

3-2020

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Recommended Citation

Anderson, Paul (2020) "Inspiring Readings of The Inspired Text-- Taking the Bible Personally, After the Manner of Friends," *Quaker Religious Thought*. Vol. 134 , Article 3.

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INSPIRING READINGS OF THE INSPIRED TEXT—TAKING THE BIBLE PERSONALLY, AFTER THE MANNER OF FRIENDS

PAUL ANDERSON

In the experience and conviction of Friends, the sway and power of Scripture lies not in an appeal to top-down authority, but in its transformative character, attested by its inspiring thrust. This view is also biblical, as the Apostle Paul exhorts Timothy to resist false teachers by clinging to what he has been taught since childhood. Indeed, the sacred writings are able to instruct one unto “salvation through faith in Jesus Christ” because of their God-breathed origin and character (2 Timothy 3:15-17). Early Friends also asserted the biblically-correct claim that the Word of God is centrally Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, of whom the written Word of Scripture testifies (John 1:1-14). And, in their experience and witness, most of their spiritual insights and convictions emerged directly from the plain reading of the Scriptures in ways inspirational.

But what does the Bible itself say about how God communicates with humanity, how did early Friends feel themselves addressed by the divine word through the written word, and how does God continue to speak through the Scriptures if we will but take up and read? These are some of the questions the present essay seeks to address. Along these lines, the experiences of early Friends are perhaps closest to that of Augustine, who twelve centuries earlier found his life changed by a transformative reading of the Bible. Upon hearing children chanting “pick it up and read,” he read Romans 13:13, and it changed his life.¹

I snatched it up, opened it and read in silence the passage on which my eyes first alighted: *Not in dissipation and drunkenness, nor in debauchery and lewdness, nor in arguing and jealousy; but put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh on the gratification of your desires.* I had no wish to read further, nor was there any need. No sooner had I reached the end of the verse than the light of certainty flooded my heart and all the dark shades of night fled away.

With this pivotal experience, Augustine reports his own conversion as a life-changing event involving several elements: (1) He *reads the Bible*, focusing on the first passage to which he was led; (2) he is *opened to the truth of his own story and situation reflectively*, being convicted (convinced) about the truth of his needful condition; (3) he *repents and turns to God* in humble submission; (4) he then finds the newness of life and *testifies to others* about his encounter with the divine, witnessing to this life-changing transformation. As recent treatments of the subject have noted,² such also is often the character of early Friends' transformative encounter with the divine word upon reading the written word, the Scriptures.

I. THE INSPIRED CHARACTER OF THE SCRIPTURES

Along these lines, Friends have embraced faithfully what Scriptures claim for themselves as their stated authority. This is important, as some claims to biblical authority are neither biblically based nor reasonably sustained. For instance, divine-dictation theories assume more than what the biblical writers claim, and however the inspirational processes may have happened, they usually involved oral formations of material, its gathering and editing, the written production of biblical texts, and their transmissions and translations over the years. Such being the case, early Friends have often been more biblically correct in their understandings of the inspired processes by which the Scriptures were written than some of their partners in dialogue, as follows.

As stated in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, *Scripture is God-breathed* (θεόπνευστος—*theopneustos*; emphases mine, NRSV): “All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for *teaching*, for *reproof*, for *correction*, and for *training in righteousness*, so that everyone who belongs to God may be *proficient*, *equipped* for every good work.” Within this passage, Paul encourages Timothy to stand firm in what he has believed, building on the sacred writings that make one wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus (vv. 14-15). Of course, Paul did not here have in mind the canonized New Testament, finalized several centuries later; rather, he was referencing Hebrew Scripture as used in meetings for worship and otherwise. This text later became a primary measures by which the New Testament was canonized, as earlier works were privileged over later ones, and experiential measures of texts' inspiring effects were key factors in the selection processes themselves.³ This passage is also cited and built upon by

several early Friends, including William Penn, who, in *An Address to Protestants*⁴ argued for the importance of Scripture's addressing the entirety of the believer's life with the most weighty elements of biblical content. In Penn's view, all biblical content is equally true; it is not equally important. Thus, discerning and wise interpretation is key to Scripture's effective roles in teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness. Another text affirming the inspiring work of the Spirit underlying Scripture is 2 Peter 1:19-21:

