks of prayer throughout his letters. This raises a question about what sorts of prayers these pneumatic prayers were. I want to argue that pneumatic prayers are best viewed as aberrant forms of prayer. To establish this point, I need to explain what I mean by "aberrant" prayer and say something about other kinds of aberrant prayer in antiquity.

2.3.2. Aberrant Prayer in Antiquity

In speaking of "aberrant" prayer in antiquity, I am referring to prayers that fall outside the boundaries of what I call above "customary" prayer. Some important qualifications are in order here. I am not referring simply to any prayer that lacks one or more of the three elements outlined above in customary prayer (invocation, argument, request).[89] Instead these aberrant prayers bear

[89] E.g., the prayers in Homer *Il.* 2.412–18; 3.351–54; 6.476–81; 7.179–80 include only the invocation and request but exclude the argument. These, however, I would still want to refer to as "customary" prayer.

some features that make them unmistakably prayers, while also having qualities that would clearly set them apart as abnormal modes of prayer. In this section, I will focus on three forms of aberrant prayer in antiquity: silent prayer, magical prayer, and unintelligible prayer.[90] I have selected these three because either some *have* previously suggested a parallel between one of these categories and a pneumatic prayer text or one *could* suggest as much. Whether they do provide a solid parallel to the aberrant qualities of the pneumatic prayers is a question I will take up in the next section (2.3.3.).

2.3.2.1. Silent Prayer. Almost all prayer in antiquity was spoken out loud.[91] Silent prayer, therefore, was an uncommon form of prayer. In his detailed study of silent prayer in Antiquity, Peter van der Horst draws attention to the different motives behind the practice of silent prayer in the pre-Christian sources. One might choose to pray silently in instances where one does not wish for enemies to hear the prayer, presumably to avoid having their enemies counter with prayers of their own.[92] The malevolent reputation of some supernatural powers, such as Eumenides, might lead others to pray silently.[93] Additionally, one might pray silently because the content of the prayer is embarrassing, i.e. erotic, or even criminal.[94] Finally, van der Horst notes how silent prayer

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[90] I have chosen to examine these three forms of aberrant prayer in particular because of their potential usefulness as parallels to the pneumatic prayers, which I explore in more detail in the next section.

[91] As Pulleyn 1997, 184, says, "The bulk of our evidence suggests that the ancient Greeks prayed out loud." This goes for both public and private prayer.

[92] E.g., Homer *Il.* 7.193–96, where Ajax advises silent prayer so that the Trojans will not hear before changing his mind and deciding that even if they pray aloud, he is confident of victory. Cf. Judith 13.4, where Judith prays "in her heart" (ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῆς), i.e., silently, for God's help before decapitating Holofernes, or Josephus, *J.W.* 3.353–54, where Josephus prays silently to God before surrendering to the Romans, presumably to avoid his Jewish comrades overhearing him.

[93] van der Horst 1994, 3–4, cites Aeschylus, *Eum*. 1035, 1039; Sophocles, *Oed. col.* 124–33, 489.

[94] van der Horst 1994, 4–7, cites many examples.

was used in magical contexts.[95] Each of these motives is identified as accounting for the vast majority of silent prayer in the pre-Christian era. Given these apparent motivations, we can see why silent prayer was an aberrant form of prayer in antiquity.

It is true, of course, that over time silent prayer became viewed not only as an acceptable mode of prayer, but, in some cases, even as the preferred mode of prayer. This is especially true of those figures who, under philosophical influence, began to adopt a certain perspective on the divine nature.[96] Examples of this change that pre-date Paul's writings are few. For example, in his work *On Divination*, Cicero states that because the gods understand one another's thoughts without the aid of eyes, ears, or tongues that "men, even when they offer silent prayers and vows, have no doubt that the gods understand them."[97] Similarly, van der Horst points to Seneca's epistle to Lucilius.[98]

> We do not need to uplift our hands towards heaven, or to beg the keeper of a temple to let us approach his idol's ear, as if in this way our prayers were more likely to be heard. God is near you, he is with you, he is within you. This is what I mean, Lucilius: a holy spirit indwells within us (*sacer intra nos spiritus sedet*), one who marks our good and bad deeds, and is our guardian. As we treat this spirit, so are we treated by it. Indeed, no man can be good without the help of God.[99]

Seneca's reference to a holy spirit that indwells people in the context of a conversation about prayer is certainly striking, especially for the present project. In this case, Seneca is not speaking

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[95] Ibid., 7–9. I will have more to say about magical prayer below. Here, I only note that praying for magical purposes sometimes leads people to pray quietly.

[96] As van der Horst says, "It was mainly the later Platonists, with their ever more elevated conception of the purely immaterial, noetic divine world and especially their *theologia negativa,* which gave a decisive impulse to the new concept of silent prayer as the only fitting means of worshipping God." van der Horst 1994, 10.

[97] Cicero, *Div.* 1.129.

[98] van der Horst 1994, 10. Versnel 1981, 27, similarly cites this epistle as an example of Seneca's support for silent prayer.

[99] Seneca, *Ep.* 41.1–2.

of an aberrant form of prayer, but of a mode of prayer which he believes should be normative. However, is he referring to silent prayer? It is not as clear as van der Horst might suggest. Certainly, there are ways in which Seneca is advising a departure from customary beliefs about prayer — one does not need to lift their hands in prayer, and one does not need to get close to the idol for the god to hear them. He does not, however, explicitly say anything about preferring silent prayer to vocalized prayer. In fact, elsewhere in his letters, Seneca encourages vocalized prayer.

> It is a true saying which I have found in Athenodorus: "Know that thou art freed from all desires when thou hast reached such a point that thou prayest to God for nothing except what thou canst pray for openly." But how foolish men are now! They whisper the basest of prayers to heaven; but if anyone listens, they are silent at once. That which they are unwilling for men to know, they communicate to God. Do you not think, then, that some such wholesome advice as this could be given you: "Live among men as if God beheld you; speak with God as if men were listening"? Farewell.[100]

Seneca, here, casts suspicion on the motivations for silent prayer, as we have seen above. Noble or virtuous prayer is prayer that can be uttered aloud without shame. This does not mean that Seneca would have no room for silent prayer whatsoever. His epistle to Lucilius indicates that theological beliefs should impact the methods utilized for pious activities, including prayer, and if, as Seneca says, everything depends on how one treats the holy spirit inside themselves, then one can see how that belief would open the door for a more appropriate form of silent, even contemplative prayer. Nevertheless, while some thinkers operating under a platonic, or especially neoplatonic, influence came later to prefer silent prayer as a reflection of their theological frameworks, for most people in antiquity, silent or quiet prayer would have been viewed with suspicion because its aberrant nature would reflect poorly on the motives of those who practiced it.

[100] Seneca, *Ep.* 10.5.

2.3.2.2. Magical Prayer. The second mode of prayer in antiquity that I believe qualifies as aberrant prayer is magical prayer. Most magical prayers from antiquity are contained in the *Papyri Graecae Magicae* (hereafter *PGM*), a diverse collection of magical texts preserved on papyrus manuscripts, many of which date after the third century C.E., though the *Vorlagen* for many of the texts likely date a few centuries prior.[101] Graf notes that the term εὐχή is only used explicitly in the title of five texts in the *PGM*.[102] However, this should not be taken as evidence that we only have five examples of magical prayer. Rather, comparing the texts that are explicitly referred to as prayer with other magical texts reveals that prayer was a common feature of magical incantation. Like customary prayers, magical prayers included invocations of the deity, including their epithets, and often lead to a specific request or petition. The petitions attested in magical prayer could include pleas for divinely aided protection, as in the case of some amulets with inscribed prayers,[103] for love, for receiving divine revelation, and much in between.[104] These points of cohesion between customary prayer and magical prayer help to explain the desire of some scholars to dispose of the category of magical prayer entirely.[105] In the end, however, there are still features of magical prayer that do

[101] On the *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, the standard Greek text is Preisendanz 2001 [1973], and the standard English translation, including also the Demotic spell material, is Betz 1992. The dates for the papyrus manuscripts are given on the tables in Betz 1992, xxiii–xxviii. The curse tablets and binding spells inscribed typically on thin metal sheets have been collected and translated helpfully in Gager 1992. On the dating of the texts in the *PGM*, see the discussion in Brashear 1995, 3419–420. Many of the *PGM* texts, as well as other ancient magical papyri, have been helpfully organized by date and presented with original text and translation, along with fresh papyrological analysis, in the *Greek and Egyptian Magical Formularies* project. See Faraone and Tovar 2022.

[102] Graf 1991, 189, citing *PGM* IV.2785–2870; VI.5–46; VII.756–94; XII.103–6; and XXXVI.211–30.

[103] Kotansky 1991, 119–22.

[104] One finds throughout the *PGM* prayers for magical protection (I.195–222), invisibility (I.222–31), divine revelation (I.262–347; VI.1–47; XII.153–60), love (IV.2891–942; VII.300a–310), favour/victory (VII.1017–26), and even a prayer to take away the pain of a headache (XVIIIa.1–4), among other requests.

[105] Graf 1991; Aune 2002, 24. What Graf and Aune both oppose is a distinction made famous by Sir James Frazer that magic was about constraining and coercing the divinity, whereas religion was only about submitting humbly to the deity's will. On magic in Greco-Roman antiquity, see Graf 1997; Ankarloo and Clark 1999; Janowitz 2001; Dickie 2001; Aune 2006, 368–420; Versnel 2012a; Watson 2019; Edmonds III 2019. For a good collection of source material, primarily literary rather than documentary, see Luck 2006 and Ogden 2009.

mark it off apart from customary prayer more generally. Here, I will provide three examples: the focus on the present status of the one praying, the use of the *voces magicae*, and the transliteration and invocation of names for foreign deities.[106]

In section 2.2.2. above, I noted that customary Greek prayer assumed an ongoing reciprocal relationship between humans and the gods. Most customary prayers, as a result, would appeal to previous acts of piety or the promise of future pious deeds to persuade the god to act in their favour. Magical prayer, however, tends to focus entirely on the present status of the one praying. No appeal is made to past or future activities. Edmonds summarizes the point well.

> The magician still makes offerings and prayers to divine powers, but, rather than rely on a relationship with the divinity built up by a longstanding reciprocity in the past or even by promises for such a relation in the future, the magician stresses his credentials for the immediate present of the interaction.[107]

Edmonds cites the frequent use of "immediately, immediately" or "quickly, quickly" in the magical spells as an example of this focus on the present.[108] The credentials of the magician are established in the present through the proper ritual acts combined with the correct incantations, which often included another peculiar feature in magical prayer, the *voces magicae*.

The second aberrant quality of magical prayer is the use of the *voces magicae*, the magical words used throughout the *PGM*, as well as curse tablets and amulets, which were formed by an

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[106] I am more concerned in this section with internal or formal features of magical prayer that evidence its aberrant nature. To that end, I omit here a discussion of whether the antisocial or illegal reputation of magical practice could also be cited in support of magical prayer's non-customary status. While some have made appeal to the anti-social or illegal status of magic (e.g., Aune 2002, 37), the ancient evidence on the (il)legality of magical practice is not always clear, especially since what qualifies as "magical practice" is not clear either. Cf. the discussions in Phillips III 1991; Ogden 2009, 275–99; Versnel 2012a, 885.

[107] Edmonds III 2019, 171.

[108] Among others, see *PGM* I.247–62; III.1–164; IV.94–153; VII.222–49; XXXIIa.1–25. Edmonds III 2019, 172, n. 53, cites several more examples and points out that this same formula is also used frequently in the curse tablets. In Gager 1992, see numbers 6, 9, 11, 12, 15, 29, 30, 35, 36, 106, 107, 112, 115, and 125.

often-incomprehensible string of various vowels and consonants.[109] As Edmonds says, "It is the incomprehensible words, the so-called *voces magicae* or *nomina barbara*, that seem to mark the prayer as magical, raising the coefficient of weirdness beyond that of ordinary religious prayer."[110] Bonner divides the *voces magicae* into two broad categories: those with auditory appeal and those with visual appeal.[111]

In the first category are those numerous instances where strings of vowels and consonants have been put together, with no discernable pattern or meaning, but apparently provided an important function in the success of magical incantation.[112] In this category also are the various ways the seven Greek vowels (αεηιουω) are utilized in the *PGM*.[113] In many cases, the longer strings of vowels might have been sung by the magician.[114] For example, in *PGM* XIII.343–646 (the so-called "eighth book of Moses"), the magician is said to know the true and valid name (ἀληθινὸν ὄνομα καὶ αὐθεντικὸν ὄνομα) of the deity being addressed.[115] What follows is a series of *voces magicae*: "ωαωηω ωεοη ιαω ιιααω θηθου θη ααθω αθηρουω ρ αμιαθαρ μιγαρνα χφουρι ιυευηοωαεη α εε ηηη ιιι ooooo υυυυυ ωωωωωω…" The magician then says, "I call on you, lord; I hymn your holy power in a musical hymn, αεηιουωωω," which is then followed by

[109] Ogden 1999, 46, notes that the *voces magicae* were rare in magical texts before the imperial period, but they were very common thereafter.

[110] Edmonds III 2019, 175.

[111] Bonner 1950, 186.

[112] Brashear 1995, 3576–603, has helpfully gathered the various *voces magicae* used in the *PGM* into a glossary for use while the infamous index volume of *PGM* remains unpublished. Various etymologies have been proposed for some of the *voces magicae*, but not all have been convincing.

[113] Among others, see *PGM* I.1–42; I.222–31; II.64–184; IV.475–829; V.70–95; XIII.646–734; XIXa.1–54.

[114] Miller 1986, 486, refers to this phenomenon of utilizing the seven vowels as part of the *voces magicae* as "the piety of the alphabet."

[115] *PGM* XIII.621–35.

instructions to burn incense while singing another long string of vowels.[116] In this case, prayer and hymn are combined as part of the magical act, and the *voces magicae* function as a demonstration of the magician's deeper knowledge of the deity.[117] Like the *pars epica* in customary prayer, the *voces magicae* provide a reason for the deity to heed the voice of the one praying. In this case, though, it is the magician's knowledge, rather than prior or future acts of piety, that serves as the basis of their invocation and appeal.

A second category of *voces magicae* in Bonner's scheme is made of those constructed apparently for their visual appeal. In some texts in the *PGM*, for example, various voces magicae are arranged into shapes: diamonds, triangles, squares, etc.[118] Additionally, the use of palindromes was prevalent, words that are the same whether read forwards or backwards, such as αβλαναθαναλβα.[119] These palindromes could be short (such as ιαωαι), but they could also be more than 30 or 40 letters long.[120] As Bonner points out, while many people cannot recognize palindromes when they hear them, it does not take the eye long to see the pattern even in very long palindromes.[121] These, as Bonner says, likely functioned as "powerful charms" that the magician could use to enhance the their spells.[122]

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[116] As Betz notes, "The seven Greek vowels…were equated with the notes of the musical scale, and so represented the basic harmony." See Betz 1992, 187, n. 104.

[117] Graf 1991, 192; Edmonds III 2019, 175–80.

[118] E.g., *PGM* I.1–42; V.70–95; VII.940–68; XVIIa.1–25; XIXa.1–54; XXXIII.1–25; XXXVI.187–210. Ogden 1999, 49.

[119] This one, for example, is used a few times in *PGM* III.1–164. The prayer from *PGM* IV.154–285 contains a slightly longer example: αεμιναεβαρωθερρεθωραβεανιμεα.

[120] Cf. the longer palindromes in, e.g., *PGM* I.262–347; III.1–164.

[121] Bonner 1950, 193.

[122] Ibid.

Alongside the practice of using the *voces magicae*, some magical texts include divine names from foreign languages transliterated into Greek. The *PGM* include a variety of foreign elements, but by far the most popular are Jewish ones. "Except for Helios no other deities appear so frequently and are invoked so often as Iao (for Jaweh), Sabaoth and Adonai."[123] In addition to names for the Jewish deity (Ἰαω Ἀδωναί), one also sees other semitic names, including many archangels (Μιχαήλ, Γαβριήλ, Ῥαφαήλ, etc.) and patriarchal figures as well.[124] This feature of magical prayer also marks it out from customary prayer.

These three internal features — the focus on the present status of the one praying, the use of the *voces magicae*, and the integration of foreign deities — all contribute to the status of magical prayer as an aberrant prayer in antiquity.

2.3.2.3. Unintelligible Prayer. The third class of aberrant prayers I wish to examine are what Versnel refers to as "linguistically meaningless sounds which accompanied certain dances and processions and which could be interpreted as invocations of the gods."[125] Burkert likewise mentions these prayers in his work on Greek religion, saying, "A more elementary stratum of invocation is touched by those traditional, linguistically meaningless, word-sounds which accompany specific dances or processions each of which is associated with a particular god."[126] There are some similarities between this category of aberrant prayer and the use of the *voces*

[123] Brashear 1995, 3427. On the syncretistic nature of the *PGM* texts, see Betz 1992, xlv–xlviii; Pachoumi 2017, 164–69.

[124] E.g., *PGM* I.195–202; I.262–347; III.1–164; IV.1227–64; V.459–89; XII.270–350.

[125] Versnel 2012b, 1206.

[126] Burkert 1985, 74.

magicae in magical prayer described above. The primary difference has to do with the setting in which the prayer occurs and any accompanying ritual activities.

I have already spoken about a few of these prayers above in section 2.3.1.1. above, namely the cries, ἰὴ παιών, Ἴακχ᾽, ὦ Ἴακχε, and εὐοῖ.[127] These short cries likely functioned originally as invocations to various deities, but some of them, especially παιών and εὐοῖ, became exclamations made, as Pulleyn says, "at the moment of supreme emotional and spiritual elation."[128] To these, one can also add the ὀλολυγή. This cry refers by onomatopoeia to a cry made apparently only by women in antiquity, which could serve a variety of purposes. Pulleyn summarizes his investigation into the ὀλολυγή in the following way: "[T]he ὀλολυγή is many things. It could accompany the high point of a sacrifice. There are also occasions when it took on an aspect more like that of free prayer, either as a greeting, or as an expression of joy to the gods or as a direct invocation."[129] There were analogous cries attributed to men as well, though not always exclusively uttered by males, namely, the cries ἀλαλαλαί (sometimes ἀλαλαι) and ἐλελελεῦ.[130]

What some of these prayers have in common is that they utilize apparently meaningless sounds to communicate with the divine. Unlike the *voces magicae* reviewed above, where the motivation behind speaking the meaningless sounds is the utilization of supernatural forces for desirable ends, in the case of these unintelligible prayers, the sounds appear to emanate from the intense emotions or ecstatic experiences. Nevertheless, with regard to their brevity and their

[127] See references in n. 41 and n. 43 above.

[128] Pulleyn 1997, 183.

[129] Ibid., 180.

[130] See, e.g., Aristophanes, *Av.* 364, 1763; *Lys.* 1291; Plutarch, *Def. orac.* 417c.

content, these enthusiastic outbursts of occasionally unintelligible speech serve as another case of aberrant prayer in antiquity.

2.3.2.4. Summary. In this section, I have looked at three examples of aberrant prayer from antiquity: silent prayer, magical prayer, and unintelligible prayer. Each of these modes of prayer can be distinguished from customary prayer by noteworthy features. The motivation to pray silently came from a desire to keep the content of one's prayer secret, especially in cases where the petitions were erotic or even evil. However, one might also, especially in later centuries, have theological motivations for praying silently. As ideas about the nature of the gods changed, so too would the practice of communicating with those gods. Magical prayer stood apart from customary prayer by (1) its focus on the present status of the one praying, (2) its use of the *voces magicae*, and (3) its frequent borrowing of the names of foreign deities and using them as part of the invocation. Finally, there are cases in which the simple invocation of a deity or even the use of unintelligible sounds served as a prayer in moments of intense elation. With these examples of aberrant prayer from antiquity in mind, we can turn now to reconsider the aberrant qualities of the pneumatic prayers in Paul's letters.

2.3.3. Aberrant Features of Pneumatic Prayer

The pneumatic prayers in Paul's letters are, I want to suggest, best understood as aberrant prayers. I have already shown that there are good reasons to suppose that the apostle viewed them as prayers, but the pneumatic prayers also bear some odd qualities in common with one another that distinguish them from more customary forms of prayer in antiquity. Having reviewed other aberrant prayers from the ancient world, we can now turn to consider whether the pneumatic

prayers might be better classified under the headings we have already seen before considering some additional aberrant qualities they share in common.

In the case of all three pneumatic prayers, there is some reason for questioning whether Paul has a silent form of prayer in mind. The Abba cry, in Galatians at least, is said to follow from the Spirit of the Son being sent εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν (Gal 4.6). If the heart is where Paul locates the prayer, then his language could be taken to imply that the Abba cry is more of a psychological or existential experience rather than an external, observable one.[131] However, if a silent mode of prayer is what Paul has in mind regarding the Abba cry, then the verb κράζω is an odd verb choice to describe such an experience.[132] Additionally, the fact that in Roman 8.15 Paul declares that "we cry, 'Abba, Father'" indicates something audible rather than silent.

With glossolalia in 1 Corinthians 14, Paul says that those who wish to pray in tongues without interpretation should "keep silent" (σιγάτω) speak only "to themselves and to God" (ἑαυτῷ δὲ λαλείτω καὶ τῷ θεῷ, 1 Cor 14.28), which could also imply at least quiet prayer, if not silent prayer.[133] He also says that the one who speaks in tongues is speaking not to people but to God, "for no one hears/understands" (οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἀκούει) what is being said (14.2).[134] We have seen already that in most cases, someone might choose to pray silently in antiquity because they did not want to be heard by others, either because their request was shameful, erotic, or even evil.

[131] Engberg-Pedersen 2008 appears to take this interpretation of pneumatic experiences, for example.

[132] I examine the perceptibility of the Abba cry in section 3.3.2. below.

[133] Hiu 2010, 115, notes that this view is advocated by Olshausen 1851, 230; Godet 1887, 302; Hodge 1980, 301.

[134] Thiselton notes, "Although λαλέω and ἀκούω are regularly translated broadly to mean respectively *to speak* and *to hear*, the issue in these verses clearly turns on intelligible communication or effective communicative action between speakers and listeners." Thiselton 2000, 1084. Numerous modern commentators have followed this pattern of interpreting ἀκούω to refer to "understanding" rather than "hearing" in 1 Cor 14.2. E.g., Senft 1990, 174; Schrage 1999, 384–85; Fee 2014, 726.

Nevertheless, as Hiu points out, "in the context of [1 Cor 14], it is clear that speaking, particularly but not only speaking in tongues, is something that is audible. Thus 'silent tongues' becomes an oxymoron and something that is not suggested by Paul."[135]

It is still noteworthy that Paul wants the Corinthians to be conscious of how their glossolalic prayers might be heard by those around them, whom he refers to as ἰδιώτης and ἄπιστοι (14.16, 23), a concern the Corinthians apparently did not share with Paul. They have been practicing glossolalia in ways that are clearly observable, just like most prayer in antiquity was done audibly and in public.[136] Paul instructs them to only practice glossolalia in gathered worship when there is an accompanying interpretation (14.27–28). Without interpretation, he discourages the gift's public use and encourages a more private mode of prayer. This still makes glossolalia a more aberrant form of prayer, not only because of its unintelligible content, but also because of the awkward or negative social interactions Paul envisions if the gift is practiced in public without the gift of interpretation.

Finally, the Spirit's intercession is described as ἀλάλητος, which some have translated "wordless".[137] This, again, could be interpreted as a form of silent prayer. While many instances of silent prayer in antiquity were motivated simply by the desire not to be heard, we have also seen that others by the time of Paul, and especially in the centuries following, found theological motivations for praying silently.[138] Paul provides just such a theological rationale for trusting that

[135] Hiu 2010, 115.

[136] Paul's use of the musical analogy in 14.7–8, along with his statement οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς ("so it is also with you") in 14.9, both point to the fact that one of Paul's concerns is how glossolalia is *heard* both by other members of the assembly, who are not edified by it, and by outsiders.

[137] BDAG lists "wordless" for ἀλάλητος. Cf. Jewett 2007, 523; Moo 2018, 546–47; Schreiner 2018b, 436–37.

[138] See discussion in section 2.3.2.1. above.

the Spirit's intercession will be heard by God: ὁ δὲ ἐραυνῶν τὰς καρδίας οἶδεν τί τὸ φρόνημα τοῦ πνεύματος (Rom 8.27). If any of the pneumatic prayers were instances of silent prayer, the Spirit's intercession appears to be the most plausible candidate.

Regarding magical prayer, there are some who have suggested parallels between the *voces magicae* and the early Christian glossolalia.[139] Both appear to be instances of communicating with deities through apparently unintelligible speech.[140] However, there is a noteworthy difference between glossolalia and magical prayer. Aune summarizes, "The use of *voces magicae* in magical rituals appears always to have been directed toward the accomplishment of particular religious objectives. In contrast to this pragmatic, and hence thoroughly magical, function of the *voces magicae*, there is no evidence to suggest that glossolalia functioned similarly."[141]

One of the interesting features of magical prayer noted above is the use of foreign names for deities in magical incantations. Knowing this, one might understandably ask whether the cry αββα ὁ πατήρ served a magical purpose in early Christian circles. The word αββα is also a palindrome, which, as noted above, were used often in the *voces magicae*. It is interesting, therefore, that among the magical papyri, amulets, and inscriptions, αββα is, so far as we know, never used in this way.[142] So while the Abba cry might seem a likely candidate for magical prayer, we simply have no evidence of it being used in magical contexts. Still, one might wonder whether

[139] Bonner 1950, 190; Smith 1973, 233; Miller 1986, 484–86; Aune 2006, 412–14.

[140] This, of course, assumes that glossolalia is best understood as an esoteric, heavenly language that manifests in incomprehensible speech rather than simply an unknown human language. This question is taken up in greater detail in section 4.3.2. below.

[141] Aune 2006, 414.

[142] E.g., the term αββα is missing in both Bonner's index for the magical amulets (Bonner 1950, 332–33) and Brashear's glossary of the *voces magicae* (Brashear 1995, 3576–603).

any non-Christians who heard the invocation αββα ὁ πατήρ would have suspected magical activity was taking place.

Finally, what about the unintelligible prayers mentioned above? These are short invocations or senseless words uttered in moments of spiritual or emotional elation. The Abba cry is also, as we have seen, a short invocation like these. It could be that early Christians cried out with this invocation during the joy of ritual initiation into the community through baptism.[143] Alternatively, if the experience of receiving the Spirit after believing the gospel was accompanied, as Paul indicates, with various miracles and charismatic occurrences, it could be that such experiences generated the ecstatic or emotional cry.[144]

The similarities noted above show why pneumatic prayer most naturally fits within the category I am calling aberrant prayer in antiquity. In addition to these similarities with categories of aberrant prayer we have already examined, there are also features shared by the pneumatic prayers that distinguish them from both customary prayer and from other forms of aberrant prayer. The most important of these is also the most obvious for the category of pneumatic prayer, namely, the role Paul gives πνεῦμα in the experience of prayer.

The role Paul gives πνεῦμα in these three prayers — the Abba cry, glossolalia, and the Spirit's intercession — distinguishes pneumatic prayer even from other forms of aberrant prayer in antiquity. One can find references to πνεῦμα (or *spiritus*) in the context of prayer, for example, in the letter of Seneca to Lucillius quoted above.[145] In that case, Seneca appeals to a theological

[143] The view that Paul associated Spirit-reception with baptism has a long and contentious history. Some contemporary advocates for the position include Meeks 1983, 87–88; Martyn 1997, 392; Schnelle 2005, 488; Engberg-Pedersen 2010, 68–69; Thiessen 2016, 111.

[144] Cf. Rom 15.18–19; 1 Cor 1.5–7; 2 Cor 12.12; Gal 3.1–5; 1 Thess 1.5.

[145] Seneca, *Ep.* 41.1–2.

belief in the presence of the divine within the person.[146] He says, "God is near you, he is with you, he is within you. This is what I mean, Lucilius: a holy spirit indwells within us…" This theological belief impacts the practice of prayer, as he states in the sentence prior to this, "We do not need to uplift our hands towards heaven, or to beg the keeper of a temple to let us approach his idol's ear, as if in this way our prayers were more likely to be heard." Seneca uses the language of an indwelling *spiritus*, in other words, to explain the way god is present in the person, and while his appeal to an indwelling spirit impacts the way humans pray, the spirit is not itself involved in the act of prayer in any discernable way.

The next closest parallel would be the role given πνεῦμα in ancient divination.[147] Both Plutarch and Cicero attest the belief that the inspiration at the Delphic oracle was dependent upon vapours that were inhaled by the Pythia.[148] Plutarch explicitly connects these "exhalations" (ἀναθυμίασις) that rise from the earth with πνεῦμα. In particular, the vapours or exhalations that arise from the earth beneath the Pythia when she sits on the tripod appear to serve as one of the ways πνεῦμα contacts the priestess, inspiring her to speak the oracle from Apollo. In his two major works on oracles, Plutarch refers to τό πνεῦμα,[149] πνεῦμα,[150] ἡ τοῦ πνεύματος δύναμις,[151] τό

[146] On Stoic theology see Algra 2003 and on Stoic cosmology, see Tieleman 2017.

[147] Some helpful resources on Greco-Roman divination include Fontenrose 1978; Johnston 2008; Sourvinou-Inwood 2012; Linderski 2012; Ustinova 2018; and Addey 2022.

[148] Cicero, *Div.* 1.38; 2.117; Plutarch, *Pyth. orac.* 402b–c. In *Def. orac.* 435a, Plutarch associates the prophecy at Delphi with πνεύματα καὶ ἀτμοὺς καὶ ἀναθυμιάσεις ("winds/spirits, and steams and exhalations"). The perspective on divination outlined here was apparently popular among many Stoics. John Levison has pointed out that in both Cicero's *De divinatione* and Plutarch's *De defectu oraculorum*, the Stoic perspective on divination finds representation, through Quintus in the former and Lamprias in the latter. See Levison 1997, 15–16; 2011, 425–26.

[149] *Pyth. orac.* 402b–c; *Def. orac.* 432f; 433a; 437d.

[150] *Def. orac*. 435b; 437c.

[151] *Def. orac*. 438c.

μαντικόν πνεῦμα,[152] and τό δ᾽ἐνθυσιαστικόν πνεῦμα.[153] Strabo refers in a similar way to the πνεῦμα ἐνθουσιαστικόν.[154] It appears likely that each of these has the same power of prophetic inspiration as its referent. In this perspective on inspired speech, however, πνεῦμα is viewed purely as a material substance that, once inhaled, brings about a change in the Pythia's consciousness and enables her to speak for the gods. Paul's view is different than this, as he attributes these prayers not just to people who have the πνεῦμα in them but to the πνεῦμα itself. In Romans 8.26–27, it is the Spirit who intercedes. In Galatians 4.6, it is the Spirit that cries out, "Abba, Father." Thus, Paul grants an agency to πνεῦμα in these prayers that is uncommon in antiquity.

It is this peculiar feature in Paul's thought that justifies my attempt to read *pneumatic* prayer as its own kind of aberrant prayer in Paul. In this section, I have reviewed several plausible points of comparison between the pneumatic prayers and other aberrant prayers in antiquity, namely, silent prayer, magical prayer, and unintelligible prayer. While some traits of the pneumatic prayers are shared with other aberrant prayers, there are differences as well that make it difficult to identify any one of the pneumatic prayers as an instance of silent, magical, or unintelligible prayer. Instead, I believe that the similarities justify my assertion that pneumatic prayers are aberrant forms of prayer. The differences, however, also justify my project of constructing a taxonomy of pneumatic prayer as its own category of prayer in antiquity. What is needed now is a closer examination of each pneumatic prayer text that will provide a descriptive and theological account of these experiences. The next three chapters will provide that examination.

[152] *Def. orac*. 433d; cf. 432d.

[153] *Def. orac*. 436f.

[154] Strabo, *Geogr*. 9.3.5.

2.4. CONCLUSION

In seeking to establish a taxonomy of the pneumatic prayers in Paul's letters, this chapter set out to establish two key points: (1) that the pneumatic prayers are prayers but (2) that they are prayers of an aberrant sort. The present chapter demonstrated these two points in two parts. First. I provided an overview of what I call customary prayer in Greco-Roman antiquity, followed by a review of how Paul speaks of prayer outside the pneumatic prayer texts. This overview provided a baseline from which to assess whether the pneumatic prayers should qualify as prayer. Second, I turned to each of the pneumatic prayer texts (Rom 8.15, 26–27; 1 Cor 14.14–15; Gal 4.6) and demonstrated that the experiences attested there are best interpreted as prayers. Additionally, to show that the pneumatic prayers are aberrant prayers, I provided three examples of aberrant prayer from antiquity — silent prayer, magical prayer, and unintelligible prayer — and compared them to the pneumatic prayers. This comparison revealed several points of commonality, thereby justifying my conclusion that the pneumatic prayers are aberrant prayers. I also highlighted some key differences, most notably the role Paul gives the πνεῦμα in prayer. Having established that pneumatic prayer is an aberrant form of prayer, I can now turn to the texts themselves to demonstrate how each of them support my proposed taxonomy for pneumatic prayer.

3. THE SPIRIT CRIES, "ABBA, FATHER!" (GAL 4.6)

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This project provides an initial taxonomy of the pneumatic prayers in Paul's letters. As such, it names and classifies a peculiar set of pneumatic experiences in Paul. I have given the name "pneumatic prayer" to these experiences. As the first step toward classification, I have shown that the pneumatic prayers should be considered prayers. More specifically, I have argued that they bear similarities with aberrant forms of prayer in antiquity. In this chapter, I turn to consider the Abba cry in Galatians 4.6 and how it conforms to the taxonomy I have proposed.

In the opening chapter, I stated that my taxonomy of pneumatic prayer would include descriptive features and theological connections. These traits, I argue, are common to the three pneumatic prayers I am examining in the present work, thereby justifying the classification of pneumatic prayers as a distinct and noteworthy feature of Paul's theology and spirituality. Descriptively, Paul depicts the pneumatic prayers as a common, perceptible experience of Spirit-inspired prayer. Theologically, the pneumatic prayers signify the eschatological time in which believers live, the glorified filial status of believers, and their participation in the prayers of heavenly beings. In this chapter, I show that these descriptive features and theological connections are present for the Abba cry in Galatians 4.6.

3.2. PNEUMATOLOGICAL DISCOURSE IN GALATIANS

Before turning to the Abba cry in Galatians 4.6, I want to expound what I will call the pneumatological discourse of Galatians. By this, I mean the way Paul integrates pneumatological language into the central argument of his letter that runs from 3.1 through to our primary text in 4.4–7. This exploration of Paul's pneumatological claims prior to the Abba cry will allow a more contextually faithful reading of the Abba cry when we come to it in the next section. Here I consider three contextual features that inform my reading of the Abba cry: (1) the situation that gave rise to the letter, (2) Paul's references to the Galatians' reception of the Spirit in 3.1–5, and (3) his claim about the Spirit's relationship to the Abrahamic promise in 3.14.

3.2.1. The Situation of Galatians

Reconstructing the situation behind the letter to the Galatians has proven a difficult task. The letter's destination, the identity of Paul's opponents, and the content of their teaching continue to be matters of considerable disagreement. It is not the place of this project to settle the ongoing dispute between advocates of the so-called "North Galatia" and "South Galatia" hypotheses.[1] Instead, this section proposes to accomplish two things. First, I highlight what I believe can be more confidently reconstructed about the Galatian situation based on the letter itself.[2] Second, I turn to highlight the role that pneumatology plays in Paul's response to this situation. This broader

[1] Both Scott 1995, 1, and Watson 2007, 109, n. 23, indicate that the North Galatia view is still the majority perspective. Representatives here include Betz 1979, 3–5; Martyn 1997, 15–17; de Boer 2011, 3–5. Some recent defenders of the South Galatia view include Moo 2013, 2–8; deSilva 2018, 26–58; Keener 2019, 20–22; and Wright 2021, 21. Wright 2013a, 808, n. 109, says "The case for a South Galatia destination is now overwhelming" citing the highly regarded work of ancient Anatolia expert, Stephen Mitchell, who says, "There is virtually nothing to be said for the North Galatian theory. There is no evidence in Acts or in any non-testamentary source that Paul ever evangelized the region." Mitchell 1993, 3. Despite the confidence both sides have in their position, the view one takes on the question often has very little impact on their exegesis of the text, as noted by Schlier 1989, 17, n. 1. Cf. the discussion in Kahl 2010, 34–42.

[2] As Barclay notes, "[M]uch of the Galatian situation remains for us unknown and unknowable; nonetheless, we have just enough clues for a partial reconstruction." Barclay 2015, 33.

context will then pave the way for a closer consideration of the letter's pneumatological claims leading up to the Abba cry in 4.6.

Paul begins the letter expressing his astonishment that the Galatians are apparently receptive to what he labels a ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον (1.6).[3] Although he had preached his gospel to them beforehand while suffering some physical malady, likely to do with his eyesight (4.13–15), they are now being persuaded by another group, whom Paul labels οἱ ταράσσοντες (1.7).[4] Although the Galatians were mostly from non-Jewish background (4.8–9), sometime after Paul left them they began to want to come under the Jewish law (4.21).[5] The specific Jewish practices mentioned in the letter include circumcision (5.3–6; 6.12–13) and calendrical observances (4.10), though other aspects of the law are likely included in the phrase ἔργα νόμου (2.16; 3.2, 5, 10).[6] While Paul gives the Galatians a sense of his reaction to the news that they were being persuaded to keep Jewish law at the beginning of the letter (1.6–9), his full response to this situation begins in 3.1

[3] As Barclay points out, Paul likely would not use this label unless the opponents were speaking about Christ (ibid., 335). Barclay rates it as virtually certain that the opponents were Christian, and highly likely that they were Jewish Christians. See Barclay 2002, 380.

[4] Trying to identify Paul's opponents in any of his letters risks getting caught in a vicious circle. See Barclay 2002, 370. Barclay outlines several hypotheses regarding the rival teachers and ranks them according by their probability in Barclay 2002, 380–81. Sumney 1990 has attempted to develop a more robust methodology for describing Paul's opponents. There are some who prefer to label Paul's rivals "teachers" to avoid the value judgments implicit in other labels, such as "Judaizers" or "agitators". See Nanos 2002, 400; Martyn 2002, 349. Because I am interested in reconstructing matters *from Paul's perspective* to better understand his strategy in the letter, I will refer to them simply as his opponents.

[5] Paul addresses them as οἱ ὑπὸ νόμον θέλοντες εἶναι in Gal 4.21.

[6] Considerable attention has been given to the meaning of ἔργα νόμου since the advent of the "new perspective" on Paul. Dunn has devoted several articles to the topic, most of which are collected in Dunn 2005. Dunn believed ἔργα νόμου referred specifically to the works of the law that distinguished the Jewish people from their neighbors, such as circumcision, Sabbath, and dietary laws (Cf. Sanders 1983, 102). Other studies have sought to maintain the view that ἔργα νόμου refers to all works done in obedience to the Mosaic Torah, including Moo 1983; Räisänen 1987, 162–77; Silva 2004; Westerholm 2004, 313–21. Thomas 2020 has recently proposed that the second-century reception of Paul's writings vindicates the new perspective reading of ἔργα νόμου.

when he re-addresses the Galatians directly (Ὦ ἀνόητοι Γαλάται). And here, Paul introduces pneumatology into the letter.

I would suggest that the experience of the Spirit's outpouring on the gentiles, which Paul refers to when he begins his argument against in 3.1–5, may be of greater importance for both Paul and his opponents than is often acknowledged.[7] Paul tells the Galatians he only wants to know one thing (τοῦτο μόνον) from them, and that is whether or not observing the law led to their reception of the Spirit (3.2). The question of how or when the Galatians received the Spirit is important for the argument Paul aims to construct. This is further demonstrated in his follow-up question in 3.3: "Having begun by the Spirit are you now being made complete by the flesh?" It could be that the opponents who came to Galatia after Paul believed the Spirit's reception among God's people, whether Jew or gentile, would result in faithful Torah observance.[8] If the Spirit's reception among the gentiles were accompanied by the sorts of miraculous and charismatic manifestations Paul describes in Galatians 3.5, then it would be undeniable that God's end-time promise to pour out the Spirit on all flesh was being fulfilled.[9] The question remained, however, whether those gentiles

[7] Cosgrove has even argued that these first five verses are the key entry point into the theme of the entire letter. Cosgrove 1988, 1–3. De Boer likewise notes that the unifying theme of this entire segment (3.1–4.7) of Paul's argument is the reception of the promised Spirit. de Boer 2011, 167. De Boer divides this portion of Paul's letter into five sections: (1) 3.1–5, (2) 3.6–14, (3) 3.15–22, (4) 3.23–29, and (5) 4.1–7. Each of the four sections that follow Paul's introduction of this main theme end, he says, with a reference to the Spirit. This is because de Boer interprets the ἐπαγγελία of 3.22 and 3.29 as referring to the τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πνεύματος of 3.14.

