THE ILLEISM OF JESUS AND YAHWEH: A STUDY OF THE

USE OF THE THIRD-PERSON SELF-REFERENCE IN THE

BIBLE AND ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN TEXTS AND

ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR CHRISTOLOGY

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A Dissertation

Presented to

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by

Ervin Roderick Elledge

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APPROVAL SHEET

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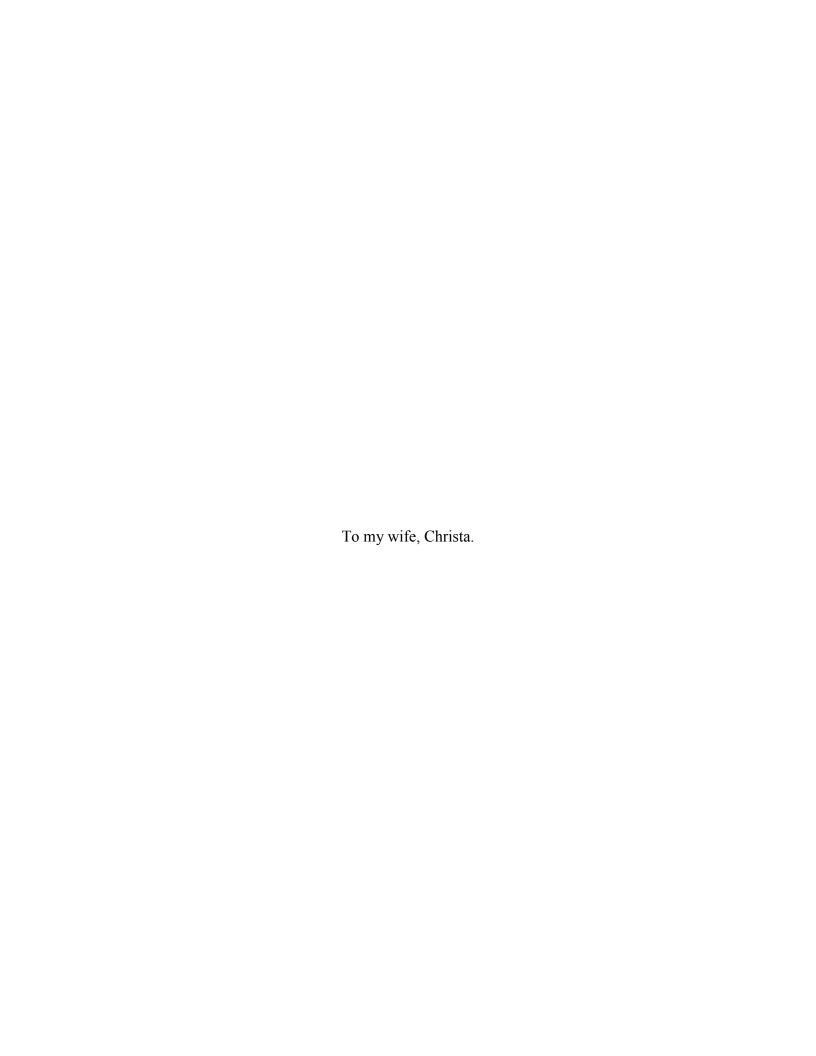Mark A. Seifrid

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Duane A. Garrett

Date_____

To my wife, Christa.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB   Anchor Bible

AEL   Ancient Egyptian Literature. M. Lichtheim. 3 vols. Berkeley, 1971-1980

ANET   *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament.* Edited by J. B. Pritchard. 3rd ed. Princeton, 1969.

ARI   *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions.* A. K. Grayson. 2 vols. RANE. Wiesbaded, 1972-1976

ATD   Das Alte Testament Deutsch

BAR   *Biblical Archaeology Review*

BASOR   *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*

BECNT   Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament

BHS   K. Elliger, and W. Rudolph, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 5th ed.

BHT   Beiträge zur historischen Theologie

BKAT   Biblischer Kommentar, Altes Testament. Edited by M. Noth and H. W. Wolff

BNTC   Black's New Testament Commentaries

BSac   *Bibliotheca sacra*

BZAW   Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

CBQ   *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

CNT   Commentaire du Nouveau Testament

EBC   *Expositor's Bible Commentary*

FAT   Forschungen zum Alten Testament

FGH   *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker.* Edited by F. Jacoby. Leiden, 1954-1964

HTKAT   Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament

HTKNT   Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament

HTR   *Harvard Theological Review*

ICC	International Critical Commentary
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament (Meyer-Kommentar)
KUB	*Keilschrift Urkunden aus Boghasköi*
KTU	*Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit.* Edited by M. Dietrich, O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartin. AOAT 24/1. Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1976, 2nd enlarged ed. of *KTU: The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani, and Other Places.* Edited by M. Dietrich, O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartin. Münster, 1995 (= *CTU)*
NAC	New American Commentary
NCB	New Century Bible
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
OTL	Old Testament Library
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
RIMA	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods (vols. 1 and 2)
NTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
TDOT	*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament.* Edited by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren. Translated by J. T. Willis, G. W. Bromiley, and D. E. Green. 15 vols. Grand Rapids. 1974-
UF	*Ugarit-Forschungen*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*

WBC   Word Biblical Commentary

WUNT   Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

ZAW   *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

ZAVA   *Zeitschrift für Assyrologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie*

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PREFACE

This dissertation is the culmination of a long journey and reflects the support and encouragement of many to whom I am indebted. Many of my past professors contributed significantly to this journey. I am thankful for their ministry, wisdom, and guidance. It has been a blessing to attend Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and to learn under the teaching of its New Testament faculty. My experience in the Ph.D. program excelled my already high expectations. I am grateful to my dissertation committee members, Dr. Mark Seifrid, Dr. Duane Garrett, and Dr. Rob Plummer, for their time and effort.

A special thank you to my advisor, Dr. Rob Plummer, who suggested this topic as a potentially fruitful area of research. I have learned much from him in my time at Southern both as his student and as his assistant. I am grateful for his encouragement, wise counsel, and friendship. He has been a consistent role model for the type of teacher and scholar I hope to be.

The time my wife and I have spent in Louisville has been greatly enriched by our church, Clifton Baptist. The small group members quickly became our friends and family. I am grateful to each of them for their friendship and prayers as I moved through the various stages of the Ph.D. program.

Linnie Maggard and her family have been a blessing to me and my wife from the time we arrived in Louisville to the completion of this dissertation. Linnie celebrated with us at the completion of each chapter of this study. I am thankful for her gracious spirit, abounding hospitality, and consistent encouragement.

My parents, John and Freida Elledge, have been a constant source of encouragement. I am thankful for their faithful, daily prayers for me, which were felt

through the high and low points of the writing process. A debt of gratitude is owed to all of my family, immediate and in-laws, for their unwavering encouragement.

Finally, I am thankful for my wife and best friend, Christa, who has walked with me faithfully on this journey. I am grateful for the encouragment she has given, the prayers she has prayed, the sacrifices she has made, and the love she has shown. I would not have pursued this degree were it not for her encouragement and belief in me.

Rod Elledge

Louisville, Kentucky

May 2015

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The use of the third person to refer to oneself, technically known as "illeism,"[1] is heard only on occasion today.[2] Yet, this phenomenon occurs frequently in the Bible and, in the vast majority of its use in direct discourse (over 80 percent), it is used by Yahweh in the OT and Jesus in the Gospels. God, speaking to David, states, "Yahweh declares to you that Yahweh will make you a house" (2 Sam 7:11b). Jesus tells the crowds to "labor for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you" (John 6:27). While the names and titles themselves are significant and deserving of the vast scholarship available, it is the odd phenomenon itself which raises questions which to date have gone unaddressed. Why is the third person used? Who else uses third person for self-reference in the Bible and why? Is this phenomenon common in ANE texts? And most significantly, is there a parallel between the way Yahweh uses this manner of speech in the OT and the way Jesus uses it in the Gospels?

Thesis

The following study will evaluate the various ways illeism is employed in the Bible (i.e., for rhetorical effect or clarity, to emphasize identity or status, to create a sense

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[1]In its most technical sense, illeism (from the Latin *ille*, "he" or "that [one]") is a reference to the "redundant use of the third-person personal pronoun." Mario Pei and Frank Gaynor, *A Dictionary of Linguistics* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954), s.v. "illeism." Yet, for the scope of this study, illeism is understood in its more commonly accepted sense as a "reference to oneself in the third-person, either by the third person pronoun (he, she) or by name or label." Bryan A. Garner, *Garner's Modern American Usage* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 899. Apparently, Samuel Taylor Coleridge is the first author recorded to have used this term around 1809. Robert Hendrickson, *British Literary Anecdotes* (New York: Facts on File, 1990), 64.

[2]The former 1996 presidential candidate Bob Dole is an often cited example of one who refers to himself in the third person.

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of distance, humility, or subordination, etc.) and address the unique character of the illeism as used by both Jesus and Yahweh, as well as the other occurrences in the OT. Additionally, the study will evaluate ANE texts which reflect the use of illeism in the direct speech of pagan gods and that of various kings. By evaluating the phenomenon of illeism in the Bible and in ANE texts this dissertation will present evidence that suggests that the choice of the third person for self-reference as used by Jesus and Yahweh may reflect both divine and royal themes.

Methodology

The use of illeism as used by Yahweh and Jesus will be categorized, and because of the large number of occurrences, representative texts will be addressed. The study will also address all examples of illeism outside of those associated with Jesus and Yahweh. Illeism as used by various biblical authors will be noted, yet the primary focus of the study is on illeism within direct discourse.[3] Furthermore, the scope of the study will include, in addition to the biblical texts, an analysis of illeism within ANE texts.

The focus of the study will address the final form of the biblical text. Utilizing primarily a literary approach, the study will address how the various occurrences of illeism are functioning within the text itself. Statements such as "Jesus speaks" or "Yahweh states" are based on literary observations and are not intended to convey historical assumptions. Finally, implications of the use of the third-person self-reference will be explored. Also, the use of illeism in the context of a certain passage or by a specific person will be evaluated in the larger context of the other occurrences in the Bible and in ANE texts. In this way the distinctive uses of illeism can be highlighted and possible parallels noted.

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[3]While the complexities concerning authorship are noted, an in-depth analysis of the issues goes beyond the scope of the study.

No thorough research to my knowledge has addressed the various occurrences of this odd manner of referring to oneself in the Bible or, more specifically, possible parallels between how Jesus uses this manner of speech in the Gospels and how Yahweh uses it in the OT. This section offers a survey of research relevant to the topic but is not meant to be exhaustive in its scope.

Diversity within Contemporary
Scholarship

While the broad concept of the use of third person for self-reference in the Bible has received little attention, a survey of how scholarship has addressed *specific* occurrences in the OT and NT reflects a diversity of responses. For example, concerning Exodus 9:5 ("And the LORD set a time, saying, 'Tomorrow Yahweh will do this thing in the land'"), Kaiser attributes the shift to the narrator.[4] Childs addresses the phenomenon in Exodus 24:1, which reads, "Then he [Yahweh] said to Moses, 'Come up to Yahweh, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu.'" He writes that "the reversal of the normal Hebrew syntax has been done by the author with an intent to indicate a shift in emphasis rather than to mark that a prior section has been omitted."[5] He adds that the speaker is clearly Yahweh himself.[6] Propp, in addressing the same verse, simply notes that "God frequently speaks of himself in third person."[7] Finally, scholarship on Hosea 1:7 ("But I will have

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[4]Kaiser notes in Exod 9:5-6 that "the use of the third person in reference to God . . . as opposed to the first person, suggests that v. 6b is to be understood as a comment of the narrator and not the words of God speaking to Noah." Walter C. Kaiser, *Exodus*, in vol. 1 of *EBC*, ed. Tremper Longman and David Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 132.

[5]Brevard S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), 503-4. Similarly, Mauchline, writes concerning 2 Sam 7:11 that "it is notable that the part of 11 which conveys this message speaks of Yahweh by this title (the LORD) and not by 1st sing. pron. which is used from 8, and is resumed in 12. Such a transition is not uncommon in Hebrew; often no reason can be discerned for making the transition but here an emphasis in expression may have been intended." John Mauchline, *1 and 2 Samuel*, NCB (London: Oliphants, 1971), 229-30.

[6]Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, 504.

[7]William Henry Propp, *Exodus 19-40: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*,

mercy on the house of Judah, and I will save them by Yahweh their God.") reflects a variety of responses. Harper attributes the shift to third person to the interpolator who "forgets that he is representing Yahweh himself as speaking;"[8] Strong, Bavinck, and Grudem see a suggestion of plurality in the Godhead;[9] Andersen and Freedman write that the shift is "not uncommon when Yahweh is using the formal *Hofstil* in an oracle, to refer to himself in third person, and by the name Yahweh;"[10] and Wood argues that God seeks "to impress on the citizens of Israel the name of their true God that they had forgotten."[11]

As noted above, Strong, Bavinck, and Grudem are representative of some scholars who suggest that some of the "illeistic" OT passages reflect a trinitarian hint. Strong, in his systematic theology, notes various categories of OT Scripture which he sees as reflecting a plurality in the Godhead, including "Jehovah distinguishes himself from Jehovah" (with Gen 19:24 and Hos 1:7 as representative examples).[12] This view goes back at least as far as Justin Martyr[13] and is reflected in Luther's reading of the

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AB, vol. 2A (New York: Doubleday, 2006), 292. Similarly, concerning Hos 1:2, Andersen and Freedman note that "the fact that the message says 'away from Yahweh' rather than 'away from me' is not evidence that this part of the verse is a remark of the compiler, and not part of Yahweh's speech. It is not uncommon in exalted address to speak about oneself in the third-person." Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Hosea: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB, vol. 24 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980), 170. Stuart notes concerning Exod 9:5-6 that Yahweh speaking of himself in the third person is paralleled in the way Moses speaks of himself and notes the phenomenon is seen frequently in the prophetical books. He notes the phenomenon is normal to Hebrew narrative. Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, vol. 2 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006), 223.

[8]William Rainey Harper, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Amos and Hosea*, ICC (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), 213.

[9]Augustus Hopkins Strong, *Systematic Theology* (Philadelphia: Griffith & Rowland Press, 1907), 1:317-18; Herman Bavinck, *The Doctrine of God* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1951), 258; Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1994), 227-28.

[10]Andersen and Freedman, *Hosea*, 195.

[11]Leon James Wood, *Daniel-Minor Prophets*, in vol. 7 of *EBC*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985), Olive Tree Bible Software.

[12]Strong, *Systematic Theology*, 1:317-18.

[13]See "Dialogue with Trypho" chaps. 56-62 and 126-29. Michael Slusser, ed. *St. Justin Martyr: Dialogue with Trypho*, Selections from the Fathers of the Church, vol. 3 (Washington, DC: The

OT.[14] An article by Andrew Malone addresses this view, arguing cogently that many of these passages which are often referenced as having a trinitarian hint have not been thoughtfully considered as simply reflecting God referring to himself in the third person.[15]

Concerning the NT, one view is to see the shift in tense as the hand of the narrator. Concerning John 6:46, Michaels notes that the abrupt shift to the third person ("he who is from God") may hint at a narrative aside to the reader, but ultimately he argues that the gospel writer "wants to attribute these words to Jesus."[16] Köstenberger notes that Jesus's reference to himself in the third person should not be seen as unusual. He writes concerning John 17:3 that "it may strike the modern reader as curious that Jesus should call himself 'Jesus Christ'; however, self-reference in the third person was common in antiquity."[17] Finally, various scholars view Jesus's use of the third person for self-reference as words of the early church which have been placed in the mouth of Jesus. Brown notes concerning the "Son of Man" reference in John 1:51 that it is "possibly a title given to Jesus after the resurrection."[18]

Catholic University of America press, 2003), 82-196, 189-93.

[14]Luther writes, "But note how the text clearly shows that the Lord who is speaking with Moses is Jesus Christ, the future Preacher of the New Testament. For He here makes a distinction between himself and the Father, saying: "All your people shall see the wondrous work of the Lord which I will do" ("Werde aber, wie der Text klar gibt das der HERR so mit Mose redet, ist Jesus Christus, der kunstige Prediger des neuen Testaments, Denn er hie auch unterschiedlich redet von sich und vom Vater, Da er spricht: 'Alle dein Fold sol sehen Wunderwerk des HERRR, das ich thun wil'"). Martin Luther, *D. Martin Luther's Kritische Gesamtausgabe* 54 (Weimar: H. Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1883), 84.

[15]Andrew S. Malone, "God the Illeist: Third-Person Self-References and Trinitarian Hints in the Old Testament," *JETS* 52, no. 3 (2009). His article will be addressed in more depth in a later section of the literature survey.

[16]J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, NICNT, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2010), 388.

[17]Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John*, Zondervan Ilustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 153; See also Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 489n26.

[18]Raymond Edward Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, AB, vol. 29 (Garden City,

**Scholarship within the Son of Man
Debate**

Though this dissertation addresses Jesus's use of illeism in general and not a

specific phrase, much of the scholarship concerning why Jesus spoke in the third person

is found within the context of the Son of Man debate. While this debate reflects daunting

complexity and an enormous body of literature, this brief section offers a succinct

overview of the various contours of the debate (primarily summarizing the thorough

research of Delbert Burkett).[19] Burkett notes the following five primary categories

concerning the way the expression has been interpreted: (1) titular designation; (2) non-

titular; (3) a corporate/collective interpretation;[20] (4) an expression referring to a Messiah

other than Jesus;[21] (5) and a title that reflects the language of the early church and not the

words of Jesus.[22] Burkett notes the titular designation itself encompasses the following

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NY: Doubleday, 1966), 91. Brown notes that "it is anomalous that Jesus should call himself 'Jesus Christ'"
(ibid.). He adds that this verse "is clearly an insertion into the text of Jesus's prayer, an insertion probably
reflecting a confessional or liturgical formula of the Johannine church" (741n3). Burkett notes that "the
third person speech represents the voice of the church rather than that of Jesus. The church's language
about Jesus has been retrojected onto the lips of Jesus himself. The similar usage of 'Son' and 'Son of God'
on the lips of Jesus points in the same direction." Delbert Burkett, *The Son of Man Debate: A History and
Evaluation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 123-24.

[19]Burkett, *The Son of Man Debate*, 32-42, 82-96. This brief overview of the research is not
intended to convey the complexity of the debate or the nuance of various positions.

[20]In this sense Jesus was referring not only to himself but to a larger collective group of which
Jesus was the head. Those who proposed this view in various forms include Thomas Walter Manson, *The
Teaching of Jesus: Studies of Its Form and Content* (Cambridge: University Press, 1955); Vincent Taylor,
The Names of Jesus (London: Macmillan, 1953); Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*
(Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963); C. F. D. Moule, *The Origin of Christology* (Cambridge:
Cambridge University Press, 1977).

[21]This view understands Jesus himself as referring to another figure who was to come. Yet, as
Burkett notes, the early church identified the Son of Man as Jesus. Main proponents of this view include
Julius Wellhausen, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1905); Rudolf Bultmann,
The History of the Synoptic Tradition (New York: Harper & Row, 1968); Heinz Eduard Tödt, *The Son of
Man in the Synoptic Tradition* (London: SCM Press, 1965).

[22]See William Wrede, "Zum Thema 'Menschensohn', *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche
Wissenschaft* 5 (1904); Wilhelm Bousset, *Kyrios Christos: A History of the Belief in Christ from the
Beginning of Christianity to Irenaeus* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970). Wrede, commenting on Jesus's
use of the third person writes, "A king can say once, 'The King wants it' and mean himself; yet speaking
this way habitually would be an absurdity" ("Ein König kann wohl einmal sagen: der König will es, und
sich selbst dabei meinen; eine ständige Ausdrucksweise solcher Art aber wäre ein Unding"). Wrede, "Zum

four positions concerning the expression: (1) It is a cryptic expression Jesus used to conceal his identity;[23] (2) an idiomatic self-reference;[24] (3) a proleptic expression Jesus used to refer to who would come in the future;[25] and (4) it is an expression that Jesus's opponents or outsiders used about him which Jesus then borrowed.[26]

The non-titular use includes understanding the expression as an Aramaic expression that served as a circumlocution for "I," a position argued by Geza Vermes[27] (though critiqued and rejected by many scholars).[28] Both Casey and Lindars build on

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Thema 'Menschensohn'," 359. Wrede adds that it is merely our early habituation to the words of the Evangelists that we so easily pass over them ("Es ist lediglich unsere frühe Gewöhnung an die Worte der Evangelien, die uns hierüber so leicht hinweggehen läßt") (ibid.). Bousset echoes the view that Jesus's use of the third person "evokes the impression of a certain unnaturalness," but notes the "riddle is immediately solved" if the expression is understood as a "stylized form of the community's language." Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, 36.

[23]See Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Gottes Herrschaft und Reich* (Freiburg: Herder, 1959).

[24]See Alejandro Diez Macho, "L'usage de la troisieme personne au lieu de la primére dans le targum," in *Mélanges Dominique Barthélemy* (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires, 1981). Diez Macho provides examples of the use of the third person instead of the first person from the Palestinian Targum. He notes that his findings confirm that Jesus was speaking of himself in the third person in his use of the "Son of Man." He writes, "Notre enquête confirme que Jésus à pu parler de lui-même à la troisième personne" (63, 84).

[25]See Johannes Weiss, *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971); Rudolf Otto, Floyd V. Filson, and Bertram Lee Woolf, *The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man: A Study in the History of Religion* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1943); Sigmund Mowinckel, *He That Cometh* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1954).

[26]See D. Smith, "The Nickname 'Son of Man'," *The Expository Times* 18, no. 12 (1907); John Pairman Brown, "Son of Man: This Fellow," *Biblica* 58, no. 3 (1977).

[27]Geza Vermes, "The Use of בר נש/בר נשא in Jewish Aramaic', App. E," in *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts with an Appendix on the Son of Man*, ed. Matthew Black (Oxford: Clarendon P., 1967), 310-30. Vermes argues that בר נש(א) replaces "I" and serves as an expression of modesty (320).

[28]See Frederick Houk Borsch, *The Son of Man in Myth and History* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967); Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "Review of M. Black, *an Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*. 3rd Edition," *CBQ* 30, (1968). Fitzmyer notes that "since the evidence on which he depends is later than the first century and does not all come from Palestine, one must exercise care in drawing conclusions from it about the 'son of man' expression in first-century Palestine" (427). Borsch notes that "it does not appear to us that any of his examples provide unambiguous illustrations." Borsch, *The Son of Man in Myth and History*, 23. Caragounis offers a thorough and convincing argument against the viability of Vermes' theory. See Chrys C. Caragounis, *The Son of Man: Vision and Interpretation* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr,

Vermes's work.[29] Whereas Vermes understands the idiom as an exclusive self-reference, Casey argues that the Aramaic idiom could be used in general statements which included the speaker.[30] Lindars, in contrast, emphasizes "the idiomatic use of the generic article, in which the speaker refers to a class of persons, with whom he identifies himself."[31] Caragounis offers criticisms of all three positions adding that "the circumloculational theory in all versions in which it has appeared has failed to provide the answer to the Son of Man problem in the Gospels."[32]

As noted, this dissertation does not address a specific phrase of Jesus or address the meaning of a particular phrase. Though aspects of the debate have offered various reasons for Jesus being presented as using this particular third-person reference, none of the scholarship to my knowledge addresses the phrase in the larger context of Jesus's use of illeism in general. Furthermore, no research addresses a possible relationship between Jesus's choice to use "Son of Man" as a third-person self-reference and Yahweh's tendency to use the third-person self-reference.

Scholarship Addressing the Deity of Christ

Since this study has the potential to highlight yet another way that Jesus

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1986), 22ff. See also C. Colpe, "ὁ υἱός τοῦ ἀνθρώπου," *TDNT*.

[29]See Maurice Casey, "The Son of Man Problem," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 67, no. 3-4 (1976); Maurice Casey, "General, Generic and Indefinite: The Use of the Term 'Son of Man' in Aramaic Sources and in the Teaching of Jesus," *JSNT* 9, no. 29 (1987); Barnabas Lindars, *Jesus, Son of Man: A Fresh Examination of the Son of Man Sayings in the Gospels in the Light of Recent Research* (London: SPCK, 1983).

[30]Casey, "General, Generic, and Indefinite," 21.

[31]Lindars, *Jesus, Son of Man*, 23-24.

[32]Caragounis, *The Son of Man*, 33. Rodney Reeves notes that scholarship has determined that this use of the third-person reference "wasn't a common practice in Jesus's day." Rodney Reeves, "Son of Man," in *The Baker Illustrated Bible Handbook*, ed. J. Daniel Hays and J. Scott Duvall (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011), 568. I am grateful to Reeves for his clarifying correspondence on this subject.

presents himself "as God" (as described by the evangelists), this dissertation will hopefully contribute to the large area of scholarship which has addressed the deity of Christ. A survey of relevant literature reveals that no work which addresses the various ways Scripture affirms the deity of Christ has suggested this possible parallel between Jesus and Yahweh.[33] Scholars including Vincent Taylor, Oscar Cullman, Leopold Sabourin, and Ferdinand Hahn have contributed works addressing the various titles and names of Jesus, but have not addressed the significance of the choice of third-person self-reference or made an argument for a possible parallel with this use by Yahweh.[34] Two other significant areas of focus in this large area of scholarship include the self-understanding of Jesus and the early church's understanding of the pre-existence or deity of Jesus.

The self-understanding of Jesus. The various works addressing Jesus's self-understanding or "Messianic consciousness" include contributions by Geerhardus Vos, Raymond Brown, François Dreyfus, J. C. O'Neill, and James Dunn.[35] While these works have contributed significantly in various ways to our understanding of Christ, none pursue the implications of the use of the third-person self-reference by Jesus to any

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[33]Two recent contributions to this area include Robert M. Bowman and J. Ed Komoszewski, *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2007); Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson, eds., *The Deity of Christ*, Theology in Community (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011). In *Putting Jesus in His Place* Bowman and Komoszewski affirm the deity of Christ by demonstrating that Jesus shares the honors due to God, the attributes of God, the names of God, in the deeds that God does, and shares the seat of God's throne (23). Neither of the works address the use of the third-person self-references by Jesus.

[34]Taylor, *The Names of Jesus*; Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*; Leopold Sabourin, *The Names and Titles of Jesus: Themes of Biblical Theology* (New York: Macmillan, 1967); Ferdinand Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology: Their History in Early Christianity* (London: Lutterworth, 1969).

[35]Geerhardus Vos, *The Self-Disclosure of Jesus: The Modern Debate about the Messianic Consciousness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1926); Raymond Edward Brown, *Jesus, God and Man: Modern Biblical Reflections* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1967); François Dreyfus, *Did Jesus Know He Was God?*, trans. Michael J. Wrenn (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1989); J. C. O'Neill, *Who Did Jesus Think He Was?* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995); James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2003), 613-762.

significant degree. Two relatively recent contributions to this area of scholarship are

works by Aquila Lee and Sigurd Grindheim. Lee, in his work *From Messiah to

Preexistent Son,*[36] argues the early church's understanding of Jesus was driven by their

interpretation of Psalm 2 and 110 in light of Jesus's own self-understanding of his divine

sonship. Grindheim's recent work *God's Equal: What Can We Know about Jesus's Self-

Understanding in the Synoptic Gospels?* addresses what he argues are Jesus's claims to

be God's equal.[37] He concludes that Jesus's words and actions reflect only what God

could say and do. Furthermore, he notes that Jesus understood his identity in the context

of his relationship with the Father, "a relationship that was so close that he could be both

subordinate and equal to God."[38] Both Lee and Grindheim contribute thoughtful insights

to this area of research, but the focus of the present study is not suggested in either work.

The divinity/preexistence of Christ. Hurtado, Bauckham, and Gathercole

have, in various ways, contributed significant works which address the emergence or

development of the understanding of Jesus's divinity/pre-existence.[39] Since the late 70s

Larry Hurtado has written significantly on devotion to Jesus as evidenced in the earliest

New Testament writings and its significance concerning Christ's deity. Specifically, he

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[36]Aquila H. I. Lee, *From Messiah to Preexistent Son: Jesus' Self-Consciousness and Early Christian Exegesis of Messianic Psalms* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005).

[37]Sigurd Grindheim, *God's Equal: What Can We Know about Jesus' Self-Understanding?* (New York: T & T Clark, 2011).

[38]Ibid., 221. Grindheim does offer a chapter in which he addresses the following four self-referential metaphors of Jesus: the bridegroom, the mother bird, the king, and the sower. He argues that Jesus's appropriation of these metaphors, which were well established as epithets for God, may suggest (just as his words and actions did) that Jesus "saw himself in God's role" (124).

[39]Larry W. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988); Larry W. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2003); Larry W. Hurtado, *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2005); Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009); Simon J. Gathercole, *The Preexistent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2006).

seeks to offer a historical understanding of the origins of this devotion. Yet, in his work he does not address the thesis of the proposed study.[40]

Richard Bauckham, in his book *Jesus and the God of Israel,* argues cogently that a high Christology was possible within a Jewish monotheistic context. He argues that we should think in terms of "divine identity" rather than viewing the main categories for Jewish theology in terms of divine essence or nature. He states that "throughout the New Testament texts, there is a clear and deliberate use of the characteristics of the unique divine identity to include Jesus in that identity."[41] Bauckham's work offers significant insight. Yet, within his discussion of Jesus's divine identity, no suggestion is made concerning the focus of this study.

In line with Hurtado and Bauckham, Gathercole also sees an early high Christology. In his work *The Pre-existent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke,* Gathercole offers a well researched and presented argument that the preexistence of Christ can be found in the Synoptic Gospels. While Gathercole's balanced assessment of his evidence offers a needed corrective to the view that the Synoptics reflect no evidence of preexistence of Christ, his analysis does not address or suggest the thesis of the present study as possible evidence for preexistence of Christ in the Synoptic Gospels.[42]

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[40]Arguing against an evolutionary or incremental model concerning this devotion, he writes that the evidence reflects a more explosive phenomenon "more like a volcanic eruption." Hurtado, *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God?*, 25. Underscoring that the earliest believers were devout Jews, he argues that "Jesus was treated as worthy of divine honor initially because Christians were convinced that it was obedience to the one God to do so" (30). Hurtado argues that this "binitarian" form of monotheism (a label used to avoid di-theism) was a mutation or variant of the exclusivist Second-Temple Jewish monotheism.

[41]Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 31. He demonstrates that when the various functions of Jesus relating to his participation in creation and his sovereign role are seen as part of this divine identity, the barrier to a high Christology within Jewish monotheism is removed. He adds that the New Testament writers, rather than seeing their Jewish monotheistic heritage as a barrier to understanding Jesus as part of this divine identity, used the resources of this heritage "in order precisely to include Jesus in the divine identity" (19).

[42]Though he argues his thesis from a variety of angles, much of his argument is based upon the "I have come" + purpose formula. He argues that these "I have come" sayings reflect a deliberate prior

Scholarship on Illeism in the Bible

While the topic of illeism in the Bible has received little attention, two articles specifically address the issue.

Andrew Malone. In his article entitled "God the Illeist: Third-Person Self-references and Trinitarian Hints in the Old Testament," Malone addresses various texts that reflect "illeism" and argues against assuming a trinitarian (or "two Gods") interpretation of certain often cited texts. Rather, he argues that illeism should be recognized as a relatively common and valid phenomenon. The focus of his article is to show that "such texts can indeed be better understood as divine *self*-references, rather than as one God or divine Person referring to another."[43] He underscores that the use of the third person to refer to oneself is not syntactically incorrect and form alone does not indicate another person as being referred to by the speaker. His article is significant in that it offers insight on the phenomenon of illesim as used by Yahweh in the OT. Yet, while his article argues for allowing for other responsible and evangelical readings of these often cited OT texts, he does not analyze every occurrence or pursue implications for the use of illeism throughout the OT. Furthermore, he does not address any possible parallels between the divine self-references he argues for in the OT and the illeism as used by Jesus.

H. M. Jackson. H. M. Jackson addresses what he argues is third-person self-

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intention as well as the implication that Jesus has come from somewhere. He writes that "the obvious conclusion is that this 'somewhere' is heaven, which entails the corresponding idea of preexistence." Gathercole, *The Preexistent Son*, 147.

[43]Malone, "God the Illeist," 502. Malone seeks to correct what he perceives as a tendency for doctrine to drive interpretation, noting that many conservative textbooks suggest or affirm "these 'two-Gods' texts as demonstrating something of the OT plurality of God." ibid. He notes many example passages (outside of what he recognizes as a number of OT testimonia popular for Christian polemic) where God speaks of himself in the third person which are rarely if ever given a "trinitarian interpretation" (ibid.). Furthermore, Malone notes that Jesus refers to himself in the third person, yet such self-references "have never been used to distinguish Jesus from another 'Jesus Christ'" (505).

references by the Beloved Disciple in the Fourth Gospel in his article "Ancient Self-Referential Conventions and Their Implications for the Authorship and Integrity of the Gospel of John."[44] In addition to the "disciple whom Jesus loved" references in the Fourth Gospel (11:5; 13:23; 20:2; 21:20), he notes that in 21:24 the author continues the use of the third-person self-reference, but at the same time reveals that the account is written by him. He argues John does this so that his narrative will be regarded as an accurate and reliable presentation of the events.[45] His article offers helpful insight concerning how John the author employs illeism, but he limits his focus only to that. His work does not address the much larger and possibly more significant area of the direct speech of Jesus and Yahweh.

Modern Scholarship on Illeism

As with its use within Scripture, illeism has received relatively little attention in modern linguistic and literary scholarship. My research uncovered no thorough treatment of the various ways illeism can function in literature or in language in general. Much of the research concerning the literary use of the phenomenon addresses Shakespeare's use of it.

Shakespearean scholarship. Viswanathan addresses illeism in Shakespeare's works, designating it as "illeism with a difference."[46] He writes, "It ['illeism with a

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[44]Howard M. Jackson, "Ancient Self-Referential Conventions and Their Implications for the Authorship and Integrity of the Gospel of John," *JTS* 50, no. 1 (1999).

[45]Jackson notes John does this "lest his loyalist readers be tempted to make the natural assumption that it was composed allographically and hence be deemed less worthy of credence as the product of an alien hand."Ibid., 30. Jackson argues that, as the first person became associated with fiction, or at least narratives of questionable reliability, "it became correspondingly de riguer for writers of formal histories, or of personal reports or memoirs meant to be used by historians . . . to adopt the detached persona of a third (i.e., different) person in referring to themselves in autobiographical contexts" (25).

[46]S. Viswanathan, "'Illeism with a Difference' in Certain Middle Plays of Shakespeare," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (1969). (What Viswanathan calls "illeism with a difference" is simply understood as "illeism" within this study.)

difference'] is one by which the dramatist makes a character, speaking in the first person, refer to himself in the third person, not simply as 'he', which would be illeism proper, a traditional grammatical mode, but by name."[47] He adds that the device is extensively used in *Julius Caesar* and *Troilus and Cressida*, and occasionally in *Hamlet* and *Othello*.[48] Viswanathan notes the device, prior to Shakespeare, was used in the medieval theater simply to allow a character to announce himself and clarify his identity. Yet, he argues that, in the hands of Shakespeare, the device becomes "a master-stroke of dramatic artistry."[49] He notes four uses of this "illeism with a difference." First, it highlights the character using it and his inner self. He notes that it provides a way of "making the character momentarily detach himself from himself, achieve a measure of dramatic (and philosophical) depersonalization, and create a kind of aesthetic distance from which he can contemplate himself."[50] Second, it reflects the tension between the character's public and private selves; third, the device "raises the question of the way in which the character is seen to behave and to order his very modes of feeling and thought in accordance with a rightly or wrongly conceived image or idea of himself."[51] Lastly, he notes the device tends to point toward the larger philosophical problem for man's search

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[47]Ibid., 407.

[48]Ibid. Within *Julius Caesar* Spevac notes that Caesar refers to himself 19x in the play, but observes that others refer to themselves using the third person also. Among the major characters who use illeism are Antony (3x), Brutus (13x), Casca (1x), Cassius (14x), and Portia (1x). William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, ed. Marvin Spevack, The New Cambridge Shakespeare (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 22.

[49]Viswanathan, "Illeism with a Difference," 408. Also see R. A. Foakes, *An Approach to Julius Caesar* (Washington, DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1954). Foakes addresses Shakespeare's use of the third person for self-reference in the larger context of the importance of names in "Julius Caesar."

[50]Viswanathan, "Illeism with a Difference," 409.

[51]Ibid., 410. Viswanathan adds that this usage of the device reflects the "hiatus between the reality that the character is in the legendary image of himself conceived by him and by others, and of his desperate attempts . . . to close the gap" (ibid.).

for identity.[52] Speaking of the use of illeism within *Julius Caesar*, Spevak writes that "in addition to the psychological and other implications, the overall effect is a certain stateliness, a classical look, a consciousness on the part of the actors that they are acting in a not so everyday context."[53]

Modern linguistic scholarship. Otto Jespersen notes various examples of the third-person self-reference including those seeking to reflect deference or politeness, adults talking to children as "papa" or "Aunt Mary" to be more easily understood, as well as the case of some writers who write "the author" or "this present writer" in order to avoid the mention of "I."[54] He notes Caesar as a famous example of "self-effacement [used to] produce the impression of absolute objectivity."[55] Yet, Head writes, in response to Jespersen, that since the use of the third person for self reference "is typical of important personages, whether in autobiography (e.g. Caesar in *De Bello Gallico* and Captain John Smith in his memoirs) or in literature (Marlowe's Faustus, Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, Cordelia and Richard II, Lessing's Saladin, etc.), it is actually an indication of special status, and hence implies greater social distance than does the more commonly used first person singular."[56]

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[52]Ibid.

[53]Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, 22. Dowden writes, concerning Shakespeare's Caesar and his use of illeism, that "he is a numen to himself, speaking of Caesar in the third person, as if of some power above and behind his consciousness." Edward Dowden, *Shakspere: A Critical Study of His Mind and Art* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1880), 285.

[54]Otto Jespersen, *The Philosophy of Grammar* (London: H. Holt, 1924), 217.

[55]Ibid.

[56]Brian F. Head, "Respect Degrees in Pronominal Reference," in *Universals of Human Language: Word Structure*, ed. Joseph H. Greenberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978), 171n15. Lakoff offers a similar view, noting that the successful use of the third-person self-reference "seems to be confined to people in positions of power, people who naturally see themselves as the cynosure of all eyes, for whom the external point of view invited by the third-person pronoun makes sense." Robin Tolmach Lakoff, *The Language War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 34. A recent article, addressing what the authors refer to as "hubris syndrome," identifies the lexical choice of the third person as 1of 14 "symptoms" of the syndrome. Peter Gerrard et al., "Linguistic Biomarkers of Hubris Syndrome,"

Land and Kitzinger argue that "very often—but not always . . . the use of a third-person reference form in self-reference is designed to display that the speaker is talking about themselves *as if from the perspective of another*—either the addressee(s) . . . or a non-present other."[57] The linguist Laurence Horn, noting the use of illeism by various athlete and political celebrities, notes that "the celeb is viewing himself . . . from the outside."[58] Addressing what he refers to as "the dissociative third person," he notes that an athlete or politician "may establish distance between himself (virtually never herself) and his public persona, but only by the use of his name, never a 3rd person pronoun."[59]

The Present Study

The history of research highlights a diversity of responses to the use of illeism by Jesus and Yahweh in the Bible. The research also reveals no thorough analysis of how the phenomenon of illeism is functioning in the Bible or any research of the topic within the broad area of scholarship concerning the deity of Christ. The present study will offer

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Cortex 30, (2013).

[57]Victoria Land and Celia Kitzinger, "Some Uses of Third-Person Reference Forms in Speaker Self-Reference," *Discourse Studies* 9, no. 4 (2007): 494. Their work is based on extensive recordings of conversation. Also, their work builds on Schegloff's observation concerning the choice of speakers to use a third-person reference form. He notes that "they select such terms as display (or constitute) the current relevance with which the referenced figures in the talk." E. A. Schegloff, "Some Practices for Referring to Persons in Talk-in-Interaction: A Partial Sketch of a Systematics," *Typological Studies In Language* 33 (1996): 447.

[58]Arnold Zwicky provides this quote from Horn in "Illeism and its Relatives," Language Log July 29, 2007, accessed September 15, 2013, http://itre.cis.upenn.edu/~myl/languagelog/archives/004762.html.

[59]Laurence R. Horn, "'I Love Me Some Him': The Landscape of Non-Argument Datives," in *Empirical Issues in Syntax and Semantics* 7, ed. Olivier Bonami and Patricia Cabredo Hofherr (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 2008), 176. In addition to the uses by athletes and politicians, Horn notes other examples including "Daddy" and "Mommy" spoken by parents to children, as well as hypocoristic self-references. Whimsically, he notes that "if this loopy verbal quirk were simple egomania, then Louis XIV might have said, 'L 'etat, c'est Lou.'" Laurence R. Horn, "I Just Dropped in to See What Condition Our Conditions Are In: Reference, Binding, and the Asymmetries of Person" (talk given at Rutgers Linguistics Colloquium, New Brunswick, NJ, 2002). I am thankful to Horn for his helpful correspondence.

a thorough analysis of this phenomenon in the Bible and in ANE texts and present findings concerning the implications for its use. Based on an analysis of the data, this dissertation will explore a possible parallel between the use of illeism by Jesus and that of Yahweh. Specifically, this study will evaluate the possibility of whether both divine and royal themes are associated with the use of illeism by Jesus and Yahweh. If Jesus is referring to himself in the third person as Yahweh refers to himself in the third person, this possible parallel offers yet another way in which Jesus revealed himself and his identity to his followers, to the crowds, and ultimately to believers today. The presentation is as follows: in chapter 2 I will address the issue of whether the use of the third person for self-reference was common in classical antiquity; in chapters 3-5 I will address the occurrence of this phenomenon in the OT, ANE texts, and the NT respectively and address the implications for its use; in chapter 6 I will offer a summary of the data and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2

ILLEISM IN CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

As referenced in the history of research, Köstenberger writes, "It may strike the modern reader as curious that Jesus should call himself 'Jesus Christ'; however, self-reference in the third person was common in antiquity."[1] While Köstenberger's statement is a brief comment in the context of a commentary and not a monographic study on the issue, his comment raises a critical question. Does a survey of the evidence reveal that Jesus's use of illeism in this verse (and by implication elsewhere in the Gospels) reflects simply another example of a common mannerism in antiquity? This brief chapter addresses the occurrence of illeism in classical antiquity in an effort to address this question.

Early Evidence

From the fifth century B.C. to the time of Jesus the following historians refer to themselves in the third person in their historical accounts: Hecataeus (though the evidence is fragmentary), Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Caesar, and Josephus. For the scope of this study this point in history (fifth century B.C. to first century A.D.) is the primary focus. Yet, this feature was adopted from the earlier tendency in literature in which an author states his name as a seal or *sphragis* for their work.[2] Herkommer notes the "self-introduction" (*Selbstvorstellung*) in the Homeric

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[1]Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John*, Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 153. See also Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 489n26. Köstenberger is referring to the illeism reflected in John 17:3.

[2]Loveday Alexander, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel: Literary Convention and Social Context in Luke 1.1-4 and Acts 1.1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 24.

Hymn to Apollo, in choral poetry (*Chorlyrik*) such as that by the Greek poet Alkman (seventh century B.C.), and in the poetic maxims (*Spruchdichtung*) such as those of the Greek poet Phokylides (seventh century B.C.).[3] Yet, from the fifth century onward, this feature appears primarily in the works of Greek historians. In addition to early evidence (prior to fifth century) of an author's self-reference in his historiographic work, the survey of evidence also noted an early example of illeism within Homer's *Iliad*. Because this ancient Greek epic poem reflects an early use of the third-person self-reference in a narrative context and offers a point of comparison to its use in later Greek historiography, this early example of the use of illeism is briefly addressed.

Marincola notes that the style of historical narrative that first appears in Herodotus is a legacy from Homer (ca. 850 B.C.).[4] He notes that "as the writer of the most 'authoritative' third-person narrative, [Homer] provided a model not only for later poets, epic and otherwise, but also to the prose historians who, by way of Herodotus, saw him as their model and rival."[5] While Homer provided the authoritative example of third-person narration, he also, centuries before the development of Greek historiography, used illeism in his epic poem the *Iliad*. Illeism occurs in the direct speech of Zeus (the king of the gods), Achilles (the "god-like" son of a king and goddess), and Hector (the mighty Trojan prince).

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[3]Elmar Herkommer, "Die Topoi in den Proömien der römischen Geschichtswerke" (Dissertation zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades der Philosophischen Fakultät der Eberhard-Karls-Universität zu Tübingen, Tübingen, 1968), 47n1-3. He adds that in a similar way the Greek historians from the earliest times indicate their names in their works, noting Hecataeus, Herodotus, Thucydides, and Antiochus ("Auch die griechischen Geschichtsschreiber geben seit der frühesten Zeit am Anfang ihrer Werke ihren Namen an; Hekataios, Herodot, Thukydides und Antiochos beginnen ihre Geschichtswerke mit einer Selbstvorstellung"). Ibid., 47. The Greek historian Antiochus of Syracuse (fifth century B.C.) also refers to himself in the third person, though, as with Hecataeus, the evidence is only fragmentary. He writes, Ἀντίοχος Ξενοφάνεος τάδε συνέγραψε περὶ. FGH 555 F 2.

[4]According to Herodotus (2.53), who places Homer four hundred years before his own time.

[5]John Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 6. He also highlights Thucydides's use of the third-person narration as modeled on Homer (184).

Zeus, addressing the assembled gods on Mt. Olympus refers to himself as "Zeus, the supreme Master" (Ζῆν' ὕπατον μήστωρ) and states how superior he is above all gods and men."[6] Hector's use of illeism occurs as he addresses the Greeks and challenges the best of them to fight against "good Hector" (Ἕκτορι δίῳ)."[7] Muellner notes in these instances of the third person for self-reference (Zeus twice and Hector once) that "the personage at the top and center of the social hierarchy is asserting his superiority over the group . . . . In other words, these are self-aggrandizing third-person references, like those in the war memoirs of Xenophon, Julius Caesar, and Napoleon."[8] He adds that "the primary goal of this kind of third-person self-reference is to assert the status accruing to exceptional excellence."[9] Achilles refers to himself in the context of an oath (examples of which are reflected in the OT), yet his self-reference serves to emphasize his status in relation to the Greeks, and especially to King Agamemnon. Addressing Agamemnon, the general of the Greek armies, Achillies swears by his scepter and states that the day will come when the Greeks will long for Achilles (ἤ ποτ' Ἀχιλλῆος ποθὴ ἵξεται υἷας Ἀχαιῶν).[10]

Homer's choice to use illeism within the direct speech of these three characters contributes to an understanding of its potential rhetorical implications. In each case the

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[6]Homer, *Iliad* 8.27. A second use of illeism by Zeus appears later within the same book. Zeus, in response to Hera's characterizing him as "the dreadful son of Cronus," responds by using the reference for himself. He notes that at dawn she will see "the mighty son of Cronus" (ὑπερμενέα Κρονίωνα) destroying much of the Greek army (8.470-73).

[7]Homer, 7.75. He states, "Among you are the most excellent of all the Achaeans. Whoever has the heart to do battle against me, let him come, champion of all, against good Hector." Lombardo offers a more interpretive translation that captures well the illeism's emphasis of Hector's superior status: "If any of you have the will to fight me, none other than Hector, come forward now." Homer, *Iliad*, trans. Stanley Lombardo (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1997), 130.

[8]Leonard Charles Muellner, *The Anger of Achilles: Menis in Greek Epic* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 137n9.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Homer, *Iliad* 1.235-40.

character's use of illeism serves to set him apart by highlighting his innate authority and superior status. Also, all three characters reflect divine and/or royal aspects (Zeus, king of the gods; Achilles, son of a king and a goddess, and referred to as "god-like"; and Hector, son of a king).[11] The examples of illeism in the *Iliad*, among the earliest evidence of illeism, reflect a usage that shares similarities with the illeism as used by Jesus and Yahweh. The biblical and Homeric examples each reflect illeism in direct speech within narrative discourse and the self-reference serves to emphasize authority or status as well as a possible associated royal and/or divine aspect(s).[12] Yet, the examples stand in contrast to the use of illeism by later historians. As will be addressed next, these ancient historians use the third-person self-reference as a literary device to give their historical accounts a sense of objectivity.

Ancient Historians

Greek Historians

Hecataeus of Miletus (ca. 550-476 B.C.) begins his work by identifying himself in the third person. He writes, "Hecataeus of Miletus recounts as follows" (Ἑκαταῖος Μιλήσιος ὧδε μυθεῖται) before shifting to the first person, noting, "I write here (τάδε γράφω) . . . ."[13] Herodotus (484-425 B.C.) also conveys his representation of history in the third person. He writes in his *History*, "Herodotus of Halicarnassian sets forth here what he found by inquiry . . ." (Ἡροδότου Ἁλικαρνησσέος ἱστορίης ἀπόδεξις ἥδε).[14] Following these remarks he shifts to the first person. Commenting on the

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[11]Homer introduces Achilles in the beginning of his work by characterizing him as "god-like Achilles" (δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς). Homer, *Iliad* 1.7.

[12]Of course the *Iliad* represents a distinct genre in comparison to the Gospels. While the commonality with Jesus and Yahweh is noted at this point, the use of illeism by each will be addressed in depth in later chapters.

[13]FGH 1F 1a.

[14]Herodotus 1.1.0, 5.3. As with Hecataeus before him, and Thucydides who would follow, Herodotus also uses the first person singular.

implications of Herodotus's use of illeism, Mole writes that "the effect is double: the naming suggests that Herodotus himself will be an important figure in his *History* (as indeed he is); the use of the third person suggests objectivity and detachment."[15] Alexander affirms this intent for objectivity noting that "the construction of this authorial *persona* is a crucial step in the development of Greek historiography. It allows Herodotus to maintain a sense of 'objectivity and detachment' throughout (even though the third person disappears after the preface) by introducing himself as observer and commentator on his own narrative."[16]

Thucydides (ca. 460-398 B.C.) begins his work *The Peloponnesian War* with the third-person self-reference, clarifying to the reader that he is the author. He writes, "Thucydides, an Athenian, recorded . . . (θουκυδίδης Ἀθηναῖος ξυνέγραψε).[17] After several lines he shifts to the first person.[18] Yet, Thucydides also presents himself in the third person in order to present himself as a character within the history in which he was a participant.[19]

Grant writes that Thucydides "seeks to emphasize his objectivity by writing of himself in the third person, like Julius Caesar."[20] Yet, Marincola notes that while Thucydides's use of the third person is usually noted as "striving for objectivity," he

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[15]J. L. Moles, "Truth and Untruth in Herodotus and Thucydides," in *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, ed. Christopher Gill and T. P. Wiseman (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), 94.

[16]Loveday Alexander, *Acts in Its Ancient Literary Context: A Classicist Looks at the Acts of the Apostles* (New York: T & T Clark International, 2005), 137.

[17]Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* I.1.1.

[18]Thuc. ibid.

[19]Primarily Thucydides's third-person perspective of his own actions are found in book IV. See Thuc. IV. 104.4-105.1.

[20]Michael Grant, *The Ancient Historians* (New York: Scribner, 1970), 116. Norden also notes that Thucydides's use of the third-person is intended to convey objectivity. He writes, "The pursuit after objectivity of the presentation was so great that it was almost a legislated style" ("Das Streben nach Objektivität der Darstellung war so groß, daß es fast ein Stilgesetz wurde"). Eduard Norden, *Agnostos Theos: Untersuchen zur Formengeschickte religioser Rede* (Leipzig: 1913), 317.

observes that Thucydides clarifies that he is the author of the history.[21] He adds that it may be that Thucydides "did not want his activity at Amphipolis to read like a travel report, nor to be classified with the work of a gossipy writer such as Ion of Chios who in his *Wanderings* also used the first person."[22]

Xenophon (ca. 430-350 B.C.), a student of Socrates, records in the *Anabasis* his march with the Ten Thousand as they travel into and back from Persia in an effort to aid Cyrus. Like Thucydides he refers to himself in the third person when referring to his own participation in the events.[23] Yet, unlike Thucydides, Xenophon does not clarify himself as the author. In fact, he apparently attributes authorship to someone else. Plutarch writes that Xenophon gave the credit for his labor to Themistogenes of Syracuse in order that it may be seen as more trustworthy (πιστότερος) when he referred to himself as another.[24] Marincola notes that "Thucydides set the course for the use of third person and Xenophon's manipulations of it in the *Anabasis* (coupled with pseudonymous publication) showed its potential for giving the appearance of unbiased reporting."[25]

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[21]Marincola, *Authority and Tradition*, 184.

[22]Ibid. The use of both the third person and the first person seem to serve Thucydides's effort to seem objective yet also affirm the accuracy of his information. Campbell writes that "the use of the first person might seem in tension with the narrative's preoccupation with projecting historical detachment, but in Thucydides' writing it too supports claims of historical authenticity." William S. Campbell, *The We Passages in the Acts of the Apostles: The Narrator as Narrative Character* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 30. He adds that this use of the first person singular is employed to "defend the historical accuracy of the account by demonstrating his personal involvement in the events or his meticulous scrutinizing of evidence gathered from other sources" (30). See also Thucydides' comment in *Hellinica* 3.1.2 as another example of this authorial third-person reference.

[23]Xenophon also refers to himself in the third person briefly in his work *Memorabilia*, referring to himself from the third-person perspective in dialogue with Socrates. Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.3.8-13

[24]. . . ἵνα πιστότερος ἦι διηγούμενος ἑαυτὸν ὡς ἄλλον, ἑτέρωι τὴν τῶν λόγων δόξαν χαριζόμενος. FGH 108 T 3. (See also Plu. De glor. Ath. 1 345 E).

[25]Marincola, *Authority and Tradition*, 205. Another Greek writer who used third-person self-reference in the context of writing pseudonymously is Isocrates (436-338 B.C.), a Greek rhetorician and teacher. In *Nicocles* (which addresses citizens under the rule of Nicocles and their duty to him), he presents Nicocles as the author and refers to himself using the third person. Gray argues that this is a "rhetorical ploy designed to give the impression that his subjects are receiving direct and unmediated instruction about the behavior he expects from them . . . . The transference of authorship, in other words, makes the advice

In the Hellenistic period, Polybius (ca. 200-118 B.C.) prefers the use of the third person for self-reference when describing events in which he is a participant.[26] Campbell notes that "as with Thucydides, the effect of narrating Polybius's participation in events in the third person is to distance the author/actor from the narrator and, in so doing, to increase the sense of historical objectivity."[27] He adds that like Thucydides, Polybius also uses first person singular "to identify the author and narrator and to underscore the knowledge and credibility of the author/narrator."[28]

Caesar

Julius Caesar (100-44 B.C.) refers to himself in the third person throughout his work *Gallic War.* Marincola suggests that Caesar was possibly drawing on the tradition of Xenophon, attempting to write his own *Anabasis* in a sense.[29] Billows agrees and adds that one of the most admired features of his commentaries is "their seeming neutrality and objectivity," which Caesar achieved through his use of the third person.[30] The linguist Robin Lakoff notes that his choice of the third person was "meant to suggest the

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more effective than if it came from Isocrates." Vivienne J. Gray, "Classical Greece," in *Political Autobiographies and Memoirs in Antiquity*, ed. Gabriele Marasco (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 31. Isocrates's use of illeism is interesting in that it is not, as almost all other instances, used in the context of writing a history. Yet, Isocrates refers to himself in the third person clearly writing as someone else (Nicocles). In this sense it is less clearly defined as illeism in the truest sense. Yet, as with the historians, the third-person self-reference is used by the author in order to convey a sense of objectivity.