So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

Interestingly, it was his literal embrace of this passage that got George Fox imprisoned in Nottingham, as he interrupted the preacher, who wrongly referenced *the Bible* as the day-star rising in people's hearts (v. 19). At this, Fox reports that he could not contain himself but was led to cry out that it was not the Scriptures, but "the Holy Spirit, by which the holy men of God gave forth the Scriptures, whereby opinions, religions, and judgements were to be tried; for it led into all Truth, and so gave knowledge of all Truth."⁵ Thus, it is the Spirit—not the Bible—that rises in people's hearts, if the biblical text is to be taken literally. In raising this protest, however, Fox is wrongly understood as devaluing Scripture over and against the Spirit. Rather, he is citing the larger passage from memory, understanding it literally and contextually, correcting the priest's flawed exegesis because he *knew the text by heart* and *had rightly discerned its central thrust*. Therefore, rather than disparaging the written text over and against the work of the Spirit, Fox was correcting the man's flawed exegesis of the written text, which points to the Spirit's work, not the written text, as authoritative.

Along these lines, Robert Barclay affirms with Fox the primary role of the Spirit in the work of revelation, as the Scriptures are not its source, but the primary testimony to the source of revelation, which is the inspiring work of the Holy Spirit. That point is also biblically correct. Thus, the authority behind the Scriptures is none other than the Holy Spirit, who assists immeasurably in their right understanding and interpretation. Barclay then cites Romans 15:4 and 2 Timothy

3:15-17 as indications of Scripture's importance, and here Barclay retains the tension between the subjective leadings of the Spirit and the objective record of Scripture. From the Spirit's revelations, the Scriptures contain "a faithful historical account of the behavior of God's people in various ages;" a prophetic account of things past and yet to come; and a "full and adequate account of all the chief principles of the doctrine of Christ."⁶ That being the case, the Scriptures are a "declaration of the source"—the inspiring work of the Holy Spirit—"and not the source itself."⁷

Nonetheless, given the human tendency to get things wrong, Scripture's "secondary" role in relation to the "primary" role of the Spirit is not a factor of diminished importance; it is a matter of epistemic sequence. Barclay sees the Scriptures as an objective means by which to check subjective leadings, giving them the final place of authority in the inward discernment of God's truth: "Whatsoever doctrine is contrary unto their testimony may properly be rejected as false." Put as a strongly worded maxim: "Anything which anyone may do while claiming to be led by the Spirit, which is contrary to the scriptures, may be considered as a delusion of the devil."⁸ Thus, while the inspirational work of the Holy Spirit is the primary and inward source and basis for the Scriptures' authority, the written Scriptures provide an external and final standard by which those inferences are to be affirmed, judged, modified, and corrected. In that sense, the written words of Scripture convey, confirm, and correct the interpreter's perception of the Divine Word of God to humanity, which has been spoken at many times and in many ways, but is eschatologically conveyed in Christ, God's final Word (Hebrews 1:1-4).

II. HOW ARE READERS REACHED AND INSPIRED BY THE DIVINE WORD?

Given that the Scriptures are God-breathed, how are readers reached and inspired by the Divine Word, experientially and transformingly? Or, as John 20:31 reminds us, that "these things are written that you might believe," how does that happen for readers across the bounds of time and space? In biblical terms, the Word of God, or the Word of the Lord, is most often associated with God's direct communication with humanity. Thus, Barclay's second Proposition on Communication⁹ rightly precedes his Proposition on Scripture.

“The word of the Lord” comes to Abram with a promise of blessing in a vision (Genesis 15:1-6), instructs Moses to enroll the Levites by clans (Numbers 3:14-16), provides the core of the authentic prophet’s words (Numbers 24:11-14), is rejected by Saul (1 Samuel 15:23), guides Nathan in confronting David (2 Samuel 7:4), leads Solomon to build the temple (1 Kings 6:11), leads the man of God to prophesy against Bethel (1 Kings 13:1-2), informs the message of Elijah (1 Kings 17), guides Jeremiah and Ezekiel multiple times, and promises to bring the dry bones to life by its hearing (Ezekiel 37:4).