[8] One thinks especially of Ezekiel 36.26–27 — "And I will give you a new heart, and a new Spirit I will give in you, and I will remove the stone heart from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will give my Spirit in you (τὸ πνεῦμά μου δώσω ἐν ὑμῖν) and will act so that you walk in my statutes (ἐν τοῖς δικαιώμασίν μου πορεύησθε) and keep my judgments and perform them." In this case the gift of the Spirit *precedes* the faithful observance of God's commands.

[9] E.g., Isa 32.15; 44.1–5; 59.15–21; Ezek 11.17–21; 36.26–27; 37.1–14; 39.29; Joel 3.1–2. Morales 2010, 15–40, helpfully reviews the connections between the promise of the Spirit and the restoration of Israel throughout these prophetic texts. Philip 2005, 226–27, argues that Paul's conviction about the Spirit being poured out on the gentiles apart from the law was formed prior to his missionary work among predominantly gentile communities. The conviction itself, Philip argues was rooted in a combination of Paul's Damascus Christophany and his interaction with earlier Hellenistic communities such as the one in Antioch.

who received the Spirit were now supposed to keep the works of the law that had marked out God's covenant people for centuries. One can see how the opponents might believe the natural "completion" or "perfection" of the work that God had begun in the gentiles by giving them the Spirit would be their decision to embrace their new covenantal identity by keeping the works of the covenant.[10]

Part of Paul's strategy for counteracting the influence of these opponents is his focus on the Spirit's reception among the gentiles by faith. Paul's pneumatological argument unfolds in three stages. First, he invites the Galatians to recall the *signs* of the Spirit's outpouring (3.1–5), the demonstrations of divine presence and power that did not depend on observing any works of the law. Second, Paul demonstrates that these pneumatic experiences *signified* that while the Galatians were gentiles, they were nevertheless children of Abraham and heirs of the Abrahamic promise and blessing (3.14). Even more profoundly, when they received the Spirit (who is identified as the Spirit of God's Son) the Galatians became children of Abraham's God (4.6). Third, Paul insists that because the Galatians have received the Spirit, they are empowered to walk or live by the Spirit (5.16, 25), no longer under the law (ὑπὸ νόμον) because they are led by the Spirit (5.18). With this framework in mind, in order to establish a credible context for Paul's discussion of the Abba cry (4.6), I will now turn to consider the pneumatological claims in Paul's challenge to the Galatians in 3.1–5 and 3.14.

3.2.2. Galatians 3.1–5

Having established the broader context and conflict that Paul's letter aims to address, we can turn now the pneumatological discourse itself, which begins in Galatians 3.1–5. The Abba cry

[10] This reading would support Jewett's claim, "It appears that [the teachers] did not plan to oppose Paul or his theology directly but instead to offer a completion to it." Jewett 2002, 342.

in Galatians 4.6 is referenced as part of a larger argument that begins in 3.1–5.[11] These verses establish an important feature of Paul's pneumatological language in Galatians that will inform my reading of Galatians 4.6. More specifically, Paul's appeal to the Galatians in 3.1–5 sets an experiential context for reading the Abba cry.

In Galatians 3.1–5, Paul appeals directly to the Galatians' experience of the Spirit.[12] These verses are saturated in language associated with the supernatural.[13] Paul makes his central concern here clear: ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελεῖσθε; (3.3). Fee states, "This is the question to which the entire argument of the letter is devoted as a response."[14] The contrast between ἐνάρχομαι and ἐπιτελέω indicate that the question here, and throughout the letter, is not how one becomes a member of God's people — in Sanders' language, "getting in"[15] — but how one who is already a member of those people ought to live so as to move towards the proper goal of their new life in the Messiah.[16] The key distinguishing mark of that new life, Paul believes, is the presence of the Spirit.[17]

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[11] Whether scholars choose to view the end of the argument Paul starts in Galatians 3.1 at 4.7 (Martyn 1997; de Boer 2011), 4.11 (deSilva 2018), 4.20 (Fee 2007), or even later (Moo 2013), the point remains that the Abba cry in 4.6 belongs within the argumentative frame that begins in 3.1 and should be interpreted in that light.

[12] Lemmer 1992 and Neuman 1996.

[13] See esp. Lull 1980, *passim*; Twelftree 2013, 187–91; deSilva 2018, 270.

[14] Fee 1994, 384.

[15] Sanders 1977, 17.

[16] On the meaning of ἐπιτελέω here, see Martyn 1997, 292–94. Contra de Boer 2011, 179–80, who believes that the rhetoric of Paul's question in 3.2 implies that the rival teachers were claiming that Spirit reception depended on law observance. This seems unlikely. Rather, as I noted earlier, one could suppose that the opponents, familiar with the scriptural promises concerning God's Spirit (e.g., Ezek 36.26–27), believed that God would send his Spirit *so that* his people would live in step with the commands of Torah. Thus, they might have viewed Torah-observance, if not as the perfection/completion of this new life, at least as the natural and necessary consequence of the Spirit's outpouring.

[17] Rom 8.9. In Fee's words, the Spirit is understood by Paul as "the singular 'identity mark' of those who belong to Christ." Fee 2007, 106.

The Spirit's presence, however, is not something that can go unnoticed to the Galatians. Paul is not, in this passage, providing a theological interpretation for the alteration of an individual and internal psychological state.[18] He is making appeal to external, perceptible experiences of God's presence and power among the Galatians. As Fee says, "the entire argument runs aground if this appeal is not also to a reception of the Spirit that was *dynamically experienced*."[19] Dunn remarks, similarly, "The appeal is clearly to an event which Paul could expect them vividly to remember."[20] In other words, as corroborated by other Pauline texts, Paul believes that the proclamation of the gospel is accompanied by miraculous or charismatic manifestations of God's Spirit.[21]

That Paul associates these experiences with the Galatians is clear from his next two questions. First, he asks, τοσαῦτα ἐπάθετε εἰκῇ; (3.4). The verb πάσχω can mean "to suffer" and is used in that way throughout several New Testament texts,[22] but Fee notes several reasons for translating πάσχω in its more general sense of "experience".[23]

> Pauline usage, significant as this is in most circumstances, is in this case the *only* thing in favor of translating the verb "suffered." Against it are: (1) the clear sense of the context, in which the traditional meaning of the word makes eminently good sense; (2) that in contrast to most of Paul's other letters there is not the slightest hint in this one that the churches of

[18] Contra Engberg-Pedersen 2008, 152, who argues for reassessing religious experience in Paul as an individualistic and internal phenomenon.

[19] Fee 1994, 383 (emphasis mine).

[20] Dunn, 1993, 153. Cf. Twelftree 2013, 189, who refers to this initial experience as "a Galatian Pentecost." Also see Rabens 2012, 142.

[21] E.g., 1 Thess 1.5; 1 Cor 1.5–7; 2 Cor 12.12; Rom 15.18–19. See also the comments in Burton 1921, 151; Dunn 1975, 209–10; Betz 1979, 134–35; Lull 1980, 41; Bruce 1982, 151; Schlier 1989, 125; Fee 1994, 41–45, 354–57, 628–31; Twelftree 2013, 187–91; Keener 2019, 216–20.

[22] E.g., Matt 17.12, 15; Mark 8.31; 9.12; Luke 22.15; 24.26; Acts 1.3; 3.18; 17.3; 2 Cor 1.6; Phil 1.29; 1 Thess 2.14; Heb 2.18; 5.8; 13.12; 1 Pet 2.19–21; 4.1; 5.10; Rev 2.10.

[23] BDAG 785 lists "experience" as the first and most popular meaning of the term outside the NT (cf. LSJ 1346–47l; L&N 806) and cites Gal 3.4 as the only instance in the NT that has this meaning.

> Galatia were undergoing suffering, not to mention suffering τοσαῦτα (so many things); and (3) that the word order puts the τοσαῦτα in the emphatic first position, referring to what has just been said in vv. 2–3, not to "so many things in general."[24]

Paul's second question further confirms that he has in mind visible, miraculous manifestations when he appeals to the Galatians' reception of the Spirit: ὁ οὖν ἐπιχορηγῶν ὑμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν, ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως; (3.5). The present participles ἐπιχορηγῶν and ἐνεργῶν imply a continuation of this divine activity rather than a singular event accompanying their conversion-initiation.[25] While the verb ἐνεργέω can refer to more mundane works, Paul often uses it to describe the work of God and the Spirit.[26] The full construction ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις is paralleled in 1 Corinthians 12.10 by ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων ("working of miracles").[27] This makes it all the more likely that Paul is referring to ongoing miraculous and charismatic manifestations of the Spirit among the Galatians. Paul is calling the Galatians to recognize that these experiences not only occurred when they first responded with faith to the gospel Paul proclaimed, but they have continued occurring among them. All of this, from Paul's perspective, serves to confirm their identity as God's people, and it all happened before Paul's opponents started to convince the Galatians to come under the law.[28]

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[24] Fee 1994, 387; cf. Martyn 1997, 285; de Boer 2011, 180; Twelftree 2013, 189; deSilva 2018, 275–76. On reading πάσχω as suffering, see Dunne 2013.

[25] Though see Longenecker 1990, 105 and Moo 2013, 187, who argue that the ἐπιχορηγῶν refers to the reception of the Spirit at conversion. Both agree, however, that the ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν denotes the ongoing work of the Spirit amid the Galatian assemblies. Bruce is probably correct when he says, "Paul is not simply referring to something which the Galatians had witnessed once for all when first they believed the gospel." Bruce 1982, 151.

[26] 1 Cor 12.6, 10–11; Gal 2.8; Eph 1.11, 20; 3.20; Phil 2.13; Col 1.29.

[27] Bonnard 1972, 64. Cf. the similar claim in 2 Cor 12.12, where Paul describes the "signs of the apostle" (τὰ σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου), which were accomplished (κατειργάσθη) among the Corinthians (ἐν ὑμῖν) as "signs" (σημείοις), "wonders" (τέρασιν), and "miracles" (δυνάμεσιν), and Rom 15.19, where ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων and ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος are parallel expressions, indicating that Paul very closely associated the Spirit with the working of signs and wonders. Indeed, they cannot be separated from one another.

[28] As Keener 2019, 204, says, "The point of this section of the letter is that the Galatians already have all that Paul's opponents claim to offer them through circumcision; having received the Spirit (3:2), the Galatians are already Abraham's heirs (3:14), making the outward covenant sign superfluous."

In Galatians 3.1–5, Paul associates the experience of the Spirit — both the initial reception of the Spirit in response to the gospel (3.2–3) and the ongoing work of the Spirit in communal life and worship (3.5) — with external, perceptible manifestations of God's power.[29] This is an important point, since Paul's refers to the reception of the Spirit again in 4.6, suggesting that the Abba cry is best understood as an example of the ἐπιχορηγῶν and ἐνεργῶν in 3.5. If this is the case, Paul considered it to be an external, audible manifestation of God's power among the Galatians.[30] Before the Abba cry, however, Paul mentions the Spirit one other time in Galatians 3.14, and it is to that text that we now turn.

3.2.3. Galatians 3.14

As we continue tracking Paul's pneumatological discourse in Galatians, we come to the next passage that mentions the Spirit (3.14). Following his appeal to the Galatians' reception of the Spirit, along with the accompanying miracles and manifestations of the Spirit, Paul turns his attention to Abraham (3.6). One of the key concerns in Galatians is the identity of Abraham's children.[31] Paul aims to bring clarity to this concern by arguing that gentiles have now become recipients of the blessings associated with the Abrahamic promise through faith (3.7–8), and that blessing is realized, Paul argues, in the reception of the Spirit recalled in 3.1–5. Paul directly

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[29] Contra Engberg-Pedersen who virtually eliminates the charismatic dimension of the Spirit's activity by collapsing the impact of the Spirit on believers to "a mental attitude, a state of mind" (Engberg-Pedersen 2000, 160). See the criticism of Engberg-Pedersen's naturalistic reading of Paul's pneumatology in Kagarise 2014, 114–18.

[30] Paul's claim that the working of miracles have occurred ἐν ὑμῖν should be read as "among you" rather than "within you." See Burton 1921, 151; Bonnard 1972, 64; Longenecker 1990, 105.

[31] As Paul makes clear in 3.7, 9, 16, 29. On the importance of Abraham in the conflict Paul aims to address, see Hansen 1989; Calvert-Koyzis 2004; Trick 2010; and Bekken 2021.

connects the blessing of Abraham with the reception of the Spirit in 3.14 with two ἵνα clauses. The Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the law and became a curse for us (3.13), he says,

> ἵνα εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἡ εὐλογία τοῦ Ἀβραὰμ γένηται ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ
> ἵνα τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πνεύματος λάβωμεν διὰ τῆς πίστεως (3.14)

Here, Paul places the reception of the Spirit, which he recalled in 3.2–5, within a broader narrative context by recalling the promise of God to Abraham.[32] It is not clear whether the reception of the Spirit is identified with the fulfilment of the Abrahamic blessing for the gentiles, or if the outpouring of the Spirit is merely related in some way to the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise.[33] The double ἵνα clause would seem to indicate at least that Paul sees a strong connection between the coming of the Spirit and the fulfilment of the Abrahamic promise.[34] Perhaps as McCaulley has recently contended, we should understand the coming of the Spirit as the sign that the fulfilment of the Abrahamic promise has begun.[35]

Paul's merging of Abraham's blessing with the promised Spirit could explained by two factors: (1) the influence of Isaiah on Paul's gospel and (2) his understanding of the Spirit's connection to the eschatological inheritance believers receive because of the Messiah. As Hays has pointed out, Isaiah 44.3 brings together the language of the Abrahamic blessing ("seed") with the promise of the Spirit: ἐπιθήσω τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπὶ τὸ σπέρμα σου καὶ τὰς εὐλογίας μου ἐπὶ τὰ

[32] Hays 2002 draws attention to what he calls "the narrative substructure" of Paul's argument in Galatians.

[33] deSilva 2018, 303, identifies the two ἵνα clauses, saying, "The careful parallelism of the components of these two clauses underscores their mutually interpreting quality: they give expression to the same spiritual reality, the second giving more specific definition to the first. The Holy Spirit *is* the content of the blessing of Abraham that was promised to the nations" (emphasis original). Cf. Martyn 1997, 321; de Boer 2011, 214–15; Moo 2013, 214. Thiessen 2016, 108, makes the softer claim that reception of the Spirit and the Abrahamic blessings are intertwined themes in Paul's thought. Lee 2013, 4–11, provides a useful review of the interpretative options on this text.

[34] The promise of the Spirit throughout the prophets focuses primarily on Israel's reception of the Spirit when God restores them. See Is 32.15; 44.3; 59.21; Ezek 36.26–27; 37.14; 39.29; Joel 2.28–29.

[35] McCaulley 2019, 136–42.

τέκνα σου.[36] Because Paul interprets the "seed" (σπέρμα) of Abraham christologically (Gal 3.16), it is possible that Paul would have read a text such as this one from Isaiah messianically. Additionally, as is clear from elsewhere in his letters, Paul understands the Spirit as an already present and concretely experienced foretaste of the eschatological hope that Christians share.[37] This eschatological hope includes the ἐλπίδα δικαιοσύνης, for which they wait eagerly through the Spirit by faith (5.5), and the καινή κτίσις (6.15). They share in this eschatological inheritance because of their incorporation into the Messiah (3.29; 4.7; cf. Rom 8.17), the singular heir of the Abrahamic promise (Gal 3.16, 19), through their baptism (3.26–27) and the reception of his Spirit (4.6).

Galatians 3.14, thus, places the outpouring of the Spirit into a broader narrative context. Paul connects the current reception of the Spirit among God's people, Jew and gentile alike, with the fulfillment of divine promise given in the past. The very fact that gentiles have received the spirit (3.2, 4), with undeniable demonstrations of divine power accompanying this reception (3.5), leaves no question in Paul's mind that they have become part of God's people, children of Abraham (3.7, 29), and thereby receive the Abrahamic blessing.

3.2.4. Excursus on the Pronominal Shifts in Galatians 3.1–4.7

Paul's argument beginning from Galatians 3.1 contains a variety of pronominal shifts between first and second person. While he begins 3.1–5 by addressing the Galatians in the second

[36] Hays 2002, 182; Morales 2010, 110. Cf. Harmon 2010 has argued strongly for the influence of Isaiah throughout Paul's argument in Galatians.

[37] This is clearest in Paul's references to the Spirit as ἀπαρχή ("first fruits") in Rom 8.23 and ἀρραβών ("down payment") in 2 Cor 1.22; 5.5 (cf. Eph 1.13–14). Horn 1992a, 389–94; Christoph 2005, 281–91; Wolter 2015, 161–64; Moo 2022, 465–66.

person, he shifts to first-person language in 3.13–14.[38] Paul makes a similar shift later in our key text for this chapter.

> So also with *us* (ἡμεῖς); while *we were* (ἦμεν) children, *we were enslaved* (ἤμεθα δεδουλωμένοι) to the elemental spirits of the world. But when the fullness of time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order that he might deliver those who were under the law, so that *we might receive* (ἀπολάβωμεν) adoption as sons. And because *you are* (ἐστε) children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into *our* (ἡμῶν) hearts, crying, "Abba, Father!" So you are (εἶ) no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God (Gal 4.3–7)

Paul introduces these first-person plural pronouns and verbs into his argument in 3.13–14. While a standard interpretation represented throughout the commentaries on Galatians is that Paul's shift to first-person plural should be read inclusively — i.e., Paul is referring to all believing Christians, Jew and gentile alike[39] — Bradley Trick has recently contended that the argument of Galatians 3–4 can be coherently read if we assume that all of the first-person plurals refer to Jewish believers alone and not the gentile Galatians.[40] The first-person plural in 3.13, he argues, makes most sense as a reference to Jewish believers and not gentiles, since Paul refers to the curse of the law, which does not apply to gentiles.[41] If this is the case, then those who argue for an inclusive reading of 3.14b would have to believe Paul suddenly shifts the referent of the first-person from Jewish believers to all believers (Jew and gentile) in 3.14b,[42] which is less likely than the view that Paul

[38] Cf. the more sudden shift from first person in 3.24–25 to second person in 3.26-29. Thiessen 2016, 130.

[39] Fee 1994, 392, represents this perspective well: "The sudden appearance of "us/we" [in 3.13–14] is noteworthy. To this point it has all been 'you' (Gentile Galatians).' But when he turns to *apply* the biblical text, Paul becomes inclusive, 'Christ freed *us*.' See those cited in n. 38 below as well.

[40] Trick 2010, 179–81.

[41] Ibid., 179. There are many scholars who have argued that Paul *is* including gentiles within those who are redeemed from the law's curse. E.g., Bonnard 1972, 68–69; Sanders 1983, 68–69; Schlier 1989, 136–37; Martyn 1997, 334–36; de Boer 2011, 209–16.

[42] The view taken by Dahl 1977, 132; Donaldson 1986. While Wright argued in favour of reading the "we" in Gal 4.14b as a reference to believing Jews (Wright 1991, 154), in his more recent commentary, he says, "the 'we' in verse 14 must be *both* Jewish believers *and* gentile believers" (Wright 2021, 214–15).

has the same referent in mind throughout 3.13–14.[43] Thus, Trick argues, Paul is carrying the same "we" from Galatians 2.15 — "we ourselves are Jews and not gentile sinners" — into his argument concerning Abrahamic descent in chapters 3 and 4.[44]

For the pronominal shifts in 4.3–7 reviewed above, Trick argues for a similar interpretation, with the first-person pronouns and verbs being a reference to Jewish believers and the second-person terms referring to the gentile Galatians.[45] Thus, Paul is saying that when the fullness of time arrived, God sent his Son to redeem those under the law (i.e. Jews), "in order that we (Jews) might receive adoption as sons. And because you (gentiles) are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our (Jews) hearts, crying, 'Abba, Father." This reading from Trick poses a potential challenge to an important element of my taxonomy for pneumatic prayer, namely, that pneumatic prayer was a common occurrence for believers from Paul's view. If Trick is correct, then Paul is referring only to Jewish believers. I need, therefore, to say a few words about why I find Trick's argument concerning the pronominal shifts unconvincing. I will first summarize Trick's reading of Galatians 4.6 before turning to consider its problems.

Trick argues that what he labels the "gentile-inclusive interpretation," which says the "we" in 4.6 is the Jew-and-gentile community in the Messiah, creates "an unsolvable logistical problem."[46] He states as follows: "if the subject of ἐστε in 4:6a and the referent of ἡμῶν in 4:6b overlap, then sonship must *precede* the reception of the Spirit, but it is presumably the reception

[43] Trick 2010, 179–80.

[44] Ibid., 180. A similar argument for seeing the first-person language of 3.13–14, 24–25, and 4.6 as exclusively a reference to Jewish Christians can be found in Morales 2010, 113–14, 126–27.

[45] Trick 2010, 385–390.

[46] Ibid., 388.

of the Spirit that makes one a son of God (cf. Rom 8:15)."[47] Trick suggests that his reading, in which the subject of ἐστε in 4:6a and the referent of ἡμῶν in 4:6b are distinct, causes the logical problem to vanish. In this view, Paul is following the logic of 3.14 (according to Trick's reading)[48] and suggesting that the Jewish people receive the Spirit *as a result of* gentiles being made children of God.[49]

Trick's argument concerning the referent of the first-person pronouns and verbs in 3.13–14 and 4.6 (as well as 3.24–25) depends in part on separating this section of the letter out from the rest. By the end of the letter, in 6.9–10 ("so then, let *us* not grow weary…"), there is no question that Paul is using the first person inclusively of himself and his gentile audience. As we work our way backwards, the same could be said of the first-person plurals in 5.25–26 ("If *we* live by the Spirit…") and 5.5. ("For through the Spirit, by faith, *we* await eagerly the hope of righteousness"). Moving back to the end of chapter 4, Paul says, "Therefore, brothers, *we* are not children of the slave woman but of the free woman" (4.31). Paul is almost certainly using the first-person plural inclusively, as his statement that they are children of promise like Isaac in 4.28 shows the gentiles are included in this status. So then, the question of pronominal referents has to do only with the argument that runs from Galatians 3.1–4.7.

Trick's appeal to the use of the first-person plurals in 2.15–17 as a basis for seeing a similar referent for the first-person plurals in 3.13–14, 24–25 and 4.6 needs more justification than he provides.[50] This is because Galatians 2.11–21 functions rhetorically as a separate unit from the

[47] Ibid. Trick is not the first to note this problem. E.g., .

[48] Trick 2010, 181–206.

[49] For Trick, Paul believed that "the Jews receive the Spirit of divine sonship only by effectively becoming gentiles." Ibid., 390.

[50] Trick reaches for 2.15–17 primarily due to the interpretative challenges he sees in an inclusive reading of 3.13–14 — e.g., asserting that gentiles are under the law's curse, etc. But he does not argue why it should be that Paul's

argument that begins in chapter 3.[51] An alternative proposal would be to look back instead to a similar shift from second person to first person that occurs in the beginning of the letter itself. Paul begins with his customary greeting: "Grace to you (ὑμῖν) and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus the Messiah" (1.3) but then he shifts to third person, "who gave himself for our sins (ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν) in order that he might set us free from the present evil age according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory unto the ages of ages, amen" (1.4–5). Paul's shift of pronouns here at the beginning of his letter could be explained by the fact that Paul is utilizing confessional language. Some have even suggested that Paul might be quoting early Christian tradition, liturgy, or a hymn, especially given the ending which ascribes glory to God and concludes with ἀμήν.[52] In fact, Paul often defaults to first-person plural when his language takes on a confessional appearance, especially when he speaks about what the Messiah or the Spirit have done.[53] In some of these cases, Paul switches to an inclusive use of "we" after using "we" in an exclusive way to refer to himself and his companions or the other apostles.[54]

narration of his argument from a dispute in the past, in which he used first-person plural language, should have any bearing on how we read first-person plural language Paul employs as part of an argument given to the Galatians at a later time.

[51] Keener 2019, 167. As deSilva 2018, 213, says, "Paul himself contextualizes 2:15–21 in the conflict that erupted in Antioch and presents it as a response specifically to that historical conflict — though in full awareness that this response (like the Antioch incident itself) has direct bearing on what is also happening in the congregations of Galatia." Barclay 2015, 370, points to several terminological links between 2.14 and 2.15–17 to demonstrate that these two segments should be viewed as part of the same event. Whether Paul is quoting his argument or merely summarizing it, his words in 2.15–17 belong in the narration of that past conflict.

[52] E.g., Martyn 1997, 87–89; de Boer 2011, 27.

[53] E.g., Rom 5.1–11; 6.4–8; 7.5–6; 8.12–17; 14.7–9, 10; 1 Cor 1.18; 5.7–8; 8.6; 12.13; 2 Cor 1.21–22; 3.18; 5.1–5, 18, 21; Phil 3.3, 20–21; 1 Thess 1.10; 4.14, 15–17; 5.9–10.

[54] E.g., 2 Cor 5.21, where Paul shifts from an exclusive "we" in 5.20 (Paul and the other apostles) to an inclusive one in 5.21 with the confession about Jesus. Another example would be 1 Thess 4.14–17, where *twice* Paul switches from an exclusive "we" (Paul and his companions) to an inclusive one.

With this in mind, it is possible that in Galatians 3.13–14, 24–25, and 4.6 Paul is resorting to the use of the first person because he is making similar confessional claims.[55] For example, in 3.13, when Paul says the Messiah "redeemed us" (ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασεν) by becoming a curse "for us" (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν), he is echoing language he uses elsewhere in his letters to describe the work of the Messiah "for us" (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν), and in each of these other cases, Paul is using the pronoun ἡμῶν inclusively of Jew and gentile believers.[56] Similarly, when Paul refers to Spirit reception with the first-person plural in 3.14b and 4.6, it is perfectly plausible that he is reverting to his customary use of the first person in confessional speech.[57]

For these reasons, I find Trick's proposal regarding the pronominal shifts in Galatians 3.1–4.7 unpersuasive. It is more likely that Paul is doing in Galatians what he does in many of his other letters when he shifts into first-person speech to make confessional claims about the Messiah and the Spirit. Thus, Trick's proposal does not present a challenge to my taxonomy for pneumatic prayer. In the next section, I turn to establish how the Abba cry conforms with my proposed taxonomy for pneumatic prayer.

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[55] Fee 1994, 392, makes this point in his exposition of Gal 3.13–14. Others who recognize Paul's use of confessional traditions in Gal 3.13–14 and 4.4–6 include Kramer 1966, 111–14; Schweizer 1966, 199–210; Wengst 1972, 59; Dahl 1977, 132; Martyn 1997, 406–8; Hays 2002, 73–74; de Boer 2011, 262.

[56] Rom 5.8; 8.32; 1 Cor 15.3; 2 Cor 5.21; Gal 1.4; 1 Thess 5.10. Trick wants to object that Paul would not place gentiles under the curse of the law, but this overlooks the fact that Paul says it is ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου who are under a curse (Gal 3.10), not the Jewish people exclusively. Paul's language leaves room for gentiles who wish to come under the law and its practices. They too, in this reading, would be under the curse of the law. Cf. Das 2003, 123–25; Gombis 2007, 90–91; de Boer 2011, 198; Moo 2013, 201.

[57] Paul uses the first-person plural in an inclusive way in confessional texts about the Spirit, for example, in Rom 5.5; 8.12–17; 1 Cor 12.13; 2 Cor 5.5.

3.2.5. Summary

In this section, I have analysed the pneumatological discourse in Galatians leading up to the Abba cry in 4.6. I have argued that the reception of the Spirit is an important element of Paul's argument to counter the influence of his opponents. He begins his primary argument in the letter by appealing to the Galatians' reception of the Spirit in 3.1–5. There Paul draws attention to the ongoing, concrete manifestations of the divine presence and power among the Galatians (3.2–5). Paul's reference to these charismatic experiences that accompanied reception of the Spirit provides an experiential context for the reader, one which, I believe, they were expected to recall when Paul mentions the Abba cry in 4.6. Related to this, the sending of the Spirit is joined in Paul's thinking to the fulfilment of divine promise in 3.14. The Spirit's outpouring on communities like those in Galatia signifies that the time of new creation has come (6.15), and God is bringing new life to those who experience deliverance from the present evil age (cf. 1.4). While 3.1–5 provides a context for understanding *the experiential grounding* for Paul's pneumatological appeals, 3.14 supplies *the narrative logic* for the central argument of the letter concerning the inclusion of gentiles in the blessing of Abraham's lineage. With this context in mind, I will now turn our key text in Galatians 4.6 to demonstrate how the Abba cry fits my proposed taxonomy for pneumatic prayer.

3.3. DESCRIPTIVE FEATURES OF THE ABBA CRY

Having examined the pneumatological discourse leading up to Paul's claims about the Abba cry, I will now turn to Galatians 4.6 and demonstrate its compatibility with my proposed taxonomy for pneumatic prayer.[58] As I stated in the introductory chapter, I believe the pneumatic

[58] With his words in 4.7, Paul rounds off the argument he started back in 3.1. See Wright 1991, 154; Fee 1994, 399; Hays 2000, 280; de Boer 2011, 249; Moo 2013, 257.

prayers share descriptive features and theological connections in common that justify a taxonomic classification of these experiences. In this section, I show that the Abba cry in Galatians 4.6 possesses all three descriptive features of pneumatic prayer: it is (1) a common experience that is (2) perceptible and is (3) viewed as an instance of Spirit-inspired prayer.[59]

3.3.1. The Abba Cry as Common Experience

According to my proposed taxonomy, Paul viewed pneumatic prayer as a common occurrence in early Christianity. Pneumatic prayer was not, in other words, an experience limited to a small number of believers. In this section, I present three pieces of evidence point to the conclusion that Paul viewed the Abba cry as a common experience for believers.

First, there are indications that Paul expected his Galatian audience to be familiar with the cry. In other words, he is not in 4.6 introducing them to something they have never experienced. This can be seen from the parallels between Paul's description of the Abba cry and his earlier description of pneumatic experiences (3.1–5) with which he expected his Galatian audience to be familiar. In 4.1–7, Paul continues the argument he began in 3.1–5, coming back full circle to where he started, the reception of the Spirit by faith. Both the Abba cry and the ἐπιχορηγῶν and ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις mentioned in 3.5 follow the Galatians' reception of the Spirit. In 3.2, Paul asks, "Did you receive the Spirit (τὸ πνεῦμα ἐλάβετε) by works of the law or by the hearing of faith?" He speaks of their "beginning" with the Spirit (ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι) in 3.3, referring again to Spirit

[59] Galatians 4.1–7 presents several interpretative difficulties. Paul's two analogies in the passage — an orphaned child receiving inheritance when they come of age (4.1–2) and adoption as sons (4.3–7) — appear incongruous with one another, especially if one assumes that Paul has real Greco-Roman guardianship practices in mind. See Scott 1992,137–39; Martyn 1997, 386–87; de Boer 2011, 259; Moo 2013, 259; deSilva 2018, 344. The latter metaphor of adoption has been read in a variety of ways, both because of disputes about its background and the function of the metaphor more generally in Paul's thinking. Cf. Byrne 1979; Scott 1992; Burke 2006; Lewis 2016; Heim 2017. Without attempting to minimize the importance of these exegetical conundrums, their resolution is not critical as a prerequisite for the present analysis, which will focus exclusively on Paul's description of the Abba cry as an experience of the Spirit.

reception. Paul's use of the aorist verbs ἐλάβετε and ἐναρξάμενοι in 3.2–3 point back to the Galatians' response to Paul's gospel with faith. These actions precede, in other words, the ongoing (present tense) supply of the Spirit and working of miracles in 3.5. In the same way, in 4.6, Paul says, "God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts," referring again to Spirit reception.[60] This past tense, aorist verb (ἐξαπέστειλεν) is again followed by a present participle (κρᾶζον), just as the present participles ἐπιχορηγῶν and ἐνεργῶν follow the aorist verbs in 3.5.[61] The parallel between the passages is striking. Paul moves from aorist verbs to describe the Galatians' reception of the Spirit in the past to present tense verbs to depict the ongoing activity of the Spirit in their midst. Just as Paul expects the Galatians to be familiar with the experiences of the Spirit he has in mind in 3.5, so too with the Abba cry. Thus, the flow of Paul's argument throughout 3.1–4.7, coupled with the parallel descriptions in 3.2–5 and 4.6 of spirit reception and the experiences that follow, leads to the conclusion that the Abba cry is also a familiar experience of the Spirit to the Galatian readers.

The second piece of evidence that Paul viewed the Abba cry as a common experience for early Christians is the fact that he refers to it in another of his letters (Rom 8.15). In the remainder of this chapter, I interpret Paul's description and theological interpretation of the Abba cry in

[60] Paul's focus in Gal 3.2–3 is on the Galatians "receiving" the Spirit, while his focus in 4.6 is on God "sending" the Spirit. While the former is focused on human reception and the latter on divine sending, they are both referring to the same moment when the Spirit comes to dwell in the heart of the believer. Cf. the parallel language Paul uses in Rom 5.5.

[61] There has been considerable attention given to the question of how Greek verbs relate to tense (or temporal reference), especially since the work of Porter 1989 and Fanning 1990 brought welcome attention to the prominence of verbal aspect in the Greek verbal system, but from very different perspectives, especially regarding the question of tense. Other studies have since followed Porter's view that the Greek verbal system is tenseless, i.e., temporal reference is not encoded in Greek verbs, whether in the indicative or a non-indicative mood. E.g., Decker 2001; Campbell 2007; 2008. This view of the Greek verb as tenseless is unpersuasive. It remains highly likely that, for example, the use of the augment encodes past temporal reference in indicative verbs, while verbs without an augment refer primarily to non-past events (presuming a distinction between semantic meanings and pragmatic effects, such as the use of the "historical present"). See Ellis, Aubrey, and Dubis 2016; von Siebenthal 2019, 98. See also the collection of essays in Runge and Fresch 2016.

Galatians 4.6 within the context of Galatians rather than primarily in conversation with Romans 8.15. On the question of the familiarity of the Abba cry, however, one must consider the fact that Paul refers to the experience in a letter he composed for a church he had not yet visited.[62] By looking only at Galatians 4.6, one can, at best, surmise that the Galatian Christians were familiar with what Paul describes (see above). However, by including the evidence from Romans 8.15, the conclusion that the Abba cry was a more common and widespread pneumatic experience appears much more plausible. Paul refers, in both Galatians and Romans, to an experience of the Spirit that results in the believer crying out to God, in a language not their own, as "Abba".

A third and final piece of evidence for the commonality of the Abba cry requires some explanation. The practice of referring to God as "Father" is a widespread one in early Christianity.[63] This practice is undeniably pre-Pauline, possibly deriving from Jesus' own frequent reference to God as Father and the accompanying belief of early Christians in Jesus as God's unique Son.[64] However, those two beliefs — the belief in God as Father and in Jesus as the Son — do not explain how or why early Christians began to refer to God as "our Father" in prayer and worship. We might expect them to say only ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, as Paul does elsewhere in his letters, to avoid infringing on the unique relation of sonship that Jesus has with God.[65] Instead, Paul refers numerous times in the opening of his letters to God as "our

[62] Meeks 1983, 88; Fee 1994, 410; Keener 2019, 346.

[63] The passages here are too numerous to list in full. A representative sample outside of Paul's letters would include Matt 6.9; 23.9; Mark 11.25; Luke 11.2; 12.32; John 4.21, 23; 14.16; 16.23; Acts 2.33; Jas 1.27; 3.9; 1 Pet 1.2, 3, 17; 2 Pet 1.17; 1 John 1.2, 3; 2.1, 15, 16; 3.1; 4.14; 2 John 3, 4, 9; Jude 1; 1 Clem. 23.1; 29.1; 56.16; 2 Clem. 3.1; 8.4; 10.1; 14.1; Ign. *Eph.* 4.2; 21.2; Ign. *Magn.* 5.2; Ign. *Trall*. 12.2; 13.3; Ign. *Rom*. 7.2; Ign. *Phld.* 1.1; Did. 7.1, 3; 8.2; 9.2, 3; 10.2; Barn. 2.9; 12.8.

[64] Hurtado notes, "In the NT, it is first and foremost in relationship to Jesus that God is 'Father.'" Hurtado 2010, 39. Cf. Dunn 1975, 11–40; Gorman 2001, 12.

[65] E.g., 2 Cor 1.3; 11.31; Eph 1.3. Cf. Ign. *Eph.* 2.1; Ign. *Magn*. 3.1; Ign. *Trall.* 9.2; Ign. *Phld.* 7.2; Mart. Pol. 14.1.

Father" without needing to qualify his claim.[66] The only hint we get *in Paul's letters* of an explanation for this shift to speaking of God as the Father of believers is his belief in believers' adoption as sons expressed in the Abba cry texts (Rom 8.14–17; Gal 4.4–7).[67] It seems possible, therefore, that this pneumatic experience, where the Spirit inspired believers to cry out to God with the same form of address as Jesus, served as a catalyst for the belief that believers had been adopted by God and that God was consequently the Father of believers also and not the Father of Jesus only.[68] The widespread nature of the belief in God as the Father of believers would therefore depend on the widespread nature of the experience that served as a catalyst for the rise of that belief, namely the Abba cry and its interpretation in relation to the believer's adoption.

In this section, I have presented three pieces of evidence in favour of the view that Paul understood the Abba cry to be a common Christian experience. First, I showed that Galatians 4.6 follows the circles back to the theme of Spirit reception that began Paul's argument in 3.1–5. Paul follows the same flow of that earlier passage and moves from speaking about the Galatians' reception of the Spirit to the ongoing work of the Spirit, and in both cases, he expects his readers to be familiar with these pneumatic experiences. Second, Paul's reference to this experience in

[66] Rom 1.7; 1 Cor 1.3; 2 Cor 1.2; Gal 1.3, 4; Eph 1.2; Phil 1.2; 4.20; Col 1.2; 1 Thess 1.3; 3.11, 13; 2 Thess 1.1, 2; 2.16; Phlm 3.

[67] It is, of course, possible that Paul and his communities inherited an earlier tradition of referring to God as "our Father" from Judean believers. The problem with this proposal, however, is that the evidence for it is thin. Paul nowhere gives any hint that he is familiar with, for example the prayer that Jesus is said to have taught his disciples (Matt 6.9–13; Luke 11.2–4), although he is familiar with other traditions about Jesus (e.g., Rom 1.3; 12.14–21; 14.17; 1 Cor 7.10–11; 9.14; 11.23–26; 15.3–7; 1 Thess 5.15). Interestingly, throughout its historical account of the early Judean Christians, the book of Acts never has believers refer to God as "Father" after the Pentecost narrative, where Peter refers once in Acts 2.33 to "the promise of the Father" simply echoing Jesus' words earlier in 1.4. Instead, God is called "the God of our fathers (i.e., ancestors)" (3.13; 5.30; 7.32; cf. Paul's use of the phrase in 22.14; 26.6). Yet, when we come to Paul's letters, the identification of God as "Father" is pervasive, *and* Paul provides, in Gal 4.6 and Rom 8.15, a theological justification for why believers relate to God in this way, grounded in an experience of God's Spirit.

[68] Hurtado 2010, 40–41.

another of his letters, especially one written to a community he did not found and had not visited yet, adds much more plausibility to my contention that the Abba cry was a common early Christian experience, from Paul's perspective. Third, the early Christian identification of God as "our Father" is explained in Paul's letters by appeal to the believer's adoption, which is evidenced by the Abba cry. The widespread identification of God as "Father" across the Pauline letters without qualification, therefore, evidences the widespread nature of the experience, which, according to Paul bears witness to the reality of this new relation with God.

3.3.2. The Perceptibility of the Abba Cry

In this section, I turn to consider the second descriptive feature in my taxonomy of pneumatic prayer: perceptibility. To establish the perceptibility of the Abba cry, I will consider whether this cry was something that early Christians spoke out loud, or whether Paul might be alluding to a more inward and private, or psychological, experience of the divine presence.

Paul says that God sent the Spirit εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν. This might lead some to the conclusion that the Abba cry is more about an inward sense of sonship than an outward experience.[69] However, this would misconstrue Paul's meaning here. Paul elsewhere describes the sending of the Spirit into the human καρδία.[70] Related to this is Paul's claim that God's Spirit indwells believers.[71] Within the context of Galatians, this sending of the Spirit εἰς τὰς καρδίας

[69] E.g., Engberg-Pedersen 2008, who consistently reads Paul's religious experience language in internal/psychological terms. Moo 2013, 270, refers to the experience as "a word picture to convey the deep and emotional reaction within the believer's heart" in response to the revelation that they are God's sons. De Boer 2011, 265, recognizes the importance of the Abba cry as a pneumatic experience, but still calls it "the internal testimony of the Spirit." Ramsaran 2012, 174, describes the cry as "a characteristic 'inward' experience and response in the heart of believers." Rabens 2012, 154, calls the Abba cry a "nonverbal, identity-forming" experience.