[26]Marincola notes the challenges presented by the evidence. Yet, he writes that despite these challenges, an analysis of the relevant passages before Book XXXVI "show that Polybius consistently adhered to the third person and to narrative impartiality, even when he was an historical character." Marincola, *Authority and Tradition*, 189. For examples within Polybius see Pol. XXIV.6.1-7; XXVIII.3.7-9; 6.8-9; 7.8-13; 12.4-13.14; XXIX.23.1-25.7; XXXI.11.1-15.12; 23.1-29.12; XXXII.3.14; XXXVI.11.1-4.

[27]Campbell, *The We Passages*, 32.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Marincola, *Authority and Tradition*, 205.

[30]Richard A. Billows, *Julius Caesar the Colossus of Rome* (London: Routledge, 2009), 198.

absolute trustworthiness and objectivity of his account."[31] Yet Caesar's use of illeism

may differ from that of other historians in that he was known to refer to himself in the

third person as a common practice.[32] Adcock suggests that "the constant use of his name

in the *Comentarii* is not only a convention or a mask of objectiveness, but includes, as it

were, the natural, almost automatic expression of his conscience preeminence."[33]

Josephus

Josephus (A.D. 37-ca. 100), in *War of the Jews*, presents himself as a

participant in the historical events conveyed by referring to himself in the third person.[34]

In contrast, in his short autobiographical work *Life*, written three decades after the war,

Josephus uses only the first person singular to refer to himself. Campbell, referring to the

preference for the third person by Josephus in *War of the Jews*, as well as by Thucydides

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[31] Robin Lakoff, *The Language War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 33. She adds that Caesar's third-person presentation "felt like history, and history is 'truth'" (ibid.). See also Luca Grillo, "Scribam Ipse De Me: The Personality of the Narrator in Caesar's Bellum Civile," *American Journal of Philology* 132, no. 2 (2011). He writes of the advantages of an omnipresent narrator noting that "by dissociating himself from the character Caesar, the narrator . . . describes the events that Caesar witnessed and those he did not with the same confidence" (244-45).

[32] Franz Ezra Adcock, *Caesar as a Man of Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 74-76.

[33] Ibid., 76. Caesar's use of illeism is unique among Roman historians to that point in history. Among the Roman historians in early Rome, all had been participants in the history, yet none used the third person for self-reference before Caesar. Marincola, *Authority and Tradition*, 192. Marincola notes that before Caesar, "We can state quite simply that no Roman historian ever refers to himself in the third person" (197). He adds that within memoirs or "hypomnematic literature," both Greek and Latin, the first person is used, with the only exception being Caesar in his use of the third person in *Gallic War* (205). For example, Velleius (19 B.C.-A.D. 31), a first-century Roman historian, writes of history in which he participated, yet always uses the first person singular or plural.

[34] See *War of the Jews* 2.569-647; 3.59-408; 3.432-42; 4.622-29; 5.361-420; 5.541-47; and 6.93-129. As with other historians who use third-person self-reference, Josephus also uses the first person singular (1.3). In *Jewish Antiquities* Josephus does not use the third person to speak of his own accounts since naturally "the narrative's concern is with matters that predate his entrance into the public arena; he is not a participant in the events narrated." Campbell, *The We Passages*, 40. Though the evidence is limited, in this period Nicolaus of Damascus (64-ca. 4 B.C.) in his autobiography *On his Life and his Education* also uses the third person to refer to himself (FGH 90 F136-38). Hägg notes that this work probably was meant as an introduction to his *History*. Tomas Hägg, *The Art of Biography in Antiquity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 197.

and Polybius, notes that it serves to characterize the narrator "as an 'objective observer' of the events being described."[35] Norden also affirms Josephus's use of the third person as an effort to convey objectivity and adds that he is following clearly the manner established by Thucydides.[36]

Conclusion

Köstenberger, as noted, writes that one should not view Jesus's use of the third person as curious because the use of the third person for self-reference was common in antiquity.[37] As a basis for this view he notes John 21:24 and an article by Howard M. Jackson. Jackson's examples of illeism in antiquity include only those which have already been noted (Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Caesar, and Josephus).[38] Jackson's argument in the article is that John, the Beloved Disciple, writes of himself in the third person in 21:24, following in the pattern of Thucydides, so that his Gospel may be seen as more reliable. Köstenberger's conclusion that these examples reflect a common use of illeism in antiquity is understandable, yet seems to call for qualification.

Though illeism occurs in antiquity, it is important to appreciate how the illeism is being used in these cases. From Herodotus to Josephus, each example reflects the use of illeism by a historian in a written document in order to give their historiographical information a sense of objectivity.[39] This use of illeism may provide a helpful

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[35]Campbell, *The We Passages*, 89.

[36]Norden notes that in this writing Josephus reports "ganz nach thukydideischer Art." Norden, *Agnostos Theos*, 317n1. Also, commenting on this effort for objectivity by Thucydides, Norden notes Xenophon, Polybius, Caesar, and Josephus as following him in this effort. He writes, "Schon Thukydides ist so verfahren . . . Xenophon, Polybios, Caesar, Josephus sind ihm gefolgt. Ibid., 317.

[37]Köstenberger, *John (BECNT)*, 489n26.

[38]Jackson, "Ancient Self-Referential Conventions." Köstenberger specifically refers to pp. 24-31.

[39]Caesar is no exception, though evidence, as noted, suggests his use of illeism may also have

background to how various biblical authors employ illeism. Jackson's article specifically argues that the author of the Fourth Gospel is referencing himself to convey objectivity and cites the noted ancient historians as precedent. To argue that one should not be surprised by Jesus's use of illeism because of its use by these noted ancient historians implies a correlation between the way Jesus is recorded as speaking in the Gospels and the way ancient historians wrote in their histories. Yet, the use of illeism by these various historians reflect a common genre (history), a common context (to refer to the author as writer and/or participant) and a common intent (to convey objectivity) which are distinct from those associated with Jesus's use of illeism. This known pattern, apparently set by Thucydides, in which a writer refers to himself in the third person in order that a reader may see the work as more objective reflects the use of a literary technique. Jesus's habitual manner of referring to himself in the third person, in direct discourse, publicly and privately, and with various expressions ("Son of Man," "Son of God," "Jesus Christ," "the Son," etc.) seems at face value a fundamentally distinct phenomenon, representing a different type of illeism with distinct rhetorical intentions.

Third-person self-reference occurs in antiquity, but its use among ancient historians represents a distinct and unrelated phenomenon to Jesus's customary manner of self-presentation. Furthermore, surveying materials that would reflect a comparable context such as non-literary letters (specifically personal and domestic letters) in the time of Jesus shows no evidence that would support the view that illeism was a common manner of speaking.[40] The same can be said for the NT witness itself. Though the NT

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been an expression of his preeminence.

[40]See W. Hersey Davis, *Greek Papyri of the First Century* (New York: Harper, 1933); Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East: The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World*, trans. Lionel R. M. Strachan, 4th ed. (London: Harper and Brothers, 1910); Henry George Meecham, *Light from Ancient Letters: Private Correspondence in the Non-Literary Papyri of Oxyrhynchus of the First Four Centuries, and Its Bearing on New Testament Language and Thought* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923); George Milligan, *Here & There among the Papyri* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1922); George Milligan, *Selections from the Greek Papyri* (Cambridge: The

contains extensive and diverse examples of recorded direct speech in which an individual refers to himself or herself, only Jesus is recorded as choosing the third-person perspective.[41] In all other instances where illeism could have been an option the speaker is recorded as choosing the first person singular pronoun. With these noted qualifications the evidence suggests that Jesus's consistent manner of speaking of himself in the third person should strike us as curious and motivate us to further investigation.

University Press, 1910); John L. White, *Light from Ancient Letters* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986). This comment is not intended to be exhaustive in scope. A survey of all relevant, extant, non-literary material goes beyond the scope of this present study. Yet, my analysis did not find a single example of a similar manner of speech. The only example noted that would qualify as an illeism is in the context of a prayer and could be read as a deferential use of the third person. It reads, "O God of the crosses which are laid down, help your servant Apphouas" (ὁ Θ(εὸ)ς τῶν παρακειμένων σταυρῶν, βοήθησον τὸν δοῦλόν σου Ἀπφουᾶν) (*Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, vii. No. 1058). If Apphouas is the writer, this example would reflect a distinct use of the third person employed to show deference to a superior (in this case, God). Yet, this deferential use is obviously distinct from Jesus's manner of speech. "Your servant" language is common in the OT and this distinct form of illeism will be addressed in the next chapter.

[41]Two significant examples are the various speeches of Peter (Acts 1:16-22; 2:14-36; 3:12-26; 4:8-12: 5:29-32; 10:34-43; 11:5-17; 15:7-11) and Paul (Acts 13:16-41; 14:15-17; 17:22-31; 20:18-35; 22:1-21; 23:1, 6; 24:10-21; 26:1-23; 28:17-20, 25-28) which, to some degree, overlap with Jesus's public teaching and preaching in their style and public nature. Though not exhaustive, other examples of individuals referring to themselves in the first person in direct speech when illeism could have been used include Pilate (Matt 27:22; Mark 15:12; John 18:38; 19:6, 10), Mary, mother of Jesus (Luke 1:38, 46), Zechariah (Luke 1:18), Proconsul of Gallio (Acts 18:14), a centurion (Matt 8:9), a scribe (Matt 8:19), a woman in need of healing (Matt 9:21; Mark 5:28), a desperate father (Mark 9:24; Matt 17:15), a rich young man (Matt 19:20), a leper (Mark 1:40), a lawyer (Luke 10:29), individual disciples such as Nathaneal (John 1:48) and Thomas (John 20:25), a Samaritan woman (John 4:9-25), a blind man (John 11:21, 24), and Mary Magdalene (John 20:15). Additionally, illeism is not found in the recorded speech of Satan (Matt 4:9), angels (Matt 28:5; Luke 2:10), or demons (Mark 5:7; Luke 4:34). In each case they are recorded as referring to themselves with the first person singular pronoun.

CHAPTER 3

ILLEISM IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The intent of this chapter is to highlight the various occurrences of illeism in the OT and evaluate how they are functioning in the text. The chapter concludes with an evaluation of Yahweh's use of illeism in his recorded direct speech, highlighting continuity and/or discontinuity with the way illeism is used elsewhere in the canon, and offers a thesis as to why Yahweh refers to himself in the third person. As a matter of thoroughness it is noted that various biblical authors may refer to themselves in the third person. This potential for self-reference is of course directly related to issues of authorship.[1] Yet, as argued in chapter 2, the use of illeism by a writer is a literary choice with a distinct rhetorical effect from that of the various uses of illeism within direct speech. Because the focus of this study is ultimately to examine the relationship between the illeism of Yahweh and Jesus, and since this illeism is within direct speech, illeism as used by biblical authors is noted but not analyzed.[2] The remainder of this chapter will offer an analysis of the various ways illeism occurs within direct speech. This survey will clarify how illeism functions in the OT and provide a basis from which to evaluate the illeism of Yahweh. The final section addresses representative examples of illeism as used by God and proposes a thesis concerning the rhetorical effect of Yahweh's use of the third-person self-reference.

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[1]Depending on conclusions concerning authorship, these may include Moses (for part of the Penteteuch), Ezra, Nehemiah, Qohelet in Ecclesiastes, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Amos, Haggai, and Zechariah.

[2]While this use of illeism is similar in many ways to its use by ancient historians, addressing its distinctive rhetorical function in the context of Scripture could be a fruitful area of research.

Deferential Use

A common use of illeism in the OT, second in prominence only to Yahweh's use of illeism, is the deferential use of the third person.[3] The speaker reflects his or her subordinate position when addressing someone of a superior status by referring to himself or herself as "your servant" (עבדך,אמתך,שפחתך) in place of their name or the expected first-person pronoun. The phrase occurs in an illeistic sense over 130x in the OT, reflected both in prayer to Yahweh and in dialogue between individuals.[4] Revell writes that "such third person reference avoids the appearance of intimacy produced by the use of first and second person forms, obviating the assumption that the speaker and addressee are equal. It suggests that the two are not participating in the same dyad, and so distances speaker from addressee."[5] Representative texts are noted to demonstrate the nuances of this common use of illeism.

Judah references himself in this way multiple times as he addresses Joseph in Egypt (Gen 44:18-34). In this instance the third-person deferential phrase "your servant" is balanced by the speaker's third-person reference to the superior he is addressing (Joseph) by the phrase "my lord" (אֲדֹנִי). For example, Judah states, "My lord, may your servant please speak a word in the ear of my lord."[6] The third-person self-references

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[3]The term "deferential" is used by Revell, who notes this type of self-reference reflects deference and distance. See E. J. Revell, *The Designation of the Individual: Expressive Usage in Biblical Narrative* (Kampen, The Netherlands: Kok Pharos Pub. House, 1996), 264-322.

[4]The majority of its occurrences are found in the narratives of 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, and Genesis, but there is also a large portion in the psalms directed to Yahweh. This use also occurs in Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Judges, Ruth, Nehemiah, and Daniel.

[5]Revell, *Designation of the Individual*, 267. Meier addresses the occurrence of what he terms "asteismos" or "modifications of language for the purpose of politeness," which he notes is "an integral part of biblical dialogue." Samuel A. Meier, *Speaking of Speaking: Marking Direct Discourse in the Hebrew Bible* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 37. He adds that "such oblique references made by changes in person did not seem to play a significant role in the Bible outside of dialogue or prayer" (ibid.).

[6]All translations are my own unless otherwise noted. Hebrew quotations are taken from *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia,* 5ᵗʰ ed., ed. Karl Eliger and Willhelm Rudolph (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997). LXX quotations are from *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum*, 16 vols., ed. John William Wevers et al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1943-74). The problematic nature of the use of the term "the LXX" is noted. Yet, for the scope of this study, the term refers to the reconstructed

serve to highlight the disparity between the status held by each. Hannah uses the deferential reference when addressing Eli (1 Sam 1:16, 18). Smith rightly captures the rhetorical effect of her use of the deferential phrase noting that it reveals "her piety and humility."[7] In Abigail's address to David in 1 Samuel 25:23-31 she refers to herself as "your servant" 6x.[8] David, as noted by Bergen, is recorded as using the deferential reference more often than anyone else, followed in prominence of use by Solomon.[9] In his address to Saul, prior to fighting Goliath, David appropriately references himself in this deferential manner (1 Sam 17:32, 34, 36).

Esau reflects an example of this deferential use, though his use varies from the typical "your servant" language. In Genesis 27:31, Esau, approaching Isaac for his blessing, states, "Let my father arise and eat of his son's game" (יָקֻם אָבִי וְיֹאכַל מִצֵּיד בְּנוֹ). As Mathews notes, Esau's request contrasts with Jacob's in that it is more respectful, reflected in the use of the third person, and he notes the "familial language . . . is fitting for the solemnity of the paternal event."[10] Alter notes that "Jacob's more nervous and urgent words for his father to arise from his bed were cast in the imperative."[11] He argues convincingly that, in contrast, "Esau . . . addresses his father more ceremonially,

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critical text of the Göttingen LXX unless otherwise noted.

[7]Henry Preserved Smith, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Samuel*, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1899), 44. Both J. Smith and Klein note Hannah is "loyal and subservient." Ralph W. Klein, *1 Samuel*, 2nd ed., WBC, vol. 10 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1983), 250; Smith, *Commentary on the Books of Samuel*, 299. Hannah, prior to addressing Eli, also uses the deferential reference in her prayer to Yahweh (1 Sam 1:11).

[8]Similar to Judah's address to Joseph, Abigail's deferential self-references are complemented by her twelve references to David as "my lord."

[9]Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, NAC, vol. 7 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 343. David uses the phrase 13x, Solomon 7x.

[10]K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27-50:26*, NAC, vol. 1b (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005), 434.

[11]Robert Alter, *Genesis* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996), 141.

beginning with the deferential third person."[12]

In addition to this use between individuals (from a subordinate to a superior), various individuals use this deferential reference in prayer to Yahweh. In Deuteronomy 3:24 Moses says to Yahweh, "Adonai Yahweh, You have begun to reveal to your servant your greatness" (אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה אַתָּה הַחִלּוֹתָ לְהַרְאוֹת אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ).[13] Craigie rightly notes Moses's choice of the phrase reflects that he is "conscious of his position before the Lord."[14] Other prominent examples of individuals within biblical narrative who refer to themselves with the deferential "your servant" include Abraham (Gen 18:3), Jacob (Gen 32:10), Samson (Judg 15:18), and Hannah (1 Sam 1:11).

Two final examples are presented to further show the nuance and complexity associated with the deferential use of illeism. In 2 Samuel 11:23 Joab's messenger is reporting to King David the outcome of the battle in which Uriah was killed. As Revell notes, the messenger reports the "relatively commendable action" in verse 23 in the first person ("We went against them . . ."").[15] Yet, in the following verse, when reporting the negative news of the associated casualties, the messenger shifts to the third-person self-reference ("the archers shot at your servants . . ."). Based on the general use of עבדך, the primary intent should be seen as deferential. Yet, Revell's observation is noteworthy in that it may highlight the nuanced use of the deferential form. In this instance the illeism serves to appropriately posture the messenger as a subordinate, while also possibly

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[12]Ibid. Alter adds that the shift from third to second person ("let my father rise . . . that 'you' may solemnly bless me") "is perfectly idiomatic in biblical Hebrew when addressing a figure of authority" (ibid.). In contrast, Wenham views Jacob's opening address "my father" in v. 18 (and Isaac's to Abraham in 22:7) as "much more deferential" than Esau's "gaiety." Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, WBC, vol. 2 (Dallas: Word Books, 1994), 211. Contra Wenham, I believe Alter's view is the more reasonable assessment. Esau's third-person references to his father and himself, in addition to the familial language, make his wording more deferential than Jacob's anxious imperatives.

[13]See also Exod 4:10; Num 11:11.

[14]Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, NICOT, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 126.

[15]See Revell, *Designation of the Individual*, 308.

distancing the speaker from the negative aspects of the event conveyed.[16]

David's prayer before Yahweh in 2 Samuel 7 is used as a final representative example. Fokkelman notes the complementary nature of the events of the preceding chapter with the current passage. In 2 Samuel 6 David "danced exuberantly before the ark, [but] now he humbly seats himself to pray, next to the ark."[17] Also, Fokkelman rightly notes the significance of the narrator informing the reader that "King David" went in and sat before the Lord. He writes that "both as monarch and as private person David turns to God."[18] In the course of the prayer David refers to himself once by name ("David"),[19] 10x by "your servant,"[20] and 1x with both ("your servant David").[21] Fokkelman highlights the intimate aspect of the reference in that it complements Yahweh's reference to David as "my servant" in his message through Nathan (2 Sam 7:5). Yet, rightly Fokkelman underscores the more obvious implication of the reference, characterizing it as "an expression of subjection, obedience and humility."[22] Avioz conveys a similar understanding and adds, "It seems David fully understood the

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[16]Caution is warranted here so as not to over read or "psychologize" the text.

[17]J. P. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art and Poetry in the Books of Samuel: A Full Interpretation Based on Stylistic and Structural Analyses*, trans. L. Waaning-Wardle (Assen, The Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1990), 3:236. Leithart notes that "David's seated posture symbolized his position as 'ruler' over Israel, as 'David the king'." Peter J. Leithart, *A Son to Me: An Exposition of 1 & 2 Samuel* (Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 2003), 200.

[18]Fokkelman, *Narrative Art*, 3:236.

[19]2 Sam 7:20.

[20]עַבְדְּךָ occurs 10x (2 Sam 7: 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 27 [2x], 28, 29 [2x]). and 1x by "your servant David" (7:26).

[21]In 2 Sam 7:26 David refers to "the house of your servant David" (וּבֵית עַבְדְּךָ דָוִד). The prayer also reflects David shifting from the first singular to the collective first person plural, as well as shifting from speaking to God with second-person references to speaking about God with third-person references. Though sharing the common element of a shift in person, this type of shift in person and number does not reflect illeism and will not be addressed.

[22]Fokkelman, *Narrative Art*, 3:237. He adds that the same qualities are also emphasized by his consistent reference to God as "my Lord" (ibid.). Bergen notes that "David was following a pious tradition of using the socially demeaning term as a badge of honor." Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, 343.

significance of God's words, clarifying the nature of Man's relationship with the Divine."[23]

As noted above, this particular occurrence of the deferential "your servant" is unusual in that David also refers to himself by name. Revell writes that "the name is occasionally used where the speaker presents himself as a subordinate, and could have referred to himself as 'your servant'. In this situation the name presents a reference more personal than that of a deferential term, but less intimate than that of a pronoun. It thus serves to present an intermediate level of deference."[24] This insight is helpful in appreciating the nuanced possibilities with the deferential use of illeism and captures, to some degree, how the illeism is functioning. Yet, more can be said. At some level, David's reference to himself as "David" contributes to a dichotomy reflected within the prayer. David acknowledges both his *insignificance* before Yahweh as well as *how greatly blessed* he is by Yahweh. Fokkelman insightfully highlights this contrast, which he refers to as the "insignificant/great" polarity, and notes that it functions as the isotopy to David's thanksgiving prayer.[25] Yet, he does not relate this observation to David's third-person self-references within the prayer. While certainty is not possible, it may be that the narrator's reference to "King David" (used only here in the book) and David's reference to himself as David (v. 20) and "your servant David" (v. 26) provide an intentional contrast to David's use of "your servant." In this sense, David recognizes both his standing before God as a man (deferential language), but also acknowledges his

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[23]Michael Avioz, *Nathan's Oracle (2 Samuel 7) and Its Interpreters*, Bible in History, vol. 5 (Bern: Peter Lang, 2005), 39. Willis proposes that David's use of the divine epithet אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה to begin his prayer reflects an individual's address to a king. He writes, "David here addresses his divine king as 'my lord *yhwh*'." He adds that David's use of "your servant" "contributes to the picture of the earthly king acknowledging YHWH as his—and Israel's—true king." Timothy M. Willis, "The Curious Case of Κυριε Μου Κυριε in 2 Kingdoms 7:18-29," *JBL* 132, no. 3 (2013): 525.

[24]Revell, *Designation of the Individual*, 350.

[25]Fokkelman, *Narrative Art*, 3:240.

unmerited status as God's chosen one (reference to himself by name).[26]

In conclusion, this use of illeism to convey deference or subordination is common in the OT. While it may be used for a variety of reasons (i.e., fear, politeness, manipulation, social expectation, etc.), the phrasing ultimately allows the speaker to express humility and to highlight his or her subordinate relationship to the addressee. As noted in the examples, this deferential use occurs within dialogue between individuals as well as in prayers to Yahweh.

Within an Oath Formula

In comparison to the deferential use of illeism, other occurrences (other than its use by Yahweh and OT kings) are relatively more isolated. Revell notes that "the use of non-deferential nominals for self-reference by humans is rare, and the specific intention in each case consequently somewhat uncertain, but there is no reason to doubt that the use is a genuine feature of the language of the corpus."[27] One distinct context where illeism occurs is within an oath formula. Three different speakers refer to themselves by name within an oath (Jonathan in 1 Sam 20:13; Abner in 2 Sam 3:9; and David in 1 Sam 25:22). The taking of an oath occurs often in the Bible and in various forms.[28] Three

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[26]Based on my research, the only other OT example of an individual referring to himself both by "your servant" and his proper name is Araunah in his dialogue with King David (2 Sam 24:16-24). This example is addressed below in the section on illeism within the speech of kings.

[27]Revell, *Designation of the Individual*, 357. Revell adds (encouragingly for this study) that "this suggests the potential value of a comprehensive study of the much more numerous examples of similar usage in speech ascribed to God" (ibid.).

[28]This study, in line with the majority of scholarship, does not make a distinction between an oath and a curse. Cartledge notes, "Old Testament oaths basically consist of a promise that is strengthened by the addition of a curse, usually in conjunction with an appeal to the deity or king who could carry out the curse." Tony W. Cartledge, *Vows in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1992), 15. See also Yael Ziegler, *Promises to Keep: The Oath in Biblical Narrative*, SuppVT (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 33; Scott Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant: A Canonical Approach to the Fulfillment of God's Saving Promises* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 53; Manfred R. Lehmann, "Biblical Oaths," *ZAW* 81, no. 1 (1969): 74-92. Also, concerning terminology, an oath should be differentiated from a vow. As Hahn notes, "A vow is a conditional promise made to God. An oath consists of a promise joined to the invocation of the name of God for help, whereby the oath swearer places himself under divine judgment signified by a conditional self-curse." Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 51. Ziegler offers

prevalent expressions which reflect an oath include 'חי ה ("as X lives . . ."), הלילה ("Far be it . . ."), and כה־יעשׂה...וכה יסיף ("thus may [God/Yahweh] do and more so . . .").[29] Yet, only in the three oaths noted do the speakers refer to themselves in the third person. It is interesting that all three uses of illeism within an oath occur within the same type of oath formula (כה־יעשׂה...וכה יסיף), yet this particular phrasing (with minor variations) occurs nine other times in which the speaker does not refer to him or herself by name.[30] While the formal, solemn nature of an oath may be more conducive to the use of the third-person self-reference, the variety and number of oaths in the OT which lack the third-person self-reference indicate that the oath formula itself does not demand it.

As noted, the oath formula which reflects illeism (כה־יעשׂה...וכה יסיף) occurs

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a succinct definition of the biblical oath describing it as a "formal assertion of truth or declaration of intent which cannot be breached without incurring severe consequences." Yael Ziegler, "'So Shall God Do...': Variations of an Oath Formula and Its Literary Meaning," *JBL* 126, no. 1 (2007): 3. She adds that "the biblical oath seems to possess substantial power which, on occasion, results in the application of divine sanctions upon the violator of his oath. This is the case whether one makes an oath himself, or is compelled to obey an oath taken by another" (ibid.).

[29]The meaning of 'חי ה is debated. It can be understood as a participle, as translated above, or as a noun ("by the life of X"). See Ziegler, *Promises to Keep*, 90ff. As with the other oath formulae, the interpretation of הלילה is debated. Ziegler notes that by viewing הלילה as deriving from "profane," "the oath formula's conditional self-curse becomes, in essence, a conditional self-profanation" (ibid. 130). Joüon-Muraoka renders חָלִילָה לִי as "Profanation to me!" Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 2nd ed., Subsidia Biblica 27 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Intituto Biblico, 2006), BibleWorks, v. 8. Lehmann argues, based on a similar Akkadian expression, that the term means "erasure." He renders the idiom "May there be erasure unto me (from God) if I break the oath." Lehmann, "Biblical Oaths," 82-83. The phrase כה־יעשׂה...וכה יסיף is enigmatic and difficult to translate. As Sanders notes, "It is not clear to what exactly the expression refers, though it is evident that a severe punishment is implied." Paul Sanders, "So May God Do to Me!" *Biblica* 85, no. 1 (2004): 91. Ziegler notes oaths which begin with הלילה occur approximately 20x and the oath formula 'חי ה occurs approximately 40x in biblical narratives. Ziegler, *Promises to Keep*, 1. Other aspects of oath taking could be noted, including use of the verb נִשְׁבַּע, as well as various expressions using the nouns for oath, אָלָה and שְׁבוּעָה. Interpretations, etymology, and even whether certain forms should be considered an oath formula (i.e., הלילה) are debated, and an in-depth analysis of the variations and nuances of the biblical oath formulae goes beyond the scope of this study. For a detailed analysis see Lehmann, "Biblical Oaths"; Blane Conklin, *Oath Formulas in Biblical Hebrew*, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011).

[30]Ruth 1:17; 1 Sam 3:17; 14:44; 2 Sam 3:35; 19:14; 1 Kgs 2:23; 6:31; 19:2; 20:10.

12x total in the OT. In six occurrences of this formula of the oath the speaker refers to himself with the first person pronoun לִי ("(May God/Yahweh do *to me* . . .") indicating that the speaker will bear the curse should the oath be violated (2 Sam 3:35; 19:14; 1Kgs 2:23; 20:10; 2 Kgs 6:31; Ruth 1:17). In one occurrence (1 Sam 3:17) the oath is directed against another person (Eli directs the curse against Samuel). In two other occurrences of the oath (Saul in 1 Sam 14:44 and Jezebel in 1 Kgs 19:2) no direct recipient of the curse is indicated.[31] Finally, in the oaths of Jonathan, Abner, and David, each refers to himself in the third person (by name).

On an initial study of the illeism reflected in the oaths of Jonathan, Abner, and David, it could be reasonably argued that the speaker is affirming his own sense of importance or authority. Fokkelman does not refer to the authority of the speaker, yet he does note that, in the case of Abner, his use of his own name makes the oath sound more solemn.[32] Ziegler, whose work offers a thorough analysis of the oath formula כֹּה־יַעֲשֶׂה...וְכֹה יֹסִיף,[33] argues against this reading. She concludes that none of the three illeistic oaths reflect a "more authoritative, weighty nature than any of the other usages of this formula."[34] She adds,

> Actually, these oaths in which the speaker refers to himself by name are consistently spoken by less established leaders; a prince (I Sam 20:13), a renegade candidate for the throne (I Sam 25:22), and a general of the losing side (II Sam 3:9). Indeed, it is often a king who, pronouncing royal policy, takes an oath which contains a [first person] pronoun as the indirect object (II Sam 3:35; 19:14; I Kgs 2:23; 20:10; II Kgs

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[31]Concerning Eli's curse, Ziegler notes rightly that this example "is the only occasion in which the oath כֹּה־יַעֲשֶׂה is used in an express bid to induce someone else to act in a particular manner." Ziegler, "'So Shall God Do . . .'," 66. Concerning Saul and Jezebel's oaths, Ziegler argues the omission may reflect the weak or flawed character of each. Ibid., 69-71.

[32]Fokkelman, *Narrative Art*, 3:74.

[33]Ziegler examines how variations to the formula may contribute to its respective narrative. Her thesis is that the small variations reflected in the occurrences of the oath formula "are in fact deliberate components of a narrative artistically woven to convey a particular idea, which often converges with a primary message of the narrative in which it is found." Ziegler, "'So Shall God Do . . .'," 59.

[34]Ibid., 72.

6:31).[35]

In arguing against viewing the illeism as emphasizing a sense of authority, Ziegler highlights a common trait of the three oaths of Jonathan, Abner, and David. She concludes that each time the speaker uses his own name he "intends to do an action himself. . . . His pledge includes a promise of a determined, personal undertaking."[36] She adds that, because of this intention of personal undertaking, each of these oaths is followed by at least one first person verb.[37] She notes that the other individuals taking the similar oath (those without a third-person self-reference) assume a level of responsibility for the promise. Yet, she argues that this commitment of personal involvement is not as great as when the speaker refers to himself by name. In these oaths, she argues, the stakes are so high the oath-taker affirms his personal involvement in the fulfillment of the oath.[38] Revell's position does not reflect Ziegler's detailed argument, but he seems to understand the illeism in a similar way. He notes that "all three oaths . . . support highly unusual undertakings, so that such emphasis is appropriate to them."[39]

Ziegler offers a helpful insight into the use of the כה־יעשׂה formula and presents a cogent argument concerning how the third-person self-reference is functioning. In light of the evidence, she presents the most probable function of the illeism in highlighting that it serves to underscore the self-involvement of the speaker in the fulfillment of the oath, as opposed to emphasizing the authority, office, or reputation of

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[35]Ibid.

[36]Ziegler, *Promises to Keep*, 71.

[37]Ibid. Ziegler does note Jezebel as the exception to her observation. Jezebel's oath does not reflect a direct reference to herself by name, but her oath does contain a first person verb. Ziegler argues that this fits with her initial argument that the omission of Jezebel's name simply reflects her flawed character and her unwillingness to put herself at risk (76).

[38]Ibid., 76.

[39]Revell, *Designation of the Individual*, 352. He notes specifically that "Jonathan rejects his king and father in favor of David. . . . Abner similarly abandons family ties and his master in favor of David. David undertakes the slaughter of innocents" (352n3).

the speaker to give weight to his word. Yet, the multifaceted nature of the rhetorical power of illeism must be appreciated. In this sense, it may be unreasonable to argue the illeism does not reflect any emphasis of the status of the speaker.[40] Yet, with this qualification noted, Ziegler's analysis offers a convincing position concerning how the illeism is functioning in these three oaths. The remaining portion of this section will briefly address the oath's of Jonathan, Abner, and David individually in an effort to clarify the distinctive nature and rhetorical benefit of the use of illeism within the oath formula.

Jonathan

In 1 Samuel 20:12-13 Jonathan pledges to warn David if his father seeks to harm him. He states, "Thus may Yahweh do to Jonathan (כֹּה־יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה לִיהוֹנָתָן) and more also if I do not reveal it to you and send you away . . . ." Jonathan's oath formula is structured the same as Abner's and David's except that he refers to יהוה rather than אֱלֹהִים. Typically, this oath formula references אֱלֹהִים. Only Jonathan and Ruth reference יהוה.[41] The distinction deserves exploration. Yet, for the scope of this study it is simply noted that the choice does not directly affect or seem to be driven by the choice of the third-person self-reference.

Concerning the choice of the third person, when it is noted, scholarship offers differing views. For example, Tsumura believes Jonathan uses his name instead of "me" "in order to distance himself psychologically."[42] Tsumura does not clarify his statement,

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[40]I would offer a clarification on only one aspect of Ziegler's argument. Her characterization of the speakers who refer to themselves by name ("a prince" [Jonathan], "a renegade candidate for the throne" [David], and "a general of the losing side" [Abner]) is based on *her perspective* of the individuals noted, rather than the *speakers' perspectives* of themselves. Abner may have been a general "for the losing side," but this does not necessarily mean he saw himself this way. The same argument applies to Jonathan and David. Her argument does not negate the possibility that the speaker refers to themselves, in some measure, to emphasize their status or authority.

[41]Ruth refers to herself with the first person singular pronoun.

[42]David Toshio Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, NICOT, vol. 9 (Grand Rapids: William B.

but he highlights a significant aspect of illeism revealed in this study. The element of distancing is a critical component of the rhetorical effect, yet the concept of psychological distance is ambiguous and ultimately fails to capture the intent of the illeism. Ziegler rightly notes that the use of his name instead of the "more impersonal pronoun" reflects his pledge of "direct personal responsibility for getting the information to David."[43]

Abner

In 2 Samuel 3:9 Abner, angered by Ish-bosheth's accusation against him concerning Saul's concubines, commits to support David as king. In his oath he refers to himself twice in the third person, initially by name and then by the third-person pronoun. "God do so to Abner and more also to him (כֹּה־יַעֲשֶׂה אֱלֹהִים לְאַבְנֵר וְכֹה יֹסִיף לֹו) if, just as Yahweh has sworn to David, I do not accomplish for him." Fokkelman makes an interesting observation of the position of the phrase "to Abner." He notes that "to Abner" (לְאַבְנֵר) is in the center of the seven words of verse 9a, in the middle of the two כֹה + verb forms, and "is the twenty-ninth word of the total of fifty-seven which make up the entire speech."[44] He adds that "the middle of the middle is the moment where Abner, by swearing an oath, takes maximum responsibility for what he spells out and commits himself irrevocably to it."[45] If indeed the intention of the third-person self-reference within the oath formula is to emphasize the speaker's personal involvement, the fact that the placement of the self-reference is strategically centered may support this view.

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Eerdmans, 2007), 508.

[43]Ziegler, *Promises to Keep*, 72. Jones notes that the language of the passage "captures the passionate communication of friendship in the throes of a crisis." Barry A. Jones, "1 Samuel 20:1-17," *Interpretation* 58, no. 2 (2004): 173. This emphasis on the deep emotional aspect of the passage offers support for Ziegler's thesis of personal involvement.

[44]Fokkelman, *Narrative Art*, 3:73n8.

[45]Ibid., 73.

Ziegler supports her thesis of an emphasis of self-involvement, noting the precarious nature of the situation for Abner. His defection reflects both a betrayal of the king he appointed and a possibly dangerous challenge to convince a former enemy of his shift of loyalties. She notes he "employs an oath in which he refers to himself by name in order to assert his pledge to personally and directly attend to his defection to the enemy, David."[46]

David

David's oath in 1 Samuel 25:22 occurs in response to Nabal's harsh rebuff to David's request for provisions. The oath itself reflects a textual issue, though the evidence suggests that this instance should be viewed as illeism within an oath formula. The LXX[AB] reads, "So God do to David and more also (τάδε ποιήσαι ὁ θεος τᾷδε Δαυιδ καὶ τὰδε) if I leave by morning any of those who belong to Nabal."[47] Yet, the MT reads, "God do thus to *the enemies of David* and more also (כֹּה־יַעֲשֶׂה אֱלֹהִים לְאֹיְבֵי דָוִד וְכֹה יֹסִיף), if, by morning, I leave any of his men alive.[48] Sanders notes that "it is generally assumed, on good grounds, that the Septuagint reading stems from an earlier Hebrew reading than the Masoretic reading. In early Judaism, the older reading לדוד 'to David' was replaced with לאיבי דוד 'to David's enemies.'"[49] Mauchline notes, "The deletion of the words 'the enemies' . . . is doubtless correct; the words may have been inserted to save David from the oath's recoiling on his own head in the event of the threat being carried out."[50]

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[46]Ziegler, *Promises to Keep*, 73.

[47]Literally the phrase reads "those who urinate against the wall" in both the MT and the LXX. Talmon notes that the phrase משתין בקיר does not refer to men in general. Rather, it refers to men of the royal house who had the privilege of using private facilities of an upper room. See Shemaryahu Talmon and Weston W. Fields, "The Collocation משתין בקיר ועצור ועזוב and Its Meaning," *ZAW* 101, no. 1 (1989): 112.

[48]Also LXX[L]. The Peshitta reads "for his servant David," also reflecting the illeistic sense of the LXX reading.

[49]Sanders, "So May God Do to Me!" 95.

[50]Mauchline, *1 and 2 Samuel*, 169.

Similarly, Klein notes that "the longer reading is an attempt to avoid having David invoke a curse on himself."[51] Based on an evaluation of the text and its context, as well as the clear majority of scholarship, David's oath is treated in this study as an example of illeism within an oath formula.[52]

Ziegler argues that David highlights his own direct participation in the destruction of Nabal's household because this intent plays such a critical part of the story. She notes the "dénouement of this narrative is Abigail's persuasive bid to dissuade David."[53] As with the other two oaths, Ziegler's position is that David's reference to himself by name rather than the third singular pronoun emphasizes his own personal action in the fulfillment of the promise.[54]

Section Summary

The taking of oaths occurs throughout the OT, yet only in these three occurrences do the speakers refer to themselves in the third person. Also, all three appear within the same form of oath formula, כה־יעשׂה...וכה יסיף. Defining the use of illeism in each case is complicated by the variety of potential rhetorical effects of illeism, as well as the distinctive context of each instance. Though the rhetorical effect of each illeism may reflect an emphasis of the authority and status of the speaker, an analysis of the evidence indicates an emphasis of personal involvement of the speaker is the primary intention of

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[51]Klein, *1 Samuel*, 245. McCarter also views the phrase as a later insertion noting that "a scribe has changed David's words to protect him (or his descendents!) from the consequences of the oath." P. Kyle McCarter, *I Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes and Commentary*, AB, vol. 8 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980), 394; See also Smith, *Commentary on the Books of Samuel*, 226; Dominique Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament*, OBO, vol. 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982), 213; Ziegler, *Promises to Keep*, 60-61n29.

[52]Bergen, in contrast to most scholars, follows the MT. He writes, "Contrary to the LXX and NIV's rendering . . . [the oath] was not stated in such a way as to bring any judgment on himself in case the vow was broken." Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, 248.

[53]Ziegler, *Promises to Keep*, 72.

[54]As with both Abner and Jonathan, David's use of his own name is followed by the first person verb.

the self-reference. Within this context the third-person self-reference serves to emphasize the individuals accountability for, as well as his personal involvement in, the fulfillment of the stated promise.

Summons to Listen

In this section the illeism in the statements of Lamech (Gen 4:23-24), Jacob (Gen 49:2), and Balaam (Num 24:3) are addressed. The passages and the various uses of illeism are distinctive, the rhetorical function of the illeism being nuanced by the background of the passage and the character of the speakers. Yet, in all three occurrences, the third-person self-reference is used in the context of either a prophecy or pronouncement with the speaker summoning his audience to listen.[55]

Lamech

In Genesis 4:23-24 Lamech refers to himself twice by name, once in his summons to be heard and once in the song portion itself. He calls to his wives to listen (v. 23): "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice, wives of Lamech. Give heed to my speech"(וַיֹּאמֶר לֶמֶךְ לְנָשָׁיו עָדָה וְצִלָּה שְׁמַעַן קוֹלִי נְשֵׁי לֶמֶךְ הַאְזֵנָּה אִמְרָתִי). The "summons to listen" reflects a formal disposition on the part of the speaker which, like the oath, is more conducive to the more impersonal sounding third-person self-reference. This summons to listen "not uncommonly" begins a poetic composition where the speaker requests attention to his or her words.[56] A survey of occurrences of the various "summons to be heard" reveals the

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[55]All three speakers use a double imperative. Lamech and Balaam reflect the same verbs in the same order (שְׁמַעַן and הַאְזֵנָּה); Jacob's command reflects the qal imperative twice (שִׁמְעַן).

[56]Meier, *Speaking of Speaking*, 112. Though, as noted by Westermann, "The summons to listen as the introduction of a saying or a song is not confined to any particular form of speech." Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, trans. John J. Scullion (Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House, 1984), 334. Lamech's words could be categorized as an oath of vengeance. Yet, in the strictest sense, the poem does not reflect an oath. Hahn, as noted in the previous section, defines an oath as "a promise joined to the invocation of God for help whereby the oath swearer places himself under divine judgment signified by a conditional self-curse." Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 51. All three uses of illeism in the "oath" category consistently convey this sense, each using the oath formula כה־יעשה...וכה יסיף.

summons itself does not demand the use of a third-person reference. Similar statements are seen elsewhere in the OT (i.e., in the song of Moses [Deut 32] and song of Deborah [Judg 5]).[57] Only Lamech and, as will be shown, Jacob and Balaam, use illeism in the context of summoning others to listen.

Lamech continues in verse 24, boasting that he has killed a man for striking him and proudly states that if Cain's revenge is sevenfold, then "Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold."[58] Matthews writes that "God's promise to avenge Cain's life 'seven times' (v. 15) is interpreted by Lamech as a badge of honor for Cain rather than as a merciful provision by God . . . . Lamech contends that if Cain's value is reprisal seven times, then his acclaimed deeds merit much more."[59] Lamech's song conveys Lamech's perceived superiority stemming from pride and arrogance.[60] As Hamilton notes, "He is not only replete with the spirit of vindictiveness, but he is also a proud man who backs away from nobody and does not hesitate to kill anybody. Cain's mind-set now surfaces in his great-great-great grandson."[61] In conclusion, the context of the passage reflects that the distancing between speaker and self-referent reflected in Lamech's use of the third-

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[57]See also Gen 49:2; Num 12:6; 23:18; Isa 28:23; 32:9; 34:1; Joel 1:2; and Mic 1:2. Yahweh begins his statements with a summons to hear at least 6x (Isa 46:3, 12; 48:12, 16; 51:7; 55:2, 3; Jer 6:18; 19; and Ezek 18:25) yet does not use illeism in the immediate context.

[58]The text reflects some ambiguity as to whether this is an act already committed by Lamech. The perfect form of the verb lends support to viewing the action as past. Yet Hamilton argues that Lamech's song speaks not of something that he has already done, but of something that under duress he would not hesitate to do." Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, NICOT, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1990), 241.

[59]K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, NAC, vol. 1 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 289.

[60]Mathews notes that "Tubal-Cain's industry of forging metal objects implies weaponry that in the hands of evil men resulted in escalating violence. Lamech thinks himself invincible with his newly acquired weapons." Ibid., 288.

[61]Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 241. Gevirtz notes that the poem reflects an "expression of arrogant self-conceit and disdain for customary retribution." S. Gevirtz, "Lamech's Song to His Wives (Genesis 4:23-24)," in *I Studied Inscriptions from before the Flood: Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1-11*, ed. Richard S. Hess and David Toshio Tsumura (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 405.

person self-reference serves to emphasize his perceived self worth, invincibility, and superiority.

Jacob

In Genesis 49:1-27 Jacob gathers his sons and offers a blessing on each. As Sailhamer notes, his words look to the future but draw on the past.[62] This "inspired prophecy" addresses the destiny of each son and his descendents.[63] In verse 1 Jacob calls his sons to gather around that he may tell them what will happen to each "in the days to come" (בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים).[64] His words, as with Lamech's summons to his wives, reflects this theme of a summons to be heard (וְשִׁמְעוּ). He states, "Gather together and listen sons of Jacob. Listen to Israel your father" (v. 2). Jacob's dual use of the imperative ("hear sons of Jacob; hear Israel your father") underscores both the audience (בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב) and the speaker to whom they are to listen (אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבִיכֶם), both of which are presented from a third-person perspective.[65] This use of illeism, as with Lamech's summoning of his wives, fits comfortably with the solemn and formal atmosphere of the moment. Yet, as noted, this "summons to listen" context does not always include a third-person self-

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[62]John H. Sailhamer, *Genesis,* in vol. 1 of *EBC*, rev. ed., ed. Tremper Longman and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 323.

[63]Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18-50*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.), 646. Cf. Moses's address in Deut 33. For an overview of scholarship concerning genre of the passage, see Raymond de Hoop, *Genesis 49 in Its Literary and Historical Context*, Oudtestamentische Studiën, vol. 29 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 248ff.

[64]Wenham notes that the phrase בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים "is a phrase that only appears in prophetic contexts. In some passages it has a clearly eschatological sense . . . but elsewhere it seems to have a less technical sense, 'in the distant future,' after certain other things, which the prophet has just described or hinted at, have happened." Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 471. According to Spero, the rabbis interpreted the phrase בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים in v. 1 "in accordance with the meaning these words had assumed in the books of the later prophets and in talmudic literature; i.e., the *end* of the exile in an eschatological sense, the redemption to be brought about by God." Shubert Spero, "Jacob's Death-Bed Farewell to His Sons: According to the Rabbis," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 29, no. 3 (2001): 168.

[65]As in Lamech's song, the initial illeism is in relation to a construct noun (i.e., "sons of Jacob") and the second is not.

reference. It is reasonable to argue that the context of the pronouncement contributes to the choice of illeism. Yet, more specifically, the choice of illeism primarily serves to emphasize Israel's unique status and relationship to his sons. Wenham notes the repetition and parallelism of verse 2 (וְשִׁמְעוּ בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב וְשִׁמְעוּ אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבִיכֶם) gives Jacob "the mantle of a wise teacher . . . as well as a prophet."[66] His status as patriarch as well as the authority associated with his prophetic blessings are all underscored in the distinctive choice of the third-person self-reference.

Balaam

Jacob the patriarch and Balaam the diviner[67] both refer to the "days to come" (בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים) in their introductions (Balaam before his final oracle in Num 24:14; Lamech in Gen 49:1),[68] and both contexts are prophetic in nature. Also, all three occurrences noted in this section reflect a "summons to listen." Just as Jacob and Lamech both summon their audiences to listen, Balaam also calls to Balak, in oracle two (Num 23:18), to hear and give ear to him (קוּם בָּלָק וּשֲׁמָע הַאֲזִינָה עָדַי בְּנוֹ צִפֹּר). Finally, Lamech's song, Jacob's prophecy, and Balaam's oracles are also connected by their poetic genre.

Balaam's use of illeism is distinctive in that it occurs in the last two of four oracles. This raises the question of how the illeism functions in oracle three and four and, just as significant, why Balaam does not refer to himself in the third person in the first two oracles. In oracle one (23:7) Balaam begins the oracle referring to himself with the expected first singular pronoun. He states, "From Aram Balak led me" (מִן־אֲרָם יַנְחֵנִי בָלָק).

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[66]Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 471.

[67]While context and background of the speaker is significant for a proper evaluation of their use of illeism, the identity and nature of Balaam's character is ambiguous. Savelle rightly notes that "Balaam is one of the most enigmatic characters in the Scriptures. His personal background is sketchy, and his spiritual status is ambiguous. Scholars debate whether he was a true or a false prophet, a diviner or sorcerer." Charles H. Savelle, "Canonical and Extracanonical Portraits of Balaam," *BSac* 166, no. 664 (2009): 1.

[68]The phrase also occurs in Deut 4:30; 31:29; Isa 2:2; Jer 23:20; 30:24; 48:47; 49:39; Ezek 38:16; Dan 10:14; Hosea 3:5; and Mic 4:1.

In oracle two (23:18) Balaam simply states, "Rise, Balak, hear. Listen to me" (קוּם בָּלָק וּשֲׁמַע הַאֲזִינָה עָדָי), again choosing the first singular pronoun. Yet, in 24:1 the narrator notes Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord for him to bless Israel and that the Spirit of God came upon him. Following this pivotal moment, Balaam's introductions for oracle three and four become elaborately worded, clarifying in descriptive poetry his authoritative status, and, most significant for this study, reflecting his choice of the third person for self-reference.

In his introduction to the third oracle (24:3-4) Balaam states, "The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor, the oracle of the man whose eye is opened, the oracle of the one who hears the words of Elohim, who sees a vision of the Almighty, falling down yet his eyes uncovered." The fourth oracle begins similarly in 24:15-16 (though Balaam adds that he "knows the knowledge of Elyon"). It is in the introductions to oracle three and four that Balaam emphasizes his given status.[69] His words are not a boast (in contrast to the words of Lamech), but an acknowledgment of the authority granted to him. He is one whose eyes are opened, who hears the very words of Elohim, and knows the knowledge of Elyon.

In summary, his shift from using the first person singular pronoun to referring to himself from a third-person perspective happens only after the narrator tells two important facts: (1) Balaam saw that his blessing Israel pleased Yahweh; and (2) the Spirit of Elohim came upon him. His shift to the third-person perspective serves to emphasize his given status and authority and contributes to the now heightened intensity

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[69]Wilson makes the complementary observation that only the third and fourth poems begin with anaphora, noting the repetition of נְאֻם common to both. Johnny Lee Wilson, "A Rhetorical Critical Analysis of the Balaam Oracles" (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1981), 92. Wilson notes the term is used primarily in Hebrew prophecy "as a means of establishing the validity of the utterance" (ibid.). He writes, "Indeed, the great preponderance of usage was with the divine name, since only here and in Psalm 36:2, Proverbs 30:1, and 2 Samuel 23:1 is the term used with other than a divine epithet" (ibid.). Interestingly, he adds that with the exception of Ps 36:2, the term "is used with an authority figure: a father, a king, or a prophet" (ibid.). Though Wilson offers a rigorous rhetorical analysis of these verses, he does not address the shift from first to third-person self-reference.

of the third and fourth oracles and the commitment with which they are given.

Section Summary

   The contexts of the illeism of Lamech, Jacob, and Balaam share the same poetic genre and, most significantly, a "summons to listen" to the prophecy or pronouncement of the speaker. Yet, concomitant with the similarities are the diverse rhetorical effects of the illeism in each context. Lamech's illeism conveys a sense of arrogance and affirms his self perceived superiority; Jacob's illeism underscores his position as patriarch and the authority of his prophetic blessings; Balaam's illeism reflects his recognition of his given status by Elyon and the authority of his prophetic words.

Characterization of the Speaker

   Three occurrences which may reflect illeism are briefly noted for the sake of thoroughness. Rather than referring to himself or herself by a title, proper name, or third-person pronoun, the speaker (if understood as a self-reference) characterizes himself or herself from a third-person perspective. These examples are noted as potential illeisms because, in each case, the text is not clear whether the speaker refers to him or herself (either because of a textual or interpretive issue).

Deborah

   In Judges 4:9 Deborah tells Barak she will go with him to battle the Canaanites. Yet, she notes that this path will not lead to glory for Barak, for Yahweh will sell Sisera "into the hand of a woman" (בְּיַד־אִשָּׁה). If Deborah is referring to herself, technically this is an illeistic statement. The generality of the expression "a woman" serves to present the outcome from the perspective of not only Barak, but the culture in

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general.[70] The reference highlights that the victory would not just go to another person, but to a female. As Yee notes, "for the author, the one who confronts Barak with the oracle of God is first and foremost a woman."[71] Yet, the text is not clear whether Deborah is referring to herself or to Jael who ultimately kills Sisera.[72] Boling argues for a double meaning. Deborah thinks she is referring to herself while the narrator and audience know it is Jael. He writes, "Deborah is thus represented as speaking better than she knows, an example of unconscious prediction, which adds poignancy to the outcome."[73] Murray suggests the possibility that Deborah, as prophetess, is knowingly speaking ironically to Barak.[74]

Naaman

In 2 Kings 5:11 Naaman, angered by Elisha's response, states that he expected Elisha would come out, call upon the name of Yahweh his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure הַמְּצֹרָע. The textual evidence supports reading this participle as reflecting a third-person self-reference (i.e., "the leper"). The same form with the article

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[70]As reflected in this example, illeism has the potential to focus either on the individual speaker or focus on a broad group in which the speaker is included. In each case illeism would be legitimately present (without degree). Both emphasize aspects of the speaker. With a third-person reference to one's proper name or title, their associated reputation, status, or authority is implied. With the general description the speaker is explicitly contextualized by the use of illeism.

[71]Gale A. Yee, "By the Hand of a Woman: The Metaphor of the Woman Warrior in Judges 4," *Semeia*, no. 61 (1993): 115.

[72]Moore notes בְּיַד־אִשָּׁה does not refer to Deborah but to Jael "as is quite clear in the sequel of the story." George Foot Moore, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Judges*, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895), 116. He notes that although numerous scholars read it this way it is influenced, "partly by an erroneous interpretation of this verse, partly by ch. 5, in which the fame of Deborah does indeed eclipse that of Barak" (ibid.). Also see James D. Martin, *The Book of Judges: Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 57.

[73]Robert G. Boling, *Judges*, AB, vol. 6A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), 96.