Likewise, “the word of God” confirms Saul’s kingship (1 Samuel 9:27), is confirmed by Solomon’s building of the temple (1 Kings 8:26), comes to Shemaiah, leading him to challenge Rehoboam against going to war against Israel (1 Kings 12:22), stands true (Proverbs 30:5), and endures eternally (Isaiah 40:8): “The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.” The divine word and wisdom were also the source of the created order (Genesis 1:1-2:4; Psalm 133:6-9; Proverbs 8:22-30), and early Christian worship material identifies Christ as the creative-redeeming agency of that work as the Word of God made flesh, who also was God and with God in the beginning (John 1:1-14; Colossians 1:15-20).¹⁰

In Deuteronomy 8:3, the whole point of the manna-feeding in the wilderness is to remind Israel that “one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.” Thus, physical nourishment points to spiritual nourishment, and yet, its meaning cannot be limited to the Torah, Hebrew Scripture, or the closed canon. It references the larger reality of divine disclosure, guidance, correction, and instruction—central features of the divine address to humanity. As Barclay continues to develop the conviction that God is the teacher of his people himself, he argues a second point along these lines.¹¹

In the scriptures God has deemed it proper to give us a looking glass in which we can see the conditions and experiences of ancient believers. There we find that our experience is analogous to theirs. We may thus become more confirmed and comforted and strengthened in our hope of obtaining the same end. Observing the providence that watched over them, and the snares which they encountered, and beholding the ways in which they were delivered, we may find ourselves directed toward salvation, and appropriately reprov'd, and instructed in righteousness.

Barclay continues, arguing that “the testimony of the Spirit as recorded in the scriptures answers the testimony of the same Spirit in the heart, just as face answers face in in a looking glass.”¹² Along these lines, Barclay counters critical objections to “unlearned” men such as Peter and John (Acts 4:13) being enabled to write inspiring biblical works, pushing back against reformed moves to exclude James from the canon because of apparent tensions between faith and works perspectives in Paul’s writings. Thus, rather than using inspiration to get around literal interpretations of Scripture, Barclay challenges the critical skepticism of his day on the basis that a Spirit-based inference of the origin and meaning of biblical texts might actually bolster the authority of the canonical writings over and against rationalistic objections.

Barclay’s larger concern addresses the unbiblical notion that revelation had ceased with the writings of the closed canon, and this concern was one of the prime motivations behind his authoring his *Catechism and Confession of Faith*—challenging the closed-revelation approach of the Westminster Catechism as unbiblical.¹³ This Spirit-imbued approach to the Bible’s authoritative meaning was also a part of the experience and view of Fox, as virtually all of his prophetic openings are directly connected to particular aspects of biblical reflection. Not only does he discern the true meanings of the Scriptures by the help of the Spirit, but he also comes to see himself in truth as revealed by the Holy Spirit’s conviction, as he explains after it was opened to him in his own conversion account, that “there was one, even Christ Jesus,” who could speak to his condition:¹⁴

For though I read the scriptures that spoke of Christ and of God, yet I knew him not but by revelation, as he who hath the key did open, and as the Father of life drew me to his Son by his Spirit. And then the Lord did gently lead me along, and let me see his love, which was endless and eternal, and surpasseth all the knowledge that men have in the natural state, or can get by history or books; and that love let me see myself as I was without him. And I was afraid of all company, for I saw them perfectly where they were, through the love of God which let me see myself.