[70] Rom 5.5; 2 Cor 1.22. Cf. Rom 2.29; 8.27; 2 Cor 3.3, which similarly describe the Spirit as working in human hearts. Paul could have in mind the promises that the sending of God's Spirit to restore Israel would include the transplantation of a new heart (Ezek 11.19; 36.26).

[71] Rom 8.9, 11; 1 Cor 3.16.

ἡμῶν relates to Paul's earlier claim that "the Messiah lives in me" (ζῇ δὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ Χριστός; Gal 2.20).[72] In light of Galatians 4.6 and other similar texts like Romans 8.8–9, what Paul means by this phrase is probably that the Messiah lives in him — and, by extension, in all believers — by means of the Spirit.

Three pieces of evidence point in favour of the Abba cry being a real, audible cry experienced by early Christians when they received the Spirit. First, Paul's use of the verb κράζω would be most unusual if the experience to which he refers were only an inward, silent one. Admittedly, Paul does not use κράζω often, and the fact that he refers to the Spirit as the one crying in this passage (unlike in Romans) might lead one to think that the cry is something believers cannot hear. However, outside Paul's letters, κράζω is used almost exclusively in contexts which indicate a loud cry, and there is little reason to doubt (especially considering the parallel passage in Rom 8.15) that Paul has such an audible cry in mind here. Elsewhere in the New Testament, κράζω is used to describe the shrieks of those who are possessed by demons as well as the shouting of crowds.[73] The verb can also refer to the loud cry of a pregnant woman experiencing birth pangs.[74] What is clear from these cases is that the verb implies exclamatory, audible utterances. Thus, Paul's choice of verb evidences the perceptibility of the pneumatic experience.

Second, as we have seen already, Paul's charge in Galatians 3.2–5 implies that the Galatians could recall the various miraculous signs and wonders that God performed in their midst when the Spirit was given to them. These manifestations of the Spirit could have included any number of the more dramatic workings of the Spirit attested elsewhere in Paul, such as the

[72] Gal 1.16; Eph 3.17. Cf. Rom 8.9–11 where the indwelling of the Spirit and the Messiah are almost interchangeable.

[73] For the cries of the demon-possessed, see Mark 5.5, 7; 9.26; Luke 9.39; cf. Acts 16.17. For the shouting of crowds, see Mark 11.9; 15.13–14; Acts 19.28, 32, 34; 21.28, 36.

[74] Isa 26.17; Rev 12.2.

charismatic gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12, especially ecstatic or inspired utterances and miracles.[75] Because Paul is here likewise recalling the initial reception of the Spirit,[76] as I have argued above, it is probable that the Abba cry was one such experience for the Galatian assemblies. In that case, we have good reason for reading this as a reference to an audible, observable religious experience that Paul is appealing to as part of his argument for the Galatians' status as children of Abraham (Gal 3.29) and sons of God (4.6–7).

Third, in the previous chapter, I showed that the Abba cry is best understood as an aberrant form of prayer.[77] In reviewing other aberrant forms of prayer, I noted how abnormal silent prayer was in Paul's world.[78] Silent prayer was typically motivated by the desire not to be heard by others, particularly if the petition being offered was embarrassing or unacceptable. Those who would interpret Paul's claims about the Abba cry as a purely inward or psychological experience, would have to believe that this is a silent form of prayer.[79] While, as I showed in the previous chapter, there were some whose theological and philosophical beliefs about the gods caused them to view silent prayer in a more positive light, there is no philosophical or theological belief in this passage that would cause one to suspect Paul has a silent experience in mind.

As with the commonality of the Abba cry above, here I have presented three pieces of evidence in favour of the view that the Abba cry was a perceptible experience of the divine Spirit. First, the verb κράζω implies an audible cry. Second, as we saw in the previous section, Paul's

[75] Twelftree 2013, 187–91.

[76] Eckey 2010, 223.

[77] See section 2.3.1.1. above.

[78] See the discussion in section 2.3.2.1.

[79] Especially considering that in the parallel passage (Rom 8.15) it is believers who cry. Thus, Paul views believers as participants in the Abba cry, and not merely as the receptacles for the Spirit who cries.

comparison of the Abba cry with the various manifestations of the Spirit within the Galatian community implies perceptibility. It is because the Galatians could witness for themselves the ongoing work of the Spirit that Paul can appeal to these experiences as the basis for his argument against them coming under the Mosaic law. Third, if Paul were referring to a silent form of prayer, this would have been highly unusual in antiquity, and one would expect some evidence from Paul that his theological beliefs justified this practice, but here in Galatians, no such evidence is present. We therefore have good reasons to think that the Abba cry fits my proposed taxonomy of pneumatic prayer as a perceptible pneumatic experience.

3.3.3. The Abba Cry as Inspired Prayer

We come now to the third descriptive feature of pneumatic prayer, which is that pneumatic prayer is described as Spirit-inspired prayer. As with the previous two descriptive features, again, three pieces of evidence suggest that Paul viewed the Abba cry in this way.

First, the Abba cry, for Paul, results from the reception of the Spirit and the believer's adoption.[80] God "sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts", and then the Spirit cries "Abba, Father." In this text, we have an experience of the Spirit that manifests in speech. Many early Jewish texts depict acts of inspired speech, whether prophetic, praise, or prayer as being the consequence of Spirit reception or the Spirit's influence.[81] Paul himself, elsewhere in his letters, associates

[80] On the meaning of ὅτι δέ ἐστε υἱοί, see n. 119 below.

[81] E.g., Num 11.17, 25; 23.5; 24.2; 1 Sam 10.6, 10; Isa 59.21; Ezek 2.2; 3.24; 11.5; Hos 9.7; Zech 12.10. The Spirit is labelled "the Spirit of prophecy" in Jub 31.12; Philo, *Flight* 186; *Moses* 1.277 and throughout the Targums (e.g., *Tg. Ps.-J. Gen.* 41.38; *Tg. Onq. Gen.* 41.38; *Tg. Onq. Num.* 11.25–26, 29; 24.2). Cf. 1QS 8.15–16. Josephus inserts the Spirit into narratives where prophecy is mentioned (*Ant.* 4.108, 165; 5.285; 6.222–23; 8.295; 9.168) and prophecy into narratives where the Spirit is mentioned (*Ant.* 4.119–20; 6.166). For Philo, see *Spec. Laws* 4.48; *Moses* 1.175, 277; *Heir* 265. On the Spirit of prophecy in early Judaism, see Menzies 1994, 48–82; Turner 1996, 82–138; Stronstad 2012, 15–35.

prophetic speech with the Spirit.[82] Paul's description here of a πνεῦμα being sent with a resultant cry following would have signalled some form of Spirit-inspired speech for readers familiar with these Jewish traditions.[83]

A second piece of evidence in favour of viewing the Abba cry as an instance of inspired prayer is the way Paul attributes the agency of the cry to both the Spirit (Gal 4.6) and the believers who receive the Spirit (Rom 8.15).[84] This attribution of agency to the Spirit precludes those interpretations of Paul's pneumatology that limit πνεῦμα to an impersonal lifegiving energy or empowering force of some kind.[85] Paul here describes the activities of the Spirit in ways that are "personal" because the Spirit has its own agency and bears the capacity for relationship, not least with God's Son.[86] The twofold agency, however, of the believer and the Spirit, if we take both

[82] 1 Cor 12.10, 28; 1 Thess 5.19–20. Cf. Rom 12.6; Eph 3.5.

[83] Those familiar with at least one theory of divination, recorded for us in Plutarch (*Def. orac.* 435a), by which the priestess at Delphi was inspired to speak as a result of inhaling vapours identified with πνεῦμα would also have reason to suspect Paul is referring to inspired speech here. The key distinction, as we have already noted (see section 2.3.3. above) is that Paul attributes the cry to the Spirit itself as an agent, implying that he does not conceive of πνεῦμα in exactly the same way as the Stoics who theorized about divination in this way.

[84] It is noteworthy that Paul can attribute the speech to the Spirit itself. Keener 2019, 348. While the association between the Spirit and inspired speech, even in the form of loud cries (e.g., 1 En. 71.11), has strong precedent in other early Jewish sources, very few references exist which claim that the Spirit speaks. It is more common to find references to the Spirit speaking in other early Christian literature. E.g., Acts 8.29; 10.19; 13.2; Rom 8.26–27; Heb 3.7; Rev 2.7, 11, 17, 29; 3.6, 13, 22.

[85] The agency of the Spirit's redemptive work is too often overlooked by those who see in Paul a clear indebtedness to Stoic conceptions of πνεῦμα. E.g., Johnson Hodge 2007, 75–76; Thiessen 2016, 111–18. Thiessen asserts, "If Paul expected that his readers would understand *pneuma* in a broadly Stoic way, and had a problem with this understanding, he presumably would have gone out of his way to correct any such misunderstandings. In contrast, Paul consistently portrays the reception of the *pneuma* in ways that coincide quite closely with Stoic conceptions of both *pneuma* and *krasis*" (Thiessen 2016, 114). However, it is precisely at this crucial point in Galatians 4.6, where Paul attributes an agency to the Spirit as a divine actor who is sent into God's world from without to produce an action from within, that he is most inconsistent with Stoic thinking. For a criticism of those who argue for Paul's indebtedness to Stoicism, see Wright 2013a, 1369–71, 1383–1406.

[86] The Spirit is identified as the τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ in 4.6, the genitive implying some kind of close relationship, but the Spirit is not identified as the Son. The two distinct "sendings" of the Son and Spirit in 4.4 and 4.6 resist any attempt to identify the Son and Spirit with one another.

Abba cry texts together, is reminiscent again of Jewish prophetic traditions, in which the words of God and the words of the prophet are one and the same.[87]

A third piece of evidence in favour of seeing the Abba cry as Spirit-inspired prayer can be found in the use of the verb κράζω, which is sometimes used in prophetic contexts or Spirit-possession contexts.[88] Paul's only other use of the verb κράζω in his letters (apart from the parallel pneumatic prayer text in Romans 8.15) is in Romans 9.27, where Paul says that Isaiah "cries out" concerning Israel before he quotes from Isaiah 10.22. This is significant for establishing the Abba cry as inspired speech, since Paul uses the verb κράζω to describe a prophetic utterance. The verb κράζω also occasionally appears in contexts where someone who is possessed by a Spirit cries out in a loud voice.[89] Some commentators have argued, on this basis, that the Abba cry was an ecstatic experience.[90] If by "ecstatic" one means the relinquishing of human agency to a/the Spirit, then the Abba cry was likely not ecstatic, especially if one is permitted at this point to read Galatians 4.6 alongside Romans 8.15, where agency in the cry is explicitly given to believers. In this case, James Dunn's category of "charismatic consciousness" proves a useful construct for reading these sorts of experiences. As Dunn described it, charismatic consciousness involves both (1) the

[87] Num 23.5, 12, 16; Isa 59.21. Cf. 1QHa 19.4–5, 33–34; 4Q511 ff63–64 3.1–5. In some cases, early Jewish authors such as Philo and Josephus would depict prophetic inspiration in ways that were clearly influenced by Greco-Roman divination, depicting the prophet as someone who lost control of their own agency and came under the full influence of the divine Spirit to speak for God. See Josephus, *Ant*. 4.119; Philo, *Moses* 1.274, 277, 283, 286; *Spec. Laws* 1.65; 4.49. On these passages from Philo and Josephus, see Levison 1994; 1995; 1996; and his broader study of the Spirit in first-century Judaism (Levison 1997).

[88] I have already shown the connections between κράζω and prayer in section 2.3.1.1. above.

[89] Mark 5.5, 7; 9.26; Luke 9.39; cf. Acts 16.17.

[90] Bultmann 2007 [1951], 161; Lull 1980, 66–67; Meeks 1983, 88; Kagarise 2014, 123–26. Gunkel even argued that Paul was referring to an ecstatic glossolalic cry. Gunkel 2008 [1888], 66, 79–80. There are some issues with assigning the label "ecstatic" to these experiences, as the meaning of the term is contested. As Forbes 1995, 53, notes, "The modern term 'ecstatic' is not at all identical in meaning with the Greek term ἐκστατικός." Fee 1994, 409, suggests that "charismatic prayer" or "Spirit-inspired prayer" would be better than "ecstatic prayer." Cf. Keener 2019, 348.

conscious awareness of being moved upon by the divine presence and power and (2) a conscious willingness to be so used by the divine in that way.[91]

3.3.4. Summary

My taxonomy for pneumatic prayer includes three descriptive features. I contend that pneumatic prayer was, from Paul's perspective, (1) a common Christian experience that was (2) perceptible, and (3) represented a case of Spirit-inspired prayer. In this section, I have made the case for why the Abba cry fits this part of my taxonomy. However, in order to show that the Abba cry fully conforms to my proposed taxonomy, I must move on to consider the theological connections Paul makes with the Abba cry.

3.4. THEOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS OF THE ABBA CRY

My proposed taxonomy for pneumatic prayer in Paul's letters includes both common descriptive features and common theological connections. Having shown that the Abba cry conforms to my taxonomy regarding pneumatic prayer's descriptive features, I now turn to examine the Abba cry's theological connections. In this section, I establish that the Abba cry signifies (1) the eschatological time in which believers live, (2) their glorified filial status in relation to God, and (3) their participation in the prayers of heavenly beings, including the prayers of God's Son.

3.4.1. The Abba Cry and Eschatological Time

First, the sending of the Spirit to bring adoption as sons and the resultant Abba cry are eschatological acts of God that occur when "the fullness of time" (τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου, Gal

[91] Dunn 1975, 241.

4.4) comes.[92] This coheres with the observations made about Paul's pneumatological discourse in Galatians 3.14, where Paul connects the outpouring of the Spirit on the gentiles with the fulfillment of divine promises given in the past. Paul believed that the future age had broken into the present through the activities of God's Son and God's Spirit.[93] The vivid manifestations of the Spirit's reception in the early Christian assemblies demonstrated, for Paul, that a crucial transition from one age to another had taken place. The former age, called the "present evil age" in Galatians 1.4, is ruled by the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (4.8) and is characterized by the language of slavery. The latter age, into which believers are delivered, is governed by the Father, and it is characterized by the sonship and freedom that accompany reception of the divine Spirit through faith.[94]

As Martyn noted in his commentary, one crucial issue of the letter to the Galatians is the question, "What time is it?" Martyn summarizes, "It is the time after the apocalypse of the faith of Christ, the time, therefore, of God's making things right by Christ's faith, the time of the presence of the Spirit of Christ, and thus the time in which the invading Spirit has decisively commenced the war of liberation from the powers of the present evil age."[95] This is all fair to note, but τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου likely also carries connotations of historical development and continuity

[92] As Macaskill puts it, "Paul's development of the concept of adoption in Galatians has a fundamentally eschatological tone." Macaskill 2013, 222.

[93] For Paul, God is now "giving" his Spirit to his people (Rom 5.5; 2 Cor 1.22; 5.5; 1 Thess 4.8) and they are "receiving" the Spirit (Rom 8.15; 1 Cor 2.12; 2 Cor 11.4; Gal 3.2, 14). The Spirit is the "first fruits" (Rom 8.23) or the "down payment" (2 Cor 1.22; 5.5; Eph 1.13–14) of the new life to come. Those who have the Spirit of the Messiah now belong to the Messiah (Rom 8.9b). They possess a new resurrected life (8.10–11) and are no longer "of the flesh" (8.9a; cf. Gal 5.24–25). As Dunn 1998, 418, says, "The claim of the first Christians, then, was that the Spirit had been dispensed as promised. The drought of the Spirit had ended. The longed for and expected new age had begun. In eschatological terms, this experience of the Spirit was as decisive for the Christians' self-understanding as was Jesus' resurrection." Cf. Hamilton 1957; Wolter 2015, 159–63; Moo 2021, 465–67.

[94] Gal 4.3–7, 8–9; Cf. Gal 2.4; 4.21–5.1, 13; Rom 6.6–11, 16–23; 7.6, 14; 8.2, 14–17. Lull 1980, 170.

[95] Martyn 1997, 104–105.

rather than the exclusively disruptive sense Martyn advocates.[96] For as we have already seen, in Galatians 3.14, Paul refers to τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πνεύματος and connects that promise to ἡ εὐλογία τοῦ Ἀβραὰμ mentioned in the first half of the verse. As Paul looked back at the promises given to Israel and the patriarchs, reading them retrospectively through the lens given by the revelation of the crucified Messiah and the arrival of God's Spirit, he saw more clearly how Israel's God remained faithful to the covenantal promises. The pneumatic prayer of the Abba cry (4.6), as a consequence of God's action "in the fullness of time" (4.4) becomes a sign of this new time, in which God is showing his faithfulness by fulfilling promises delivered from centuries past to his people.

3.4.2. The Abba Cry and Sonship

The Abba cry connects to Paul's belief in the glorified filial status of believers in three ways. In this section, I will unpack each of these three connections, demonstrating again the suitability of my proposed taxonomy for pneumatic prayer.

First, Paul connects the Abba cry to sonship through his identification of the Spirit as τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ (4.6). Paul describes the action of God in the fullness of time using two parallel sending formulas (ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς) one for God's Son (4.4) and one for the Spirit of his Son (4.6). Notice the high concentration of sonship language between these two sendings.[97]

ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς **τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ**…
ἵνα τὴν **υἱοθεσίαν** ἀπολάβωμεν.
Ὅτι δέ **ἐστε υἱοί**,

[96] In his own words, "Throughout this passage Paul does not think of a gradual maturation, but rather of a punctiliar liberation, enacted by God in his own sovereign time. Stepping on the scene, that is to say, God has closed the enslaving parenthesis of the Law at the time chosen by him alone." Ibid., 389. For a more balanced approach to the question of time in Galatians, see Still 2014.

[97] The concentration of sonship terms in Galatians 4.4–6 makes it clear that Paul intends for there to be a connection between the actions of God's Son and the believers' adoption as sons when they received the Spirit. See Fee 1994, 407.

> ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς **τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ** εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν κρᾶζον· αββα ὁ πατήρ (Gal 4.4b, 5b–6)

The references to υἱοί throughout Galatians (whether υἱοί Ἀβραάμ or υἱοί θεοῦ) are overshadowed by the more prominent focus on Jesus as God's Son throughout this section of the letter (1.16; 2.20; 4.4, 6b). For Paul, Jesus' sonship is, as Grant Macaskill puts it, "categorically different" to the sonship of believers, with the former serving as the theological ground for the latter.[98] This means that "the believer's communication with the Father is seen as a Spirit-generated outworking of the Son's sonship."[99] This point about the believer's sonship being dependent on their union with Christ is made elsewhere in Paul's writings.[100] Even here in the letter to the Galatians, one of Paul's primary points in Galatians 3 is that the Messiah is the true "seed" (singular) of Abraham (3.16) who makes believers Abraham's "seed" (3.29) when they are united to him through faith (3.26) and through their baptism εἰς Χριστὸν (3.27). Their kinship with Abraham and Abraham's God is dependent on his as the Messiah.

Paul elsewhere describes the Spirit in ways that closely relate to Jesus, referring to the Spirit as πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ (Rom 8.9) or τὸ πνεῦμα Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Phil 1.19). While Paul might elsewhere appear to identify the Spirit with Jesus (1 Cor 15.45; 2 Cor 3.17–18), here the two are clearly individuated by their distinct sendings.[101] The sending of the Spirit follows the sending of the Son, and it is this second sending that uniquely brings about the Abba cry for believers. The

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[98] Macaskill 2013, 223.

[99] Ibid., 225.

[100] One thinks especially of Rom 8.17, where Paul identifies believers as συγκληρονόμοι δὲ Χριστοῦ, who both suffer with (συμπάσχομεν) and are glorified with (συνδοξασθῶμεν) him, but also his claim in 8.29 that God's Son is the πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς.

[101] Macaskill 2013, 224, describes the logic of this passage as a "combination of identification and individuation." Cf. the arguments in Hamilton 1957, 4–8; Dunn 1975, 318–26; Fee 1994, 831–38; Schnelle 2005, 487–88; Wolter 2015, 164–67.

Spirit's description as τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ is designed to highlight the unique role of the Spirit in granting the status of sonship to believers, which status is confirmed by the resultant prayer to God as "Abba, Father".

This leads to the second connection between the Abba cry and the theme of sonship, namely, the cry itself. Paul's use of the Aramaic αββα has been the subject of considerable discussion. James Dunn points to Jesus' use of αββα to draw conclusions about his own religious experience of divine sonship.[102] Joachim Jeremias famously contended that this form of address was both (1) used by young children to address their fathers and (2) used by Jesus and almost no one else as a way of referring to Israel's God in prayer.[103] Jeremias' claims have since been criticized heavily, chiefly on lexical and historical grounds. Lexically, the suggestion that the Aramaic αββα is like the English "daddy" has been sharply criticized by James Barr.[104] Others have drawn attention to the Jewish texts prior to the time of Jesus which do refer to Israel's God as "Father", implying that Jesus and his earliest followers were not unique in this regard.[105] Jeremias acknowledges many of these references, but he does not see in the early Jewish literature a paternal address to God in the vocative.[106] Admittedly, Jeremias' conclusion that Jesus' designation of God as αββα represented a radical break from Judaism is too strong a claim to make

[102] Dunn 1975, 15–37.

[103] Jeremias 1967, 54–65.

[104] Barr 1988.

[105] Both Perrin 2018, 20–36, and Osten-Sacken 2019, 197–201, draw attention to numerous examples in post-biblical writings, including some rabbinic texts, where God is referred to as "Father" (though not "Abba") in a way that correlates strongly with early Christian usage.

[106] There is an old danger here, of which Jeremias might be guilty, of assuming a fundamental distinction between the piety of Jesus (and by extension the early Christians) and that of his Jewish contemporaries. E.g., Jeremias 1967, 15–29.

in the face of this evidence.[107] However, his argument that Jesus was distinct, along with his followers, in calling upon God as "father" *in the context of prayer and with such regularity* appears correct. Put differently, the uniqueness of the early Christian prayer in this regard is not the fact that they referred to God as "Father". Other Jewish texts did the same.[108] Rather, it was the fact that they called upon God as *their* Father while simultaneously confessing the more fundamental belief that God is the Father of Jesus, the Son.[109]

As we have already seen, Paul's appeal to an experience of speaking the Aramaic αββα is written such that his Galatian audience would have been aware of this phenomenon, as we have already seen. Indeed, the Aramaic reveals an awareness by these early Christians that this prayer was offered up to God by Jesus. The assumption often made by scholars is that Jesus used αββα frequently in his prayers, despite the singular attestation of its use in Mark 14.36.[110] While not often considered, it could be that the singular attestation of αββα in the Gethsemane story is of significance to Paul, particularly as he understands the nature of the believer's union with Christ displayed in this prayer (see below).[111] Regardless, the fact that the prayer "Abba, Father" is attested elsewhere only as a prayer of Jesus signals that early Christians understood the prayer first

[107] D'Angelo 1992, 612–13. A good example of this caricature of early Judaism can be found in Kittel 1964, 6, who says, speaking of Jesus' distinct use of the term in addressing God, "Jewish usage shows how this Father-child relationship to God *far surpasses any possibilities of intimacy assumed in Judaism*, introducing indeed something which is wholly new" (emphasis added).

[108] E.g., Isa 63.16; 64.8; Sir 23.1–4; Wis 14.3; Tob 13.4; cf. *m. Yoma* 8.9; *m. Soṭah* 9.15. See also the discussion in Keener 2019, 348–52, of the supreme deity as "father" in ancient thought. Keener cites numerous examples in Greco-Roman sources Zeus or Jupiter being invoked as "father."

[109] See the texts cited in n. 64 above. Hurtado 2010, 38–9.

[110] E.g., Dunn 1998, 193, who says, "Jesus' prayer life was indeed characterized and distinguished by his use of Abba to address God." Cf. Jeremias 1967; Dunn 1975, 21–26.; Gorman 2001, 12; de Boer 2011, 94.

[111] See Wenham 1995, 277–80; Keener 2019, 347.

as one that belonged to Jesus as God's Son, and second, as one that believers were enabled to say through their reception of the Spirit of God's Son.

Paul certainly viewed the experience as attesting to the believer's sonship, but did the Galatians themselves already agree with Paul's theological perspective, or did they attribute an additional significance to the Abba cry?[112] This question is raised in David Lull's study of the Spirit in Galatians.[113] He argues that the association of sonship with the Abba cry is a secondary development, introduced by Paul.[114] "Before Paul's letter, the Spirit's Abba-cry meant something else to [the Galatians]."[115] What might it have meant to them? Lull suggests that the Abba cry was significant to these gentile believers as a sign of their renunciation of false gods and their knowledge of the one true God.[116] The evidence for this comes immediately following Paul's description of the Abba cry. "Before, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to beings that are not gods by nature. Now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and poor elemental spirits who desire to enslave you once more?" (Gal 4.8–9).

It is possible to adopt this additional insight from Lull's study without necessarily giving up the notion that the Galatians already associated their sonship with the experience of the Abba

[112] It can be easy to assume that the Galatians understood the Abba cry in the same way as Paul. For example, Meeks says of the cry, "The ecstatic response of the baptized person, 'Abba! Father!' is at the same time a sign of the gift of the Spirit and of the 'sonship' (*hyothesia*) that the Spirit conveys by incorporating the person into the one Son of God" (Meeks 1983, 88). Similarly, Dunn contends that the Abba cry refers to "a spontaneous expression of this sense of sonship in a cry of exultation and trust" (Dunn 1975, 240), but, again, Dunn is assuming that the Galatians shared Paul's assessment concerning the significance of the experience for sonship.

[113] Lull 1980, 68.

[114] Ibid.

[115] Ibid., 69.

[116] Ibid.

cry. As I noted earlier, it becomes difficult to explain how early Christians began to speak of God so personally as "our Father" apart from this experience of God's Spirit and the accompanying interpretation of the experience in terms of sonship. In any case, further support of Lull's claim that the Abba cry signalled a transfer of allegiance from pagan deities to the one true God can be deduced from the importance of the divine names for Greco-Roman prayers. As we noted in the previous chapter, the invocation, in which the deity is named by the one praying, is an important part of customary Greco-Roman prayer.[117] The importance of being able to name the god one is addressing in prayer is rooted primarily in a desire to honour the god and wanting the god to hear the prayer offered. The Abba cry, as described by Paul, is an invocation, evidenced most strongly by the use of the vocative αββα and the nominative ὁ πατήρ used as a vocative.[118] Thus, when the Spirit inspires the Galatians to cry out to God as "Abba, Father," they are invoking the name of the one true God, whom they have come to know as Paul states in 4.8–9, but they are also declaring their new status as sons of God.

The third connection between the Abba cry and sonship is the fact that immediately before Paul describes the cry, he tells the Galatians that God has sent the Spirit of his Son into the hearts of believers "because you are sons" (ὅτι δέ ἐστε υἱοί, 4.6).[119] But what does Paul mean when he

[117] See the discussion of invocation in customary Greco-Roman prayer in section 2.2.2. above. Sometimes the name is accompanied by a verb imploring the god to "hear" (κλῦθί, ἄκουε, etc.) or "come" (ἐλθέ), e.g., Homer *Il.* 1.37; 10.278, 284; 16.514; 23.770; *Od*. 9.528; Vergil *Aen.* 12.176–79, 777.

[118] See the discussion on the Abba cry as a prayer in section 2.3.1.1. above.

[119] Many commentators have gotten caught up in Paul's use of ὅτι in 4.6a to discern whether he thinks reception of the Spirit precedes the believer's adoption or vice versa. See Longenecker 1990, 173. More recently, scholars prefer to say either (1) that Paul assumes a logical precedence for the believer's legal status, even if the reception of the Spirit is chronologically simultaneous (Martyn 1997, 391, n.11; Wright 2021, 270) or (2) that Paul's use of ὅτι is meant to signal an experience that results from conversion-initiation rather than to describe any *ordo* within conversion itself. As Osten-Sacken says, "Hier aber liegt ihm daran, nicht den Geist als Ursache der Sohnschaft herauszustellen, sondern die Folge hervorzuheben, die mit der Gabe des Geistes des Sohnes im Abba-Ruf gegeben ist." Osten-Sacken 2019, 194.

refers to early believers as God's "sons"? The nature of the sonship becomes clearer in the context of Galatians as a whole. First, the believer's sonship is described as a state of freedom. Believers are no longer slaves but sons (Gal 4.7), because the Messiah has called them into freedom (5.1, 13), setting them free from their captivity under the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (4.3). Second, the Abba cry signifies that the believers are "sons of God" (3.26) and part of Abraham's offspring/seed (3.29), who are born according to the Spirit (4.23, 29) because they have received the promised Spirit (3.2–3, 14). Because of this, third, they are "heirs through God" (κληρονόμος διὰ θεοῦ; 4.7) who await a hoped-for-righteousness (5.5) from God and eternal life (6.8). But the title "sons of God" also has some important background in early Jewish thought that might explain some of Paul's usage here in Galatians.

The title "sons of God" (plural), alluded to by Paul here and used explicitly in the parallel text of Romans 8.14,[120] is used of Israel only once in the Hebrew Bible.[121] The title is given diversely in Hebrew as בני עליון, בני אלים, or בני האלהים.[122] In nearly every case, these phrases are used to designate members of YHWH's heavenly council.[123] These beings are sometimes described with astral imagery,[124] which is significant for understanding the nature of the

[120] Note the use of the title υἱοὶ θεοῦ in Gal 3.26 and Rom 8.19.

[121] Hos 2.1; cf. Rom 9.25–26. YHWH is identified as Israel's "father" and Israel as his son/child/firstborn elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Exod 4.22–23; Deut 32.6; Isa 63.16; 64.7; Jer 3.19; 31.9; Mal 2.10), but I am concerned here with the phrase "sons of God", which is predominantly used elsewhere to denote members of God's heavenly household and divine council. See Stokes 2010, 1251. The question is whether and why Paul might have used this phrase to describe how God has transformed humanity, including Israel, through the activity of the Messiah and the Spirit.

[122] Ps. 82.6 (בני עליון); Ps 29.1; 89.7 (בני אלים); Gen 6.2, 4; Job 1.6; 2.1; 38.7 (בני האלהים). Cf. Deut 32.8.

[123] Byrne 1992, 156–57. On the theme of the divine council in OT and early Jewish thought, see Mullen 1992; Parker 1999a; 1999b; Heiser 2004; and White 2014.

[124] E.g., Job 38.7; Ps 148.1–3, which identify members of the divine council with the stars who bear witness to the Creator. See Lelli 1999; Parker 1999b, 798.

Abrahamic promise to which Paul appeals in Galatians.[125] God tells Abraham to number the stars in heaven and says that his children will be like them (Gen 15.5, Οὕτως ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα σου; 22.17, ὡς τοὺς ἀστέρας τοῦ οὐρανοῦ). Matthew Thiessen has pointed out that, while numerous Jewish works assumed that the promise signified a *quantitative* comparison with the heavenly bodies,[126] another interpretative tradition reads the description of Abraham's seed in a *qualitative* manner as well.[127] The earliest texts to read the Abrahamic promise qualitatively include Jubilees and Ben Sira (both second century BCE).[128] In Jubilees, Rebecca blesses Jacob by alluding to the Abrahamic promise, saying,

> Blessed are you, O Lord of righteousness and God of Ages;
> and may he bless you more than all the generations of man.
> May he grant to you the way of righteousness, my son;
> and to your seed, may he reveal righteousness.
> May he multiply your sons in your life(time);
> may they rise up according to the number of the months of the year.
> And may their sons be more numerous and greater than the stars of heaven;
> and more than the sand of the sea, may their number increase. (Jub 25.15–16)

[125] Although Paul makes appeal to the "promise(s)" given to Abraham several times in Galatians (3.14, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 29; 4.23, 28), he nowhere identifies with a quotation what "promise" text from Genesis he has in mind. The quotation of Gen 15.6 in Gal 3.6 suggests that Genesis 15.5 could be a strong contender. Additionally, Gen 22.16–18, where the promise from 15.5 is reaffirmed as an oath, makes good sense as being the promise to which Paul appeals. What both passages share is a promise that Abraham's "seed" (σπέρμα) will be as the stars of the heavens. See Thiessen 2016, 132–34.

[126] Thiessen 2016, 135, points to Deut 1.10; 10.22; 1 Chr 27.23; Neh 9.23; and Josephus, *Ant.* 4.116 as examples of the quantitative interpretation of the Abrahamic promise.

[127] Thiessen 2016, 136.

[128] Both texts were originally composed in Hebrew and later translated into Greek (as well as other languages in the case of Jubilees). On the questions of date and provenance for both texts, see the succinct introductions by Nickelsburg 2005, 53; Gurtner 2020,232–236. More detailed discussion of Ben Sira's dating can be found in Skehan and Di Lella 1987, 8–16. Vanderkam 2018, 37–38, puts the date for Jubilees sometime in the middle of the second century BCE (specifically between c. 170s and c. 125).

Here, the author of Jubilees interpreted the promise that Abraham's children would be like the stars both quantitatively ("more numerous") *and qualitatively* ("greater than").[129] In his hymn to the fathers, Ben Sira speaks of the Abrahamic promise in a similar way:

> Therefore he established by means of an oath with him
> that nations would be blessed by his seed (ἐν σπέρματι),
> that he would multiply him as the dust of the earth
> and *like the stars to exalt his seed* (ὡς ἄστρα ἀνυψῶσαι τὸ σπέρμα αὐτοῦ)
> and *to give them an inheritance* (κατακληρονομῆσαι αὐτοὺς) from sea to sea
> and from the river to the end of the earth. (Sir 44.21)

In this, Ben Sira interprets the comparison with the stars exclusively in a qualitative sense. Abraham's children are like the stars because they will be exalted and given an inheritance.[130] Thiessen points out other passages, both Jewish and Christian, that read the Abrahamic promise in this qualitative sense.[131] He then goes on to argue that Paul joins the Abrahamic promise to the reception of the Spirit (Gal 3.14) because, according to ancient physics and cosmology, πνεῦμα was the substance of the stars.[132] In Thiessen's view, then, for Abraham's descendants to be "like

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[129] Vanderkam 2018, 787, n. 29, points out that the description of Abraham's seed as "greater" probably alludes to Gen 15.1, in which God tells Abraham that his "reward" (שכר) will be "very great" (הרבה מאד), where the "reward" is a reference to Abraham's children.

[130] The notion that the inheritance for Abraham's children will be the entire earth and not just the promised land is also attested in Jub 22.14; 32.18–19; Philo, *Dreams* 1.175. McCaulley 2019 makes a strong case that Paul believed Abraham's children inherit the world because they share in the messianic king's global inheritance. Cf. Burnett 2015, 217, who points out that Ben Sira 44.21 joins the promise to Abraham's seed with the royal inheritance of the Davidic Messiah in Ps 72.8 (71.8 LXX).

[131] See Thiessen 2016, 135–40. Additional texts cited that date within a century or so of Paul include Philo *Heir* 86–87; *QG* 4.181; Apoc. Ab. 20.3–5; 1 Clem. 32.3.

[132] Ibid., 143–47. Thiessen cites Jewish texts that associate angelic beings with πνεῦμα, e.g., Ps 103.4 (LXX); Jub. 1.25; 2.2; 10.1–2; 15.31; 1 En. 15.4, 6; 1QS 3.13–4.26; 1QM 13.10–12; Philo, *Abraham* 113. While these texts do demonstrate an association between angelic beings (who are elsewhere identified with stars) and πνεῦμα, Thiessen goes a step further and introduces Stoic cosmology into the mix: "What is more, Stoic physics, identified the matter of these living stars with *pneuma*" (Thiessen 2016, 146). Thiessen is dependent here on the earlier work of Martin 1995 and Engberg-Pedersen 2010 (see Thiessen 2016, 152, where he cites their work favourably). Commenting on the σῶμα πνευματικόν of 1 Cor 15.44, Engberg-Pedersen states, "a 'pneumatic body' *is* a heavenly body like the sun, moon, and stars" (Engberg-Pedersen 2010, 28). This belief, he says, "a distinctly Stoic idea" (ibid.). The problem with this claim is that the language of σῶμα πνευματικόν is not found in any Stoic source. In Stoic sources, the substance of the stars is consistently identified as αἰθήρ (e.g., Cicero *Nat. d.* 2.15.39), and while πνεῦμα serves a prominent role in Stoic cosmology (see Tieleman 2017), the precise relationship between αἰθήρ and πνεῦμα is not clearly defined. The πνεῦμα is described as an analogue (ἀνάλογος) to αἰθήρ (Aristotle *Gen. an.* 736b–37a; *SVF* 2.471), but the two

the stars", not only quantitatively but qualitatively, they must have their material existence transformed so that they now share in a pneumatic materiality like the celestial bodies, and they do this by receiving Christ's πνεῦμα. As Thiessen summarizes his argument, Abraham's children would, according to God's promise, "be infused with *pneuma*, the same indestructible matter as the stars."[133]

Thiessen's work is noteworthy for pointing out overlooked connections between Paul's designation of gentiles as Abraham's descendants, their reception of the Spirit, and their adoption as υἱοὶ θεοῦ. However, like many recent interpreters of Paul's pneumatology, Thiessen insists that Paul's primary concern regarding πνεῦμα is the ontological change it brings. Instead, I would contend that there are good reasons to think that Paul's focus is not the ontological change brought about by a material spirit but *the transformation of the heart and function of God's people in the cosmos that results from receiving the divine Spirit*. This contention against the ontological reading of Thiessen requires some further argument.

Paul does associate the Spirit with the transformation of the believer, but the transformation is not a material one as Thiessen suggests. A good example of this is 2 Corinthians 3.18, where Paul states that "we all…contemplating the Lord's glory are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as this is from the Lord who is the Spirit." The Spirit here brings about the transformation (μεταμορφόω) of believers "into the same image" (τὴν αὐτὴν εἰκόνα).

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are not identified Cf. Barclay 2011, Engberg-Pedersen 2010, 217, n. 76, acknowledges, "I have been unable to find the term itself "pneumatic" employed in Stoic sources in direct connection with the heavenly bodies."

[133] Ibid., 147. In contrast Moffitt 2011, whom Thiessen cites approvingly (Thiessen 2016, 143–44), argues regarding Jesus' heavenly ascent and exaltation above the angelic hosts that it is his *flesh and blood existence as a human*, not his existence as a fiery spirit, that enables him to rule over the angels at God's right hand in Heb 1–2. "[I]f the Son had left his flesh and blood on earth to return to the realm of the fiery heavenly spirits as only a spirit himself, he would have left behind his most important credential for dominion over the world to come—his humanity" (Moffitt 2011, 142).

This image is the image of God (2 Cor 4.4), which Paul also identifies with the Messiah.[134] This transformation, Paul says, is "from glory to glory" (ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν). This combination of transformation into the image of God and the move from glory to glory requires some explanation.

I believe two important concepts from Paul's Jewish heritage help to explain why he says what he does about the believer's transformation by the Spirit. First, there is humanity's creation in the image or likeness of God (Gen 1.26–27).[135] Catherine McDowell has shown in her work on this passage that humanity's designation as God's "image" and "likeness" implies their filial status in relation to God.[136] This filial status results both in humanity's kingship and priesthood.[137] The exaltation of humanity to a royal function is reflected in Psalm 8 where the psalmist looks at the heavens, including the celestial bodies (the moon and the stars), and is astonished that humanity has been made little lower than the אלהים (Ps 8.5, ἀγγέλους in the LXX), a reference to those same heavenly beings associated with the stars.[138] Humanity is "crowned with glory and honour" (δόξῃ καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφάνωσας, Ps 8.6 LXX) and is granted dominion over the world and its creatures (8.6–

[134] Rom 8.29; 1 Cor 15.49; cf. Col 1.15. On Paul's understanding of Christ as the image of God, see Kim 1981, 137–268; Kugler 2020.

[135] The use of first-person plural in Gen 1.26 is best explained as God's announcement to members of his divine council who were witnesses to the creation event. See Kline 1999, 22–23; Garr 2003, 85–92.

[136] The connection between צלם and kinship comes especially from the use of the term in Gen 5.1–3, which recalls humanity's creation in the likeness of God (5.1) before describing the birth of Seth in the image and likeness of his Adam (5.3). McDowell 2015, 131–37; cf. Kline 1999, 23, who says, "Image of God and son of God are thus twin concepts."

[137] McDowell 2015, 175, says, "*ṣelem* and *dəmût* in Gen 1:26–27 define the divine human relationship in terms of kin, king, and cult. To be created *bəṣelem ʾĕlōhîm* suggests that humankind is, on some level, in a filial relationship with God, that humans are his appointed rulers over creation, and, in contrast to an inert divine statue…they are living 'images' of Elohim." This connection between צלם and royal rule and authority is explored also in Middleton 2005, 50–55, 204–12.

[138] Cf. Ps 82.1, where "God" (אלהים) stands "in the midst of the gods" (בקרב אלהים) and proceeds to judge them for failing to exercise just judgement over the world.

8). Thus, while humanity is lower than the heavenly hosts, they are nevertheless exalted to a place of glory and honour as part of the divine family with which God exercises rule over creation.