[74]D. F. Murray, "Narrative Structure and Technique in the Deborah-Barak Story," in *Studies in the Historical Books of the Old Testament*, ed. John Adney Emerton, VTSup (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979), 174-75, 176n40. Murray ultimately views Deborah's statement as a foreshadowing of Jael's actions, yet he explores interesting possibilities such as how Barak and the audience may have understood her words.

is found in Leviticus 14:2-3 and clearly means and is consistently rendered by modern translations as "leper." Also, the pual passive form is used in an indefinite sense ("a leper) in 2 Kings 5:1, 27; 7:8; 15:5; and 2 Chronicles 26:21, 23. Yet, translators and scholars translate the participle variously as "the leper"[75] or "the leprosy."[76] Interestingly, no commentators surveyed note any associated ambiguity.[77] Ultimately, whether Naaman is referring to the disease or himself does not radically change the interpretation of the passage. Yet, the distinction is noteworthy. If the Hebrew is understood as Naaman referring to himself, why does he reference himself as "the leper"?[78] The illeism seems to distance or disassociate the speaker from the identity of a diseased social outcast. It functions to convey Naaman's own indignation with his condition. While it may possibly emphasizes the seriousness of his malady, ultimately, a more natural reading of the text is that the shift in perspective provides distance between how Naaman sees himself and what, in reality, he has become.

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[75]Translations include ESV, KJV, and NASB. The only scholars of those surveyed who translate the participle as the "leper" are Cogan and Tadmor. Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *II Kings: A New Translation*, AB, vol. 10 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1988), 61.

[76]Translations noted that render הַמְּצֹרָע as leprosy or similar (i.e., "the disease;" "the spot") are NIV, NET, HCSB, NJB, and TNK. Scholars who render the participle this way include T. R. Hobbs, *2 Kings*, WBC, vol. 13 (Dallas: Word Pub., 1989), 56; John Gray, *I & II Kings: A Commentary*, 2nd ed., OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970), 503; James A. Montgomery and Henry Snyder Gehman, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Kings*, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1951), 375; Marvin A. Sweeney, *I & II Kings: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 293; Allan Effa, "Prophet, Kings, Servants, and Lepers: A Missiological Reading of an Ancient Drama," *Missiology* 35, no. 3 (2007): 308.

[77]HALOT simply renders it as "afflicted with a rash, with a skin disease." The LXX translates it as a neuter singular (τὸ λεπρόν) which indicates an understanding of "the leprous place" rather than "the leprous one," though Brenton renders the Greek as "the leper." Lust, Eynikel, and Hauspie render the Greek as "leprosy" in 2 Kgs 5:11. J. Lust, E. Eynikel, and K. Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, rev. ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1992), 370. Muraoka simply offers the general gloss of "suffering leprosy" for το λεπρός. T. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2009), 429.

[78]The article would define the leper as the one who had recently approached Elisha for healing, so Naaman's expectations do not refer to a general idea of Elisha's coming out to "a" leper.

Job

In Job 26:2-3 Job responds to the counsel of his friends. His words are defensive and marked with sarcasm. He states, "How you have helped one with no strength (לְלֹא־כֹחַ). How you have saved the arm with no power (לֹא־עֹז). How you have counseled one with no wisdom (לְלֹא חָכְמָה) . . . ." In agreement with Alden,[79] context indicates Job is referring to himself, though the text leaves room for debate.[80] If the expressions are illeistic, they allow Job to characterize himself from an external perspective, serving to highlight his counselors' own misguided assumptions.

Section Summary

Because of textual and interpretive issues, the examples are presented only as potential occurrences of illeism. Each possible illeism noted is distinctive from the expected third-person title, name, or pronoun typically noted. Rather, each example reflects a characterization of the speaker. Deborah refers to herself as "a woman," Naaman refers to himself as "the leper," and Job as "one with no strength . . . the arm with no power . . . one with no wisdom." Yet, as seen with other types of illeism, the three examples noted each have their own distinct rhetorical effect, each being nuanced by the identity and background of the speaker and specific context.

Within a Trial Setting/Historical Context

In Samuel's farewell address, he speaks of Yahweh's righteous deeds in behalf of his people. Samuel states that, in answer to the cries of the people for deliverance,

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[79]Alden notes Job has already referenced his lack of strength on several occasions (6:11-13; 9:19; 12:16; 24:22). Robert L. Alden, *Job*, NAC, vol. 11 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993), 258.

[80]Habel follows the NEB translation, understanding the three expressions ("no strength," "powerless arm," "no wisdom") as referring to his counselors. Norman C. Habel, *The Book of Job: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985), 375-76. Clines views the lines as spoken by one of Job's friends. David J. A. Clines, *Job 21-37*, WBC, vol. 18A (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2006), 630.

"Yahweh sent Jerubbaal and Barak[81] and Jephthah and Samuel (וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה אֶת־יְרֻבַּעַל וְאֶת־בְּדָן וְאֶת־יִפְתָּח וְאֶת־שְׁמוּאֵל) and delivered you from the hand of your enemies" (1 Sam 12:11). The LXX[L] and Syriac read "Samson" instead of "Samuel."[82] Yet, McCarter notes the MT reading is preferred by many critics "on the grounds that the reading 'Samson' was substituted to preserve Samuel's modesty."[83] The evidence strongly supports the reading "Samuel" and most scholars support this view.[84] Hertzberg notes that Samuel's name being mentioned among the judges "should not be viewed as a writing error (for 'Samson' for example)."[85] He writes that this inclusion of Samuel's name expresses "that the sermon is meant as more than a presentation of a specific historical circumstance. The entire period of the judges, including that of Samuel, is being examined here."[86] Hertzberg captures an important aspect of this third-person self-reference by Samuel. Samuel is a participant within the history he is conveying.

Yet, Goldman argues against the view that Samuel's self-reference allows him to review the era of the judges as a whole. He notes that, if one understands the reference in the context of a trial, "the third person is not strange. Samuel, the accuser, disassociates himself from Samuel, the saviour who is cited as evidence against his

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[81]Based on context and LXX. MT reads בְּדָן.

[82]The LXX[BA] reads "Samuel." Josephus does not include either name (Ant. 6.90).

[83] McCarter, *I Samuel*, 211. He adds that the reading "Samuel" is appropriate in light of 7:2-17 (ibid.).

[84]So Klein, *1 Samuel*, 111; R. P. Gordon, *I & II Samuel: A Commentary*, Library of Biblical Interpretation (Grand Rapids: Regency Reference Library, 1988), 128; Smith, *Commentary on the Books of Samuel*, 86; Karl Budde, *Die Bücher Samuel* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1902), 79-80. Budde confidently writes, "Simson statt Samuel in Syr. und LXX Luc. ist sicher nicht das Ursprüngliche" (ibid.).

[85]". . . dar nicht als Schreibfehler (etwa für 'Simson') angesehen werden." Hans Wilhelm Hertzberg, *Die Samuelbücher* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956), 77.

[86]He writes, "Daß die Predigt mehr sein will als die Darlegung einer bestimmten geschichtlichen Lage. Die Gesamtperiode der Richter einschließlich Samuels soll hier begutachtet werden." Ibid.

people."[87] Smith offers a similar position. He writes that "since the figure of a trial is being employed, the third person reference to Samuel is appropriate."[88]

These points by Hertzberg, Goldman, and Smith contribute to an appreciation for the function of illeism in verse 11 and the positions of "historical perspective" and "trial setting" do not seem contradictory. Hertzberg sees the third-person reference as appropriate because Samuel is addressing the period of the judges, of which he was a part. In his speech, Samuel notes the people's forgetting of Yahweh, the oppressors which followed, and the deliverers sent by Yahweh (v. 11).[89] Samuel's reference to himself in the third person allows him to present the works of God, his sending of these deliverers of Israel, from the perspective of his audience. The dissociation created by the illeism allows the focus to remain on these moments of oppression and deliverance in their history. To say "Yahweh sent Jerubbaal and Barak and Jephthah and *me*" would serve only to distract the hearers' attention from Yahweh and his acts of deliverance. The illeism allows Samuel to emphasize the righteous deeds of God rather than himself.[90] Additionally, the trial setting of the speech is significant and likely contributing to the choice of illeism by Samuel. While certainty is not possible, it seems both issues are functioning in complementary roles. Both Samuel's intent to focus on the historical era

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[87]Solomon Goldman, *Samuel: Hebrew Text & English Translation with an Introduction and Commentary* (London: Soncino Press, 1951), 65.

[88]Smith, *Commentary on the Books of Samuel*, 166. Smith notes that Samuel is in effect putting himself on trial, inviting the people to testify against him before the Lord who is the heavenly Judge (v. 3). Ibid., 162-63.

[89]Fokkelman notes that "in vv. 9-11 the various stages of the Judges period are telescoped according to the cyclical view of history, so that we are guided through the circle once." Fokkelman, *Narrative Art and Poetry*, 4:510. He adds that the cycle is reflected by "the series of oppressors in v. 9, and their opposites in 11a" (ibid.).

[90]This aspect of the use by Samuel is similar in a sense to the ancient Greek historians who use the third-person self-reference to present their own activities in the history they are recording. Yet, this literary use was intended to mitigate the perception that the writer was less than reliable, the third-person narration contributing an air of objectivity to the writing. Samuel is referring to himself in direct speech while addressing an audience, and, as noted, uses illeism to focus on the saving work of Yahweh. The area of overlap is interesting, but the distinction between the two should be maintained.

rather than his specific role in it, as well as his present role in the context of a trial setting, are contributing to the choice of the third-person self-reference.

In the Speech of Kings

To this point five uses of illeism in the OT have been noted: to show deference (primarily the reference "your servant"); within an oath formula (Jonathan, Abner, David); within a summons to listen (Lamech, Jacob, Balaam); in characterization of the speaker (Deborah, Naaman, Job); and in a trial setting/historical era (Samuel). It was noted that the deferential use occurs over 130x. Yet, outside of this use only 10 other total occurrences have been noted so far. In this section, the study addresses the relatively prominent occurrence of illeism in the direct speech of kings.

Twelve kings[91] use the third-person self-reference in direct speech a total of 33x in the OT. This number is significant in comparison to the relatively few times the phenomenon occurs outside of its use to show deference. Only Yahweh and Jesus are recorded as using illeism more in Scripture. Each occurrence will be addressed below, but the following observations are offered as an overview of the third person for self-reference among kings.

In evaluating the various occurrences of illeism in the OT, the study addresses the basic question "Why does the speaker choose to refer to him or herself in the third person?" In evaluating the speech of kings, the text was analyzed in order to highlight any possible factors that may be associated with or contributing to the use of illeism. The analysis reveals that illeism as used by kings of the OT is reflected in a variety of self-references, including by name ("David [2x]," "Jehu," and "Jeroboam"), by name and title ("King Solomon," "King Ahasuerus"), title and state ("King of Assyria"), royal title

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[91]This number does not include Araunah because of the ambiguity of the text in 2 Sam 23. Though this occurrence is addressed below, the occurrence is not included in any of the totals noted in this section.

("king" [מֶלֶךְ] [22x]), and sacral title ("anointed" and "anointed ones"). As can be seen, the self-reference by the royal title "king" is used in the majority of occurrences (22 of the 33x). Illeism in the speech of kings occurs in questions (3x), commands (3x), requests (3x in the context of prayers), and most commonly in statements (11x).[92] It appears in various types of genres (biblical narrative, biblical historiography, and poetry) and various contexts (dialogue, oath formula, letter, decree, through a messenger, and within prayer to Yahweh) as well as in various settings. Also, the illeism of kings is found in the Writings and the Prophets, but does not occur in the Pentateuch. These observations reveal no specific pattern associated with illeism among OT kings and affirms its consistent use across a variety contexts. As noted, the self-reference is the title "the king" in the majority of cases. This reference is more impersonal than a reference by name (i.e., "David," "Jehu," etc.) or even name and title (i.e., "King Ahaseurus"), yet, as will be shown, all ultimately have the same rhetorical effect.

It is significant to note not only where illeism is found, but also where it is not. Illeism can occur when a person has a sense of self-importance (such as noted with Lamech) or when one's status is in reality important, such as kings. Yet, if simply having the status of "important person" were the single criterion (in other words, if the use of illeism by a king should simply be categorized in this sense), one would expect to see illeism elsewhere. Yet, many individuals of "importance" whose recorded words in Scripture reflect a clear opportunity for illeism do not refer to themselves in the third person. For example, Nehemiah never refers to himself in the third person though much

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[92]Of the 33 occurrences, the third-person self-reference is chosen instead of the possessive pronoun "my" 16x (1 Kgs 14:2; 2 Kgs 16:15; 18:33; Ezra 4:22; 6:10; 7:23; Esth 1:15; 8:8; 9:12; 2 Sam 5:8; 2 Sam 5:8; Ps 72:1; 1 Kgs 14:2; 2 Kgs 16:15; 18:3; 19:10; Ezra 4:22; 7:20, 23, 26; 6:10; Esth 1:15; 8:8; 9:12; Dan 3:28). As noted, in these instances the self-reference (the name or the title מֶלֶךְ) is preceded by a noun in the construct state (i.e., "wife of Jeroboam," "realm of the king," etc.). The possibility of some of these phrases having a "fixed" nature in the language of that day will be addressed below. In contrast, the third-person self-reference replaces the personal pronoun "I," "me," or "us" 16x (2 Sam 19:11-12; 22:51; 1 Kgs 2:45; 2 Chr 6:22; Ps 72:1; 2 Kgs 18:18; 3:10, 13; Ezra 7:14, 15; Jer 38:5). The plural "us" occurs in 2 Kgs 3:10 and 13 in which Jehoram refers to himself and two other kings.

of his narration is in the first person. No prophet refers to himself in the third person, though the respect given to them in accordance with their status is consistently reflected in Scripture. Job is another example, though clearly there is a complexity to the context.[93] He is presented in such a way that he meets reasonable criteria for being "an important person"[94] and, at various times in his dialogue, he refers to himself. Yet, in the course of the extensive recorded dialogue Job never refers to himself in the third person.

While not a conclusive point, the evidence reveals that illeism never occurs in the OT in the direct speech of individuals whose sole characterization is that of a person of respectability or importance. In every occurrence of illeism noted so far where the individual is presented as a person of importance, the choice of illeism is driven by a more specific element (i.e., an oath context, summons to listen, a specific characterization of the speaker, and a trial setting).

Finally, it should be noted that the argument for the category of "royal illeism" does not imply that every king in Scripture is recorded as speaking in this manner. Based on a survey of 1 Samuel through 2 Chronicles, a total of 23 royal figures (22 kings and 1 queen) are recorded as referring to themselves in some manner (where illeism could be chosen).[95] Of the 23 royal figures, 16 refer to themselves only in the first person while 7

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[93]It could be argued illeism is less likely to be used by the speaker in such a context of distress. Yet, the case could be made that Job could have spoken illeistically to emphasize his current state or to emphasize his once prominent status.

[94]Terrien observes that "experts have recognized for a long time that the hero did not present himself as an ordinary mortal. Allusions to the virility, the social responsibility, and the kingly leadership of the sufferer abound throughout the poetic discussion." Samuel L. Terrien, "The Yahweh Speeches and Job's Responses," *Review & Expositor* 68, no. 4 (1971): 507. Yet, see also A. Caquot, "Traits royaux dans le personnage de Job," in *Hommage À Wilhelm Vischer* (Montpellier: Causse, 1960), 32ff. Caquot addresses royal aspects of Job, evaluating royal traits reflected in Job 29. Whether or not Job reflects royal traits, the example of Job as an individual presented as a person of importance who does not use illeism still stands. The author does not present Job explicitly as a royal figure, but rather as a person of means and importance (1:2-3; 29:7ff).

[95]Achish (1 Sam 21:14, 15; 26:22; 27:12; 28:1, 13; 29:3, 6), Hiram (1 Kgs 5:8-10), Queen of Sheba (1 Kgs 10:6), Pharaoh (1 Kgs 11:22), Rehoboam (1 Kgs 12:5; 2 Chr 10:5, 14), Jeroboam (1 Kgs 13:6-7; 14:2), Asa (1 Kgs 15:18-19; 2 Chr 16:3), Ben-hadad (1 Kgs 20:2-11, 34), Ahab (1 Kgs 21:2, 6, 20; 22:6, 8, 16, 27, 30, 34; 2 Chr 18:3, 29, 33), Ahaziah (2 Kgs 1:2), Ben-hadad II (2 Kgs 5:5-6; 6:11; 8:8),

refer to themselves illeistically (either by title, name, or both). It should be noted that this survey includes all recorded speech of royal figures that reflect self-reference. Defining the context of the recorded speech of each would give a more accurate picture.[96] While broad in its parameters, this assessment of these texts does offer a general picture of this tendency for kings to speak illeistically. Thirty percent of the royal figures within 1 Samuel through 2 Chronicles refer to themselves with a third-person self-reference. Of those who are recorded as using illeism, this choice of third-person reference is not seen each time they refer to themselves in direct speech. Often the third-person reference occurs after a shift from the first person. (The same is true in the direct speech of Jesus and Yahweh. Often the direct speech of both shifts from first person ("I," "me," etc.) to third-person perspective ("Yahweh," "the Son," etc.).

The remainder of this section addresses each occurrence in context and evaluates its rhetorical function within the text. The rhetorical effect is addressed based on the self-reference itself (name, title, etc.) as well as the context in which it is used. The texts evaluated below will show a consistent rhetorical effect of illeism reflected among kings. The third-person self-reference creates a dissociation or distance between the speaker and his self-reference which allows the speaker to present himself from an external perspective. This perspective encompasses not just the perspective of the king, but of everyone who is under his reign. As noted, the rhetorical effect of this external perspective is nuanced based on context, speaker, and self-reference. Yet, it will be shown that, in general, this third-person perspective allows emphasis of the office of the speaker and the associated reputation, authority, military power, etc.

Jehoram (2 Kgs 6:31; 7:12), Hezekiah (2 Kgs 19:10; 20:8, 15; 2 Chr 29:10), Josiah (2 Kgs 22:13; 2 Chr 34:21; 35:21, 23), Amaziah (2 Chr 25:9), and Cyrus (2 Chr 36:23). The Queen of Sheba is included, though it is not clear whether she was a queen regnant or not.

[96]For instance, a king speaking to another king may be less likely to use illeism. The same may be true when the king is speaking in the context of weakness or sickness (such as the case of Hezekiah). In this sense, the survey of 1 Samuel through 2 Chronicles offers only a general assessment.

King David

Two uses of David's use of illeism have already been noted under "deferential use" (2 Sam 7:18-29) and "within oath formulas" (1 Sam 25:22). Yet, in addition to these, David speaks illeistically on three other occasions (2 Sam 5:8; 19:11-12; 22:51) and the illeism can most naturally be described as reflecting a "royal" emphasis, or primarily an emphasis of the status of David's kingship.[97]

In 2 Samuel 5, David and his men go to Jerusalem to take the city from the Jebusites. The complexity of the passage is reflected in the history of interpretation.[98] Yet, most modern scholars understand the verse in the following way: The Jebusites boast that "the blind and the lame" will turn David away. Leithart notes this is likely a

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[97]If Davidic authorship is assumed for certain psalms, the Psalter then reflects many instances of illeism (i.e., 16:10; 18:30; 21:1-19; 34:6; 61:6-7; 63:11). 73 psalms reflect the subscript לְדָוִד (Pss 3-9; 11-32; 34-41; 51-65; 68-70; 86; 101; 103; 108-10; 122; 124; 131; 133; 138-45. As Vangemeren notes, "The Bible clearly teaches that David was a poet of extraordinary abilities . . . and a musician . . . and that he created the temple guilds of singers and musicians . . . . The NT writers likewise assumed that David was the author of many Psalms (cf. Mt 23:43-25; Ac 2:25-28; 4:25-26; Heb 4:7) and even spoke of the book of Psalms as being David's (Lk 20:42)." Willem A. Vangemeren, *Psalms,* in vol. 5 of *EBC*, ed. Tremper Longman and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 63. Yet, as Vangemeren rightly notes, the difficulty of interpreting the preposition ל "is crucial in determining authorship" (ibid.). For the scope of this study these potential illeisms are noted but are not explored.

[98]See P. Kyle McCarter, *II Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes, and Commentary*, AB, vol. 9 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984), 137-41; A. A. Anderson, *2 Samuel*, WBC, vol. 11 (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), 81-85. Primarily the issues concern the reference to the "blind and the lame" and the meaning of צִנּוֹר. These issues are addressed briefly because of the context surrounding David's illeism. Interpretations for צִנּוֹר vary including the following: "windpipe or throat," McCarter, *II Samuel*, 138-39; "trident," Yigael Yadin, *The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands: In the Light of Archaeological Study* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), 268; a euphemism for David's *membrum virile* in the context of his taking an oath "on the mark of his circumcision." J. J. Glück, "The Conquest of Jerusalem in the Account of II Sam 5:68a," in *Biblical Essays* (Proceedings of the Ninth Meeting of "Die Ou-Testamentiese Werkgemeenskap in Suid-Afrika" Held at the University of Stellenbosch, 26th-29th July 1966, and Proceedings of the Second Meeting of "Die Nuwe-Testamentiese Werkgemeenskap van Suid-Afrika" Held at the University of Stellenbosch, 22nd-25th July 1966) ed. A.H. Van Zyl (Pretoria: Pro Rege-Pers Baperk, 1966), 101-2; παραξιφις ("daggar"), LXX. For categorized proposed translations, see Terence Kleven, "Up the Waterspout: How David's General Joab Got inside Jerusalem," *BAR* 20, no. 4 (1994). Most modern scholars understand צִנּוֹר as "water shaft." So Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, 321; Anderson, *2 Samuel*, 84; Mauchline, *1 and 2 Samuel*, 218; Hertzberg, *Die Samuelbücher*, 220; James E. Smith, *1 & 2 Samuel*, The College Press NIV Commentary (Joplin, MO: College Press Pub. Co., 2000), 375; Kleven, "Up the Waterspout."

"pre-fight taunt: Even the weak can protect this fortress, it is so strong."[99] In verse 8 David states illeistically, "Whoever would strike the Jebusites, let him get to the lame and the blind who are hated by David's soul"(שָׂנְאוּ נֶפֶשׁ דָּקִד),[100] through the water tunnel (צִנּוֹר)."[101] David's words do not mean that he despises those who are disabled;[102] he is rather echoing the words of the Jebusites' own self-designation.[103]

David's reference to himself by name in the immediate context of the encounter with the Jebusites could be seen as an emphasis of David's internal disposition only. In this sense the illeism is solely emphasizing his animosity for the enemy, with no associated royal themes. The fact that David does not include his newly acquired title in his third-person self-reference aligns with this view. Yet, the reference should be seen in the context of his being anointed king of Israel and in the context of him leading his men in the attack. Bergen notes that "by David making his first recorded act as Israel's king that of fulfilling the long-neglected Torah command to dispossess the Jebusites and reinitiating the crusade to eradicate them from the land . . . he was demonstrating his continuity with Moses and establishing himself as a king devoted to the Lord's demands."[104]

David's self-reference follows immediately in the narrative sequence after David is anointed king over Israel and his reign of 40 years is noted (5:1-5). His attack of the Jebusites begins in verse 6 and ends in verse 10 with the narrator noting that "David

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[99]Leithart, *A Son to Me*, 187n4.

[100]Qere reads שֹׂנְאֵי.

[101]The parallel account in 1 Chr 11:4-9 reflects David's offering the position of commander to the first to strike the Jebusites and does not reflect this illeistic phrase.

[102]As Leithart notes, he would later welcome Mephibosheth to his table. Leithart, *A Son to Me*, 187.

[103]Ibid. So also Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, 321.

[104]Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, 320.

became greater and greater (וַיֵּלֶךְ דָּוִד הָלוֹךְ וְגָדוֹל), for Yahweh, the God of hosts, was with him." If the self-reference is simply understood as an emphasis of David's animosity for his enemy, the context of the narrative is lost. Why would David's emotions matter to anyone, except for his status as king? The self-reference is serving in this instance to emphasize those who are enemies of *the anointed king of Israel*. As in many of the instances of illeism, certainty is not possible, particularly in this instance where David refers to himself by name only. Yet, because of the context, the rhetorical effect of the illeism may best be understood as a royal emphasis.

In the second example, in 2 Samuel 19, the "large-scale political point of the chapter is David's return to the throne."[105] In 2 Samuel 19:11-12 the narrator tells us that King David sent a message to the elders of Judah through Zadok and Abiathar the priests. The king asks, "Why should you be the last to bring back the king (לְהָשִׁיב אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ) to his house, since the word of all Israel has come to the king (בָּא אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ). You are my brothers; you are my bone and my flesh. Why then should you be last to bring back the king (לְהָשִׁיב אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ).[106] The message reflects the words of David, presented from his perspective as indicated by the first person pronouns in the context of his kinship with Judah ("you are *my* bone and *my* flesh"). In contrast to the first person pronouns in this personal context, the three-fold self-reference by title (מֶלֶךְ) emphasizes his royal office. Revell notes the envelope structure of the phrase "to bring back the king" (לְהָשִׁיב אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ) which "represent[s] the action with which the speaker, King David, is

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[105]Leithart, *A Son to Me*, 258.

[106]In vv. 9-10 the tribes of Israel argue among themselves. Noting that the one whom they had anointed, Absalom, was dead, they ask why there was no effort to bring the king back (לְהָשִׁיב אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ). Smith notes that the elders of Judah had been "instrumental in launching the coup." Smith, *1 & 2 Samuel*, 483. He adds that "by inviting them to take the lead David was signaling that there would be no reprisals against them" (ibid.). Anderson views David as "apparently exploiting the North-South jealousy in order to force the hand of the men of Judah to take the lead in restoring him to his throne." Anderson, *2 Samuel*, 236.

concerned, as viewed by his subjects, and so evoke its political significance."[107]

David's third use of "royal" illeism occurs in 2 Samuel 22:51 in the context of David's song of thanksgiving. David praises Yahweh stating, "Great deliverance he gives to his king (מַגְדִּיל יְשׁוּעוֹת מַלְכּוֹ),[108] and shows steadfast love to his anointed, to David (לִמְשִׁיחוֹ לְדָוִד) and his offspring forever. Bergen writes concerning the statement that "undergirding David's ministry was the certain knowledge that he was the Lords 'anointed' . . . one chosen by the Lord to be 'king,' formally set apart and empowered for divine service."[109] While Bergen does not mention the shift to the third person, the threefold third-person self-reference ("his king," "his anointed," and "to David") serves to emphasize this fact of being chosen by Yahweh to be king. The song itself reflects Psalm 18, which praises Yahweh for delivering David from his enemies and from the hand of Saul. The song in its new context still exalts Yahweh for his deliverance from his enemies and this deliverance reflects Yahweh's "steadfast love for his anointed king."[110] Yet, as Leithart rightly notes, "David's Psalm of praise for deliverance from Saul applies also to his deliverance from the new Saul, Absalom."[111]

Though these three texts briefly addressed differ in their phrasing and contexts, the illeism of each reflects emphasis of kingship. Yet, interestingly, each also echoes a more broader theme, a common context of David's victory over his enemies. In 2 Samuel

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[107]Revell, *Designation of the Individual*, 352.

[108]Qere reads מַגְדּוֹל.

[109]Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, 462-63. Bergen notes the similarity with the final verse of Hannah's song (1 Sam 2:10), yet also notes a distinction. He writes, "David names himself and his descendents as being the Lord's kings, whereas Hannah made no such mention" (463). He adds, "The resulting effect of the apparently intentional contrast between the two verses is the affirmation that the house of David was in fact the fulfillment of Hannah's prophetic word" (ibid.).

[110]Mauchline, *1 and 2 Samuel*, 312.

[111]Leithart, *A Son to Me*, 272. Mays writes concerning the song that "the reader is asked to think of each episode and of the whole in terms of the Lord's deliverance, a vast witness to the covenant loyalty of the Lord to his anointed king." James Luther Mays, "The David of the Psalms," *Interpretation* 40, no. 2 (1986): 148.

5:8 and 19:11-12 David faces and overcomes the Jebusites and Absalom respectively. 2 Samuel 22 as a whole reflects deliverance from David's enemies. Though the three contexts also reflect degrees of discontinuity, the theme of adversity to the king and deliverance by Yahweh is noteworthy. The evidence suggests that in each context David's self-reference functions to emphasize his royal identity. Yet, more broadly, each instance of illeism and its surrounding context resonates with the theme of Yahweh's commitment to the establishment and continuation of Davidic kingship.

King Solomon

In 1 Kings 2:45 Solomon uses illeism in a manner that emphasizes his royal status. In 2 Chronicles 6:42 and Psalm 72 Solomon may also speak illeistically, though each reflects interpretive issues which will be addressed. In 1 Kings the king has heard that Shimei has traveled from Jerusalem to Gath and back. Solomon confronts him with the fact that he has broken his oath not to leave Jerusalem and reminds him of the harm he did to his father David. In verses 44b-45 he states, "Therefore, Yahweh will return your wickedness on your own head. But King Solomon shall be blessed (וְהַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בָּרוּךְ) and the throne of David shall be established before Yahweh forever." As Brueggemann notes, Solomon's statement reflects a "sweeping dynastic affirmation."[112] House highlights the echoes of 2 Samuel 7:1-17 heard in the context. "God will punish David's enemies, will bless Solomon, and will secure David's dynasty forever."[113] The self-reference by both name and title emphasizes the already emphatic nature of the wording, affirming Solomon's status as king and the Davidic dynasty in general.[114]

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[112]Walter Brueggemann, *1 & 2 Kings*, Smyth & Helwys Biblical Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000), 36. He adds that "the king named *Shalom* sits on the throne in the city named Jeru-*shalom*" (ibid. 37).

[113]Paul R. House, *1, 2 Kings*, NAC, vol. 8 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995), 103.

[114]Cogan argues that Solomon's self-benediction was meant to render ineffective any lingering effects of the curse. He bases this view on similar language found in an Egyptian legal papyrus. Mordechai Cogan, *1 Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB, vol. 10 (New York:

In 2 Chronicles 6:42 the Chronicler conveys Solomon's prayer of dedication for the temple. In the parallel passage of 1 Kings 8:50-53 Solomon ends his prayer using deferential language, calling on Yahweh to hear the pleading "of your servant" and "your people Israel" and references Yahweh's mercy demonstrated in delivering his people from Egypt. Yet, in 2 Chronicles 6:42, in place of the theme of the Exodus, Solomon's language reflects the wording of Psalm 132:8-10.[115] In 2 Chronicles 6:42 he prays, "Yahweh, Elohim, do not turn away the face of your anointed ones (אַל־תָּשֵׁב פְּנֵי מְשִׁיחֶיךָ). Remember your steadfast love for David your servant."[116] The text reflects ambiguity. Codex Leningradensis reflects the plural "anointed ones," yet, multiple Hebrew manuscripts, versions, as well as Psalm 132:10 reflect the singular "anointed one" (מְשִׁיחֶךָ). Dillard follows the plural rendering and notes that, while Solomon could be referring to the priests who are mentioned in verse 41b, "it would appear better to refer it

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Doubleday, 2001), 178-79. Gray argues in a similar direction, noting that "with the declaration of the blessing on Solomon, the curse of Shimei on David is formerly annulled." Gray, *I & II Kings*, 113. The wording may reflect a response to the initial curse of Shimei. Yet, the statement more naturally reads as an affirmation of Solomon's kingship and Yahweh's preservation of the Davidic dynasty. Patterson captures the sense of the break with the past and affirmation of the future noting that "past injustices had been dealt with, thus enabling him to begin his reign with a clean moral slate." Richard D. Patterson and Hermann J. Austel, *1 Samuel-2Kings,* in vol. 3 of *EBC,* ed. Tremper Longman and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 657.

[115]As Dillard notes, the context of the psalm is fitting for the temple dedication in that it recalls David's faithfulness in finding a place for the temple, the relocating of the ark to Jerusalem, as well as the "divine choice of the city and David's dynasty."Raymond B. Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, WBC, vol. 15 (Waco: Word Books, 1987), 51.

[116]The phrase זָכְרָה לְחַסְדֵי דָּוִיד עַבְדֶּךָ reflects ambiguity as well in that דָּוִיד עַבְדֶּךָ can be understood as an objective genitive (as translated above) or subjective genitive ("remembering the faithful actions of David"). Thompson notes the lines from Ps 132:10 have been reversed to emphasize the last line, "reminding the reader of Isa 55:3-6 with its reference to God's steadfast love for his servant David." J. A. Thompson, *1, 2 Chronicles*, NAC, vol. 9 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 231. He argues the verse reflects the same sense as Isa 55:3. Though I agree with Thompson's assessment, the ambiguity does not directly affect an analysis of Solomon's illeism. Whether affirming Yahweh's faithfulness to his promises or David's faithfulness to Yahweh, Solomon's self-reference affirms his chosen royal status by Yahweh and his status as descendent of David. For a more thorough analysis, see H. G. M. Williamson, "Sure Mercies of David: Subjective or Objective Genitive," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 23, no. 1 (1978).

to David and Solomon."[117] He adds that "the singular of Psalm 132:10 which clearly referred to a king has been made plural in Chronicles to embrace both kings."[118]

Most scholars surveyed view the reference as referring to Solomon.[119] Japhet renders the reference as singular and as referring to Solomon himself. She writes that, based on the context of its use here, "the entreaty 'do not refuse your anointed one', coming as it does at the end of the king's long prayer, surely indicates that Solomon himself is meant."[120] She adds that the order of the narrative itself supports this interpretation.[121] As soon as Solomon finishes his prayer, God responds in a favorable way. The following verse (7:1) notes that, when Solomon finishes his prayer, fire from heaven consumes the offering and sacrifices and God's glory fills the temple.

In contrast to the exodus context of 1 Kings, Solomon ends his prayer in the context of Yahweh's steadfast love for his servant David. Although ambiguity remains, context suggests that Solomon's reference allows him to speak of Yahweh's covenant with David, but also speak of himself, the present "anointed one," as well. He prays (v. 40), not to "the God of my father," but to "my God" (אֱלֹהַי). To see the reference as limited only to David misses the powerful context of the present chosen king, praying for his people, himself, and his descendants. Given this context, the reference may best be

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[117]Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 51.

[118]Ibid. In support of his view he notes a similar occurrence in 2 Chr 7:10, where a singular reference to David in 1 Kgs 8:66 is expanded to include both David and Solomon. Throntveit follows the plural understanding as a reference to David and Solomon, viewing their reigns as a united monarchy. Mark A. Throntveit, "The Idealization of Solomon as the Glorification of God in the Chronicler's Royal Speeches and Prayers," in *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium*, ed. Lowell K. Handy (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 424.

[119]So Edward Lewis Curtis and Albert Alonzo Madsen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Chronicles*, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1910), 345; Klein, *1 Samuel*, 99. Klein notes that in the reuse of Ps 132:10a "the Chronicler's Solomon seems to refer primarily to his own person" (ibid.).

[120]Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 604.

[121]Ibid.

understood as a third-person self-reference, the use of מְשִׁיחֶךָ serving to emphasize dynastic continuity, Solomon's position before Yahweh, and his reign over Yahweh's people.

Lastly, in Psalm 72 the psalmist begins by stating, "Give your judgment to the king (לְמֶלֶךְ) and your righteousness to the king's son (לְבֶן־מֶלֶךְ)." The psalm also reflects multiple third-person pronouns in verses 2-19 in reference to the king. If this royal psalm is written by Solomon, as traditionally held, these self-references are then a clear example of illeism that reflects royal emphasis. Yet, the authorship, as with many of the psalms, is debated. Though an in depth analysis goes beyond the scope or needs of this study, the possibility of Solomonic authorship is briefly addressed.

The superscription לִשְׁלֹמֹה, found only here and in Psalm 127, can of course be understood variously as "to," "for," or simply "concerning" Solomon.[122] The scholarship can be broadly divided into those who view Solomon as the author,[123] those who view David as the author writing to Solomon his son and successor,[124] or those who view

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[122]For a helpful analysis on the Hebrew preposition לְ as used in the psalms, see Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 2nd ed., WBC, vol. 19 (Nashville: Nelson Reference, 2004), 33-35.

[123]Perowne emphatically states that "the inscription, beyond all doubt, means to say that the Psalm is Solomon's." J. J. Stewart Perowne, *The Book of Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1976), 564. Though Gerstenberger suggests a possible post-exilic date, he notes that the "majority tradition . . . ascribes the text to Solomon, a model son of a king . . . and a monarch at that, whose main concerns were justice (cf. 1 Kgs 3:16-28), peace in an immense national territory (cf. 1 Kgs 5:4 . . .), and prosperity (cf. 1 Kings 10)." Erhard S. Gerstenberger, *Psalms. Part 2, and Lamentations*, ed. Rolf P. Knierim, Gene M. Tucker, and Marvin A. Sweeney, The Forms of the Old Testament Literature, vol. 15 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 65.

[124]Goldingay notes the LXX rendering may reflect that v. 20 (the Coda to Pss 42-72) implies that this is David's prayer for his son Solomon. John Goldingay, *Psalms 42-89*, Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 383. So also Walter J. Houston, "The King's Preferential Option for the Poor: Rhetoric, Ideology and Ethics in Psalm 72," *Biblical Interpretation* 7, no. 4 (1999): 344. Tate notes that, with its present canonical context, v. 20 suggests that the psalm was read this way in later times. Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, WBC, vol. 20 (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 222. Wilson notes this is perhaps the best way to understand it. Gerald H. Wilson, "The Use of Royal Psalms at the 'Seams' of the Hebrew Psalter," *JSOT* 11, no. 35 (1986): 89. He writes elsewhere that "the clear intent of the heading is to associate Solomon in *some* fashion with the vision of enduring kingship articulated in the psalm." Gerald H. Wilson, *Psalms*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 985.

neither David or Solomon as the author.[125] The Targum reflects Solomon as the author

(in addition to reflecting a messianic interpretation).[126] It reads "By Solomon it was said

in prophecy: O God, give the halakhoth of your justice to the anointed king, and your

righteousness to the son of king David."[127] The LXX renders the Hebrew as εἰς Σαλωμων

offering support for viewing the psalm as written by David to his son.

Kraus notes that many statements in the psalm could have led the editors to

ascribe the psalm to Solomon (i.e., vv. 1, 8, 10, and 15).[128] Yet, he adds that the phrase

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[125]Dahood notes the prayer "may well have been written by a functionary of the Solomonic court." Mitchell J. Dahood, *Psalms II: 51-100*, AB, vol. 17 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968), 179-80. Weiser views the prayer as "an intercession for the king which cannot originate with the king himself." Artur Weiser, *The Psalms: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), 502. Clements suggests the "royal son" reference is to Cyrus. Ronald E. Clements, "Psalm 72 and Isaiah 40-66: A Study in Tradition," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 28, no. 4 (2001): 338, 341. See also William George Seiple, "The Seventy-Second Psalm," *JBL* 33, no. 3 (1914): 172. Weiser, Dahood, and Tate view the psalm as likely being part of a type of enthronement or coronation ceremony for the Israelite king. See Weiser, *The Psalms*, 502; Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 222; Dahood, *Psalms II: 51-100*, 179. House sums up the scholarship noting that though the superscription links the psalm to Solomon and v. 20 states the psalm concludes David's prayers, "few scholars believe either man wrote the text." Paul R. House, *Old Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 413.

[126]Traditionally the psalm has been interpreted messianically, though even this understanding has its nuanced interpretations. Cf. P. Veugelers, "Le Psaume 72 Poème messianique," *Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses* 41, no. 3 (1965); Jean-Marie Carrière, "Le Ps 72 est-il un Psaume messianique," *Biblica* 72, no. 1 (1991); Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., "Psalm 72: An Historical and Messianic Current Example of Antiochene Hermeneutical Theoria," *JETS* 52, no. 2 (2009). Although the psalm is not quoted in the NT, Kaiser writes that "so clear is the picture of the king described in this psalm, and so extensive and far-reaching are the boundaries of his reign, not to mention of the similarities seen between the psalm in the prophecies of Isa 11:1-5 or Isa 60-62 that the case for being a messianic psalm can hardly be diminished." Ibid., 259. Perowne writes that "we have here another instance of the way in which prophecy rooted itself in the Jewish soil, how it looked first to the Present and then to the Future, first to the Type and then to the Anti-type." Perowne, *The Book of Psalms*, 565. Zenger notes it is difficult to decide whether the superscription should be understood as referring to the messianic Solomon. Yet, he notes that "the rendering of the jussive by the future tense should introduce into the psalm a certain messianic perspective" ("Die Wiedergabe der Jussive durch das Futur soll in den Psalm gewiß eine messianische Perspektive eintragen"). Erich Zenger, "So betete David für seinen Sohn Salomo und für den König Messias: Überlegungen zur holistischen und kanonischen Lektüre des 72 Psalms," *Jahrbüch Biblische Theologie* 8 (1993): 61.

[127]David M. Stec, *The Targum of Psalms*, The Aramaic Bible, vol. 16 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004), 139.

[128]"Viele Einzelaussagen in Ps 72 konnten die Redaktoren veranlaßt haben, das Königslied auf Salomo beziehen (vgl. 1.8.10.15)." Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalmen 64-150*, BKAT, vol. 15 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag des Erziehungsvereins, 1972), 495.

"בֶּן־מֶלֶךְ is in the broad sense the heir to throne, the descendant of the dynasty of David."[129] Zenger affirms that many commentators translate the superscription as "of Solomon" and "so present the Psalm as having been understood by the tradition as a prayer attributed to Solomon as its author or petitioner, which would then be spoken by (the poetic-fictive) Solomon himself."[130] Of the research surveyed only Zenger addresses the implications of the third person use if one interprets the king as speaking. He writes, "That he would thus speak not in the first person, but of himself in the third person is not a counterargument; it would rather, emphasize that he is an 'officeholder'."[131]

If viewed as written by Solomon or another king, the royal references apply to the Davidic descendents, including the ultimate Davidic King to come, but also to the speaker himself. The reference would act to highlight the speaker's royal office, emphasizing his position as seen through the eyes of the people of Israel as well as Yahweh himself. The messianic aspect of the psalm is only significant (in terms of this study) if the psalm is understood as both written by Solomon or another king and originally written with a future messianic king in mind. The use of the third person would then offer sufficient distancing and ambiguity to allow the speaker to refer to himself as well as a future messianic king. Kaiser writes of Solomon speaking of himself, and yet, beyond himself as well. He notes that "Solomon speaks . . . as the prophet who anticipated one would come after him who would be greater than he ever was or could ever hope to be."[132]

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[129]"Aber is im weiteren Sinne der Thronerbe, der Nachkomme aus der Dynastie Davids." Ibid.

[130]Erich Zenger, *Psalms 2: A Commentary on Psalms 51-100*, trans. Linda M. Maloney, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 211.

[131]Ibid., 211n21. To be clear, Zenger is only clarifying this interpretation, not proposing it.

[132]Kaiser, "Psalm 72," 263.

King Jehu

In 2 Kings 10:18-27 Jehu, King of Israel, brings judgment on Baal worship, killing the prophets of Baal. In verse 18 he presents a false zeal for Baal, intending to bring together the prophets, worshipers, and priests in an assembly of worship. Jehu states to the people, "Ahab served Baal a little, but Jehu will serve him much" (אַחְאָב עָבַד אֶת־הַבַּעַל מְעָט יֵהוּא יַעַבְדֶנּוּ הַרְבֵּה).[133] His words imply that the worship of Baal will continue, but now with zealous commitment.[134] Revell writes concerning this verse that "the speaker presents his reputation, his public persona, as more significant in the context than a less specific pronominal reference."[135] His insight underscores the elements of reputation and "public persona" which this use of illeism emphasizes. In the context of the passage the "persona" would be Jehu's status as king as various aspects of the context affirm. He compares himself to Ahab, he commands an assembly, and, in a broader sense, he acts as Yahweh's anointed agent of wrath against Baal worship. Furthermore, the phrasing of the verse also affirms kingship by drawing a comparison between the former reign and the present one. Jehu's comparison of himself to Ahab at one level explicitly highlights a distinction, specifically emphasizing his superior (though false) commitment to Baal worship. Yet, the simple structure "Ahab (the former king) did this . . . but Jehu (the present king) will do even more" also implicitly emphasizes the continuity from the former reign to the present kingship.

Though Jehu refers to himself by name rather than title, the context and phrasing of the verse suggests emphasis of the kingship of the speaker. The reference to

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[133]The Vulgate reflects Jehu's referring to himself in the first person rather than illeistically. Robker notes, "This was probably a stylistic change that also de-emphasizes Jehu's contrasting himself and Ahab as in the canonical Hebrew narrative. No argument mandates that these changes be made." Jonathan Miles Robker, *The Jehu Revolution: A Royal Tradition of the Northern Kingdom and Its Ramifications* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 30n74.

[134]As Gray notes, Jehu's characterization of Ahab's tempered worship was probably a true statement. He notes that "the king probably gave mere lip-service to Baal." Gray, *I & II Kings*, 560.

[135]Revell, *Designation of the Individual*, 352.

himself by name is less impersonal than title only. Based on the context of the passage (Jehu's effort to show his alignment with his audience), perhaps the proper name is used to convey a connection to his audience that the more formal title of "king" would not.

King Jeroboam

In 1 Kings 14:2, his son ill, Jeroboam sends his wife to Ahijah in hopes to hear a positive word about his son. He states to his wife, "Arise and disguise yourself that they may not know that you are the wife of Jeroboam" (וְלֹא יֵדְעוּ כִּי־אַתִּי אֵשֶׁת יָרָבְעָם). His instructions to his wife reflect that he wants to hide his wife's identity in order to avoid Ahijah's condemnation.[136] Interestingly, this use of illeism does not overtly reflect kingship and its associated authority. Rather, the self-reference is embedded in the words of a distraught father hoping for an encouraging prophetic word. Yet, this self-reference is possibly one of the more profound examples of royal emphasis. It is his identity as the king which must be hidden. Referencing himself by name only, without title, may serve to emphasize his own personal failings. Yet, it is his personal failures *as king* which is relevant. In this sense the illeism of Jeroboam is driven by the fact that he is king. Yet, an illeistic emphasis of kingly status, authority, and reputation is usually a positive affirmation; in this instance, the reputation of Jeroboam's kingship does not serve him well.[137]

King Jehoram

In 2 Kings 3 the allied kings Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and the king of Edom find themselves without water in the wilderness after a circuitous route to Moab. The narrator notes in verse 10 that the "king of Israel" states, "Alas! Yahweh has called these three

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[136]Simon J. De Vries, *1 Kings*, WBC, vol. 12 (Waco: Word Books, 1985), 178.

[137]Ahijah had conveyed the word of God to Jeroboam (1 Kgs 11) concerning his leadership of the ten tribes of Israel. Yet, in his reign, even after being confronted by a man of God (13:1ff), Jeroboam did not turn from his evil ways (13:33).

kings to give them into the hand of Moab'" (אֲהָהּ כִּי־קָרָא יְהוָה לִשְׁלֹשֶׁת הַמְּלָכִים הָאֵלֶּה לָתֵת

אֹתָם בְּיַד־מוֹאָב). The context reflects the statement to be Jehoram's assessment of their

predicament. After the kings seek the guidance of Elisha, the prophet tells the king of

Israel to go to the prophets of his parents. In verse 13 the narrator writes again that "the

king of Israel" states, "No; for Yahweh has called these three kings to give them into the

hand of Moab."[138] The first mention of Yahweh in the narrative is by Jehoram who sees

their predicament as divine judgment.[139] The illeism is unusual in that it is a third-person

plural. Rather than the expected pronoun "us" in verses 10 and 13, the king references

"these three kings" (לִשְׁלֹשֶׁת הַמְּלָכִים הָאֵלֶּה). The self-reference clearly affirms the royal

office of the speaker and his allies.

The deictic force of the demonstrative adds another unique element.[140] The

demonstrative could be functioning in conjunction with the illeism, further contributing

to a distancing between the speaker and his self-presentation. Possibly the king of Israel

reflects his sense of contempt for the seemingly failed alliance and seeks to distance

himself from the debacle.[141] Yet, the demonstrative likely works in conjunction with the

illeism to underscore the status of the kings. In essence, king Jehoram highlights the

contradictory nature of the powerful alliance of "these three kings" being given into the

hand of Moab. Regardless, while the use of the plural is unique in the survey, the

emphasis of kingship by the statement is not. The illeism functions in a manner consistent

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[138]Apart from the exclamations "Alas" and "No," Jehoram's wording is the same in vv. 10 and 13.

[139]Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 36.

[140] Waltke-O'Connor render the phrase as a question and note that the English idiom tends to render this deictic force with a personal pronoun ("Has YHWH called us three kings together . . . ?"). Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Conner, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 311. By rendering the phrase with a first person pronoun the original sense of the illeism is unfortunately lost.

[141]A possible comparison is the Pharisee's prayer in which he gives thanks that he is not like "this" tax collector (Luke 18:11).

with the other uses by a king.

King Ahaz

In 2 Kings 16:15 Ahaz commands the priest, "On the great altar burn the morning burnt offering and the evening grain offering and the king's burnt offering and his grain offering" (וְאֵת־עֹלַת הַמֶּלֶךְ).[142] This instance of illeism as used by a king reflects what seems to be a "fixed" expression. The possibility exists that the phrase was a common expression in the time of its use. Thus the use of the third person would represent a product of the language of that time and not a clear choice of illeism on the part of the speaker. The king is speaking more about the offerings themselves than about his own identity. Yet, to some degree, the phrase still reflects the king referring to himself and, more specifically, his office. In this sense the phrase functions as illeism, reflecting a royal emphasis. Yet, if a fixed expression (which seems likely based on the context), the emphasis is not intended.[143]

King Sennacherib

In 2 Kings 18 the king of Assyria sends a message to Hezekiah. The Rabshakeh addresses various administrators as well as some of the people of Judah within hearing distance from the wall. The message is presented from the king's perspective with multiple first person pronouns referring to the king.[144] In his message, the king asks in 2 Kings 18:33, "Has any of the gods of the nations delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria?" (מִיַּד מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר). The question could refer to any king of Assyria. Yet, the verses which follow make clear Sennacherib is referring to

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[142]This follows his order to Uriah the priest to build a replica of the Damascus altar.

[143]None of the relevant scholarship surveyed concerning the passage address the third-person self-reference.

[144]Also, the messenger punctuates his message with "Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria" (v. 19), "Thus says the king" (v. 29), and "Thus says the king of Assyria" (v. 31).

himself. He asks, "Have [these other gods] delivered Samaria from my hand" (מִיָּדִי). Who among all gods . . . delivered their lands from my hand (מִיָּדִי) that Yahweh should deliver Jerusalem from my hand" (מִיָּדִי).[145] The first person perspective of these latter verses serve to clarify the illeism of verse 33.[146]

In addition, in 19:10, Sennacherib sends a second message to Hezekiah. He states, "Thus you shall say to Hezekiah king of Judah: Do not let your God whom you trust deceive you by saying Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria (בְּיַד מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר)." As with the earlier message, this message is sent through an intermediary. Yet, the words are presented as the words of the king. Both messages reflect multiple instances where the king chooses to refer to himself with a first person pronoun.[147] Only in 18:13 and 19:10 does the king refer to himself as "king of Assyria."

Based on the context, the primary emphasis is the status of power and military might associated with the king of Assyria. No god, including Yahweh (according to Sennacherib), is his equal. Hobbs, while not addressing the third-person shift, does note the arrogant tone associated with the message. He writes that Sennacherib "oscillates between boasting of his defeat of Yahweh (vv 22, 30, 35) and claiming that Yahweh is on his side (v 25). . . . His great mistake, however, is in claiming to be himself the architect of history. He believes his power alone is the source of his victory."[148] The distancing created by the third-person perspective allows the king to distance himself from his own

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[145]The parallel passage in Isa also reflects a single instance of illeism. In Isa 36:18 the king asks, "Has any one of the gods of the nations delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria?" (הַצִּילוּ אֱלֹהֵי הַגּוֹיִם אִישׁ אֶת־אַרְצוֹ מִיַּד מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר).

[146]In his analysis of 2 Kgs 18:19-25, Walsh argues the Rabshakeh introduces elaborations on the king's message. Jerome T. Walsh, "The Rab Šāqēh between Rhetoric and Redaction," *JBL* 130, no. 2 (2011). Yet, even if Walsh's argument is accepted, the context of 18:33 and 19:10 does not reflect that the third-person self-reference is that of the Rabshakeh.

[147]2 Kgs 18:20, 22, 29, 31, 34, 35; 19:12.

[148]Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 263.

identity, office, and military might and speak of these things from an external perspective. This perspective may encompass how the king sees himself and how he assumes the various nations perceive him.

King Artaxerxes

Responding to those informing the king of the rebuilding effort in Jerusalem, Artaxerxes states a decree shall be made for the work to cease (Ezra 4:7-23).[149] He closes the royal letter (4:22) commanding urgency and adding, "Why should damage increase to the detriment of the king?" (לְהַנְזָקַת מַלְכִין).[150] A similar use of the third-person self-reference is found in the king's letter given to Ezra for his journey to Jerusalem (Ezra 7:11-26). The king states that Ezra is sent "by the king and his seven counselors . . . (v. 14); "to give the silver and gold that the king and his counselors have freely offered to the God of Israel" (v. 15); and that whatever else is needed for the house of his God Ezra may provide it "from the treasury of the king" (v. 20). He adds that "whatever is commanded by the God of heaven it should be done for the house of the God of heaven, lest his wrath come against the kingdom of the king and his sons" (v. 23)[151] and calls for judgment on any who "do not obey the law (דָּת) of your God and the law (דָּת) of the king*" (v. 26). The phrases "the treasury of the king" and "the law of the king," as with

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[149]Though some scholars argue the time period reflects the ruler is Artaxerxes II Mnemon, the king is assumed to be Artaxerxes I Longimanus. So Greg Goswell, "The Handling of Time in the Book of Ezra-Nehemiah," *Trinity Journal* 31, no. 2 (2010): 189. The broader issues of chronology in Ezra-Neh go beyond the scope of the current study.

[150]The illeism of Artaxerxes, as well as that of Darius which follows, is conveyed in the context of a written document. Because the wording of each is presented as the words of the king (as with a prophet or messenger) the words are treated as the speech of the king.

[151]Breneman notes it is "interesting that the king of one of the greatest empires the world has ever known should care about the God of such a seemingly insignificant people." Mervin Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, NAC, vol. 10 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 135. His comment highlights an ironic aspect of the illeism. The self-reference emphasizes his exalted status. Yet, his affirmation of this power is in the context of concern about the wrath of the God of (in his eyes) an insignificant people. Though this practice was apparently common, this statement highlights a sense of awareness on the king's part of his own vulnerability.

earlier noted expressions, could be understood as "fixed" in nature. Yet, along with "the detriment of the king," as well as "the kingdom of the king," these expressions also reflect an emphasis of the king's royal status. Also, if the king only used an expression such as "the king's treasury," the use of third-person self-reference could be attributed to its use within such a common phrase, even when on the lips of the king himself. Yet, the other third-person self-references (by title in 7:14 and 15 as well as "detriment of the king" in 4:22) which reflect a clear choice of the third-person perspective, provide evidence that suggests an intentional choice of perspective is being made and that the choice serves to emphasize the royal identity of the individual.

Additionally, the king uses the first person pronoun for self-reference 6x in the letters (4:18, 19, 21; 7:13, 21, 24). This fact also suggests that the use of the title מֶלֶךְ for self-reference in the letters (as a title alone and at the end of a construct chain) is a choice on the part of the speaker. Based on these factors, the illeism here, as with its use in the speech of other kings, should be viewed as serving to emphasize the authority and status of the king.