Fox was later moved to declare that “the holy scriptures were given forth by the Spirit of God; and all people must come to the Spirit of God in themselves, by which they might know God and Christ, of whom the prophets and the apostles learnt; and by the same Spirit

know the holy scriptures.” In disagreement with a priest who declared that the Spirit and the letter were inseparable, Fox asked whether one could simply buy the Spirit as one would purchase a book. At this, Judge Fell and Colonel West supported Fox’s view over and against the priest’s, saying “according to that position, they might carry the Spirit in their pockets, as they did the scriptures.” Fox then appeals to his personal and inspirational experience: “These things I did not see by the help of man, nor by the letter, though they were written in the letter, but I saw them in the light of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by his immediate Spirit and power, as did the holy men of God, by whom the Holy Scriptures were written.” This is why Fox was then able to say that he “had no slight esteem of the Holy Scriptures.”¹⁵ His goal was to be totally biblically faithful.

And, it was precisely this spiritually transformative approach to Scripture, which piqued Margaret Fell’s interest in the ministry of George Fox. Hearing him speak for the first time at the church at Ulverston, Fell reports being moved by the message that the spiritual truth of the words of the Prophets, Christ, and the Apostles is directly accessible by means of the ministry of “the Spirit that gave them forth.” Thus, the true test of the Scriptures’ inspiring thrust lies not in asking what do others say they mean, but in the probing experiential query: “What canst *thou* say?”

Reading *about* the Light of Christ (John 1:9) is one thing; becoming a child *of* the Light and walking *in* the Light (John 12:35-36) is another. Likewise, in expounding upon the inspired text, does it reflect one’s creaturely notions, brilliant though they may be, or is it “inwardly from God” and born of divine initiative and inspiration (John 1:10-13)? At these probing questions, Margaret Fell reports herself to have been “cut to the heart,” seeing clearly that “we were all wrong” in surface readings of the text, reduced to tears in her pew. She thus cried out in her spirit to the Lord, “We are all thieves; we have taken the Scriptures in Words, and know nothing of them in ourselves.”¹⁶

What we see in the experiences and thought of Fox, Fell, Barclay, and so many other early Friends, is the spiritually transformative effect of taking the Bible inspirationally and personally—seeking to discern the spiritual meaning of a text, connecting with its meanings experientially and convictionally. This is what Michael Birkel describes as “reading inwardly,” and in Vail Palmer’s words, an “empathic” reading of Scripture.¹⁷ When one sees one’s own life and existence

mirrored in the inspired text, an experiential connection between the spiritual reality behind the text—that of the writers, speaks with convictional relevance to the real spirituality in front of the text—that of the readers.

Put in Johannine terms, Jesus promises that the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, will then teach and bring to remembrance all that he has been teaching them, and that the Spirit of Truth will convict and convince them of sin and of righteousness—opening readers to the authentic truth of their spiritual condition—reminding them also of all he has taught them (John 14:6; 16:8-15). Thus, to be a “convinced Friend” is to be reached experientially by the Spirit of Christ—operative behind, through, and in front of the text—transforming the lives of believing readers.

Numerous examples abound among Friends and others, but the experience of young John Woolman deserves a mention. As 18th century Friends practiced the discipline of regular readings of the Bible and other good books, John Woolman reports becoming acquainted with “a motion of divine love” from reading Scripture inwardly and taking it personally, even before his seventh year. Feeling drawn to seek after that “pure habitation” which God had prepared for his servants according to Revelation 22, young Woolman felt convicted that his contemporaries exhibited “less steadiness and firmness” than did the saints of old, as portrayed in the Bible. As a teenager, Woolman felt himself “estranged” from the standards of holy living revealed in Scripture, as “youthful vanities and diversions” drew him into associations with “that which is reverse to true friendship.”¹⁸

Woolman reports keeping steadily to meetings for worship, followed by reading the Scriptures and other good books on First Day afternoons. He reports being “early convinced in my mind that true religion consisted in an inward life, wherein the heart does love and reverence God the Creator, and learns to exercise true justice and goodness, not only toward all men, but also toward the brute creation.” As he sought to live “under the cross,” he reports his mind being opened to the truth and being “more enlightened” from day to day. As he pondered the transformative change within him, he notes a sense of inward awe, with his heart becoming “tender and often contrite, and universal love to my fellow-creatures increased within me.” Among those who “have trodden in the same path,” there is “harmony in the sound of that voice to which divine love gives utterance.” By those who know this inward reality of spiritual

transformation is the “white stone and new name” (Revelation 2:17) given.