This leads to the second Jewish belief that explains Paul's belief about the transformation of believers as "sons of God." Alongside the story of humanity's fall with Adam (Gen 3.1–19), a story Paul alludes to in his letters,[139] there runs in early Jewish thinking a myth concerning the fall of heavenly beings, known as the "sons of God" (Gen 6.2, 4).[140] In fact, the fall of these "sons of God" brings greater depth and universality to the fall of humans and subjects creation to greater distress and calamity. Deuteronomy alludes to the division of the nations in the Tower of Babel incident (Gen 11), saying,

> When the Most High was apportioning nations,
> as he scattered the sons of Adam,
> he fixed boundaries of nations
> according to the number of the sons of God (κατὰ ἀριθμὸν υἱῶν θεοῦ),
> and his people Jacob became the Lord's portion,
> Israel his allotted inheritance (σχοίνισμα κληρονομίας αὐτοῦ Ισραηλ) (Deut 32.8–9 LXX).

The "sons of God" mentioned in this passage refer to members of the divine council, whom God addressed in the Babel story (Gen 11.7). Apparently, after the incident at Babel, YHWH delegated the rule over the scattered nations to these members of his council.[141] The failure of the sons of God to rule appropriately over the nations is a theme picked up elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible.[142]

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[139] Rom 5.12–18; 1 Cor 15.45–49.

[140] The appeal to this event as an explanation for the origin of evil spirits, and the resultant evil of their work in the world, is attested throughout early Jewish literature. See Stuckenbruck 2004; A. Wright 2015; Heiser 2020, 109–44.

[141] These beings are the "rulers" referred to by Ben Sira (Sir 17.17). Daniel refers to them as a "prince" (Dan 10.13, 21; 12.1). The fact that the angel, Michael, is also referred to as a "prince" leaves no question that Daniel is referring to a divine being and not a human king. Jubilees 15.30–32 refers to them as "spirits" who are descendants of the Watchers (see Jub. 10.2–9).

[142] This is clearest in Ps 82.1–7 where YHWH takes his place amid the divine council and judges the אלהים who have failed to rule justly over the nations. They are punished by being sentenced to die like mortals (Ps 82.7). Cf. Dahood 1968, 268–70; Tate 1990, 329–41; Hossfeld and Zenger 2005, 329–36; Goldingay 2007, 559–559–62; Declaissé-Walford, Jacobson, and Tanner 2014, 641–44. Elsewhere in Deuteronomy, YHWH forbids Israel to worship the sun, the moon, the stars, and the host of heaven, referring to them as "things that YHWH your God has apportioned to all

Some of these "sons of God" are referred to as "the Watchers" in early Jewish texts,[143] and they are often credited with the origin of many transgressions in the world.[144] Likely, Paul has their transgression, as well as the transgressions they help produce among humans, in mind when he refers in Galatians to the law being added τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν (Gal 3.19b).[145] He certainly believed that angelic beings were capable of leading people astray (1.8), and Paul's application of Deuteronomy 32 to the worship of false gods (or demons) in 1 Corinthians 10.20 increases the possibility that he would have viewed the τοῖς φύσει μὴ οὖσιν θεοῖς of Galatians 4.8 as these fallen heavenly beings who have added to humanity's corruption by leading them away from the true God.[146]

Taking these two concepts together — the restoration of the divine image in believers and the OT and Early Jewish background for interpreting "sons of God" as members of God's heavenly council — brings clarity to Paul's identification of believers as υἱοὶ θεοῦ. The point, for Paul, is

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the people under all the heaven" (Deut 4.19). These astral entities, referred to as אלהים Israel is commanded not to worship (Deut 17.3), are best understood as the sons of God put in charge of the nations. Cf. 1 En. 86–88, where the Watchers are referred to as stars.

[143] Most famously, 1 En. 1–36. Cf. Jub. 4.15, 22; 7.21–22; 8.3; 10.4–5; CD 2.18; 4Q203; T. Naph. 3.5; T. Reu. 5.6–7. See Reed 2010.

[144] A. Wright 2015. As an explanation for the universal problem of human sin, the fall of the Watchers appears to have been much more prominent in the minds of early Jewish thinkers than the fall of Adam, though that story is mentioned occasionally (e.g., 4 Ezra 3.20–22; 2 Bar 54.15; and allusion to Adam's fall in Sir 15.11–20). The sins of the Watchers are described differently in the traditions about them. In some cases, the Watchers succumb to the temptation to copulate with human women (e.g., 1 En. 6.1–7.6) and give birth to children who wreak havoc and destruction among humanity. Alternatively, they are also credited with teaching humans forbidden knowledge, leading humanity to sin even more (e.g., 1 En. 8.1–4). For the most thorough treatment concerning the sources of sin for Second Temple Jewish thinkers, see Brand 2013.

[145] Despite the conclusions of most commentators, it would almost be remarkable for Paul *not* to have these transgressions in mind, given their prominence in early Jewish literature. According to this interpretation, Paul believed that the Torah was given to restrain the spread of sin precipitated by the Watchers among the people that YHWH had chosen as his allotted inheritance (Deut 32.9). This "apocalyptic" reading produces a more coherent account of Paul's understanding of the law in Galatians 3–4 than Martyn 1997, 353–57, and de Boer 2011, 225–36.

[146] The interpretation of Paul's argument in Galatians in light of the myth of the watchers has been argued with great detail in the recent doctoral work of Stewart 2019, 218–96.

not that believers experience a transformation of their material existence and become the pneumatic stuff of which stars are made, as Thiessen and others contend.[147] Rather, believers are exalted as co-heirs of the Messiah's kingdom[148] and given a place as his divine co-regents above the heavenly beings, the "sons of God" or the "stars" that failed to exercise their rule over the nations in accordance with the creator's will.

In this section, I have explored how the Abba cry connects to Paul's theology of the believer's glorified status of sonship. First, I looked at Paul's description of the Spirit as "the Spirit of [God's] son," showing the close connection between the son's work (resulting from his "being sent") and the Spirit's work (resulting from its "being sent"). Second, I made a few observations about the Aramaic term αββα, noting both its qualified uniqueness as a way of addressing God in prayer and the significance of the term for the Galatians who turned from pagan deities and now understood the name by which the true God could be called. Third, I examined the importance of Paul's designation of believers as υἱοὶ θεοῦ, a description that, I argued, echoes both the creation of humanity and the well-known Jewish belief in "the sons of God" as members of YHWH's heavenly council who were charged with governing the nations of the world, but failed. The Abba cry, being an experiential sign of the believer's new status, serves as a guarantee of this coming exaltation and glorification.

3.4.3. The Abba Cry and the Prayer of Jesus

In this final section, I want to demonstrate the theological significance of the Abba cry as it relates to the prayer(s) of Jesus. As we have already seen above,[149] the familiarity of the Aramaic

[147] See the discussion of this view in n. 132 above.

[148] συγκληρονόμοι Χριστοῦ (Rom 8.17); κληρονόμος διὰ θεοῦ (Gal 4.7).

[149] See the discussion in section 3.3.1.

Abba cry among Greek-speaking communities is best explained if early Christian assemblies first recognized Jesus, God's Son, as the one who addressed God in this way. Here, I want to explore the connection between the Abba cry of believers and Jesus' own prayer to God. Since the only recorded instance we possess of Jesus calling upon God as "Abba" comes from Mark 14.36, could it be that Paul knew a tradition similar to the one recorded in Mark?[150] Are there any indications in the Abba cry texts that the apostle connects the cry with the suffering of the Messiah?

In Romans, Paul describes the believer's union with Christ as one that includes suffering (Rom 8.17–18). In fact, Paul predicates the glorification of believers, an element we explored in the previous section, on their shared suffering with Christ. But does Paul have suffering in mind in Galatians as well? On the surface, it would appear not, and most commentators do not mention any connection to the believer's suffering when they speak about the Abba cry.[151] I argue, however,

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[150] There is some question today as to whether Mark might have known about Paul. It was Werner 1923 who influentially argued a century ago that Mark could not have used Paul as a source. More recently, some scholars have reopened the question of whether Mark was influenced by Paul. See, e.g., the recent two-volume collection of essays in Wischmeyer, Sim, and Elder 2014 and Becker, Engberg-Pedersen, and Müller 2014. Some of these scholars have attempted to make the case that he in fact did know Paul's writings and was influenced by his thought. At present, I find these arguments unpersuasive. The perspective can quickly turn into an unfalsifiable one, where every instance of theological commonality between the two authors is cited in favour of Mark's paulinism, but the many important differences are explained away by saying Mark was also his own thinker and did not have to always be a paulinist. This position is fair enough at a theoretical level, but it is simply too difficult to assess as a historical hypothesis. A good example is Paul's account of the Lord's Supper in 1 Cor 11.23–26. Comparing Paul's account with Luke's (Luke 22.19–20) or Mark's (Mark 14.22–25) reveals similarities with both authors, but also differences. The evidence is not strong enough to make the case for direct influence. Additionally, Paul says in 1 Cor 11.23 that his account of this event is something he received and handed on to his converts. The hypothesis that Gospel authors knew about and used Paul's letters as a source is certainly possible. But an alternative explanation strikes me as equally plausible, namely, that Paul in his letters frequently draws on early Christian traditions, whether confessional or, in the case of the Lord's Supper, narrative (or even liturgical), and that the Gospel authors constructed their stories on the basis of similar Christian traditions.

[151] E.g., Burke 2006, 93–94, who argues, "There is, however, one vital distinction that must be made between Jesus' usage of *abba* and that of his followers; namely, that whereas Jesus, the Son, uses the expression on the eve of the greatest challenge to his earthly career (the cross), we as his disciples and God's adopted sons employ *abba* on the postresurrection side of Calvary." Similarly, suffering is not mentioned in Schlier 1989, 198–99; Longenecker 1990, 174–75; de Boer 2011, 265–66; Moo 2013, 270; deSilva 2018, 356–58.

that Paul means for the Galatians to see in the Abba cry an allusion to their co-crucifixion with Christ.

There are essentially two points to this argument. First, the only surviving tradition of Jesus using the Aramaic "Abba" in prayer comes in the final hours leading to his crucifixion (Mk 14.36). The *assumption* that Jesus made frequent use of "Abba" in prayer, and that he taught his disciples to pray in this way (e.g., in the Lord's prayer), has led most scholars to downplay any special connection between the Abba cry and the Gethsemane prayer.[152] The connection is also missed by those who associate the Abba cry with the baptism of the believer. Here the temptation for some is to associate the baptism of believers with the baptism of Jesus, who is declared God's Son and receives the Spirit after being baptized.[153] However, there is no evidence that Paul understood the baptism of the believer to be analogous to Jesus' baptism.[154] In fact, Paul gives no evidence of knowing anything about Jesus' baptism, just as he reveals no knowledge of the Lord's prayer. By contrast, Paul knew traditions concerning the story of Jesus' crucifixion. The centrality of the cross in his proclamation can hardly be missed.[155] Additionally, Paul clearly knew traditions about the events leading up to the crucifixion, shown most importantly by his account of the institution of the Lord's supper (1 Cor 11.23–26). It is possible, therefore, that he and other early Christian

[152] See Kittel 1964, 6, where he argues that the Abba cry might refer to the beginning of the Lord's Prayer. Similarly, Cullmann 1963, 208–9; Jeremias 1971, 1.197, argue that the Abba cry is rooted in the Lord's prayer. On this view, see the comments in n. 67 above. More recent commentaries also make no mention of the Gethsemane narrative, other than to cite Mark 14.36 as another occurrence of the cry. E.g., Longenecker 1990, 174–75; Martyn 1997, 392; de Boer 2011, 265–66; Moo 2013, 270; deSilva 2018, 356–58. One recent exception is Keener 2019, 347, who says, "The *Abba* prayer might therefore recall Gethsemane and Jesus's cries of anguish as he prepared to face the world's hostility, a usage relevant for its recurrence in Rom. 8:15."

[153] E.g. Dunn 1998, 193, n. 52.

[154] When Paul connects the believer's baptism to Jesus in Romans 6.1–11, it is understood as a participation in the death of Jesus, not Jesus' baptism. Wolter 2015, 139.

[155] Outside of Gal, see 1 Cor 1.17–18, 23; 2.2; Eph 2.16; Phil 2.8; Col 1.20.

communities were aware of Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane, where he accepted God's will that he should experience the horror of crucifixion.

Another point in favour of reading the Abba cry as a participation in the sufferings of Jesus is the pervasive importance of Jesus' crucifixion in Galatians. In contrast to Jesus' resurrection, which is only mentioned in the letter's opening verse, the death of Jesus is alluded to throughout the letter.[156] Included among these references to Jesus' death are statements about the believer's co-crucifixion with Christ (Gal 2.19b–20; 5.24; 6.14). Additionally, Paul connects the Spirit to Jesus' crucifixion throughout the letter.[157] It is after Jesus' crucifixion has been so vividly portrayed that the Galatians received the Spirit by faith (3.1–2). Paul closely relates living under the Spirit's guidance with crucifying one's flesh (5.24–25). Finally, Paul makes clear that one of the primary consequences of Christ's death is the reception of the promised Spirit by Jew and gentile alike (3.13–14). It is here, in this final, central passage that we see how Paul incorporates the believer's union with the death of Christ into the "Abba" cry. In Galatians 4.4–5, Paul claims that God "sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law." This redemption is described as Christ "becoming a curse for us" (3.13), referring to his crucifixion. The narrative logic of both passages run in parallel with each other, looking to the same redemptive-historical event but from different angles and with distinct emphases.[158] The Son who is sent in 4.4 is the Messiah who was cursed in 3.13. The sonship he possesses is the sonship of the crucified one "who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age" (1.4). Thus, the sonship into which believers are adopted is likewise a cruciform one. For this

[156] Gal 1.4; 2.19–20, 21; 3.1, 13; 5.11, 24; 6.12, 14, 17.

[157] Cosgrove 1988, 177–94.

[158] Hays 2002, 95–107, 200–204.

reason, the Spirit, who is sent to accomplish and signify their adoption, cries out with the same prayer that was spoken by the Son as he went to his death. The "Abba" cry is, as so many have noted, an indication of the intimacy between believers and God the Father, but it is the intimacy enjoyed by the Son at the same moment he embraced the will of the Father and went to the cross. Thus, the Abba cry, for Paul is an example of how the believers are brought into a union with the sufferings of the Messiah. By the Spirit they participate in his prayer to the Father.

One more observation about the Abba prayer as a prayer of Jesus. Is it possible that Jesus, in Paul's thinking, continues to call on God as "Abba, Father" in heaven as he prays for believers (Rom 8.34)? Are believers sharing not only in the sufferings of Jesus but also in his glory when they cry "Abba, Father"? There are occasions where Paul speaks of his own prayers being offered "through" (διὰ) Jesus.[159] He even speaks of his prayers being offered "before" (ἔμπροσθεν) the Father (1 Thess 1.3), indicating that Paul thought he could somehow offer his prayers in the very presence of God. It is conceivable that Paul might have viewed the Abba cry similarly as a prayer that could be made to in the presence of the Father "through" Jesus.[160] Thus, the Abba cry might signify the typically Pauline mystery that the believer's fellowship in the sufferings of Jesus is also a fellowship in his glory.[161]

[159] Rom 1.8; 5.11; 7.25; cf. Col 3.17.

[160] The same would apply, presumably, to the Aramaic prayer, μαράνα θά, that Paul writes in with his own hand, which was probably also prominent among early Christian communities (1 Cor 16.22; cf. Did. 10.6). On the meaning and context of the μαράνα θά prayer, see Moule 1960; Black 1973; Thiselton 2000, 1348–52. It is interesting to note that the legitimacy of praying in Aramaic would later come to be criticized by some rabbinic sages (e.g., *b. Soṭah* 33a; *b. Šabb.* 12)

[161] I will revisit the connections between the Abba cry and the themes of suffering and glory when I come to the Abba cry in Romans 8.15 in chaper 5 below.

3.5. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have shown how the Abba cry in Galatians 4.6 conforms to my proposed taxonomy for pneumatic prayer. In both its descriptive features and its theological connections, the Abba cry in Galatians 4.6 models the distinctive character of pneumatic prayer in Paul's writings. Descriptively, the Abba cry is a common early Christian experience that is perceptible, not merely inward, or psychological. The Spirit's role in generating the cry also makes the experience one of Spirit-inspired prayer. In addition, the Abba cry shares theological connections to Paul's broader thought by signifying the eschatological time in which believers live, the glorified filial status believers share, and the participation of believers in the prayers of heavenly beings, in this case, the Son of God. Having shown how the first pneumatic prayer fits with my proposed taxonomy, all that remains is to demonstrate the same conformity in the case of both glossolalia in 1 Corinthians and the pneumatic prayers in Romans 8.

4. SPEAKING MYSTERIES AND PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT (1 COR 14.2, 14–15)

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This project aims to establish a taxonomy for the pneumatic prayers in Paul. In chapter 2, I demonstrated that each of these pneumatic experiences (Rom 8.15, 26–27; 1 Cor 14.14–15; Gal 4.6) are experiences of prayer, though admittedly of an aberrant sort. In chapter 3, I showed how the Abba cry in Galatians 4.6 conformed to my proposed taxonomy, which includes both descriptive features and theological connections for pneumatic prayer. In this chapter, I turn to glossolalia, a form of pneumatic prayer Paul describes in his first letter to the assembly in Corinth. As with chapter 3, the argument of the present chapter is divided into three sections. First, I examine the context of Paul's claims about glossolalia and its relation to the other charismatic manifestations of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12–14. Second, with this context for Paul's argument established, I turn specifically to 1 Corinthians 14, where Paul describes glossolalia with the greatest detail, to show how this experience of pneumatic prayer shares the three descriptive features I have argued for throughout the thesis, namely that pneumatic prayer is a common, perceptible experience of Spirit-inspired prayer. Finally, I conclude by arguing that glossolalia also shares the theological connections I have proposed in my taxonomy for pneumatic prayer. As with the Abba cry from the last chapter, glossolalia bears witness to (1) the eschatological time in which

believers live, (2) the glorified filial status of God's people, and (3) a participation in the prayers of heavenly beings.

4.2. GLOSSOLALIA WITHIN THE DISCOURSE OF 1 CORINTHIANS 12–14

Before turning to demonstrate how glossolalia fits within my proposed taxonomy for pneumatic prayer, I will need to establish three preliminary matters regarding the role place of glossolalia within Paul's broader discourse in 1 Corinthians 12–14. Each of these three preliminary topics bear implications for weighing the textual evidence on glossolalia. They are (1) the meaning of Paul's terms πνευματικά and χαρίσματα in these chapters, (2) the relationship between glossolalia and the other πνευματικά and χαρίσματα Paul mentions, and (3) the potential role glossolalia's use (or misuse) has played in the generating the problems Paul aims to address in these chapters.

4.2.1. The πνευματικά *and* χαρίσματα

In this section, I survey the meaning and function of two terms Paul uses in 1 Corinthians 12–14: πνευματικά and χαρίσματα.[1] Both terms are used by Paul apparently to denote broader experiences of pneumatic life, but their precise meaning and their relationship to one another need to be expounded before turning to consider glossolalia specifically, since takes up the topic of

[1] Of the 19 uses of πνευματικός in the undisputed letters, 15 of them are in 1 Corinthians. 1 Cor 2.13 (x2), 15; 3.1; 9.11; 10.3, 4 (x2); 12.1; 14.1, 37; 15.44 (x2), 46 (x2); cf. Rom 1.11; 7.14; 15.27; Gal 6.1. With χάρισμα, Paul uses the term 14 times in the undisputed epistles, half of which are in first Corinthians. 1 Cor 1.7; 7.7; 12.4, 9, 28, 30, 31; cf. Rom 1.11; 5.15, 16; 6.23; 11.29; 12.6; 2 Cor 1.11. In 1 Corinthians 12–14, Paul tends to use the plural of both terms (14.37 being the only exception with πνευματικός).

glossolalia and its place in the worship of the assembly as part of his discussion concerning the πνευματικά and χαρίσματα.

The opening phrase, περὶ δὲ τῶν πνευματικῶν (1 Cor 12.1), introduces the topic of a new segment in Paul's letter.[2] The meaning of τῶν πνευματικῶν in this text is disputed because the form could be masculine ("spiritual people") or neuter ("spiritual things"), and both the masculine and neuter forms of the adjective πνευματικός are used elsewhere in 1 Corinthians.[3] The neuter πνευματικά in 14.1 would suggest that Paul is introducing a discourse on "spiritual things" or "things of the Spirit" in 12.1,[4] but the fact that the form is identical in the masculine and feminine — and would therefore sound the same to those who heard Paul's letter — leaves the possibility that even if Paul intended one meaning (neuter) the Corinthians might have heard another (masculine).[5] The neuter adjective, however, probably relates in some way to the earlier masculine use of the adjective in 1 Corinthians (2.13, 15; 3.1). As Barclay has suggested, πνευματικά in 12.1 likely refers to those things that characterize the new identity of those who are πνευματικοί.[6] As one of the πνευματικά, glossolalia was, as Paul says later, a φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος (12.7), a special manifestation of the divine presence and power among members of the assembly. Another term he uses for these experiences is χαρίσματα.

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[2] Mitchell 1989; Chiu 2007, 160–61. The preposition περὶ is utilized to introduce topical discourses elsewhere in 1 Corinthians, e.g., 7.1, 25; 8.1; 12.1; 16.1, 12. Of course, this doesn't mean Paul leaves themes from previous chapters behind. As Marshall 2017 has shown, Paul's argument concerning praying in tongues and prophecy throughout chapters 12–14 advances the argument about the proper conduct of women who pray and prophecy in the assembly from 11.2–16. Cf. Perkins 2012, 132–70, who treats 11.2–14.40 as a unit. Additionally, Ciampa and Rosner 2010, 560, note the connection between the theme of idol worship in chs. 8–10 and Paul's reference to idols in 12.2.

[3] Paul refers to "spiritual people" (masculine) in 1 Cor 2.13, 15; 3.1; and 14.37. He refers to "spiritual things" (neuter) in 2.13; 9.11; and 14.1.

[4] Conzelmann 1975, 204; Senft 1990, 155; Lang 1994, 162; Collins 1999, 446–47; Garland 2003, 561–63.

[5] A point made by Schrage 1999, 118–19.

[6] Barclay 2004, 165.

Compared to other NT writers, Paul is distinctive in using the term χάρισμα as often as he does.[7] The concentrated use of χάρισμα in his letters has suggested to some that, while Paul was likely not the first person to use the term, he might have attached a special significance to it.[8] This contention is sometimes based on the misunderstanding that the noun χάρισμα is derived from χάρις, which has always been seen as a central element of Paul's theology.[9] However, it is more correct to say that the noun is derived from the verb χαρίζομαι.[10] The -σμα ending is characteristic of nouns that denote the result of various verbs that end with -ιζω or -αζω.[11] It thus refers to "a thing graciously given" or "something favourably bestowed."[12] As Turner has pointed out,[13] there is little reason to assume that Paul gave the term a technical meaning by associating it with various manifestations of the Spirit.[14] For example, Paul can use the term interchangeably with synonyms

[7] Njiru 2002, 77–78; Turner 2005, 256. See the list of occurrences above in n. 1. The term is used only once elsewhere in the NT (1 Pet 4.10).

[8] For example, Luke Ndubuisi, in his study of the term χάρισμα in Paul's letters, distinguishes between a nontechnical, general use of the term, and the more technical, distinctively Pauline use of the term. Ndubuisi 2003, 38–66. Ndubuisi and others who have drawn similar conclusions are guilty of a lexical confusion pointed out by Barr in his seminal work on the subject, namely, the confusion between words and concepts. See Barr 1961, 216–17. This mistake also leads to a confusion between a sense and reference of a word. Thus, while Paul might *refer* to various manifestations of the Spirit with a word like χάρισμα, that does not indicate that such manifestations should be understood as part of the sense conveyed by χάρισμα itself. Cf. the critique of confusing word and concept in Berding 2000; Ong 2014; 2016.

[9] E.g., Dunn 1975, 253, who says, "*Charisma can only be understood as a particular expression of grace*" (emphasis original). Likewise, Carson 1987, 18, says, "[F]or the apostle who so delights to discuss grace, it is eminently appropriate that he should devote attention to the things of grace, to the concretizations of grace, to grace gifts." Njiru 2002, 75–76, starts by suggesting that χάρις is a "possible" root for χάρισμα, after admitting the connection to χαρίζομαι, but then goes on to assume that χάρις *is* the root word in the rest of the work. Cf. Schatzmann 1987, 1–11; Ndubuisi 2003, 35–38.

[10] Conzelmann 1975, 402; Turner 1995, 158–59; Ong 2014, 587.

[11] See the examples in Moulton and Howard 1963, 354.

[12] Turner 1995, 159.

[13] Ibid., 163.

[14] Cf. Rom 1.11; 12.6; 1 Cor 1.7; 12.4–7, 9, 28, 30, 31. Othere places where Paul uses χάρισμα in ways that do not appear to have any connection with manifestations of the Spirit include Rom 5.15, 16; 6.23; 11.29; 2 Cor 1.11.

like δωρεά and δώρημα (Rom 5.16–17). He also uses it to refer to gifts that are personal and communal.[15]

Thus, if both πνευματικά and χαρίσματα have a place within Paul's own thought, how should they be related to each another?[16] Soeng Yu Li has recently provided a thorough review of the various scholarly positions on these two terms and their relation to one another.[17] She outlines three perspectives. First, there are those who have taken πνευματικά and χαρίσματα to be roughly synonymous.[18] Second, there are some who have argued that πνευματικά and χαρίσματα are related in a hyponymic (category | type) way.[19] Third, there are those who have suggested a meronymic (whole | part) relationship between the two terms.[20] This third view is the one that Li takes, arguing that πνευματικά is the whole consisting of the parts χαρίσματα, διακονίαι, and ἐνεργήματα.[21] As Li shows, this perspective is supported strongly by the fact that Paul is already

[15] Li 2017, 101.

[16] It is sometimes asserted that πνευματικά is a preferred term of the Corinthians for the manifestations of the Spirit, while Paul prefers χαρίσματα. E.g., Käsemann 1964, 66; Schatzmann 1987, 6. It may well be that the Corinthians viewed themselves as πνευματικοὶ based on the various πνευματικά practiced in their gatherings, but to say that πνευματικοὶ is not the sort of term Paul might have used, and used gladly, of believers is speculation. It is more likely that Paul is the one responsible for introducing the term πνευματικοὶ into the social dialect of early Christianity since he is the first Christian author to identify reception of the πνεῦμα as a defining mark of the Christian (Rom 8.9).

[17] Li 2017, 117–90.

[18] This includes those who claim a qualified synonymy between the terms. Li cites Dunn 1975; Schatzmann 1987; and Carson 1987 as examples of this paradigm. See also Horsley 1998, 167.

[19] According to most who hold this view, πνευματικά (normally taken as a reference to inspired speech like tongues and prophecy) is a type of the larger hypernym χαρίσματα. Cf. Chevallier 1966, 148–63; Robinson 1972. Martin 1984, 8, adopts a similar view but instead of interpreting πνευματικά as a reference to glossolalia and prophecy only, he reads it as a reference to the gifts that manifest as elements within the liturgical worship of the community. Ellis does not make a case for hyponymic relationship but assumes it throughout his study, saying, "χάρισμα can be used of any or all of the gifts while πνευματικόν appears to be restricted to gifts of inspired perception, verbal proclamation and/or its interpretation." Ellis 1978, 244. The opposite perspective, where the various χαρίσματα refer to types of the larger category, πνευματικά, is taken in Johnson 1998, 121.

[20] See the works cited in Li 2017, 151–82.

[21] She attempts to show how this reading impacts the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 12–14 in ibid., 193–402.

thinking in a meronymic (whole | part) manner in 1 Corinthians 12 with his analogy of the body.[22] In terms of Paul's usage, the apparent similarity of the two terms (e.g., 12.31; 14.1) can be explained when we recognize that "the emphasis in each case reflects the root word…When the emphasis is on the manifestation, the 'gift' as such, Paul speaks of *charismata*; when the emphasis is on the Spirit, he speaks of *pneumatika*."[23]

As a χάρισμα, glossolalia was understood by Paul as a gift given by God to his people for their benefit. Like the other χαρίσματα mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12, glossolalia was also one of the πνευματικά, the special manifestations of the Spirit that bore witness to the believer's new identity. However, there are features in Paul's discussion of the various χαρίσματα that imply a difference for glossolalia, helping explain why Paul singles out this gift for so much attention in chapter 14. Thus, we need to say more about the relationship between glossolalia and the other χαρίσματα Paul mentions in 12.8–10.

4.2.2. Glossolalia Among the χαρίσματα

In this section, I expound the relationship between glossolalia and the other charismatic manifestations of the Spirit Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 12–14. Whereas most scholars have suggested that Paul's goal in these chapters is to help the Corinthians understand that glossolalia is only one gift among many, I will argue that Paul's discourse provides enough hints throughout chapters 12–14 to suggest that glossolalia is a different sort of gift to the others he mentions.

How should we relate glossolalia to the other χαρίσματα listed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12? Paul's description of Corinthian worship in chapters 11 and 14 gives the impression that prayer

[22] Ibid.

[23] Fee 2014, 638.

and prophecy formed a significant role in their gatherings.[24] The reference to prophecy and prayer in chapter 11 is very likely a reference to the same two activities Paul mentions later in chapter 14: prophecy and speaking in tongues, which Paul takes to be a form of prayer.[25] Reading these two chapters alone leaves no impression that there were some in the community who participated in this activity while others did not. While Paul addresses men and women in 1 Corinthians 11.4–15, he gives no indication that one group has the capacity to pray and prophesy while the other does not. Here, I want to focus on the peculiarity of glossolalia among the various manifestations of the Spirit Paul mentions to explain one of the reasons why Paul is singling out this manifestation of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 14.

There is one notable characteristic of glossolalia that makes it peculiar among the χαρίσματα Paul lists in 1 Corinthians. Of all the χαρίσματα mentioned by Paul, glossolalia is the only one which *on its own* lacks the capacity to edify the assembly of believers. Of all the gifts given to the body, glossolalia is the only one that, once it is used, fails to edify others unless accompanied by another gift. Paul's entire discourse in 1 Corinthians 14 suggests, as we will see below, that while glossolalia does have the capacity to edify the one praying and should be used in private prayer, it lacks the ability to build up others who are present when it is used in public.[26] Only by putting the glossolalic prayer into intelligible speech can it edify others.[27] In this sense,

[24] 1 Cor 11.4–5, 13; 14.1–4, 6, 9, 13, 23–25, 26–33.

[25] Recall the discussion in section 2.3.1.2.

[26] 1 Cor 14.4, 9, 13, 16–17, 18–19, 23, 27, 28.

[27] 1 Cor 14.13, 23. I discuss the meaning of ἑρμηνεία γλωσσῶν (12.10) and διερμηνεύω (14.5, 13) in section 4.3.2.1. below.

while glossolalia is certainly a χάρισμα and a φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος (12.10), it is not, on its own, a διακονία or something that can serve others in love.[28]

What this means is that we have good reason to reconsider the theological function of the χαρίσματα in 1 Corinthians. While Paul's major focus throughout chapter 12 is on the unity and edification of the assembly, it would be wrong to suppose that this other-directed function is built into the very theological meaning of χάρισμα.[29] For example, in his recent work on the Spirit and Paul's relational anthropology, Ferguson says, "Thus, ἡ φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος are aimed, not at the individual's, but the community's good."[30] If this were true, then it is hard to see how glossolalia, on its own, functions as a φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος, since Paul's argument in chapter 14 is that it cannot benefit others unless it is made intelligible. Paul clearly views glossolalia as a gift or manifestation of the Spirit (12.10). He also acknowledges that glossolalia, by itself, benefits the one speaking in tongues but not those who hear it and cannot understand (14.4). Thus, we are able to say, as Paul does, that believers are given a φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος "for what is advantageous" (πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον, 12.7), whether for the individual or the community or both. Glossolalia is the sort of gift that mainly has the capacity to benefit the individual, but when

[28] "Glossolalia…is not an expression of ἀγαπή, because one is speaking unintelligible words to God and only the glossolalist is being built up. An exception is interpreted glossolalia. This also demonstrates that the χάρισμα of glossolalia is not a διακονία. For Paul a χάρισμα that is characterized by ἀγάπη results in a διακονία that contributes to the eschatological οἰκοδομή of the ἐκκλησία." Li 2017, 392.

[29] It is precisely this perspective that leads Choi 2007 to assess glossolalia in such a negative manner, suggesting that Paul's remarks are purely critical, leaving no place for the public exercise of the gift in the assembly. The largest problem with Choi's reading, apart from the decision to attribute every one of Paul's positive statements about glossolalia to irony (see Choi 2007, 56–57), is the fact that Paul never questions the status of glossolalia as a χάρισμα. If Paul intended to undue the hierarchical ranking of various χαρίσματα by democratizing them and relativising glossolalia, as Choi affirms (ibid., 195), then Choi's interpretation of Paul's response in 1 Corinthians 14 makes little sense. A total elimination of tongues from the church's worship undermines Paul's affirmation of all the χαρίσματα, including tongues, in ch. 12.

[30] Ferguson 2020, 223. To be fair to Ferguson, he is quick to note following this quotation that Paul does not lose sight of how various gifts benefit those who use them individually as well. My point here is just to point out that the problem glossolalia poses to the common view that all the χαρίσματα are given fundamentally with the intention of benefitting others is much greater than is often recognized.

accompanied by interpretation, it has the capacity to build up the community as well. This unique feature of glossolalia among the χαρίσματα helps to make sense of why Paul views the Corinthian misuse of glossolalia as a problem. It is to the problem in Corinth that we now turn.

4.2.3. The Problem at Corinth

A fair amount of scholarship on the meaning and significance of glossolalia for Paul has depended on how reliably the source and nature of the confusion in Corinth surrounding the use of glossolalia can be reconstructed. In this section, I will call into question those reconstructions of the Corinthian situation that limit the problems with glossolalia to a minority of Corinthian elitists. Instead, I will argue that Paul's language indicates that misunderstandings about glossolalia were pervasive throughout the assembly because many of the Corinthians were exercising the gift in ways that Paul viewed as immature and unhelpful.

Previous works on Paul's description and theology of glossolalia in 1 Corinthians have depended largely on reconstructions of the Corinthian situation to which Paul writes.[31] On its surface, the letter appears somewhat *ad hoc*, since Paul deals with topics as diverse as the unity of the assembly, sexual morality, eating meat sacrificed to idols, proper conduct in assembly worship, and the resurrection of the dead. This apparently disparate list of topics can be explained, it is suggested, when the nature of Corinthian Christianity is better understood.

The conflict underlying the surface of Paul's correspondence has been described in three ways:[32] (1) a conflict between Paul and a rival missionary or missionary group — normally

[31] Dunn 2004 provides a good overview of how various reconstructions of Corinthian Christianity have impacted the history of interpretation.

[32] See the overview in Adams and Horrell 2004, 13–34.

associated with the Jewish Christians of Palestine — with the Corinthians divided between them,[33] (2) a conflict within the Corinthian assembly itself along social lines based on status, education, or apparent spiritual giftedness,[34] and (3) a theological conflict between Paul and the assembly in Corinth as a whole due either to changes in the apostle's thought[35] or to distortions of his teaching by the Corinthians based on the influence of their broader Hellenistic culture.[36] Most commentators today concede some combination of these three conflicts to explain the various topics addressed in letter, including Paul's treatment of the πνευματικά in 1 Corinthians 12–14.[37] A look over the history of scholarship on these chapters reveals that each of the conflicts mentioned above has been blamed for creating the problem Paul seeks to correct with regard to glossolalia.[38]

T. W. Manson located the confusion over glossolalia in the first conflict between Paul and competing Jewish Christian missionaries.[39] In particular, Manson argued that glossolalia was first introduced to the Corinthian assembly by either Cephas himself or a representative speaking in Cephas' name. He says, "I suggest that the demand came from the leaders of the Cephas party,

[33] This theory goes back to the work of Baur 2011 [1873], 268–320. The basic position has received more recent affirmation in Luedemann 1989, 64–80; Goulder 2001.

[34] Horsley 1976; idem., 1978; Theissen 1982; Dutch 2005.

[35] E.g., Hurd 1983.

[36] This would include those who, since Lütgert 1908, have argued for the influence of gnostic enthusiasm in Corinth. Cf. Bultmann 2007, 1:158; Schmithals 1965. It also includes those who have abandoned the gnostic hypothesis in favour of Hellenistic religious or philosophical influence. The argument for over-realized eschatology in Corinth has been influential for Carson 1987, 16; Fee 2014, 187–89.

[37] Cf., e.g., Talbert 1987, xxii, who says, "In 1 Corinthians one finds a number of factors behind the problems: for example, overrealized eschatology (1 Cor 4; 7; 11; 15); the effects of social stratification (1 Cor 8–10; 11); misunderstanding of Paul's earlier letter (1 Cor 5); divisions due to allegiance to different leaders growing in part out of the scattered character of the various church groups or cells in Corinth; a carryover of Jewish norms that were contrary to Christian practice (e.g., 1 Cor 14:34–36). It is impossible to reduce all of the issues dealt with in 1 Corinthians to one cause like Gnosticism or overrealized eschatology."

[38] Cf. the discussion of the Corinthian situation in Ahn 2013, 147–57.

[39] Manson 1962, 203–5; Sweet 1967, while not agreeing fully with Manson's position, appears to grant it plausibility.

and was part of the concerted move to instill Palestinian piety and orthodoxy into the Corinthian church. Paul's converts were being told that here was something most important, indeed absolutely essential to the Christian life."[40] Manson's view, however, is too speculative and remains unconvincing. When Paul speaks to the topic of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12–14, he gives no indication that he is countering the work of other teachers, as he does elsewhere in his letters when there are such teachers involved.[41] Instead, this entire portion of Paul's letter is addressed to the assembly. The more likely scenario is that the practice of glossolalia in Corinth derived from Paul's initial proclamation of the gospel and establishment of the Christian assembly in the city.[42]

The second potential source of confusion, a social conflict within the Corinthian assembly itself, has influenced the belief that a "glossolalist faction" had formed within the Corinthian assembly.[43] A group of tongue-speakers, so the reconstruction goes, viewed themselves as spiritual elites in relation to the rest of the Corinthian congregation. This group might have, as Horn and others have argued, used πνευματικοί as an "exklusive Selbstbezeichnung."[44] Their elitist perspective is said to derive from their high estimation of the spiritual gifts they exercise in corporate worship. Martin has pointed specifically to the apparently lofty valuation of glossolalia as the spiritual gift *par excellence.*[45] Throughout 1 Corinthians 12–14, Martin argues, "Paul repeatedly invokes, *often subtly*, status terms, and his arguments throughout these chapters are

[40] Manson 1962, 205.

[41] E.g., Rom 16.17–18; 2 Cor 10.10–12, 18; 11.4, 5, 12–15, 22–23; 12.11; Gal 1.9; 3.1; 5.12; 6.12–13.

[42] Chester 2005, 435.

[43] Schatzmann 1987, 42.

[44] Horn 1992a, 180–201. Cf. Pearson 1973, 47; Painter 1982, 237; Gillespie 1994, 74–78; Ekem 2004.

[45] Martin 1995, 87–103; cf. Wedderburn 2004, 150–51.

built on the assumption that the practice of speaking in tongues has ruptured the Corinthian church precisely because glossolalia carries status implications."[46] When applied to the practice of glossolalia, Martin's proposed background for the Corinthian conflict between those who practice speaking in tongues and those who do not tends to be assumed rather than argued. As Poirier notes, "Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 12–14 does not in fact presuppose that glossolalia/angeloglossy was experienced by only a few in Corinth."[47] While a conflict within the community does help to explain *some* of the problems in the Corinthian assembly, when it comes to the πνευματικά, Paul addresses the community at large throughout the discourse rather than a small group of glossolalists.

Other works have located the problem with glossolalia in the assembly. According to this reconstruction, the entire Corinthian body is targeted for correction when Paul speaks to matters concerning the πνευματικά. Normally it is suggested that the problems derived from the misguided theology of the Corinthians.[48] Thiselton, for example, argues that the seemingly disparate topics addressed in 1 Corinthians can be best explained if we conclude that the Corinthians had an over-

[46] Martin 1995, 87 (emphasis added). The appeal to the "subtlety" in Paul's argument by Martin here reaches beyond where the evidence goes. When Paul discusses the issue with glossolalia in 1 Corinthians 14 he gives no impression that there is a group in the Corinthian assembly that speaks in tongues and another that does not. Instead, the only groups he mentions are the Corinthians as a whole (note the second-person plurals 14.1, 5, 9, 12, 18, 23, 31 and the vocative ἀδελφοί in 14.6, 20, 26, 39) and those who are ἰδιῶται and ἄπιστοι (14.16, 22, 23, 24), passers-by from outside the community who witness the Corinthians in worship. If only some in the community were causing the problem, one might expect Paul to use τινες, as he does elsewhere in 1 Corinthians (e.g., 4.18; 6.11; 8.7; 15.12, 35) in relation to the practice of glossolalia.