King Darius

In Ezra 6, having made a search for Cyrus's record concerning the house of God in Jerusalem, Darius responds to Tattenai, Shethar-bozenai, and associates. He decrees that work should continue and provisions be made from the royal treasury. He adds in verse 10 that whatever is needed be provided to the priests day by day "that they may offer pleasing sacrifices to the God of heaven and pray for the life of the king and his sons" (לְחַיֵּי מַלְכָּא וּבְנוֹהִי).[152] The king states the provisions are to be made available that the priests may make offerings and pray "for the king." The dissociation created by

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[152]As Batten writes, "The Persian king was not averse to the good offices of other gods than his own." Loring W. Batten, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah*, ICC, vols. 12-13 (New York: Scribner, 1913), 146.

the third-person reference provides emphasis of his position as king and its associated authority. The context of a royal letter and the content concerning the building effort in Jerusalem parallel the example of Artaxerxes. The illeism here should be understood as it is there; Darius's self-reference serves to emphasize his royal office.[153]

King Ahasuerus

In Esther 1:15 Ahasuerus refers to himself by title and name. Faced with the queen's refusal to appear, Ahasuerus asks, "According to the law, what is to be done to Queen Vashti, since she has not performed the command of King Ahasuerus (לֹא־עָשְׂתָה אֶת־מַאֲמַר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲחַשְׁוֵרוֹשׁ)?" In the five remaining examples of illeism by Ahasuerus the king refers to himself by title only. In Esther 8:8, the king informs Esther and Mordecai, "You may write whatever you deem right . . . in the name of the king (בְּשֵׁם הַמֶּלֶךְ) and seal it with the ring of the king (בְּטַבַּעַת הַמֶּלֶךְ), for an edict written in the name of the king and sealed with the ring of the king cannot be revoked." In 9:12 the king asks Esther, "What have they [the Jews] done in the rest of the provinces of the king?" (מְדִינוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ).[154] The king's self-reference by title and name in 1:15 stands out as a clear example of illeism which serves to emphasize the speaker's identity, his royal status, and, more specifically, his unquestionable authority. The use of the name in this instance may reflect a greater degree of personal insult associated with the queen's actions. In contrast, the other expressions noted are more impersonal. The phrase "ring of the king," and similar could include the speaker but could also include all others who have been and

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[153]Breneman notes that there is a similar request in the inscriptions on the Cyrus Cylinder. Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, 117n74. The request is similar, but there the king refers to himself only in the first person. He states, "May all the gods whom I have resettled . . . long life for me and may they recommend me (to him). "Cyrus," trans. F. H. Wiessbach (ANET, 316).

[154]The expression בְּשֵׁם הַמֶּלֶךְ is found only in Esth 8:8. The expression "in the name of king Ahasuerus" is used by the narrator in Esth 3:13 and 8:10. The expression appears also in Esth 8:8. The expression מְדִינוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ appears 9x and all in Esther. The king's official uses it in 1:16; Esther uses the phrase in 4:11 and 8:5; the narrator uses the expression in 1:22; 3:13; 8:12; and 9:2, 20.

may be king. Yet, ultimately it can be reasonably argued that, even if viewed this way, expressions such as these reflect an emphasis of the speaker's office and associated authority.

King Zedekiah

In Jeremiah 38, four officials, seeing Jeremiah's preaching as demoralizing to the soldiers and the people, ask the king to have Jeremiah put to death. Verse 5 reads, "King Zedekiah said, Behold, he is in your hands, for the king can do nothing against you" (כִּי־אֵין הַמֶּלֶךְ יוּכַל אֶתְכֶם דָּבָר). Zedekiah's words reflect the weakness of his position.[155] Thompson highlights that Zedekiah was, in fact, merely a "puppet king" set up by Nebuchadnezzar after the exile of Jehoiachin.[156] While this example is unique in its context, the emphasis of the self-reference by title still emphasizes royal status.[157] It is King Zedekiah's emphasis of his royal status and its associated authority that highlights his failure to act on Jeremiah's behalf. In this context the illeism affirms Zedekiah's given office, but it also serves to reflect the weakness of Zedekiah's character.

King Nebuchadnezzar

On seeing Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego emerge from the furnace unharmed, King Nebuchadnezzar states in Daniel 3:28, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego . . . who delivered his servants who put their trusts in him and ignored the edict of the king" (וּמִלַּת מַלְכָּא שַׁנִּיו). As with many of the noted illeisms spoken by a king which have the title ending a construct chain, this expression could be

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[155] Huey notes that "Zedekiah may have wanted to do the right thing, but he did not have the fortitude to stand up to Jeremiah's enemies." F. B. Huey, *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, NAC, vol. 16 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1993), 334.

[156] J. A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, NICOT, vol. 21 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 638.

[157] The rhetorical impact of the illeism is also heightened in these instances where the narrator identifies the speaker of the illeistic phrase by title and name. (i..e., "King Zedekiah said, 'The king . . .'").

categorized as "fixed" in nature. If so, the fixed nature of the expression may explain the use of the third person. Also, as argued, the expression is obviously less personal than name and title (i.e., "the edict of King Nebuchadnezzar"). Yet, even with these qualifications, the phrase still functions in degree to emphasize royal identity.[158]

King (?) Araunah

In 2 Samuel 24, David seeks to purchase the threshing floor from Araunah (אֲרַוְנָה)[159] the Jebusite to build an alter to Yahweh to end the plague. On hearing David's intentions, Araunah makes available all supplies needed to make an offering, making no mention of selling (v. 23).[160] According to the MT Araunah states, הַכֹּל נָתַן אֲרַוְנָה הַמֶּלֶךְ לַמֶּלֶךְ . The verse can be understood in one of two ways. Some scholars argue the title הַמֶּלֶךְ should be read as describing Araunah.[161] With this view Araunah states in illeistic

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[158]Of the various scholarship surveyed on the passage, no scholars addressed the third-person reference. Yet, as noted, even clear cases of third-person self-reference often go unmentioned.

[159]In 2 Sam 24 and Chronicles the word is found in various forms. In 2 Sam 24:16 the ketiv reads הָאוֹרְנָה; the qere reads הָאֲרַוְנָה; in 2 Sam 24:18 the ketiv reads אֲרַנְיָה; qere אֲרַוְנָה; in 2 Sam 24:20-24 consistently אֲרַוְנָה; in 1 Chr 21:15-28 and 2 Chr 3:1 the name is consistently אָרְנָן. The LXX consistently records it as Ορνα. Various scholars understand the name to be non-Semitic. For example, Rosén views its origin as Hittite. Haiim B. Rosén, "Arawna: Nom Hittite," *VT* 5, no. 3 (1955).

[160]Fokkelman notes that Araunah ignores the issue of selling, simply offering to give his property. Fokkelman suggests that "Araunah wants to keep his land, the inheritance of generations, and tries to keep the question of ownership off the agenda with a great show of generosity." Fokkelman, *Narrative Art*, 3:329. Alter translates the verse as "Let my lord the king take and offer up what is good in his eyes. . . . All of it has Araunah, O king, given to the king." He notes, "What Araunah does not offer David is the land itself, which he clearly wants." Robert Alter, *The David Story: A Translation with Commentary of 1 and 2 Samuel* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999), 358.

[161]Goldingay notes that Araunah "may be the X-king of Jerusalem, if Vg. understands 2 Samuel 24:23 all right: 'Araunah the king gave all this to the King' (i.e., David).'" John Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. 1, *Israel's Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 575. Youngblood notes that "in light of the MT's accents . . . it is more natural to read 'Araunah the king gives all this to the king'." Ronald F. Youngblood, *1, 2 Samuel,* in vol. 3 of *EBC*, rev. ed., ed. Tremper Longman and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 614. Ahlström argues that הַמֶּלֶךְ is intended to be in apposition to Araunah. He writes, "The last Jebusite king of Jerusalem was Araunah, who, in 2 Samuel 24:23, receives and recognizes David as his lord ("Der letzte jubusitische König Jerusalems war Arauna der . . . David als seinen Herrn empfängt und anerkennt"). Gösta W. Ahlström, "Der Prophet Nathan und der Tempelbau," *VT* 11, no. 2 (1961): 118. Wyatt, building on the work of Ahlström, argues that the term

royal fashion, "All this *Araunah the king* gives to the king." This understanding

contributes to the view that Araunah was the king of the Jebusites before the conquest by

David. An alternative view held by some is to view הַמֶּלֶךְ as a vocative, rendering

Araunah's statement as "All this, *O King,* Araunah gives to the king."[162] In addition to

the grammatical ambiguity of the MT, various scholars argue the title should simply be

omitted.[163] Revell notes that "'the king' (המלך) was probably introduced through

error."[164] He writes that "if he were king of some other state, its name would be included

in his title. It is thus highly unlikely that 'the king' in his speech . . . is his title."[165] Smith

understands the phrase as "All has your servant, my lord the king, given to the king." He

notes, in line with Revell, that if Araunah had been the Jebusite king before the conquest

of the city that "the author would have taken pains to inform us."[166] Yet, the adamancy

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אֲרַוְנָה "is a title of office, rather than a personal name, clearly meaning 'king' in the present context, and the following hmlk [הַמֶּלֶךְ] is simply lost translating the foreign term into Hebrew for the reader's benefit." Nicolas Wyatt, "'Araunah the Jebusiteʾ and the Throne of David," *Studia Theologica* 39, no. 1 (1985): 40. Ishida notes Araunah was "most probably the last ruler of Jebusite Jerusalem." Tomoo Ishida, *The Royal Dynasties in Ancient Israel: A Study on the Formation and Development of Royal-Dynastic Ideology* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1977), 129. See also Shmuel Yeivin, "Social, Religious and Cultural Trends in Jerusalem under the Davidic Dynasty," *VT* 3, no. 2 (1953): 149.

[162]Fokkelman notes the use of the vocative allows Araunah to double the reference to David as "the king." Fokkelman, *Narrative Art*, 3:329. Alter similarly notes that "the Hebrew, with repeated 'king,' looks peculiar, though it is intelligible if the first 'king' is construed as a vocative." Alter, *The David Story: A Translation with Commentary of 1 and 2 Samuel*, 358. Most modern translations render the phrase as a vocative (so ESV, NIV, NASB, HCSB). The KJV understands "king" as referencing Araunah, though the phrase is rendered as reflecting the words of the narrator and not Araunah.

[163]So Anderson, *2 Samuel*, 281; Mauchline, *1 and 2 Samuel*, 326; Revell, *Designation of the Individual*, 337. The title "the king" is omitted from the LXX, OL, Syr., and Targum. McCarter suggests the primitive reading was "I give it all to my lord the king" (הַכֹּל נָתַתִּי לַאדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ). He notes that אדני was misread as ארונה and the grammar was adjusted accordingly. McCarter, *II Samuel*, 508.

[164]Revell, *Designation of the Individual*, 351n1. He adds that it is also very unlikely that it is used as a vocative (337).

[165]Ibid., 351n1.

[166]Smith, *Commentary on the Books of Samuel*, 392n23. He views ארונה as a corruption of אדני and so assumes the subject was originally עבדך.

of the assertions by Revell and Smith seem unwarranted. Revell's assertion that the "state" would necessarily be included with the title "king" stands at odds with the numerous examples noted in which various kings do not include the associated state. In fact, based on all listed occurrences, only Sennacherib is recorded as including the name of his state (2 Kgs 18:3; 19:10).

To summarize, scholarship reveals the following three primary ways the verse is understood: "the king" is viewed as referring to Araunah; "the king" is understood as a vocative referring to David; or the title "the king" is omitted all together. Common to all positions is that the text does reflect Araunah referring to himself in the third person at least by name. Scholarship is divided on whether he refers to himself as "King Araunah" (the first position addressed) or simply "Araunah" (the latter two). If Araunah is not a king, the illeism could be understood as functioning as part of Araunah's effort to bargain as an equal. Revell views the illeism in the following way:

> The use of third person reference to both speaker and addressee would provide distancing suitable to the offer of a gift to a superior . . . . However, Araunah is not acting as a subordinate. He has rejected the king's suggestion and offered one of his own. He is bargaining as an equal. His use of his own name, instead of the deferential "your servant" (as in 2S 24:21) reflects this.[167]

Mauchline writes that "the use of his own name Araunah instead of 'thy servant' or 'the king's servant' . . . in 23 has often been taken as evidence that he must have been a man of position and authority in Jerusalem."[168] Yet, he notes, in a position similar to Revell's, that the words of verse 23 "are a typical opening gambit in oriental bargaining."[169]

Counter to Revell's view, the context does not seem to support viewing

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[167]Revell, *Designation of the Individual*, 350.

[168]Mauchline, *1 and 2 Samuel*, 326. As argued in a previous section, being a "person of importance" does not seem to be the governing factor for illeism in the OT. In fact, nowhere is this the sole criterion.

[169]Ibid.

Araunah's self-reference by name as elevating him to a place of equality in the bargaining process. The shift could be seen as a rhetorical effort to assert a *greater measure* of authority in the bargaining process, but it would not create equal status before the King of Israel. Also, based on my findings, the use of illeism to *elevate* one's status before a superior does not occur in the OT. The only other occurrence of an individual using a personal name when addressing a superior is in David's prayer to Yahweh (2 Sam 7). In this instance David is not trying to elevate himself in status or affirm a more equal standing for negotiating purposes.

In viewing the various ways illeism does appear in the OT, the only category that could apply is that of "royal emphasis."[170] It is of course possible that Araunah's self-reference by name reflects a unique use of illeism in Scripture. Yet, viewing this passage in the larger context of the use of illeism in the OT suggests Araunah may indeed be a king. Because of the textual and grammatical issues associated with the text the usefulness of the example as an instance of illeistic royal emphasis is diminished. Yet, based on the evidence presented, it seems more probable that the Hebrew should be understood as a title ("King Araunah"). If so, the illeism functions to highlight the office of the speaker and possibly to establish a sense of authority in the bargaining process.[171]

The "Royal" Bramble

A final example of illeism that reflects royal overtones occurs within the context of a fable in which a bramble speaks illeistically.[172] Within the Abimelech

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[170]This use by Araunah is not deferential, an oath formula (i.e., Jonathan), a summons to listen (i.e., Lamech), or a characterization of himself (i.e., Balaam). Neither is he speaking in the context of a trial setting or of his participation within a past era, as with Samuel. According to my research, these are the only other uses of illeism in the OT (outside the use by kings and Yahweh).

[171]This argument is similar to Revell's and Mauchline's, though both argue only that the third-person reference to the proper name alone functioned in this way. My argument against Revell's position is simply that a "non-royal" individual's reference to himself by name alone would not create equality in the bargaining process with one who is in fact king.

[172]Soggin refers to the section as an apologue or fable. He adds that though some scholars call

narrative (Judg 9:1-57) Jotham stands on Mount Gerazim and cries out to the people of Shechem who have recently made Abimelech king. In verses 7-15 Jotham tells a fable of the trees which go out to anoint a king over them. Proceeding from the olive tree, to the fig tree, and to the vine, each tree refuses the kingship. Lastly, the bramble is asked to reign over the trees. The bramble tells them to come and take refuge in its shade if they are anointing it king in good faith, but adds illeistically, "If not, let fire come out from the bramble (אֵשׁ מִן־הָאָטָד) and consume the cedars of Lebanon" (v. 15).[173] Verses 16-21 equate the parable to the Shechemites' choosing of Abimelech their relative. Jotham notes that, if they have acted in good faith with his father Jerubbaal and his household, then they should enjoy the reign of Abimelech. But if not, "let fire come out from Abimelech and consume the leaders of Shechem" (v. 20).[174] A thorough exploration of the fable goes beyond what is necessary to appreciate the rhetorical function of the illeism.[175] It suffices to note that the bramble is speaking in the context of accepting the offered kingship and his words are representative of Abimelech the chosen king.[176]

The illeism is distinct because of the unusual genre, yet the rhetorical effect of

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it a parable, "this term does not seem precise; the parable presents human beings." J. Alberto Soggin, *Judges: A Commentary*, trans. John Bowden, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981), 173.

[173]Most scholars understand the term אָטָד as "bramble." HALOT defines it as "buckthorn." Yet, the history of research offers various understandings. For a helpful analysis, see Silviu Tatu, "Jotham's Fable and the Crux Interpretum in Judges IX," *VT* 56, no. 1 (2006). Tatu argues that the term should be understood as reflecting "a thorny tree, most likely impressive in stature" (123).

[174]See vv. 48 ff.

[175]Interpretations of the parable vary. Irwin notes that "the point of the fable is that the people of Shechem have placed themselves in an untenable situation; having embarked on their chosen path, they will encounter violence if they accept the rule of Abimelech but also if they eventually reject it." Brian P. Irwin, "Not Just Any King: Abimelech, the Northern Monarchy, and the Final Form of Judges," *JBL* 131, no. 3 (2012): 450. O'Connell argues that the fable "shows that not kingship *per se* but the ill-motivated popular appointment of a king is the central concern." Robert H. O'Connell, *The Rhetoric of the Book of Judges*, VTSup (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 164.

[176]Lindars rightly notes that the fable "is intended to make them [the Shechemites] think about what they have done in making Abimelech king. He is a worthless man, and they should have realized this." Barnabas Lindars, "Jotham's Fable: A New Form-Critical Analysis," *JTS* 24, no. 2 (1973): 361.

the illeism is not unique. The bramble's self-reference functions to emphasize his authority and power. Block states, "The bramble's excessively high self-esteem is reflected in his claiming his own person as the source of the fire (the king himself would punish faithless subjects), as well as in his specific designation of the trees as the 'Cedars of Lebanon.'"[177] He adds that the bramble "will not be king over just any trees; the most majestic trees on earth are subject to him."[178] The reference does seem to reflect a high self-esteem in this context. The illeism may serve to reflect the bramble's innate sense of self-worth, but based on the context, the sense of importance seems a product of the status of kingship he is accepting.[179] In this sense, the illeism is yet another example of an anointed king using third-person self-reference to affirm his royal office.

Section Summary

The following kings refer to themselves in the third person: David, Solomon,[180] Jehu, Jeroboam, Jehoram, Ahaz, Sennacherib, Artaxerxes, Darius, Ahasuerus, Zedekiah, and Nebuchadnezzar. Though various interpretive issues are associated with the self-reference, the evidence suggests also viewing Araunah as a probable example of royal illeism. Also, though naturally not included as an example of illeism in the direct speech of a king, Jotham's imagery of a bramble bush reflects royal overtones associated with the use of illeism. The following chart offers a visual summary of the OT kings who refer to themselves in the third person:[181]

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[177]Daniel I. Block, *Judges, Ruth*, NAC, vol. 6 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 319.

[178]Ibid.

[179]The dissonance of the picture of the small bramble speaking in such a way functions effectively to convey Jotham's opinion of Abimelech's kingship.

[180]Though it is unclear whether 2 Chr 6:42 and Ps 72 should be viewed as examples of illeisms of Solomon, they are included here for thoroughness.

[181]Because of the interpretive issues noted, Araunah is included only as a matter of thoroughness.

Table 1. Illeism of OT kings

King	Self-Reference	Scripture
David	"David"	2 Samuel 5:8
David	"the king" (3x)	2 Samuel 19:11-12
David	"king," "anointed," "David"	2 Samuel 22:51
Solomon	"King Solomon"	1 Kings 2:45
Solomon	"anointed ones"	2 Chronicles 6:42
Solomon	"the king"	Psalm 72
Jehu	"Jehu"	2 Kings 10:18
Jeroboam	"Jeroboam"	1 Kings 14:2
Jehoram	"these three kings" (2x)	2 Kings 3:10, 13
Ahaz	"the king"	2 Kings 16:15
Sennacherib	"King of Assyria" (2x)	2 Kings 18:3; 19:10
Artaxerxes	"the king" (6x)	Ezra 4:22; 7:14-26
Darius	"the king"	Ezra 6:10
Ahasuerus	"King Ahasuerus"	Esther 1:15
Ahasuerus	"the king" (5x)	Esther 8:8; 9:12
Zedekiah	"the king"	Jeremiah 38:5
Nebuchadnezzar	"the king"	Daniel 3:28
Araunah?	"King Araunah"?	2 Samuel 24:23

The royal title "king" (מֶלֶךְ) is used as the self-reference in the majority of cases, though title and name, title and state, sacral titles ("anointed" or "anointed ones"), as well as the king's name are also used. While the various self-references reflect nuanced emphases, context suggests that each ultimately functions to emphasize the royal office of the speaker. Furthermore, illeism occurs in various contexts and is addressed to various audiences. This diversity suggests that no specific factor beyond the office of the speaker is governing the choice of the third-person self-reference.

Over thirty third-person self-references are noted in the direct speech of kings. The illeism in each case reflects a distancing between the speaker and his self-reference which allows him to speak of himself from an external perspective. This perspective

emphasizes the speaker (the king) and his associated reputation and authority and may include the speaker's perspective, his audiences' perspective, as well as the views of those beyond the immediate audience. These occurrences in the direct speech of kings serve to emphasize the speakers' royal office and the authority associated with kingship. Though it can be said that the illeisms addressed in this section reflect a "royal" aspect because they are spoken *by* the king, it is more accurate to say the illeisms reflect a royal emphasis because they underscore the reality that the speaker *is* the king. In this sense the illeism functions to highlight the king's unique and unequaled status among his people.

Some phrases may best be categorized as "fixed" in nature (i.e., "offering of the king"; "edict of the king"). Yet, even setting aside every use of the third-person self-reference that could be attributed to a "fixed" nature of the expression (all illeisms ending a construct chain), the OT reflects over twenty other occurrences of kings referring to themselves in the third person. Yet, even the "fixed" expressions reflect illeism. At the literary level the shift in perspective reflects a clear contrast to the expected first person pronoun and ultimately serves to emphasize the royal identity of the speaker.[182]

This use of illeism among kings stands out as a distinctive and relatively prominent phenomenon. Though illeism used to show deference and the illeisms of Yahweh are common, the other uses of illeism outside of the use of kings reflect only 10 total occurrences of the third-person self-reference. In comparison to this relatively small number, the fact that illeism in the speech of kings occurs over 30x and is used by at least 12 kings is significant. Furthermore, the evidence does not suggest that illeism simply functions to reflect that the speaker is a person of importance. Third-person self-reference never occurs in the direct speech of someone whose sole criterion for the use of illeism is their characterization as a person of importance. In conclusion, the evidence suggests that

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[182]The issue of the fixed expression ultimately relates to the intention or choice of illeism on the part of the speaker.

the illeism addressed in this section functions to highlight the royal status of the speaker and underscores that this phenomenon in the speech of OT kings is relatively common.

In the Speech of Yahweh

To this point the study has highlighted various ways illeism is used in the OT, including to show deference (i.e., "your servant"), within an oath formula (Jonathan, Abner, and David), and within a summons to listen (Lamech, Jacob, and Balaam). The study has highlighted the possible occurrences of illeism where the reference reflects a characterization of the individual ("a woman" for Deborah, "the leper" for Naaman, and "one without wisdom," etc., for Job). Additionally, the study noted the single use of illeism by Samuel which reflects the trial setting as well as his participation within a historical era. Finally, the study noted the various occurrences of illeism in the direct speech of kings which function to emphasize the royal office and its associated authority. This section addresses the final use of illeism in the OT, the third-person self-reference in the direct speech of Yahweh. The study analyzes the various ways this illeism occurs, presents and analyzes representative texts, and offers a thesis as to how the illeism is functioning in Scripture.

Overview of Section

Two issues are confronted in the analysis of the illeism of Yahweh. First, certain texts where God refers to himself in the third person have been viewed as reflecting a "trinitarian hint." Malone notes that certain OT texts are often cited as reflecting this trinitarian hint while many others which reflect a similar syntax either go unnoticed or are at some level are acknowledged as examples of God referring to himself in the third person.[183] Malone rightly argues that illeism must be acknowledged as a

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[183]Andrew S. Malone, "God the Illeist: Third-Person Self-References and Trinitarian Hints in the Old Testament," *JETS* 52, no. 3 (2009), 508.

phenomenon in Scripture "lest we find that the Bible attests multiple referents of 'Lamech' and 'Abner' and 'Jesus Christ'."[184] Furthermore, he argues cogently that the many occurrences of Yahweh referring to himself in direct speech "can indeed be better understood as divine *self*-references, rather than as one God or divine Person referring to another."[185] Because of the scope of this study, I do not attempt to separate verses that may reflect trinitarian hints from verses that reflect a clear illeistic sense. Yet, in my arguing for the consistent occurrence of illeism in Yahweh's speech, my view echoes that of Malone. He notes that such a recognition of the prevalence of this phenomenon does not "deny either the existence of the Trinity in the OT [or] the possibility of direct or indirect revelations of it there."[186] The study builds on the premise that illeism is a valid phenomenon and a common occurrence in the direct speech of Yahweh.

A second issue concerns the difficulty in some texts (primarily prophetic texts) of discerning when Yahweh is speaking and the prophet is speaking. Korpel notes that these texts give the impression that they are the words of the prophet speaking in the first person singular until they suddenly switch to what apparently is God speaking in the first person.[187] He writes, "In ancient Semitic texts this kind of an introduced direct oration is by no means rare. In prophetic texts the divine speaker and his human messenger seem to merge."[188] Concerning this shift between first and third-person speech among the

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[184]Malone, "God the Illeist," 506.

[185]Ibid., 502. Malone seeks to correct what he perceives as a tendency for doctrine to drive interpretation, noting that many conservative textbooks suggest or affirm "these 'two-Gods' texts as demonstrating something of the OT plurality of God" (502). He notes many example passages (outside of what he recognizes as a number of OT testimonia popular for Christian polemic) where God speaks of himself in the third person which are rarely if ever given a "trinitarian interpretation" (505). Furthermore, Malone notes that Jesus refers to himself in the third person, yet such self-references "have never been used to distinguish Jesus from another 'Jesus Christ'" (ibid.).

[186]Ibid., 518.

[187]Marjo C. A. Korpel, "Who Is Speaking in Jeremiah 4:19-22? The Contribution of Unit Delimitation to an Old Problem," *VT* 59, no. 1 (2009): 88.

[188]Ibid.

prophets Korpel notes that "one cannot automatically assume that the prophet is speaking when God is described in the third person."[189]

As a matter of thoroughness the study notes the various occurrences of illeism of Yahweh in the OT. These occurrences considered illeistic which come from the prophetic texts are chosen based on two primary criteria. The first criterion is a close proximity of the third-person reference to the prophet's statement "Thus says Yahweh" (כֹּה אָמַר יְהֹוָה).[190] For example, Jeremiah 17:5 reads, "Thus says Yahweh, 'Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength and whose heart turns from Yahweh." The second criterion is proximity of the first person pronoun (which refers to Yahweh) to the third-person divine reference. Even when there is potential for ambiguity, the proximity of the first person singular pronoun increases the likelihood Yahweh is using the third-person self-reference. For example, Isaiah 65:15 reads, "You will leave your name for a curse to my chosen, and the Lord Yahweh (אֲדֹנָי יְהֹוִה) will put you to death." Sometimes the occurrences reflect both immediate proximity to the messenger formula and the first person singular pronoun such as in Zechariah 10:12: "'I will make

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[189]Ibid., 89. See also Meier's work concerning direct discourse in the prophets. Meier, *Speaking of Speaking*, 207-72.

[190]Meier notes it has "become a truism that כה אמר . . . is the 'messenger formula.' As such, this formula was exploited by the prophets in order to authenticate their role as messengers relaying a message from God." Meier, *Speaking of Speaking*, 277. He adds that "the general consensus is that the prophets were messengers whose role is defined by the phrase כה אמר יהוה." ibid. Rottzoll characterizes the phrase as a *Legitimationsformel* used by the prophet which should be understood as him speaking in the name of the sender. Thus the *Legitimationsformel* functions as "Im-Namen-des" Formel. Dirk U. Rottzoll, "Die Kh 'Mr: Legitimationsformel," *VT* 39, no. 3 (1989). For the foundational work on the "messenger formula" see Ludwig Köhler, *Deuterojesaja (Jesaja 40-55) Stilkritisch Untersucht*, BZAW, vol. 37 (Giessen: A. Töpelmann, 1923); Johannes Lindblom, *Die literarische Gattung der prophetischen Literatur. Eine literargeschichtliche Untersuchung zum Alten Testament* (Uppsala: A-B Lundequistska Bokhandeln, 1924); Claus Westermann, *Grundformen prophetischer Rede* (Munich: C. Kaiser, 1960). Also, Wilderger's work is significant in this area in that he explores to what degree, if at all, the prophet is contributing to the message. He concludes ultimately that the prophet, while a herald of God's word, is also an interpreter. He writes, "Der Prophet ist also nicht nur Künder, sondern zugleich der Hermeneut des Gotteswortes." Hans Wildberger, *Jahwewort und prophetische Rede bei Jeremia*, Theolgische Dissertationen, vol. 2 (Zürich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1942), 123.

them strong in Yahweh and in his name they will walk,' declares Yahweh."[191]

For the sake of this study certain forms of illeism used by Yahweh are addressed initially but are not included in the final analysis. These include the illeistic use by Yahweh of the phrases "to Yahweh" (לַיהוָה) and "before Yawheh" (לִפְנֵי יְהוָה), as well Yahweh speaking of a person, place, item, or concept being "of Yahweh, Elohim, etc." Technically the latter phrase is an illeistic reference where the divine name is an absolute noun within a construct chain. This formation will be addressed last.

Yahweh often uses the phrases לַיהוָה and לִפְנֵי יְהוָה, rather than the expected "to *me*" or "before *me.*" For example, in Numbers 8:10-13 Yahweh speaks to Moses concerning the consecration of the Levites.[192] Yahweh states that Moses is to bring the Levites "before Yahweh" (v. 10), and Aaron will present the Levites "before Yahweh" (v. 11). The Levites will lay their hands on the heads of the bulls which will be offered "to Yahweh" as an atonement (v. 12). Moses is then to offer the Levites as a wave offering "to Yahweh" (v. 13). These expressions are used by Yahweh primarily in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. In these three books alone the expressions taken together are spoken by Yahweh a total of 240x.[193] Yet, the expressions are used by

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[191]This conservative approach likely leaves out possible illeistic occurrences, but also mitigates the potential to mistakenly assume Yahweh is speaking.

[192]Num 8:5 states, "And Yahweh spoke to Moses saying . . . ."

[193]לַיהוָה occurs in Exodus 18x, Leviticus 95x, Numbers 53x; לִפְנֵי יְהוָה occurs in Exodus 14x, Leviticus 16x, Numbers 16x. For the phrase "to Yahweh" (לַיהוָה) in the speech of Yawheh see Exod 12:11, 14, 48; 16:23, 25; 20:10; 22:20; 28:36; 29:18, 25, 28, 41; 30:10, 12, 13, 20, 37; 31:15; Lev 1:2, 9, 13, 14, 17; 2:1, 2, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16; 3:3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 14, 16; 4:3, 31; 5:6, 7, 15, 19, 25; 6:6, 15, 20, 21, 22; 7:5, 11, 14, 20, 21, 25, 29 [2x], 35; 16:8, 9; 17:4, 5 [2x], 9; 19:5, 21, 24; 22:3, 15, 18, 21, 22 [2x], 24, 27, 29; 23:3, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18 [2x], 20, 25, 27, 34, 36, 37 [2x], 38, 41; 24:7; 25:2, 4; 27:2, 9, 11, 14, 16, 21, 22, 23, 26, 28 [2x], 30, 32; Num 5:8; 6:2, 5, 6, 8, 12, 14, 17, 21; 8:12, 13; 9:10, 14; 15:3 [2x], 4, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 19, 21, 24, 25; 18:6, 12, 13, 15, 17, 19, 24; 25:4; 28:3, 6, 7, 11, 13, 15, 16, 19, 24, 26, 27; 29:2, 6, 8, 12, 13, 36, 39; 31:28; 32:23. For the phrase "before Yahweh" (לִפְנֵי יְהוָה) as used by Yahweh, see Exod 27:21; 28:12, 29, 30 [2x], 35, 38; 29:11, 23, 24, 25; 30:8, 16; Lev 1:3, 5, 11; 3:1, 7, 12; 4:4, 6, 7, 15, 17, 18, 24; 6:7, 14, 25; 7:30; 12:7; 14:11, 12, 16, 18, 23, 24, 27, 29, 31; 15:14, 15, 30; 16:7, 10, 13, 18, 30; 19:22; 23:11, 20, 28, 40; 24:3, 4, 6, 8; Num 5:16, 18, 25, 30; 6:16, 20; 8:10, 11; 10:9; 15:15, 25, 28; 16:38, 40; 18:19; 27:21.

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Yahweh elsewhere. In 1 Kings 19:11 Yahweh commands Elijah on Horeb, "Go out and stand on the mountain before Yahweh." In 2 Kings 22:18-19 Yahweh tells King Josiah through Huldah the prophetess that he has heard him because he humbled himself "before Yahweh." Also, while the expression לַיהוָה and לִפְנֵי יְהוָה are by far the most common, the same structure is also found with other divine names. In Genesis 35:1 Yahweh tells Jacob to go to Bethel and "make an alter there to El (לָאֵל)."

While these expressions are technically illeism, the consistent use and almost rhythmical repetition (particularly as they are used concerning instructions pertaining to the tabernacle and sacrificial process in general) reflect an almost formulaic sense. Yet, this "formulaic" sense should not diminish the significance of their rhetorical effect. On the contrary, the cumulative effect of this illeistic use of these phrases by Yahweh serves to consistently emphasize his divine name, in essence creating rhetorical waves of illeism that continually confront the hearer or reader of Scripture.[194] For the scope of this study these expressions are noted as contributing to the already large presence of Yahweh's illeism in the OT, but will not be addressed any further.

The second type of illeism pertains to a particular syntax where the divine name is at the end of a construct chain. This type of illeism occurs 73x in the OT.[195] For example, in Exodus 31:3 Yahweh states, "I have filled him with *the Spirit of Elohim* (רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים). Amos 8:11 reads, "Behold, the days are coming, declares Adonai Yahweh (אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה), when I will send a famine on the land. Not a famine of bread . . . but of hearing *the*

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[194]The rhetorical effect of Yahweh's use of the third person is addressed at the end of this section.

[195]This structure of illeism appears predominantly in Leviticus (26x) and Numbers (11x), followed by Isaiah (7x), Exodus (6x), Ezekiel (5x), and Jeremiah (4x). The few remaining occurrences appear sporadically in the historical books and minor prophets. Of the 73 occurrences, 42 distinct expressions are noted and 7 distinct self-references are used with Yahweh (יְהוָה) being by far the most prevalent (58x). Other self-references include "Yahweh your God" (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ) (4x), Elohim (אֱלֹהִים) (8x), "Lord God" (אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה) (1x) and "Yahweh of hosts" (יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת) (2x). See appendix 1 for a full listing with references.

words of Yahweh (דִּבְרֵי יְהוָה); in Exodus 15:26 Yahweh states to the Israelites, "If you will listen *to the voice of Yahweh* (לְקוֹל יְהוָה) and do what is right in his[196] eyes . . .."; in Genesis 9:6 God states, "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man will his blood be shed. For *in the image of Elohim* (בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים) he made man.[197] Taking Genesis 9:6 as an example, the shift to the third-person perspective goes unmentioned in all commentaries and articles surveyed. Yet, the illeism is significant in that it provides emphasis of God as creator and ultimately contributes to underscoring the reason for the evil of homicide. The shift in tense, though often missed, is rhetorically powerful. Man is made, not in "*my* image," but in "the image of *Elohim*," the illeism functioning almost as a grammatical pause for the reader to think about the implications. This brief observation of this single example offers a subtle insight. Yet, one aspect of this research highlights the opportunity for richer, more nuanced exegesis through an appreciation of the often overlooked illeisms of Yahweh.

Though the construct chain structure is distinct, the expressions are illeistic and could be reasonably treated with the main body of examples of illeisms of Yahweh. Yet, in the context of the OT, some of these expressions could be understood as "fixed" expressions to some degree. In other words, one could argue that the "fixed" or common nature of the expression is driving the choice of the third-person self-reference.[198] In this

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[196]Another aspect of illeism that this study notes but does not address is the many uses of the third-person pronoun (he, his, him) used by Yahweh which occurs often in conjunction with the illeistic use of a divine name. In this example (Exod 15:26) the complete verse reads, "Do what is right in *his* eyes (בְּעֵינָיו) . . . and obediently listen to *his* commandments (לְמִצְוֹתָיו) and keep all of *his* statutes (כָּל־חֻקָּיו), I will not place on you the diseases which I put on the Egyptians, for I am Yahweh (כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה)." The use of the third-person pronoun for self-reference is yet another example of the illeism of Yahweh. Yet, because of the large number of such occurrences, they are noted but not addressed in this study.

[197]Many such references go unnoticed or unaddressed by commentators. Malone notes that the "acceptability and frequency of divine illeism is demonstrated by Scripture itself. Yet he adds, noting Gen 9:6 and other OT examples, that "many examples are so innocuous that they are rarely recognized as abnormal." Malone, "God the Illeist," 504.

[198]A similar concern was addressed in the illeism in the speech of kings.

sense, Yahweh's choice of the third-person reference would be understood as an accommodation to what is already a fixed expression in the language of his audience. Revell, addressing the expressions "the way of Yahweh" and "an altar to Yahweh your God," notes that these expressions could be seen "as invoking the authority of the name," but adds that "they are more probably examples of fixed phrases, used in spite of their third-person viewpoint."[199]

Certain expressions could more naturally be categorized as "fixed" based on the number of times they are used by Yahweh and, more significantly, the number of times they are used by others in the OT. For instance, Yahweh uses the expression "the commandments of Yahweh" (מִצְוֺת יְהוָה) 7x and the expression is used 17x by others in the OT. Yahweh speaks of "the word of Yahweh" (דְּבַר יְהוָה) 5x and it is used 250x by others in the OT. Similarly, Yahweh speaks of "the house of Yahweh" (בֵּית־יְהוָה) 3x and it is used 185x by others in the OT. Likewise, other expressions are less likely to be "fixed" expressions based on this same criterion. "The Sabbath of Yahweh" (שַׁבְּתֹת יְהוָה) is used by Yahweh 1x (Lev 23:38) and appears nowhere else in the OT. The illeistic phrase "in the image of Elohim" (בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים) in Genesis 9:6 appears again only in Genesis 1:27 in the creation narrative. It should be noted that, even if the choice of the third-person reference is based on the fixed nature of an expression, the self-reference still functions illeistically. In each of the 73 instances noted, Yahweh's self reference creates the distancing associated with illeism which functions to highlight his identity from an external perspective. Yet, it goes beyond the focus of this study to parse each instance for its potential degree of being a fixed phrase.[200] Rather, for thoroughness the

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[199]Revell, *Designation of the Individual*, 354.

[200]Some instances of possible "fixed" expressions are relatively obscure on the surface. For instance, in Amos 4:11 Yahweh states, "I overthrew some of you as when Elohim overthrew Sodom and Gemorrah." The phrase "as Elohim overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah" (כְּמַהְפֵּכַת אֱלֹהִים אֶת־סְדֹם וְאֶת־עֲמֹרָה) is formulaic in nature, occurring with identical phrasing in Isa 13:19 and Jer 50:40. Also,

study notes the occurrences and their significance as examples of illeism of Yahweh. As with the illeistic phrases "to Yahwheh" and "before Yahweh," the numerous examples of this construction further contribute to the already large corpus of examples. Yet, because of the possibility that many of the illeisms that reflect this syntax could be categorized as "fixed" in nature, the study will not address them further.

With the illeistic use of the phrases לַיהוָה and לִפְנֵי יְהוָה, as well as the illeistic use of the divine name ending a construct chain noted, the remaining examples of illeism of Yahweh are addressed in the rest of this section and it is from this body of examples that the representative texts will be taken. Addressing the remaining examples only, Yahweh speaks illeistically a total of 178x with 16 different self-references.[201] By far the most prominent self-reference is Yahweh (יהוה) which occurs 97x (54 percent).[202] Elohim (אֱלֹהִים) is the second most prominent self-reference, occurring 26x (15 percent). The compound phrase "Yahweh your God" (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ) occurs 17x (10 percent).[203]

Westermann notes this is the only occurrence of אֱלֹהִים in Amos. In all other instances the reference is יְהוָה. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 298.

[201]See appendix 2 for a full listing with references.

[202]As noted, the study is not focused on the meaning of specific names or references, but on the function of the illeism itself. The illeism of Yahweh, as will be argued more fully below, emphasizes his identity, and the diversity of self-references reflects the beauty and complexity of that revelation. In this sense, God's choice of illeism is a product of his revelation. Yet, the fact that the primary reference used is יְהוָה should not go unnoticed. As Bavinck notes, "Scripture reveals God to us as YHWH . . . . YHWH is the covenant God of promise, the faithful one who saves his people. YHWH is the highest revelation of God in the Old Testament; YHWH is God's real name." Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, trans. John Vriend, vol. 2, *God and Creation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 97.

[203]The other self-references include "Yahweh of hosts" (יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת) (7x),"the Holy One of Israel" (קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל) (6x),"El" (אֵל) (3x), "Eloah" (אֱלוֹהַּ) (3x), "Yahweh, the God of Israel" (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) (2x) "Adonai Yahweh" (אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה) (3x), faithful God" (אֵלֹהֵי אָמֵן) (2x), and 1x each "God of all the earth" (אֱלֹהֵי כָל־הָאָרֶץ),"Holy One of Jacob" (קְדוֹשׁ יַעֲקֹב), "the Lord God of hosts" (אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת), "the Almighty" (שַׁדַּי), "the God of Israel" (אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), "their God" (אֱלֹהֵיהֶם), and "Yahweh their God" (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם). ("Yahweh God," "Yahweh your God," "Yahweh their God," etc. are differentiated for thoroughness).

Yahweh's use of illeism can be found in the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. Of these 178 occurrences, Yahweh speaks illeistically 35x in the Pentateuch. Though Yahweh's illeistic speech is represented in the Minor Prophets, the phenomenon occurs most prominently in Isaiah (45x) and in Jeremiah (24x). The Writings are represented in the multiple occurrences reflected in the Psalms (3x) as well as in Job (5x). This evidence reflects the consistent use of illeism by Yahweh across the OT corpus, through various stages of revelation, and in a variety of genres (historical narrative, prophetic texts, wisdom literature, etc.).[204]

One aspect of the study seeks to highlight or eliminate any factor or factors which may be governing the choice of the third-person reference in the speech of Yahweh. Two prominent questions raised by the thesis are (1) "Is there a particular audience to whom Yahweh speaks illeistically?" and (2) "Is there a particular setting or background associated with Yahweh's use of illeism?" These two questions are briefly explored.

In an effort to understand the rhetorical function of Yahweh's illeism the study addresses whether the audience to whom Yahweh is speaking determines the use of illeism. Of the 178 occurrences of illeism noted, 65x (36 percent) Yahweh is speaking to the Israelites in general. (The term "Israelites" is used in a comprehensive sense, though specifically the northern or southern kingdom is addressed during the divided kingdom.) In each instance where Israel is the audience there is of course an intermediary speaking for Yahweh (Isaiah 23x, Jeremiah 11x, Hosea 9x, Zechariah 5x, Micah 3x, Moses 3x, Amos 3x, and 1x each in Zephaniah, Malachi, Joshua, and Joel).[205] The remaining

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[204]An in-depth analysis of genres and subgenres goes beyond the scope of the current study.

[205]Out of the 178 total occurrences, 50x Yahweh is quoted directly in the text and 124x an intermediary expresses the direct speech of Yahweh. (In some instances Yahweh's speech is recorded as being spoken directly to someone, i.e., David, when a prophet intermediary is not mentioned but understood).

occurrences primarily reflect Yahweh speaking to individuals, with Moses being the most prominent audience (23x). Yet, the analysis reflects Yahweh speaking illeistically to a variety of individuals (i.e., Joshua, Job, Aaron, Abraham, Noah, angels, Satan).[206] This observation highlights the relatively high number of times Yahweh speaks illeistically when addressing the Israelites, but the variety of audiences noted also affirms that there is not a particular person or audience associated with Yahweh's use of illeism.

In addition to audience, the study addresses whether the background or setting influences Yahweh's use of illeism. The evidence reveals that, while certain contexts commonly reoccur, there is no single or primary background reflected. As noted, his words are often directed toward Israel through a prophet and often the message reflects words of warning, judgment, or assurance. Yahweh speaks to various individuals in the contexts of covenant establishment and renewal, the giving of laws and regulations, as well as promises of provision and deliverance. These examples are not intended to be exhaustive but rather to reflect the recurring backgrounds as well as to highlight the diversity of the contexts of Yahweh's use of illeism.

If looked at from a broader perspective, the various backgrounds of the occurrences reveal an aspect of God's nature or his activities. Based on an evaluation of the 178 occurrences, the following categories are noted: God's holiness, mercy and grace, judgment/wrath, jealousy, sovereignty, deliverance, provision, covenant faithfulness and covenant expectations. The last four reflect two actions (God's deliverance and provision) and two aspects of the covenant relation with his people (his faithfulness and his expectation of covenant faithfulness). These four could be categorized under the larger category of "God's covenantal love."

While categorizing the occurrences in this manner reflects a degree of

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[206]Joshua (Josh 1:9); Job (Job 38:41; 40:2, 9); Aaron (Lev 10:11); Abraham (Gen 17:7; 18:14); Noah (Gen 9:6, 16); angels (Gen 18:17-19); Satan (Zech 3:2;).

subjectivity (and the categories themselves reflect a degree of overlap), the thematic categories are intended to contribute further insight into Yahweh's use of illeism. This organization also highlights that there is no particular aspect of God being reflected by the use of the third-person self-reference and no particular action or attribute of God is emphasized over another. Yet, the fact that God speaks illeistically in contexts which reveal aspects of his nature is significant. This diversity of aspects of God reflects the multifaceted nature of his identity, and it is this unique identity he is revealing and emphasizing by his use of the third-person self-reference.

Representative Text.

While many of these illeistic texts could be addressed with great benefit, the remainder of this section addresses representative texts of Yahweh's use of illeism. The texts are not chosen as necessarily distinct examples but as representative of the phenomenon in general. The various texts selected reflect the phenomenon from a variety of books within the OT corpus, within diverse genres, from various authors, and from various contexts. Also, the representative texts reflect both recorded direct speech of Yahweh and Yahweh's words through an intermediary. The representative texts are grouped according to the particular aspect of God emphasized or associated with the context. The texts are grouped this way simply as a means of presentation and as an aid to clarity.[207] Initially, this section will succinctly present the representative texts and then briefly engage with various scholarship on the passages.[208] Following this, the study addresses the rhetorical implications of the illeism of Yahweh.

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[207]In this sense the texts are not intended to be exhaustive. Such a presentation of material would both go beyond the scope of this section and overemphasize the significance of these categories.

[208]The section on the illeism of kings offered limited but specific context for each passage. The issue being explored was whether the king was emphasizing his royal status. The background of each passage was noted to highlight aspects which affirmed or suggested this view. The examples of Yahweh's illeism are presented with less background with the intent of presenting a broad picture of the phenomenon, though brief background is noted for clarity when necessary.

In Genesis 9:16, (ten verses after illeistically referring to "the image of *Elohim*) God[209] speaks to Noah concerning the bow in the sky: "I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant 'between *Elohim*[210] and between all living things . . .'" (בֵּין אֱלֹהִים וּבֵין כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה).[211] It is noteworthy that, in addition to the context of the Noahic covenant, Yahweh also refers to himself in the third person in the context of the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenant (as well as the covenant renewal with Joshua).[212] In Genesis 17:7 God states to Abraham, "I will establish my covenant between me and between you and between your offspring . . . to be *Elohim* to you (לִהְיוֹת לְךָ לֵאלֹהִים) and your offspring after you." Later, in 18:19, God states, "For I have chosen him so that he may command his children . . . that *Yahweh* may bring to Abraham (הָבִיא יְהוָה עַל־אַבְרָהָם) what he has spoken about him." When Yahweh comes down on Mount Sinai in Exodus 19:21-22 he commands Moses, "Go down, warn the people, lest they break through to *Yahweh* (פֶּן־יֶהֶרְסוּ אֶל־יְהוָה) to look and many perish." In Exodus 24:1-2 God commands Moses, "Come up to *Yahweh*, you and Aaraon, Nadab, and Abihu." In verse 2 God states, "Moses alone will come near to *Yahweh* (וְנִגַּשׁ מֹשֶׁה לְבַדּוֹ אֶל־יְהוָה)." In the covenant renewal ceremony in Joshua 24:2-27, Joshua speaks on behalf of Yahweh (v. 2: כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל). Yahweh recounts his past actions with his covenant people, the message consistently from the first person perspective. Yet, in verse 7 Yahweh briefly shifts to the third person before shifting back to the first person: "And when they cried out to *Yahweh* (וַיִּצְעֲקוּ אֶל־יְהוָה), *he* put darkness between you and the Egyptians . . . and you saw with your own eyes that which I did (אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתִי) in Egypt.

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[209]In this study God is used interchangeably with Yahweh as a matter of stylistic variety.

[210]Because the examples of illeism are intentionally presented seriatim, with little initial discussion, the third-person self-references of God are italicized in this section as an aid in clarity.

[211]The LXX reads ἀνὰ μέσον ἐμοῦ instead of בֵּין אֱלֹהִים.

[212]God also refers to himself in the third person in the context of the "covenant of peace" in Isa 54:5, 6, and 13.

Finally, in 2 Samuel 7:11, in the context of God's covenant with David, God states, "And I will give you rest from all your enemies. And *Yahweh* declares to you that *Yahweh* will make a house for you (וְהִגִּיד לְךָ יְהוָה כִּי־בַיִת יַעֲשֶׂה־לְּךָ יְהוָה)."[213]

The consistent occurrence of illeism in this covenant establishing/renewing context could be explained based on the formality of the occasion. Yet, Yahweh clearly uses illeism in many other contexts. Rather, this occurrence in this covenantal context affirms a significant and consistent aspect of God's use of illeism; God is affirming his identity as the covenant God of his people. As noted, this identity is multifaceted, but this is a significant aspect of God's identity which is associated with his use of the third-person self-reference.

Another aspect indicative of God's covenantal love is his expectations of obedience, which is reflected when he addresses his people's unfaithfulness. In these instances God emphasizes the severity of the transgressions by affirming the identity of the one they have offended. In 2 Chronicles 24:20 God speaks through the prophet Zechariah. "Thus says Elohim, 'Why do you transgress the commandments of *Yahweh*? Because you have forsaken *Yahweh* (כִּי־עֲזַבְתֶּם אֶת־יְהוָה), *he* has also forsaken you." In Isaiah 65:11 Yahweh's words of judgment are spoken through the prophet: "But you who forsake *Yahweh* (וְאַתֶּם עֹזְבֵי יְהוָה), who forget my holy mountain . . . ." Jeremiah conveys God's words to Judah in Jeremiah 2:19: "Know and understand that it is bitter and evil that you forsake *Yahweh your God* (עָזְבֵךְ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיִךְ);[214] the fear of me is not in you,

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[213]First Chr 17:10 does not reflect the shift to the third person. Yet, McCarter argues the text "has been subjected to accident [haplography] and revision." McCarter, *II Samuel*, 193. He concludes "the shift at this point in the oracle from first to third person, therefore, cannot be eliminated on textual grounds" (ibid.). The LXX renders the MT as ἀπαγγελεῖ σοι κύριος ὅτι οἶκον οἰκοδομήσεις αὐτῷ. Anderson maintains the third-person shift but follows the LXX to the degree that he disregards the final reference to Yahweh. See Anderson, *2 Samuel*, 111-12.

[214]The LXX reads τὸ καταλιπεῖν σε ἐμέ instead of עָזְבֵךְ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיִךְ.

declares Yahweh."[215] In Jeremiah 3:13 God calls for repentance. Verses 12-13a reads, "Return faithless Israel, declares Yahweh . . . I will not be angry forever. Only acknowledge your iniquity that against *Yahweh your God* you have rebelled" (כִּי בַּיהוָה אֱלֹהַיִךְ פָּשָׁעַתְּ). A final example is Hosea 1:2. Yahweh commands Hosea, "Take to yourself an adulterous wife . . . for the land commits blatant adultery forsaking *Yahweh* (מֵאַחֲרֵי יְהוָה)."

Various occurrences of illeism reflect the context of God's sovereignty. God speaks illeistically to Satan in Job 2:3, as well as in his response to Job in 39:17 and 40:2, 9. Job 2:3 offers a look into the heavenly realms as God addresses Satan. God describes Job as a man "who fears *Elohim*" (יְרֵא אֱלֹהִים) before shifting back to the first person perspective in his address to Satan (. . . "although you incited me against him" [וַתְּסִיתֵנִי בוֹ]). A similar context is found in Zechariah's vision in the heavenly courtroom. In 3:2 Yahweh speaks to Satan stating, "*Yahweh* rebuke you Satan. *Yahweh* who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you" (יִגְעַר יְהוָה בְּךָ הַשָּׂטָן וְיִגְעַר יְהוָה בְּךָ הַבֹּחֵר בִּירוּשָׁלָם).[216] In both contexts (Job and Zech) God's sovereignty is clearly demonstrated.

Returning to the book of Job, God's speech reflects illeism 3x in his answer to Job.[217] Speaking of the ostrich (39:17) God states, "*Eloah* has made her forget wisdom

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[215] Yates notes that the dialogue in Jer 2 "serves to indict Israel for covenantal infidelity." Gary E. Yates, "Jeremiah's Message of Judgment and Hope for God's Unfaithful 'Wife'," *BSac* 167, no. 666 (2010): 145-46. Yates addresses the language of the unfaithful wife as it is applied to Israel. He rightly notes that his language was not just to condemn, but "more importantly to bring about restoration" (148-149).

[216] Though I translate the Hebrew term in the sense of a proper name, the debate concerning whether the term should be understood as a noun or as a proper name is not addressed here. My position echoes that of Barker who writes, "One cannot be dogmatic about this issue, as it is sometimes difficult to determine when (or whether) a particular common noun also began to function as a personal name." Kenneth L. Barker, *Zechariah,* in vol. 8 of *EBC*, rev. ed. ed. Tremper Longman and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 754.

[217] Technically there are four occurrences in his reply to Job. In 40:19 God notes that behemoth is "the first of the works of El" (הוּא רֵאשִׁית דַּרְכֵי־אֵל). Prideaux notes that in 38:1 God breaks his silence as he speaks from the whirlwind, revealing himself as the Creator Lord (יהוה), "the Creator-sustainer of every part of the universe." Andrew Prideaux, "The Yahweh Speeches in the Book of Job: Sublime

(כִּי־הִשָּׁה אֱלוֹהַּ חָכְמָה).” In 40:2 God asks, “Will the faultfinder contend with *the Almighty*? Let the one who reproves *Eloah* answer it” (יִסּוֹר מוֹכִיחַ אֱלוֹהַּ יַעֲנֶנָּה). And finally in 40:9 God asks Job, “Do you have an arm like *El* and with a voice as *his* can you thunder?” (וְאִם־זְרוֹעַ כָּאֵל לָךְ וּבְקוֹל כָּמֹהוּ תַרְעֵם).

