

Dissertation Defenses at Baptist Bible Seminary

— *Old Testament* —

Tim Little — *The Identity of the King of Babylon in Isaiah 14:4-21*

Abstract: The identity of the King of Babylon in Isaiah 14 has perplexed scholars for millennia. The early church sometimes identified the king as Nebuchadnezzar, but most also saw a deeper meaning and believed Isa 14:12–14 referred to Satan. Many current scholars reject both views and offer a variety of alternatives. This dissertation proposes that the king of Babylon referred to in Isa 14 is Israel’s eschatological enemy.

— *New Testament* —

Jared M. August — *The Climax of Christ: Toward a Broader Semantic Range of πληρόω in Matthew’s Formula-Citations*

Abstract: In Matthew’s formula-citations, the Gospel author uses the verb πληρόω to denote the “fulfillment” of the OT fourteen times (1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 5:17; 8:17; 12:17; 13:14 [ἀναπληρόω], 35; 21:4; 26:54, 56; 27:9). Although not all the OT passages cited by Matthew were predictive in their original contexts, quite a few scholars have assumed that since πληρόω can denote predictive fulfillment, it should be understood as such in every case. Due to this assumption, these scholars assert that the formula-citations demonstrate Matthew’s non-contextual approach to the OT.

However, once Matthew’s formula-citations are examined on their own terms, it becomes evident that πληρόω did not presuppose previous prediction. On the contrary, it appears to have been used in a wide variety of ways, with a much broader semantic range than has previously been assumed. This study demonstrates that Matthew used πληρόω in regard to three distinct categories: five times in reference to non-predictive OT historical accounts (2:15, 17; 13:14, 35; 27:9), four times in reference to generally anticipatory OT themes (2:23; 5:17; 26:54, 56), and five times in reference to predictive OT prophecies (1:22; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 21:4).

In view of this semantic range, it is proposed that rather than “to fulfill,” a more textually sensitive translation of πληρόω is “to

climax.” This study demonstrates the validity of this translation in relation to the overarching theme of Matthew, as well as the individual uses of πληρόω in these fourteen passages. Ultimately, this study concludes that in regard to the formula-citations, Matthew used the OT with keen contextual sensitivity.

Tom Dailey — *Informal Conditions in the New Testament: A Triangulated Approach*

Abstract: Informal conditions are set off from formal conditions in that they are missing one or two structural elements that characterize formal conditions. In NT Greek, informal conditions are often presented without the presence of the conditional particle or by the use of unexpected verb forms. How does NT exegesis determine the presence and function of conditionality when key structural features for identifying a condition are missing?

The approach suggested by this study begins by addressing conditional form and function as they are described in cognitive psychology, philosophical logic, and linguistic pragmatics. These fields provide generic conceptions of conditional usage with specific reference to internal logic and illocution. The study focuses on structural elements to establish a baseline for conditional semantics. This baseline is supplemented by two contributions from pragmatics. The first of these concerns the internal logic that exists between the conditional protasis and apodosis; the second entails the determination of the illocutive purpose for the utterance of the conditional itself. The study suggests that NT exegesis must approach informal conditions by triangulating structural semantics with internal logic and illocutive purpose.