[47] Poirier 2010, 56.

[48] Though some, e.g., Hays 1997, 8, say, "[I]t is not always clear that the problems addressed by Paul have their basis in explicitly *theological* ideas…In many cases, the practices of the Corinthians were motivated by social and cultural factors — such as popular philosophy and rhetoric — that were not consciously theological at all" (emphasis original). However, Paul's goal, in Hays' perspective, is to get the Corinthians to think eschatologically and to rethink their identity in light of Israel's identity, a perspective with which I largely agree. See Hays 2005, 6.

realized eschatology.[49] Others have pointed out that the source of confusion regarding glossolalia could more precisely be identified as a misunderstanding of what it means to be πνευματικός.[50]

Some have attributed the problem to broader cultural practices in the Greco-Roman world rather than a specific theological misunderstanding.[51] In a recent work on the experience of πνεῦμα in 1 Corinthians 12–14, Clint Tibbs offers a unique perspective on the background of Paul's argument concerning glossolalia. According to Tibbs, the topic Paul aims to explore in 1 Corinthians 12–14 is "spiritism" (his translation of πνευματικῶν), which he defines as "an act to solicit communication with the spirit world."[52] In 1 Corinthians, Paul is attempting to instruct the members of the Corinthian community about how to conduct themselves as they interact with "holy" or good spirits in their corporate worship. Tibbs argues that Paul believed in a "spirit world" full of benevolent and evil entities who brought about a variety of effects among believers. Tibbs relies heavily on Paul's reference to plural πνεύματα (1 Cor 14.12, 32). These plural "spirits" normally disrupt the theology and exegesis of those who would insist that for Paul, πνεῦμα has a unique, singular focus. While his precise reconstruction is unconvincing,[53] his appeal to the

[49] Thiselton 1978. In his later commentary on 1 Corinthians, Thiselton modified his view slightly, arguing that the theological commitment to over-realized eschatology was "combined with the seductive infiltration into the Christian church of cultural attitudes derived from secular or non-Christian Corinth as a city." See Thiselton 2000, 40.

[50] E.g., Garland 2003, 13–14, who posits a pneumatological misunderstanding without granting an accompanying eschatological mistake; Fee 2014, 11–13, who thinks the over-realized eschatology flows from the Corinthian beliefs about the Spirit.

[51] For example, Winter 2001 traces many of the problems in Corinth to the influence of Corinthian culture on members of the assembly.

[52] Tibbs 2007, 151. Tibbs explains his decision to translate περὶ δὲ τῶν πνευματικῶν as "now concerning spiritism" in an appendix. See Ibid., 285–305. The argument is a strange one, and unconvincing, as he fails to mention any Greco-Roman text that uses the term πνευματικός for divination, necromancy, or other acts that might fit the label "spiritism".

[53] Tibbs relies heavily on a dubious argument concerning the ambiguity of πνεῦμα in Paul's letters. In particular, he provides three conclusions: "(1) the anarthrous πνεῦμα arguably indicates in certain contexts "a spirit," implying one of many, and not "the Spirit" or simply "spirit"; (2) the plural "spirits" refers to sentient spirit beings, good or evil, and not to "gifts," "manifestations," "inspirations," or "prophetic utterances"; and (3) the Greek noun πνεῦμα refers to a spirit world that distributes endowments in order to facilitate communication between that world and the human

broader practices of consulting spirits or gods through divination or prophecy to explain the situation in a metropolitan context like Corinth is most welcome. As I will seek to show below, a closer look at Greco-Roman conceptions of inspiration helps to explain Paul's description of glossolalia in 1 Corinthians 14.10–12, 14–15.[54]

It seems most likely that a combination of these last two factors — theological misunderstanding and negative cultural influence — created the problem Paul sought to correct in 1 Corinthians 12–14. The following reconstruction anticipates some of the exegetical conclusions that follow below. When Paul proclaimed the gospel among the Corinthians, they experienced powerful manifestations of the Spirit, just like other Pauline assemblies.[55] One of these manifestations of the Spirit was glossolalia, a mode of prayer subsequently practiced by the assembly which, to the outsider and the Corinthians themselves as former pagans, bore similarities to the sort of prophetic inspiration one could observe throughout the Hellenistic world.[56] Additionally, if we assume that the Corinthians heard the same gospel message proclaimed to them that Paul also shared with the Galatians and others, then it would have been natural for the Corinthians to view their reception of the Spirit, accompanied by these manifestations, as a sign of their glorification. Thus, the estimation of prophetic mania in Greco-Roman culture coupled with Paul's teaching on the glorification of humans who have received the Spirit created within

world." At least two of these conclusions (1 and 3) are highly questionable. For example, Fee points out that in a number of passages Paul fluctuates between articulated and anarthrous uses of πνεῦμα within a very short passage (e.g., Rom 8.1–17; 1 Cor 6.9–20; Gal 5.16–25). Fee 1994, 15, n. 11.

[54] See section 4.3.3. below.

[55] 1 Cor 1.4–7; 2.1–5; cf. Rom 15.19; Gal 3.1–5; 1 Thess 1.5.

[56] Paul anticipates in 1 Cor 14.23 that those who are ἄπιστος might overhear the Corinthian assembly speaking in tongues and respond by saying μαίνεσθε ("you are mad"), a term associated with cultic frenzy, and a cognate of μανία, used of prophetic inspiration in the Greco-Roman world. See Chester 2005; Ustinova 2018.

the Corinthian assembly an inflated estimation of their own status in the world and, by extension, an exaggerated emphasis on the importance of exercising the gift that signified that status.[57] Paul writes to this situation in order not only to remind the Corinthians about the proper functions of glossolalia in private and public use, but also to emphasize that they are meant to be characterized by a new way of life, one that embraces the lordship of Jesus and works to serve other members of the assembly in love.[58]

4.2.4. Summary

In this section, I have examined three preliminary matters that shed light on the place of glossolalia within the broader context of 1 Corinthians 12–14. First, I looked at two key terms for Paul's discourse in 1 Corinthians 12–14 — πνευματικά and χαρίσματα — and expounded their relationship to one another. My own reading agrees with Li's argument for a meronymic understanding of the two terms, with πνευματικά being the broader topic Paul addresses and χαρίσματα being one of the elements of that broader topic. Second, I considered the relationship between glossolalia and the other χαρίσματα, highlighting the fact that glossolalia alone of all the gifts Paul mentions, cannot edify the assembly on its own. Third, this peculiar feature of glossolalia was then applied to reconstructing the background of the Corinthians' confusion about glossolalia, leading Paul to offer a corrective to their misuse in 1 Corinthians 12–14. From here, I will now move on to establish how glossolalia fits within my proposed taxonomy for pneumatic prayer.

[57] As Theissen 1987, 292, writes: "[Paul's] central problem is not glossolalia itself but a system of social reinforcement, developing in Corinth, that attributes exaggerated value to glossolalia and thus requires this behaviour more than is appropriate."

[58] Note that Paul begins his discussion of the πνευματικά by reminding the Corinthians that their confession Κύριος Ἰησοῦς is brought about by the Spirit (12.3), and the centre of his argument in chs. 12–14 is a discourse on the importance of love (13.1–13).

4.3. DESCRIPTIVE FEATURES OF GLOSSOLALIC PRAYER

In what follows, I establish that glossolalia possesses the descriptive features I have listed in my proposed taxonomy for pneumatic prayer. First, I will show that Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 14 supports the commonality of glossolalia. Second, I will consider not only the perceptibility of glossolalia, which no one questions, but how glossolalia was perceived by Paul. In other words, if someone is speaking in tongues (γλώσσαις λαλῶν, 14.6), what did Paul think they were speaking? Third, I will end by establishing glossolalia's character as Spirit-inspired prayer. As with glossolalia's perceptibility, no one contends that Paul did not think of glossolalia as Spirit-inspired. However, there are questions surrounding Paul's depiction of glossolalia as inspired speech, particularly as it relates to the involvement of the νοῦς.

4.3.1. Glossolalia as Common Experience

In this section, I aim to demonstrate that Paul understood glossolalia to be a common Christian experience of the Spirit.[59] Most interpreters have adopted the position that Paul believed glossolalia was a gift reserved for only a small number of believers or that glossolalia was an experience limited to Corinth alone.[60] In this section, I want to argue that glossolalia was, in Paul's

[59] An important qualification is in order. In stating that glossolalia was a common Christian experience, I am not aiming to defend something like a contemporary Pentecostal theology of glossolalia, which would suggest that all Christians can and should experience this particular χαρίσματα. Others have defended this view. E.g., Menzies 1999; Hovenden 2002, 151–61. My position in this project is different. While previous scholars have largely ignored pneumatic prayer or limited it to a minority of early Christians, I believe pneumatic prayer was a more common feature of early Christian spirituality. By saying pneumatic prayer was "common" I am not suggesting it was "universal". In other words, while I would suggest pneumatic prayer was a "normal" sort of pneumatic experience for early Christians, I would not suggest that *this particular pneumatic experience* was "normative", even if pneumatic experiences (pl.) were normative, as Twelftree 2013 has demonstrated with respect to Paul and his churches.

[60] See the discussion above in section 4.2.3. on the position that Paul is combating a "glossolalist" faction in Corinth. Choi 2007 suggests that glossolalia was limited to Corinth alone of the various Pauline assemblies, but this minority perspective rests entirely on an argument from silence. More than this, it is an argument that downplays the evidence from outside the Pauline letters for the practice of glossolalia in early Christianity (Acts 2.3–4; 10.46; 19.6; Eph 6.18; Jude 20).

understanding, a common experience for believers. This argument will consist of two parts. First, I will contend that Paul's theology of πνευματικά and χαρίσματα does not preclude the possibility of glossolalia's commonality. Second, I will show that Paul's desire that all the Corinthians would speak in tongues (14.5) expresses a genuine possibility.

4.3.1.1. Is Glossolalia a Gift for Only Some? In assessing how common Paul thought glossolalia was, we cannot overlook what he says about the gift in 1 Corinthians 12. In this section, I want to consider both the meaning of Paul's rhetorical question concerning whether or not all speak in tongues (1 Cor 12.30) and what Paul says about the various χαρίσματα being distributed to the members of the body.[61]

According to one prominent interpretation of 1 Corinthians 12, Paul believed that not all believers could speak in tongues because not all believers are given the same gifts to exercise in worship.[62] In other words, glossolalia is a gift reserved by God for only some believers and not others, implying that Paul would have a principled theological objection to the very notion that all believers could experience glossolalic prayer. It is easy to see why the position is so popular. After all, Paul asks μὴ πάντες γλώσσαις λαλοῦσιν in 1 Corinthians 12.30, a question that expects a negative response.[63] Additionally, he begins his initial list of the various χαρίσματα by saying, ἑκάστῳ δὲ δίδοται ἡ φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον (12.7), seeming to imply that

[61] My interpretation of glossolalia as a pneumatic prayer does not require that every member of the Corinthian assembly, or any other Pauline church, prayed in tongues. It does require that the experience of glossolalic prayer be one common enough to be considered a normal experience among early Christians.

[62] It should be clear to the reader that this position bears a distinction from the reconstruction of the Corinthian situation that posits conflict based on glossolalia as a status marker, though both require that only some in the Corinthian assembly spoke in tongues. This interpretation does not require the notion of social conflict based on spiritual status. Rather, it merely says because of Paul's claims about the χαρίσματα that they are, of necessity, the sorts of gifts that are limited to some and not others.

[63] Carson 1987, 50; Turner 2005, 229.

each member of the body receives their own individual gift.[64] This interpretation of Paul's theology of χαρίσματα would appear to challenge my thesis about the commonality of glossolalia as a pneumatic prayer and, thus, needs to be addressed here.

The largest piece of evidence in favour of this perspective is the series of rhetorical questions Paul poses in 12.29–30. These questions, each beginning with the negative particle μή, anticipate a negative response. Thus, when Paul asks explicitly whether all speak in tongues, he expects his readers to reply, "no". One might be tempted to simply stop here, assuming the question has been sufficiently answered, but there are a few complications that need to be taken into consideration.

First, as we have seen already, the worship of the assembly in Corinth was characterized primarily by the exercise of two manifestations of the Spirit: prophecy and tongues.[65] Throughout the argument of chapter 14, Paul never suggests that there are members of the Corinthian assembly who can and others who cannot speak in tongues.[66] The problem is not that some are able to speak in tongues while others are not. The problem Paul addresses in chapter 14 is that no matter who is speaking in tongues, no one understands what they are saying (14.2) and, thus, no one is edified by it other than the one speaking (14.4).

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[64] E.g., Twelftree 2013, 170–71.

[65] Paul's comments about the church's gathering in 14.23 reflect hypothetically on the possibility of all the Corinthians speaking in tongues. It could be that Paul is using the hypothetical scenarios in 14.23–25 just to illustrate the distinction between prophecy and tongues, but if that is the case, why would he refer to all (πάντες) of them exercising the gifts when focusing on just one or a few would make the same point? In 14.26–31 Paul describes how he wants their worship to look, and there he deliberately limits the amount of glossolalia (14.27–28) in contrast to prophecy, which he states, all of them can do (14.31).

[66] See n. 46 above. Carson 1987, 104–5, interprets the ἰδιώτης of 14.16 as a "non-tongues speaker", but that is not Paul's point. On Carson's' view, even other members of the congregation who exercise the gift of tongues would be in the position of an ἰδιώτης because they would not understand what is being said when someone else speaks in tongues. See Garland 2003, 641; Fee 2014, 745–7; Li 2017, 355.

Second, we have already seen that the gift of tongues stands out in a peculiar position among the χαρίσματα. While every other χάρισμα has the potential to edify other members of the assembly on its own, glossolalia is the one gift that cannot edify others unless it is accompanied by a separate gift. Paul's description of tongues throughout chapter 14 indicates that it can function in three ways: first, as a mode of private prayer that edifies the individual praying (14.2, 4, 14–15); second, when the tongues are put into articulate language, they can edify others in the body (14.5, 13, 27); third, tongues function as a positive sign from the perspective of the ἄπιστοι (14.22).[67] Given these different functions we might be justified in asking whether Paul has all of them or only one in mind when he asks, "Do all speak in tongues?" Prophecy provides an interesting analogy in this regard. While Paul asks, "Are all prophets?" in the same way he asks whether all speak in tongues, Paul's description of prophecy in chapter 14 implies that all of the Corinthians could, in principle if not in practice, prophesy to one another.[68] It could be that Paul's series of questions are simply designed to emphasize the importance of having a variety of gifts exercised in the assembly, or, perhaps, when he asks, "Are all prophets?" he has a ministerial function in mind and not the gift in general, which is available to all.[69] If the latter is the case, then why would it be problematic for Paul to be referring only to *public* tongue speaking and not private prayer in tongues when his description of glossolalia, as we have already seen, demonstrates that it functions *mainly* as a mode of prayer and as a means of building up others under limited circumstances?[70]

[67] Best 1975, 47.

[68] 14.5, 24 and esp. 14.31 — δύνασθε γὰρ καθ' ἕνα πάντες προφητεύειν.

[69] Dunn 1975, 171; Carson 1987, 117–18; Forbes 1995, 258–59; Turner 1998, 242.

[70] Menzies 1999, 290–91; Fee 2014, 689.

These complications reveal that the rhetorical questions in 12.29–30 do not simply settle the question. Paul's intention throughout the argument of 12.4–31 is to highlight the importance of the various gifts for the assembly in gathered worship. At issue is not primarily the *ability* of any believer to perform the gifts listed but the *actuality* of which gifts are exercised and how their diversity contributes to the overall health of the body. Still, the simplest reading of the rhetorical question in 12.30 does leave the impression that not all of the Corinthians did practice glossolalia, and that Paul attributes glossolalia's lack of universal accessibility to the Spirit's will in distributing the gifts to the various members of the assembly.

4.3.1.2. Does Paul Really Want All to Speak in Tongues? In 1 Corinthians 14.5, Paul expresses a desire to see all the Corinthians speak in tongues — θέλω δὲ πάντας ὑμᾶς λαλεῖν γλώσσαις, μᾶλλον δὲ ἵνα προφητεύητε. Does this wish express a genuine desire on Paul's part, or he making a rhetorical move by appealing to an unrealizable ideal in order to emphasize his aspiration for the Corinthians to prophesy in their gatherings? Paul entertains the possibility of the entire assembly speaking in tongues in 14.22 — Ἐὰν οὖν συνέλθῃ ἡ ἐκκλησία ὅλη ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ πάντες λαλῶσιν γλώσσαις — and recognizes that ἰδιῶται and ἄπιστοι who might be present to witness this would recognize that the Corinthians are speaking under inspiration.[71] However, following this hypothetical description is another where all the Corinthians prophesy (ἐὰν δὲ πάντες προφητεύωσιν, 14.24), the ἰδιῶται and ἄπιστοι are compelled to respond by worshiping God and acknowledging the divine presence among the community. The second situation is clearly preferable in Paul's mind, as it leads the ἰδιῶται and ἄπιστοι to a recognition of the true God and does not merely leave the true but potentially confusing or misleading sense that members of the

[71] Chester 2005. For a creative and interesting take on the interaction of the Corinthian believers with their non-believing neighbors in Corinth (ἰδιῶται and ἄπιστοι), see the recent article, Last 2022.

Corinthian assembly experience inspired speech (μαίνεσθε, 14.23). In this sense, Paul's rhetorical use of the two hypothetical scenarios mirrors his statement in 14.18–19: "I thank God I speak in tongues more than you all, but in the assembly, I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others…" The point is not necessarily that one scenario is bad and the other good, but that one scenario is preferable to the other in public worship.

Conversely, we cannot minimize Paul's thankfulness for his own experience of glossolalic prayer (14.18) just because in one context (ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ, 14.19) he views prophecy as superior.[72] He recognized a legitimate benefit in this manifestation of the Spirit for the one praying, as we have seen already (14.4), and despite his clear preference for prophecy in the community's gatherings, he nevertheless charges them not to forbid speaking in tongues (14.39), indicating that he still viewed glossolalia as playing a positive role in the community's edification going forward.

In summary, while Paul's view on the universal accessibility of tongues is not entirely clear, his description of the practice in chapter 14 implies that it was a common experience for the Corinthian believers. While Paul personally benefited from the practice of glossolalia (14.18), he seems to favour exercising the gift of tongues in private prayer rather than public worship, unless there is an interpretation (14.5, 13, 27). This is because, as we saw above, glossolalia is a different sort of gift to the other charismatic manifestations of the Spirit, lacking the ability to build up the assembly on its own (see section 4.2.2).

4.3.2. The Perceptibility of Glossolalia

I turn now to the second descriptive feature of pneumatic prayer, perceptibility. Given that no one questions the perceptibility of glossolalia, I wish to take the question one step further and

[72] Hiu 2010, 61.

investigate how Paul perceived glossolalia.[73] A variety of interpretative options have been put forward regarding the nature of early Christian glossolalia.[74] In this section, I examine two facets of how glossolalia was perceived by Paul. First, there is the question of how glossolalia relates or does not relate to human languages. Second, there is Paul's description of the content of glossolalic speech as "mysteries" (μυστήρια) in 1 Corinthians 14.2.

4.3.2.1. Tongues and Human Languages. Understanding how Paul perceived glossolalia requires that we determine what he meant when he referred to "tongues" (γλῶσσαι).[75] Many scholars hold the view that Paul understood glossolalia to be a form of ecstatic or unintelligible speech, likely related in some way to the "tongues of angels" mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13.1.[76] The evidence for this view can be summarized quickly. First, Paul refers to speaking in the tongues of angels in 13.1. Second, Paul states clearly that the one who speaks in tongues is not speaking to other people but to God (14.2). Paul's other verbs for describing glossolalic speech (προσεύχομαι, ψάλλω, εὐλογέω) in 14.14–16 fit the context of worship, not evangelism and proclamation. Third, in 13.1 Paul compares the one who speaks in tongues to a ringing gong or clashing cymbal (χαλκὸς ἠχῶν ἢ κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον) or in 14.8 he compares it indistinct or uncertain (ἄδηλος) sound. In both cases, the meaning of the speech being uttered is indiscernible for all who hear it. Finally, Paul

[73] As Forbes notes, we possess no recorded examples of the glossolalic prayers Paul describes in 1 Corinthians, so our only way to understand what it was is to examine how it was apparently understood. Forbes 1995, 56.

[74] For a review of possible options, see Poythress 1977; Forbes 1995, 56–65; Thiselton 2000, 972–88.

[75] Paul speaks in various ways about the gift in 1 Corinthians 12–14, referring initially to "kinds of tongues" (γένη γλωσσῶν, 12.10, 28). He also uses the singular γλώσσῃ (14.2, 4, 13, 19, 27) and plural γλώσσαις (12.30, 13.1; 14.5 [x2], 18, 23, 39) with the verb λαλέω to refer to the exercise of the gift. With the singular γλώσσῃ he also uses the verb προσεύχωμαι (14.14). Finally, he sometimes refers to the gift with just the plural γλῶσσαι (13.8; 14.22). See the discussion of the lexical data in Paul and elsewhere in Harrisville 1986.

[76] Every one of the figures reviewed in the opening chapter who have written on Paul's theology of pneumatic prayer would affirm this way of understanding glossolalia. See section 1.3.

imagines that an unbeliever who witnesses the act will say in response μαίνεσθε (14.23). All of these observations point in the direction of glossolalia being not a human language but something else instead, whether the angelic speech or unintelligible speech. This is the view of tongues I wish to defend in the present project.

A substantial minority of scholars argue that glossolalia does not refer to ecstatic or unintelligible speech but instead signifies real human languages that are unknown to the speaker.[77] An important representative of this perspective is Christopher Forbes.[78] Because his work has been influential for others who hold the same view, I will respond to Forbess' argument briefly by focusing on two of its key elements: (1) the meaning of the phrase ταῖς γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων…καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων in 1 Corinthians 13.1 and (2) the meaning of ἑρμηνεία γλωσσῶν (12.10) and διερμηνεύω (12.30; 14.5, 13).

Forbes outlines four basic options for understanding the nature of glossoalia[79]:

> (a) Paul, like Luke, thought of glossolalia as the miraculous ability to speak unlearned human languages. (b) Paul thought of glossolalia as the miraculous ability to speak heavenly or angelic languages. (c) Paul thought of glossolalia as some combination of (a) and (b). (d) Paul thought of glossolalia as a kind of sub- or pre-linguistic form of speech, or possibly as a kind of coded utterance, analogous but not identical to speech.[80]

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[77] Numerous sources could be cited, but a sampling from the past several decades would include Gundry 1966; Gaffin 1979, 81; Edgar 1983, 110–68; Carson 1987, 83; Thomas 1999, 186; Turner 2005, 224; Tibbs 2007, 220–21; Ciampa and Rosner 2010, 583–87; Schreiner 2018c, 125–30. Many of these scholars grant the possibility that glossolalia could include both human and angelic language, though some hold that Paul's reference to angelic tongues is hyperbole.

[78] Forbes 1995. Tupamahu 2023 has offered a different perspective on glossolalia in 1 Corinthians. Unfortunately, his book was published after the present thesis was nearly finished, so my engagement with his work will be limited.

[79] A fifth, minority view, which Forbes also lists is that "Paul thought of glossolalia as (or glossolalia was) an idiosyncratic form of language, a kind of dialect for prayer, in which archaic or foreign terms dominated." Forbes 1995, 58. This one is dismissed convincingly in ibid., 60–61.

[80] Forbes 1995, 57. Cf. the discussion of options for understanding glossolalia in Poythress 1977. An important qualification, for which Forbes criticizes others in a footnote on the same page as this quotation, is what he calls "The failure to distinguish between what glossolalia actually *may have been* and the way it was *understood*" (Ibid. n. 28, emphasis original). Thus, it is possible that Paul and the early Christians understood glossolalia as human languages while they were actually speaking angelic languages, or that they believed they were speaking angelic languages while they were actually speaking unintelligible gibberish, etc. It is impossible to know what glossolalia actually was for the earliest Christians, as we have no recorded instances of glossolalic speech. It could have been similar to what

Forbes defends view (a), the xenolalia perspective, primarily because of the parallel with Acts 2, saying, "the parallel with Luke suggests *a priori* that a miraculous gift of langue is intended, as does the closely related terminology," citing the use of γλῶσσα and ἑρμηνεία as well as Paul's description of the one speaking in tongues as a βάρβαρος (1 Cor 14.11).[81] Forbes' uncritical acceptance of Acts 2 as a parallel with 1 Corinthians 12–14 and as the normative text for reading other glossolalic passages is somewhat surprising.[82] I have already addressed the problems with this sort of approach to understanding glossolalia in 1 Corinthians in section 2.3.1.2. above. Moreover, as Poirier has pointed out, almost all of the evidence Forbes cites in support of view (a) could also be used to support the angeloglossy view (b).[83] As additional evidence for a xenolalia perspective, Forbes cites Paul's reference to the "tongues of humans" in 1 Corinthians 13.1.

In 1 Corinthians 13.1, Paul refers to speaking in the tongues of humans and angels (Ἐὰν ταῖς γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων λαλῶ καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων).[84] According to Forbes, "Those who wish to argue that *only* angelic languages (not some unspecified mixture of angelic and human

contemporary Pentecostal and charismatic Christians experience, or it could have looked and sounded completely different. What I am interested in for this section is how glossolalia was understood by Paul.

[81] Forbes 1995, 58. Forbes also lists Paul's citation of Isa 28.11–12 in 1 Cor 14.21 as evidence in favour of view (a). For a reading of the quotation from Isaiah that conforms to views (b) and (d), see the discussion in section 2.3.1.2.

[82] Likewise, he assumes, without justification that the other glossolalic events in Acts 10.46 and 19.6 are the same in kind as the miracle of Pentecost in Acts 2.

[83] Poirier 2010, 154–55.

[84] The notion that angels worship God in their own language is attested in Jewish and Christian sources outside of Paul, though most of the sources date after Paul. The most detailed study of this topic is Poirier 2010, who draws attention to two early Jewish perspectives on angelic languages (or "angeloglossy"): those who believed the angels worshipped God in Hebrew and those who believed the angels had their own esoteric language. In the former camp, Poirier places the author of Jubilees, who says an angel taught Abraham the Hebrew language (Jub. 12.25–27) as well as the author of 4Q464, 8, who refers to Hebrew as "the holy language", and the later rabbis (e.g., *b. Soṭah* 33a; *b. Šabb.* 12b). The latter position, Poirier argues, is seen in Paul (1 Cor 13.1; 2 Cor 12.1–7) and some pseudepigraphic writings (T. Job 46.7–9; 47.6b–9; 48.1–50.2; Apoc. Zeph. 8; Apoc. Ab. 15.2–7; 17.1–7) as well as other later texts. See the discussion in Poirier 2010, 47–109.

languages) are what Paul intends his readers to understand are compelled to ignore 1 Corinthians 13.1a, 'the tongues of men', or avoid its force by arguing that it means non-glossolalic speech."[85] This is a valid point, but an important clarification is needed. One need not take up the view that Paul intends his readers to understand glossolalia as *only* angelic languages. Forbes himself takes the position that glossolalia was *primarily* human languages and *possibly* heavenly ones,[86] but one could simply argue for something like the reverse of this. Were Paul to come across something like the miracle described in Acts 2, he very well might have referred to it as λαλεῖν γλώσσαις. The question we must ask is whether there are good reasons to think this was the sort of thing happening in Corinth.

In favour of the hypothesis that Paul and the Corinthians believed they were speaking in the tongues of angels is its power to explain (1) why the Corinthians became so attached to this particular manifestation of the Spirit and exercised it in their worship, (2) how the private exercise of glossolalic prayer could still edify the one praying, as Paul says (1 Cor 14.4), and (3) Paul's description of glossolalic speech as "mysteries" that can only be articulated miraculously by someone else with a gift of ἑρμηνεία.[87] When we put this data together with the background material for Jewish speculation about the language of angels, the case for seeing the problem in Corinth this way is strengthened even more.[88]

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[85] Forbes 1995, 58 (emphasis original). Those who take the opposite perspective and argue that glossolalia is primarily or exclusively human languages tend to say that Paul's reference to the "tongues of angels" is hyperbolic. Edgar 1983, 137; Forbes 1995, 61; Thomas 1999, 68; Ciampa and Rosner 2010, 585; Schreiner 2018c, 127. Such a hyperbolic interpretation is assumed more often than it is argued. For example, it is not clear that Paul intends to exaggerate the significance of tongues, prophecy, or faith. His intention is rather to show that no matter how great the personal benefit of these gifts may be, they are nothing if the one who possesses them lacks love.

[86] Forbes 1995, 64.

[87] Dunn 1975, 244; Horn 1992a, 211–14; Klauck 2000, 277–84; Zeller 2009, 243; Fee 2014, 699.

[88] See the discussion in n. 84 above. Zeller 2010, 435, makes a similar point. Additionally, one might add Ellis' observations concerning the possible role of angels in inspiring various χαρίσματα during the assembly's gathering. See Ellis 1978, 23–44.

What about the reference to "the tongues of humans" in 1 Corinthians 13.1, as Forbes mentions? John Poirier has offered an intriguing reading in this regard. He says, "A large part of the fight over 1 Cor 13.1 turns on enlisting the reference to 'the tongues of angels' without due consideration of 'the tongues of men', and *vice versa*. A more promising approach would be to combine the significance of both references within a single model of understanding."[89] When we do this, he says,

> "[T]ongues of men" and "tongues of angels" can be seen to represent the two complementary halves of the earthly-heavenly community of "saints", expressed in terms of the pneumatic-linguistic sign that the new believer receives as a token of his/her newfound citizenship in that community.[90]

Thus, glossolalia "functions as a sign that ecclesiology includes the host of heaven."[91] This interpretation coheres well with the reading of Paul offered so far in this project. In the previous chapter, I argued that Paul's designation of believers as υἱοί makes the most sense within an apocalyptic framework whereby humans who are united to Christ, God's Son, are elevated above the angelic host to become members of God's heavenly family on earth. As I will aim to show below, it is likely that Paul would have introduced similar notions to the assembly in Corinth.[92]

What should one make of the other manifestation of the Spirit (ἑρμηνεία γλωσσῶν) that Paul believes is necessary for tongues to edify the assembly? If ἑρμηνεία in 12.10 and the verb διερμηνεύω that Paul uses throughout chapters 12–14 refer to "translation", then the case for glossolalia as angelic language (b) is not threatened, since, like a human language, it is intelligible

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[89] Poirier 2010, 57.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid., 58.

[92] See section 4.4.2.

and can be translated into other languages.[93] However, Thiselton has shown on the basis of evidence from Josephus and Philo that διερμηνεύω frequently means "to put into words" rather than "translate", particularly where διερμηνεύω is used to refer to the process of articulating thoughts or experiences.[94] The stronger form of Thiselton's lexical argument — that διερμηνεύω means "to put into words" in the *majority* of cases from Josephus and Philo — has been called into question.[95] However, a weaker form of the argument might be entertained, where we accept that Thiselton has demonstrated lexical justification for rendering διερμηνεύω as "to articulate" or "to put into words" *in some cases*.[96] Contextual observations from 1 Corinthians 12–14, as well as the parallels between Paul's discussion of musical instruments as an analogy for intelligible speech and similar discussions in Philo, increase the probability that Paul intended διερμηνεύω in this sense.[97] Paul refers to both speaking in tongues and ἑρμηνεία γλωσσῶν/διερμηνεύω as manifestations of the Spirit. Glossolalia is speech that, according to Paul, no one can understand because it is unclear (μὴ εὔσημον, 14.9).[98] By contrast, ἑρμηνεία γλωσσῶν/διερμηνεύω is

[93] As Forbes argues, "The interpretation of tongues must have been understood to be the equally inspired ability to render the particular glossolalic speech into the vernacular, thus making its content (whether praise, as in Acts 2, or mysteries, as in 1 Corinthians 14) available to the congregation." Forbes 1995, 100.

[94] Thiselton 1979, 18–20, cites several examples from Philo, e.g., *Migration* 72, 73, 81; *Confusion* 53; *Joseph* 189.

[95] Forbes 1995, 65–68. Forbes relies on the fact that when one examines the use of both διερμηνεύω and ἑρμηνεύω the ratio of meanings (whether "translate" or "put into words") shifts. This is a valid observation, but it is still the case that a substantial percentage of the uses of διερμηνεύω in Philo and Josephus have the meaning Thiselton ascribes. The lexical observation remains sound, and *context* will have to be the determining factor in deciding one meaning over another.

[96] In his commentary on 1 Corinthians, Thiselton makes exactly this point. "But I am only arguing that the verbs *can* mean *to produce* articulate speech in appropriate contexts, and that 1 Corinthians 12–14 provides such a context." Thiselton 2000, 976 (emphasis original). Some, such as Carson 1987, 81; Turner 2005, 222–23; and Ciampa and Rosner 2010, 587–88, remain unconvinced.

[97] See Thiselton 1979, 20–23, citing specifically *Posterity* 100–11 and *Dreams* 1.29.

[98] As Thiselton points out, Paul's concern in chapter 14 is not the contrast between interpreted and uninterpreted tongues, but between tongues (unintelligible speech) and prophecy (intelligible speech). Thiselton 1979, 30.

experience of the Spirit that enables someone to articulate in clear words the ecstatic communication of glossolalic speech. Thiselton's argument, thus, leaves open both positions (b) and (d) in Forbes' list.

The weight of the evidence in 1 Corinthians does not favour the view that Paul understood glossolalia as the ability to miraculously speak in unknown human languages. Paul's argument throughout 1 Corinthians 14 treats glossolalia as speech directed to God, not people (14.2, 14–15, 28). A xenolalia perspective makes very little sense without the missional and evangelistic context often assumed by those who hold this perspective,[99] and the evidence often marshalled in favour of the xenolalia view can be explained adequately by those who take glossolalia to be either uintelligible speech or angelic speech. One additional point that might tip the scales in favour of the angelic speech (or angeloglossy) perspective is Paul's comment in 14.2 that the one who speaks in tongues "speaks mysteries" (λαλεῖ μυστήρια) to God. It is to that text that we now turn.

4.3.2.2. Speaking Mysteries in the Spirit. If glossolalia is a form of prayer uttered in heavenly languages that no one can understand without the prayer being put into words by another work of the Spirit, what was being prayed? The closest we get to answering this question in 1 Corinthians is Paul's claim in 14.2 that the one who speaks in tongues "speaks mysteries in the Spirit" (πνεύματι δὲ λαλεῖ μυστήρια). In this section, I will argue against two prominent interpretations of this passage: (1) that the μυστήρια are previously hidden but now revealed truths like the ones Paul proclaims in his apostolic ministry and (2) that μυστήριον is being used simply to capture the cryptic and incomprehensible nature of glossolalic speech. I will suggest that Paul's use of μυστήριον makes better sense within the broader context of his apocalyptic framework and

[99] See the discussion of some of these authors in section 2.3.1.2.

suggests that believers are participating in the activity of the heavenly realm when they pray in tongues.

In his study of μυστήριον in Paul and other early Christian authors, T. J. Lang deals with 1 Corinthians 14.2 and challenges a conventional reading of πνεύματι δὲ λαλεῖ μυστήρια. According to Lang, Paul could be using μυστήριον in 14.2 as he does elsewhere in his letters to denote "previously hidden but now knowable Christian truths."[100] One of the keys to interpreting this verse, as Lang observes, is how the δέ in 14.2b relates the second statement about speaking mysteries in the Spirit to the first statement about speaking (in tongues) to God. Several scholars have opted to read δέ as *explanatory*, meaning that the reason a person speaking in tongues speaks only to God and not humans is because he or she speaks mysteries in the Spirit. Lang argues instead, "There is another option, and it is to take the δέ as contrastive: the person speaking in indecipherable tongues speaks only to God *even though* she speaks mysteries in the Spirit."[101] In other words, "Paul is lamenting that private interaction between the believer and God in incomprehensible tongues obscures what would otherwise be profitable for the whole community."[102]

Lang's interpretation is attractive, since it allows us to read the μυστήρια spoken in tongues in a way that is consistent with Paul's use of μυστήριον elsewhere.[103] However, as Thiselton points out, "[E]very writer uses terminology in context-dependent ways that may modify a more usual meaning, and Paul's usual meaning cannot make sense here without undermining his own

[100] Lang 2015, 39. This interpretation is also advocated by Edgar 1983, 151; Thomas 1999, 188; Ciampa and Rosner 2010, 671.

[101] Lang 2015, 39.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Passages that include this use of μυστήριον include, e.g., Rom 11.25; 1 Cor 2.7; 15.51; Eph 1.9; 3.7; Col 1.26.

argument."[104] This is because Paul apparently did not think that even the person speaking in tongues understood what was being said, and, if this was the case, how could they be edified by speaking such mysteries?[105] Additionally, there is another problem with this reading. If Paul is using μυστήριον here as he does elsewhere to denote previously hidden truths now revealed through his ministry, why would it make sense for believers to speak those revelations back to God?[106]

Others have interpreted the μυστήρια in 14.2 as a reference to the unintelligibility of tongues.[107] Thus, speaking mysteries is just speaking in ways that no one can understand. While this interpretation coheres with the fact that the unintelligibility of tongues is clearly implied throughout the chapter (14.5, 9, 16, 19, 23, 27–28), one should ask whether this is really all Paul has in mind, especially given the heavenly and revelatory context Paul has established for glossolalia and prophecy in 13.1–2.

We can make better sense of Paul's description, I suggest, when we appreciate the broader apocalyptic framework within which the language of "mystery" fits most naturally.[108] For Paul, as for so many early Jewish figures, mysteries are associated first and foremost with the realm of heaven. These divine mysteries include, as Rowland puts it, "almost anything which the human

[104] Thiselton 2000, 1085.

[105] Lang does accept that the glossolalia described in 1 Corinthians 14 was an unknown celestial language rather than a foreign human language. Lang 2015, 37–38.

[106] Fee 2014, 728. Though see Gladd 2008, 215, for an attempted response to this objection.

[107] Carson 1987, 102; Thiselton 2000, 1086; Ciampa and Rosner 2010, 671; Fee 2014, 727–28.

[108] Cf. Bockmuehl 1990, 169–70; Gladd 2008, 210–21.

mind cannot comprehend," including descriptions of God's heavenly domain and information about the future course of events.[109]

To speak μυστήρια, as Paul says one does when praying in tongues, is to speak things that are beyond the comprehension of normal human understanding.[110] It is to participate in heavenly realities that, unless they are disclosed through revelation, the natural mind cannot comprehend.[111] Paul certainly uses μυστήριον elsewhere to describe these previously-hidden-but-now-revealed truths that form his apostolic proclamation. He believed, as other Jews did, that "God reveals his mysteries directly to man and thereby gives them knowledge of the true nature of reality so that they may organize their lives accordingly."[112] However, he also believed that through Christ humans were made new and constituted the temple of God's presence on earth, the place where heaven and earth meet with one another.[113] Believers are exalted with God's Son, as we saw in the last chapter, and when they gather in worship, they worship as members of God's heavenly host on earth. Having received the Spirit, they are enabled to participate in the worship of the angels by speaking mysteries that remain veiled.[114] However, given their earthly existence, and especially

[109] Rowland 1982, 10.

[110] This implies, contra Tibbs 2007, 228, that human languages are not in view for Paul. The problem with understanding the "mysteries" spoken by the glossolalist is not that there is no one present who bears the natural capacity to decode the language being spoken. The problem is that the very act of speaking in tongues participates in a heavenly reality beyond the natural understanding of any human, and the only way for such understanding to occur is for the mysteries being spoken to be put into the language of the speaker or the audience through the gift of interpretation.

[111] As Bockmuehl puts it, "[T]hese μυστήρια are in no way identified as God's saving designs; they seem rather to designate in a general sense the envisioned 'furniture' of the heavenly world." Bockmuehl 1990, 168.

[112] Rowland 1982, 11.

[113] Rom 8.9, 11; 1 Cor 3.16–17; 6.19; 2 Cor 6.16. Cf. Eph 2.21. See the discussion of Paul's view of the community as the temple of God in Gärtner 1965; Renwick 1991; Lanci 1997; Beale 2004, 245–92; Hogeterp 2006; Levison 2006; Suh 2020.

[114] See the discussion on the eschatological context of glossolalic prayer in section 4.4.1. below.

their lack of maturity, Paul must correct the Corinthian obsession with this sort of mystical experience and turn their attention towards one another.

The taxonomy of pneumatic prayer I have proposed suggests that all pneumatic prayer was perceptible. No one doubts that glossolalia, as it was practiced in Corinth, was a perceptible phenomenon, as the problems Paul seeks to correct would be a non-issue if it were not an experience others were observing. Given that no one doubts the perceptibility of glossolalic prayer, I have sought in this section to examine how Paul perceived glossolalia, since there is dispute surrounding this question. I have defended the perspective that Paul understood glossolalia to be angelic speech, showing that it explains the most evidence in 1 Corinthians 12–14, including the evidence often marshalled in favour of the xenolalia perspective. Added support for the angeloglossy view of tongues has been sought in Paul's description of glossolalic speech as μυστήρια. Having shown how glossolalia fits with the first two descriptive features of pneumatic prayer in my taxonomy, I can now turn to consider the third, namely, that glossolalia is Spirit-inspired prayer.