Prideaux views the emphasis of this section as reflecting God’s governance.[218] Indeed, in verse 8 Yahweh speaks of his judgment (מִשְׁפָּט). Scholnick notes the term as used in Job can reflect both jurisprudence and sovereignty. Offering various supporting examples (biblical and non-biblical) she underscores the associated aspect of kingship.[219] She concludes noting, “Job speaks at the end of the drama not as an innocent hero who rejects the divine Judge for improperly accusing him of wrongdoing, but as an enlightened and humbled man who accepts an all-powerful King.”[220]

Often God’s use of illeism is in the context of his delivering his people from their enemies. In Exodus 9:1-5 Moses conveys the words of Yahweh to Pharaoh. In verse 4 the message shifts from the first person perspective as God states, “*Yahweh* will make a distinction (וְהִפְלָה יְהוָה)[221] between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt.” In verse 5 the narrator adds, “And Yahweh set an appointed time saying, ‘Tomorrow *Yahweh* will do this thing in the land” (וַיָּשֶׂם יְהוָה מוֹעֵד לֵאמֹר מָחָר יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה)

Irrelevance, or Right to the Point?” *Reformed Theological Review* 69, no. 2 (2010): 77. He notes that God “answers Job as the transcendent Creator-Lord, his Lord who is intimately and personally involved in the life of his little creature Job” (ibid.). While these aspects are present, God does not refer to himself in the book as Yahweh, though the poet and Job use the name. Yet, Dailey captures Prideaux’s point noting that “by explicitly employing the tetragrammaton here, the poet evokes all the salvific foundations of the Old Testament.” Thomas F. Dailey, “Theophanic Bluster: Job and the Wind of Change,” *Studies in Religion/Sciences religieuses* 22, no. 2 (1993): 190.

[218]Prideaux, “The Yahweh Speeches in the book of Job,” 81.

[219]Sylvia Huberman Scholnick, “The Meaning of Mišpat in the Book of Job,” *JBL* 101, no. 4 (1982): 521-22.

[220]Ibid., 529.

[221]The LXX reflects the first person pronoun (παραδοξάσω ἐγὼ).

בָּאָרֶץ). In 2 Samuel 5:24 David inquires of Yahweh concerning the attack of the Philistines. Yahweh concludes his reply stating, "When you hear the sound of marching . . . pay attention, for *Yahweh* has gone out before you (כִּי אָז יָצָא יְהוָה לְפָנֶיךָ) to strike down the army of the Philistines."[222]

In Psalm 50:22, reflecting the context of God's judgment, God rebukes the wicked stating, "Consider this, you who forget *Eloah* (שִׁכְחֵי אֱלוֹהַּ) . . . ." In the following verse Yahweh's perspective shifts back to first person: "He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors me" (זֹבֵחַ תּוֹדָה יְכַבְּדָנְנִי). In Isaiah 13, within the oracle concerning Babylon, God speaks through the prophet Isaiah concerning his coming judgment. Yahweh states in verse 19, "Babylon . . . will be as when *Elohim* overthrew Sodom and Gemorrah" (כְּמַהְפֵּכַת אֱלֹהִים אֶת־סְדֹם וְאֶת־עֲמֹרָה).[223]

Finally, just as Yahweh emphasizes his divine name in the context of his judgment, he speaks illeistically when revealing himself as the God of mercy. In the context of his restoration of the remnant of his people, Zechariah 10:12 reads, "I will make them strong in *Yahweh* and in *his* name they will walk,' declares Yahweh" (וְגִבַּרְתִּים בַּיהוָה וּבִשְׁמוֹ יִתְהַלָּכוּ נְאֻם יְהוָה). Micah 4 notes that in the latter days the nations will stream to the mountain of the house of Yahweh. In 4:6-7 Yahweh speaks of his restoration of those he has afflicted. Verse 7 states, "I will make the lame a remnant (וְשַׂמְתִּי אֶת־הַצֹּלֵעָה) . . . and *Yahweh* will reign over them (וּמָלַךְ יְהוָה עֲלֵיהֶם)[224] in Mount Zion."

Diversity of Scholarship

As noted in the introduction, the illeism of Yahweh often goes unmentioned by

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[222]The parallel text in 1 Chr 14:15 also reflects Yahweh's illeism with very similar wording (כִּי־יָצָא הָאֱלֹהִים לְפָנֶיךָ).

[223]Similar third-person shifts are also noted in vv. 4-6 and 9 of the oracle.

[224]BHS apparatus notes וּמָלַךְ יְהוָה should probably read וּמָלַכְתִּי, yet offers no basis for the emendation.

commentators. Such is the case in a survey of scholarship on the above examples. The

scholarship that does address Yahweh's use of the third person varies in the above

examples.[225] Scholars variously attribute the shift to the work of an editor (Wagenaar on

Mic 4:7),[226] to a parenthetical comment by the narrator (Sailhamer on Gen 9:6),[227] as the

prophet speaking instead of Yahweh (both Kessler and Rudolph on Mic 4:7),[228] as a

liturgical response from the community (Vuilleumier and Weiser on Mic 4:7),[229] as

reflecting a proverbial saying (Harland on Gen 9:6),[230] or as a corruption of the text

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[225]The analysis of scholarship on these passages is not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, the scholarship highlights the diversity of responses and offers an appropriate background of relevant scholarship from which to address the rhetorical function of the illeism of Yahweh.

[226]Jan A. Wagenaar, *Judgement and Salvation: The Composition and Redaction of Micah 2-5* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 274.

[227]Sailhamer sees the shift in Gen 9:6 as reflecting the voice of the narrator rather than Yahweh speaking to Noah. He writes, "Thus at this point in the narrative the author has inserted an explanation . . . for the prohibition of manslaughter —namely, a reference back to the creation of humankind in God's image." Sailhamer, *Genesis*, 132.

[228]Rainer Kessler, *Micha*, HTKAT (Freiburg: Herder, 1999), 192. Kessler views the texts as reflecting two elements. The first reflects Yahweh speaking in the first person, referring to himself as a shepherd who gathers his flock. The second part is not spoken by Yahweh, but rather spoken about Yahweh as King. He writes, "Der Kerntext selbst besteht wiederum aus zwei Elementen. Das erste bildet Verse 6.7a. Es ist das in der Einleitung angekündigte Gotteswort, in dem JHWH in 1. Person spricht. Daran angeschlossen ist V 7bα, wo in 3. Person über JHWH gesprochen wird. Auch inhaltlich unterscheiden sich die beiden Aussagen. Vers 6.7a schildert JHWH als den die Herde sammelnden Hirten, während V 7b von ihm als König spricht." Wilhelm Rudolph, *Micha, Nahum, Habakuk, Zephanja*, Kommentar zum Alten Testament, vol. 13 (Gütersloher: Gerd Mohn, 1975), 84. Rudolph notes the prophet begins to speak in v. 7b, explaining God's statement in vv. 6-7a. ("In V.7b, wo nicht mehr Jahwe redet, erläutert der Prophet den Gottesspruch V.6.7a dahingehend") (ibid.).

[229]Vuilleumier writes, "It may seem curious that the subject shifts suddenly from the first to the third person singular. It should not be surprising. This is the use of a liturgical response celebrating the kingship of YHWH. ("Il peut paraître curieux que le sujet passe subitement de la première à la troisième personne du singulier. Il ne faut pas s'en étonner. C'est la reprise d'un répons liturgique célébrant la royauté de YHWH.") René Vuilleumier, *Michée*, Commentaire de L'ancien Testament, vol. 11b (Neuchâtel, Switzerland: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1971), 52. A similar view is held by Weiser. He writes that Mic 4:7b, because the verse speaks of Yahweh in the third person, cannot be understood as a continuation of the divine word of promise. He writes, "Der zweite halbvers, der von Jahwe in der dritten Person redet, kann in dieser Form nicht als Fortsetzung des göttlichen Verheißungswortes verstanden werden."). Rather, he argues the best explanation for the shift is that it reflects a liturgical response of the community affirming the kingship of God ("dies alles erklärt sich am besten durch die Annahme einer liturgischen Responsion der Gemeinde, die sich zur Königsherrschaft Gottes bekennt." Artur Weiser, *Das Buch der zwölf kleinen Propheten*, ATD, vol. 24 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), 268.

[230]P. J. Harland, *The Value of Human Life: A Study of the Story of the Flood (Genesis 6-9)*,

(Jeremias on Zech 3:2; Cross and Smith on 2 Sam 7:11).[231]

Those who do attribute the third-person shift to Yahweh offer various explanations and responses. Westermann on Genesis 9:6 simply notes the oddness of the shift in person.[232] Stuart on Exodus 9:5 helpfully notes Yahweh's tendency for illeism, yet notes Moses's literary use of the third person in the Penteteuch as comparable examples.[233] Alden, on Job 39:17, notes that the shift in person in general is a common practice in the OT and cites as examples the psalmists who often shift from talking about God to talking to God.[234] Two scholars rightly highlight the illeism and offer some

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VTSup (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 153.

[231]Concerning Zech 3:2 Jeremias notes that many interpreters emend the MT to follow the Syriac translation (which reads "angel of Yahweh" instead of "Yahweh"). He notes this is based on the fact that the MT contains the great difficulty ("die große Schwierigkeit") that the literal words of Yahweh reflect him speaking of himself in the third person and himself calling for the rebuke of Satan ("daß in der folgenden wörtlichen Rede Jahwe von sich selbst in 3. pers. redet und sich selbst zum Schelten des Satans auffordert"). Christian Jeremias, *Die Nachtgesichte des Sacharja: Untersuchungen zu ihrer Stellung im Zusammenhang der Visionsberichte im Alten Testament und zu ihrem Bildmaterial* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1977), 204n4. Cross argues 2 Sam 7:11 is corrupt in both 2 Sam, 1 Chr, and in the Greek traditions. His reconstruction renders the verse, "And I make known to you that I will build a house for you . . . ." Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 256 and nn. Smith notes various efforts to improve the texts. His objections are based on the perceived awkwardness of the illeism. He writes, "The change in person is without motive; the repetition of the name Yahweh is superfluous." Smith, *Commentary on the Books of Samuel*, 300.

[232]Westermann writes that one would expect the pronoun "me" instead of the third-person reference "God" in a divine address. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 474. Westermann's comment is surprising. As noted, divine address occurs 6x in Gen alone, and is a frequent occurrence throughout the Pentateuch and the OT canon in general.

[233]Stuart writes, "The way God spoke of himself in the third person in v. 5 is paralleled by many other instances in Scripture, particularly in the prophetical books." Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, vol. 2 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006), 223. He adds, "Moses was throughout Exodus and the following Pentateuchal books speaking of himself in the first person [sic] as well. Both are examples of a phenomenon normal to Hebrew narrative style." Ibid. Stuart's comment is a helpful acknowledgment of the illeisms. Yet, based on the distinctive rhetorical functions reflected by illeism, I have argued in this study that a distinction should be made between the literary use of the third person and that used in direct speech. Moses's literary use of the third-person self-reference as an author does not offer significant support or explanation for Yahweh's illeism in recorded direct speech.

[234]Alden notes that "though the Lord is speaking, he refers to himself in the third person, a practice found throughout the Old Testament, particularly by the psalmists who alternate between 'he' and 'you' when referring to God." Alden, *Job*, 387. The phenomenon Alden refers to does reflect a shift in person, but technically is not the same phenomenon as illeism. The third-person self-reference is a fundamentally different phenomenon with a significantly different rhetorical effect. The comparison of the

precedent for its use. Clines addresses the shift in Job 40:9 writing, "It is a little strange that Yahweh should speak of 'God' in the third person . . . but it is by no means unparalleled (cf. Isa 40:11)."[235] Alexander writes concerning Exodus 24:1-2 that "although the third-person references to Yahweh . . . might suggest that the speaker is someone other than Yahweh . . . it is not uncommon within the Sinai narrative for God to refer to himself in this way (e.g. Exod. 19:21-22; 20:7, 10-11)."[236] Barker and Bailey's explanation most clearly reflects the evidence of this study in their note on Yahweh's illeism in Micah 4:7. They write, "Micah may be the speaker in the second half of the verse . . . yet it is not uncommon for the Lord to refer to himself in the third person."[237] While this statement is arguably the most accurate of those noted above, it does not address why Yahweh refers to himself this way.

This brief evaluation of relevant scholarship highlights the diverse ways the shift to the third person is addressed. Even when scholarship attributes the self-reference to Yahweh, the reason for the shift is not addressed. The unanswered question is why

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two phenomena does not adequately address why God would choose to refer to himself in the third person. Yet, as Alden notes, this tendency of shifting from speaking *to God* to speaking *about God* appears in the psalms. Also, this type of shift in person appears often in the writings of the prophets who shift from speaking *to God or Israel* and then shift to speaking *about God or Israel* (i.e., Hos 9:1-5; Isa 51:17-18). This phenomenon is sometimes referred to as *Personenwechsel*, though the term can also refer to the shift from first to third person. In addressing the topic, Sperber notes that *Personenwechsel* is nothing extraordinary in the Bible ("Der Personenwechsel ist eine in der Bibel nicht außergewöhnliche Erscheinung"), and notes that it reflects "the vividness of the prophet's language" ("In der Lebhaftigkeit seiner Sprache geht der Prophet . . ."). J. Sperber, "Der Personenwechsel in der Bibel," *ZAVA* 32, nos. 1-2 (1918): 23-24. Yet, he also notes the shift from the first to the third person and vice versa, adding that the numbers are so large that it must be considered a stylistic phenomenon ("Die Zahl der Belege für diese Erscheinung ist eine so große, daß auch hier eine Stilerscheinung angenommen werden muß"). Ibid. Illeism, in so far as it reflects a shift in person, is a subset of *Personenwechsel*. Yet, this study highlights the prominent and unique use of illeism in the OT. For accuracy and clarity, illeism should be viewed as a distinct phenomenon with unique rhetorical implications. The concept of *Numeruswechsel* (shift from singular to plural) is also a related but distinct phenomenon.

[235]David J. A. Clines, *Job 38-42*, WBC, vol. 18B (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011), 1181.

[236]T. Desmond Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 67n14.

[237]Kenneth L. Barker and Waylon Bailey, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, NAC, vol. 20 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1998), 89.

Yahweh uses illeism. The following section evaluates the possible motivation for and potential rhetorical effects of Yahweh's use of illeism.

**Rhetorical Function of the Illeism
of Yahweh**

As noted in the introduction, the rhetorical uses of illeism are diverse. It may be used to reflect sarcasm, humor, humility, or hubris. It may be used for the sake of simplicity and clarity as in discourse between an adult and a child. It may be used to contribute a sense of objectivity to one's historical account as noted among various ancient historians. In the broadest sense, the use of the third-person self-reference, or "dissociative third person" as the linguist Laurence Horn calls it, allows the speaker to present himself from an external perspective, emphasizing identity or an aspect of one's identity. Land and Kurtzinger note that, though it is not always the case, "the use of a third-person reference form in self-reference is designed to display that the speaker is talking about themselves *as if from the perspective of another*— either the addressee(s) . . . or a non-present other."[238] In the OT illeism is used within oaths, within a summons to listen, within a trial setting, to characterize the speaker, and to convey deference or humility. In the case of the illeism of the various kings, the rhetorical emphasis is of their office of kingship and, specifically, their identity as king. This external perspective of their royal identity may also implicitly draw upon related aspects of kingship, (military power, royal authority, etc.) depending on the context of its use.

As noted, the context of Yahweh's illeisms reflect some aspect of his nature or activities. The various individual aspects associated with his use of illeism (his holiness, mercy, judgment, jealousy, sovereignty, deliverance, provision, covenant faithfulness, and covenant expectations) reflect a limited perspective on the multifaceted nature of

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[238]Victoria Land and Celia Kitzinger, "Some Uses of Third-Person Reference Forms in Speaker Self-Reference," *Discourse Studies* 9, no. 4 (2007), 496.

God's revealed identity. Though God reveals himself in various ways, his consistent use of the third-person self-reference is yet one more way he reveals and affirms his identity. Yahweh is revealing and affirming his identity in relation to his covenant people, but also declaring his unique status in relation to the gods of the surrounding nations (i.e., Lev 19:4; Deut 31:16; Judg 6:10).[239]

While the revealing God makes himself known in various ways, one significant aspect of this revealing nature is seen in the many occurrences of Yahweh's use of the phrase "I am Yahweh" (אֲנִי יְהוָה) or "I am Yahweh your God" (אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ). These expressions occur a total of 183x in the Pentateuch, Judges, 1 Kings, Psalms, and the Prophets.[240] The importance of God's people knowing his identity is prevalent. In Ezekiel alone the phrase "You/They shall know that I am Yahweh" occurs 33x. The importance given to God's name, both by God and by others, also underscores the importance of God's revelation of himself.[241] For example, Isaiah 42:8 reads, "I am Yahweh. That is my name" (אֲנִי יְהוָה הוּא שְׁמִי). In Jeremiah 16:21 Yahweh states, "They

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[239]The intention here is to underscore the possible motivations for the emphasis of identity. God is revealing himself to Israel (a pedagogical motivation), but he is also addressing the consistent danger of idolatry (a polemical motivation). Addressing the backdrop of the development of Israelite religion goes beyond the scope of the study.

[240]This number includes variations, including both plural and singular pronominal suffixes ["your" sg. and pl.] and both אֲנִי and אָנֹכִי. The vast number of times God uses the divine name in the third person along with the number of times he states, "I am Yahweh" raises the possibility that the illeism, to some degree, may serve as an abbreviation of the fuller expression of identity. In other words, the expression "Yahweh your God" or simply "Yahweh" used illeistically may serve to resonate with echoes of the larger, unspoken phrase "I am the Lord (your God)."

[241]As noted, the two most prominent names God uses illeistically are Yahweh and El. Bavinck notes that El "emphasizes God's power and might . . . . YHWH is the covenant God of promise, the faithful one who saves his people. YHWH is the highest revelation of God in the Old Testament; YHWH is God's real name ." Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, vol. 2*, *God and Creation*, 97. He adds, "There is an intimate link between God and his name. According to Scripture, this link . . . is not accidental or arbitrary but forced by God himself. We do not name God; he names himself. . . . By proper names, particularly by the name YHWH, God made himself known to Israel. . . . Israel, accordingly may not blaspheme and desecrate that name, or use it in vain (Exod. 20:7; Lev. 18:21; 19:12; 24:11). On the contrary: that name must be invoked, passed on in story, magnified, known, feared, exalted, expected, sought out, sanctified (Gen. 4:26; 12:8;Exod. 9:16; Deut. 28:58; 1 Kgs 8:33; Ps. 5:12; 34:3; 52:9; 83:17; 122:4; Isa. 26:8; Matt. 6:9; John 12:28; etc.)." Ibid., 98.

will know that my name is Yahweh" (וְיָדְעוּ כִּי־שְׁמִי יְהוָה). Exodus 34:6-7 reflects a final

example of God's intent of self-disclosure. In these verses Yahweh proclaims his name,

speaking illeistically, and describes attributes of himself to Moses. He states, "Yahweh,

Yahweh, El, compassionate and gracious . . ." (יְהוָה יְהוָה אֵל רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן).[242]

     A final aspect of the identity of God deserves mention in light of the prominent

use of illeism among OT kings. Various biblical authors affirm the kingship of Yahweh,

as does Yahweh himself. In the final representative text noted in this section, Micah 4:6-

7, Yahweh states that Yahweh will reign over the remnant in Mount Zion. This theme of

the kingship of God is reflected throughout the OT.[243] As Psalm 103:19 states, "Yahweh

has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all."[244] To be clear,

I am not arguing that Yahweh refers to himself consistently as king in the third person,

though this does occur (i.e., Mal 1:14). Rather, I am highlighting the significance of

kingship as part of God's identity. The prominence of illeism among kings in the OT

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[242]Widmer notes that these verses are "the most comprehensive account of YHWH's nature in the entire Bible" and argues that "the canon ascribes these verses to God Himself." Michael Widmer, *Moses, God, and the Dynamics of Intercessory Prayer: A Study of Exodus 32-34 and Numbers 13-14*, FAT, vol. 8 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 175. Though Widmer argues that Yahweh uses the third person for self-reference, he concludes, following a Jewish tradition, that Yahweh is assuming the role of *Vorbeter*. He writes, "YHWH teaches Moses how to use the divine name in subsequent prayer by revealing His name" (202). Widmer does not address why this one instance should be interpreted so radically in light of the extensive use of the third person by Yahweh elsewhere. Gordon notes that "support is found for the view that the exposition of divine attributes in 34:5-8 derives from a liturgical text, which may explain why YHWH speaks of himself in the third person, and even why he proclaims his own name, since *ex hypothesi* this may have been done originally by a priest." R. P. Gordon, "Introducing the God of Israel," in *The God of Israel*, ed. R. P. Gordon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 14. Based on the assumption of a liturgical text, Gordon's assessment is reasonable. Yet, as with Widmer's position, the abundance of other instances in the OT of Yahweh's illeisms must also be considered. In light of the tendency within scholarship to offer distinctive explanations on individual occurrences of Yahweh's illeism, this study underscores the need to appreciate the prominent use of illeism by Yahweh throughout the OT and evaluate the phenomenon in light of this evidence.

[243]I.e., Exod 15:18; Num 23:21; Deut 33:5, 26; Judg 8:23; 1 Sam 2:10; 8:7; 10:19; 12:12; Pss 2:6; 24:7; 29:10; 44:4; 47:2, 7; 48:2; 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1; 103:19; Isa 33:17, 22; 44:6; Jer 8:19; 10:7, 10; Zeph 3:15; Zech 14:9, 16, 17.

[244]Childs notes Ps 2 may be intended to emphasize God's kingship as a major theme in the Psalter. Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 516.

suggests the possibility that the illeism of Yahweh is functioning in a similar manner.[245]

Outside of the deferential use, this "royal" emphasis is the second most prominent use outside of the use of illeism by Yahweh. In addition, with the exception of this "royal" use in the speech of kings, Yahweh's use shares no similarities with other noted uses of illeism in the OT (i.e., to show deference, within an oath, in a summons to listen, for characterization, in a trial setting, or to highlight a historical era). The suggestion here, based on the evidence, is that God as divine and universal King is reflecting a similar phenomenon in his speech as that of the earthly kings. The data is suggestive, though not conclusive. This proposed royal/divine aspect of illeism will be explored further in the following chapters.[246]

Section Summary

The analysis of the use of illeism of Yahweh reflects no specific pattern associated with the phenomenon. Though Yahweh often refers to himself in the third person when addressing Israel, he also addresses a variety of individuals when speaking illeistically. Various aspects of God's nature which are associated with his use of illeism are noted. Yet, these various aspects of God serve to reflect the complexity of his overarching, unique, divine identity. The rhetorical effect of the consistent and varied illeisms nuanced within their varied contexts serve to instruct and remind Israel of the identity of their true God. Also, the illeism functions to affirm the identity of the true God to a people surrounded by worship of false gods. Finally, the prominence of illeism

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[245]God is of course portrayed in other ways in the OT, such as a father, savior, warrior, judge, etc. Yet, the prominent use of illeism to affirm royalty raises the possibility that this royal aspect is reflected within its use by Yahweh.

[246]Frame highlights the pervasive theme of kingship in general that runs throughout the Bible, highlighting that the noun "king" in the Greek and Hebrew occurs over 2800x in Scripture (not including the many references to kingdom and corresponding verbs). John M. Frame, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2013), 91. He notes the relationship between human and divine kingship, noting that "human kingship and divine kingship influence each other. Human kingship is to some extent an image of the divine. But negatively also: God's kingship stands in contrast with the corruption and tyranny of earthly kings" (ibid.).

among OT kings and the similarities this use shares with Yahweh's use may suggest a "royal" aspect associated with God's tendency to refer to himself in the third person.

Conclusion

Illeism used to show deference or humility before a superior occurs prominently in the OT (over 130x). The use of third person for self-reference also occurs in the context of an oath (3x), within a summons to listen (3x), in the characterization of the speaker (3x), in the context of a trial setting/historical era (1x), as well as in the speech of kings. Illeism in the speech of kings occurs 33x and is used by at least 12 kings. Based on an analysis of the various occurrences in the speech of kings, the illeism is functioning in this context to emphasize the royal status of the speaker. The remaining occurrences of illeism are in the direct speech of Yahweh, occurring over 500x in the OT. The following chart briefly summarizes illeism in the OT:

Table 3. Illeism in the OT

Use of Illeism in OT	Occurrence
To Show Deference	>130x
Within an Oath	3x
Within a Summons to Listen	3x
For Characterization of the Speaker	3x
Within a Trial Setting/Historical Context	1x
In Speech of Kings	33x
In Speech of Yahweh	>500x

Yahweh's use of the third-person self-reference is not limited to a particular audience, though Israel and Moses are often addressed in this manner. Based on modern research of illeism, an evaluation of its use in the speech of Yahweh, and its broader use throughout the OT, the evidence indicates the illeism of Yahweh is functioning

rhetorically to emphasize his unique, divine identity as the true God of Israel. Also, based on the prominence of the use of illeism among kings of the OT, the research suggests that the illeism of Yahweh may reflect a royal aspect. The illeism as used by kings and by Yahweh functions in a similar manner. In addition, Yahweh presents himself as King and OT authors also consistently affirm his kingship.

CHAPTER 4

ILLEISM IN ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN TEXTS

The evidence presented in chapter 3 suggests a potential royal and divine aspect associated with the use of illeism in the OT. Yet, is this an isolated phenomenon within the OT canon? Does a similar use of illeism occur in the speech of kings and/or gods in ANE texts that may offer clarification and support for this thesis? In an effort to gain further insight into the use of illeism in the OT, this section addresses the occurrence of illeism in the ANE texts.

Covering almost three millennia, various regions (Egypt, Anatolia, Syria-Palestine, and Mesopotamia), cultures (Egyptian, Persian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Hittite, etc), languages (Egyptian, Sumerian, Akkadian, Hittite, Ugaritic, etc.) and reflecting many genres (epics and legends, prayers and laments, myths, commemorative and dedicatory texts, treaties, legal and commercial texts, love poetry, wisdom literature, etc.), a general exploration of the texts is a daunting challenge. Yet, for the scope of this study, a broad survey will offer a more encompassing view of the use of illeism. With this in mind, the survey is not intended to be exhaustive in its analysis of all available evidence.[1] Rather, the survey reflects a broad inspection of the ANE corpus with respect to genre, geography, and history in an effort to gain a clearer understanding of the biblical use of illeism and, more specifically, its use by Yahweh.

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[1]Such an analysis would go beyond the scope of a single dissertation. Also, while the complexities concerning text and interpretation, historical background, etc., are noted, an in-depth analysis of each text goes beyond the scope of this study.

West Semitic Compositions

The genres of myth and legend are particularly interesting for this study in that the narratives reflect a culture's understanding of direct speech among individuals as well as pagan gods.[2] The survey of these texts reflects various gods (primarily preeminent gods) referring to themselves in the third person. Within the Ugaritic literature, three occurrences of illeism in the speech of El are noted. In the Baal Cycle, El (translitarated as ʾIlu by Pardee),[3] speaking to lady Asherah states, "Or is it the 'hand' of *ʾIlu*[4] the king that has excited thoughts in you, the love of *the Bull* that has aroused you?"[5] Smith and Pitard note that El refers to himself in the third person in the text, concluding that "though the title is conventional, in this context it may evoke his sexual prowess, since the bull was famous for its sexual power."[6] Further in the narration of the Baal Cycle (iii 1-21), El has been told that Baal is alive and states that he will only believe this if he has a dream in which he sees the effects of the weather god.[7] He states, "And if Mighty [Baʿlu] is alive, if the Prince, lord of [the earth], exists (again), In[8] a dream of *the Gracious One, the kindly god*, in a vision *of the Creator of creatures*, The heavens will

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[2]Sparks defines a legend as "a traditional story that treats cultural heroes and institutions." Kenton L. Sparks, *Ancient Texts for the Study of the Hebrew Bible: A Guide to the Background Literature* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2005), 271. He defines myth as "a story about gods or supernatural beings" (306).

[3]In this chapter names will at times reflect more than one spelling based on the transliteration of different sources. Clarification will be added when needed.

[4]Italics added. For clarity the various occurrences of illeism of both gods and kings are italicized throughout the chapter.

[5]"The Baʿlu Myth," trans. Dennis Pardee (COS 1.86:259).

[6]Mark S. Smith and Wayne T. Pitard, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 521-22.

[7]COS 1.86:271n270.

[8]Each new line of poetry is capitalized in the presentation of the text in COS. For the sake of space the text is not presented line by line in poetic form. Yet, for the sake of clarity the capitalization is followed.

rain down oil, the wadis will run with honey. Then I'll know that Mighty Baʿlu is alive."[9]

A few lines later he calls out to Anatu, again referring to himself illeistically. He states,

"Listen Girl ʿAnatu: (Go) say to Šapšu, luminary of the gods: Dried up are the furrows of

the fields, O Šapšu, dried up are the furrows of *ʾIlu's* field's."[10]

Finally, El refers to himself illeistically in "The Legend of King Keret." King

Keret has suffered loss of family and, in a dream, speaks with El. The text reads

(beginning at line 40), "And in his dream El descends, in his vision the Father of Man.

And he approaches asking Keret: 'What ails Keret that he weeps, The Beloved, Lad of *El*,

that he cries?'"[11] In line 59 the text reads, "And Bull, his father El, [replied]: 'E[nough]

for thee of weeping, Keret; of crying, Beloved, Lad of *El*."[12] Finally, 16 lines later he

states to King Keret, "And go up to the top of a [to]wer; Bestride the top of the wal[l];

Lift up thy hands to heaven, Sacrifice to *Bull, thy father El*."[13]

Within the Baal Cycle the god Baal[14] also refers to himself in the third person.

At one point in the narrative (iii 10-22) Baal complains of his treatment by the gods. The

text reads:

Again Mighty Baʿlu (speaks). Cloud-Rider tells his story: [. . .] they stood up and
cast scorn upon me, they arose and spat upon me in the assembly of the gods; . . .
Now there are two (kinds of) feasts (that) *Baʿlu* hates, three (that) *Cloud-Rider*

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[9]COS 1.86:271.

[10]COS 1.86:271. Though the third-person reference could reflect that the message is a general statement and not the words of El, ʿAnatu delivers the message as the "message of the Bull, your father ʾIlu" (1.186:271). Though certainty is not possible here, context supports viewing this as an illeistic reference.

[11]"The Legend of King Keret," trans. L. Ginsberg (ANET, 143).

[12]Ibid. Yet, cf. COS 1.102:334. Pardee translates the previous line and the one noted illeistically, yet translates this line as the wording of the narrator. "The Bull, his father ʾIlu, [answered] [(with) goodley (words)] as Kirta wept, as the goodly lad of ʿIlu shed tears . . . ."

[13]Ibid.

[14]Baal is the Canaanite storm god and is the central deity in most of the extant myths. He corresponds to the gods Marduk of Babylon and Zeus of Greece myth. Michael David Coogan, *Stories from Ancient Canaan* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978), 116.

(hates): An improper feast, a low-quality feast, and a feast where the female servants misbehave.[15]

Roth seeks to explain the use of the third person by arguing that the section (lines 17-21a) was originally a separate proverbial saying which was inserted into Baal's speech.[16] Yet, Smith and Pitard note this proposal is unlikely because of the lack of corroboratory evidence.[17] Furthermore, and more significantly, Smith and Pitard note that "the gods speak of themselves in the third person fairly often in Ugaritic narrative . . . . Thus there is no need to see this as an indication of the presence of a foreign literary fragment here."[18]

Elsewhere, Baal declares his claim to a palace. This illeism follows a brief lacuna in the text (about 15 lines), yet Smith and Pitard note it is clear Baal is the one speaking, "bemoaning the fact that he has no palace, [which is] the pre-eminent sign of divine kingship."[19] Speaking to Anat, Baal states, "*Baʿlu* has no house as (do) the (other) gods, (no) court as (do) the sons of ʾAṯiratu, (No) dwelling (as does) ʾIlu, (no) shelter (as do) his sons, (no) dwelling (as does) the Great Lady, ʾAṯiratu of the Sea."[20] Smith and Pitard comment on the oddness of the third person in light of the context. They write, "On the face of it, Baal might not be expected to speak of himself in the third person to Anat . . . . Baal is Anat's intimate, and the first person would seem more appropriate."[21]

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[15]The Baʿlu Myth," trans. Dennis Pardee (COS 1.86:258).

[16]Wolfgang Roth, *Numerical Sayings in the Old Testament: A Form Critical Study*, VTSup, vol. 13 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965), 80-81.

[17]Smith and Pitard, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle*, 476n14.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Ibid., 304.

[20]COS 1.86:253. Cf. 1.86:255, 259 where the statement is conveyed three additional times in the third person. Smith renders this as an illeistic reference as well. His translation reads, "In lament he declares to the Bull El, his father, to El the King who brought him into being . . . 'But Baal has no house like the other gods, no court like Asherah's sons'." "Baal," Coogan, *Stories from Ancient Canaan*, 96.

[21]Smith and Pitard, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle*, 305.

Yet, in their view, the shift is justified because Baal is instructing Anat on what to say to El.[22] This is a possible reason. Anat does convey the message of Baal to El. The text reads,

> (But) groaning he does cry out to the Bull, his father, to the king who established him, He cries out to ʾAtiratu and her sons, to the goddess and the host of her kin: Baʿlu has no house as (do) the (other) gods, (no) court as (do) the sons of ʾAtiratu, (No) dwelling (as does) ʾIlu, (no) shelter (as do) [his sons].[23]

Yet, even in this section it seems possible, if not probable, the intended message is the verbatim words of Baal. In this sense her message to El also conveys Baal's use of illeism. Also, as noted, Baal refers to himself in the third person elsewhere, further supporting the case for illeism in this instance.

A final illeistic example occurs as Baal, now in his house, speaks through his window:

> Mighty Baʿlu speaks up: Enemies of Haddu, why do you shake with fear? . . . *Baʿlu* looks ahead of (where) his hand (will strike) when the cedar (shaft) dances in his right hand. Since *Baʿlu* has taken up residence in his house is there or is there not a king (who) can establish himself in the land of (*Baʿlu's*) dominion? Why don't I send a courier to Môtu, son of ʾIlu . . . .[24]

Pardee captures the tone of the section with the descriptive heading "Baʿlu's Powers Incite Him to Hubris."[25] Baal's use of illeism reflects his self-perceived power and stature. El's use reflects a similar rhetorical effect, yet the context is somewhat different. Within the Baal cycle, El speaks with authority recognized and imposed over the span of uncounted ages. Baal speaks as the young god who sees himself as deserving of a house (temple), reflective of his divine stature and power. El's illeism emphasizes

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[22]Ibid.

[23]COS 1.86:255.

[24]COS 1.86:263. Coogan notes, "The possession of a palace was thus a proof of royal status, and this is the reason for the emphasis placed on it in *Baal.*" Coogan, *Stories from Ancient Canaan*, 80.

[25]Ibid.

acknowledged authority; Baal's illeism, to some degree, emphasizes his status and power so that it may be rightly acknowledged by others

These multiple occurrences of illeism in the speech of both El and Baal in the Ugaritic evidence raises the question of the status and relationship between the two. El "was the head of the pantheon . . . as his epithets 'the King' and 'the Father of Gods' indicate."[26] Yet, as Coogan notes, the importance of El within the Ugaritic pantheon is difficult to assess. He writes that "it seems that by the time Baal was composed, El's position among the gods was ceremonial and without power."[27] He adds that acknowledgement of the kingship of Baal, both by Baal and other gods, supports this view, though El clearly was not without power.[28] Kapelrud notes that "El was considered the leader of the pantheon and father of gods and men. He was the head of the assembly of gods, and those who wanted to build a temple for themselves had to get his permission first."[29] Coogan also affirms the obvious power and authority of El noting that it is El who can cure Kirta and who Baal turns to for help for Danel.[30] He also highlights that it is Baal (and not El) who is vanquished by Death.[31] In his view, the best explanation for this tension or discrepancy within the Baal cycle is that "Canaanite theology was not static. While El was the head of the pantheon, and actively so in earlier stories such as *Aqhat* and *Kirta*, Baal was becoming the dominant Canaanite deity, and the *Baal* cycle

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[26]Coogan, *Stories from Ancient Canaan*, 12.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Arvid S. Kapelrud, "The Relationship between El and Baal and the Ras Shramra Texts," in *The Bible World: Essays in Honor of Cyrus H. Gordon*, ed. Gary Rendsburg et al. (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1980), 79.

[30]Coogan, *Stories from Ancient Canaan*, 12-13.

[31]Ibid.

reflects this process."[32]

The presence or degree of conflict between the two is debated.[33] Kapelrud summarizes that "there was a silent struggle going on between Baal and El, a struggle that Baal was on the verge of winning, but had not yet won."[34] El maintains a nominal position as father and leader of the gods, but the narrative of the mythology reflects that "Baal is the powerful god."[35]

Within the Baal cycle, one other god is noted as referring to herself. ʾAṯiratu, a few lines after Baal has complained of his treatment by the gods, speaks illeistically. The text reads, "The Great Lady, ʾAṯiratu of the Sea, responds: How is it that you offer gifts to *the Great Lady, ʾAṯiratu of the Sea*, presents to *the Progenitress of the Gods*? Have you offered gifts to the Bull, the kindly god, presents to the Creator of creatures?"[36] The epithets themselves highlight her acknowledged status among the gods. Yet, ʾAṯiratu's use of the descriptive phrases illeistically (without first person pronouns for clarification) serves to emphasize her position from the perspective of her audience.

A final example of illeism within the Ugaritic literature occurs in "The Aqhatu Legend." The goddess Anat,[37] speaking to Aqhatu states, "Listen, [valiant ʾAqhatu]: Ask for silver and I'll give (it to) you, [for gold and I'll] present (it to) you. Just give your

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[32]Ibid., 13.

[33]Oldenburg argues the mythology reflects a conflict. See Ulf Oldenburg, *The Conflict between El and Baal in Canaanite Religion* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969). Schmidt in comparison argues the mythology reflects no conflict; both gods had their royal positions at the same time. He writes, "Von einer Fehde zwichen El und Baal wissen die Mythen nichts —Beide Götter haben ihre königliche Stellung zugleich und nebeneinander inne." Werner H. Schmidt, *Königtum Gottes in Ugarit und Israel: Zur Herkunft der Königsprädikation Jahwes* (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1966), 53.

[34]Kapelrud, "The Relationship between El and Baal and the Ras Shramra Texts," 85.

[35]Ibid., 84-85.

[36]COS 1.86:258. ʾAṯiratu (Asherah) is the wife of El and principal goddess of Sidon and Tyre; "Mother of the Gods." Coogan, *Stories from Ancient Canaan*, 116.

[37]Coogan notes she is the "'violent goddess,' goddess of love and of war. She is the wife and sister of Baal." Ibid.

bow [*to ʿAnatu*], let *the sister-in-law of Liʾmu* [take] your arrows."[38] As the tale

progresses Anat speaks illeistically once again as she threatens El. The illeism contributes

to her bravado, emphasizing her stance of power before El, the head of the gods. "[I'll

smite the . . .] of your head, I'll make [your gray hair] flow [with blood], your [gray]

beard with gore. (If) [you (appeal to)] ʾAqhatu, will he (be able to) save you? Will the

son of [Dānīʾlu] (be able to) help you (when you're) in the grasp of *Girl* [ʿ*Anatu*]?"[39]

       The text "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script" is described by Steiner as "the

liturgy of the New Year's Festival of an Aramaic-speaking community in Upper

Egypt."[40] Within the text both the goddess Marah and the god Mar[41] refer to themselves

illeistically. The goddess Marah in a consistent rebuff to offered sacrifice states on five

different occasions, "[M]an! . . . outside, and hear me! I am exalted. I reared you, you

sucked my breast, the sap of *Marah* nourished you. *She* strengthens, *she* empowers with

her power."[42] The god Mar, in response to a lament presented to him by the author of the

text, speaks illeistically. Again, the text is broken but the self-reference is clear: "Mar

speaks up and says to me: '[Be]strong, my servant, fear not. I will save your . . . . to

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[38] "The 'Aqhatu Legend," trans. Dennis Pardee" (COS 1.103:346). Coogan and Smith also translate this as a third-person self-reference: "Listen, Aqhat the Hero: ask for silver, and I'll give it to you, for gold—I'll make it yours. But give your bow to Anat, let the Mistress of the Peoples have your arrows." Ibid., 41. Ginsberg assumes a first person pronoun for the initial reference. "[A]sk for silver and I'll give it thee; [For gold, and I'll be]stow't on thee; But give thou thy bow [to me; Let] Yabamat-liimmim take thy darts." "The Tale of Aqhat," trans. H. L. Ginsberg (ANET, 151). This is possible, but seems unlikely in light of the following third-person reference in the second half of the verse. Because of the clear symmetrical nature of the writing, the third-person reference is preferable.

[39] COS 1.10 3:348. "Girl 'Anatu" appears consistently throughout the text. Coogan and Smith, as well as Ginsberg also each translate the phrase illeistically as "Maiden Anat" and "Maid Anath" respectively. Coogan, *Stories from Ancient Canaan*, 38; ANET, 152.

[40] COS 1.99:310. He adds that it was likely dictated by a priest possibly at the beginning of the third century BC.

[41] Steiner notes the chief gods are referred to as *mr* "lord" and *mrh* "lady" and rendered in COS as Mar and Marah respectively. He writes that the terms' usage in the text "suggests that they have taken on the status of names, much like their Canaanite counterpart *bʿl* "lord," the epithet of Hadad." COS 1.99:310.

[42] "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," trans. Richard C. Steiner (COS 1.99:311-12).

Marah, if you will . . ., to *Mar* from your shrine and Rash, [I shall destroy] [your] en[emy in] your days and during your years [your] advers[ary] will be smitten.'"[43]

Sumerian Compositions

Within Sumerian literature the goddess Innana as well as the god Enlil use the third person for self-reference. One occurrence is noted in the poem "Enmerkar and the Lord Aratta." Inanna is the goddess of the city of Uruk.[44] Enmerkar, by virtue of his office of "priest-king" of the city, is her human husband.[45] This Sumerian poem (ca. 2100-2000 B.C.)[46] reflects her speaking illeistically as she speaks to Enmerkar:

> At that time did the delightful one in the pure sky, the queen keeping an eye on the mountains . . . Inanna, Queen of all lands, say to Enmerkar son of Utu . . . 'Come here, Enmerkar, let me instruct you, and may you take my advice . . . . When you have chosen from out of the troops a word-wise envoy having (sturdy) thighs, whither should he take the great message for *word-wise Inanna*?'[47]

In the Sumerian poem "The Return of Lugalbanda," the main character Lugalbanda is seeking the advice of Innana on behalf of king Enmerkar concerning how to defeat the city of Aratta. Within the discourse Innana refers to herself in the third person:

> Holy Inana replied to him: 'Now then, at the end of the clear river, of the clear watercourse, of the river that is the gleaming water skin of *Inana* . . . . When he has thus chased the ĞIŠ.ŠEŠ fish . . . caught it, cooked it, and served it and so fed the a-ankara, *Inana's* battle strength, then his army shall succeed; then he will be able to

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[43]COS 1.99:313.

[44]The goddess "was the most important female deity in ancient Mesopotamia in all periods." *Dictionary of the Ancient Near East,* s.v. "Ishtar." Green and Black address "Inana" under "Ishtar" noting the Sumerian goddess was also Akkadian Eshtar or Ishtar.

[45]Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Harps That Once . . .: Sumerian Poetry in Translation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 275. Sparks notes that both Enmerkar and his royal counterpart, Lord of Aratta, each "copulated with [Inanna] during an annual rite of sacred marriage —a rite that secured the blessing of the goddess upon their respective cities." Sparks, *Ancient Texts for the Study of the Hebrew Bible*, 273.

[46]So Sparks, *Ancient Texts for the Study of the Hebrew Bible*, 273.

[47]"Enmerkar and the Lord Aratta," Jacobsen, *The Harps That Once . . .* , 284.

end the life force Aratta draws from the subterranean waters!'[48]

In each of these last two examples the context highlights the rhetorical effect of the illeism. Inanna refers to "the great message of word-wise Inanna," the illeism contributing distance between speaker and subject, allowing emphasis and recognition of the wisdom and greatness of the goddess. In the second text Inanna speaks of "Inana's battle strength," again speaking illeistically in reference to an aspect of her divine attributes.

In "Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur" (line 137ff) the goddess Ningal, amidst the ruins of her city, recalls the decision by the gods that led to the city's destruction and specifically, the storm sent by Enlil. The goddess laments,

> On that day, when that storm had pounded again and again, when in the presence of *the lady her* city was destroyed,[49] on that day, when the storm had done(?) it(?) again and again, when they ordered the utter destruction of my city . . . . On that day, I verily did not forsake my city, I verily did not neglect my Land.[50]

Hallo notes, "If the text is not corrupt, than [*sic*] we have here a case of enallage: i.e. Ningal refers to herself exceptionally in the third person, as from a distance."[51] Though Ningal was powerless to stop the destruction of Enlil, her third-person self-reference possibly reflects her status as goddess of the city. The distancing created by the illeism presents her identity as it is perceived by herself, by the other gods, and possibly by the citizens of her city.

Finally, illeism in the speech of Enlil ("one of the most important gods in the

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[48]"The Return of Luglabanda," Herman Vanstiphout, *Epics of Sumerian Kings: The Matter of Aratta*, ed. Jerrold S. Cooper (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 157.

[49]Jacobsen translates the phrase as "when the queen's city was ravaged before her." Ibid., 456.

[50]"Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur," trans. Jacob Klein (COS 1.166:536).

[51]COS 1.166:536n17. Enallage can be a substitution of person, tense, number, etc. Yet, Howard defines it in its broadest sense writing that it refers to "adjusting a sentence so as to make it equivalent in thought, but different grammatically." Gregory T. Howard, *Dictionary of Rhetorical Terms* (Thorofare, NJ: Xlibris, 2010), s.v. "enallage." Though the term captures the perceived awkwardness of the third-person self-reference, recognizing it as "illeism" offers a more specific characterization.

Mesopotamian pantheon"[52]) is also noted in the Sumerian composition known as "The Ninurta Myth Lugal-E." The poem's primary focus is on the young god Ninurta. Returning to Nippur he is greeted by the gods and receives praises and new status from Enlil, his father. Enlil states, "(Warrior—) king, surpassing as to your august name in heaven and on earth . . . May a pleasant reign not to be changed (o) server of An, and life unto distant days, (o) trust of *Enlil,* be your gift, king of powering strength!"[53]

Akkadian Compositions

In the Akkadian composition "Erra and Ishum,"[54] the god Erra refers to himself by name in the third person. Erra is a great god in the Mesopotamian pantheon. He is presented in the narrative as "an effective challenge to Marduk" who is presented as "the disgruntled and senile god of Babylon."[55] In a section of broken text the full sentences are unclear. Yet, it is clear that Erra is speaking and refers to himself by name:

> Erra addressed his words to Ishum, who marches before him,"The Sebitti, unrivaled warrior [. . .] All of them [. . .] who [. . .] Who marches before [. . .] Who [. . .] Who like Gerra [. . .] . . . Who like [. . .] Who [. . .] Whom *Erra* [. . .] The face of a lion [. . .] In my rage [. . .] Open the path, let me take the road! Let me appoint the Sebitti, unrivalled warrior [. . .]. Make them march at my side as my fierce weapons. And as for you, go ahead of me, go behind me![56]

On tablet IV the god Erra refers to himself by name again, the illeism complementing the context of the great god's desire for unequaled praise:

> And the warrior Erra spoke, saying . . . "The king who magnifies my name shall rule the world, The prince who recites the praise of my valiant deeds shall have no rival

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[52]Jerry Black, *Dictionary of the Ancient Near East* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2000), s.v. "Enlil." Black notes that one Sumerian poem states that "the other gods could not even look upon his splendour."

[53]"The Ninurta Myth Lugal-e," Jacobsen, *The Harps That Once . . .* , 270-71.

[54]Dalley notes the composition can be dated no earlier than the eighth century and adds that the tablets with the text come from both Assyria and Babylonia. "Erra and Ishum," trans. Stephanie Dalley (COS 1.113:404).

[55]COS 1.113:404.

[56]COS 1.113:411.

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. . . . In the house where this tablet is placed, even if *Erra* becomes angry and the Sebitti storm, The sword of judgment shall not come near *him* . . . . Let this song endure forever . . . ! Let all countries listen to it and praise my valor! Let settled people see and magnify my name![57]

Hittite Compositions

Within Hittite documents the military narrative known as "Crossing of the Taurus," or the so-called "Pahuna Chronicle" may reflect an example of illeism. Though the interpretation is unclear, it is possible that the Bull (the storm-god of Aleppo) refers to himself in the third person. The text reads,

> But [the]n he became a bull for them, and his horns were a little bent. I further asked [. . .], why his horns (were) bent, thus he (spoke): When I was campaigning [...], a mountain was causing us difficulties. This here bu[ll] was [X]. So when he came, he lifted that mountain And he [mov]ed it [away], so we conquered the sea. And his horn [is] for that reason bent.[58]

The text is included for the possibility of illeism, but more significantly to highlight Weeden's observation on the text. He notes that "the question of who is being asked, and therefore who is narrating the story of the mountain's removal, needs to be left open. If it is the bull who is talking, we have to assume a complex paranoia with the storm-god talking about his actions as a bull in the third person."[59] His observation reflects similar views towards the use of the third person in the OT in the sense that the

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[57]COS 1.113:415-16. One unique aspect of this five tablet Akkadian myth is that the author, a Babylonian priest, gives details of its composition. Sparks, *Ancient Texts for the Study of the Hebrew Bible*, 320. The priest writes, "The one who put together the composition about him [Erra] was Kabti-ilani-Marduk son of Dabibj. (Some god) revealed it to him in the middle of the night, and when he recited it upon waking, he did not miss anything out, Nor add a single word to it." COS 1.113:415. Interestingly, the narrator's comment is in fact illeistic. This use of the third person is similar to a narrator referring to himself or his actions within the story line. In broad terms this would include the Greek historians addressed in chapter two as well as various biblical authors who potentially refer to themselves in the text.

[58]Lines 15-19, KUB 31.4. "Puhanu Chronicles," Mark Weeden, "Poetry and War among the Hittites," in *Warfare and Poetry in the Middle East*, ed. Hugh Kennedy (London: I.B. Tauris 2013), 87. Also see the translation by Harry A. Hoffner (COS 1.73:184-85). Hoffner renders the text in such a way that it does not reflect the bull speaking illeistically: "[Beh]ind them he became a bull, and its horns were a little bent. I asked [him:] "Why are its horns bent?" And he said: "[…] Whenever I went on campaigns/trips, the mountain was difficult for us. But this bul[l] was [strong]. And when it came, it lifted that mountain and [m]oved it, so that we reached(?) the sea. That is why its horns are bent."

[59]Ibid., 94n52.

validity and use of the phenomenon is at times not given its due weight. The limited evidence for this particular text weighs against it being understood illeistically. Yet, the evidence of illeism noted in the speech of gods in Sumerian, Ugaritic, and Akkadian literature suggests that the phenomenon should be considered as a viable option in this text and in ancient Near Eastern textual interpretation in general.

In conclusion, this section has noted multiple examples of gods referring to themselves illeistically. In each case the self-reference distances the god who is referenced from the speaker himself, allowing emphasis of his identity and associated authority and power. In almost every occurrence the god is either the primary god or one of the primary gods within the context of the associated culture. This survey of various texts also highlights the prominence of this phenomenon within the Ugaritic literature, but also shows that the occurrence of illeism in the speech of gods is not isolated to a particular culture or time period.

Illeism in the Speech of Kings of the ANE

In addition to illeism occurring in the speech of various ANE gods, illeism also occurs in the speech of various ANE kings. This section addresses occurrences of the phenomenon in Ugaritic compositions and royal correspondence, Sumerian compositions, Hittite texts, various royal inscriptions, as well as two law codes (Sumerian and Babylonian).

West Semitic (Ugaritic) Compositions

In the Ugaritic "Kirta Epic," Kirta, King of Khubur, has a vision in which El shows him how he may acquire a royal heir by a military campaign against King Pabil of Udmu. Within the vision, El reveals what Kirta's response will be to King Pabil's message.

> Send the messengers back to him (with the message): What need have I of silver and of yellow gold . . . . Rather, you must give what my house lacks: give me maid

Hurraya, the best girl of your firstborn offspring . . . ; that she might bear a scion for *Kirta*, a lad for *the servant of ʾIlu.*[60]

 The message is repeated, including King Kirta's illeistic references, when the actual message exchange occurs.[61]

The epic "The Tale of Aqhat" from Ras Shamra has been noted earlier, reflecting illeism in the speech of the goddess Anatu. After she has killed Aqhat, Aqhat's father Daniel curses the clouds, referring to himself illeistically. He states,

> Seven years shall Baal fail, Eight the Rider of the Clouds. No dew, No rain; No welling-up of the deep, No sweetness of Baal's voice. For rent is the garment of *Daniel the Rapha-man,* The vestment of *Ghazir [the Harnamiyy-man].*[62]

The issue of the social status of Daniel is debated.[63] Yet, Wyatt argues cogently that Daniel should be understood as a royal figure.[64] Among other arguments, he understands the title as "man (i.e., ruler) of Rapha."[65] Also, he notes the following evidence which appears throughout the narrative: Daniel places his feet on a footstool which is "an accoutrement of royal rank;" Daniel is "enrobed" similar to the way Ugaritian kings are shown robed in various images; Daniel's dispensing of justice to widows and orphans reflects the theme of royal justice found throughout ANE literature;

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[60]"The Kirta Epic," trans. Dennis Pardee (COS 1.102:335).

[61]COS 1.102:337.

[62]"The Tale of Aqhat," trans. H. L. Ginsberg (ANET, 153). Pardee translates this section as the words of the narrator. "When she had torn the garment of Daniʾilu the man of Rapʾu, the cloak of the valiant Harnamite man . . . ." COS 1.103:352. Yet, Smith and Coogan render it as does Ginsberg. The text reflects Daniel, in mourning for his son, cursing the clouds. He states, "For seven years let Baal fail, eight the Rider on the Clouds: no dew, no showers, no surging of the two seas, no benefit of Baal's voice. For the clothes of *Danel, the Healer's man*, have been torn, the garments of the *Hero, the man of the god of Harnam*." Coogan, *Stories from Ancient Canaan*, 41.