A further example of transformative readings of biblical texts is found in the world-changing ministry of Elizabeth Fry. Recorded as a Friends minister in 1811, she visited London’s Newgate Prison two years later, having heard reports from Stephen Grellet about the horrendous conditions for women and children—subject to nakedness, starvation, abuse, and violence. She immediately organized the making of flannel clothing for children, delivered the following day, and upon her visits, she simply gathered women together and read the Bible to them aloud.

One of her first readings was from Luke 7-15, beginning with Jesus’ having been accused of associating with sinners, concluding with the Prodigal Son’s return to his loving father’s embrace. Following her reading, she reports that women were on their knees weeping, feeling moved by the inspiring power of the biblical text itself. In 1817 she organized the *Association for the Improvement of the Female Prisoners of Newgate*, which put forward a twelve-point plan for prisoners’ organization and discipline. The plan included twice-daily Bible readings, teaching children and women to read, organizing grounds-cleaning and maintenance, and holding inmates accountable for good behavior. These measures were approved with unanimity, and the prison that had been called “Hell above ground” became the shining example of what reformed prisons might look like, in Britain and the rest of Europe.

As news spread about how this stately, plain-dressing Quaker minister had transformed the most notorious prison in Britain with her reforms and Friday Bible readings, dignitaries sought to take in the spectacle. Tickets had to be organized to manage the interest. News travelled internationally, and kings and queens of Denmark and Prussia came to witness her Bible-reading ministry. Upon witnessing one of these events, the American Ambassador to Russia declared that beyond seeing the great landmarks of London, the greatest sight was Elizabeth Fry reading the Bible in Newgate and “the miraculous effect of true Christianity upon the most deprived of human beings.”¹⁹

Thus, we see in the transformative encounters with the Holy Spirit who inspired the Scriptures, occasioned in their reading among early and later Friends, these four movements similar to the experience of Augustine: (1) reading the Bible with spiritual attentiveness; (2) being opened to the truth of one’s situation and needful condition; (3)

being led into the newness of life in humble submission to God; and (4) embracing prophetic openings through the prayerful readings of Scripture, to which one is called to bear witness.

III. HOW DO THE INSPIRED TEXTS CONTINUE TO INSPIRE AND GUIDE OUR LIVES?

Being convinced of some aspect of the truth in taking Scripture personally and meaningfully, however, is not the end of the story; it more importantly becomes a new beginning. As a general observation, the earlier biblical references in the *Journal* of George Fox are mostly indirect, while later references are more explicit, as he recounts debates over biblical texts and their meanings with others. While otherwise critical of those citing “chapter and verse,” Fox and early Friends found themselves debating particular texts in specificity, which is understandable. Nonetheless, Friends also sought to testify to the clear meanings of biblical texts, which called for walking in the light as children of the light and of the day (1 Thessalonians 5:5), embracing the counsel of Paul in 2 Timothy 2:14-15:

Remind them of this, and warn them before God that they are to avoid wrangling over words, which does no good but only ruins those who are listening. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth.

Thus, even in arguing for adherence to the plain meanings of biblical texts, Friends were seeking to be biblically faithful—literally—not getting caught up in “wrangling over words” or proof-texts. Even in “rightly explaining” (or rightly dividing) “the word of truth,” Friends sought to let the Scriptures speak for themselves. In Barclay’s *Catechism and Confession of Faith*, he simply lists Scriptures which answer questions raised, putting forth the clear and simple meaning of the text—at times presenting an alternative biblical side to an issue, over and against views of Puritans, Anglicans, or others. And, of course, such texts were employed against Quakers as much as they were used by them.