4.3.3. Glossolalia as Spirit-Inspired Prayer

The third descriptive feature of my taxonomy for pneumatic prayer is the role Paul gives the Spirit in inspiring prayer. In this section, I want to bring clarity to how Paul describes the nature of glossolalic speech as inspired speech. I will do this in two parts. First, I will treat 1 Corinthians 14.14–15, focusing especially on Paul's contrast between praying τῷ πνεύματι and praying τῷ νοΐ as well as Paul's claim that his mind is ἄκαρπος while praying in tongues. Second, I will offer an alternative perspective on the significance of Paul's appeal to the various φωναί in the world (14.10) and suggest that this may be another allusion to inspired speech within the Hellenistic world.

4.3.3.1. The Spirit and the Mind. Paul comes closest to describing what it was like to pray in tongues in 1 Corinthians 14.14–15. He says, "For if I pray in tongues, my spirit prays, but my mind is unproductive. So what follows? I will pray by means of the Spirit, and I will also pray by means of the mind." To understand the nature of glossolalic prayer as Spirit-inspired speech, one must begin by inquiring as to Paul's meaning here. Several questions need to be addressed. First, what is the relationship between τὸ πνεῦμά μου in 14.14 and τῷ πνεύματι in 14.15? Second, what does Paul mean when he says that his mind (νοῦς) is ἄκαρπος while praying in tongues? Third, what is the significance of Paul's final claim that he will pray both with the Spirit and with the mind? Answering these questions will give us a better sense of how Paul viewed glossolalic prayer as Spirit-inspired prayer.

Paul's reference to praying τῷ πνεύματι in 14.15 is likely meant to parallel his earlier reference to speaking mysteries πνεύματι (14.2). In the prior verse (14.14), however, Paul says that when he prays in a tongue, his spirit prays (τὸ πνεῦμά μου προσεύχεται). Barrett noted three possible ways to interpret Paul's use of τὸ πνεῦμά μου here.

> (a) *My spirit* is part of my psychological make-up, a non-rational part serving as the counterpart of *my mind*. (b) My *spirit* is the spiritual gift entrusted to me, as in verse 12, or rather the particular spiritual agency which induces my inspired speech. (c) *My spirit* is the Holy Spirit as given to *me*.[115]

An anthropological reading of τὸ πνεῦμά μου has been defended by many scholars, primarily based on the pronoun μου and the assumption that Paul would never refer to the Holy Spirit as "mine".[116]

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[115] Barrett 1968, 319–20 (emphasis original).

[116] Paul appears to use πνεῦμα in an anthropological sense occasionally in his letters (e.g., Rom 1.9; 1 Cor 16.8; 2 Cor 2.13), though he uses πνεῦμα most often to refer to the divine Spirit. See Fee 1994, 14–24. For those who read the πνεῦμα in 1 Cor 14.15 as anthropological, see, e.g., Collins 1999, 502, states, "the opposition [between Spirit and mind] is not between the divine and the human, but concerns something that is going on within the human." Likewise, Thiselton 2000, 1110, translates τὸ πνεῦμά μου as "my innermost spiritual being." Similarly, Garland 2003, 639, believes the phrase refers to Paul's "innermost spiritual depths."

Fee argues the anthropological and divine interpretation of πνεῦμα (options [a] and [c] in Barrett's scheme) should be brought together here: "Paul's ultimate point of reference is to the Spirit of God, who prays through my praying. Thus he means 'my S/spirit prays/sings' in the sense that his own spirit is worshipping, but this transpires by the direct influence of the indwelling Spirit of God."[117] Jewett has argued strongly that the πνεῦμά μου could denote the Spirit of God apportioned to each believer.[118] Regardless of the view one takes, several things should be clear. First, Paul is talking about the exercise of a χάρισμα that is "distributed" (διαιροῦν) and "activated" (ἐνεργεῖ) by "the same Spirit" (τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα, 12.11). Second, Paul introduces the broader topic of his discourse in 12.1 (Περὶ δὲ τῶν πνευματικῶν), and immediately expresses a desire for his Corinthian audience to know how to tell when someone is or is not "speaking by the Spirit of God" (ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ λαλῶν, 12.3). Thus, we have good reason to think that Paul attributes glossolalic prayer to the influence of the Spirit.[119] Nevertheless, he can also say, "If *I pray* in a tongue" (προσεύχωμαι γλώσσῃ, 14.14a), implying that he is not a purely passive participant in the act but an active partner of the Spirit praying in tongues. Both divine and human agency are involved in this act of prayer.

Paul claims that when he prays in tongues, his νοῦς is ἄκαρπος. This language echoes popular Hellenistic conceptions of inspired speech, especially prophecy.[120] As Eyl says, "While

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[117] Fee 1994, 25.

[118] See Jewett 2004. A view taken up and defended earlier in Weiss 1977 [1910], 327–28.

[119] Cf. the argument in Tibbs 2007, 243–46, against reading πνεῦμα as the anthropological spirit in 14.14–15.

[120] E.g., Plato, *Tim.* 71e, who contrasts being inspired (ἔνθεος) with being in the right mind (ἔννους). Cf. *Ion*, 534c–d. Cicero describes true prophecies being made during frenzy and says of Cassandra that it is not her who speaks but "a god in human form" (Cicero, *Div.* 67). Plutarch, *Def. orac.* 414e refers to the belief that the diety takes possession of the prophet and uses their mouth like a ventriloquist, or as a musician plays an instrument (cf. *Def. orac*. 418c–d). Both Philo (*Vit. Mos.* 1.274, 283, 286; cf. *Spec. Laws* 1.65; 4.49) and Josephus (*Ant.* 4.118–19) in their retelling of the Balaam story both imply the complete loss of mental control and subservience to the Spirit during his prophesies of blessing on Israel.

Paul does not use the term *mania*, his assertion that the *nous* is inactive while one is speaking in tongues resonates easily with widespread ideas of possession by gods."[121] It is, therefore, possible that Paul is describing the kind of experience that would have been familiar not only to his Corinthian readers but to the broader Greco-Roman culture as well.

While Paul's claim that the νοῦς is ἄκαρπος does sound like Hellenistic descriptions of prophecy where the νοῦς is temporarily displaced via possession by a spirit or divine being, he al For example, when he states, "*I will pray* in the Spirit" (14.15), he appears to maintain his own agency in glossolalic prayer. In other words, Paul does not appear to share the view that a person inspired by God to speak loses mental control under the possession of a divine being. A similar claim about the agency of the one who prays in tongues is made in 14.27–28.[122] Paul, thus, affirms that those who speak in tongues and those who prophesy can exercise enough control to be silent (14.28) or manage the frequency of their inspired speech (14.27) in the assembly so that the worship can be conducted in an orderly manner.

The term ἄκαρπος ("fruitless") normally functions in a negative manner.[123] However, Paul's earlier claim that the one speaking in tongues experiences edification in the act, (14.4) coupled with his expressed gratitude for his own experience of glossolalic prayer (14.18) suggests a more nuanced reading of this statement is needed. In 14.15, Paul asks, τί οὖν ἐστιν (lit. "what, therefore, is it?"), in response to his previous claim about the unproductive νοῦς when praying in tongues. If Paul assessed the noetic state of ἄκαρπος in purely negative terms, then one should be surprised to find Paul affirming both forms of prayer (τῷ πνεύματι and τῷ νοΐ) rather than

[121] Eyl 2019, 95; cf. Theissen 1987, 287; Martin 1995, 100; Tibbs 2007, 243.

[122] If we were to draw from the categories preferred by Aune's taxonomy of prophetic speech, glossolalia might be compared to a *controlled* rather than *uncontrolled* form of a possession or revelatory trance. See Aune 1983, 86.

[123] Matt 13.22; Mark 4.19; Eph 5.11; Titus 3.14; 2 Pet 1.8; Jude 12.

privileging one over the other.[124] However, this is exactly what Paul does. The future verb (προσεύξομαι τῷ πνεύματι) entails an ongoing commitment to praying in tongues, but the δὲ καὶ implies an accompanying commitment to pray also via the νοῦς.

In summary, Paul's conception of glossolalia as inspired speech does not involve a competitive framework for divine and human agency, where the divine spirit overcomes the human agent and forces them to act independently of their will.[125] While some forms of glossolalia and inspired speech may have functioned this way in early Christian circles, Paul envisions a type of glossolalic prayer that maintains the agency of the believer despite the fruitlessness of the mind.[126] Additionally, Paul's goal throughout chapters 12–14 is not to downplay glossolalic prayer or seek its exclusion. It is, instead, to renew the Corinthians' priorities in the assembly, helping them to see that οἰκοδομή pursued by means of ἀγάπη is the highest good in communal worship.[127] This renewal of priorities leads to a reassessment of glossolalia's value vis-à-vis prophecy in a public setting, but it does not lead to a disregard for the legitimate use of glossolalia in private prayer nor in public worship with interpretation. There is one final piece of evidence which might shed some light on Paul's broader discourse concerning inspired speech, namely, his appeal to the term φωνή in 14.10–11.

4.3.3.2. Many Voices in the World. One important, though often overlooked insight into Paul's description of glossolalic prayer as Spirit-inspired speech is found in 14.10–11: τοσαῦτα εἰ τύχοι

[124] Schrage 1999, 399–400. Contra Martin 1995, 101.

[125] On the relationship between the Spirit and human agency in charismatic practice, see Kagarise 2014, 74–106.

[126] Dunn 1975, 243.

[127] As Paul says, πάντα πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν γινέσθω (1 Cor 14.26), echoing the language of 14.12 (πρὸς τὴν οἰκοδομὴν), 14.5 (ἵνα ἡ ἐκκλησία οἰκοδομὴν λάβῃ), and ultimately back to 12.7 where the manifestations of the Spirit are said to be given πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον.

γένη φωνῶν εἰσιν ἐν κόσμῳ καὶ οὐδὲν ἄφωνον· ἐὰν οὖν μὴ εἰδῶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς φωνῆς, ἔσομαι τῷ λαλοῦντι βάρβαρος καὶ ὁ λαλῶν ἐν ἐμοὶ βάρβαρος. A substantial majority of commentators have read this as Paul's appeal to the analogy of speaking foreign languages to describe the unintelligibility of tongues.[128] According to these scholars, Paul uses φωνή to denote foreign languages because he is already using γλῶσσα as a *terminus technicus* for a specific χάρισμα.

What is missing from all these treatments is an acknowledgement of the role φωνή plays in other descriptions of divine communication — such as messages from a deity or other intermediary spiritual entities — and inspired speech.[129] Given that a focus of Paul's throughout 1 Corinthians 12–14 is the proper function of inspired speech in the assembly, it is surprising that the relationship of φωνή to divine speech, inspired speech, and revelation has been so commonly overlooked. Among the Jewish sources, φωνή is used for the communication of divine beings, including God and the angelic host.[130] Later rabbinic authors referred to this tradition when they claimed that after the divine Spirit departed with the death of the last prophets, God spoke through the בת קול.[131]

In the Greek sources, this mode of inspiration is particularly exemplified by Socrates. Xenophon and Plato both recount Socrates' testimony that a voice (φωνή), identified elsewhere as

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[128] E.g., Conzelmann 1975, 236; Wolff 1996, 331; Thiselton 2000, 1105; Garland 2003, 637; Ciampa and Rosner 2010, 683; Fee 2014, 736–37; Tupamahu 2023, 108–116.

[129] Another very recent article by Guttenberger has advanced a different hypothesis about how Paul's language might be interacting with texts about voice and language from ancient medicine, philosophy, music, and rhetoric. See Guttenberger 2020. Space does not permit an assessment of Guttenberger's interesting hypothesis as part of the present project. However, I enthusiastically welcome another scholar inviting fresh critical reflection on the significance of Paul's discourse concerning various φωναί against the backdrop of other ancient texts.

[130] E.g., Num 7.89, where the "voice of the Lord" (τὴν φωνὴν κυρίου) speaks to Moses from between the cherubim in the tent of meeting, or Psalm 29.3–5, 7–9 (Ps 28 LXX), with its refrain on the קול יהוה (φωνὴ κυρίου). For other heavenly voices, see Ps 19.2; Isa 6.3–4; 40.3; Ezek 1.28; Dan 4.28 (4.31 LXX, φωνὴν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ). Cf. Josephus *Ant.* 1.185, 332; 2.267; 3.90; 4.43; 8.350, 352.

[131] *t. Soṭah* 13.2; *b. Soṭah* 48b; *b. Sanh.* 11a; *b. Yoma* 9b.

a δαιμόνιον, leads him by telling him what to do.[132] In his dialogue about the δαιμόνιον of Socrates, Plutarch has one of his characters, Simmias, say,

> [W]e came to suspect that Socrates' *daimonion* was not a vision, but the perception of a voice (φωνῆς τινος αἴσθησις) or the apprehension of a thought which made contact with him in some extraordinary way, just as in sleep there is no voice, but people get impressions or apprehensions of words and think they hear people speaking.[133]

Thus, φωνή was used in Greek and Jewish sources to speak of a mode of inspiration where one encounters the divine voice. In that sense, Paul could be saying, "as it happens, there are many 'voices' (i.e. spiritual sources of inspiration) and nothing is 'voiceless'." A helpful comparison at this point would be Paul's treatment of idols earlier in the letter. In 8.4–5, Paul acknowledges that "an idol is nothing in the world" before acknowledging in the very next sentence that "there are many gods and lords." Likewise, in 10.19–20, Paul reiterates the truth that idols are nothing before saying that the one who sacrifices to idols is sacrificing to demons. In the same way, in 12.2, Paul can say the Corinthians were led astray by τὰ εἴδωλα τὰ ἄφωνα before going on to acknowledge that γένη φωνῶν εἰσιν ἐν κόσμῳ καὶ οὐδὲν ἄφωνον (14.10). These φωναί, Paul says, are not ἄφωνον like the εἴδωλα who previously led the Corinthians astray (12.2). They are best understood as the spiritual forces behind the εἴδωλα who speak from sacred space and inspire speech through divination or prophecy, including the sort of speech others are likely to respond to by saying μαίνεσθε (14.23).

One factor that complicates this reading is that Paul goes on to say ἔσομαι τῷ λαλοῦντι βάρβαρος καὶ ὁ λαλῶν ἐν ἐμοὶ βάρβαρος (14.11b). If βάρβαρος is taken in an ethnographic or

[132] Xenophon, *Apol.* 12; Plato, *Apol*. 31d; *Phdr.* 242b. On Socrates' experience of revelation through the δαιμόνιον, see McPherran 1996, 185–208. My concern here is less with Socrates' own view of his inspiration than how later figures, like Plutarch, interpreted this mode of inspiration via a φωνή. See other works cited in Betz 1974, 279–80.

[133] Plutarch *Gen. Socr*., 588c–d.

geographic sense to denote non-Greek speaking foreigners, then the case for reading φωνή as "language" stands.[134] However, another explanation is possible. In its most basic sense, the term βάρβαρος refers to "stammering" or "making unintelligible sounds."[135] What is clear is that Paul is portraying a state of confused and confusing communication. This state, he says, occurs when one does not know τὴν δύναμιν τῆς φωνῆς, which could be the "power" or "force" of the voice, meaning its power to inspire, or "the meaning" of the voice's inspired speech.[136] This interpretation would help explain why Paul says in 14.12, οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς, ἐπεὶ ζηλωταί ἐστε πνευμάτων. They are acting like people who are zealous for these various spirits who inspire speech. The public behaviour of the Corinthians is creating nothing but confusion in a culture that is already full of divination and prophecy that can be ascribed to the many gods throughout the empire. Paul's concern is for the Corinthians to consider both (1) the source of their inspired speech and (2) the effect that speech has on others who hear it.

In this section, I have argued that Paul describes the experience of glossolalia in ways that cohere with broader conceptions of inspired speech prevalent in the Hellenistic world. As with other forms of inspired speech in antiquity, Paul acknowledges the inactivity of the νοῦς during glossolalic prayer, though Paul maintains that the one praying in tongues maintains agency in the act and is not overruled by the influence of the divine πνεῦμα. Additionally, Paul's appeal to the φωναί in 14.10 might be yet another way that Paul utilizes the language of Hellenistic views on

[134] Ciampa and Rosner 2010, 683, point out, "The word translated *languages* usually means 'sounds' or 'voices', but v. 11 makes it clear that languages are in mind."

[135] Windisch 1964, 546–47; Balz 1990, 197–98. Conzelmann 1975, 236, acknowledges this meaning.

[136] While the normal and most common sense of δύναμις is in Paul's letters is "power", δύναμις can also refer to the "meaning" of something. See BDAG, 263.

inspiration to describe tongues, contrasting the speech of the divine πνεῦμα with other spiritual sources of inspiration as he did in 12.2–3.

4.3.4. Summary

In this section, I have shown how glossolalia bears all three descriptive features of pneumatic prayer according to my proposed taxonomy. First, I established that glossolalia was, from Paul's perspective a common experience for early Christians. Second, because the perceptibility of glossolalia is not in doubt, I turned to consider additional questions as to how Paul perceived glossolalia. More specifically, I argued that Paul (and likely the Corinthians) understood glossolalia to be angelic speech, the content of which Paul labels μυστήρια (1 Cor 14.2). Third, I examined the way Paul's description of glossolalia reveals that he conceived of it as Spirit-inspired prayer. Having shown how glossolalia conforms to the descriptive side of my taxonomy, I now turn to the theological connections Paul associates with glossolalia.

4.4. THEOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS OF GLOSSOLALIA

I have argued throughout this thesis that pneumatic prayer was theologically significant for Paul in at least three ways. First, pneumatic prayers signify the eschatological time in which believers life. Second, pneumatic prayers signify the glorified status of believers. Third, pneumatic prayers are participations in the prayers of heavenly beings. In this section, I will argue that one can detect these three beliefs about glossolalia in 1 Corinthians.[137]

[137] Previous attempts to expound Paul's theology of glossolalia have relied primarily on Romans 8. See, e.g., Wedderburn 1975; Theissen 1987, 315–20; Macchia 1992; Fee 2000, 105–20. I will deal with the question of whether and how Romans 8.26–27 relates to glossolalic prayer in the next chapter. For now, I wish to limit my focus to what can be reasonably established from Paul's remarks in 1 Corinthians.

The challenge with establishing these three points is that Paul's remarks about glossolalic prayer throughout 1 Corinthians 12–14 are governed primarily by the apostle's desire to correct error rather than establish a clear, positive construal of his theology of glossolalia. Thus, some reading between the lines is required. To present a Pauline theology of glossolalia, one must consider his correctives *as well as* the beliefs Paul apparently shared with the Corinthians based on his own experience of the gift.[138]

4.4.1. Glossolalia as Sign of Eschatological Time

Most discussions of glossolalia in the scholarly literature are especially concerned to engage critically how Paul describes the phenomenon to relate it to other similar experiences in antiquity or the present day. As a result, important theological observations about glossolalia and the other χαρίσματα are frequently overlooked or underdeveloped. One example of this is the eschatological context within which Paul explicitly situates the discussion of glossolalia throughout 1 Corinthians 12–14.[139] In this section, I will argue that, as with the Abba cry of Galatians 4.6, glossolalic prayer signifies the believer's position in eschatological time, the *Zwischenzeit*. As Fee says, "The Pauline context for 'praying in the Spirit,' and thus for glossolalia, is his thoroughgoing eschatological framework, in which he understands the Spirit as the certain evidence that the future has already made its appearance in the present and the sure guarantee of its final consummation."[140] I will explore this concept by looking at Paul's claim regarding the

[138] Contra Choi 2007, who insists on emphasizing Paul's negative remarks to the exclusion of virtually any positive construal of glossolalia, so that in the end glossolalia only stands in tension with prominent aspects of Paul's theology.

[139] Though see Macchia 1992, 55–60.

[140] Fee 2000, 117.

cessation of glossolalia in 1 Corinthians 13.8 and his comments concerning the purpose of glossolalia and other charismatic gifts as οἰκοδομή.

Paul places glossolalia explicitly within an eschatological context in 1 Corinthians 13, where he refers to certain gifts (προφητεῖαι, γλῶσσαι, and γνῶσις) coming to an end (13.8). He claims that this will happen ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ τὸ τέλειον (13.10), which conveys a sense of eschatological expectation and possibly anticipates Paul's discourse on the resurrection in chapter 15.[141] There is in this passage a potential objection to my interpretation of glossolalia. If glossolalia is speaking in the tongues of angels and a participation in heavenly mysteries, in what sense does Paul view those things as coming to an end? For example, Turner objects, "If Paul thought all tongues were angelic he is unlikely to have maintained they belong only to our pre-resurrection 'childhood' (1 Cor 13:11) and will pass away."[142] Likewise, Thiselton asks, "[I]n what sense, if any, could the use of the language of heaven be described as childish?"[143] The problem with this objection is that both Turner and Thiselton misunderstand the nature of the childishness to which Paul objects. What Paul regards as childish is not glossolalia as such but *all of existence* in the time leading up to the arrival of the perfect (τέλειον).[144] This is clear not only from the context of Paul's statement but also from his use of the verb καταργέω, which he uses earlier to describe the eventual passing away of prophecy and knowledge (13.8).

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[141] While Paul's use of τέλειος elsewhere in 1 Corinthians (2.6; 14.20) denotes "maturity" rather than perfection, in 13.10, the term likely implies an eschatological, even apocalyptic context, made clearest by Paul's reference to seeing the Lord πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον (13.12). See Conzelmann 1975, 226; Schrage 1999, 308; Thiselton 2000, 1065; Zeller 2010, 415.

[142] Turner 2005, 223. Again, I should make clear that my argument is not that *all* tongues were angelic, but that Paul and the Corinthians are discussing the proper function of inspired speech that he and the Corinthian assembly took to be angelic speech in some way.

[143] Thiselton 1979, 32.

[144] See Forbes 1995, 70; Poirier 2010, 52. When Paul tells the Corinthians not to be childish in their thinking (14.20), he is referring not to the exercise of tongues as such but to the manner of its utilization in their public gatherings and the over-estimation of significance they have attached to the gift.

Prophecy and knowledge are together with tongues associated with what is "partial" (τὸ ἐκ μέρους). Paul's use of the plural γινώσκομεν and προφητεύομεν implies that the gifts he discusses here — prophecy, glossolalia, and knowledge — are the sorts of gifts available to all believers. Paul is speaking generically about the circumstances within which all believers live. The prepositional phrase ἐκ μέρους modifies the verbal actions, indicating the fragmented and imperfect way they are experienced and exercised in the present. What passes away when the end comes is not knowledge as such (cf. 13.12b) but the way knowledge is experienced in the present (ἐκ μέρους) and the need for knowledge to be given specially via charismatic gifting. This is confirmed by Paul's analogy in 13.11: ὅτε ἤμην νήπιος, ἐλάλουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐφρόνουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐλογιζόμην ὡς νήπιος· ὅτε γέγονα ἀνήρ, κατήργηκα τὰ τοῦ νηπίου. What is put away (κατήργηκα) when one is no longer a child is not speaking, thinking, or reasoning but the way they are exercised and experienced and expressed (ὡς νήπιος).

Likewise, with glossolalia what will cease is not the experience of the believer's communion with God via a participation in heavenly prayer but the believer's dependence on a special χάρισμα of the Spirit in order to engage in this communion with God.[145] Thus, it is possible to read glossolalia as the tongues of angels and still make sense of how they might "cease" when the present age reaches its appointed goal. What will cease is the inability to understand what is being communicated in glossolalic speech, but it can only come to an end when the mind of the Spirit and the speech of the Spirit are fully integrated and realized in the believer.

As one of the πνευματικά, glossolalia is a manifestation of the Spirit that believers are meant to pursue with zeal (ζηλοῦτε). Its purpose in the life of the believer is not something that ceases when the perfect comes. Rather, what will cease is the manner of its practice and its present

[145] Poirier 2010, 158, suggests this view as well.

unintelligibility. In this sense, glossolalia is a present experience of an anticipated reality yet to be fully revealed. Nevertheless, the inability of glossolalia to edify others in the present without the aid of another gift serves as a reminder that believers are still in the *Zwischenzeit*. This eschatological function for glossolalic prayer is often overlooked or minimized in treatments of glossolalia,[146] but when Paul's entire argument in chapters 12–14 is considered, glossolalia, like the Abba cry, signifies the eschatological time in which believers live and worship God.

This eschatological role of glossolalia is not entirely negative. It does not merely function as a sign that believers still live in a time marked by ignorance and partiality. Glossolalia is a gift (χάρισμα) from God, a φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος meant to contribute the building up of God's people, corporately if put into interpreted and individually if practiced in private prayer (14.4–5). Paul expresses this purpose as οἰκοδομή in 1 Corinthians 14.[147] Paul first introduces this language of οἰκοδομή in 1 Corinthians 3.9 to describe his relationship to the assembly in Corinth. They are, he says, "God's building" (θεοῦ οἰκοδομή ἐστε). Paul then describes himself as an architect (ἀρχιτέκτων) who laid a foundation for the Corinthians "according to the grace of God given to me" (κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι). This phrase bears some similarities with Paul's language in 1 Corinthians 12–14. God gives Paul grace for the purpose of contributing to the construction of the Corinthian assembly as God's οἰκοδομή. This work that Paul does, along with the work of others, such as Apollos (3.5–6), who contribute to the building up of the Corinthians, will be tested by fire, he says, "for the Day will disclose it" (ἡ γὰρ ἡμέρα δηλώσει, 3.13). This is likely a reference to the day of judgment, which will happen when the Lord returns (4.5).[148] Thus,

[146] E.g., Choi 2007, 197, who believes that Paul grants no eschatological value to glossolalia, or Theissen 1987, 320, who argues that Paul confers the eschatological function on glossolalia only in Romans 8.

[147] 14.3, 5, 12, 26. Cf. the use of the verb οἰκοδομέω in 14.4, 17.

[148] Thiselton 2000, 313, points out that Paul uses ἡμέρα by itself to refer to the day of judgment in Rom 2.16; 13.12; and 1 Thess 5.4. Paul also speaks of ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου in 1 Cor 1.8; 5.5; 2 Cor 1.14; Phil 1.6, 10; 2.16; 1 Thess 5.2.

when Paul introduces οἰκοδομή in 1 Corinthians, he does so explicitly in an eschatological context.[149]

It is possible, then, to carry this eschatological context into Paul's discussion of οἰκοδομή in the rest of Corinthians.[150] In Paul's view, God is the one growing the Corinthian assembly (cf. 3.7), but God also uses the work of others, like Paul and his companions to build up His people. When Paul comes to 1 Corinthians 12–14, he emphasizes that not only has God given his people apostles, prophets, teachers, and the like (12.28), but also various χαρίσματα through the Spirit (12.4) to each of the members of the Corinthian assembly. These manifestations of the Spirit are given πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον (12.7), or, as Paul will say in chapter 14 πρὸς τὴν οἰκοδομὴν (14.12, 26). Just as Paul was *given* (δοθεῖσάν) χάρις to build up the Corinthians as God's building (3.10), so too, God has given (δίδοται) to the Corinthians themselves various χαρίσματα to do the same work of building up God's people in such a way that their work remains after the day of judgment comes, and glossolalia is one of these gifts given to promote the οἰκοδομή of God's people. In other words, just as God has enlisted Paul in the work of constructing a building for himself in the form of the Corinthian assembly, so too, Paul is saying, God has equipped the Corinthians with the gifts they need to also join in that constructive work. This work, Paul argues in 1 Corinthians 13, should be motivated by love, because it is the greatest of the things that, like the building constructed of precious metals (3.12), will remain after the end comes (13.13).[151]

Cf. Collins 1999, 158; Yinger 1999, 215–18; Garland 2003, 117; Hogeterp 2006, 320–22; Ciampa and Rosner 2010, 154; Fee 2014, 152.

[149] It is also possible that Paul's description of the Corinthians as "God's building" (θεοῦ οἰκοδομή) in 3.9 anticipates their identification as "God's temple" (ναὸς θεοῦ) in 3.16–17. So Hogeterp 2006, 316–26. This would provide some clarification as to why Paul later connects the work of the Spirit (mentioned in 3.16) to οἰκοδομή in 1 Corinthians 14.

[150] Li 2017, 337, also argues for reading οἰκοδομή eschatologically in 1 Cor 12–14.

[151] As Paul states earlier in the letter, ἀγάπη οἰκοδομεῖ (1 Cor 8.1).

In this section, I have shown that glossolalia, like all pneumatic prayer according to my proposed taxonomy, bears witness to the eschatological time in which believers exist. Glossolalia serves as a reminder that believers remain in a time characterized by only partial knowledge, understanding, and experience of God. At the same time, Paul affirms that glossolalia, like the other charismatic gifts, has been given to believers so that they can be built up as the οἰκοδομή of God. This building up of God's people, I have argued, should be read eschatologically, making the χαρίσματα part of God's plan for growing his people and making them ready for the day of judgment.

4.4.2. Glossolalia and Sonship

The second theological connection for pneumatic prayer, according to the taxonomy being argued here, is that it bears witness to the glorified filial status of believers. In this section, I want to argue that this theological theme can also be seen in an indirect way when we consider how the Corinthians fell into the error Paul aims to correct in chapters 12–14.

The Corinthian assembly had an inflated sense of their own spiritual status. It seems very likely that glossolalia, experienced by many of the Corinthians, contributed to this elevated sense of prestige, but why would the Corinthians associate glossolalia with high status? One possible solution is that a positive attitude towards esoteric speech and divine madness within Greco-Roman society more generally contributed to a misinterpretation of glossolalia's significance.[152] Another, rarely entertained, option is that the Corinthian error stems not only from their pre-

[152] This is the perspective advocated by Hill 1979, 121; Martin 1995.

Christian background but from a misinterpretation of Paul's teaching about the gift when they first received it.[153]

One of the keys for reading the problem in Corinth this way is how Paul can appeal to Jewish ideas in his letter to the Corinthian assembly without much explanation. These would include not only his use of the Jewish scriptures throughout the letter, but also his appeal to apocalyptic and eschatological concepts such as the characterization of the present as "this age" (1 Cor 1.20; 2.6, 8; 3.18; cf. 10.11), the identification of the assembly with God's temple (3.16–17; 6.19) or "the holy ones" (1.2; 6.1–2; 14.33; 16.1), the day of the Lord (3.13–15; 4.5; 5.5), the kingdom of God (4.20; 6.9, 10; 15.24, 50), the hope of resurrection (ch. 15), the Spirit of God (2.4, 10, 12, 13, 14; 3.16; 6.11, 19; 7.40; 12.3), and his subtle references to the angelic host and their relationship to the assembly (6.3; 11.10). If, as seems likely, the Corinthian assembly was predominantly gentile and ex-pagan,[154] then these references to Jewish ideas are hard to explain unless we grant that Paul himself — or possibly other early Jewish Christian leaders — introduced these concepts to the Corinthians.[155] Since we know Paul was the one who first brought the gospel to the city of Corinth (1.14–17; 2.1–5), and since Paul reports on what he proclaims when he

[153] Forbes 1995, 172. Contra Meier 1998, 196–99, who contends that rival missionaries are responsible for introducing glossolalia in Corinth.

[154] E.g., in 1 Cor 12.2, Paul speaks to the Corinthians and says, "when you were gentiles you were misled by mute idols." Cf. 6.9–11; 8.7, where Paul also implies that some of the Corinthians used to be idol worshippers. At the same time, there are clear indications of a Jewish presence among the Corinthian assembly. E.g., 7.18–19, which implies that some of the Corinthians may have been circumcised prior to their calling. There is also the mention of Crispus in 1 Cor 1.14, whom Paul reports he baptized when he first preached the gospel in Corinth. This Crispus is likely the same as Crispus in Acts 18.8, who is the ἀρχισυνάγωγος ("ruler of the synagogue") in Corinth and becomes a believer. Witherington III 1995, 24, 82.

[155] While a Jewish population in Corinth is possible, the archaeological evidence for one in the middle of the first century is meagre. Internal evidence from Paul's letter is key in this regard, and the apostle's identification of his readers as ἔθνη who were previously led astray by τὰ εἴδωλα τὰ ἄφωνα at the outset of our discourse (12.2) all but settles the matter. There is no hint here of a prior exposure to Jewish ideas via participation in a local synagogue as proselytes or Godfearers. Fee 2014, 1–4, provides a nice summary of the background.

proclaims the gospel,[156] it seems best to assume that any ideas the Corinthians might have had about any of the χαρίσματα would have been given to them by Paul first.

This reading requires only that one accept the simple premise that the gospel Paul proclaimed among the Corinthians was like the gospel described elsewhere in his letters. If the themes listed above were expounded by Paul to the members of the Corinthian assembly when they believed, then it is also possible that another theme, the sonship of believers, could have been included as an element of the gospel Paul proclaimed. Two subtle pieces of evidence could be cited in support of this notion: the Corinthians' familiarity with the baptismal rite and their understanding of God as "Father". Theologically, baptism is tied in the apostle's mind to union with Christ and the believer's adoption into the family of God.[157] Likewise, the Corinthians' understanding of God as "Father" follows naturally from precisely this connection, since, as we saw in the previous chapter, Paul's theology of adoption is the theological key for enabling his assemblies to call upon God as their Father rather than merely the Father of Jesus.[158] Thus, while Paul does not refer explicitly to the adoption of believers in 1 Corinthians as he does in Galatians and Romans, it is possible that the theme was originally introduced when Paul spent time in the city with the assembly.[159]

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[156] On the content of Paul's gospel, see the discussions in Dunn 1998,163–81; Wolter 2015, 51–69; and more recently, Twelftree 2019.

[157] Despite Paul's relatively infrequent mention of baptism, when he does mention it, he often ties it to the believer's union with Christ (Rom 6.3, 4; Gal 3.27) and reception of the Spirit (1 Cor 6.11; 12.13). Contra Dunn 1970, 109–13, 127–31; Fee 1994, 131, 179–82, 294–96. See Schnackenburg 1964, 105–12, 121–27; Ferguson 2009, 146–65.

[158] 1 Cor 1.3; 8.6; 15.24; 2 Cor 1.3; 6.18; 11.31.

[159] Additional evidence for this is Paul's identification of believers as "holy ones" (see below), another term that, like "sons of God", was used frequently in Jewish literature of the heavenly host, members of God's divine household.

The Corinthian perspective on glossolalia can thus be explained entirely by Paul's original teaching to the assembly. Reception of the Spirit, according to Paul, is accompanied by various manifestations of the divine power and presence, one of which is glossolalia.[160] Receiving the Spirit signifies believers' new status as sons of God, a glorified status tied to their union with the Son who is enthroned above the angels. It would not take much for the Corinthians to connect a sign of Spirit reception with the signified new status shared by all believers, and so far, Paul would agree with the connection.[161] Their error stems from lacking the complete theological picture.[162] In this case, Paul must remind the Corinthian assembly first that the one with whom they are united in glory is the crucified one (1 Cor 1.23; 2.2) and second that their worship should be characterized by οἰκοδομή motivated by ἀγάπη. Nevertheless, to understand Paul's own theology of glossolalia, we must strip away the layers of misunderstanding that cover the practice because of the Corinthian error. Paul's positive assessment of glossolalic prayer still comes through even during his polemic against the Corinthian misuse of the gift,[163] and we can imagine that had they not become so puffed up with their new spiritual status and lost sight of their obligations to serve one another when

[160] Paul claims in 1 Cor 2.4 that his initial proclamation of the gospel was not with words of wisdom but with demonstration of the Spirit and power. This description of his gospel proclamation mirrors the description from Galatians 3.1–5 analysed in the previous chapter. See also Rom 1.16; 15.18–19; 1 Thess 1.5. In each of these texts, Paul connects the miraculous manifestation of the Spirit to his proclamation of the gospel. As Twelftree 2013, 317, concludes, "The gospel was a composite expression of the audible and the tangible powerful presence of God. *For Paul, no more could the gospel be proclaimed without words than it could come or be experienced without miracles. Without the miraculous, Paul may have had a message, but he would not have had a gospel. Without the miraculous, there was no gospel, only preaching*" (emphasis original).

[161] Some would object that tongues were not the only sign of Spirit-reception, and I would agree. However, there is nothing in the Corinthian correspondence that indicates they thought tongues was the only sign of Spirit-reception either. The Corinthian attachment to glossolalia was not based on an ancient form of the later Pentecostal "initial evidence" doctrine, on which see the essays in McGee 1991 and the recent historical work by Walters 2016.

[162] Compare the similar situation in 1 Thess 4.13, where it appears that the Thessalonian believers were distressed by the deaths of some members of their assembly before the return of Christ. There too, the problem is not false teaching or negative cultural influence, but an incomplete theological picture based on what Paul was able to communicate with them while he was present. See Richard 1995, 232–33; Boring 2015, 157.

[163] Contra Choi 2007, 56–57.

gathered for worship, Paul would take no issue with the sort of connection between glossolalia and the glorified filial status of believers outlined above.

The connection between glossolalia and the glorified filial status of believers is an indirect one. The Corinthian overestimation of glossolalia can be explained if their error is due not only to negative cultural influence but also to a misunderstanding of Paul's teaching. These elements of Paul's teaching — their union with the Messiah and the identification of God as "Father" — evidence the possibility that the Corinthians associated the manifestations of the Spirit with their new glorified status as God's children.

4.4.3. Glossolalia and Participating in the Worship of Heaven

The final theological connection in the taxonomy of pneumatic prayer is that pneumatic prayer is viewed by Paul as a participation in the prayers of heavenly beings. In this final section, I demonstrate that Paul understood glossolalia as a participation in the prayers of heaven. As angelic speech, glossolalia is a Spirit-inspired prayer that enables believers on earth to join the angelic hosts in praising God.

As we have seen, Paul and the Corinthians likely did not believe they were speaking human languages when they prayed in tongues but heavenly ones. One theological key to understanding the significance of glossolalia as angeloglossy is the prominence of heavenly worship as a theme in Jewish mystical traditions in the centuries surrounding Paul. Additionally, since Paul associates believers with the eschatological temple of God, and because the temple was the place where the worship of heaven and earth came together, it makes sense that Paul would refer to the presence of angels in the worship of the Corinthian assembly (1 Cor 11.10).[164]

[164] Foster 2022, 128.

In addition to being the temple of God, Paul refers to the members of the Corinthian assembly as "holy ones" (e.g. 1.2; 6.1–2), a term used most commonly in Jewish literature for heavenly beings.[165] Of special importance in this regard is 6.1–2, where Paul applies passages like Daniel 7.22, which refers to heavenly beings,[166] to say that οἱ ἅγιοι will preside over the cosmos in judgment, including judgment over angels (1 Cor 6.3). Paul's use of ἅγιοι in this way provides further support for the glorification of believers noted in the previous section. These two factors — the assembly's identification with the temple of God and the reference to believers as ἅγιοι — provide some insight into why Paul would affirm the assembly's participation in heavenly worship.

What was the significance of this for Paul?[167] There is a noticeable scarcity of positive references to angelic entities in the Pauline corpus.[168] This could be the result of his elevated Christology, which displaces the prominent role held by other mediatorial heavenly entities in early Jewish thought.[169] In Colossians 2.18, whether composed by Paul or simply reflective of his broader theology, θρησκείᾳ τῶν ἀγγέλων is an emphasis of his opponents rather than himself.[170] Nevertheless, while he may not have had the same interest in the nature of angelic worship as other

[165] Davila 2000, 100. In his own study of the term, Trebilco 2012, 122–28, emphasizes the prominence of ἅγιοι as a term for the heavenly host, but in his section on Pauline usage (ibid., 128–37), he fails to note any possible correspondence. McKnight 2018b, who correctly connects Paul's use of ἅγιος to his understanding of the assembly as God's temple, also fails to appreciate this connection.

[166] See Collins 1993, 319–23.

[167] The importance for the Corinthians is clear enough, as Meier says, "Für die Glossolalie besteht die Nähe zu den Engeln darin, daß die Betenden am himmlischen Gebet teilnehmen." Meier 1998, 225.

[168] On angels and angelic beings in the Pauline corpus, see Arnold 1992; Reid 1993; Williams 2009.

[169] Poirier 2010, 55.