[63]Margalit argues Daniel should not be viewed as a king, but rather as a city elder. See Baruch Margalit, *The Ugaritic Poem of Aqht: Text, Translation, Commentary*, BZAW (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1989). Yet, in contrast, Ginsberg argues Daniel is presented as reflecting various royal themes. See H. L. Ginsberg, "The North-Canaanite Myth of Anath and Aqhat I," *BASOR* 97 (1945). See also Harold H. P. Dressler, "The Identification of the Ugaritic DNIL with the Daniel of Ezekiel," *VT* 29, no. 2 (1979).

[64]For his full argument see Nicolas Wyatt, "The Story of Aqhat," in *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*, ed. Wilfred G. E. Watson and Nicolas Wyatt (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 249-51.

[65]Ibid., 249.

the term for his home is most naturally understood to mean a royal palace; and finally,

Daniel himself is referred to as *mlk* and should be understood to mean "king."[66] Wyatt

states that the evidence "represents a *prima facie* case for Danel's kingship," adding that,

in fact, "Danel's kingship appears to be taken for granted."[67]

West Semitic (Ugaritic) Royal Correspondence

A letter from the king of Hatti to the king of Ugarit reflects illeism used in the

context of a superior addressing an inferior. The king (who is unidentified) is writing to

ʿAmmurāpiʾ of Ugarit. He writes,

> Bef[ore] the Sun's [fat]her [your] fath[er], his servant, did indeed dwell
> submissively; for a se[rvant] indeed (and) his possession was he and [his] l[ord] he
> did indeed guard. My father never lacked g[rain], (but) you, for your part have not
> recognized (that this was how things were). Now you also belong *to the Sun your
> master*; a serv[ant] indeed, *his* possession are you. But [yo]u, for your part, you have
> not at all recognized (your responsibility toward) *the Sun, your master*. To me, the
> Sun, your master, from year-to-year, why do you not come?[68]

The text continues with the king referring to himself by the third-person title "the Sun"[69]

3 more times and "your master" 1 more time.

In an extant remnant of a letter addressed to the king of Egypt, the writer, the

king of Ugarit, quotes a portion of the message of the king in which the king of Egypt

refers to himself in the third person ("your master"). In contrast, the king of Ugarit

reflects deferential use of illeism, referring to himself as "his servant."

The text reads,

> And according to the word of the Sun, the great king, my master, to ʿTT, the [X] of
> the messengers of his servant: "[. . .] *your master* that he must HP(N) my
> messengers (when they are) with him," so [will] your servant [do] when the

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[66]Ibid., 249-50.

[67]Ibid., 251.

[68]"The King of Hatti to the King of Ugarit," trans. Dennis Pardee (COS 3.451:94-95).

[69]Pardee notes that the term "designates both the celestial orb and the solar deity [and] is used in Ug. letters to designate both the King of Hatti . . . and the king of Egypt." COS 3.451:89n 6.

messenger-party of the Sun, the great king, my master, arrives (here) with [me . . .].[70]

Dijkstra, addressing the prose of Ugaritic diplomatic letters, notes "the tenor of such letters is often haughty, if not aloof on the part of the Great King, his queen and his officials. The Great King speaks about himself in the third person, the greetings are curt and there is no love lost, whereas the attitude of the vassal king is submissive and the airs and graces are elaborate, if not exhaustive."[71]

Sumerian Compositions

In the Sumerian poem "Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta" the lord of Aratta (king of the city of Aratta) speaks illeistically as he praises the goddess Inanna. (The king also is her husband). The text reads,

> The Lord of Aratta said to the envoy: 'Most magnificently Inanna, queen of all lands . . . *the lord, her one of the clean hands*, she has not abandoned, has not delivered *him* up to the lord of Uruk, to the lord of Kullab! Aratta, right and left, has Inanna, queen of all lands, surrounded for *him* as with the waters of a mighty burst of a dam.'[72]

The illeism in this passage is used by a subordinate (the king) to a superior (Inanna). Yet, wording and context does not suggest a deferential usage. Rather, the illeism affirms the special status of "the lord" and the favors from Inanna his kingship enjoys.

Hittite Documents

Several Hittite texts also reflect royal figures referring to themselves illeistically and, in each case the self-reference is the royal title. In an edict of one of the Hittite Great Kings, Hattušili I, the king justifies his decision to disinherit an adopted son, referring to himself by his royal title 4x. The text reads,

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[70]"Part of a Letter Addressed to the King of Egypt," trans. Dennis Pardee (COS 3.45O:99).

[71]Meindert Dijkstra, "Ugaritic Prose," in *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*, ed. Wilfred G. E. Watson and N. Wyatt (Boston: Brill, 1999), 157.

[72] "Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta," Jacobsen, *The Harps That Once . . .* , 315-16.

I, the king,[73] apprehended him and had him brought to my couch; "What (is this)? . . ." But he didn't accept the word of *the king*. He always took the advice of his mother, that snake. . . . "But enough!" (I said). "He is no longer my son!" Whereupon his mother bellowed like an ox: "they have torn my bull-calf [from] my living womb, (as if I were) a cow, and they have deposed him. (And now) you will kill [him]!" But have I, the king, done him any evil? [Haven't I elevated him] to the priesthood? I have always singled him out for goodness and kindness. [Yet] he showed no sympathy when commanded by *the king*. . . . [And concerning my troops], my dignitaries, [and] my subjects who surround? *the king*, [he will vow]: "They will be massacred on account of the king!"[74]

The illeism complements and heightens the king's indignation at the lack of respect and appreciation for his position and authority.

In the Hittite diplomatic text entitled "Letter from Queen Puduhepa of Hatti to Ramses II of Egypt" the queen refers to herself by royal title. She writes,

This message is just what one would expect from my brother! Since *the Queen* is coming to Amurru, I will be in your vicinity, and from there I will write to my brother whatever matters are on *the Queen's* mind. . . . When the daughter arrives at my brother's bed, these matters of *the Queen* will be settled. . . . Now I know that Egypt and Hatti will become a single country. Even if there is not [now] a treaty with Egypt, *the Queen* knows thereby how [you] will conclude it out of consideration for my dignity. The deity who installed [me] in this place has not denied me anything.[75]

This royal use of illeism emphasizes the status of the speaker. The queen's self-references to her title highlight the importance of the matter (because of the status of the writer) as well as the respect she expects to be accorded.

In the Hittite text "Treaty between Mursili II of Hatti and Tuppi-Teshshup of Amurru" the king refers to himself by royal title and state. He writes, "And as I took care of you according to the request of your father, and installed you in place of your father, I have now made you swear an oath to the *King of Hatti* . . . Observe the oath and the authority of *the King*. I, My Majesty, will protect you, Tuppi-Teshshup."[76]

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[73]As with OT self-references, the use of a self-reference in conjunction with the first person pronoun is not considered illeistic.

[74]"Bilingual Edict of Hattušili I," trans. Gary Beckman (COS 2.15:79).

[75]"Letter from Queen Puduhepa of Hatti to Ramses II of Egypt," §§ 12-13 (No. 22F) Gary M. Beckman and Harry A. Hoffner, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 134-35.

[76]"Treaty between Mursili II of Hatti and Tuppi-Teshshup of Amurru" ibid., 60-63. Many

In the Hittite vassal treaty "Treaty between Arnuwanda I of Hatti and the Men of Ismerika," the king is presented as speaking in the first person, but his direct discourse is interspersed with third-person self-references. He refers to himself by royal title, but also by the phrase "My Majesty,"[77] a self-reference commonly found in the ANE literature within royal speech. This particular treaty is distinct in that the Great King is not addressing a specific monarch, but rather is addressing a group of people referred to as "the men of Ismerika."

> Thus says Arnuwanda, [Great King, King of Hatti. I have placed the following matters] under oath [for the men of the land of Ismerika: You shall be well-disposed(?) To *the King*, to the Queen, to the sons of *the King*] . . . . [I have] now [summoned] the Thousand [Gods . . .] and I have called them to witness. . . . No one [shall do] evil [to *the King*, to the Queen, to the sons of *the King*]. . . . You shall bring the civilian captives before *My Majesty*, but [take] the oxen and sheep for yourselves. If within a city a single household [commits an offense] . . . You shall bring its servants to *My Majesty* . . . . In regard to your troops for your standing army . . . I have made [a revised requirement] for you. . . . All you men of the land of Ismerika are now parties to his oath to [*My Majesty*]. In the future protect *the King*, the Queen, the sons of *the King* to the first and second generation.[78]

The expression "My Majesty" is often found in Hittite vassal treaties.[79] Though many examples could be noted, the following examples reflect the occurrence of the phenomenon and the tenor of the context.

The "Treaty between Tudhaliya II of Hatti and Sunashshura of Kizzuwatna" reflects similar transitions:

Formerly, in the time of my grandfather, Kizzuwatna came into the possession of

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other Hittite treaties could be noted. For further examples see Beckman and Hoffner, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 34-114.

[77]The phrase was used in the previous Hittite treaty, but in that case it was proceeded by the first person pronoun. Both instances occur often, but the use of "My Majesty" by itself naturally qualifies it as illeism.

[78]"Treaty between Arnuwanda I of Hatti and the Men of Ismerika," §§ 1, 3, 10-12 (No. 1A) Beckman and Hoffner, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 14-16. This illeistic phrase "to *the King*, to the Queen, to the sons of *the King*" is assumed here by the translator based on its clear use in lines 19-22.

[79]Beckman notes that "since the Hittite monarch had to deal with many more subordinate rulers than equals, by far the most commonly attested variety of diplomatic agreements from Hatti is the vassal treaty, imposed by the Great King. Ibid., 2.

Hatti, but afterwards the land of Kizzuwatna freed itself from Hatti and turned to the land of Hurri. When the people of the land of Isuwa, [subjects] of *My Majesty*, [commenced] hostilities against *My Majesty*. I, My Majesty, went [in battle] against them. I overpowered the land of Isuwa . . . . I, My Majesty, sent to the ruler of Hurri.[80]

The text reflects the consistent use of the third-person reference, but also reflects

occasional first person pronouns as well:

> The troops of *My Majesty* shall take all the civilian captives which they conquer . . .
> I, My Majesty will get the territory of the city to Sunashshura . . . . I, My Majesty, will take all that I, My Majesty, desire. And I (!) will give to Sunashshura all that he desires. . . . I will never later give back to the King of Hurri anything of the land of Hurri . . . . If this enemy of mine, of *My Majesty*, is indeed my enemy, then he is also your enemy, Sunashshura.[81]

In "The Treaty between Suppiluliuma I of Hatti and Huqqana of Hayasa" the

introduction reflects similar language throughout. The introduction reads, "Thus says My

Majesty Suppiluliuma, King of Hatti: I have now elevated you, Huqqana, a lowly dog,

and have treated you well."[82] In the section concerning expectation of mutual loyalty the

king states,

> You, Huqqana, benevolently protect *My Majesty*, and stand behind only *My Majesty*. You shall not recognize anyone else beyond that. And I, My Majesty, will benevolently protect you. Later, I will protect your sons, and my sons will protect your sons. And if you always behave well and benevolently protect *My Majesty*, then I, My Majesty, will later act favorably . . . .[83]

The language is consistent throughout and, as noted, the occurrence of this expression is

common. Interestingly, the copy of the treaty between Suppiluliuma I of Hatti and

Shattiwaza of Mittanni, written from the perspective of the subordinate, does not reflect

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[80] "Treaty between Tudhaliya II of Hatti and Sunashshura of Kizzuwatna," §§ 2-3 (No. 2) ibid., 17-18.

[81] "Treaty between Tudhaliya II of Hatti and Sunashshura of Kizzuwatna," §§48-55 (No. 2) ibid., 23.

[82] "The Treaty between Suppiluliuma I of Hatti and Huqqana of Hayasa," §1 (No. 3) ibid., 27.

[83] "The Treaty between Suppiluliuma I of Hatti and Huqqana of Hayasa," §§5-6 (No. 3) ibid., 27-28.

this illeistic use of name or title on the part of the speaker; only first person discourse is used.[84]

Outside of treaties, this royal use of illeism is also found in a document that reflects an arbitration of a Syrian dispute. The speaker is Mursili II of Hatti. The text reads,

> Thus says My Majesty, Mursili, Great King, King of Hatti; . . . Then it happened that Tette and En-urta fought a war with *My Majesty*, while Abiradda went over to *My Majesty's* side. He chased En-urta, the enemy of *My Majesty*, out of the land, and himself came . . . to *My Majesty*. Kneeling at my feet he . . . . I, My Majesty, made a commitment to him.[85]

Though the Hittite diplomatic texts have been referenced to emphasize the use of the common expression "My Majesty," this common royal circumlocution for the first person pronoun occurs elsewhere. The Egyptian boundary stela Sesostris III (Middle Kingdom) reflects a similar use of this third-person self-reference. The inscription is written entirely in the first person. It begins, "I have made my boundary further south than my fathers. I have added to what was bequeathed me. I am a king who speaks and acts . . . ."[86] Beginning at line 13 the text reads, "They are not people one respects, they are wretches, craven-hearted. *My majesty* has seen it, it is not an untruth. I have captured their women, I have carried off their dependents."[87] The final phrasing of the text continues the consistent self-reference: "Now, *my majesty* has had an image made of *my majesty*, at this border which *my majesty* has made, in order that you maintain it."[88] Other texts of kings using the expression could be noted.[89]

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[84]See "Treaty between Suppiluliuma I of Hatti and Sattiwaza of Mittanni," ibid., 42-48.

[85]"The Matter of Iyaruwatta," In "Arbitration of Syrian Disputes," §§1-3 (No. 30) ibid., 169-70.

[86]"Boundary Stela of Sesostris III" (*AEL* 1:119).

[87]Ibid.

[88]*AEL* 1:120.

[89]On a papyrus from the Middle Kingdom, King Snefru is quoted using this common

Royal Inscriptions

Having referenced West Semitic compositions and royal correspondence, Sumerian compositions, as well as various Hittite texts, this final section addresses the broad and complex area of royal inscriptions. Green characterizes these inscriptions well, noting that "ancient Near Eastern royal inscriptions are undergirded and shaped by an ideology of self-glorification."[90] Concerning specifically Assyrian royal inscriptions, Tadmor notes that they are "official documents of self-praise."[91] The potential for illeism seems particularly relevant in the case of these self-laudatory inscriptions which, by nature, offer a conducive context for the rhetorical implications associated with the third-person self-reference (emphasis of royal status, power, etc.). While the shift from first to third person and vice versa is a noted phenomenon in royal inscriptions in the ancient Near East, the response of scholars concerning the reasons for these shifts vary.

Beginning with an Egyptian royal inscription from the Late Kingdom, the text reflects what seems to be a clearly intended shift to the third person. In "The Victory Stela of King Piye," the inscription is narrated in the third person. Yet, the king is quoted at the beginning. Because of its brevity, the complete quote is noted.

> Year 21, first month of the first season, under the majesty of the King of Upper and Lord Egypt, Piye beloved-of-Amun, ever living. Command spoken by my majesty: 'Hear what I did, exceeding the ancestors, I the King, image of god, living likeness of Atum! Who left the womb marked as ruler, feared by those greater than he! *His* father knew, *his* mother perceived: *He* would be ruler from the egg, *The Good God, beloved of gods, The Son of Re, who acts with his arms, Piye beloved-of-Amun.*[92]

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expression as he has his servants row him in his boat: "Said his majesty: . . . '*My majesty's* heart was refreshed seeing them row." "Three Tales of Wonder" (Papyrus Westcar [= P. Berlin 3033]) (*AEL* 1: 217).

[90]Douglas J. Green, *"I Undertook Great Works": The Ideology of Domestic Achievements in West Semitic Royal Inscriptions* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 35.

[91]Hayim Tadmor, "History and Ideology in the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions," in *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions: New Horizons in Literary, Ideological, and Historical Analysis*, ed. Frederick Mario Fales, Orientis Antiqui Collectio (Rome: Istituto per l'Oriente, Centro per le antichità e la storia dell'arte del vicino Oriente, 1981), 14.

[92]"The Victory Stela of King Piye" (*AEL* 3:68).

From the Middle Kingdom the Rock Stela of King Nebtawyre Mentuhotep IV reflects a similar shift in person. The inscription is written from a third-person perspective (i.e., "His majesty commanded to erect this stela for his father Min, lord of desert lands   . . . in order to please his *ka* and to worship the god as he wishes").[93] Yet, within the third-person presentation the writer quotes the king. Within the quote, the king illeistically refers to himself by the often used phrase "My Majesty," by title, and by the third-person pronoun. The text reads,

> The king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Nebtawyre, who lives forever like Re says: *My majesty* has sent the prince, mayor of the city . . . Amenemhat, with a troop of ten-thousand men from the southern nomes of Upper Egypt . . . in order to bring me a precious block of the pure stone of this mountain . . . as a mission of *the king who rules the Two Lands*, so as to bring *him his* heart's desire from the desert lands of *his* father Min.[94]

The Kadesh Battle Inscription of Ramses II (the New Kingdom) reflects two accounts of Ramses campaign to remove the Hittites from northern Syria. The Record or "Bulletin" section is conveyed in the third-person perspective primarily until the final lines. The following quote includes the last part of the third-person section prior to the shift to first:

> His majesty slaughtered them in their places; they sprawled before his horses; and his majesty was alone, none other with him. *My majesty* caused the forces of the foes from khatti to fall on their faces, one upon the other . . . . I was after them like a griffin; I attacked all their countries, I alone. For my infantry and my chariotry had deserted me.[95]

Lichtheim acknowledges the shift, but simply notes that "the mixture of first-person and third-person narrative is common in royal inscriptions of the New Kingdom."[96]

The Egyptian inscription the "Stela of Amenhotep III" also reflects this common shifting between third and first person. The monument inscription begins in the

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[93] "Rock Stela of King Nebtawyre Mentuhotep IV" (*AEL* 1:114).

[94] *AEL* 1:114-15.

[95] "The Kadesh Battle Inscriptions of Ramses II" (*AEL* 2:62).

[96] *AEL* 2:72.

third person: "It pleased his majesty's heart to make very great monuments, the likes of which had not existed since the beginning of the Two Lands. He made as his monument for his father Amun . . . the building for him of an august temple."[97] After approximately a third of the inscription, the text shifts from the third person to the first person: "Another monument that his majesty made for his father Amun is making for him a viewing-place as a divine offering, opposite Southern Ipet, a place of relaxation for my father at his beautiful feast. I erected a great temple in its midst, resembling Re when he rises on the horizon."[98]

The inscription continues in the first person, (i.e., "before my father . . . ;" " he has handed over to me . . . ;" "I act for my begetter with affection in as much as he has appointed me as the Sun of the Nine Bows;" etc.).[99] The final section reflects a blessing upon the king by the god Amun. Yet, prior to the blessing, the text consistently reflects the king's first person perspective with the exception of the following embedded statement: "*The king* made another monument for Amun in making for him a very great gate in front of Amen-Re."[100] This momentary interruption of first person pronouns with the third-person self-reference "the king" is particularly interesting. As noted in chapter 3 of this study, a similar shifting to a third-person reference of the royal title is reflected multiple times within the OT texts in the speech of kings. Yet, Lichtheim comments on the shift in person noting that it is a common feature in royal inscriptions "when the first and the final versions of the text were not completely harmonized."[101]

While the shift in person in this inscription and others may reflect a failure on

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[97]"Stela of Amenhotep III" (*AEL* 2:44).

[98] *AEL* 2:45

[99]*AEL* 2:45-46.

[100]*AEL* 2:46.

[101]*AEL* 2:47n10.

the part of the scribe to harmonize sources, it seems prudent to weigh the potential for illeistic phrasing in the speech of the king. Also, the shifting in person outside of the ancient Near Eastern genre of inscriptions must be considered, such as the illeism in the speech of kings within epics and myths already noted.

Within Persian evidence a shift from first to third person occurs often in the form of a type of proclamation statement of the king himself. On limestone tablets intended to serve as commemorative foundation stones,[102] the text begins in the third person referring to King Xerxes before shifting to the first person voice of the king. Throughout the inscription each new section begins with a brief shift to the third-person statement "King Xerxes proclaims" before continuing with the first person voice of Xerxes. A sample of the text reads,

> A great god (is) Auramazda, who created this earth, who created yonder heaven . . . who made Xerxes king, one king of many, one lord of man. I (am) Xerxes, the great king, king of kings, king of countries containing many peoples, king on this great earth far and wide, son of Darius, the king, an Achaemenid. King Xerxes proclaims: My father (was) Darius . . . . King Xerxes proclaims: Darius had other sons also; (but) thus was the desire of Auramazda: Darius, my father, made me the geatest after himself . . . . King Xerxes proclaims: Me may Auramazda protect and my kingdom! And what (has been) built by me . . . .[103]

As noted, this proclamation statement in third person is a common occurrence in the texts. Many such examples could be noted.[104] The third-person interjections could naturally be understood as an "outside" voice proclaiming the message of the king. Yet, if the phenomenon of illeism in the speech of kings is accepted as a valid phenomenon, the repeated statements "King Xerxes proclaims" could also be viewed as the voice of the king himself.

Finally, the use of the third person in the speech of kings is found throughout

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[102]So Amélie Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire: A Corpus of Sources from the Achaemenid Period* (London: Routledge, 2007), 1:244n1.

[103]7.A.1.§§ 1-5, ibid., 1:244.

[104]Ibid., 1:141-51, 244, 301, 304-5, 334-35, 364, 403-4, 407 and 2:483, 487-88, 491-92, 495-97, 502-5.

the Assyrian royal inscriptions. In an inscription reflecting the reign of Tigleth-pileser I (1114-1076 B.C.) the text primarily reflects the words of the king in the first person. The text reads, "With the onslaught of my fierce weapons . . . I took my warriors trained for successful combat. . . . I marched to the land Išdiš . . . . I abandoned my chariotry. . . . Taking the lead of my warriors I slithered victoriously with the aggressiveness of a viper."[105] Throughout the first person narrative the text shifts briefly to the third person, reminding the reader of the identity of the speaker and of his greatness. For example, the passage above continues,

> I imposed upon them (the obligations to provide) hostages, tribute, and taxes. *Tiglath-pileser, valiant man, opener of remote regions in the mountains, subduer of the insubmissive, overwhelmer of all fierce (enemies):* I conquered the rebellious and insubmissive Šubaru." I imposed the heavy yoke of my dominion upon the lands of Alzu.[106]

A text from Aššur reflects an edition of the annals of Adad-nārārī (ca. 893 B.C.). After a lacuna the text begins,

> [I am enormously radiant. I am a hero]. I am a warrior. [I am a virile] lion. [I am foremost, I am exalted, I]; *Adad-nārārī, strong king, king of* [*Assyria, king of the four quarters, the one who defeats his enemies*, I], the king capable in battle, overwhelmer [of cities, the one who scorches the mountains of (foreign) lands, I] . . . have no successful opponent. . . . *Valiant man who marched with the support of the god Aššur*, [his lord, from the other side of] the Lower [Zab].[107]

Grayson notes concerning this particular text that "the curiosities may derive from the author's inexpertise in abbreviating longer passages and it is possible he was also trying to conflate several sources."[108]

Grayson highlights the phenomenon of what he terms "the incongruous fluctuation between first and third person in a few passages in Assyrian royal

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[105]Tiglath-pileser I (RIMA 2, A.0.87.1:16-17).

[106]RIMA 2:17.

[107]Adad-nārārī. (RIMA 2, A.0.99.4:157).

[108]Albert Kirk Grayson, "Assyria and Babylonia," *Orientalia* 49, no. 2 (1980): 166. A similar shifting is in the Broken Obelisk (ARI 2, LXXXIX, 2). Grayson argues "the author of this text has taken accounts from various sources with little or no effort to blend them together" (ibid.).

inscriptions."[109] He notes such fluctuations can be found in some of the oldest known texts such as ARI 1, XXXII,2 and XXXIII,6,7,10. All begin in the third person before shifting to the first person. For example, the following inscription from a door socket reads,

> *Erish*[*um*], vice-regent of the god Ashur, son of Ilu-shuma, vice-regent of the god Ashur, built the temple (and) all the temple area for the god Ashur, his lord, for his life and the life of the city. When I started the work, my city being under my command, I made tax-exempt silver, gold . . . .With the god Ashur, my lord, standing by me, I expropriated houses from the Sheep Gate . . . .[110]

An inscription from a potsherd relating to the same work on the Ashur temple at Ashur[111] reads,

> [*Eri*]*shum*, [vice-regent] of [the god Ash]ur, [beloved] of [the god Ahu]r [and the goddess Ishta]r (Lacuna) for the god Ashur, his lord, he dedicated. Into the mortar of every wall I mixed ghee and honey and (then) laid one layer of bricks. The name [of the temple] is 'Wild Bull]. In future . . . a prince of [my] status, if the temple should become [dilapidated and] old, he must not [disturb the] clay cone . . . .[112]

A similar shifting is found in the Assyrian annals of Tukultī-Ninurta II. An example of the text reads, "I was merciful towards Amme-baʾlī, a man of Bīt-Zamāni. I established (them) in abandoned cities (and) settled them in peaceful dwellings. I had them take an oath by Aššur, my lord . . . . At that time Tukultī-Ninurta fashioned his tall steles, two *kurību*-genii, (and) *brought* [*them*] into the temple."[113] Niehaus observes the "basic shifting between first and third-person singular" in the text and concludes that "the shift can hardly be explained except as a stylistic phenomenon."[114]

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[109]Ibid., 165.

[110] "Erishum I," ARI 1:10-11, XXXIII, 7 §§61-62.

[111]So Grayson, ARI 1:8.

[112]ARI 1:13, XXXIII, 10 §§79-80.

[113]Tukultī-Ninurta II (RIMA 2, A.0.100.5:172). The italics within this quote are original. To avoid confusion the potential self-reference "Tukultī-Ninurta" is not italicized as are other potential ileisms in this chapter.

[114]Jeffrey Jay Niehaus, *Ancient near Eastern Themes in Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2008), 151n46. Niehaus directs the reader to J. Sperber, "Der Personenwechsel in der

The apparent awkwardness of the shift in person results in varied responses (i.e., a failure to harmonize sources, stylistic variation) and the views of notable scholars such as Lichtheim (Egyptian inscriptions), Grayson, and Niehaus must be given their due weight. Possibly many such shifts can be dismissed as the result of an error of the author, blending of sources, or stylistic variation. Yet, the cumulative evidence is suggestive, particularly in light of the evidence of other clear examples of illeism in the speech of ancient Near Eastern kings. The common occurrence of such shifts suggests the possible alternative view that the inscription is intended to be understood as the voice of the ruler himself.

An inscription from Tell Fekherye is a distinctive monumental inscription that has received significant attention within ANE scholarship. The bilingual Assyrian/Aramaic inscription, dated to around the mid-ninth century B.C.,[115] reflects inscriptions carved on the statue of Adad-itʾi. The text in Assyrian cuneiform is inscribed on the front of the skirt and the Aramaic script on the back portion. The dedication is to the god Adad and is made by the person portrayed in the statue, Adad-itʾi.[116] Grayson notes the inscription reflects two texts, with lines 1-18 reflecting an earlier writing and lines 19-38 reflecting a later writing.[117] Each text begins with Adad-itʾi speaking in the third person and then shifts to the first person. The first section begins,

> To the god Adad, canal-inspector of heaven and underworld, who sends abundant rain: . . . *Adad-itʾi, governor of the city of Guzānu* . . . has devoted and dedicated (this object) for his life, that *his* days might be long, *his* years many, for the well-being of *his* family . . . that his (lit. 'my') prayers may be heeded that his (lit.'my')

Bibel."

[115]So Edward Lipinski, *Studies in Aramaic Inscriptions and Onomastics*, vol. 57 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1975), 21.

[116]So Grayson, ARI 1:389. (Sasson notes the Aramaic version of the text is a translation of the Assyrian text. Victor Sasson, "The Aramaic Text of the Tell Fakhriyah Assyrian-Aramaic Bilingual Inscription," *ZAW* 97, no. 1 (1985): 87.

[117]ARI 1:391.

utterances may be acceptable (to Adad). Whoever comes later, may he restore its weakened (portions) and re-establish my (inscribed) name. Whoever removes my (inscribed) name and puts his (own) name: may Adad, the warrior, be his adversary.[118]

Lipinski notes the shift in lines 13-14a where the author shifts to first person ("my prayers;" "my utterances"). He explains it as "probably reflect[ing] the use of a model text that the author of the Tell Fekherye inscription did not adapt everywhere in a consequent way."[119]

The second section begins in the third person as well: "Monument of *Adad-itʾi, governor of the city Guzānu, Siānu, and Zarānu: he* made this monument better than before and erected it before the god Adad who resides in the city Sikānu."[120] In line 26 the texts shifts to the first person: "Whoever erases my name from the furnishings of the temple of the god Adad, my lord: may the god Adad, my lord, not accept his bread (and) water (offerings)."[121]

Garr, addressing the Aramaic text, views the first section (lines 1-12) as a prayer or *Weihinschrift* and the second section (lines 12-23) as a *Kommemorativinschrift*. Garr notes that in the prayer section Adad-itʾi (tranliterated by Gar as Had-yiṯʾî) "refers to himself in the distal third person and, at the same time, treats his divine addressee to multiple expressions of respect and reverence."[122] The Aramaic translation follows the Assyrian text, "The image of Hadad-yithʿi which he has set up before Hadad of Sikan, regulator of waters of heaven and earth, who rains down abundance . . . ."[123] Garr argues that in the prayer section Adad-itʾi is "negotiat[ing] with the divine world on behalf of his

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[118]Tell Fekherye Inscription, lines 1-16 (RIMA 2:391).

[119]Lipinski, *Studies in Aramaic Inscriptions and Onomastics*, 41.

[120] Lines 18ff (RIMA 2:391).

[121]RIMA 2:391.

[122]W. Randall Garr, "'Image' and 'Likeness' in the Inscription from Tell Fakhariyeh," *Israel Exploration Journal.* 50, no. 3 (2000): 229.

[123]"Hadad-yithʿi," trans. Alan Millard (COS 2.34:153).

own."[124] The text reads (beginning line 6), "To the great god, his lord, Hadad-yithʿi, king[125] of Guzan . . . set up and gave (the statue) to him, so that his soul may live, and his days be long, and to increase his years, and so that his house may flourish, and his descendents may flourish, and his people may flourish."[126]

Concerning the next section (beginning in line 12) Garr notes that "he [Had-yiṯ ʿî] begins obliquely in the third person, asking Hadad to answer several self-interested requests in return for his tributary statue."[127] The text reads, "The statue of *Hadad-yithʿi*, king of Guzan and Sikan and of Azran, for exalting and continuing *his* throne, and for the length of *his* life and so that *his* word might be pleasing to gods and to people . . . . In the presence of Hadad who dwells in Sikan . . . *he* has set up *his* statue."[128] The king then, as reflected in the Assyrian script, shifts to the first person, issuing a series of curses on any who would vandalize the monument: "Whoever removes my name from the furnishings of the house of Hadad, my lord, may my lord Hadad not accept his food and water from his hand . . . . When he sows may he not reap . . . ."[129] Garr views the curses as a reflection of the king's authority and power. He writes,

> In this section the governor effectively portrays himself as power personified. These curses expressed the conviction that Had-yiṯ ʿî is capable of directing the gods and nature, as well as men and women, to serve his own needs. Had-yiṯ ʿî thereby implies that he has superlative directive and effective power—or, at the very least, that he has sufficient power to be a catalysing instrument and agent of destruction.

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[124] Garr, "'Image' and 'Likeness'," 229.

[125] The Assyrian translation reads "governor" (šākin māti); the Aramaic version "king" (*mlk*). Millard notes that "the best explanation takes each text as directed at a different audience, the former to the local people, whose ruler erected the statue, the latter to representatives of the Assyrian emperor whose vassal the local ruler was." COS 2.35:154n5.

[126] COS 2.34:154.

[127] Garr, "'Image' and 'Likeness'," 230.

[128] COS 2.34:154.

[129] Ibid.

His power is akin to that of the gods.[130]

Garr highlights the king's subordinate role reflected in the beginning of the inscription. Yet, the context reflects both the deferential role of the king before his god as well as the authority of the king in his own eyes and that of his people. In this context the initial illeism may function in degree to reflect both royal emphasis and deference.[131] Yet, in the latter section the context clearly underscores the king's authority and power, the royal illeism contributing to the king's intended emphasis.

Four Phoenician dedicatory inscriptions are written in the first person, from the perspective of the king, but shift to the third person in the blessing/cursing section. (This section asks for blessing on the king from a god or gods and announces curses on whoever may change or move the monument, stele, etc.) The Azitawadda Inscription[132] is a building inscription likely from the eighth or seventh century.[133] Lawson notes the inscription reflects a structure typical of West Semitic memorial inscriptions and notes the following main divisions: Epithets' (I.1-2), 'Body: Azatiwada's Mighty Deeds' (I.3-II.2), and 'Closing' (III.7-IV.3)."[134] The closing itself is composed of three sections: "Blessings (III.2-11), Curses (III.12-IV.1), and Climatic invocation (IV.2-3)."[135] The king[136] clearly speaks in the first person in the first half of the inscription. He states, "I

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[130]Garr, "'Image' and 'Likeness'," 230.

[131]Though in light of the argument for Araunah's use of the third-person self-reference in chapter 3 (2 Sam 24:23), it is possible that the king is here referring to himself by name in an effort to gain bargaining leverage in his petitions to the god Adad.

[132]The inscription is bilingual, written in both Phoenician and Luwian. Green, *"I Undertook Great Works"*, 232.

[133]So Younger. "The Azatiwada Inscription," trans. K. Lawson Younger, Jr. (COS 2.31:148).

[134]K. Lawson Younger, Jr., "The Phoenician Inscription of Azatiwada: An Integrated Reading," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 43, no. 1 (1998): 22.

[135]Ibid., 26.

[136]Hallo describes Azitawadda as "king of the neo-Hittite Danunites." William W. Hallo, *Origins: The Ancient Near Eastern Background of Some Modern Western Institutions* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 162. Green notes that Azatiwadda should be understood as vizier or governor to the Danunian king

have subdued powerful countries in the west which the kings who were before me had not been able to subdue. I, Azitawada, subdued them. . . . I have been sitting upon the throne of my father. I have made peace with every king."[137] In the blessing section the perspective of the inscription shifts to the third person. "May Ba'l-Krntrys bless *Azitawadda* with life, peace, and mighty power over every king, so that Ba'l-Krntrys and all the gods of the city may give *Azitawadda* length of days, a great number of years, good authority, and mighty power over every king!"[138] The text continues in this last section with a total of six third-person references to the king.[139]

The Yaḥawmilk inscription is dated to around the fifth or fourth century B.C.[140] As with the first inscription, the text begins from the perspective of the king: "I am Yaḥawmilk, king of Byblos/Gubal . . . and I called my Lady, Baalat/Mistress of Byblos/Gubal, [and] she heard my voice. And I made for my Lady, Baalat/Mistress of Byblos/Gubal this altar . . . ."[141] The inscription continues with various first person references. In the request for blessing the text shifts to the third person: "May the Mistress of Byblos/Gubal bless *Yaḥawmilk, king of Byblos/Gubal*, may she keep him alive, and may she prolong his days and his years . . . for *he (is) a righteous king*."[142] For the curse section the inscription once again shifts to the first person: "[Whoever you (are)], every king and/or every (ordinary) man, who will do additional work on this altar

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Awariku and his successor. Yet, he writes that earlier commentators who viewed Azatiwadda as king were in fact right within the context of the narrative of the inscription itself. He notes that, in the narrative world of the text "the line between king and vizier is blurred." Green, *"I Undertook Great Works,"* 250.

[137]"Azitawada of Adana," trans. Franz Rosenthal (ANET, 653-54).

[138]ANET, 654.

[139]Ibid.

[140]So Segert. "The Inscription of King Yaḥawmilk," trans. Stanislav Segert (COS 2.32:151).

[141]Ibid.

[142]Ibid.

. . . My name, (that of mine), Yeḥawmilk, king of Byblos/Gubal, [you must put with] yours on that work. And if you will not put my name with yours . . . may the Lady, Mistress/Baalat of Byblos/Gubal putrify [him], that man and his seed . . . ."[143]

The Inscription of Zakkur, King of Hamath is a memorial text dated to around 800 B.C.[144] The text begins in the first person. "I am Zakkur, king of Hamath . . . . I raised my hands to Baʿlshamayn . . . . Baʿlshamayn said to me . . . ."[145] In the curses section the text shifts to the third person: "[In future who]ever removes from this monument wha[t *Zakkur king of Hamath* . . . has [accomplished] . . . ."[146]

Finally, The Hadad Inscription reflects a similar shifting of person. The statue is of the god Hadad, erected by Panamuwa I, king of Y'dy, and is dated to the mid-eighth century B.C.[147] Almost the entire inscription is written in the first person, including the blessings and curses. An example of the text reads, "And I, Panamuwa, reigned also on the throne of my father. And Hadad gave into my hands a scepter of dominion. And I also cut of]f war and slander from the house of my father. And in my days . . . ."[148] Yet, in line 14 of the inscription, the king refers to himself in the third person. Beginning with line 13b the text reads, "Then Hadad gave the land for my [ ]; he singled me out to build . . . . So I have built the land. And I have erected the statue of Hadad, and the place of *Panamuwa, son of Qarli, king of Y'dy*, with the statue-a burial chamber."[149] The blessing section shifts back to first person ("Whoever of my sons seizes the scepter, and sits upon

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[143]COS 2.32.151-2.

[144]So Millard. "The Inscription of Zakkur, King of Hamath," trans. Alan Millard (COS 2.35:155).

[145]Ibid.

[146]Ibid.

[147]So Younger. "The Hadad Inscription, " trans. K. Lawson Younger, Jr. (COS 2.36:156).

[148]Ibid.

[149]COS 2.36.157.

my throne . . .")[150] and continues so for the remainder of the text.

Concluding the royal inscriptional evidence, an Akkadian manuscript, the first person account from Agum, an early Kassite king,[151] highlights a similar shift to third person. The document addresses how the king restored the image of Marduk in Babylon and is written consistently from the first person perspective of the king until the request for blessing. The king states, "I asked king Shamash by divination(?), I sent to a far-off land . . . ." (ii 8ff), "I, the king, Agum, who constructed the sanctuary of Marduk . . . . (vi 42ff . . . ., etc.[152] As noted, the text shifts to third person concerning blessings upon the king [beginning vii 11]: "May *King Agum's* days be long, may his years be prolonged, may his reign be awash(?) in prosperity. . . . May Anu and Antu bless him in heaven, may Enlil and Ninlil in Ekur ordain him a destiny of (long) life . . . ."[153] Foster writes concerning this section that King Agum "concludes by *asking a blessing upon himself* for his works."[154] Significantly, Foster understands these third-person references in the blessing section to be third-person self-references by the king.[155]

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[150]COS 2.36:157.

[151]Foster notes a possible date of the reign of the king as mid-second millennium. Yet, the text is known only from mid-first millennium manuscripts. Benjamin R. Foster, *Before the Muses: An Anthology of Akkadian Literature* (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1993), 1:273.

[152]"Agum-Kakrime and the Return of Marduk," ibid., 1:274-76.

[153] Ibid., 1:276.

[154]Ibid., 1:273. Emphasis mine.

[155]Though not addressed in this section, the well known Cyrus Cylinder is a royal inscription which potentially reflects illeism. The initial section narrates Cyrus's being chosen by Marduk and the development of Babylon after Cyrus captured it in 539 B.C. The inscription begins in the third person initially, describing how Marduk chose Cyrus as ruler as well as Cyrus's capture of Babylon: "And he (Cyrus) did always endeavor to treat according to justice the black-headed whom he (Marduk) has made him conquer. Marduk, the great Lord, a protector of his people/worshipers beheld with pleasure his good deeds and his upright mind (lit.: heart) (and therefore) ordered him to march against his city Babylon . . . . "Cyrus," trans. F.H.Wiessbach (ANET, 315-16). Yet, the text shifts midway to first person: "I am Cyrus, king of the world, great king, legitimate king . . . . When I entered Babylon . . . as a friend and (when) I established the seat of the government in the palace of the ruler . . . . Marduk, the great Lord, was well pleased with my deeds and sent friendly blessings to myself, Cyrus, the king who worships him." Because of the shift in person (initial narrative in third person and latter section in first person) the text of the cylinder seems naturally to reflect a narrative about Marduk's choice of Cyrus that is then followed by the

Law Codes

Within this final area addressed, two law codes reflect possible illeism. The Code of Hammurabi is composed primarily of a prologue, a main body of laws, and an epilogue. In the prologue the king refers to himself in the first person:

> At that time, the gods Anu and Enlil, for the enhancement of the well-being of the people, named me by name: Hammurabi, the pious prince, who venerates gods, to make justice prevail in the land, to abolish the wicked and the evil, to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak, to rise like the sun-god Shamash over all humankind, to illuminate the land. I am Hammurabi, the shepherd, selected by the god Enlil . . . .[156]

The main body is casuistic in nature, with no reference to the writer. Yet, in the epilogue the king initially begins by referring to himself in the third person, but shifts to the first:

> These are the just decisions which *Hammurabi, the able king*, has established and thereby has directed the land along the course of truth in the correct way of life. *I am Hammurabi, noble king*. I have not been careless or negligent toward humankind, granted to my care by the god Enlil, and with whose shepherding the god Marduk charged me. I have sought for them peaceful places, I removed serious difficulties, I spread light over them.[157]

The remaining portion of the text, including the curse section, continues in the first person.

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first person speech of Cyrus. Scholarship supports this view. Finkel notes that "it has long been evident that the content of the Cyrus Cylinder divides naturally into three distinct literary sections, especially given the highly significant shift from third person to first person beginning with line 20." Irving L. Finkel, *The Cyrus Cylinder: The Great Persian Edict from Babylon* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 23. He notes that it can be assumed that the three parts have "separate compositional origins" and posits that the first part may be from "a court Chronicle or other appraisal of Cyrus' early reign" (24). Smith notes the text is the proclamation of Cyrus, but views the first section as a "theological justification of his conquest of Babylon, from the viewpoint of the Marduk priesthood." Morton Smith, *Studies in the Cult of Yahweh*, ed. Shaye J. D. Cohen (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 73. Meier notes that the first half is a narrative about Cyrus; after the shift the text "continues as a typical pre-Persian royal, self-laudatory inscription." Meier, *Speaking of Speaking*, 292. While the weight of such scholarship must be noted, in light of the evidence presented in this section, the potential seems to remain for a "univocal" perspective of the Cyrus Cylinder. In this sense, Cyrus initially speaks of himself and his choice by Marduk from a third-person perspective, the rhetorical effect of the illeistic self-references emphasizing his appointment, position and exploits. If understood this way, the initial narrative of the text has a rhetorical effect that the same words from the perspective of an undisclosed narrator could not.

[156]"The Laws of Hammurabi," trans. Marth Roth (COS 2.131:336).

[157]COS 2.131:35. The shift occurs in line xlvii.9.

Similarly the "Lipit-Ishtar Lawcode"[158] reflects a similar structure, having a prologue, the main body of legal text, and an epilogue. As with the Hammurabi code, the prologue and the epilogue are written in the first person. Yet, where there is a brief shift to the third person in Hammurabi's epilogue, here it is in the prologue. The text reads,

> When Anu (and) Enlil had called *Lipit-Ishtar—Lipit-Ishtar, the wise shepherd* whose name had been pronounced by Nunamnir—to the princeship of the land in order to establish justice in the land . . . then *I, Lipit-Ishtar, the humble shepherd* of Nippur . . . . I procured . . . the [fre]edom of the [so]ns and daughters of [Nippur] . . . . I made the father support his children . . . I made the children stand by their father . . . . Verily, I, Lipit-Ishtar, the son of Enlil, brought seventy into the father's house . . . .[159]

The epilogue is written consistently in the first person.

In brief summary, this section has noted third-person self-references in the speech of royal figures within Ugaritic compositions and royal correspondence, Sumerian compositions, and various Hittite documents. In addition, the survey has highlighted both clear and potential illeism in various royal inscriptions and law codes. As with evidence noted in the OT, the rhetorical effect of the illeism creates distancing between the speaker and his self-reference, emphasizing the authority and status of his kingship.

Deferential Use of Illeism in the ANE Texts

As in the OT, the use of illeism for deferential use is not an uncommon occurrence in the ANE literature. Watson notes a "formulae of submission" in Ugaritic letters. For example, a letter from General Iwri-ṯarruma to the king reads, "And the king my lord, why did he assign such a thing to his servant? Two thousand horses, you said, would come soon! Why has the king, my lord, not provided them yet?"[160] Other examples of correspondence to a ruler/king reflect similar language.

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[158]The text is probably from the mid-nineteenth century B.C., antedating the Hammurabi code by about a century. Pritchard, 159.

[159]"Lipit-Ishtar Lawcode," trans. S.N. Kramer (ANET, 159).

[160](KTU 2.33 = RS 16.402, 22-39) Dijkstra, "Ugaritic Prose," 158.

Many instances of the deferential use of illeism are found in the Amarna Letters, dating to the fourteenth century B.C. For instance, Abimilki (Abimelech) of Tyre writes to Akj-en-Aton stating, "Thus Abimilki, thy servant. Seven and seven times I fall at the feet of the king, my lord. I am the dirt under the feet of the king, my lord. . . . Behold, thy servant has written to his lord because he has heard the gracious messenger of the king who comes to his servant."[161] The prince of Megiddo writes to the king stating, "Let the king be informed concerning his servant and concerning his city."[162] Prince of the Hebron district writes similarly to the king stating, "So let the king take thought for his servant because of this deed! And I will not do anything until the king sends back a message to his servant."[163]

This deferential usage of illeism is also found in other types of correspondence (outside of king/servant correspondence) where there is a disparity of social status. Various Hebrew letters discovered reflect the deferential third-person self-reference commonly found in the OT. The Yavneh Yam Ostracan reads, "Your servant is working in the harvest; your servant was at Hasar-Asam (when the following incident occurred). Your servant did his reaping . . . ."[164] "From the so-called "Lachish Letters,"[165] this deferential use is common. Lachish 3 reads, "Your servant Hoshayahu (hereby) reports to my lord Yaush. . . . And now, please explain to your servant the meaning of the letter which you sent to your servant yesterday evening. For your servant has been sick at heart

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[161]"EA, No. 147," trans. W.F. Albright and George E. Mendenhall (ANET, 484).

[162]RA, xix, p. 97, trans. W.F. Albright and George E. Mendenhall (ANET, 485).

[163]EA, No. 280, trans. W.F. Albright and George E. Mendenhall (ANET, 487).

[164]"The Mesad Hashavyahu (Yavneh Yam) Ostracon," trans. Dennis Pardee (COS 3.4 1.77). See also a the West-Semitic letter "Two Servants to their Master," trans. Dennis Pardee (COS 3.45HH: 110-11).

[165]Pardee notes these are believed to be from around the period just before the fall of Judah (586 B.C.). "Lachish Ostraca," trans. Dennis Pardee (COS 3.42:78).

ever since you sent (that letter) to your servant."[166]

An exhaustive study of ANE literature would offer a more nuanced assessment of when and how the deferential third-person self-reference occurs across cultures and languages.[167] Yet, the survey highlights that, in addition to illeism in the speech of gods and royal figures, the ANE literature also reflects the deferential use of this phenomenon. The rhetorical implication of this use of illeism is consistent with the similar use noted in the OT, emphasizing both the superiority of the addressee and the humility of the writer or speaker.

Conclusion

The evidence of the survey reveals illeism in the speech of gods and royal figures within the ancient Near Eastern texts. In the speech of gods, the illeism often serves to emphasize the unique authority and power of a preeminent god (i.e., Ugaritic Baal, El, and Asherah; Sumerian's Inanna and Enlil; and the great god Erra in the Mesopotamian pantheon). A similar context is associated with the illeism in the speech of royal figures. The royal writer or intended speaker seeks to emphasize his or her royal status and authority, not unlike that found in the OT speech of kings. Though this survey of ANE literature is not intended to be exhaustive, significantly, outside of the deferential

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[166]"Lachish 3: Complaints and Information," trans. Dennis Pardee (COS 3.42B.79). For similar deferential third-person self-references see "Lachish 4: Military Reports," trans. Dennis Pardee (COS 3.42C.80); "Lachish 5: Thanks and Remarks on the Harvest," trans. Dennis Pardee (COS 3.42D.80); "Lachish 6: Reactions to Forwarded Correspondence," trans. Dennis Pardee (COS 3.42E.80); "Lachish 9: Requests," trans. Dennis Pardee (3.42F.81). In a text reflecting a widow's plea to an official the text reads, "May YHWH bless you in peace. And now, may my lord the official listen to your maidservant. My husband has died (leaving) no sons. (I request politely that the following) happen: (let) your hand (be) with me and entrust to your maidservant the inheritance about which you spoke." "The Widow's Plea," trans. Dennis Pardee (COS 3.44:86).

[167]Contini, addressing epistolary evidence, notes for example that first millennium B.C. Aramaic reflects little use of "self-abasing appellatives for a speaker addressing a superior," while Akkadian and Hebrew do. Riccardo Contini, "Epistolary Evidence of Address Phenomena in Official Biblical Aramaic," in *Solving Riddles and Untying Knots: Biblical, Epigraphic, and Semitic Studies in Honor of Jonas C. Greenfield*, ed. Ziony Zevit, Seymour Gitin, and Michael Sokoloff (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 67.

use, illeism was found only in the speech of gods and royal figures.

As noted, the ANE corpus is a diverse and complex collection of literature. Yet, this broad survey highlights the occurrence of the phenomenon of illeism within the texts and, more significantly, its use within the speech of gods and kings. The thesis that the intentional choice of the third-person self-reference has the potential to convey both royal and divine aspects is strengthened by these findings. Yet, a more specific aspect of the intent of this study is the evaluation of a possible relationship between the illeism of Yahweh and that of Jesus. In the next chapter the use of illeism in the NT is explored.

Excursus: Deity of Kings and Kingship of Gods

C. J. Gadd notes that "God and King are two conceptions so nearly coupled in the Oriental mind that the distinction is constantly blurred."[168] In the ancient Near East gods were viewed as kings (or queens) and kings were often seen (to varying degrees) as gods. With the evidence presented so far suggesting the possibility of both a divine and royal aspect associated with the use of illeism by Yahweh, this excursus briefly addresses the lack of delineation between the two concepts.

Concerning gods viewed as kings, Smith notes it seems natural that "the chief gods or powers would be described in terms of the highest analogical power on earth: the king."[169] The concept of god as king is found in Mesopotamian literature throughout the Sumerian, Assyrian and Babylonian periods.[170] Offering many textual examples, Smith affirms the understanding of kingship for the gods in Mesopotamia noting An, Enlil,

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[168]C. J. Gadd, *Ideas of Divine Rule in the Ancient East* (London: Publisher for the British Academy by Oxford University Press, 1948), 33.

[169]Gary V. Smith, "The Concept of God/the Gods as King in the Ancient Near East and the Bible," *Trinity Journal* 3, no. 1 (1982): 18.

[170]Ibid.

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Enki, Ninurta, Marduk, Ishtar, and others.[171] In the Ugaritic literature, and in the ancient

Near Eastern mind set in general, Smith notes that "kingship was the significant factor in

the struggle of the gods for power."[172] Within Hittite mythology Smith highlights the

kingship of Alalu, Anu and Kumarbi, as well as the sun and storm gods noting that "the

struggle for power and dominant position is consistently stated in kingship

terminology."[173] Additionally, the kingship of Re and other gods are reflected in Egyptian

texts.[174]

Concerning the perception of divinity associated with kingship, Evans and

Pritchard write, "Kingship everywhere and at all times has been in some degree a sacred

office. This is because a king symbolizes a whole society and must not be identified with

any part of it. He must be in the society and yet stand outside it."[175] Frankfort clarifies the

significance of kingship in the ancient Near East noting that "the purely secular—in so

far as it could be granted to exist at all—was the purely trivial. Whatever was significant

was imbedded in the life of the cosmos, and it was precisely the king's function to

maintain the harmony of that integration."[176] While the king is often understood as a god,

the role of intermediary between the secular and the divine is often associated with the

king.[177] Beckman addresses religion among the Hittites noting that "the Hittite monarch

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[171]Ibid., 19-23.

[172]Ibid., 27.

[173]Ibid., 29.

[174]Ibid., 30-32.

[175]E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Social Anthropology and Other Essays* (New York: The Free Press, 1962), 210.

[176]Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 3.

[177]Engnell highlights the perceived divinity of the Egyptian king, the monarchs in Sumero-Akkadian king ideology, as well as kings in Hittite and Canaanite culture. See Ivan Engnell, *Studies in Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967), 4, 16, 62, 80, 91, 105. For the purpose of this study, this broad statement merely affirms Engnell's conclusions concerning ANE kingship and does not address his presentation of the complexity and nuanced understandings of divinity within

occupied a pivotal position. Standing at the point of contact between the realm of man and the realm of the gods, the king both represented the Hittites before the pantheon and directed the activities of the people on behalf of their divine overlords."[178]

While at times understood as the point of contact between two realms, in other contexts the king was seen as divine. Wyatt highlights the nature of kingship in the Ugaritian evidence highlighting that "the king stood at the apex of society, on the borderline of the divine dimension. His involvement in the royal cultus took him across this divide, so that he became divine in order to represent his people and to acquire benefits on their behalf most effectively."[179] He adds, "He became a man again to bring these benefits down to earth."[180] In this respect the living king was only divine at times, while the dead kings were permanently understood as divine.[181]

With an appreciation for the complexity of the issue, these various observations highlight how the king was understood at various times and within various cultures. Within Israel, this blurring of the lines is not seen within the concept of earthly kingship. Smith clarifies the uniqueness of the Israelites' view concerning the human king noting that, in contrast to Egypt and Mesopotamia, the Israelites did not believe that the king acted as mediator between God and man or that he was "the one who integrated and harmonized man with the natural world."[182] Yet, while clearly the king was not viewed as divine, his unique relationship with Yahweh must also be appreciated.

various cultures.

[178]Gary Beckman, "How Religion Was Done," in *A Companion to the Ancient Near East*, ed. Daniel Snell (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 345-46.

[179]N. Wyatt, "Degrees of Divinity: Some Mythical and Ritual Aspects of West Semitic Kingship," *UF* 31 (1999): 864.

[180]Ibid. He writes that "this capacity for transformation was probably understood to be initiated by the right of unction which took place only once, at or in relation to his installation" (ibid.).

[181]Ibid.

[182]Smith, "The Concept of God/the Gods as King in the Ancient Near East and the Bible," 33.