When applied personally, however, the words of the Psalmist reflect Friends’ inspirational embrace of biblical texts: “I treasure your word in my heart, so that I may not sin against you” (Psalm 119:11). When applied personally, meditating over biblical texts leads

to personal transformation. When applied societally, lion-voice of the Lord roars from Zion (Amos 1:2), and Israel is exhorted to “hear this word that the LORD has spoken” (Amos 3:1) in repentance and faithfulness. When understood contextually, a radically Christocentric focus is clarified, as early Friends embraced the hermeneutical key of John 5:39, “You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf.” If Moses indeed wrote of Jesus (v. 46, a clear reference to Deuteronomy 18:15-22),²⁰ and if the teachings of Jesus fulfill the Law (Matthew 5:17), the second covenant provides a lens through which to understand the first. With Luther and others, in discerning a Christocentric “canon within the canon,” the gospel becomes the core by which to consolidate biblical approaches to diverse subjects. Thus, following Jesus is central to Christian faith and practice, for his “friends” (John 15:13-15) and for all believers.²¹

That being the case, several corporate Testimonies among early Friends reflect surprisingly literalistic and dogmatic interpretations of Scripture, for which they were willing to suffer at great lengths to uphold. For instance:

- Let your yes be yes and your no be no (Matthew 5:37; James 5:12)
- Swear not (Matthew 5:34-36; James 5:12)
- Love your enemies (Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:27, 36)
- Love God and neighbor (Matthew 22:37-39; Mark 12:29-31; Luke 10:27)
- Love one another (John 13:34-35; 15:13)
- Put away the sword (Matthew 26:52; Luke 22:50-52; John 18:11)
- The Light of Christ enlightens all (John 1:9)
- God is spirit, and authentic worship is in spirit and in truth (John 4:24)
- Walk in the Light as children of the Light and of the Day (John 12:35; 1 Thessalonians 5:5)
- You are my friends because you know what I am doing and you do what I command (John 15:14-15)
- The Spirit will guide you into all truth (John 16:13)

- Eternal life is based on knowing God and Christ (John 17:3)
- The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)
- The church is the people of God (1 Corinthians 1:2)
- Pure religion involves embracing the fatherless and widows (James 1:27)
- God is no respecter of persons, regardless of wealth, dress, or class (James 2:1-9)
- They will make war upon the Lamb, and the Lamb shall conquer them (Revelation 17:14)

In the light of these and other biblical convictions, it is clear that most or nearly all of the early Quakers' testimonies were simply direct appeals to the plain meanings of Scripture. They not only spoke to the condition of the individual, but they also addressed the needs of society. Friends also noted the multiplicity of biblical perspectives on many an issue, and in their engagements with contemporaries, their most common bases for countering a particular interpretation of a biblical text involved the citing of alternative biblical texts—as did Jesus in the Gospels—shedding light dialectically upon an issue. In that sense, they were mindful of the multiplicity of voices within the biblical corpus, which all the more required Spirit-led discernment in terms of understanding how the Bible speaks to pressing issues in later generations.

Thus, inspiring readings of the inspired text invite personal engagement, seeing oneself addressed by the Holy Spirit as the prime mover behind and through the text, leading to conviction of the truth regarding one's condition and need before God (John 16:1-15). This is then followed by the prophetic call to sound the Day of the Lord, whereby the divine word is sounded over the land by those who know the workings of Christ and are willing to heed his direction. They also remind readers of the inspired text that within the canonical corpus more than one perspective is often expressed on a given issue, so the biblical corpus must be explored in dialogue with itself, rather than being interpreted monologically.²² That being the case, however, practical guidelines as to how Friends and others might best discern the divine word within and through the inspired corpus are developed elsewhere.²³

IV. CONCLUSION

While biblical scholars and interpreters bear the responsibility for inferring “what the Bible says” (to oneself and also to others), the common reader of the text always has a right to affirm “what the Bible says *to me*.” At times the divine word comes through the Scriptures as an inspiring opening; at other times, it serves as a looking glass, whereby we see our condition more clearly and are drawn into new relationships with God, oneself, and with others. In that sense, it is not only we who read the Bible, but it is we who are read by the text, revealing our existential condition in the transformative light of God’s truth. From thence, the prophetic word emerges, delivered as a challenge to the world in signaling the newness of life.