[170] The nature of these opponents and the meaning of this genitive construction are much disputed. See, e.g., Stettler 2005; McKnight 2018a, 18–34, 275–78.

early Jewish thinkers, Paul does demonstrate an interest in the unification of heavenly and earthly worship.[171]

In the Christological hymn of Philippians 2.6–11, Paul claims that God has given the Messiah a name above all names so that all heavenly (ἐπουρανίων), earthly, and subterranean knees bow to him, and every tongue confesses (πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσηται) that the Messiah Jesus is Lord (κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς).[172] This same confession of lordship, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12.3, is an instance of Spirit-inspired speech. It is not difficult to see how all Spirit-inspired speech for Paul — whether prophecy, prayer, or praise — leads to or results from this fundamental Christological confession. The argument for prophecy over glossolalia in 1 Corinthians 14 demonstrates this very point, as Paul anticipates outsiders recognizing that ὁ θεὸς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐστιν (14.25).[173] For the one praying in tongues, however, the participation in heavenly worship is limited to themselves. They speak the heavenly mysteries to God in a manner no one, even themselves, can understand. Nevertheless, they are built up because the experience of glossolalia facilitates an ascent of the believer into the place where the Messiah is with God, a place that cannot be grasped by any mind in the present but a place where the coming πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον (13.12) encounter with the divine will be fully realized.

4.4.4. Summary

When we examine glossolalia in 1 Corinthians, the same three theological connections of pneumatic prayer emerge as the Abba cry in Galatians. First, his manifestation of the Spirit bears

[171] On the importance of heaven for Paul's theology, see Lincoln 1981, 169–95.

[172] On the Christological hymn, see the essays in Martin and Dodd 1998.

[173] The allusion to Isaiah 45 in both Philippians 2.11 (Isa 45.23) and 1 Corinthians 14.25 (Isa 45.14) provides the necessary justification for the underlying relation between these texts. On Paul's use of Isaiah 45 in Philippians, see Bauckham 2008, 41–45.

witness to the eschatological life of the believer in the *Zwischenzeit* and prepares believers for the eschatological judgment by building them up, individually and corporately. Second, the experience of praying in the tongues of angels was tied, in both Paul's and the Corinthians' perspective, to their glorified status as members of God's family. Third, this new status was confirmed in part by their participation in the joint worship of heaven and earth through their praying in the tongues of angels.

4.5. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have explored Paul's description and theology of glossolalia as a form of pneumatic prayer. I have shown that glossolalic prayer bears the elements of the taxonomy I established in the opening chapter, both descriptively and theologically. Glossolalia is described as a familiar and perceptible instance of inspired speech. Theologically, it signifies the eschatological time in which believers life, bears witness to their glorified filial status, and enables them to participate in the prayers of heaven. In the next chapter, we will consider the final references to pneumatic prayer in Paul's letter to the church in Rome and see how these themes gain even fuller expression.

5. THE SPIRIT BEARS WITNESS AND INTERCEDES (ROM 8.15–16, 26–27)

5.1. INTRODUCTION

So far in this project I have argued that the history of scholarship on the pneumatic prayer texts reveals the need for a taxonomy of these experiences that highlights their shared descriptive features and theological connections (chapter 1). Second, I have made the case that each of the pneumatic prayer experiences attested in Paul's writings are best interpreted as prayers, but prayers of an aberrant kind, with some similarities to other aberrant forms of prayer in Greco-Roman antiquity (chapter 2). Third, from there I turned to the Abba cry in Galatians 4.6 and demonstrated its conformity to the proposed taxonomy of pneumatic prayer (chapter 3). Fourth, I did the same for glossolalic prayer in 1 Corinthians 14 (chapter 4).

In this chapter, I turn to consider the final Pauline texts on pneumatic prayer, both of which are in Romans 8. First, there is the Abba cry (Rom 8.15), which we have already examined as it appears in Galatians 4.6. Second, there is Paul's claim regarding the Spirit's intercession on behalf of believers (Rom 8.26–27). As with the previous chapters, I will first provide an overview of the pneumatological discourse in Romans 8 leading up to the first pneumatic prayer text in 8.15. This context will set the stage for an examination of the Abba cry. Finally, I will conclude by showing that the Spirit's intercession (Rom 8.26–27), which is the final pneumatic prayer that remains, also fits within the taxonomy I have put forward.

5.2. PAUL'S PNEUMATOLOGICAL DISCOURSE IN ROMANS 8

In setting out to better understand the two pneumatic prayers in Romans 8, I wish to preface my examination of the key texts by establishing their context in two ways. First, I will comment very briefly on what I believe to be the situation behind the letter to the believers in Rome. Second, I will review the structure of Romans 8 and the role Paul gives the Spirit in that chapter. These two sections will then pave the way for a more detailed look at the Abba cry in 8.15 and the Spirit's intercession in 8.26–27 as I aim to show how they conform to my taxonomy for pneumatic prayer.

5.2.1. The Purpose of the Letter to Rome

There is a fair amount of uncertainty regarding the circumstances surrounding Paul's letter to the believers in Rome.[1] Karl Donfried, in 1991, drew attention to a few of the matters concerning the context of Paul's letter that were increasingly accepted by a consensus of scholars, such as the following.[2] (1) Paul wrote to the Roman believers in order to address a concrete situation occurring in their assemblies, likely having to do with polarization or divisions among the Roman believers.[3] (2) There is likely no singular purpose behind Paul's letter to the Romans. (3) Romans 16 is an integral part of the letter and contains insight into the social makeup of early Roman Christianity.[4] (4) Paul's argument in Romans 9–11 is now regarded as an important component of Paul's broader

[1] Paul refers in passing to the ἐκκλησία in the house of Prisca and Aquilla (16.5) when he sends his final greetings, perhaps implying the existence of several house churches in Rome. It could be that, due to conflict and divisions among the Roman believers, Paul deliberately avoids referring to them as an ἐκκλησία in his letter. Instead, he calls them "all those who are in Rome, beloved by God, called holy ones." (1.7).

[2] Donfried 1991, lxix–lxx. A review of the main evidences utilized in reconstructing the situation in Rome can be found in Wedderburn 1988; Longenecker 2011, 55–160.

[3] The precise reconstruction of this historical situation varies, of course. E.g., Barclay 2015, 455, n. 13, cites three radically different, and incompatible reconstructions by Nanos 1996, 41–165, Das 2007, and Campbell 2009, 469–518.

[4] Donfried cites the Lampe 1987 as contributing especially to a better understanding in this regard. Lampe's work has since been translated into English (Lampe 2003).

argument in Romans. While the debate around the purpose behind Romans will undoubtedly continue, I believe some stronger inferences can be made about Paul's reasons for writing based on his comments throughout the letter. In particular, I wish to highlight two plausible reasons behind the letter, beginning with the most certain reason moving to reasons for which it is harder to be certain.

First, it is certain that one reason Paul writes Romans is in anticipation of his future ministry plans and the role he believes the Roman believers can play in those plans. Paul writes the letter to Rome from the house of Gaius in Corinth.[5] While it is clear that Paul did not found the assemblies in Rome, he has heard of them and their faith (1.8). He expresses regret over the fact that he had not, by the time of his writing, been to Rome (1.10–15). He also reveals something of his plans to finally visit them (15.22–23). After returning to Jerusalem with the collection for the poor (15.25–28),[6] Paul intends to go to Rome as part of a larger missionary strategy to get his gospel to Spain (15.24, 28–29). He also makes it clear that he hopes the Roman believers will support him in his efforts to get to Spain.[7] Paul makes clear in the letter that he views himself as the apostle to the gentiles (1.1, 5; 15.16–21), which means, as Barclay as observed, that Paul wants the Roman believers to think of Paul as *their* apostle.[8] As part of his persuasive strategy, both to

[5] Rom 16.23; cf. 1 Cor 1.14. According to Acts, this trip would be during his third missionary journey (Acts 18.23–21.17).

[6] Cf. 1 Cor 16.1–4; 2 Cor 8–9.

[7] Paul says he wants "to be sent" (προπεμφθῆναι) by the Roman believers to Spain (15.24).

[8] Barclay 2015, 457.

gain their support and to fulfill his own calling as an apostle *to them*, Paul presents a broad overview of his teaching, especially his gospel.

Second, Paul writes to the Roman believers to address conflicts within the Roman assemblies. If Romans 14.1–15.13 concerning the conflict between the "strong" and the "weak" is reflective of the situation in Rome, as Watson has argued,[9] then these texts provide further insight into Paul's reasons for writing. Given that the Christians in Rome are made up of Jewish and gentile believers, it is possible that Paul is referring to these two groups of believers in Romans 14.1–15.13.[10] Paul's gospel, which he speaks of throughout the letter, speaks directly to the need for Jews and gentiles to be united as part of God's people.[11]

These brief observations about the potential setting behind the letter help to establish an important point for our analysis of Romans 8. Throughout the letter, Paul is unpacking in broad strokes the truth of the gospel he proclaims while applying that gospel specifically to situations he is aware of among the believers in Rome. When we come to Romans 8, therefore, we are coming to a statement of Paul's belief about the new life of the believer that is not relying on previous contact or preaching, but is speaking to these believers in Rome possibly for the first time. It is to Romans 8, and the role of the Spirit in Paul's argument, that we now turn.

5.2.2. The Spirit in Romans 8

The beginning of Romans 8 makes clear that the answer to the problem of sin and death is God's act on humanity's behalf through the death of the Messiah and the work of the Spirit. There

[9] Watson 2007, 175–82.

[10] Wiefel 1991 attributes the tension between Jewish and gentile Christians to the return of Jewish believers to the city after their Expulsion by Claudius (Acts 18.2; cf. Suetonius, *Claud*. 25.4).

[11] Paul's references to the gospel in the letter include 1.1, 9, 16; 10.16; 11.28; 15.16, 19. Note also his references to "my gospel" (τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου) in 2.16; 16.25.

is a recognizable structure to Paul's argument in Romans 8. As Käsemann observes, "Chapter 8 is clearly structured. Verses 1–11 deal with the Christian life as being in the Spirit. Verses 12–17 expound this as the state of sonship. Verses 18–30 portray it as the hope of eschatological freedom. Verses 31–39 depict it as triumph."[12] To set a context for our examination of the pneumatic prayer texts in Romans 8, I want to make a few observations about Paul's language concerning the Spirit in this important chapter. In particular, I want to highlight the highly *experiential* nature of Paul's claims concerning the pneumatic life believers enjoy.

Romans 8 is full of experiential language about the Spirit. This is clearest in the focus Paul gives to the connection between the Spirit and the new life of the believer.[13] The law of the Spirit that gives life (νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς) has liberated them from the law of sin that gives death (8.2). Believers are enabled by the Spirit to walk μὴ κατὰ σάρκα but rather κατὰ πνεῦμα (8.4). Their mindset (φρόνημα) has been transformed by the Spirit to bring both ζωὴ and εἰρήνη (8.6). The indwelling of the divine Spirit in believers (πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν) is the way they experience the presence of the Messiah, which also includes a sense of belonging to him (8.9). God has given life (ζῳοποιήσει) to believers through the indwelling Spirit just as the Messiah was given new life after his death (8.11).[14]

The experiential context of Paul's language paves the way for his depiction of pneumatic prayer in 8.15. The reception of the Spirit marks both a deliverance from bondage and fear and the adoption of the believer into the family of God, resulting in the experience of the Abba cry (8.15). Following this, the reception of the Spirit is connected to the believer's experience of groaning

[12] Käsemann 1980, 204.

[13] Lohse 2003, 227. Cf. the "lifegiving Spirit" (πνεῦμα ζῳοποιοῦν) of 1 Cor 15.45. On the connection between the Spirit and life in Paul's thought, see the study by Yates 2008.

[14] Moo 2018, 515–16.

(στενάζω, 8.23) in the midst of present suffering, while they wait for the redemption of the body. Finally, Paul turns the other pneumatic prayer in this chapter, claiming that, even in the midst of the believer's weakness, the Spirit brings help in the form of intercession on their behalf (8.26–27).

The language of pneumatology pervades Romans 8, especially in comparison with the rest of the letter.[15] The broad theme of the text is the new life believers enjoy by the Spirit. This life, however, is experienced both in ways that demonstrate the work of God in the present (8.1–11, 12–17), and in ways that anticipate the future work of God for his people (8.18–30). Paul places pneumatic in the midst of this already-not-yet eschatological existence. It is to those prayers that we now turn.

5.3. THE SPIRIT BEARS WITNESS WITH OUR SPIRIT (ROM 8.15–16)

Because I have already devoted considerable space to the Abba cry in Galatians, and because I believe, with most scholars, that Paul refers to the same experience in both Romans and Galatians, I will keep my remarks about Romans 8.15–16 brief.[16] Descriptively, the commonality, perceptibility, and inspired nature of the Abba cry holds in Romans as it did in Galatians. The commonality of the experience is supported more strongly in this case, since Paul is writing to an assembly he has never visited. As Wreford states, "[I]f none of his addressees had ever called out like this or heard a fellow believer do so, they would have little reason to accept his description of

[15] Paul uses πνεῦμα 21 times in Romans 8, compared with 13 uses of πνεῦμα in the rest of the letter (Rom 1.4, 9; 2.29; 5.5; 7.6; 9.1; 11.8; 12.11; 14.17; 15.13, 16, 19, 30).

[16] Bieder 1948 is one of the only scholars I know of who makes a distinction between the two experiences. However, the similarities between the two texts are too numerous to think Paul had distinct experiences in mind, and the differences are more easily explained by other factors such as differing contexts and theological emphases. See the discussion of Bieder's work in section 1.3.3. above.

the theological reality of adoption."[17] We can, therefore, justifiably claim that the Abba cry, as a pneumatic prayer, was a familiar or common experience among many different early Christian assemblies, including, most likely, other assemblies besides the ones in Rome and Galatia. The remaining descriptive feature (Spirit-inspired prayer) and theological connections require more comment. In this section, I focus on these three facets of Paul's description and theology of the Abba cry in Romans: (1) the attribution of the cry to believers in 8.15, (2) the eschatological significance of the Spirit's witness through the cry in 8.16, and (3) the believer's subsequent participation in the suffering and glory of the Messiah in 8.17.

5.3.1. We Cry, "Abba, Father" (8.15)

In Galatians believers "receive the adoption" (τὴν υἱοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν, Gal 4.5), whereas in Romans, they "receive the Spirit of adoption" (ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας, Rom 8.15).[18] One should refrain from making too much of this distinction. Both passages emphasize that the new status of sonship and the reception of the divine Spirit are virtually if not actually simultaneous with each other.[19] Once again, the Abba cry is said to result from reception of the Spirit. However, whereas in Galatians, Paul attributes the Abba cry directly to the Spirit, here in Romans, he says "we cry (κράζομεν), 'Abba, Father'" (8.15).

The shift in ascribed agency makes explicit what was already implicit in Paul's description of the Abba cry in Galatians. As Dunn says, "The one who actually says the words 'Abba! Father!' is the human voice, but the human voice as inspired and enabled by the Spirit — 'by whom, we

[17] Wreford 2017, 208.

[18] In this case, the genitive υἱοθεσίας describes the effect of the Spirit's reception. See Dunn 1988, 452; Fee 1994, 566; Ferguson 2020, 188.

[19] As Moo 2018, 524, says, the Spirit is "the agent through whom the believer's sonship is both bestowed and confirmed."

cry.'"[20] In chapter 3 above, I already explored the reasons for seeing the Abba cry in Galatians as a perceptible, audible cry resulting from an experience of the Spirit. That audible cry comes from the Spirit whom God has sent εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν. Thus, the audibility would come from the believer's expression of the Spirit's cry.

The cooperative agency behind the Abba cry stems, as we have seen, from the apostle's conception of divine inspiration, which may sometimes involve the inactivity of the νοῦς, as in glossolalic speech, but does not necessitate the abdication of human volition *in toto*. The Spirit-inspired nature of the Abba cry is further established by Paul's use of ἐν ᾧ to modify the verb κράζομεν. The dative pronoun ᾧ, with πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας as its antecedent, functions as a dative of means, rather than being used to introduce a new thought (i.e., "In this, we cry…" or "When we cry…").[21] The Spirit of adoption is the one *by whom* believers can cry out to God as αββα ὁ πατήρ.[22]

As I already noted in chapter 3, there are some who wish to challenge an experiential reading of the Abba cry. For example, regarding the cry in Romans 8.15, Marianne Meye Thompson has argued that "Paul's statements [in Rom 8] have more to do with what God has done than how God is experienced."[23] She contends that interpreters have read Romans 8 "primarily in *individualistic, subjective*, and *experiential* terms, when it should be read first in *cosmic*, *corporate*, *eschatological*, and *theocentric* terms."[24] Thompson justifies this dichotomy on the

[20] Dunn 1999, 85.

[21] Cranfield 1975, 398–99.

[22] Fee 1994, 56–67; Schreiner 2018b, 419.

[23] Thompson 2000, 130.

[24] Thompson 1999, 212.

basis of the fact that her reading, focused on cosmic and corporate scope of the eschatological act of God, coheres more with the stated purpose behind Paul's epistle to the Roman assembly. The problem is that other works on Romans 8, such as Monika Christoph's, have argued that the purpose behind Paul's letter adds further evidence to an experiential reading of these pneumatological themes.[25] What this indicates is that a consideration of the letter's circumstances does not provide enough evidence for favouring one side of the dichotomy Thompson proposes. Instead, one might suggest that the dichotomy itself needs to be challenged. The key to this challenge is the example of the apocalyptic sages, for whom the divine revelation received was undoubtedly cosmic, corporate, and theocentric, as Thompson suggests. However, it is the transformative *experience*, individually and subjectively, of the sage that mediates the content of that cosmic and corporate revelation.[26] We cannot, therefore, expect Paul, a figure who experienced exactly these kinds of transformative encounters with God[27] and expected his followers to experience the same, to make or maintain the distinctions Thompson insists on making.

In summary, the Abba cry bears the descriptive marks of pneumatic prayer noted so far in this thesis. It was a perceptible and common experience of inspired speech following the believer's reception of the divine Spirit. As with glossolalic prayer, the Abba cry is a cooperative act, in which the human agent participates alongside the divine Spirit in calling out to God as Abba. In the following sections, I want to move from the descriptive features of the Abba cry to how the

[25] Christoph 2005.

[26] On the role of experience for shaping the apocalyptic genre, see especially the work of Rowland 1982 and Fletcher-Louis 2008.

[27] E.g., 1 Cor 14.18; 2 Cor 12.1–10; Gal 1.15–16. On Paul's "mysticism" see the works of Meier 1998; Luz 2004. On the apostles account of his ascent into the third heaven (2 Cor 12.1–10), see esp. the recent works of Wallace 2011; Bowens 2017; Foster 2022, 162–85.

theological connections already noted in relation to the cry as it is expounded in Galatians receive further depth in Romans.

5.3.2. The Witness of the Spirit (8.16)

The first theological connection with pneumatic prayer, according to my taxonomy, is its witness to the eschatological time believers inhabit. The reception of the Spirit and subsequent Abba cry occur at the critical transition from slavery to sonship (Rom 8.14). The cry Abba makes known the believer's identity as one of God's children (τέκνα θεοῦ, 8.16). Through this cry, Paul says with the first in a series of σύν- words, the Spirit itself "bears witness with our spirit" (8.16). Jewett points out that the verb συμμαρτυρέω is typically used to refer to co-witnessing of some sort.[28] Fitzmyer aims to alleviate any theological discomfort on the part of those who might take Paul to be saying that the human Spirit has the capacity to bear witness to sonship independent from the divine Spirit.

> The preceding context makes it clear that the vital dynamism of the Spirit constitutes the sonship itself and bestows the power to recognize such a status. Now Paul goes further and stresses that the Spirit concurs with the Christians as they acknowledge in prayer or proclamation this special relation to the Father.[29]

The dative τῷ πνεύματι here makes best sense if it is translated "with" rather than "to", bringing out more explicitly the force of the σύν- prefix in the previous verb. The identity of the second πνεῦμα mentioned here is distinguished by the pronoun ἡμῶν from the αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα mentioned first. Some have interpreted the second πνεῦμα as anthropological (cf. 1 Cor 2.11; 1 Thess 5.23), or a reference to the human spirit, or the innermost part of the human.[30] As we saw in the previous

[28] Jewett 2007, 500, citing Plato (*Hipp. maj.* 282b1) and Plutarch (*Adul. amic.* 64c13) as examples.

[29] Fitzmyer 1993, 501.

[30] Cranfield 1975, 403; Dunn 1988, 454; Hultgren 2011, 315.

chapter,[31] Jewett persuasively argues a reading in which "the apportioned Spirit granted to believers and the 'Spirit itself' confirm that believers are 'children of God.'"[32] It might seem awkward at first to suggest that the divine Spirit and the apportioned Spirit given to humanity *co-witness* believers' adoption as children of God,[33] but the concentration of σύν- verbs in the passage, along with the fact that Paul can attribute the agency of the cry to both believers and the Spirit, helps to clarify that this is exactly Paul's point.

The witness of the Spirit bears important implications for understanding the nature and eschatological significance of the believer's new filial status. As in Galatians so also in Romans, believers who receive and are led by the Spirit are υἱοὶ θεοῦ (8.14).[34] I already spoke in chapter 3 about the significance of this designation for humanity's glorified status as members of God's heavenly family.[35] Those same observations hold for Romans as well, especially given Paul's emphasis in chapter 8 on the cosmic restoration of all creation and the victory of God over all things, including the wicked ἄγγελοι and ἀρχαὶ (8.38). Creation, Paul says, is eagerly awaiting the ἀποκάλυψιν τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ θεοῦ (8.19). This unveiling of the identity of God's sons begins when believers received the Spirit and cry "Abba, Father." As Byrne says, the sonship of believers, proven by the Abba cry, is "a status that points towards eschatological life."[36] For Paul, the long-awaited expectation of creation is finding fulfilment in the formation of God's family. However,

[31] See the discussion in section 4.3.3.

[32] Jewett 2007, 500. Cf. idem. 2004; Heliso 2012, 168–71; Eastman 2014, 113–14.

[33] Cranfield 1975, 403.

[34] Eastman 2002.

[35] Recall the observations about the meaning of this designation in section 3.4.2.

[36] Byrne 1979, 98.

that identity is still *being formed* over time and will not be fully unveiled until all things are restored at the Parousia. This eschatological tension between the anticipated revelation of God's sons in the future (8.19) and the already-present witness of believers as God's children through the Abba cry (8.15–16) is unpacked further in Paul's claims about the believer's fellowship in the suffering and glory of the Messiah.

5.3.3. Suffering and Glory (8.17)

When examining the Abba cry in Galatians 4.6, I argued that Paul was not only speaking of the believer's new intimacy with God as Father. Instead, I suggested that Paul's language calls to mind the believer's union with the crucified one.[37] That same emphasis comes across even clearer in Romans 8.17, where the new status of believers (υἱοὶ θεοῦ, 8.14) is expounded in terms of their sharing in the suffering (συμπάσχομεν) and glory (συνδοξασθῶμεν) of the Messiah. The key to this connection, as Gorman has pointed out, is Paul's focus on the theme of hope in the latter half of Romans 8.

> For Paul, hope is fundamentally the certainty that the ultimate fate of the humiliated, crucified Messiah will also be the ultimate fate of himself and of all others who are co-crucified with Christ. That is, hope is the conviction that the future of cruciformity is resurrection and exaltation, or, in a word, glory — the completion of the process of conformity to the narrative pattern of the Messiah.[38]

The theme of suffering and glory goes on to be an important theme of 8.18–30. However, in this section, I want to focus on how the Abba cry itself might anticipate this theme as well. While several scholars have noted the connection between 8.17 and 8.18–30, fewer have paid attention to the possible connections between the Abba cry and the theme of suffering and glory.

[37] See the discussion in section 3.4.3.

[38] Gorman 2001, 305.

The connection between the Abba cry and the cruciform glorified status of believers is established in two ways. First, as I noted in chapter 3, there are good reasons to think that early Christians knew not only about the Aramaic Abba cry's association with Jesus, but that they knew about the use of this cry specifically in the context of Jesus' impending suffering and glory.[39] If this was the case, then Paul's move to connect the sonship of believers with their co-suffering and co-glorification makes more sense. Second, the pattern of faithful sonship exemplified by Jesus in the letter to the Romans is one that is tied inseparably to the suffering and glory of his death and resurrection. Earlier in Romans 5, a passage bearing many similarities to Romans 8, Paul says, "For if, while being hostile, we were reconciled to God through the death of his son, how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved in his life?" (Rom 5.10).[40] As in Galatians, so also in Romans, the cruciform pattern of the Son's obedience is later repeated in the lives of believers after they receive the Spirit of the Son.[41]

The Abba cry functioned in Paul's thought as a sign of the union between believers and their crucified and glorified Lord. It is important to note once again that the Abba cry is associated with Spirit-reception (ἐλάβετε) in 8.15. This becomes an important point of contact between the Abba cry and the intercession of the Spirit in Romans 8.26–27, which Paul connects to the believer's groaning during present suffering.[42] This groaning, Paul says, is part of the experience

[39] See my comments in section 3.4.3. Contra Käsemann 1980, 228, who claims the αββα ὁ πατήρ originates in Hellenistic Christianity.

[40] The similarities between Romans 5 and 8 have been noted by several scholars. E.g., Gieniusz 1999, 51–55; Jewett 2007, 506; Blackwell 2011, 155–58; Moo 2018, 532; Berry 2020, 286–91.

[41] As Cullmann 1950, 236, put it, "The Holy Spirit is operative in the present as the power of the resurrection."

[42] See sections 5.4.1. and 5.4.2. below.

for those who have the ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ πνεύματος (8.23), also an image associated with Spirit reception.[43]

5.3.4. Summary: The Abba Cry in Romans and Galatians

In both Galatians and Romans, the Abba cry is described as an instance of charismatic or Spirit-inspired prayer that follows the believer's conversion-initiation via their reception of the divine Spirit. Both texts support my contention that this pneumatic prayer was a perceptible and common experience of inspired speech among early Christians. Romans 8.15 adds further clarity to the nature of the Abba cry as inspired speech with its claim that believers are the one who cry "Abba, Father" by means of the Spirit they have received. The Spirit's witness to the believer's sonship is a witness to their glorified filial status. However, Paul's clarification that this status requires a participation in the sufferings of the Messiah provides an eschatological context for making sense of the believer's glory. It is from this point, having established this eschatological tension between the already and not-yet of the believer's existence that Paul moves to consider the sufferings of the present (8.18) leading to his description of the final pneumatic prayer: the help of the Spirit through intercession (8.26–27).

5.4. DESCRIPTIVE FEATURES OF THE SPIRIT'S INTERCESSION (ROM 8.26–27)

We turn now to consider the final pneumatic prayer: the Spirit's intercession on behalf of believers. As I showed in the opening chapter, Romans 8.26–27 has proven to be particularly contentious among Pauline interpreters.[44] A variety of exegetical and theological questions attend this passage, and this thesis is not the place to address all of them. In this section, I demonstrate

[43] As Keesmaat 1999, 77, notes, "there is a thematic unity between v. 15 and v. 23."

[44] See the review of scholarship in section 1.3.

that the Spirit's intercession possesses the descriptive features that make up part of my taxonomy for pneumatic prayer. The experience Paul describes here is a common and perceptible experience of spirit-inspired prayer.

5.4.1. The Spirit's Intercession as Common and Perceptible Experience

In this section, I establish the Spirit's intercession as a common and perceptible early Christian experience. There are a few interpreters who doubt Paul has a recognizable experience of the Spirit in mind at all. For example, Hultgren contends that Paul is not describing an experience of human prayer but an imperceptible work of the Spirit.

> Paul does not say that the Spirit prompts prayer or empowers it from within the believer. However much the Spirit is "in" believers (cf. Rom 8:9b, 11; 1 Cor 3:16), in this instance Paul envisions the Spirit as external, praying on their behalf. None of this activity of the Spirit need be heard, for it takes place within the larger life of God. God, "who searches hearts," answers the prayer of the Spirit. The entire emphasis is on God, the life of God, from start to finish.[45]

Against this reading, I would suggest that there are a few factors that favour reading 8.26–27 as Paul's attempt to expound what is first and foremost an experience of the Spirit that other believers would have recognized.

In several of his letters, Paul's pneumatological claims depend on his readers' capacity to recall concrete experiences of the Spirit in their lives and worship.[46] Throughout Romans 8, as we saw above,[47] Paul uses language to describe the ministry of the Spirit that could very easily

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[45] Hultgren 2011, 325–26. Cf. Wiarda 2007, 301, who claims, "There is thus no exact parallel between what Paul describes in Rom 8.26–27 and the kind of Spirit/believer concurrence in prayer that seems to be pictured in Rom 8.15 and Gal 4.6."

[46] Many of these experiences of the Spirit accompanied Paul's proclamation of the gospel in his ministry to different regions. E.g., Rom 15.18–19; 1 Cor 2.1–5; 1 Cor 12–14; 2 Cor 12.11–12; Gal 3.1–5; 1 Thess 1.5. On Gal 3.1–5, see the discussion in section 3.2.2. above.

[47] See section 5.2.2.

correlate with tangible experiences of the new creation life (ζωή) God has given believers. All this prior language about the Spirit in Romans 8 fits especially well if Paul's pneumatology is a matter not only of explicating theological ideas but also of interpreting experiences of the new life God brings to his people. We, therefore, have every reason to think that this further mention of the Spirit's work in 8.26–27 bears an experiential quality.

Additionally, there is Paul's earlier use of the verb στενάζω in 8.22–23 to describe the state of creation and believers in the sufferings of the present time. Like the verb κράζω used in 8.15, the verb στενάζω carries emotive force, making it a strong term for describing a more visceral kind of experience. One thinks, for example, of the many parallel uses of the term in the early Jewish literature to describe a human response to great pain, tragedy, or suffering.[48] Paul also associates this experience specifically with those who have τὴν ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ πνεύματος (8.23), indicating that the experience of groaning is one that is potentially prompted by the activity of the Spirit following conversion-initiation.

Finally, there is also Paul's parallel description of the believer's groaning in 2 Corinthians 5.1–5. This passage bears numerous similarities to Romans 8.18–27.[49] Both texts speak of the eschatological tension between present suffering and coming glory, and in both passages, Paul uses the language of "groaning" to capture the believer's sense of longing and hope for the eschatological future. The language in both texts is highly emotive, again implying experience of some sort. The gift of the Spirit is identified as the one who inspires these eschatological yearnings, with the Spirit identified as the ἀπαρχή in Romans 8.23 and the ἀρραβών in 2 Corinthians 5.5.

[48] E.g., in the LXX, Gen 3.16; Exod 2.24; 6.5; Judg 2.18; Ps 6.7; 11.6; 37.9; 78.11; 101.6; Isa 35.10; 59.10; Jer 4.31; 51.33; Ezek 21.11–12; Nah 3.7; Mal 2.13. Cf. 1 En. 9.10; 12.6; 1 Macc 1.26; Sir 30.20; Jdt 14.16; 3 Macc 1.18; 4.2.

[49] On this, see the analysis of Szypula 2007.

Given the similarities between the two texts, it seems likely that Paul has the same kind of experience in mind when he speaks of the believer's groaning for the eschatological future after receiving the Spirit.

Paul is referring to a recognizable experience of the believer, prompted and inspired, in his view, by the work of God's Spirit. That the experience Paul describes in these texts is assumed to be a common one is clear from the inclusive way Paul describes it. In 2 Corinthians 5.2 and 5.4, Paul says "we groan" (στενάζομεν). Likewise, in Romans 8.23, it is "we" (ἡμεῖς), those who have the firstfruits of the spirit, "we groan" (στενάζομεν).

5.4.2. The Spirit's Intercession as Spirit-Inspired Prayer

To establish the intercession of the Spirit as an experience of Spirit-inspired prayer, there are two primary points that need to be unpacked. First, because spirit-inspired prayer is a mode of prayer in which humans participate,[50] I need to unpack the meaning of στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις, in order to show how the work of the Spirit in intercession connects to the believer's experience of groaning examined above. Second, as demonstrated in the review of scholarship in the first chapter, there are some scholars who have suggested that this pneumatic prayer should be identified with another we have already examined, namely, glossolalia. Given that glossolalia is also a form of Spirit-inspired prayer, I will also assess the evidence proposed in favour of reading the Spirit's intercession as a reference to glossolalia.

5.4.2.1 The Meaning of στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις. For the intercession of Romans 8.26 to classify as a pneumatic prayer like the others examined so far, one would expect the intercession to relate not only to an act of the Spirit but also to some corresponding or cooperative human action. Paul's

[50] In other words, I do not believe the Spirit's intercession is a prayer that only the Spirit prays and not believers.

attribution of the Abba cry to both believers (Rom 8.15) and the Spirit (Gal 4.6) indicates that he conceived of these inspired prayers as in some sense cooperative activities, where divine and human agency both participate in the act of prayer without a competition between them where one overrides the other. This same conception goes for glossolalic prayer, where the apostle can say "If *I pray* in tongues, *my spirit* (i.e., the apportioned divine Spirit in me) prays" (1 Cor 14.14). With the Spirit's intercession in Romans 8.26, the cooperation of human and divine action in prayer is not so clear. If the στεναγμοὶ ἀλάλητοι are the Spirit's own inarticulate or silent groans, then this pneumatic prayer would stand out from the rest, at least descriptively, as a prayer that solely belongs to the divine Spirit. This reading challenges my thesis that pneumatic prayers for Paul are instances of Spirit-inspired speech, with inspiration being understood in the manner just described. Thus, demonstrating the inspired nature of the Spirit's intercession requires a close look at the connection Paul makes between the Spirit's intercession and the phrase στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις.

Paul claims that the Spirit "intercedes" (ὑπερεντυγχάνει, 8.26; ἐντυγχάνει, 8.27) for believers.[51] The first verb Paul uses (ὑπερεντυγχάνω) is an apparent invention of Paul's, finding no attestation prior to Romans. The prepositional prefix ὑπέρ could be interpreted as an intensive (i.e., the Spirit "hyper-intercedes" or "super-intercedes"), but it is far more likely that Paul attaches the prefix to communicate the notion that the Spirit is interceding "on behalf of" believers, as is made explicit in the next verse (ἐντυγχάνει ὑπὲρ ἁγίων, 8.27).[52]

[51] The activity ascribed to the Spirit by Paul here is unique. As Fitzmyer points out, while one can easily find references to the intercessory activity of major figures in the OT such as Abraham (Gen 18.23–33), Moses (Ex 32.11–14; 33.12–23; 34.9), priests (2 Macc 3.31; 15.12; Wis 18.21–22), prophets (1 Kgs 18.22–40), or even angels (Tob 12.12; 1 En 9.2–3, 10–11; 3 *Bar* 11.4, 9; 14.2), "nowhere in the OT or in pre-Christian Jewish writings does one find the idea of the Holy Spirit as an intercessor. It is, then, a Pauline novelty." Fitzmyer 1993, 518. Cf. Kruse 2012, 352; Jewett 2007, 523; Dunn 1988, 477–78; Obeng 1986b, 621–22.

[52] There is a doubtful variant reading ὑπερεντυγχάνει ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις, in several manuscripts also that makes this connection to 8.27 more explicit. Metzger 1994, 457; Lohse 2003, 250; Longenecker 2016, 713–14.

The verb ἐντυγχάνω means to approach or appeal to someone. Paul here argues that the Spirit's help meets the weakness of believers in the Spirit's approach toward and appeal to God on their behalf. However, this is the first and only passage in his letters where the Spirit is explicitly identified as the one performing the intercession. One might ask whether believers play any role in the action described by Paul. We have already seen a dynamic interaction of divine and human agency at play in the relationship between Romans 8.15 and Galatians 4.6, in which both the Spirit and believers (in the Spirit) cry "Abba, Father!" Before we can say whether a similar interaction is implied by Romans 8.26, we need to understand how Paul relates the Spirit's intercession to στεναγμοί ἀλάλητοι.

The verb ἐντυγχάνω is often followed by a noun in the dative case. In these instances, which are numerous, the dative noun most often denotes either *the indirect object* of the action or *the location* of the action.[53] However, neither of these meanings makes much sense in this passage, leading many scholars to argue that στεναγμοῖς is a dative of means, signifying that the Spirit's intercession takes the form of groaning or occurs by means of groaning.[54] This begs the question of how the στεναγμοῖς of 8.26 potentially relates to the groans of creation (8.22) and believers (8.23) already mentioned. If the Spirit groans, as some have suggested, then the Spirit somehow participates in the brokenness of creation and the people of God by expressing that brokenness through groans in a similar manner.[55] This is a possible reading of Paul's language. The only

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[53] The examples are too many to list, but a sample could be included here. See Acts 25.24; Rom 11.2; Dan 6.12; Wis 8.21; 16.28; 2 Macc 6.12; 15.39; 3 Macc 6.37; Josephus *Ant*. 2.96; 10.58; 12.18, 87, 226; 15.68; 17.195; 20.258; *Life* 53; 90; 311; *Ag. Ap.* 1.217; 2.45, 147; *War*. 1.281, 298; Philo, *Creation* 165; *Sacrifices* 58; *Worse* 159; *Drunkenness* 48; *Sobriety* 17; *Migration* 177; *Her*. 29, 30; *Names* 116; *Dreams* 1.71, 214; *Moses* 1.173; *Decalogue* 37; *Spec. Laws* 1.214; 2.104; *Virtues* 17; *Contempl. Life* 28; *Embassy* 239.

[54] E.g., Viard 1975, 189; Morris 1988, 328; Christoffersson 1990, 114; Schnabel 2016, 250.

[55] Bieder 1948, 32, speaks of the "kenosis of the pneuma" in this regard. Cf. Wright 2002, 598: "The groaning of the church, in the midst of the groaning world, is sustained and even inspired by the groaning of the Spirit."

problem with this reading is that Paul does not actually say the Spirit groans but αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα ὑπερεντυγχάνει στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις. In 8.22 and 8.23, he uses the verbal form στενάζω, while in 8.26, he uses the noun στεναγμός. The Spirit's actions highlighted in 8.26 are help and intercession, not groaning, and the Spirit's work stands in stark contrast to the groaning of believers since the Spirit's action is on their behalf (ὑπὲρ ἁγίων, 8.27). Paul's use of the noun rather than the verb could also indicate that the groans in question are not the Spirit's own groans but the groans of believers mentioned in 8.23. Believers, he says, "groan inwardly" (ἐν ἑαυτοῖς στενάζομεν) while they wait for the redemption of their body.[56]

These groans, according to Paul, are experienced by those who possess the ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ πνεύματος (8.23), which, as I suggested above, could indicate that the Spirit inspires the very travail Paul says characterizes the believer's existence in the midst of present suffering (cf. 2 Cor 5.4–5). It is plausible, then, that the groans Paul has in mind in 8.26 are the groans of believers. Just like Paul can locate the Abba cry in τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν in Galatians 4.6, so also here he locates a pneumatic prayer in that inner part of humanity that experiences the sufferings of the present age in the most visceral way. Whether the groans are the Spirit's or believers', what Paul is describing is a work of the Spirit in prayer that involves believers as well. Just as the Spirit's cry, "Abba," finds expression in the vocalized cry of the believer who has received the Spirit, so too the Spirit's intercession on behalf of believers finds expression in the inarticulate prayers of believers in the form of groaning.[57] To complete our investigation of the Spirit's intercession as inspired prayer,

[56] On the use of the singular σῶμα in 8.23, see the explanations in Beker 1980, 181; Eastman 2002, 268; Jewett 2007, 519; Bowens 2021, 327.

[57] I will speak more to the meaning of ἀλάλητος in the next section, since that term plays a larger role in determining whether Paul is speaking about glossolalia.

we need to consider whether, as some have suggested, Paul might in Romans 8.26–27 be referring to another pneumatic prayer already examined in this thesis, namely, glossolalia.

5.4.2.2. A Reference to Glossolalic Prayer? A venerable minority position on the Spirit's intercession has been to suggest that Paul is referring to glossolalia. The interpretation is not modern, going back at least as far as Chrysostom and Origen.[58] A fair number of German scholars have embraced a glossolalic reading of the Spirit's intercession over the last few centuries, including Gunkel, Zahn, Käsemann, Balz, and Theissen.[59] Positive arguments in favour of this reading are represented by Käsemann and Fee.[60] However, a large majority of scholars have remained sceptical of a glossolalic interpretation, arguing instead for other possibilities. In what follows, I will review briefly the argument put forward by Fee in favour of a glossolalic reading, as well as the objections raised against this interpretation.[61] I conclude that while Fee's arguments in favour of reading the Spirit's intercession as glossolalia are not so compelling as to make the reading certain, the objections raised against a glossolalic interpretation are weak and fail to dismiss it in the manner the objectors seem to think.

Fee's case for a glossolalic interpretation of the Spirit's intercession consists of eight points.[62]

1. Almost all prayer in the ancient world were vocalized rather than silent.

[58] *PG* 14.1120 and *PG* 60.533.

[59] Käsemann 1971, 122–37; idem., 1980, 240–41; Fee 1994, 581–84. Cf. Balz 1971, 80; Theissen 1987, 315–20.

[60] See the quick review of Käsemann and Fee in the opening chapter.

[61] I use Fee because his argument is more recent, and because his case does not rely as heavily as Käsemann's on a hypothetical conflict between Paul and Hellenistic enthusiasts. Additionally, Käsemann assumes a liturgical setting for the Spirit's intercession, while Fee's does not.

[62] The following eight points are my attempt to summarize Fee 1994, 581–84.