Schreiner, addressing the book of Proverbs, comments how closely the king is aligned with Yahweh. Concerning Proverb 25:2 he writes, "Kings have almost a godlike ability to unearth what God has hidden."[183] He adds that the "godlike stature" of the king is reflected in proverb 25:3 which notes the heart of the king is unsearchable (echoing the unsearchable nature of God [Job 5:9; 9:10; Ps. 145:3; Isa. 40:28]).[184] Yet, Schreiner rightly highlights that no king fulfills the picture of the ideal king pictured in Proverbs. Viewed from a canonical perspective, Proverbs' ideal king "points to a future king—a king who fulfills the covenant with David."[185]

This blurring of deity and royalty is seen clearly however in the identity of Yahweh whose kingship is fundamental to the Old Testament. Eichrodt states succinctly, "That which binds together indivisibly the two realms of the Old and New Testaments . . . is the irruption of the Kingship of God into this world and its establishment here."[186] This aspect of God's identity reflects similarities with kingship associated with various ANE gods. McKenzie notes psalms 93 and psalms 95-100 "make it clear beyond doubt that the basis of the kingship of Yahweh is not merely His covenant with Israel and His redemption of Israel from bondage, but also His cosmic rule over nature, which rests, in turn, upon His prerogatives as creator."[187]

Yet, the obvious discontinuity must be appreciated as well. Smith notes three broad distinctions. First, clearly the relationship of man to God reflected by the unique

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[183]Thomas R. Schreiner, *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 294.

[184]Ibid.

[185]Ibid.

[186]Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, trans. J. A. Baker (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), 1:26.

[187]John L. McKenzie, *Myths and Realities: Studies in Biblical Theology* (Milwaukee: Bruce Pub. Co., 1963), 115.

aspects of God's covenant contributes to this distinctiveness.[188] Second, he underscores the distinctiveness of the biblical concept of God. He writes, "When the power of a thousand nature gods is centralized in the power of one God, he becomes the king in a way which was foreign to Mesopotamian thinking."[189] Finally, he notes the relationship of the king to God set Israel apart noting that the king "was not the high priest and it was not through the king that God revealed his will to Israel."[190]

These brief observations highlight the imbricating nature of the concepts of royalty and deity as reflected in ancient Near Eastern literature as well as in the OT. As the study addresses the illeism of the NT in the following chapter, this overlap between the two concepts cautions against an unnatural division between a possible royal aspect and divine aspect associated with the phenomenon.

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[188]Smith, "The Concept of God/the Gods as King in the Ancient Near East and the Bible," 36.

[189]Ibid.

[190]Ibid., 37.

CHAPTER 5

ILLEISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The various stages of this study have sought to address specific questions and issues for a proper analysis of the illeism of Jesus and Yahweh. Chapter 1 of this study highlighted that evidence does not suggest that illeism in direct discourse was a common occurrence in the first century. The survey of the OT highlighted the prominent use of illeism in the speech of Yahweh as well as in the speech of OT kings. The analysis of the ANE literature reflected a similar occurrence of illeism, both in the speech of preeminent gods and that of various kings. The survey noted evidence for the distinct deferential use of illeism in letters, business transactions, etc., but the research found no evidence that would indicate that the manner of illeism used in the speech of gods and kings was a common way of speaking in any place, culture, or time period in the ancient Near East. The rhetorical function of illeism among the divine and royal figures in the ANE texts functions in broad terms as it does in the speech of Yahweh and OT kings; the self-reference serves to highlight the position and authority of the individuals. Yahweh's consistent use of illeism, as well as its use by OT kings, ANE kings, and pagan gods, suggests a possible royal and divine aspect to the use of illeism. This chapter addresses the use of illeism in the NT in an effort to evaluate a possible relationship between Yahweh's use of this phenomenon and Jesus's use.

Illeism in Paul's Letters

The NT reflects several possible occurrences of illeism by a biblical author.[1]

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[1]In the Gospel of Matthew see 9:9 and 10:3. In the Gospel of John see 11:5; 13:23; 20:2; 21:20, 24. The issue of authorship, as well as the larger context of biblical authors referring to themselves

Yet, as noted concerning various OT authors' use of illeism, this type of illeism reflects a fundamentally distinct rhetorical function from the way illeism functions in direct speech. The use of illeism in direct speech within the NT occurs only in the speech of Jesus. The only other third-person self-reference noted in the NT occurs in 1 and 2 Corinthians. Though not technically direct speech, the personal correspondence conveys Paul's first person speech to the Corinthians.[2] As a matter of thoroughness, these isolated instances of illeism are briefly addressed.

In 1 Corinthians 3:5 Paul addresses the church asking, "What then is Apollos? What is Paul?" At a fundamental level Paul uses illeism in this instance to hold himself and Apollos up as examples. The dissociation created by the third-person self-reference allows Paul to address the views of the Corinthians in an objective sense and allows him to avoid personalizing the issue. Ciampa and Rosner state that the answer to the questions is that "Apollos and Paul, as examples of Christian leaders in general, are *only servants*."[3] Kuck rightly notes that Paul's words emphasize that Paul and Apollos are διάκονοι who have received their assignments from the Lord."[4] He adds that the "dominant motif in 3:5-9 . . . is the more fundamental dependence of the church and its leaders on God."[5] Ultimately, Paul's intent is to focus the Corinthians on God, not himself, and his illeistic reference to himself contributes to this intent.

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within the narrative goes beyond the scope of this study.

[2]As Witherington notes, "Letters in a largely oral culture are by and large surrogates for a direct conversation the author would rather have had in person." Ben Witherington, *The New Testament Story* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Pub., 2004), 49. He adds, "One of the reasons Paul's letters, with the exception of their beginnings and endings, do not look much like most other ancient letters in either content or length is that they are in fact long-winded speeches written down, speeches Paul would rather have delivered in person" (ibid.).

[3]Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, PNTC, vol. 7 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2010), 145. (Author's emphasis.)

[4]David W. Kuck, *Judgment and Community Conflict: Paul's Use of Apocalyptic Judgment Language in 1 Corinthians 3:5-4:5*, NTSup, vol. 66 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 165.

[5]Ibid.

A more debated text which reflects illeism is 2 Corinthians 12:2-5. Paul writes,
"I know a man (οἶδα ἄνθρωπον) in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the
third heaven . . . . And I know that this man (οἶδα τὸν τοιοῦτον ἄνθρωπον) was caught up
into paradise . . . . On behalf of this man I will boast (ὑπὲρ τοῦ τοιούτου καυχήσομαι),
but in behalf of myself I will not boast, except in my weaknesses." Though some scholars
conclude Paul is referring to another person,[6] the majority view is that Paul is referring to
himself.[7] Yet, the reasoning as to why Paul speaks in the third person reflects a diversity
of scholarship. Betz argues Paul is countering his opponents by offering a parody of an
"ascension story."[8] He notes that both the ascension report and its parody were old
literary forms.[9] Others see the third person as reflecting a dichotomy within Paul. Barrett
notes the apparent desire on Paul's part to avoid boasting. He writes that "even when
boasting of his own visions Paul is unwilling to do so directly, and tells his story as if it
related to someone else."[10] Yet, Barrett goes further, noting that Paul "distinguishes two
men within himself. There is a *man* who is a visionary, and this man is in fact Paul; but
Paul would rather be thought of as the weak man, who has nothing to boast of but his
weakness."[11] Baird writes that Paul is likely using the third person to "distance his true

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[6]Hermmann, arguing this view writes, "Quand Paul emploie la première personne du singulier,
c'est de lui-même qu'il parle; quand il emploie la troisième personne, il s'agit d'un autre." Léon
Hermmann, "Apollos," *Revue des sciences religieuses* 50, no. 4 (1976): 332. Hermmann concludes Paul is
referring to Apollos. Goulder argues that Paul has a "(Pauline-Christian) friend who was ravished to the
Throne." M. D. Goulder, "Vision and Knowledge," *JSNT*, no. 56 (1994): 57.

[7]As Garland notes, Paul refers to himself in vv. 1, 5, and 7, revealing that he has "chosen to
relate this event by referring to himself only indirectly." David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, NAC, vol. 29
(Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 510.

[8]Hans Dieter Betz, *Der Apostel Paulus und die sokratische Tradition: eine exegetische
Untersuchung zu seiner Apologie 2 Korinther 10-13*, BHT, vol. 45 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1972), 85.

[9]He writes, "2 Kor 12, 2-4 ist die Parodie eines Himmelfahrtsberichtes. Beides,
Himmelfahrtsbericht und dessen Parodie, sind alte literarische Formen." Ibid.

[10]C. K. Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, BNTC (London: A. and C. Black,
1973), 307.

[11]Ibid. See also Heinz Dietrich Wendland, *Die Briefe an die Korinther*, NTD, vol. 7

self—his apostolic identity—from the self in which he has been forced to boast."[12] He adds that in Paul's argument with his opponents he seeks to "prove that his ministry is not grounded in the sort of experience they claim as normative."[13]

Seifrid argues that Paul is speaking more broadly than just about himself. His experience belongs to everyone who is "in Christ." He writes, "It belongs to them, not as a natural possession, but as a reality of the new creation, in which they share in Christ."[14] In this sense Paul "distances himself from himself, not simply as a rhetorical move, but as a theological statement."[15]

While there is a complexity to Paul's use of illeism in 2 Corinthians and though certainty is not possible, at a fundamental level the distancing created by the illeism seems to allow Paul to present his vision without the appearance of boasting. Barnett affirms this view noting that "Paul uses the third person because of his unwillingness to boast about what he has done."[16] Garland, while noting multiple

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(Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1954), 219.

[12]William Baird, "Visions, Revelation, and Ministry: Reflections on 2 Cor 12:1-5 and Gal 1:11-17," *JBL* 104, no. 4 (1985): 654.

[13]Ibid. See also Victor Paul Furnish, *II Corinthians*, AB, vol. 32A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984), 544. Morray-Jones, who argues merkabah mysticism as a proper background to the account, views the third person as emphasizing the Paul who is transformed during his heavenly ascension. See C. R. A. Morray-Jones, "Paradise Revisited (2 Cor 12:1-12): The Jewish Mystical Background of Paul's Apostolate," Pt. 2, "Paul's Heavenly Ascent and Its Significance," *HTR* 86, no. 3 (1993): 273. Zmijewski argues the use of the third person has nothing to do with modesty ("Die Erzählweise in der dritten Person hat nichts mit 'Bescheidenheitstil' zu tun"), but rather in the fact that Paul seeks to only boast in his infirmities. Josef Zmijewski, *Der Stil der paulinischen "Narrenrede" Analyse der Sprachgestaltung in 2 Kor 11, 1-12, 10 als Beitrag zur Methodik von Stiluntersuchungen neutestamentlicher Texte*, Bonner Biblishe Beiträge, vol. 52 (Köln: Hanstein Verlag GmbH, 1978), 336. He argues that Paul only views his infirmities as demonstrating his apostolicity ("Vielmehr hängt die distanzierende Form wohl mit seiner Absicht zusammen, sich seiner selbst nicht zu rühmen, es sei denn seiner Schwachheiten . . . weil er nur diese zum Erweis seiner Apostolizität als maßgebend erachtet") (ibid.).

[14]Mark A. Seifrid, *The Second Letter to the Corinthians*, PNTC, vol. 7 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2014), 443.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans

possibilities, views Paul's illeism as "attributable to his desire not to boast. . . . He therefore avoids an egocentric form of expression since he is already acutely conscious of the foolishness of self-praise."[17] The illeism, in this sense, offers a more impersonal presentation of his experience and a more effective argument against his opponents. Yet, his illeism may be more than a rhetorical effort to subtly shift the focus of the reader away from himself. As Seifrid notes, Paul's manner of self-reference in effect may implicitly broaden "the range of recipients of such a revelation" to include every believer.[18]

While each of the two uses of illeism by Paul reflects a distinct rhetorical intent, neither instance aligns with the rhetorical effect associated with illeism noted among Yahweh, kings, and gods. In these occurrences the speakers' use of the third person affirms their identity, and specifically their status and authority. As will be argued, Jesus's use of illeism also aligns with these occurrences and so is distinct from Paul's use. With these two instances of Paul's use of illeism noted, the remainder of the chapter addresses the only individual in the NT recorded using illeism in direct speech.

The Illeism of Jesus

Overview

Jesus is recorded referring to himself in the third person a total of 113x reflected in 11 distinct self-references. As would be expected, the most common third-

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Pub., 1997), 562n27. Yet, Harris notes it is "more than a rhetorical ploy, a conventional avoidance of boasting about oneself." Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2005), 835. He argues Paul was "embarrassed at needing to engage in fruitless boasting (v. 1) and found in this objectifying of his experience a convenient way of distancing himself from this necessary but futile boasting" (ibid.). He adds that this distancing enabled Paul to show that the vision was given to him "as a man in Christ," noting that "from first to last the initiative lay with God" (ibid.).

[17]Garland, *2 Corinthians*, 511.

[18]"Seifrid, *The Second Letter to the Corinthians*, 438.

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person self-reference is the phrase "Son of Man," occurring a total of 78x in the direct speech of Jesus. Naturally, the Synoptic Gospels reflect various parallel passages with the "Son of Man" phrase. Treating the various parallel accounts of illeistic uses of the "Son of Man" phrase as a single account, Jesus uses the phrase "Son of Man" 40x in the Synoptic Gospels.[19] All 11 of the occurrences of "Son of Man" in John are unique,[20] reflecting a total of 51 occurrences of Jesus referring to himself as "the Son of Man."[21] Jesus refers to himself as "the Son" 21x[22] total (12 of which occur in John). Not counting parallel occurrences he uses "the Son" 17x. Additionally, Jesus refers to himself 2x as "the Christ" (Matt 23:10; Luke 24:26), 1x as "Christ" (Mark 9:41), 2x as "the son of God" (John 5:25; 11:4), 2x as "the one whom the Father has sent" (John 5:37-38; 6:29), and 1x each as "the King" (Matt 25:34), "the Lord" (Mark 5:19), "he who comes down

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[19]Matt 8:20 (par. Luke 9:58); Matt 9:6 (par. Mark 2:10, Luke 5:24); Matt 10:23; Matt 11:19 (par. Luke 7:34); Matt 12:8 (par. Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5); Matt 12:32 (par. Luke 12:10); Matt 12:40 (par. Luke 11:30); Matt 13:37, 41-43; 16:13, 27-28; 17:9 (par. Mark 9:9) 17:12 (par. Mark 9:12-13); Matt 17:22 (par. Mark 9:31, Luke 9:44); Matt 19:28; 20:18 (par. Luke 18:31-33, Mark 10:33); Matt 20:28 (par. Mark 10:45); Matt 24:27 (par. Luke 17:24); Matt 24:30 (2x) (par. Mark 13:26, Luke 21:27); Matt 24:37, 39, 44 (par. Luke 12:40); Matt 25:31; 26:24 (par. Mark 14:21, Luke 22:22); Matt 26:2; 26:24 (2x) (par. Mark 14:21, Luke 22:22); Matt 26:45 (par. Mark 14:21); Matt 26:64 (par. Mark 14:62, Luke 22:69); Luke 6:22; 12:8 ; 17:26, 30; 18:8; 19:10; 21:36; 22:48; 24:7; Mark 8:31 (par. Luke 9:22); Mark 8:38 (par. Luke 9:26).

[20]John 1:51; 3:13, 14; 5:27; 6:27, 53, 62; 8:28; 9:35; 12:23; 13:31.

[21] Matthew presents 6 occurrences of the "Son of Man" reference which are unique (10:23; 13:37, 41; 24:30a; 25:31; 26:2). In Luke, 7 of the sayings are unique (17:22, 30; 18:8; 19:10; 21:36; 22:48; 24:7).

[22] Matt 11:27 (3x) (par. Luke 10:22); Matt 24:36 (par. Mark 13:32); Matt 28:19; John 5:19-26 (8x); 6:40; 8:36; 14:13; 17:1 (2x). In keeping with conservative criteria for the selection of illeisms for the scope of this study, John 3:16 is not included. Scholars debate whether John 3:16-21 should be viewed as Jesus's words or the words of the Evangelist. For example, Brown and O'Day view the section as the words of Jesus. Raymond Edward Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII,* AB, vol. 29 (Garden City, NY:Doubleday, 1966), 149. Gail R. O'Day, *John* in vol. 9 of the NIB, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 548. O'Day notes two reasons which contribute to understanding the verses as the words of the Evangelist are the third-person pronouns and the distinctive Johannine themes. Concerning viewing the third-person pronouns as evidence that the passage reflects the Evangelist's commentary, O'Day rightly underscores the many instances where Jesus speaks of himself in the third person in the Fourth Gospel. O'Day, *John*, 548. The evidence of this study offers a caution against too quickly assuming a third-person reference *about* Jesus necessarily means a speaker *other* than Jesus. Schnackenburg and Beasley-Murray view the passage as the words of the Evangelist. Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 1:361; George Raymond Beasley-Murray, *John*, WBC, vol. 36 (Waco: Word Books, 1987), 46, 50.

from heaven" (John 6:33), "he who is from God" (John 6:46), and "gift of God" (John

4:10). The following chart reflects these various self-references of Jesus by book:[23]

Table 3. Self-references of Jesus by book

Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
The Son of Man (30)	The Son of Man (14)	The Son of Man (24)	The Son of Man (11)
The Son (5)	The Son (1)	The Son (3)	The Son (12)
The Christ (1)	Christ (1)	The Christ (1)	. . .
The King (1)	. . .	. . .	. . .
. . .	The Lord (1)	. . .	. . .
. . .	. . .	. . .	The Son of God (2)
. . .	. . .	. . .	Jesus Christ (1)
. . .	. . .	. . .	The One Whom he [the Father] Has Sent (2)
. . .	. . .	. . .	He Who Comes down from Heaven (1)
. . .	. . .	. . .	He who is from God (1)
. . .	. . .	. . .	Gift of God (1)
Total= 37	Total= 17	Total= 28	Total= 31
Minus Son of Man = 7	Minus Son of Man = 3	Minus Son of Man = 4	Minus Son of Man = 20

Jesus's use of illeism is not determined by audience. While his predominant

audience when using illeism is the disciples (55x),[24] Jesus also often refers to himself in

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[23]See appendix 3 for a full listing of self-references of Jesus by book.

[24]This number and any further numbers are based on the total occurrence of Jesus's illeism in the four Gospels. Jesus speaks to the disciples using a third-person self-reference in all four Gospels. Yet, interestingly, the disciples are the intended audience primarily in the Synoptics. Jesus speaks to the disciples illeistically only 5x as a group in John. In comparison, Matthew reflects Jesus speaking illeistically to the disciples 24x. Though beyond the scope of this study, a deeper analysis of Jesus's use of illeism within each Gospel may offer a fruitful area of future research. If Jesus is drawing on royal and divine themes by his use of illeism, further research in this area may highlight how this understanding contributes to the various emphases of each Evangelist.

the third person when addressing the scribes and/or Pharisees (10x),[25] the Jews in general (6x in John),[26] or to the undefined crowds (9x).[27] Jesus also uses illeism when addressing individuals, including Nathanael (John 1:51), Nicodemus (John 3:13, 16), a man born blind (John 9:35), Zacchaeus (Luke 21:27), Judas (Luke 22:48), the high priest (Mark 14:62; Matt 26:64), the healed demoniac (Mark 5:19), an unidentified individual from the crowd (Luke 9:58), and the woman at the well (John 4:10).[28] Jesus also refers to himself illeistically when addressing God the Father in prayer (John 17:1, 3). As evidenced from the various intended audiences, Jesus uses illeism in a variety of contexts, including healing (i.e., Mark 2:10; 5:19), preaching/teaching (i.e., John 5:25; Luke 7:34), praying (i.e., John 17:1, 3), and in private conversations (i.e., John 3:16; 4:10).[29]

Finally, Jesus's use of illeism can be separated into the following five broad categories or contexts: "Relationship with the Father," "Relationship with the Disciples," "Earthly Ministry/Mission," "Passion/Resurrection," and "Future Return/Judgment." The last three categories reflect the categories commonly used to separate the "Son of Man" sayings in the Synoptic Gospels.[30] As Schreiner notes, the three categories for the Son of Man sayings are imperfect, yet helpful.[31] In the same way, these broad five categories are

[25]Matt 8:20; 9:6 (par. Mark 2:10; Luke 5:24); Matt 12:8 (par. Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5); Matt 12:32, 40; John 8:28.

[26]John 5:25, 26, 27, 37-38; 6:46, 53. Also Jews who had believed are noted as his audience in John 8:36 as well as the Jewish council in Luke 22:69.

[27]Matt 11:19; Luke 7:34; 11:30; 12:8, 10; John 6:27, 29, 33, 40.

[28]As reflected by the audiences, Jesus uses illeism when addressing both his followers and his opponents.

[29]The survey also reveals Jesus's illeism is not limited to a specific type of sentence; the phenomenon occurs in statements (i.e., Luke 10:22), questions (i.e., Luke 24:26), requests (i.e., John 17:1) and commands (i.e., Matt 28:19).

[30]The categories are usually attributed to Bultmann. See Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, vol. 1 (New York: Scribner, 1951). (Yet, see Burkett, who attributes them to earlier scholars.) Burkett, *The Son of Man Debate*, 43.

[31]He writes, "Some of the sayings do not fit neatly into any category, demonstrating that the categories are imperfect. Still, the division is a useful way of analyzing the different sayings." Thomas R.

intended to offer one approach for viewing and addressing Jesus's use of illeism. The

various self-references of Jesus presented by category are as follows:

1. Relationship with the Father
   1.1. The Son (12)[32]
   1.2. Jesus Christ (1) (John 17:3)
   1.3. The One whom the Father has sent (2) (John 5:38; 6:29)
   1.4. He who is from God (1) (John 6:46)
2. Relationship with Disciples
   2.1. The Christ (1) (Matt 23:10)
   2.2. Christ (1) (Mark 9:41)
   2.3. Son of Man (2) (Luke 6:22; 22:48)
3. Earthly Ministry/Mission
   3.1. Son of Man (12)[33]
   3.2. The Son (John 8:36)
   3.3. Son of God (1) (John 11:4)
   3.4. The Lord (1) (Mark 5:19)
   3.5. He who comes down from heaven (1) (John 6:33)
   3.6. Gift of God (1) (John 4:10)
4. Passion/Resurrection
   4.1. Son of Man (15)[34]
   4.2. The Christ (1) (Luke 24:26)
5. Future Return/Judgment
   5.1. Son of Man (23)[35]
   5.2. The Son (1) (John 6:40)
   5.3. King (1) (Matt 25:34)

Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 219.

[32]Matt 11:27 (par. Luke 10:22); Matt 24:36 (par. Mark 13:32); Matt 28:19; John 5:19-23 (7x); 26; 17:1.

[33]Matt12:8 (par. Mark 2:28, Luke 6:5), Matt 8:20 (par. Luke 9:58), Matt 9:6 (par. Mark 2:10, Luke 5:24), Matt 11:19 (par. Luke 7:34), Matt 12:32 (par. Luke 12:10), Matt 13:37; 16:13; Luke 19:10; John 3:13; 6:27, 53; 9:35; 12:23.

[34]Matt 17:22 (par. Mark 9:31, Luke 9:44); Matt 20:18 (par. Luke 18:31-33, Mark 10:33); Matt 17:12 (par. Mark 9:12-13); Matt 17:9 (par. Mark 9:9); Matt 12:40 (par. Luke 11:30); Matt 20:28 (par. Mark 10:45); Matt 26:24 (2x) (par. Mark 14:21, Luke 22:22); Matt 26:2; Matt 26:45 (par. Mark 14:41); Mark 8:31 (par. Luke 9:22); Luke 24:7; John 3:14; 8:28; 13:31.

[35]Matt 10:23; 13:41-43; 16:27, 28; 19:28; 24:27 (par. Luke 17:24); Matt 24:30 (2x) (par. Mark 13:26, Luke 21:27); Matt 24:37, 39; 24:44 (par. Luke 12:40); Matt 25:31; 26:64 (par. Mark 14:62, Luke 22:69); Mark 8:38 (par. Luke 9:26); Luke 12:8; 17:26, 30; 18:8; 21:36; John 1:51; 5:27; 6:62.

While these observations highlight that Jesus's prominent use of illeism is not dictated or influenced primarily by a particular audience or context, the question remains unanswered as to why Jesus is recorded as choosing to present himself in this manner. As noted, the focus of this dissertation is not on the use of any particular phrase ("Son of Man," "Son of God," "Jesus Christ," etc.). Rather, the question is why Jesus chooses to refer to himself in the third person (i.e., "The Son of Man will . . .") as opposed to alternative phrasing which would clarify he is referring to himself (i.e., "I, the Son of Man, will . . ." or "I am the Christ and I will . . .," etc.). The study will show that Jesus uses illeism in a similar manner as that seen in the speech of OT kings, ANE kings, and Yahweh and that both divine and royal themes are potentially associated with this manner of speech.

As noted in the introduction, the study offers primarily a literary analysis in the sense that it focuses on how illeism is functioning in the text. Addressing issues of authenticity would not allow for a comprehensive evaluation of all occurrences of illeism within the parameters of this study. Statements concerning how Jesus presents himself are based on the literary world of the text and are not intended to convey historical assumptions. Yet, it should be noted that, even if the illeism within the direct speech of Jesus is understood as the words of the Evangelist, the thesis remains unaffected. Either Jesus chooses this manner of speech or the Evangelist chooses to present Jesus as using this manner of speech. Yet, in each case the understanding of the associated themes of royalty and divinity is governing the choice of the third person for self-reference.[36] The illeism maintains the same rhetorical effect.

The next section highlights multiple examples of the illeism of Jesus from the four Gospels, reflecting various contexts, audiences, and self-references. As with the

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[36]From a historical perspective it should be noted that the unusual illeistic phrasing is not the type of speech an eyewitness would likely contribute to an account. As noted, Jesus is the only individual in the Gospel narratives quoted as using illeism.

analysis of the illeism of Yahweh, because of the large number of occurrences, only representative texts are addressed. Also, the various texts are presented according to the five broad categories outlined as a means of organization and clarity of presentation. Following the analysis of representative texts, the study offers a brief survey of how various scholars address the texts and concludes with an evaluation of the rhetorical function of the illeism of Jesus.

Representative Texts

Relationship with the Father. In Matthew 11:25-26 Jesus prays to the Father, speaking in the first person. "I thank you Father, Lord of heaven and earth." In verse 27 (par. Luke 10:22) Jesus shifts his focus and addresses the crowd concerning his relationship to the Father. He begins speaking in the first person before shifting to the third-person perspective. "All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows *the Son* except the Father, and no one knows the Father except *the Son*, and anyone to whom *the Son* chooses to reveal him."[37] (After this illeistic statement, Jesus shifts back to the first person in v. 28. "Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke . . . .") The illeism serves to emphasize the relationship of the Father and the Son with both presented from an external perspective in relation to the speaker and audience.[38] The distancing created by the use of the illeistic self-reference emphasizes the status and authority of the Son. The Son knows the Father and reveals him to whomever he chooses.[39] France specifically notes the shift in person, writing that "the direct address to God in verses 25-26 now gives way to a third-person

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[37]The occurrences of illeism are italicized for clarity in this section.

[38]Aspects of the rhetorical implications associated with the representative texts are noted throughout. Analysis and summation of the rhetorical effect of Jesus's illeism is addressed in a later section.

[39]Turner notes that Jesus shifts from "prayer to affirmation of his unique messianic status as the exclusive revelator of the Father." David L. Turner, *Matthew*, BECNT, vol. 1 (Grand Rapid: Baker Academic, 2008), 303.

pronouncement about Jesus' own position. . . . Jesus, the Son, is the one and only plenipotentiary of the one true God, his Father."[40] He adds, "The focus is on his possession of this authority rather than on when and how it was given."[41] The illeism contributes to this theme of the message by emphasizing the status and authority of the speaker.

John 5:19-30 also reflects this emphasis of Jesus's relationship to the Father and also offers an opportunity to highlight an aspect of the complexity of the use of illeism by Jesus. In this brief section Jesus refers to himself as "the Son" 8x along with various third-person pronouns, as well as the "Son of God" and the "Son of Man." The verses also reflect Jesus shifting several times back and forth between first and third person.[42] For example, in verse 17 Jesus states, "My Father is working until now, and I am working." He then shifts in his next statement to the third person saying, "Truly, truly, I say to you, *the Son* can do nothing of *himself*, except that which *he* sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, these things *the Son* does likewise" (v. 19). Within verses 19-23 Jesus refers to himself as "the Son" 7x. In verse 24 he shifts back to the first person. "Truly, truly, I say to you, the one who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life." Verse 25 again repeats the first person pronouncement Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, but shifts once again to a third-person self-reference. "The hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of *the Son of God*." The third person-perspective continues through verse 29 with Jesus referring to himself as both "the Son" ("For as the Father has life in himself, thus also he gave *to the Son* to have life in

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[40]R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2007), 445.

[41]Ibid.

[42]The shifting from first person to third person and vice-versa is not uncommon (i.e., Matt 16:13-15; 20:28; Luke 9:22-26; 12:8). As noted in chap. 4, the speech of Yahweh also reflects similar shifts in person, sometimes even within a single verse. For example, in 2 Sam 7:11 God states, "And *I* will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, *Yahweh* declares to you that *Yahweh* will make you a house." Other examples could be noted.

himself") and "the Son of Man" ("and he gave *him* authority to execute judgment, because he is *the Son of Man*"). In verse 30 the perspective shifts once again, the first person pronouns and first singular verbs emphasizing the first person perspective. "I can do nothing on my own (Οὐ δύναμαι ἐγὼ ποιεῖν ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ οὐδέν). As I hear I judge (ἀκούω κρίνω), and my judgment is just, because I do not seek (οὐ ζητῶ) my will but the will of the one who sent me."[43]

Jesus's words affirm and characterize his relationship with the Father. The distance between speaker and the self-referent created by the illeism offers a subtle contribution to Jesus's presentation of his transcendent nature which he shares with the Father. While at times Jesus speaks of himself in the first person in relation to the Father, the choice of illeism emphasizes "the Son," the Son of Man," and "the Son of God" in parallel (third-person) presentation with the Father.[44] This dissociative third-person self-presentation in conjunction with another third-person referent does not inherently imply equality of status between the two. Yet, in this context, the choice to present both his own identity in the third person and the Father in the third person alludes to their shared transcendent nature.[45] Apart from the illeism creating a parallel presentation of the Father

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[43]Howard views this last verse as summing up the entire section. Wilbert Francis Howard, "Father and the Son: An Exposition of John 5:19-29," *Interpretation* 4, no. 1 (1950): 11.

[44]I.e., "For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father" (vv. 22-23a); "For as the Father has life in himself, thus also he gave to the Son to have life in himself" (v. 29).

[45]In a similar way, Jehu presents his status of kingship in conjunction with that of Ahab by referring to himself and the former king from the third-person perspective ("Ahab served Baal a little, but Jehu will serve him much"). This comparison does not imply that the context and intention of the illeism in the two occurrences do not reflect clear differences. Yet, in both cases the two referents are presented in the third person *because of a point of connection*. Jehu and Ahab are presented together based on the relationship of kingship, the former king and the present king. The connection of transcendence in the context of Jesus's illeism is suggested based on the fact that Jesus presents the Son and the Father from a third-person perspective. While functional subordination is often emphasized in this context and possibly other points of connection could be noted, it is this aspect of transcendence which can naturally be inferred from the context in John. Jesus was sent from the Father. In this sense these parallel third person-presentations are contributing to the Christological affirmations reflected in the context of the passage. Frey, though not addressing the illeism of the passage, underscores the Christological claim within the passage that "Jesus's ministry is the work of God the Father, who has equipped his Son with the same

and Son, the illeism in itself functions to highlight the authority and status of the speaker. The context of the illeism highlights this authority. Jesus states, "The dead will hear the voice of the *Son of God*." The presentation of himself from this external perspective offers an emphasis of this associated authority in a manner which the first person pronoun would not.

John 6:46 and 17:3 are two additional representative texts that reflect illeism in a similar context in John's Gospel. In 6:46, Jesus (presenting himself as the bread of God which comes down from heaven) states that "no one has seen the Father, except *the one who is from God*" (ὁ ὢν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ). This reference reflects a more descriptive aspect in comparison to "the Son," "the Son of Man," etc. Yet, the rhetorical effect of the self-reference is consistent with Jesus's other self-references. The distance created between the speaker and the reference functions to emphasize the associated status and authority of the speaker. In John 17:1-3, Jesus refers to himself illeistically as he prays to the Father.[46] "And this is eternal life that they may know you the only true God, and *Jesus Christ* whom you have sent" (ὃν ἀπέστειλας Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν). This is the only occurrence of the use of this reference by Jesus.[47] The context is unique in that Jesus's audience is the Father. Yet, Jesus also speaks to another audience indirectly. Ridderbos

divine authority" ("daß Jesu Wirken das Werk Gottes des Vaters ist, der den Sohn mit gleichen, göttlichen Vollmacht ausgestattet hat."). Jörg Frey, *Die johanneische Eschatologie*, WUNT (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1997), 3:354. He adds, addressing v. 23 specifically, that "the oneness with the Father claimed by the Son in his work and will . . . also implies the claim that the Son be given the same (divine) honor as the Father ("Die vom Sohn beanspruchte Einheit mit dem Vater im Wirken und Wollen . . . impliziert zugleich den Anspruch, daß dem Sohn die gleiche (göttliche) Ehre zuteil werde wie dem Vater") (ibid.).

[46]In Matt 11:25-26 Jesus prays to the Father in the first person and shifts to the third-person self-reference when addressing the crowd. Here Jesus shifts to the first person in vv. 4-26 for the remainder of the prayer. Stube highlights that the rhetorical effect of this shift is to highlight initially the Father-Son relationship before shifting to first person "to draw attention in a most personal way to the 'I' of the discourse." John Carlson Stube, *A Graeco-Roman Rhetorial Reading of the Farewell Discourse* (London: T & T Clark International, 2006), 193. Though Stube's observation does not address the fuller rhetorical implications of Jesus's illeism, his insight highlights the parallel third-person presentation of the Father and the Son.

[47]In the Gospels, "Jesus Christ" also appears in the prologue of John (1:17) as well as in Matt 1:1, 18 and Mark 1:1.

underscores how Jesus involves the "overhearing disciples" in his prayer, "depicting before their eyes the power given him by the Father in its full salvific meaning, as it concerned them."[48] Though the prayer is directed to the Father, the illeism contributes to Jesus's self-presentation to his disciples. Consistent with his other uses of illeism, the dissociative self-reference presents himself from an external perspective, affirming his status and authority in a way the first person reference could not. Yet, within the context of this emphasis of identity, the choice of illeism on the part of Jesus seems to reflect an instructional component, his words serving to teach and illuminate the disciples' developing understanding of who he is.

Relationship with his disciples. In Matthew 23:10 Jesus refers to himself illeistically as "the Christ" (Matt 23:10). "Nor be called teachers (καθηγηταί) for you have one teacher, *the Christ*" (ὅτι καθηγητὴς ὑμῶν ἐστιν εἷς ὁ Χριστός).[49] The relational aspect of the teacher/disciple paradigm is emphasized by Jesus's illeistic emphasis. His intentional choice of the third person functions to emphasize his identity as the Messiah, but also affirms a significant aspect of his relationship to the disciples. He is their teacher and that teacher is the Messiah.

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[48]Herman N. Ridderbos, *The Gospel According to John: A Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 549.

[49]Though the meaning of the term καθηγητής is debated, for the scope of this study the term is understood as synonymous with διδάσκαλος. France notes the term καθηγητής may be a "virtual synonym" for the term "teacher." France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 864. Yet, Byrskog, based on the term's extra-biblical usage, argues the term reflects a term of higher status than the term διδάσκαλος. Samuel Byrskog, *Jesus the Only Teacher: Didactic Authority and Transmission in Ancient Israel, Ancient Judaism and the Matthean Community*, Coniectanea Biblica New Testament Series (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1994), 287. He notes that "Jesus was as teacher also Matthew's personal guide and leader" (290). Winter notes that, based on the term's use in a non-literary papyrus, the term should be understood as a personal tutor. Bruce W. Winter, "The Messiah as the Tutor: The Meaning of Καθηγτής in Matthew 23:10," *Tyndale Bulletin* 42, no. 1 (1991): 157. For the scope of this study it is sufficient to highlight that Jesus affirms his status as God's anointed in the context of his role as the disciples' διδάσκαλος. Yet, the complexity of Jesus's role as teacher is noted. As Witherington writes, "One needs to reckon with the fact that Jesus the teacher was, if not *sui generis*, nonetheless a complex combination of influences, and no one parallel model is adequate to categorize him." Ben Witherington, *The Christology of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 184.

In Mark 9:41 Jesus, speaking to his disciples, refers to himself as Christ. "Whoever gives you a cup of water ἐν ὀνόματι ὅτι Χριστοῦ ἐστε will certainly not lose his reward." Pesch rightly notes that the wording presents Jesus as the Messiah, who gives the disciples their special significance and status.[50] The emphasis contributed by the illeism emphasizes his identity, yet also serves to emphasize the disciples status as well, based on their relationship to him. Luke 6:22 reflects a similar context with Jesus speaking illeistically using the common self-reference "Son of Man." "Blessed are you when men hate you and whenever they exclude you . . . on account of *the Son of Man*."[51] As noted earlier, Jesus's choice of illeism, while emphasizing his identity, includes an element of instruction. Illeism can be used to emphasize the speaker's understanding or perception of his identity. This aspect is the overarching effect of the use of illeism by Jesus. Yet, at times, such as here, the use of illeism not only underscores the reality of his identity, but is used to draw others to a clearer understanding of this identity. The distinction between the two is admittedly subtle. At times Jesus's use of illeism seems to reflect a natural means of expression that affirms his unique status and authority; the *extraordinary* nature of his identity presses the constraints of language beyond the boundaries of its *ordinary* usage. The dissociative nature of the use of the third person in place of the expected first person provides an acknowledgment of the reality of the status of the speaker. Other occurrences reflect a more conscious intent toward personal revelation of his identity and mission.

A final example of illeism within this category of Jesus's relationship with the disciples highlights an act of betrayal. Jesus asks, "Judas, would you betray *the Son of*

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[50]He writes, "Es meint Jesus als den Messias, der den Jüngern ihre besondere Bedeutung und Stellung gibt." Rudolf Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium: Kommentar zu Kap 8, 27-16, 20*, HTKNT, vol. 2 (Basel: Herder, 1977), 111.

[51]Nolland emphasizes the relational aspect of the verse noting that these unhappy experiences are "the occasion for blessedness because at their base lies one's identification with the Son of Man." John Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*, WBC, vol. 35A (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), 285.

Man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:48).[52] Jesus's choice of the third-person phrase rather than

the first person pronoun "reminds Judas that it is the Messiah whom he is treating with

this amazing form of treachery."[53]

Earthly ministry and mission. As noted, Jesus also speaks in the context of

his present ministry, his suffering, and his future return. In the context of his earthly

ministry Jesus asks his disciples at Caesarea Philippi, "Who do people say that *the Son of*

Man is?" (Matt 16:13).[54] France addresses what he characterizes as the

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[52]This example of illeism highlights the overlap that exists between the categories. This phrase could also naturally fit into the "Passion/Resurrection" section. Yet, Jesus's use of illeism in the context of betrayal, the breaking of this relationship, offers an interesting comparison to the other uses in this category.

[53]Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke*, 5th ed., ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901), 512. Stein echoes a similar understanding but underscores the choice of wording by Luke. He writes, "The seriousness of this act is shown by Luke's pointing out that Judas was in fact betraying the Son of Man." Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, NAC, vol. 24 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 561. Matthew and Mark omit Jesus's question to Judas.

[54]Τίνα λέγουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι εἶναι τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου; In Mark 8:27 Jesus asks, "Who do people say that I am?" (Τίνα με λέγουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι εἶναι;). Luke 9:18 similarly reflects the first person pronoun (Τίνα με λέγουσιν οἱ ὄχλοι εἶναι;). Various witnesses include the pronoun με in addition to the Son of Man phrase (i.e., C W D L Θ). This addition is best seen as an addition based on the reading in Mark 8:27 and Luke 9:18. So Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, WBC, vol. 33B (Dallas: Word Books, 1995), 463. Contra Luz who includes the pronoun as the more difficult reading. Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, trans. James E. Crouch, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 354. There are other instances where one Evangelist records Jesus using the third-person self-reference "the Son of Man" and another records Jesus using the first person pronoun. For example, in Matt 10:32 Jesus states, "Everyone who confesses me before men, I will also confess (ὁμολογήσω) him before my father who is in heaven." In Luke 12:8 he states, "Everyone who confesses me before men, the Son of Man also will confess (Ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὁμολογήσει) him before the angels of God." The focus of this study is primarily a literary approach as opposed to a historical one. The driving question throughout is why Jesus is presented as habitually using illeism. Yet, concerning where Jesus's use of illeism is not reflected in a parallel account, it can be argued that Jesus said similar statements at different points in his ministry to different audiences, choosing to speak illeistically in one circumstance and not in another. In this sense Donald Green makes a cogent argument that evangelical *ipsissima vox* proponents have often yielded too much ground. See Donald E. Green, "Evangelicals and Ipsissima Vox," *Master's Seminary Journal* 12, no. 1 (2001). Yet, in some cases, as in Luke 9:18 and Mark 8:27, the illeism reflected in Matt 16:13 is not recorded. In these instances it can be argued that all three Evangelists have conveyed "the voice" of Jesus. Concerning the *ipsissima vox* position see Darrell Bock, "The Words of Jesus in the Gospels: Live, Jive, or Memorex," in *Jesus under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents the Historical Jesus*, ed. Michael J. Wilkins and James Porter Moreland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 77-78; Jonathan T. Pennington, *Reading the Gospels Wisely: A Narrative and Theological Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 63-64. Bock notes, among other things, that Jesus likely taught in Aramaic and that his teachings were summarized. He writes that "we clearly hear Jesus, but we must be aware that there is a summary and emphasis in the complementary portraits that each Evangelist gives to the founder of the faith" (77). As an example of this view Osborne

"interchangeability of 'I' and 'the Son of Man' in the gospel tradition, noting that Matthew has the latter and Mark the former. He writes, "Matthew's decision to use 'the Son of Man' here perhaps reflects his awareness of the open-ended and puzzling nature of this designation as used by Jesus during his ministry; as a title it invites the question 'Who?'"[55] Yet, France rightly adds that the title in and of itself "does not provide the answer."[56] France's observation is specifically on the use of "Son of Man" in place of "I" and does not address the phenomenon of illeism in general. Yet, his point highlights this "instructional" aspect of the choice of the third person for self-reference. The unusual external perspective conveyed by illeism invites questions for further revelation.

A further example within the context of Jesus's earthly ministry is found in Matthew 20:26-28. Jesus speaks to his disciples stating, "Whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant . . . . even as *the Son of Man* came not to be served but to serve and give *his* life as a ransom for many."[57] While the distancing created by the

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notes concerning Matt 16:13 that "Matthew substitutes 'Son of Man' . . . to Mark's 'I,' making this a section of high Christology." Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew*, Zondervan's Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 625. As noted, from a historical perspective illeism is not the type of thing an eyewitness would likely add to an account. Addressing the distinctions between Matt 16:13, Mark 8:27, and Luke 9:18, Bock notes that "Jesus probably uttered the enigmatic title originally, since the Gospel writers never introduce this term independently of Jesus." Bock, "The Words of Jesus in the Gospels," 86-87. Ultimately, such distinctions reflect the richness of the complementary nature of the Gospels. As Pennington writes, "What we are given in the Gospels are four self-consciously painted portraits and interpretations of the real Jesus. . . . The issue then is not whether the events happened — both the Gospel writers and readers make this assumption, otherwise the whole exercise would be meaningless — but to recognize that what we have are inspired, theologically, pastorally, and at times, even polemically driven accounts. And this is enough." Pennington, *Reading the Gospels Wisely*, 97-98. See also Francis Watson, *Gospel Writing: A Canonical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2013), 615-16.

[55]France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 615.

[56]Ibid., 615.

[57]Carter notes v. 28 is the seventh "I have come" statement concerning Jesus's mission. The first six are in chapters 5-10 (5:17a, 5:17b, 9:13b, 10:34a, 10:34b, 10:35). Noting that "the Son of Man" is used in Jesus's four predictions about his death (17:22; 20:18; 26:2), he argues "the Son of Man" is used in v. 28 rather than "I" in order to remind the audience of these four earlier statements. Warren Carter, "Jesus' 'I Have Come' Statements in Matthew's Gospel," *CBQ* 60, no. 1 (1998): 60. The article offers an insightful proposal for the use of the phrase. Yet, Jesus could have reminded his audience of the "Son of Man" statements without specifically using illeism (i.e., "I, the Son of Man"). Also, Carter addresses the third-

illeism serves to affirm the unique identity of Jesus, aspects of his identity are also

reflected by the context of the illeism which emphasizes his mission.[58]

In John 9:35 Jesus addresses the man recently healed of his blindness asking,

"Do you believe in *the Son of Man*?" The man responds, "And who is he sir that I may

believe in him?" (v. 36).[59] In his reply Jesus uncharacteristically clarifies his third-person

self-reference. "You have seen *him* and the one speaking to you is *he*" (v. 37). The

illeism, as consistently noted, affirms the status and authority of the speaker. Yet, the

illeism conveys ambiguity, allowing a context for Jesus to lead the individual to a greater

level of understanding. Müller rightly compares the scene to Jesus's encounter with the

Samaritan woman in John 4:26. Though Müller does not note the use of the third person

in John 4, Jesus refers to himself illeistically as "the gift of God" (4:10). He states to her,

"If you knew *the gift of God* (τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ θεοῦ) . . . you would have asked *him* and *he*

would have given you living water" (σὺ ἂν ᾔτησας αὐτὸν καὶ ἔδωκεν ἄν σοι ὕδωρ ζῶν).

His revelation to her ends with a clarifying statement concerning the identity of the

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person self-reference in the context of v. 28 only. His argument for this particular use of the third person instead of the first person pronoun "I" implies that each third-person self-reference must be explained on a case-by-case basis. While each third-person self-reference of Jesus may reflect distinct implications within its specific context, the present study suggests a possible over arching theme associated with the choice of illeism.

[58]This context is captured well by Davies and Allison who note that the reader is reminded of Matt 19:28. Yet, they add that, where 19:28 highlights the Son of Man's glory, the present verse highlights his ministry which leads to death. They write, "As in vv. 20-3, visions of grandeur (cf. Dan 7. 13-14) give way to forecasts of suffering and death (cf. Isaiah 53; Dan 7. 21-5), for the king cannot rest on his throne until he has, through self-sacrifice, rescued his people." Davies and Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 3:100

[59]The exact nature of the man's confusion is debated. Barrett notes two options. Either the man does not understand what the phrase itself means or he is unclear as to what person is the "Son of Man." C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John* (London: S.P.C.K, 1967), 364. Ridderbos argues the man did not understand what Jesus meant by "Son of Man." Ridderbos, *The Gospel According to John*, 348. Reynolds, representative of the latter option, notes it is more likely the man knows the phrase "Son of Man" and is asking who this person is. Benjamin E. Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man in the Gospel of John*, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 178. Leivestad argues that the term would have been "without meaning for those who are outside the Christian faith." Ragnar Leivestad, "Exit the Apocalyptic Son of Man," *NTS* 18, no. 3 (1972): 253. An exploration of the options quickly takes the study beyond its intended boundaries and into the complex area of the Son of Man debate. Yet, it is sufficient to note that it is the third-person self-reference which prompts the question which leads to further clarification.

Messiah. "I who speak to you am *he*" (Ἐγώ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι). In a similar manner Jesus's illeistic question in 9:35 provides a pedagogical function. Müller notes, "The whole scene demands that Jesus should not reveal himself until after the confession of the faith which is now being sought."[60]

Jesus also speaks illeistically in the context of his earthly ministry to those who oppose him. In Luke 5:24 (par. Matt 9:6; Mark 2:10) Jesus heals a paralytic before the Pharisees and teachers of the law. He tells them he performs this miracle "that you may know that *the Son of Man* has authority on earth to forgive sins." He then shifts to the first person in his address to the paralytic ("I say to you rise"). The third-person self-reference functions to affirm the status and authority of the one speaking. Yet, in light of the immediate audience, the choice of the third-person self-reference raises the question of whether Jesus intends a degree of ambiguity concerning his identity. While illeism can be used to clarify identity, such as a father speaking to a child (i.e., "Daddy will be right back"), the awkwardness of referring to oneself in the third person can also reflect ambiguity. Does Jesus's illeism contribute to the larger intent to avoid provocation of authorities or to avoid being associated with the current day messianic expectations?[61] Concerning the historical reality of the period Bird succinctly writes,

> The political reality of Palestine, with diverse messianic expectations, many of them militaristic, would have made it necessary for Jesus to keep the messianic question under wraps. A transparent and clear messianic claim by Jesus would have triggered revolutionary fervor and a severe response from either Jewish or Roman authorities, who saw it in their interests to put down prophetic and messianic

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[60]Mogens Müller, "'Have You Faith in the Son of Man?' (John 9:35)," *NTS* 37, no. 2 (1991): 292.

[61]An exploration of the religious, social, and political environment of first-century Palestine is beyond the scope of this study. Yet, as a matter of thoroughness, this potential motivation for Jesus's use of illeism is noted and briefly addressed. The complexity and diversity of messianic expectations is appreciated. Dunn succinctly captures the challenges in addressing Second Temple messianic expectations noting that "the confidence of an older generation which assumed a single, coherent, widespread Jewish hope for the coming of 'the Messiah' has long since been abandoned." James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2003), 618.

movements long before they led to uprisings.[62]

Yet, if Jesus speaks illeistically at times in order to avoid overt messianic statements that could be misunderstood or be seen as provocative, only a limited number of occurrences support this potential understanding. Jesus is recorded as using illeism 113x, yet he speaks illeistically to the scribes and/or Pharisees only 10x (or 9 percent).[63] When parallel passages are considered, this number is only 6x. He is noted as speaking illeistically to the Jews in general in John only 7x (6 percent) and to the undefined crowds 9x (8 percent).[64] As noted, almost 50 percent of Jesus's use of illesim occurs while

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[62]Michael F. Bird, *Are You the One Who Is to Come? The Historical Jesus and the Messianic Question* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 68-69. Bird adds that "if Jesus wished to avoid the militaristic associations of "Messiah" or to refrain from exciting crowds with nationalistic zeal, then his intention to keep a messianic theme either undisclosed or at least ambiguous is perfectly understandable" (69). Stein also notes Jesus's concern to avoid the popular messianic view and also refers to the "tinderbox environment of first-century Palestine." Robert H. Stein, *The Method and Message of Jesus' Teachings* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978), 146. He writes, "Rome had little interest in distinctions between messianic concepts. Anyone who claimed to be a/the messiah would have been a challenge to Rome" (ibid.). According to Schreiber, this militaristic aspect associated with messianic expectations was a defining characteristic. Schreiber writes, "A decisive characteristic of the Davidic anointed end-time ruler is his military role in bringing in the salvation reign borne by God, in which the conception of the kingdom of God over Israel (and the nations) finds its historical realization" ("Ausschlaggebendes Charakteristikum des davidischen gesalbten Endzeit-herrschers ist seine militärische Funktion zur Aufrichtung der von Gott getragenen Heilsherrschaft, worin der Gedanke der Königsherrschaft Gottes über israel [und die Völker] eine realgeschichtliche Verwirklichung findet"). Stefan Schreiber, *Gesalbter und König: Titel und Konzeptionen der königlichen Gesalbtenerwartung in frühjüdischen und urchristlichen Schriften* (New York: De Gruyter, 2000), 542. If the illeism is reflecting an element of intended ambiguity it would then be contributing to Jesus's intention to keep a "messianic theme" ambiguous. An aspect of this is seen in his call to secrecy such as at Peter's proclamation of Jesus as the Messiah. Stuhlmacher writes that the reason for the secrecy is "probably that the public proclamation 'Jesus is Messsiah!' would threaten his journey and mission, which the people would align too unilaterally with their very vivid expectation of the Messiah from the lineage of David who would free Israel from Roman domination, purify Jerusalem of the godless heathens, and usher in the era of justice. Jesus does not want to be classified in this pattern" (Der Grund liegt vermutlich darin, daß die öffentliche Proklamation "Jesus ist der Messias!" Jesu Weg und Auftrag zu einseitig auf die damals im Volk sehr lebendige Erwartung festzulegen drohte, der Messias aus Davids Geschlecht werde Israel von der römischen Fremdherrschaft befreien, Jerusalem von den gottlosen Heiden reinigen und die Zeit der Gerechtigkeit heraufführen (vgl. Psal Sal 17, 21-46). In dieses Schema wollte Jesus sich nicht einordnen lassen.) Peter Stuhlmacher, *Jesus von Nazareth, Christus des Glaubens* (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1988), 29. Witherington, writing in more general terms, notes that "there was a variety of misconceptions about God's *mashiach*, often including the idea of messiah as some sort of political liberator. Jesus did not wish to fit into these preconceptions of what the messiah must be like." Witherington, *The Christology of Jesus*, 266.

[63]Matt 8:20; 9:6 (par. Mark 2:10; Luke 5:24); Matt 12:8 (par. Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5); Matt 12:32, 40; John 8:28.

[64]Illeism is used while speaking to the Jews in general in John 5:25, 26, 27, 37-38; 6:46, 53. Also Jews who had believed are noted as his audience in John 8:36 as well as the Jewish council in Luke

speaking to the disciples (55x). Also, Jesus's use of illeism is often in the context of first person pronouns. In John 5:19-30 and 6:22-59 Jesus consistently uses illeism. Yet, in these contexts Jesus also clarifies his self-references with first person pronouns.[65] For example, in John 6:33 Jesus speaks illeistically ("For the bread of God is *he who comes down from heaven*"), but then follows the third-person reference with various first person pronouns (i.e., "I am the bread of life" [6:48]; "I am the living bread that comes down from heaven" [6:51]).

Clearly there is an enigmatic aspect to the use of illeism by Jesus based simply on the dissonance created by the distance between the speaker and his self-reference.[66] In a limited number of occurrences Jesus may be intentionally using this aspect of illeism to avoid provocation of authorities who would react to a direct messianic statement. In Matthew 9:6 (par. Mark 2:10; Luke 5:24), Jesus speaks to the Pharisees and teachers of the law and refers to himself only in the third person ("that you may know that *the Son of Man* has authority on earth to forgive sins"). Matthew 12:8 (par. Mar 2:28; Luke 6:5) may also reflect an occurrence of intended ambiguity. Jesus, speaking to the religious authorities states, "For *the Son of Man* is Lord of the Sabbath." No effort for clarification is given. Likewise the illeism may contribute to some degree to an intention on Jesus's part to avoid having the gathered crowds misunderstand his messianic status. Yet, in general, based on an analysis of all occurrences, the enigmatic nature associated with

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22:69; Matt 26:64; Mark 14:62. Undefined crowds are noted as the audience in Matt 11:19; Luke 7:34; 11:30; 12:8, 10; John 6:27, 29, 33, 40.

[65]See John 5:19, 26, 37-38; 6:29, 33, 40, 46.