Of course, disciplinary tools facilitate one’s getting into the marrow of the text (using Samuel Fisher’s language), and devotional disciplines furthering the regular readings of the Bible can be helpful. However, the first step is to read the Bible prayerfully and receptively, open to the inspiring work of the same Spirit who inspired the text to begin with. And, as the children’s voices spoke to that confessional author long ago, the chorus in the garden speaks again today, as a voice within: “Take up and read.”

ENDNOTES

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2. Michal Birkel, *Engaging Scripture: Reading the Bible with Early Friends* (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 2005); Vail Palmer, *Face to Face: Early Quaker Encounters with the Bible* (Newberg, OR: Barclay Press, 2016); Howard R. Macy, “Quakers and Scripture,” *The Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies*, Stephen W. Angell and Ben (Pink) Dandelion, eds. (Oxford: Oxford United Press, 2013), 187-201; Ben Richmond, *Signs of Salvation* (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 2005).

See also the *Quaker Religious Thought* treatments of Friends and Scripture: Hugh S. Barbour, “Christ and Truth: The Catholicity and Protestantism of Early Friends,” *QRT* 4:1, #7 (1962): 2-15; T. Canby Jones, “The Bible: Its Authority and Dynamic in George Fox and Contemporary Quakerism,” *QRT* 4:1, #7 (1962): 18-36; Lucy Davenport, “Christ Jesus the Covenant of God: Two Views of the Quaker Doctrine of the Light,” *QRT* 26:2, #80 (1993): 7-15; Michael P. Graves, “Robert Barclay and the Rhetoric of the Inward Light,” *QRT* 26:2, #80 (1993): 17-32; Charlotte Condia-Williams, “The Names of God in George Fox and John Woolman,” *QRT* 26:2, #80 (1993): 33-40; T. Vail Palmer, Jr., “Early Friends and the Bible: Some Observations,” *QRT* 26:2, #80 (1993): 41-55. Additionally, see *QRT* 30:3, #97 (2001), which addresses the subject, *Uses of Scripture by Early Friends*: Paul Anderson, “Is There a Quaker Hermeneutic?” (5-8); Ronald Worden, “Text and Revelation—George Fox’s Use of the Bible” (9-15); Dean Freiday, “Robert Barclay and Scripture” (19-23, “Appendix: Hermeneutics as

- Seen from a Distance” 24-26); Juliet H. Dodds, “George Keith: Biblical Apologist for the Religious Society of Friends” (27-35); Timothy W. Seid, “Samuel Fisher: Seventeenth-Century Quaker Biblical Scholar” (37-45); Mary Garman, “Elizabeth Bathurst and Truth’s Vindication” (47-53); Michael Birkel, “Reading Scripture with Dorothy White” (55-62); and the Response by Hugh S. Pyper: “Can There Be a Quaker Hermeneutic?” (63-69).
3. See my treatment of the canonization process, Paul N. Anderson, *From Crisis to Christ: A Contextual Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon 2014), 7-12.
 4. William Penn, *An Address to Protestants Upon the Present Conjecture: In 2 Parts* (1679, London: Forgotten Books, 2018), 91.
 5. George Fox, *The Journal of George Fox*, ed. John L. Nickalls (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), 40.
 6. Robert Barclay, *Barclay’s Apology in Modern English*, ed. Dean Freiday (1967, Newberg, OR: Barclay Press, 1991), 5. Barclay’s third Proposition offers the classic Quaker understanding of the Spirit’s inspiring work being the primary authority behind the writing and the interpretation of the canonized Christian Scriptures (46-65).
 7. *Ibid*, 5.
 8. Barclay, 60.
 9. Barclay, “Inward and Unmediated Revelation,” 16-45.
 10. Paul N. Anderson, “The Word,” *The New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. 5; ed. Katherine Doob Sakenfeld (Nashville: Abingdon, 2009), 893-98.
 11. Barclay, 59.
 12. *Ibid*, 175.
 13. Robert Barclay, *A Catechism and Confession of Faith; A New Edition in Modern English*, eds. Dean Freiday and Arthur O. Roberts (Newberg, OR: Barclay Press, 2001).
 14. Fox, 11-12.
 15. *Ibid*, 34.
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