2. There are notable correspondences between Romans 8.26–27 and Paul's description of glossolalic prayer (i.e., "praying in the Spirit") from 1 Corinthians 14.14–15. Especially relevant is the fact that Paul refers in Romans to a kind of prayer which is "by the Spirit" that the human mind cannot comprehend but which nevertheless is a help (or edification in 1 Corinthians) to the one praying.
3. Paul picks up the language of "groaning" in v. 26 from v.23 earlier in the text, where "we groan" (στενάζομεν). This mirrors the way Paul can attribute the Abba cry and glossolalia to the believer and the Spirit.
4. The adjective ἀλάλητος is best rendered "inarticulate" rather than "silent" or "inexpressible".
5. Paul's use of "groaning" is contextually determined. He never uses such language to describe glossolalia in 1 Corinthians, and it is unlikely he would have used it in Romans were it not for the prior uses of the verb στενάζω (8.22, 23).
6. The kind of prayer Paul describes in Romans 8.26 cannot be compared to praying τῷ νοΐ in 1 Corinthians 14.15, since Paul explicitly describes the Spirit's intercession as something we do not know but that God does.
7. Romans 8.26–27 is Paul's attempt to interpret an experience of prayer that he and others have faced.
8. Fee's final point deserves to be quoted at length.

> [T]here is no other known phenomenon, either in Paul or the early church, apart from the prayer in the Spirit described in 1 Corinthians 14, that even remotely resembles what Paul now describes in such a matter-of-fact way. What most interpreters finally come down to in this passage is a form of praying for which there is not only no evidence in the early church, but which they themselves have great difficulty describing in a phenomenological way, since neither is there any widespread contemporary expression of such prayer. The net result is that rather than Paul's describing the common experience of believers, as most urge he is doing, they *fail to describe any known phenomenon* that they or the church engage in that looks like this.[63]

Fee's argument is one of the strongest in the history of scholarship on this passage in favour of a glossolalic interpretation. A few things are noteworthy about his case. First, Fee makes no appeal to the ἄρρητα ῥήματα of 2 Corinthians 12.4, a passage often cited by others who favour a reading the στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις as glossolalia.[64] Second, there is a focus on the experiential force of Paul's language in Fee's argument that is missing from other interpreters who have previously

[63] Ibid., 584 (emphasis original).

[64] E.g., Käsemann 1971, 130; idem. 1980, 241. Horn 1992a, 294–97, acknowledges the parallel constructions but does not rely on those parallels as positive evidence in favour of a glossolalic reading.

argued for the allusion to glossolalia here. His insistence that those who reject the glossolalic reading point to *any* concrete and comparable experience of prayer in Paul's letters —or in the history of the early church — poses a strong objection to the idea that this interpretation can be easily dismissed. The objection is all the stronger when combined with the previous observations, especially observations 1 (almost all ancient prayer is vocal, not silent), 3/5 (the use of "groaning" being primarily contextual), and 6 (that Paul cannot be referring to a kind of prayer that is τῷ νοΐ). Consequently, if Paul is referring to a form of Christian prayer that is inspired by the Spirit, that other believers also experience, and which results from the mind's inability to know what (τί) to pray, the only comparable experience attested in early Christian literature is glossolalia. Otherwise, one is forced to imagine a unique form of prayer whose phenomenological description is nowhere attested in the early history of Christianity.

There are some interpreters who are open to the glossolalic reading of the Spirit's intercession, even if they remain unconvinced for one reason or another.[65] However, most authors who do not advocate an allusion to glossolalia have disputed the reading more strongly, and several such attempted refutations have been put forward. There are six major objections to a glossolalic interpretation of Romans 8.26–27.

(1) Paul doesn't refer to glossolalia as στεναγμοί elsewhere, nor does he refer to glossolalia anywhere else in Romans.[66]
(2) Paul does not insist that the στεναγμοί need to be interpreted, which he does with glossolalia in 1 Corinthians 14.[67]

[65] E.g., Dunn 1975, 241, suggests the passage "does not exclude glossolalia but may not be confined to it." Similarly, Wright 2002, 599, has no prejudice against a reference to glossolalia here, though he finds the reading strange considering Paul's use of ἀλάλητος (on which, see below).

[66] Schnabel 2016, 250; Schreiner 2018b, 437.

[67] Schlatter 1995 [1935], 191; Légasse 2002, 527; Lohse 2003, 250; Schnabel 2016, 250.

(3) In Romans 8.26–27 Paul speaks of intercession, but in 1 Corinthians 14.16, Paul describes glossolalia as praise rather than prayer.[68]
(4) In Romans 8.26–27, it is the Spirit who prays/groans, but in glossolalic prayer it is the believer who prays.[69]
(5) In Romans 8, Paul describes the prayers of all believers, whereas 1 Corinthians 14 describes only the prayers of those who have the gift of tongues.[70]
(6) The adjective ἀλάλητος means 'silent' or 'wordless' and glossolalic prayer involves speaking.[71]

We can respond to the first three objections briefly. Objection (1) is an argument from silence. Neither side of this debate is served well by focusing more on what Paul does not say than on what he does. Regarding objection (2), it is true that Paul does not insist that the στεναγμοί need to be interpreted, but Paul only insists that glossolalic prayers need to be interpreted when they are practiced publicly for the upbuilding of the gathered assembly in worship. Here, Paul's language is very general, referring the experience of ἀσθένεια in the form of not knowing what to pray, which applies as much to private as public settings. Objection (3) was discussed in chapter 2.[72] Paul did view glossolalia as a form of prayer, so it is perfectly possible that intercession could be conveyed via glossolalic utterance. These first three objections, therefore, are weak and fail to discount a glossolalic interpretation of the Spirit's intercession. The next three are more substantive and require further comment.

[68] Schlatter 1995 [1935], 191; Cranfield 1975, 423; O'Brien 1987, 70; Rosscup 1999, 154; Légasse 2002, 527; Black 2012, 129; Longenecker 2016, 734; Schnabel 2016, 250; Schreiner 2018b, 437.

[69] Cranfield 1975, 423; MacRae 1980a, 292; Rosscup 1999, 153; Black 2012, 129; Longenecker 2016, 734.

[70] Schlatter 1995 [1935], 191; Wilckens 1980, 161–62; MacRae 1980a, 292; O'Brien 1987, 70; Fitzmyer 1993, 519; Rosscup 1999, 155; Légasse 2002, 527; Lohse 2003, 250; Black 2012, 129; Schnabel 2016, 250; Schreiner 2018b, 437; Moo 2018, 547.

[71] O'Brien 1987, 70; Dunn 1988, 478; Rosscup 1999, 154; Légasse 2002, 527; Longenecker 2016, 734; Schreiner 2018b, 436–37; Moo 2018, 547; Thielman 2018, 407.

[72] See the discussion in section 2.3.1.2.

Objection (4), that in Romans 8.26 it is the Spirit who prays while in 1 Corinthians 14.15 it is believers who pray, relates to something I have already addressed above.[73] It is true that Paul attributes intercession to the Spirit in 8.26. However, I have argued that Paul's description of the Spirit's intercession makes the most sense if a recognizable pneumatic experience is in mind. In each of the pneumatic prayers examined so far — the Abba cry and glossolalia — Paul can speak of the agency of both the Spirit and believers. The fact that he attributes intercession here to the Spirit is not evidence that *only the Spirit* engages in this act with no corresponding or cooperative action from the believer. In fact, if the pattern of other pneumatic prayers is any indication, one would expect precisely the same sort of complementary relationship between divine and human agency. The Spirit provides help to believers who do not know what to pray for as they ought (8.26a). This aid comes in the form of an experience of prayer Paul describes in this text and in 2 Corinthians 5.1–5 as the groaning of believers who yearn for the promised eschatological future of which the Spirit's reception in the present is a foretaste and guarantee. Thus, there are good reasons to think that this passage, like the other pneumatic prayer texts, bears witness to the participation of humans in the prayer of the Spirit.

Schreiner refers to objection (5), that Romans 8.26 describes the prayer of all believers while glossolalic prayer only applies to a few, as "the most serious objection" to a glossolalic reading of Romans 8.26–27.[74] That Paul refers to something true of all believers in Romans 8.26–27 is virtually uncontested, since the circumstances of the experience Paul depicts are so general. This objection, however, rests on a particular reading of 1 Corinthians 12–14, and it only carries weight if this reading of 1 Corinthians is accurate. In the previous chapter, when I took up the

[73] See section 5.4.2. above.

[74] Schreiner 2018b, 437.

question of whether Paul thought all believers could pray in tongues, I showed that this reading is often assumed rather than argued and rests on some key misunderstandings of Paul's theology of the Spirit's gifts.[75] If Paul did not have the principled objection to the idea that all believers could pray in tongues, as many of his interpreters have supposed, then there is no problem in supposing that Paul could have glossolalia in mind for all believers in Romans 8.26.

Objection (6), that the adjective ἀλάλητος means "silent" or "wordless", provides the strongest challenge to the glossolalic interpretation of Romans 8.26. If ἀλάλητος means "silent" then Paul cannot be referring to glossolalia, since we have already seen that glossolalia was an audible experience of inspired speech.[76] In response to this objection, Fee highlights the ambiguity of ἀλάλητος, which can mean "unspoken" but can also mean "wordless" or "inarticulate".

> If Paul had intended "inexpressible" why not use the appropriate word which unambiguously means so? And if he had intended "silent," why not simply say so? Given that it modifies "groanings," and given that the context is that of prayer, which in the ancient world was primarily vocalized even in private, there is good reason to think that the word means something close to "inarticulate": not "silent" or "inexpressible," but without the kind of articulation we associate with the use of words — that is, with *words that we understand with our own minds*.[77]

Fee's response deserves careful consideration. However, there is also another piece of evidence, not mentioned by Fee but by others who favour the glossolalic reading of Romans 8.26, namely, the possible parallel between the στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις of Romans 8.26 and the ἄρρητα ῥήματα of 2 Corinthians 12.4. Both expressions contain a substantive plus a verbal adjective for speech with the α-privative.[78] In addition to these grammatical similarities, if the conclusions of the

[75] See section 4.3.1.

[76] Paul's statement that the one who prays in tongues should speak ἑαυτῷ without an interpreter present does not provide evidence that tongues could be silent, since the dative in this case is a dative of advantage ("for himself/herself").

[77] Fee 1994, 583 (emphasis original).

[78] Horn 1992a, 297.

previous chapter regarding glossolalic prayer as the unintelligible speech of heaven are correct,[79] then the comparison is further justified, since the ἄρρητα ῥήματα are heard during an experience of heavenly ascent. In his work on the meaning of the ἄρρητα ῥήματα, Murariu emphasises that in 2 Corinthians 12.4 as well as Romans 8.26, Paul's focus is on the contrast between divine and human realities.[80] What Paul experiences during his heavenly ascent, as Murariu points out, is the sort of thing summarized well in 1 Corinthians 2.9: "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God prepared for the ones who love him."[81] One can begin to see the similarities between what Paul hears in 2 Corinthians 12 and what he says about tongues in 1 Corinthians 14 and the Spirit's intercession in Romans 8. When he ascends into heaven, he hears words that are ἄρρητος (2 Cor 12.4); when he prays in tongues, he speaks μυστήρια (1 Cor 14.2); and the Spirit's intercession is ἀλάλητος (Rom 8.26). When humans participate in this sort of speech, inspired by the Spirit, it cannot be understood by the human mind, just as Paul cannot understand what he hears in the heavens before he himself experiences the awaited transformation of his body. What cannot be understood in the present, however, will become clearer on the other side of the looming eschatological horizon, when the body is redeemed (Rom 8.23) and believers no longer know in part or see obscurely but know fully and see God face to face (1 Cor 13.12).

While the arguments in favour of reading the Spirit's intercession as an indirect allusion to glossolalic prayer are not entirely decisive, the most common objections levelled against this interpretation rest on questionable assumptions and lack persuasive force. On balance, therefore, we have good reasons to think that Paul could have an experience like glossolalic prayer in mind.

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[79] See section 4.3.2.

[80] Murariu 2013, 396.

[81] Ibid.

This would help to explain the connections between these two pneumatic prayer texts, not only in their conformity to the descriptive and theological taxonomy being defended in the present thesis, but also in their other syntactic and theological overlaps noted by Fee and others who have made the case for a glossolalic reading.

5.4.3. Summary

Paul's description of the Spirit's intercession in Romans 8.26–27 fits with my thesis concerning the descriptive features of pneumatic prayer. In recounting how the Spirit helps believers by interceding on their behalf, Paul describes a familiar and perceptible experience of inspired speech, where the Spirit takes the deep groanings and longings of God's people in the present and transforms them into a mode of intercession they do not know how to produce on their own. I also discussed whether Paul might be indirectly alluding to glossolalia in describing the Spirit's intercession and concluded that a glossolalic interpretation, while not certain, carries strong plausibility. Having established that the Spirit's intercession fits the descriptive taxonomy of pneumatic prayer in Paul, I wish to consider now whether Romans 8.26–27 fits within the theological taxonomy offered throughout this thesis as well.

5.5. THEOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS OF THE SPIRIT'S INTERCESSION

In this section, I consider how the Spirit's intercession relates to the three theological connections I have proposed in the taxonomy for pneumatic prayer. I will show, once again, that this pneumatic prayer functions as a sign of the believer's eschatological existence, bearing witness to their glorified filial status as they participate in heavenly intercession, in this case, the intercession of the Messiah. Throughout this section, I will also aim to highlight the theological

connections between the Spirit's intercession and the Abba cry, since both pneumatic prayers are mentioned in the same chapter.

5.5.1. The Spirit's Intercession as Eschatological Sign

Like the other pneumatic prayers examined so far, the Spirit's intercession functions as an eschatological sign. At the centre of his pneumatological reflections in Romans 8, Paul provides a strong sense of the unique time in which the Spirit ministers to God's people. The chapter begins with a recognition that the present (ἄρα νῦν) has been transformed through the actions of the Messiah and the Spirit (8.1). Paul's next use of νῦν, however, comes when Paul turns to consider the sufferings that continue to plague the present time (τὰ παθήματα τοῦ νῦν καιροῦ, 8.18). Paul establishes this already/not yet eschatological vision through the paradox of the believer's life in the present. This is seen most clearly in the contrast between 8.14–16, in which believers *are* (εἰσιν) sons of God (8.14) who *have received* (ἐλάβετε) the Spirit of adoption (8.15), and 8.19–23, where creation eagerly awaits (ἀπεκδέχεται) the unveiling of the sons of God (8.19) and believers eagerly await (ἀπεκδεχόμενοι) their adoption (8.23).[82] All creation (πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις), Paul says, which includes believers, experiences labour pains (συνωδίνει) and groans (συστενάζει) in anticipation of the birth of God's sons (8.22).[83] Believers, however, have the ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ πνεύματος and groan inwardly as a result. This ἀπαρχή, as Lisa Bowens has recently put it, is the "birth certificate" of God's newly adopted children.[84] Bowens describes the paradox well:

[82] Dunn 1998, 469; Blackwell 2011, 145–46.

[83] On this verse, see Gaventa 2007, 51–62.

[84] See Bowens 2021, 322–24, for interpreting ἀπαρχή as "birth certificate". While other commentators have acknowledged the possibility of reading ἀπαρχή in this way, most have rejected it in favour of viewing ἀπαρχή as roughly synonymous with ἀρραβών. E.g., Lohse 2003, 248; Moo 2018, 542; Schreiner 2018b, 431. Dunn asserts that the problem with the "birth certificate" reading is that it produces a confusing if not contradictory picture: "a birth certificate already issued while the birth travail is still in progress!" (Dunn 1988, 474), but this is exactly the sort of tension and confusion about the believer's present existence that Paul aims to explore in Romans 8.14–30. Despite

"Believers live in the nexus of a reality in which they undergo labor pains at the same time they receive the birth's confirmation."[85]

Throughout both discourses about the present time in 8.1–17 and 8.18–30, Paul views the Spirit's activity as central. This is no less the case with the Spirit's intercession coming as help in believers' weakness. The precise meaning of τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ ἡμῶν in 8.26 is disputed, since it could refer specifically to the problem of prayer Paul goes on to describe or more generally to the life characterized by suffering in the present age.[86] In his study of ἀσθένεια in Paul's letters, Black takes the latter position, saying,

> [T]he idea of "weakness" should be understood in a comprehensive sense as covering the whole range of weakness that is characteristic of the present life. The "prayer-problem" of the Christian is but one aspect of the infirmity in view, though in Paul's mind (according to the next sentence) it uniquely exemplifies the Christian's helplessness and total dependence upon God.[87]

As Wolter has observed, some aspects of the "weakness" believers experience have passed away, as Romans 5.6 indicates.[88] However, as Paul makes clear in his exposition of the paradoxical life of believers in the already/not yet, other aspects of creaturely weakness remain present.[89] These kinds of weaknesses are the sort through which Paul believed God could demonstrate his grace and power.[90] As Fee says,

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already being children of God who have received the Spirit of adoption (8.15), believers still wait for that adoption (8.23).

[85] Bowens 2021, 328.

[86] The latter position is taken by a minority of scholars, including Nygren 1949, 336; Niederwimmer 1964, 255; Cranfield 1975, 421; Stuhlmacher 1994, 135; Byrne 1996, 266; Schreiner 2018b, 434–35.

[87] Black 2012, 126.

[88] Wolter 2014, 522. That the weak state of Romans 5 has passed away is clear from the close connection between the ἔτι… ὄντων ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν in 5.6 and the ἔτι ἁμαρτωλῶν ὄντων ἡμῶν in 5.8.

[89] Most notably, there is the lingering impact of the "body of death". Cf. Rom 7.24; 8.10. Berry 2020, 292.

[90] On the relation between the power of God and pneumatology in Paul, see Gräbe 2000, 245–55.

> By praying through us in tongues, the Spirit is the way whereby God's strength is made perfect in the midst of our weakness — which is where the ultimate strength lies for the believer. Thus our praying in tongues, while evidence for us that we have entered the new, eschatological age ushered in by the Spirit, serves especially as evidence that we are still "not yet" regarding the consummation of that age.[91]

This sort of pneumatic prayer, however, serves as more than a reminder of the eschatological frame within which believers must consider their lives. Here, it serves, as Frank Macchia has argued, as an eschatological theophany.[92] Consequently, the parallel to Paul's theophanic revelation of God's perfect grace and power in his weakness in 2 Corinthians 12 is stronger than Fee and others have supposed. The reminder of eschatological time follows the believer's *encounter* with God, here labelled τό πνεῦμα, who is experienced during present weakness to demonstrate the divine power and give the help that is needed.

The closeness of the Spirit for this theophanic encounter is highlighted most in Paul's description of the Spirit's "help" with the double compound verb συναντιλαμβάνεται.[93] Both prepositional prefixes — σύν ("with") and ἀντί ("in front of", "in the place of") — imply the proximity of the Spirit's action on behalf of believers. Cranfield suggested that the σύν prefix does not carry significant meaning but functions as an intensive prefix for the verb.[94] This suggestion overlooks the fact that throughout 8.14–30, Paul uses a variety of verbs with a σύν prefix, most of which appear to relate to the Spirit's activity. Just as the Abba cry "bears witness" (συμμαρτυρεῖ)

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[91] Fee 2000, 119. Klauck 1986, 95, refers to this "power made perfect in weakness" theme as the "Magna Charta christlicher Existenz."

[92] Macchia 1992, 55–60.

[93] On the meaning of this verb, see Vollmer 2018, 205–21.

[94] Cranfield 1975, 421; Cf. Kruse 2012, 351.

with the believer's Spirit concerning their adoption (8.15–16), so also the Spirit's intercession offers "help" (συναντιλαμβάνεται) in their present weakness (8.26).

Rom 8.16	αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα	<u>συμμαρτυρεῖ</u>	τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν
Rom 8.26	τὸ πνεῦμα	<u>συναντιλαμβάνεται</u>	τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ ἡμῶν

In both cases, the Spirit is received and known through the experience of pneumatic prayer, unveiling the ongoing work of God on behalf of his people following the cosmic work of redemption accomplished through the Messiah. Despite the present weakness that continues to characterize the life of all creation, God's powerful help comes to the aid of his people through the Spirit's intercession on their behalf.

5.5.2. The Spirit's Intercession and the Glory of God's Children

On its surface, the Spirit's intercession appears to have little to do with the second theological connection I have proposed for pneumatic prayer, the glorified filial status of believers. The fact that Paul asserts that the Spirit's intercession serves as help for believers amid their weakness indicated, for Käsemann, that Paul did not have the believer's glory in mind. As he says, following his own glossolalic interpretation of the Spirit's intercession, "What enthusiasts regard as proof of their glorification [Paul] sees as a sign of lack. Praying in tongues reveals, not the power and wealth of the Christian community, but its ἀσθένεια."[95] Leaving aside his speculation about an enthusiast faction in Rome,[96] in this section, I want to challenge Käsemann's reading and show that Paul would associate the glorified status of believers with the Spirit's intercession.

First, it is important to note the nature of the glorified status believers receive as Paul describes it. Already in 8.14–16, Paul alludes to the reception of this status, with the Spirit bearing

[95] Käsemann 1980, 241. Cf. Wedderburn 1975, 375–77.

[96] See the critique of Käsemann's reconstruction of the situation Paul is addressing in Romans 8 in section 1.3.2.

witness through the Abba cry to the adoption of the believer into God's family. In 8.30 Paul refers to the chain of redemptive acts that God has accomplished on humanity's behalf, climaxing with their glorification. Jacob has argued that "believers' final glorification in Romans is their reinstatement to Adamic rule over creation."[97] Humanity exchanged the glory originally bestowed on them by God at creation (cf. Ps 8.6–9 LXX; Apoc. Mos. 21.6) for the foolishness of idolatry (Rom 1.23).[98] However, through the Messiah, who is a new Adam (5.12–21), the glory of humanity can be restored to all who are united with him by the Spirit.

In 8.19, Paul refers to the new glorified filial status of believers when he speaks of the revelation of the υἱοί θεοῦ. Most scholars believe Paul is referring to believers with this designation.[99] In chapter 3, I argued that the title υἱοί θεοῦ had its background in the Hebrew Bible and early Jewish apocalyptic texts as a moniker for the heavenly members of God's divine council. Christoffersson is one of the few interpreters who has given serious consideration to this interpretation of the "sons of God" language in Romans 8.19.[100] However, he rejects the view that the "sons of God" are believers, arguing that nowhere else in the NT is there a "revelation" of believers. He also claims, "In Rom 8.18–27, we find no information which identifies the sons as believers."[101] Instead, Christoffersson concludes that in 8.19, "Paul refers to the angels of the Last Judgment, who will arrive to free the earth from oppression."[102]

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[97] Jacob 2018, 218.

[98] Keesmaat 1999, 84–88.

[99] E.g., Cranfield 1975, 412–13; Barrett 1991, 155; Byrne 1996, 257; Jewett 2006, 513; Keener 2009, 105; Moo 2018, 537; Sherwood 2020, 448–49. Eastman 2002 takes the view that υἱοί θεοῦ in 8.19 is different to the υἱοί θεοῦ of 8.14, and that the former includes not-yet-converted Jewish people who must be included in adoption (cf. Rom 9.4).

[100] Christoffersson 1990, 120–24.

[101] Ibid., 121.

[102] Ibid.

Before offering a response to Christoffersson's objections against seeing believers as the referent behind the υἱοί θεοῦ, it is worth appreciating the strength of his proposal for reading υἱοί θεοῦ against the background of early Jewish apocalyptic traditions. Others have noted the thematic similarities between Romans 8.19–22 and Jewish apocalyptic literature.[103] Christoffersson focuses specifically on the parallels with the apocalyptic re-readings of the Flood tradition from Genesis 6 in works like 1 Enoch. Especially noteworthy is the fact that in 1 Enoch 9, creation cries out to God for deliverance from the sin and death inflicted on the earth by the Watchers and their giant offspring (1 En. 9.2). Additionally, the *groans* of "the Spirits of the souls of men who have died" come up to the gate of heaven for members of the angelic host to bring before God in intercession (9.10). In the Flood tradition, it is the "sons of God" (οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ, Gen 6.2 LXX) who bring the calamity on the earth that results in the suffering of humanity and creation. One can see why Christoffersson would be tempted to make the connection between Romans 8.19 and these "sons of God" from Genesis 6.2.

The great weakness of Christoffersson's reading is his rejection of the position that Paul is referring to believers as υἱοί θεοῦ. If we follow Paul's claims about believers starting from 8.14, one can see that his concern is with what God has done, and still needs to do, for believers. Already, regarding those who are led by the Spirit, Paul says, οὗτοι υἱοὶ θεοῦ εἰσιν (8.14). They have received the πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας and cry "Abba, Father" (8.15). The Spirit co-witnesses with them that they are God's children (τέκνα θεοῦ, 8.16), co-heirs (συγκληρονόμοι) with the Messiah, who will be glorified with him (συνδοξασθῶμεν) if they also suffer with him (8.17). As children of God, they receive the inheritance given to the Messiah, which Paul referred to earlier in Romans 4.13 as the promise given to Abraham that his descendants would inherit the cosmos (τὸ

[103] See esp. Hahne 2006, 210–24; Bowens 2021.

κληρονόμον αὐτὸν εἶναι κόσμου).[104] Then Paul says the sufferings believers experience in the present do not compare with the glory about to be revealed to them (8.18). Both the sufferings of the present and the coming glory are meant to be related back to the co-suffering and co-glorification believers experience with the Messiah as his co-heirs. So when Paul goes on to speak of creation waiting eagerly for τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ θεοῦ (8.19), and explains that creation will ultimately move from slavery of corruption (ἀπὸ τῆς δουλείας τῆς φθορᾶς) to the freedom of the glory of God's children (εἰς τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τῆς δόξης τῶν τέκνων τοῦ θεοῦ, 8.21), we are meant to read the story of creation's liberation in light of what came before. Just as humanity moves from slavery to sonship through the reception of the Spirit, and from that sonship to a share in the glory of the Messiah, so also creation will move from its state of slavery to one of freedom when God's children receive the glory Paul speaks of in 8.17 and 8.18. We can see, therefore, that there is every reason to think that Paul has not changed the referent of υἱοὶ θεοῦ or τέκνα θεοῦ. He is speaking of believers in every case.

The coming glory of which Paul speaks is the restored glory God intended for humanity from the beginning, the glory described in Psalm 8.5–8.[105] In this case, however, whereas humanity was originally made a little lower than the אלהים in Psalm 8, here humanity is more highly exalted through their union with God's Son. The special role previously occupied by the heavenly sons of God, who were charged by YHWH to rule over the nations (Deut 32.8), will be taken up by a redeemed humanity as they share in the Messiah's rule over the entire cosmos.

[104] On the promise to inherit the cosmos, see Wright 2013b, 554–92; Jacob 2018, 212–18. McCaulley 2019 has argued for this same cosmic interpretation of the Abrahamic promise in Galatians.

[105] Jewett 2006, 513; Berry 2020 connects the Spirit's intercession via groaning to the glory of the believer but fails to make the connections with the restored glory of humanity, with its background in the creation narrative. Contrast Jacob 2018, 241, who makes the connection explicit.

Paul claims that creation and humanity groan for the revelation of the glory of God's children. The glory spoken of in 8.18–25 is located primarily in the future. However, for Paul, the glory awaiting believers, like their sonship, is something that can be experienced proleptically through the work of the Spirit.[106] The Spirit's intercession is not, as Käsemann suggests, a sign of ἀσθένεια. The sign of ἀσθένεια described in 8.26 is the believer's ignorance concerning what to pray during the present time, which continues to be characterized by παθήματα (8.18), ματαιότης (8.20), δουλεία, and φθορά (8.21). Instead, this pneumatic prayer functions as a sign of the coming glory. The Spirit's intercession is the eschatological work of God that meets the lingering present weakness and groaning of humanity. The use of the datives τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ ἡμῶν and στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις following the actions ascribed to the Spirit (συναντιλαμβάνεται and ὑπερεντυγχάνει respectively) make this point. An additional connection between the Spirit's intercession and the Abba cry is made apparent here. Just as the Spirit makes present the eschatological status of sonship by bearing clear witness to it through the Abba cry, so also the Spirit makes present the believer's glorified status over creation by enabling them to intercede to God even when they do not know what to pray in the face of the lingering brokenness within a creation that awaits its final deliverance.

5.5.3. The Spirit's Intercession and the Intercession of Christ

The third theological connection for pneumatic prayer, I have argued, is that they function as modes of participating in the prayer of heavenly beings. In this section, I explore how the Spirit's intercession is that kind of participation in heavenly prayer.

[106] Blackwell 2011, 159.

Paul's use of the verb (ὑπερ)ἐντυγχάνω in Romans 8.26–27 is unique, not only because he is the first author to attribute this action to the Spirit, but also because this verb is used only 4 times by Paul, and all in the same letter. In Romans 11.2, Paul recalls the prophet Elijah saying, ἐντυγχάνει τῷ θεῷ κατὰ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. The attribution of an intercessory work to a prophetic figure comes as no surprise, given the role of prophets as intercessors in ancient Israelite and early Jewish religion.[107] The remaining three uses of ἐντυγχάνω all occur in Romans 8, with two in the present verses about the Spirit's intercession (8.26–27). The final occurrence of the term is in Romans 8.34, where Paul refers to the crucified and risen Messiah who is ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ, ὃς καὶ ἐντυγχάνει ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν. If pneumatic prayers are participations in the prayers of heavenly beings, then we need to consider how the Spirit's intercession of 8.26–27 might relate to the Son's intercession in 8.34.

Surprisingly few interpreters have wondered about the connections between the Spirit's intercession and Jesus' intercession at God's right hand.[108] Käsemann is a notable exception, saying that the Spirit's intercession is "the earthly reflection of what the heavenly High Priest does before the throne of God."[109] For those who think that the Spirit's intercession is an action hidden from human experience, the parallel with the heavenly intercession of Jesus serves as little more than an acknowledgement of the fact that the Spirit engages in the same kinds of activities on the believer's behalf that Jesus does. However, once one sees the Spirit's intercession as an instance of pneumatic prayer, the significance of the parallel becomes more important.

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[107] E.g., Gen 18.23–33; Exod 31.11–14; 33.12–23; 34.9; 1 Kgs 18.22–40.

[108] For example, Dunn 1975 and Fee 1994 both mention the heavenly intercession of Jesus but fail to note any possible connections to the Spirit's intercession. Several commentators mention the parallel between the Spirit and Christ's intercession but fail to explore the significance beyond this. E.g., Jewett 2007; Kruse 2012; Longenecker 2016; Moo 2018.

[109] Käsemann 1980, 242; cf. Wilckens 1980, 162.

If Paul intends the Spirit's intercession to be read as a similar experience to the Abba cry, as I have argued, then one might expect the Spirit's intercession to follow a similar theological pattern to the Abba cry as a pneumatic prayer. Put differently, if in the case of the Abba cry, Paul is speaking of an experience whereby believers participate in the prayer of God's Son in calling out to God as "Abba, Father," we might expect that in the case of the Spirit's intercession Paul envisions a similar participation, this time in the heavenly intercession of Jesus. The difference between the two experiences in this case is that Paul explicitly draws attention to the fact that Jesus intercedes in the presence of God, whereas with the Abba cry Paul leaves unmentioned the fact that Jesus also called out to God in this way.[110]

Paul says that Jesus is at the right hand of God and makes intercession ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν (8.34). This corresponds to the Spirit's intercession being ὑπὲρ ἁγίων (8.27). Both Jesus and the Spirit make intercession for believers. In the Spirit's case, however, the intercession comes to expression in a mode of prayer Paul describes in Romans 8.23 and 2 Corinthians 5.2–4 as "groaning." Additionally, while Jesus' intercession is depicted as taking place ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ, providing assurance that God hears and honours that intercession, the Spirit's intercession is κατὰ θεὸν.[111] The Spirit's intercession takes the form that believers' prayers cannot take in the circumstances Paul describes. Whereas they do not know what to pray καθὸ δεῖ, the Spirit assists them by producing an intercession through their groans that is in accordance with God and God's purposes. As Wright says, "the Spirit, active within the innermost being of the Christian, is doing the very

[110] Though, as I noted in chapter 3, the presence of the Abba cry in gentile assemblies makes little sense if early Christians were not already aware of the fact that Jesus prayed to God in this manner.

[111] It is normal to see κατὰ θεὸν translated as "according to (the will of) God". Admittedly, the prepositional phrase is an odd one, and Paul only uses it elsewhere in 2 Corinthians 7.9–11 to describe a grief that is κατὰ θεὸν. In both cases, however, the preposition κατά could also be read as a spatial marker indicating that the act is directed to God or takes place in the presence of God.

interceding the Christian longs to do, even though the only evidence that can be produced is inarticulate groanings."[112]

Jacob summarizes Paul's main point well: "Just as the Son intercedes on behalf of the saints in his glory in Romans 8:34, so also the saints demonstrate their sonship, and thus their participation in the Son's glory, in the present."[113] One should make more explicit Jacob's observation and say that believers do this through their Spirit-inspired intercessions offered up to God. Only by sharing in the intercession of the exalted Messiah can believers fulfil their vocation to intercede for the sake of a world still marked by futility and corruption (8.20–21).

5.5.4. Summary

The preceding sections have demonstrated that the Spirit's intercession in Romans 8.26 fits well in the theological taxonomy for pneumatic prayer I have defended throughout this thesis. First, the Spirit's intercession functions as a sign of eschatological time, bearing witness to the God who acts (τὸ πνεῦμα) and the time/place of God's action (τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ ἡμῶν). The closeness of the theophanic encounter experienced in the Spirit's intercession described by Paul using the double compound verb συναντιλαμβάνομαι, emphasizing all at once the Spirit's cooperation with believers (σύν) as well as the Spirit's proximity working to intercede in their place when they do not know what to pray (ἀντί). Second, the Spirit's intercession serves as a sign in the present of the glorified filial status believers enjoy in relation to God. As the "sons of God" for whose unveiling creation waits with eager anticipation, the Spirit enables believers to experience their glory by enabling them to intercede to God even when they do not know what to pray. Third, the

[112] Wright 2002, 599.

[113] Jacob 2018, 245.

Spirit's intercession enables believers to participate in the heavenly intercessions of Jesus. Just as believers are enabled to pray the prayer of God's Son when they receive the πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας (8.15), so also the same Spirit (αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα, cf. 8.15, 26) enables them to intercede to God with the very intercessions of Jesus when they do not know what to pray.

5.6. CONCLUSION

In Romans 8, Paul brings together two pneumatic prayers, the Abba cry (8.15) and the Spirit's intercession (8.26–27). While both pneumatic prayers bear the same descriptive marks of all pneumatic prayers as familiar, perceptive instances of inspired speech, it is perhaps in Romans 8 most of all that the theological significance of pneumatic prayer comes across most clearly. All three elements of the theological taxonomy for pneumatic prayer I have proposed are present in Romans 8: eschatological theophany, the glorified filial status of believers, and participation in the prayer of heavenly beings.

6. CONCLUSION: PNEUMATIC PRAYERS IN PAUL

6.1. TOWARDS A TAXONOMY OF PNEUMATIC PRAYER

The present work has proposed a new taxonomy of pneumatic prayer in the letters of Paul. In the opening chapter, I showed that pneumatic prayer deserves to be considered a topic in the study of Paul's theology and spirituality. I also reviewed the history of scholarship on these texts, focusing on major figures who have attempted to interpret these experiences together and showing the need for a taxonomic classification of them. My proposed taxonomy of pneumatic prayer is focused on the common descriptive features of pneumatic prayer and the theological connections Paul makes to these pneumatic prayers.

6.2. DESCRIPTIVE FEATURES OF PNEUMATIC PRAYERS

In the case of all three pneumatic prayers Paul describes in his undisputed letters, the experience is assumed to be a common one for his audience. Paul can refer to the Abba cry when writing to an assembly he has never visited and assume they know what this experience is. In Galatians, Paul connects the Abba cry with the miraculous manifestations of the Spirit the Galatians experienced when they first heard Paul's gospel (Gal 3.1–5). Obviously, the Corinthians were familiar with the experience of glossolalia. I have argued, however, that the experience of praying in tongues was likely more common in Corinth than many scholars have supposed. Paul

had no principled objection to the notion that all believers could experience glossolalia, or the other gifts, though he would aim to direct how believers practice glossolalic prayer in the context of assembly worship. The Spirit's intercession is framed as a general experience that can be true of all believers, as indicated by Paul's use of the inclusive first-person plurals in 8.26 to describe the believer's ignorance in prayer and 8.23 to depict their groaning. If it is a reference to glossolalia as I suggest is plausible, this would also add further evidence to the commonality and familiarity of these pneumatic prayers throughout the early church.

All three pneumatic prayers are also perceptible phenomena. I have argued that the Abba cry was an audible exclamatory, even ecstatic utterance, prompted by the Spirit when early Christians responded to the proclamation of the gospel. Likewise, praying in tongues is, in Paul's words, a manifestation of the Spirit (1 Cor 12.7), a concrete demonstration of the Spirit's operation in the lives of early believers. In the case of the Spirit's intercession, Paul connects it directly to the groaning believers experience in the present as they long for the promised future God will bring at the Parousia.

Finally, I have shown that in the case of each pneumatic prayer, Paul and other early Christians would have viewed the experience as an instance of Spirit-inspired prayer. The inspired nature of the prayers is evident from Paul's description. The designation of the Abba prayer as a "cry" (κράζω) fit not only with contexts of prayer but also contexts of prophetic or Spirit-inspired speech, including in some cases speech prompted through Spirit possession. With glossolalia, Paul depicts an experience of prayer that looks to outsiders like an instance of inspired speech (1 Cor 14.23). He also speaks of glossolalia as an experience in which the mind of the one praying is ἄκαρπος (14.14) and contrasts praying in tongues — which he labels praying τῷ πνεύματι — with praying τῷ νοΐ (14.15). In this case, Paul depicts glossolalic speech using language for inspired

speech that would have been recognizable to his Hellenistic audience. However, unlike some of his Jewish and Greco-Roman contemporaries, who often viewed inspired speech as an occasion for the agency of the human to be overcome or displaced by the divine agency, Paul did not think that the agency of the believer was overruled in glossolalia or the Abba cry. Instead, his description of both experiences displays a belief that both the Spirit and the believer cooperate in the pneumatic prayer in a complementary, not competitive, manner.

6.3. THEOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS OF PNEUMATIC PRAYER

All pneumatic prayer for Paul functions as signs of the eschatological time in God's people inhabit in the already-not-yet tension of the Christian life. These experiences are first and foremost encounters with God mediated through the divine Spirit. But these encounters occur at a particular time. They signify the fulfillment of divine promise in the past, as Paul says of the reception of the Spirit (Gal 3.14) and mark God's activity in the fullness of time (4.4). They remind believers of the partial and incomplete nature of their current existence, as Paul says of glossolalia (1 Cor 13.8–12), but they also work to build up believers and prepare them for the eschatological judgment of God (14.4, 12, 28). Finally, even though believers still live in a time marked by weakness (Rom 8.26), pneumatic prayer serves as a help amid that weakness, reminding believers of the greater coming glory (8.17. 18, 30).

Through pneumatic prayer, the Spirit bears witness to the glorified filial status of believers. When they cry "Abba, Father" with the Spirit, believers participate in the glorified sonship of the Messiah and receive adoption as God's children. Through their union with Christ, they are the υἱοί θεοῦ, members of God's heavenly family and divine council who share in the Messiah's rule over the cosmos. But through their union with God's Son, believers are joined not only to his glory, but also to his suffering. Their glory is a cruciform glory. They share in the glory of the crucified one.

Finally, pneumatic prayers are participations in the prayers of heavenly beings, whether the exalted Son of God or the angelic hosts who worship with God's people. Both the Abba cry and the Spirit's intercession are viewed by Paul as the believer's participation in the prayers of Jesus through the Spirit. Glossolalia is identified by Paul as the "tongues of angels" (1 Cor 13.1), and I have argued that we can make the most sense of the theology of glossolalia for Paul (and the Corinthians) if we accept that he and the members of the Corinthian assembly believed they were praying with the angelic hosts when they prayed in tongues.

6.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

While I have sought to provide an initial descriptive and theological taxonomy for these, often neglected, pneumatic experiences in Paul's letters, others who might wish to pursue further research into these topics could do so in several ways. First, the importance of pneumatic prayer, as a common experience for Paul and early Christians, raises important questions about the prominence of other "transempirical" or miraculous occurrences within the early Christian movement. In particular, the role of these experiences for Paul's spirituality and theology needs further exploration. Second, if my conclusions about the Spirit's intercession being an instance of glossolalic prayer are correct, then we have good reasons to reconsider the prevalence of glossolalia in early Christianity. In particular, the role of glossolalia in the early Christian movement deserves reconsideration in light of these findings. Building on some of these conclusions, one could examine how other New Testament references to glossolalia in Acts or praying in the Spirit (Eph 6.18; Jude 20) cohere or do not cohere with Paul's description and theology of these pneumatic experiences.

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