[66]This sense is reflected in John 12:34. The crowd responds to Jesus's reference to his death stating, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?"As Ridderbos notes, the crowd speaks of the Messiah "because they assume (rightly) that in speaking of 'the Son of man' Jesus is referring to the Messiah that they expect." Ridderbos, *The Gospel According to John*, 441. He adds that clearly the crowd did not understand this figure as an eschatological bearer of salvation, "at least they did not know the object of their messianic expectations under this name" (ibid.). Ridderbos adds that, though the Jews' messianic understanding was tied significantly to the expectation of a future Davidic king, a link between the Son of Man figure and the expected Messiah is uncertain (441n202).

illeism does not seem to be the fundamental reason Jesus employs it. As will be argued in the next section, Jesus primarily uses this manner of speech to emphasize his unique identity, and, at times, within this overarching intent, to instruct others concerning his identity.

Passion and resurrection. Three brief examples highlight illeism in the context of Jesus's passion and resurrection. In Matthew 20:18 (par. Luke 18:31-33; Mark 10:33) Jesus announces to his disciples his impending death. "See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death." The emphasis reflected by the illeism ultimately functions as an affirmation of Jesus's identity, yet, as previously observed, also serves to draw the disciples to a greater understanding of his ministry. Just as Jesus's question to Judas (Luke 22:48) emphasizes that it is the Messiah he is betraying, so also here Jesus's use of illeism emphasizes it is the Messiah who will be delivered and put to death. In Matthew 12:40 (par. Luke 11:30) Jesus speaks illeistically to scribes and Pharisees who are seeking a sign from him. "For just as Jonah was in the belly of a great fish three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." This occurrence may reflect an element of intended ambiguity. Yet, as noted, based on an analysis of all occurrences and their context, this potential rhetorical effect is rarely present. The evidence suggests that the distancing created by the use of illeism primarily serves to affirm the status and authority of the speaker. An appreciation of this rhetorical implication enriches the reader's understanding of this aspect of Jesus's mission. The choice of illeism itself functions to affirm the unique status of the one who will suffer and die. Finally, In John 8:28, in the context of Jesus's consistent use of first person pronouns, Jesus speaks illeistically of himself concerning his death. He states to the Pharisees, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he (ἐγώ εἰμι)." Here Jesus speaks illeistically, yet he clarifies the reference with the first

person pronoun.

Future return and judgment. In Mark 8:38 (par. Luke 11:26) Jesus speaks of his future return using the common third-person self-reference "Son of Man." "For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, *the Son of Man* will also be ashamed of him when *he* comes in the glory of *his* Father with the holy angels."[67] The illeism is, as is often the case, contrasting with the first person singular pronouns in close proximity ("of me;" "my words"). In Luke 22:68 (par. Matt 26:64; Mark 14:62) Jesus speaks illeistically before the Jewish council. Those assembled ask him, "Tell us if you are the Christ" (v. 66). Jesus responds initially in the first person ("If I tell you [ἐὰν ὑμῖν εἴπω] you will not believe." In verse 69 he shifts to the third-person self-reference as he speaks of his future glory. "But from now on *the Son of Man* will be seated at the right hand of the power of God."

Bovon captures an important aspect of the narrative when he highlights the disparity of knowledge between the council and the reader. He notes that the assembly is surprised by Jesus's reference because nothing in the sentence indicates that he is in fact the Son of Man. Yet, the reader "has long known that Jesus, modest and glorious, is the Son of Man announced by the prophet Daniel."[68] Bovon adds that "Jesus speaks to those who listen in faith, that the Son of Man, who shares in the human condition (7:34), enjoys an authority of divine origin (5:24), and has accepted the path that leads to death, will

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[67]Though the phenomenon of third-person self-reference often goes unnoticed, Stein insightfully refers the reader to 2 Cor 12:2-5 for the similar phenomenon of someone using the third person to describe themselves. Robert H. Stein, *Mark*, BECNT, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 409. Yet, the evidence presented in the study highlights that the use of illeism reflects a variety of rhetorical effects. As noted earlier, Paul's example, while illeistic, reflects distinct rhetorical implications from Jesus's use of illeism.

[68]"La lecteur est averti, mais le Sanhédrin écoute, surpris . . . . Surpris, ensuite, parce que rien dans la phrase n'indique que Jésus soit ce Fils de l'homme. Mais ce sont les lecteurs qui comptent: ils savent depuis longtemps que Jésus–modeste et glorieux–est le Fils de l'homme annoncé par le prophète Daniel." François Bovon, *L'évangile Selon Saint Luc*, CNT (Geneva: Labor et Fides 2009), IIId:296.

soon be exalted."[69] While the illeism conveys a degree of ambiguity to the immediate audience, the context does not support seeing this ambiguity as the intended purpose of its use. Jesus is on trial; his appointed time of death has arrived. Nothing is gained by intentional ambiguity. The third-person self-reference does not veil the identity of the speaker; it highlights it, emphasizing the unique identity and associated authority of the one who stands before them.[70]

Continuing the context of Jesus's future exalted position is Jesus's illeistic statement in Matthew 19:28. Speaking to his disciples he states, "Truly, I say to you, that you who have followed me, in the new world, when *the Son of Man* will sit on *his* glorious throne, you also will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." To say "When *I* will sit on *my* glorious throne" would convey an unambiguous image of Jesus's future role. Yet, the illeistic self-presentation heightens the imagery of the statement, further affirming the status and authority of the referent.

In Matthew 25:31-34 Jesus refers to himself explicitly, and illeistically, as "the King." Speaking to his disciples concerning the end times[71] he states, "When *the Son of Man* comes in *his* glory and all the angels with *him*, then *he* will sit on *his* glorious throne." Jesus states that the Son of Man will separate them as a shepherd, separating the

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[69]"Jésus . . . annonce à qui veut l'entendre dans la foi, que le Fils de l'homme, lequel a partagé la condition humaine (7, 34), joui d'une autorité d'origine divine (5, 24), et accepté de suivre le chemin qui mène à la mort . . . va être exalté incessamment." Ibid., IIId:296.

[70]In a similar manner, a king may say "The king will be victorious in battle." The illeism is not intended to instruct or to create ambiguity, but offers a grammatical means to more aptly capture the absolute authority and superior status of the speaker.

[71]Gray, who offers a thorough history of interpretation concerning Matt 25:31-46 notes, that, of the 602 twentieth-century authors surveyed, 562 understand the subject of the passage as the final judgment. Sherman W. Gray, *The Least of My Brothers: Matthew 25:31-46: A History of Interpretation* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 257. As Davies and Allison note, the passage is not a parable, but rather paints a picture of the Last Judgment. W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), 3:418. So also Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, PNTC, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1992), 633; Joachim Gnilka, *Das Matthäusevangelium*, HTKAT (Freiburg: Herder, 1986), 2:367.

goats on the left and the sheep to his right. In verse 34 Jesus replaces the self-reference "Son of Man" with "the King." "Then *the King* will say to those on *his* right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'"[72] Carson sees the shift from "Son of Man" to "King" as a natural one, noting Daniel 7 as background. He writes that in Daniel 7:13-14 the Son of Man "approaches the Ancient of Days to receive 'a kingdom,' and here that kingdom is consummated."[73] Carson makes an insightful connection between the likely background to the Son of Man phrase and the kingship of Jesus. Yet, the multiple self-references used by Jesus as well as the prominent theme of kingship beyond its association with this phrase suggests the use of the title "king" is not motivated only by the Daniel 7 context.[74] Luz notes the designation is unusual for the coming Son of Man and notes the ambiguity concerning how the readers understand this kingdom. He notes the designation raises the question whether the readers think of the kingdom of the Son of Man noted in 16:28 and 20:21 or, "because of the throne of glory on which Jesus sits, it is more likely that they associate him with God the 'king,' who in the biblical tradition sits on this throne."[75]

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[72]France notes that that the Son of Man being described as "the King" reflects "the culmination of the process throughout this gospel whereby the kingdom of God/heaven becomes embodied in the kingship of the Son of Man (13:41; 16:28; 19:28; cf. 20:21)." France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 960. As Turner notes, Matthew alludes to Jesus as King elsewhere (2:2; 21:5; 27:11, 29, 37, 42). Turner, *Matthew*, 609. Morris captures well the contrast between the present circumstances and Jesus's future glory. He writes, "At the time he was speaking [Jesus] might well be 'despised and rejected of men,' but in due course he will be sovereign over all." Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 636. Davies and Allison rightly highlight that the reference to the King reflects back to Matt 2:2 and 21:5 and "reinforces the irony which will come to expression in 27:11, 29, 37 and 42 (where Jesus's kingship is mocked or questioned)." Davies and Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 3:424-25.

[73]D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 9 of *EBC,* rev. ed., ed. Tremper Longman and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 585.

[74]To be clear, the replacement of "Son of Man" with the title "the King" strongly reflects a connection with the Daniel 7 passage which reflects the Son of Man phrase and kingship. Yet, Jesus's use of the title "the King" may be drawing on the broader context of imagery associated with the royal Messiah.

[75]Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, trans. James E. Crouch, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 277.

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Keener notes the high Christology and adds that the parable probably assumes the deity of Jesus.[76] He writes that "the central biblical and Jewish role of eschatological judge that Jesus here assumes normally belongs to God himself."[77] While the use of illeism by Jesus functions rhetorically in a similar manner to that found among kings, pagan gods, and Yahweh himself, here Jesus specifically, and illeistically refers to himself as king. Though certainty is not possible, the context of the parable suggests both the kingship and deity of Jesus is assumed.

Diversity of Scholarship

This section is intended to offer a brief overview of the diversity of scholarship concerning the representative texts. As with the OT texts which reflect illeism, the illeism of Jesus is seldom directly addressed.[78] Scholarship that does address the illeism within the representative texts reflects various views. Concerning Mark 9:41 Marcus notes it is likely that the phrase ὅτι Χριστοῦ ἐστε "is a gloss by Mark or a later scribe to explain the ambiguous phrase 'in the name'."[79] Concerning the same verse Evans notes that the final statement is "probably a later Christian saying, perhaps originally cast in the form of a prophecy."[80] He adds that if the phrase ἐν ὀνόματι ὅτι Χριστοῦ ἐστε is removed as a later

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[76]Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Pub., 1999), 602.

[77]Ibid. So also Hagner who notes that the judgment scene reflects Jesus as the Son of Man acting as judge, "a role restricted to Yahweh in the OT." Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 742. Carson notes the allusions to Zech 14:5 and similarly adds that "the role of eschatological Judge is . . . transferred without hesitation from Yahweh to Jesus." Carson, *Matthew*, 585.

[78]As noted in the introduction, much of the scholarship addressing the issue is found within the extensive research on the "Son of Man."

[79]Joel Marcus, *Mark 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB, vol. 27 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 688.

[80]Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27-16:20*, WBC, vol. 34B (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001), 66.

addition or if the text is emended, then objection to its authenticity is addressed.[81]

Michaels views John 6:46 as a possible aside by the author to the reader.[82] Yet, Michael's does ultimately conclude that the writer seeks to "attribute these words to Jesus."[83] Barrett views Jesus's illeism in John 17:3 as a parenthetical comment by the writer. He notes that "John felt the necessity of a definition of eternal life, and being unable to use a footnote incorporated it into the prayer."[84] Concerning the same verse, Brown views the use of the third person as reflecting an insertion. He notes that "although John has Jesus speak of himself in the third person, for example, as 'the Son,' it is anomalous that Jesus should call himself 'Jesus Christ.'"[85]

The various contexts and nuances of each passage must be appreciated. Yet, in broad terms, the various positions highlight a diversity of responses to the phenomenon of illeism in the direct speech of Jesus. Not surprisingly, the apparent awkwardness of the third-person self-reference often leads to skepticism concerning the authenticity of the saying or to a position which views the reference as being spoken by the narrator himself. Also, the scholarship noted in the analysis reflects primarily commentators addressing illeism of Jesus within specific verses. As noted in the introduction, no scholarship to my

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[81]Ibid. Taylor writes that "the reading ἐν ὀνόματι ὅτι Χριστοῦ ἐστε' is remarkable." Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1966), 408. He offers a helpful overview of the various positions of scholars, but emphasizes personal correspondence with T. W. Manson. Manson argues the correction should clearly be ἐν ὀνόματι ὅτι ἐμοί ἐστε'.

[82]J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, NICNT, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2010), 88.

[83]Ibid.

[84]Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 419.

[85]Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, 741. He adds that "this verse is clearly an insertion into the text of Jesus' prayer, an insertion probably reflecting a confessional or liturgical formula of the Johannine church" (ibid.). So also Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 3:172. Moloney writes that "the use of 'Jesus Christ' on the lips of Jesus is strange" and notes the simple question is "why was it added." Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, Sacra Pagina, vol. 4 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), 464. For balanced scholarship against this view see D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1991), 556; Ridderbos, *The Gospel According to John*, 549.

knowledge offers an analysis addressing the broad question of why Jesus is consistently presented as referring to himself in the third person. In the following section, the study offers an assessment of the rhetorical function of the illeism of Jesus in order to address this broad question. While appreciating individual contexts and intent of the distinct self-references ("Son of Man," Son of God," etc.), the evidence suggests an overarching rhetorical function associated with the use of illeism by Jesus.

Rhetorical Function

The analysis of the text reveals the primary rhetorical implication of the dissociative aspect of the third-person self-reference as used by Jesus is affirmation of his unique identity and associated status and authority. This conclusion is based on a survey of the limited modern research on the phenomenon as well as an analysis of the various rhetorical implications associated with illeism throughout the Bible.[86] This rhetorical effect is an overarching aspect of the use of illeism by Jesus and is always present at some level. Yet, the analysis highlights that the illeism may, in specific occurrences, be intended to create ambiguity concerning Jesus's identity. On other occasions his use of illeism may contribute to the instruction of others concerning his identity. Finally, in some instances of Jesus's use of illeism, the affirmation of his unique identity seems to be the primary, if not the sole intent of the use of illeism.

Concerning ambiguity, the analysis does not reveal that Jesus speaks of himself in the third person primarily because of its potential for ambiguity. The enigmatic

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[86]Head highlights this aspect of the use of illeism, noting that the manner of speech is reflective of special status; the third person "implies greater social distance" than the first person singular. Brian F. Head, "Respect Degrees in Pronominal Reference," in *Universals of Human Language: Word Structure*, ed. Joseph H. Greenberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978), 171n15. This use of the "dissociative third person" allows the speaker to create distance between himself and the self-reference, presenting himself from an external perspective. See Laurence R. Horn, "'I Love Me Some Him': The Landscape of Non-Argumentative Datives," in *Emperical Issues in Syntax and Semantics* 7, ed. Olivier Bonami and Patricia Cabredo Hofherr (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 2008), 176. A fuller survey of the modern linguistic work on illeism is briefly surveyed in chap. 1.

nature of illeism may at times contribute to an intent to avoid being understood according to popular messianic expectations and to avoid direct provocation from authorities. Jesus directs his path and timing to the cross and reveals himself according to his own terms. Yet, much of his use of illeism is with his disciples. When using illeism outside of this context, speaking to the crowds in general or specifically to religious authorities, Jesus generally balances the third-person self-references with first person pronouns. While ambiguity is present, this aspect does not seem to be a primary intent.

A more prominent aspect of Jesus's illeism is a subtle pedagogical element that contributes to his instruction of others concerning his identity. Particularly in the company of the disciples, Jesus speaks illeistically when further revealing his identity and mission (i.e., Matt 11:25-26; 23:10; Mark 9:41). As consistently noted, the illeism functions to affirm Jesus's unique status and authority, yet the illeism is used in the context of instructing others concerning his identity. In this sense the rhetorical function of illeism (emphasizing Jesus's unique status) contributes to the instruction of others concerning his identity and mission.

Additionally, the potential ambiguity associated with the use of illeism may at times contribute to this instructional aspect (i.e., John 9:35). The distancing associated with illeism creates confusion for the audience, providing a background for further clarification concerning Jesus's identity. On these occasions Jesus is not revealing himself *in spite* of the ambiguity but *through* it; the illeism creates an environment of confusion that is conducive to learning. As initially noted, the ambiguity can function as a veil to his identity for those who oppose him. Yet, the same rhetorical implication of the illeism can act as a foundation for clarity for those who seek him.[87] For example, in John 9:35 Jesus asks the man now healed of blindness, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

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[87]This suggestion is perhaps too simple. The degree of ambiguity present and the way it ultimately functions depends on many factors.

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Hera notes that John accomplishes two things by having Jesus introduce himself in the third person. First, "he creates the opportunity for Jesus to reveal his identity as the Son of Man; second he prepares the setting for the man to pose the question, 'who is he, Sir, that I may believe in . . . him?'"[88] This rhetorical implication of illeism serves to emphasize the identity of Jesus, drawing the audience to a greater level of understanding.[89]

Finally, the primary rhetorical effect of the intentional choice of illeism by Jesus is an affirmation of his unique status and authority. While this intention is always present, at times Jesus speaks illeistically when affirmation of his identity seems to be the primary or sole rhetorical function of the choice of illeism (i.e., Luke 22:69). This broad category aligns with the rhetorical effect of illeism noted among OT kings, ANE kings and pagan gods, and most predominantly Yahweh himself. The dissociative aspect of the third-person self-reference in each of these noted uses allows emphasis of the speaker's identity and its associated status and authority. Yet, does this similar use of illeism among OT kings, ANE kings, ANE gods, and Yahweh support the thesis that Jesus is drawing on both royal and divine themes? An analysis of the evidence suggests that Jesus, as presented by the evangelists, may be intentionally drawing on these royal and divine connotations as yet another rhetorical opportunity associated with the third-person self-reference. The remainder of this section offers a brief analysis and summary of the

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[88]Marianus Pale Hera, *Christology and Discipleship in John 17*, WUNT II, vol. 342 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 77. Other instances could be noted where the illeism of Jesus functions to some degree as a means of revelation, creating confusion and raising questions in the minds of his hearers. There is a complexity of course concerning the understanding of the varied audiences. The disciples themselves reflect a progressive understanding of the identity of Jesus.

[89]Witherington does not address the use of illeism as a means of instruction, but he does highlight the instructional aspect of the indirect nature of Jesus's self-presentation. He writes, "Jesus's way of expressing his transcendent self-understanding was by using metaphorical language, symbolic gestures, and actions that, in the light of the Old Testament, had messianic overtones. The indirectness was necessary not only because Jesus was suggesting something that went beyond ordinary and popular understandings of what *mashiach* would be like but also because *Jesus sought to provoke a mental effort on the part of his listeners to grasp the truth for themselves.*" Witherington, *The Christology of Jesus*, 266. (Emphasis mine).

evidence.

**Evidence for an Associated Divine
and Royal Theme**

Jesus is the only person in the NT to use illeism in direct speech. An evaluation of the various uses of illeism in the OT (to show deference, within an oath, within a summons to listen, for characterization of the speaker, within a trial setting/ historical context, within the speech of OT kings, and within the speech of Yahweh) reveals Jesus's use aligns only with the illeism noted in the speech of kings and in the speech of Yahweh.[90] Finally, as noted in chapter 4, this similar use of illeism is found in the speech of ANE kings and pagan gods.

Concerning a "royal" use of illeism, this study has presented evidence that reflects a "royal" emphasis associated with illeism among OT kings and ANE kings. In each occurrence the illeism functions to emphasize the identity and associated status and authority of the speaker. By the third-person self-reference the speaker emphasizes his status as king and the concomitant authority associated with kingship. The study has also shown prominent use of illeism in the speech of pagan gods (primarily preeminent gods) of the ancient Near East. The evidence highlights a clear pattern of usage that functions to emphasize the identity of the speaker, and more specifically the divine status of the speaker.[91]

As noted in chapter 3, Yahweh's use of illeism reflects an emphasis of his identity, which include the significant aspects of his kingship and his divine status. He is king in relation to Israel and to all nations.[92] Additionally, his third-person self-references

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[90]See appendix 4 for a list of illeism in the OT and NT by person.

[91]As noted in chap. 4, the illeism is often found in the context of an emphasis of the god's unique or superior authority in relation to other gods or to man.

[92]Concerning Yahweh as king in relation to Israel Dunn writes, "Noticeable is the strength of the conviction regarding Yahweh as king. Whatever happened on earth, Israel comforted itself with the assurance that God's kingship, his kingly rule, is still in effect." Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 392.

serve to affirm his unique, divine status as the true God of Israel and all creation. While

there are of course other aspects of God's identity, only these two aspects are associated

with a similar use of illeism in the OT and ANE texts.

As noted, Jesus's illeism aligns with OT kings and ANE kings with respect to

the rhetorical function of the emphasis of identity. Yet, while Jesus's manner of illeism

aligns with this similar use of illeism, Jesus also affirms his kingship explicitly in the NT

(i.e, Matt 16:28; Luke 22:30; John 18:36).[93] (In Matt 25:31-34 he even affirms his

kingship illeistically.) Furthermore, the broader witness of Scripture affirms this royal

aspect of his identity. The OT witness looks to a future king[94] and the NT affirms Jesus as

the fulfillment of these OT promises.[95] Luz captures well this royal aspect of Jesus's

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Concerning Yahweh's kingship in relation to other nations Seybold notes how Yahweh, in the book of Isaiah, "stands over against the nations and their gods explicitly as *melek* of Israel, proving himself in the divine trial as the superior, singular, and unique God." K. Seybold, *TDOT*, 8:369-70, s.v. "מֶלֶךְ".

[93]The texts noted are not meant to be exhaustive, though it should be noted that Jesus's affirmation of his kingship is both explicit and implicit. For example, he compares himself to both king Solomon and king David (Luke 11:31 [par. Matt 12:2]; Mark 2:23-28; Mark 12:35-37). Bird notes this comparison and adds that "this may tell us more of Jesus's perception of his own identity and authority in relation to the kingdom. Bird, *Are You the One Who Is to Come?*, 107. In addition to explicit and implicit statements, Jesus arguably presents himself as king through his actions as well. Dunn notes the episode of the feeding of the five thousand (Mark 6:30ff. par.) as evoking "a potent mix of messianic ideas—Moses and manna, the shepherd king feeding his flock (Ezek 34:23). James D. G. Dunn, "Messianic Ideas and Their Influence on the Jesus of History," in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 374.

[94]I.e., 2 Sam 7; Amos 9:11; Isa 9:6-7; 7:13-25; 16:5; 55:3; 11:1-9; Jer 23:5; 30:9; 33:14-26; Ezek 34:20-24; 37:22, 24-25; Hos 3:5; Zech 3:8; 6:12-13; 9:9; 12:7-8. Bird notes "a powerful image of restoration was for a Davidic shepherd king to come and rescue Israel from military oppression, exile, and divine judgment (Num. 27:17; Ezek. 34:8, 12; Zech. 10:2; Bar. 4:26; Pss. Sol. 17.40; Tg. Isa. 6:13; 8:18; 35:6; Tg. Hos. 14:8; Tg. Mic. 5:1-3)." Bird, *Are You the One Who Is to Come?*, 133.

[95]I.e., Luke 1:31-33; 23:42; Matt 1:1-17; 22:45; Acts 2:30; Rom 1:3; 1 Cor 15:25; 1 Tim 6:15; Rev 17:14; 19:16. A thorough exploration of this topic goes beyond the needs of the study. As with the OT references, the references are not meant to be exhaustive but to underscore Scripture's affirmation of the kingship of Christ. He identifies himself as king in his ministry, and will come again as king at the final judgment (Rev 19:16). He was and always will be king. Frame helpfully captures this aspect of his kingship. He writes, "Jesus's title 'King' "refers both to who he is ontologically, the Ruler of all things, and to what he becomes historically, as he accomplishes his redemptive work. . . . In the gospel narrative, Jesus becomes (historically) what he is (ontologically). In the former sense, he becomes King; in the latter sense he is always King." Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 895. He adds elsewhere, "It is evident that Jesus himself is the son of David greater than David himself. In him, God himself comes to rule his people" (92). Christ's office of kingship has been explored in depth elsewhere. I.e., see Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*,

identity reflected in Matthew's Gospel with a comment on the crucifixion in Matthew 27:36-37. He writes,

> Above all, in spite of the entire horrible masquerade, [the readers] know about the true kingship of him whom God designated as the messianic king for Israel, to whom the Gentile magi paid homage (2:1-12), who entered Jerusalem 'as a humble king' . . . according to the words of Zechariah (21:5), and who one day will judge all nations as king (25:34, 40).[96]

The suggestion of a royal emphasis associated with Jesus's use of illeism is then based on the following complementary pieces of evidence: Jesus's prominent use aligns with similar uses of illeism by both OT kings and kings from the surrounding cultures of the ANE; OT prophecies of a future Davidic king; the witness of NT authors affirming Jesus as the fulfillment of these OT hopes; and Jesus's own affirmation of his kingship. If this royal emphasis is present as the evidence suggests, it is difficult to say with specificity how it is to be understood. This royal aspect naturally resonates with the theme of OT hopes for a coming messianic king (i.e., Jer 23:5; 30:9; Ezek 37:22, 24; Zech 9:9, etc.).[97] Yet, this habitual manner of speaking by Jesus should be heard in the context of the canonical presentation of his kingship in all of its richness and complexity. As noted, the kingship of Yahweh is affirmed throughout Scripture. Ultimately, Jesus's kingship is a reflection, an embodiedment, of Yahweh's reign.

Concerning a "divine" theme associated with Jesus's use of illeism, similar logic can reasonably be suggested. Jesus's use of illeism aligns with the use found among ANE gods and, more specifically, that of Yahweh. This evidence is suggestive in itself.

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ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend, vol. 3, *Sin and Salvation in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 479-82; Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1996), 409-11.

[96]Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 534.

[97]To suggest a "royal emphasis" does not intend to oversimplify the complexity of Jewish eschatology in general which, as Dahl notes, "did not know just one salvation figure; in addition to the royal Messiah there was the eschatological high priest, the prophet like Moses, Elijah redivivus, the warrior from Ephraim; and there were still other figures." Nils A. Dahl, *Jesus the Christ: The Historical Origins of Christological Doctrine*, ed. Donald Juel (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 38-39.

Yet, as with the theme of kingship, Jesus's deity is affirmed by the NT witness[98] and, as cogently argued by Bowman and Komeszewski, by Jesus himself.[99] The authors highlight that Jesus shares the honors due to God, the attributes of God, the names of God, the deeds that God does, and shares the seat of God's throne.[100] While a thorough exploration of this area goes beyond the scope of the current study, the scholarship is noted as a cogent argument concerning Jesus's presentation of himself "as God." If Jesus is drawing on a "divine" aspect associated with illeism, this distinctive self-presentation would not be an isolated anomaly, but would be yet another contribution to a broader revelation of his deity.

In conclusion, the analysis of the evidence of all occurrences of noted illeism found among OT kings, ANE kings, ANE gods, Yahweh, and Jesus reveals a common rhetorical theme of an emphasis of the identity of the speaker and specifically the speaker's divine and/or royal status.[101] This evidence suggests that Jesus, who presents himself elsewhere as king and God, may be drawing on royal and divine uses of illeism to further emphasize his unique status.

Finally, the illeism of Jesus and Yahweh stands apart from the examples found among OT kings, ANE kings and pagan gods with respect to the prominence of use (Jesus uses illeism 113x and Yahweh over 500x), and manner of use, with both using

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[98]I.e., John 1:1, 14; Heb 1:1-4; 2 Pet 1:1; Titus 2:13. Additionally, the NT reflects prayer to Jesus (Acts 7) and worship of Jesus (Rev 5). Frame notes that "the biblical writers take Jesus' deity for granted: that is, when discussing other subjects they use language that presumes or presupposes Jesus' deity, not apologizing, not feeling as though this language needed to be defended. The evidence, therefore, is that among the Christians of the NT period, the deity of Christ was entirely uncontroversial." Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 881.

[99]See Robert M. Bowman and J. Ed Komoszewski, *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2007).

[100]Ibid., 33.

[101]The emphasis of identity among kings highlights the royal status and accompanying authority; the emphasis associated with pagan gods naturally and often contextually emphasizes the divine status and associated authority; the illeism of Yahweh reflects an emphasis of both the divine and royal aspects of his identity.

multiple self-references (Jesus uses 11 distinct self-references and Yahweh 15). This odd manner of self-presentation by Jesus, which reflects Yahweh's own distinct and habitual manner of speaking, may be yet another way Jesus presents himself as God.

Conclusion

Paul refers to himself in the third person on two occasions in his letters. In 1 Corinthians 3 Paul speaks illeistically to present himself and Apollos as examples of church leaders. Also, the distancing created allows Paul to ultimately focus his readers upon God himself. In 2 Corinthians 12:2-5 Paul uses illeism to refer to his being caught up to the third heaven. Though interpretation of the passage is debated, Paul's use of illeism seems to stem primarily from a sense of modesty, the third-person reference allowing him to avoid boasting. Ultimately, the rhetorical effect of both occurrences of illeism are shown to be distinctive from the use of illeism by Jesus.[102]

In terms of prominence, Jesus's use of illeism (113 occurrences in the Gospels) is second only to that of Yahweh's use in the OT (over 500 occurrences). Also, though the Son of Man phrase is by far the most common, Jesus's illeism is reflected in 11 distinct self-references. The analysis of the occurrences reveal that Jesus's use of illeism is not determined by audience. He speaks to both followers and opposition illeistically, as well as groups and individuals. Finally, the analysis of the occurrences show context does not govern Jesus's use of the third-person self-reference.

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[102]Contra Theissen and Merz who compare Jesus's use of "the Son of Man' with Paul's illeism in 2 Cor 12. They note that, like Paul, Jesus is referring to himself. Yet, "Paul speaks of another 'man' (in the third person) who for a moment belonged to the heavenly world . . . . What Paul writes about a past ecstatic experience, Jesus says about a future ecstatic experience: with the dawn of the kingdom of God he expected to assume the role that he attributed to the Son of Man." Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide*, trans. John Bowden (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 552. While the view that Paul's reference is to his "other self" who ascended is held by some scholars, Theissen and Merz' view is problematic in that Jesus refers to himself in the third person on many occasions with 10 distinct self-references other than "the Son of Man" phrase. It is of course possible that Jesus's prominent illeistic use of "the Son of Man" phrase is distinct from his other third-person self-references. Yet, it seems more reasonable to seek a common reason behind the phenomenon in general.

An analysis of representative texts reflects that the primary rhetorical function of the use of illeism by Jesus is emphasis of his identity and associated status and authority. Yet, within this context, subtle rhetorical implications are noted. First, the illeism creates ambiguity concerning his identity. The disciples understand Jesus is referring to himself, though the various references are still likely enigmatic. Yet, when speaking to the crowds or to religious authorities specifically, the study notes that in limited contexts Jesus may be using the illeism for intentional ambiguity. In this sense he is able to affirm his identity and yet do so with measured mystery. The ambiguity may potentially contribute to his intention to avoid being viewed in the context of popular messianic expectations. Yet, if this aspect is present, it does not seem to be of primary importance. The majority of Jesus's use of illeism is directed to his disciples or to individuals rather than religious leaders or the general crowds. Also, many of Jesus's illeistic statements are clarified or at least balanced by his use of the first person pronoun.

Second, Jesus's use of illeism at times reflects a pedagogical aspect. The distance created by the illeism between himself and the self-reference provides a rhetorical emphasis of his status and authority. Yet, this rhetorical emphasis is used in the context of instruction and contributes to his intention to guide others to a higher level of understanding of his identity and mission. Also, at times the noted ambiguity associated with Jesus's use of the dissociative third person provides an opportunity for instruction of others concerning his identity. In these instances (i.e., Nicodemus, the woman at the well, the man cast out of the synagogue), Jesus's reference to himself in the third person contributes an element of ambiguity or even confusion which provides an opportunity for further revelation. Finally, the analysis of the illeistic texts revealed that in some instances Jesus's use of illeism solely functions to affirm his unique status and authority. Though this aspect of his use of illeism is a constant, at times it seems this is the primary, if not the only rhetorical function of the illeism. Neither ambiguity, instruction, or any

other noted implication of illeism seems to be intended.

A similar manner of self-presentation occurs when a king or a divine figure refers to him or herself by name or title. The speaker is presenting himself or herself from the perspective of the audience or as he or she desires to be seen. In this sense, the rhetorical function of Jesus's use of illeism aligns only with that of the use by OT kings, ANE kings, ANE gods, and Yahweh. The evidence presented of the various kings highlights that the illeistic referent, whether by title, name, or both, emphasizes the individual's position as king. For ANE gods the emphasis is of their unique nature as divine beings. Both royal and divine emphasis is reflected in the illeism of Yahweh. While the illeism of Jesus aligns with illeism as used by OT and ANE kings, pagan gods, and Yahweh, Jesus himself, as well as the larger witness of Scripture, affirms his kingship and deity. In terms of prominence, as well as manner (multiple self-references), Jesus's use of illeism aligns only with the use of illeism by Yahweh.

In conclusion, the study has found no evidence that this manner of speaking was a common phenomenon in the daily life of individuals within first-century Palestine or within the cultures and periods reflected in the ANE texts. While the deferential use of illeism was noted as relatively common in the OT and ANE evidence, no other examples of illeism were noted outside of its use within the recorded speech of kings, pagan gods, and Yahweh. While not conclusive, the analysis of the evidence suggests that Jesus, as presented by the evangelists, uses this manner of speaking in part to draw on potential royal and divine connotations associated with it.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

This study began as an evaluation of a possible relationship between the way Jesus and Yahweh refer to themselves in the third person. Because the phenomenon has received little attention in scholarship, the study also began with many questions. Was this a common manner of speaking in antiquity? Who else speaks this way in the Bible? Does it occur in the ANE texts? And the primary question, Why is the third-person reference chosen instead of the expected first person pronoun? Through a comprehensive presentation which highlighted the prominence of illeism in the Bible and its various rhetorical effects, the study has addressed these questions and offered insight into how the illeism of Jesus and Yahweh may be better understood.

In chapter 1 I noted the cogent article by Malone which argues that illeism should be recognized as a valid and relatively common phenomenon in the Bible. Apart from this work, the survey noted limited scholarship on illeism. When illeism is noted, often no reason is offered for the shift in person. Other times various proposals are offered to avoid the apparent awkwardness of the shift, such as viewing it as an interpolation, an aside by the narrator, or, as in the case of the Son of Man debate, the words of the early church. One intended contribution of this study is to offer a comprehensive evaluation that highlights the legitimacy and prominence of illeism in the Bible and offer insight into how it is functioning in the text.

In chapter 2 I surveyed the use of illeism in classical antiquity to address whether this was a common manner of speaking. Though illeism is used by some Greek

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historians to contribute a sense of objectivity to their work, I argued that this literary use of illeism is fundamentally different from that found in the direct speech of Jesus. Additionally, based on a survey of relevant evidence from the period (primarily personal and domestic letters) I noted there was no indication that this manner of speaking was a common pattern in everyday public or private discourse.

A survey of the OT revealed the third-person self-reference is often used to show deference. Also, the study revealed prominent usage of illeism among kings and in the speech of Yahweh (though the disparity between the usage is large [12 kings with over 30 occurrences versus over 500 occurrences of illeism in the speech of Yahweh]). Outside of this usage of illeism, the phenomenon was only noted in 10 other occurrences (less than 1.5 percent of total occurrences in the Bible) reflected in the following contexts: within a specific oath formula; within a summons to be heard; within a trial setting/historical context; and potentially where the speaker offers a characterization of themselves (Naaman's "the leper;" Deborah's "a woman," etc.).

Based on an analysis of the uses of illeism in the Bible, as well as available modern analysis of illeism, I argued that the illeism in the speech of kings serves to highlight their position as king and its associated authority. The distance created between the speaker and the self-reference allows emphasis of the speaker by presenting him from the perspective of the audience. This use of illeism could potentially be understood simply as an expression of the individual's importance, rather than an expression emphasizing kingship specifically. Yet, the research revealed many characters who could naturally be categorized as "important" and yet do not refer to themselves illeistically in their recorded direct speech. Based on the available evidence and the prominent use of illeism among OT kings, I argued that the specific aspect of identity which seems to govern the use of illeism in these instances is that of kingship.

Because of the extensive use of illeism in the speech of Yahweh, and because

no relevant scholarship was noted that addressed all of the various occurrences, I looked for a pattern or patterns reflected by the phenomenon. Though Yahweh often is speaking to Israel when illeism is present, no particular audience, genre, context, or type of sentence (question, command, etc.) dictates the use of illeism. Rather, the analysis revealed the illeism of Yahweh is functioning in a similar manner as that found among OT kings. The choice by Yahweh to use the dissociative third person emphasizes his unique identity. I argued that this emphasis contributes in one sense to the instruction of Israel concerning his identity. Yet, the illeism also functions at another level as a natural means of expression of Yahweh's unique identity, his unique status as the only true God. Furthermore, in light of the prominent use among OT kings and in light of Scripture's and Yahweh's own affirmation of his kingship, I argued that the illeism may also reflect a royal emphasis concerning Yahweh's identity.

With the evidence suggestive but not conclusive, I surveyed the ANE texts for occurrences of illeism. The survey analyzed texts across multiple genres, historical periods, and cultures. In addition to the deferential use, the research revealed illeism in the speech of ANE gods and ANE kings. The survey did not find illeism in other contexts. Again, based on extensive evaluation of the nature of illeism and the contexts of the use specifically, I argued that the illeism in these cases functioned in a similar manner as that found among OT kings and in the speech of Yahweh. The prominent use of illeism noted in the speech of pagan gods served to emphasize their unique status and power over other gods and people. (Often a royal emphasis could not be excluded since various gods are also presented as a king or queen.) Among the ANE kings, this prominent use of illeism emphasized their identity as king and the reputation, status, and authority that entailed. Though the survey addressed a broad range of genres and historical periods, no evidence was noted that would indicate that illeism was a common manner of colloquial speech. With an appreciation for the complexities associated with

the ANE literature, I argued that the prominent occurrence of third-person self-reference among ANE kings and pagan gods serves to further strengthen the thesis of illeism having both royal and divine themes associated with its use.

In chapter 5 I addressed illeism in the NT. After addressing the distinctive uses of illeism noted in Paul's letters, the study evaluated the illeism of Jesus, the only person in the NT to speak illeistically. The divine and royal themes which subtly resonate from the illeism found in the speech of kings, gods, and Yahweh offered a suggestive and potentially significant backdrop to the analysis of the illeism of Jesus. As with Yahweh's use, Jesus's use of illeism does not reflect any associated patterns concerning genre, audience, context, or type of sentence. Though the manner of speech is enigmatic, I noted the evidence did not suggest intended ambiguity to avoid provocation or misunderstanding as a primary rhetorical effect. Rather, I argued that Jesus's illeism functions in a similar manner as that found among OT and ANE kings, among ANE gods, and among Yahweh. As in these noted cases, the distance created between speaker and referent functions to emphasize the individual's identity and specifically his status and authority. Though the rhetorical effect of illeism is multifaceted, other possible uses of illeism do not align with the way Jesus uses this phenomenon (i.e., deferential use, within an oath, etc.). Within this broadly defined rhetorical effect (emphasis of status and authority associated with identity) I highlighted how Jesus speaks illeistically at times within the narrative to contribute to instruction of others concerning his identity. Yet, at times, the context reflects that Jesus's illeistic self-reference serves solely to emphasize his unique status and authority.

As noted with kings, the illeism of Jesus could be potentially understood as simply affirming that he is a person of significance. A limited number of individuals of status are noted as using illeism (i.e., Balaam, Jacob, etc.), yet these uses of illeism were shown to reflect unique contexts which contribute to the choice of illeism. Though

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certainty is not possible, the evidence suggests that Jesus's use of illeism is conveying a specific emphasis concerning his unique identity. A similar use of illeism is found only in the speech of kings, pagan gods, and Yahweh. Based on the royal and divine themes highlighted in the OT and ANE research, in light of the context of the occurrences, and in light of Jesus's and various NT authors' own affirmation of his kingship and deity, I argued that the evidence suggests these themes may be associated with Jesus's use of illeism.

Also, I highlighted significant overlap in the manner of use of the illeism of Jesus and Yahweh which sets their specific use of this phenomenon apart from kings and pagan gods. These shared characteristics include the prominent and consistent use of illeism, the consistent shifting between first and third person, the multiple self-references used by each, as well as the instructional aspect reflected in both (Jesus to his disciples; Yahweh to Israel). Based on the summation of the research I suggested that this manner of speech may be yet another way Jesus presents himself "as God."

Conclusions

This study has highlighted the prominent and multifaceted nature of illeism in the Bible. While the phenomenon occurs in various contexts, consistent use of illeism in the speech of Jesus and Yahweh stands apart. A familiarity with the texts of the Bible has the unfortunate effect of desensitizing the ears to the "oddness" of the third-person self-reference in their speech. Yet, an appreciation of this "odd" manner of speech can potentially lead to a richer understanding of the individual contexts of their recorded words as well as a clearer understanding of their self-presentation. Jesus and Yahweh affirm their identities through both word and deed. Yet, with an ear attuned to the rhetorical implications of illeism, these sudden shifts to the third-person self-reference highlight the magnitude of the moment and the uniqueness of the speaker. This multifaceted, grammatical oddity of language when used by Yahweh and Jesus may

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subtly (yet significantly) convey its own message about the speaker which offers a proper context to the discourse itself. In effect, this shift may convey that the one God and King has come into history, and the one who is speaking . . . is he.

As noted, the study has answered fundamental questions and presented evidence which strengthens the thesis for a divine and royal theme associated with illeism. As an analysis of all occurrences of illeism in the Bible, the study may hopefully contribute a foundation for future studies. While scholarship may highlight specific reasons for a shift in person in the speech of Yahweh or Jesus in an isolated context, this study's findings concerning the prominence and rhetorical potential of biblical illeism will hopefully offer a proper context for such work. Also, because of the breadth of the study and its attempt to address illeism in general, future issues remain to be addressed.

A more detailed analysis of how each Gospel writer presents the illeism of Jesus may prove beneficial. If a "royal" and/or "divine" emphasis is intended, how does this contribute to an understanding of the way each author presents Jesus? How does it contribute to how we should understand specific passages where illeism is present and how does it contribute, if at all, to the author's emphasis in general? Also, the many occurrences of Yahweh's use of the phrase "I am Yahweh" (אֲנִי יְהוָה) or "I am Yahweh your God" (אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ) and its relation to the current study may be beneficially explored. In a similar context, an analysis of the importance given to God's name by God himself and others within Scripture may offer insights when looked at in the context of the findings of this study. Finally, an evaluation of Yahweh's use of the first person plural pronoun and its potential relationship to his use of the third-person self-reference may offer insight concerning both issues.

APPENDIX 1

ILLEISMS OF YAHWEH IN CONSTRUCT

Table A1. Illeisms of Yahweh in construct

Reference	Scripture	Illeistic occurrences	Other OT Occurrences
"the way of Yahweh" (דֶּרֶךְ יְהוָה)	Gen 18:19; Judg 2:22	2x	4x
"the hand of Yahweh" (יַד־יְהוָה)	Exo 9:3	1x	19x
"the voice of Yahweh your God" (לְקוֹל יְהוָה אלֹהֶיךָ)	Exod 15:26	1x	11x
"the word of Yahweh" (דְּבַר יְהוָה)	Num 15:31; 2 Sal 12:9; Jer 2:31; 23:17; Ezek 16:35	5x	270x
"the words of Yahweh (דִּבְרֵי יְהוָה)	Amos 8:11	1x	15x
"the house of Yahweh your God" (בֵּית יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ)	Exod 23:19; 34:26	2x	5x
"the house of Yahweh" (בֵית־יְהוָה)	Jer 27:16; Ezek 44:5; Zech 8:9	3x	185x
"the Spirit of Elohim" (רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים)	Exod 31:3	1x	12x
"the work of Yahweh" (מַעֲשֵׂה יְהוָה)	Exod 34:10	1x	4x
"the commandments of Yahweh" (מִצְוֹת יְהוָה)	Lev 4:2, 13, 22, 27; 5:17; Num 15:39; 2 Chr 24:20	7x	17x

Reference	Scripture	Illeistic occurrences	Other OT Occurrences
"the food offerings of Yahweh," (אִשֵּׁי יְהוָה)	Lev 2:3, 10; 4:35; 5:12; 6:18; 7:30, 35; 21:6, 21; 24:9	10x	3x
"the appointed times of Yahweh" (מוֹעֲדֵי יְהוָה)	Lev 23:37	1x	3x
"the Sabbath of Yahweh" (שַׁבְּתֹת יְהוָה)	Lev 23:38	1x	0
"the mouth of Yahweh (פִּי יְהוָה)	Lev 24:12; Jer 23:16	2x	45
"in the ear of Yahweh (בְּאָזְנֵי יְהוָה)	Num 11:18	1x	4x
"the form of Yahweh" (תְּמֻנַת יְהוָה)	Num 12:8	1x	0
"about the holy things of Yahweh" (מִקָּדְשֵׁי יְהוָה)	Lev 5:15	1x	0
"The altar of Yahweh" (מִזְבַּח יְהוָה)	Lev 17:6	1x	21x
"the bread of your God" (לֶחֶם אֱלֹהֵיכֶם)	Lev 21:8; 22:25	2x	0
"service of Yahweh" (עֲבֹדַת יְהוָה)	Num 8:11	1x	1x
"offering of Yahweh" (קָרְבַּן יְהוָה)	Num 9:13	1x	2x
"the glory of Yahweh" (כְּבוֹד יְהוָה)	Num 14:21	1x	27x
"offering/contribution of Yahweh" (תְּרוּמַת יְהוָה)	Numb 18:28	1x	11x
"the tabernacle of Yahweh" (מִשְׁכַּן יְהוָה)	Num 19:23	1x	8x
"the sanctuary of Yahweh" (מִקְדַּשׁ יְהוָה)	Num 19:20	1x	2x

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Reference	Scripture	Illeistic occurrences	Other OT Occurrences
"anger of Yahweh" (חֲרוֹן אַף־יְהוָה)	Num 25:4	1x	6x
"the mountain of Elohim" (הַר אֱלֹהִים)	Ezek 28:16	1x	0
"the eyes of the Lord God" (עֵינֵי יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי)	Amos 9:8	1x	0
"the day of Yahweh (יוֹם יְהוָה)	Isa 13:6, 9; Ezek 13:5; Mal 4:5	3x	12x
"at the wrath of Yahweh of hosts" (בְּעֶבְרַת יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת)	Isa 13:13	1x	2x
"the wrath of Yahweh" (בֵית־יְהוָה)	Ezek 7:19	1x	1x
"the name of Yahweh" (שֵׁם יְהוָה)	Isa 56:6	1x	24x
"the name of your God" (שֵׁם אֱלֹהֶיךָ)	Lev 18:21; 19:12	2x	0
"the name of Yahweh your God" (לְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהַיִךְ)	Isa 60:9	1x	0
"the people of Yahweh" (עַם יְהוָה)	2 Kgs 9:6	1x	23x
"all the servants of Yahweh" (כָּל־עַבְדֵי יְהוָה)	2 Kgs 9:7	1x	4x
"the instruction of Yahweh" (תּוֹרַת יְהוָה)	Isa 30:9	1x	10x
"the zeal of Yahweh of hosts (קִנְאַת יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת)	Isa 37:32	1x	2x
"the judgment of their God" (מִשְׁפַּט אֱלֹהָיו)	Isa 58:2	1x	0
"the temple of Yahweh (הֵיכַל־יְהוָה)	Hag 2:15, 18	2x	13x

Reference	Scripture	Illeistic occurrences	Other OT Occurrences
"the salvation of Elohim" (יֵשַׁע אֱלֹהִים)	Ps 50:23	1x	0
"the table of Yahweh" (שֻׁלְחַן יְהוָה)	Mal 1:7	1x	0

APPENDIX 2

EVALUATED ILLEISMS OF YAHWEH

Table A2. Evaluated illeisms of Yahweh

Self-Reference	*Scripture*
Yahweh	Gen 18:14, 17-19; Exod 4:5; 9:1-5; 11:7; 16:28-29; 19:11, 21-25; 22:11, 20; 24:1-2; 31:17; Lev 10:11; Num 15:30; Deut 1:8, 36; Josh 24:7; 1 Sam 16:7 (2x); 2 Sam 5:24; 7:11; 1 Kgs 17:14; 2 Kgs 3:17; 17:36; 19:23; 22:18-19 (2x); 1 Chr 17:10; 2 Chr 21:14; Isa 3:17; 6:12; 14:32; 21:17; 38:7; 41:16; 51:1, 3, 13; 57:6, 13; 58:8-14 (6x); 60:1-22 (6x); 65:11; Jer 2:37; 5:10; 6:30; 12:12-13 (2x); 14:10; 17:5, 7; 29:7; 47:4, 7; 48:26, 42; 50:4, 24-25, 45 (3x); Ezek 44:2; 45:1 (2x); Hos 1:2; 2:20; 3:1; 4:10; 5:4, 6, 7; 8:13; 11:10; Joel 3:21; Mic 2:7, 13; 4:7; Zech 1:17; 2:11; 3:2; 10:7, 12; 12:7
ʿElohim (אֱלֹהִים)	Gen 9:6, 16; 17:7; Exod 3:12; 4:16; 7:1; 21:13; 22:9, 28; Lev 19:14, 32; 21:6; 25:17, 36, 38; 1 Chr 14:15; 2 Chr 34:27; Isa 13:9; 58:2 (2x); Hos 4:12; 6:6; 8:6; Amos 4:11-12; Zech 12:8; Mal 3:18
Adonai Yahweh (אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה)	Isa 65:15; Amos 9:8; Zeph 1:7
Adonai Yahweh of hosts (אדֹנָי יְהוִה צְבָאוֹת)	Jer 50:25
ʿEl (אֵל)	Gen 35:1; Job 38:41; 40:9
ʿEloah (אֱלוֹהַּ)	Job 39:17; 40:2b
Faithful God (אלֹהֵי אָמֵן)	Isa 65:16

Self-Reference	*Scripture*
God of all the earth (אֱלֹהֵי כָל־הָאָרֶץ")	Isa 54:5
Holy One of Jacob (קְדוֹשׁ יַעֲקֹב)	Isa 29:23
The Almighty (שַׁדַּי)	Job 40:2
The God of Israel (אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל))	Isa 29:23
The Holy One of Israel (קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל)	Isa 37:23; 41:14-16 (2x); 49:7; 54:4; 60:9
Yahweh the God of Israel (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל)	Isa 21:17; Ezek 44:2
Yahweh of hosts" (יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת)	Isa 8:13; 13:13; 14:27; 31:4; 51:15; 54:5; Zech 10:3
Yahweh the God of Israel (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל)	Isa 21:17; Ezek 44:2
Yahweh their God (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם)	Hos 1:7
Yahweh your God (6x) (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ)	Exod 15:26; 20:7; 23:25; Deut 5:11-16 (6x); Josh 1:9; 2 Kgs 17:39; Isa 7:11; 60:9; Jer 2:19; 3:13; 30:9

APPENDIX 3

ILLEISM OF JESUS BY BOOK

Table A3. Illeism of Jesus by book

Scripture/Text	Self-Reference
Matt 8:20	Son of Man
Matt 9:6	Son of Man
Matt 10:23	Son of Man
Matt 11:19	Son of Man
Matt 11:27	The Son (3x)
Matt 12:8	Son of Man
Matt 12:32	Son of Man
Matt 12:40	Son of Man
Matt 13:37	Son of Man
Matt 13:41	Son of Man
Matt 16:13	Son of Man
Matt 16:27	Son of Man
Matt 16:28	Son of Man
Matt 17:12	Son of Man
Matt 17:22	Son of Man
Matt 17:9	Son of Man
Matt 19:28	Son of Man
Matt 20:18	Son of Man
Matt 20:28	Son of Man
Matt 23:10	The Christ

Scripture/Text	Self-Reference
Matt 24:27	Son of Man
Matt 24:30	Son of Man (2x)
Matt 24:36	The Son
Matt 24:37	Son of Man
Matt 24:39	Son of Man
Matt 24:44	Son of Man
Matt 25:34	The King
Matt 26:2	Son of Man
Matth 26:24	Son of Man (2x)
Matt 26:45	Son of Man
Matt 26:64	Son of Man
Matt 28:19	The Son

Scripture/Text	Self-Reference
Mark 2:10	Son of Man
Mark 2: 28	Son of Man
Mark 5:19	The Lord
Mark 8:31	Son of Man
Mark 8:38	Son of Man
Mark 9:9	Son of Man
Mark 9:12	Son of Man
Mark 9:31	Son of Man
Mark 9:41	Christ
Mark 10:33	Son of Man
Mark 10:45	Son of Man

Scripture/Text	Self-Reference
Mark 13:26	Son of Man
Mark 13:32	The Son
Mark 14:21	Son of Man (2x)
Mark 14:41	Son of Man
Mark 14:62	Son of Man

Scripture/Text	Self-Reference
Luke 5:24	Son of Man
Luke 6:22	Son of Man
Luke 6:5	Son of Man
Luke 7: 34	Son of Man
Luke 9:22	Son of Man
Luke 9:26	Son of Man
Luke 9:44	Son of Man
Luke 9:58	Son of Man
Luke 10:22	The Son (3x)
Luke 11:30	Son of Man
Luke 12:10	Son of Man
Luke 12:40	Son of Man
Luke 12:8	Son of Man
Luke 17:22	Son of Man
Luke 17:24	Son of Man
Luke 17:26	Son of Man
Luke 17:30	Son of Man
Luke 18:31	Son of Man

Luke 18:8	Son of Man
Luke 19:10	Son of Man
Luke 21:27	Son of Man
Luke 21:36	Son of Man
Luke 22:22	Son of Man
Luke 22:48	Son of Man
Luke 22:69	Son of Man
Luke 24:26	The Christ
Luke 24:7	Son of Man

Scripture/Text	*Self-Reference*
John 1:51	Son of Man
John 3:13	Son of Man
John 3:14	Son of Man
John 4:10	Gift of God
John 5:19-23	The Son (7x)
John 5:25	The Son of God
John 5:26	The Son
John 5:27	Son of Man
John 5:37-38	The One Whom the Father Has Sent
John 6:27	Son of Man
John 6:29	The One Whom the Father Has Sent
John 6:33	He Who Comes down from Heaven
John 6:40	The Son
John 6:46	He Who Is from God
John 6:53	Son of Man
John 6:62	Son of Man
John 8:28	Son of Man

John 8:36	The Son
John 9:35	Son of Man
John 11:4	The Son of God
John 14:13	The Son
John 17:1	The Son
John 17:3	Jesus Christ

APPENDIX 4

OCCURRENCES OF BIBLICAL ILLEISM BY PERSON

Table A4. Occurrences of biblical illeism by person

Person	Number	Office/Position	Context
Yahweh	>500x		
Jesus	113x		
David	7x	King	Royal emphasis (5); deferential (1); oath (1)
Solomon	3x	King	Royal emphasis
Jehu	1x	King	Royal emphasis
Jeroboam	1x	King	Royal emphasis
Jehoram	2x	King	Royal emphasis
Ahaz	1x	King	Royal emphasis
Sennacherib	2x	King	Royal emphasis
Artaxerxes	6x	King	Royal emphasis
Darius	2x	King	Royal emphasis
Ahasuerus	6x	King	Royal emphasis
Zedekiah	1x	King	Royal emphasis
Nebuchadnezzar	1x	King	Royal emphasis
Araunah ?	1x	King	Royal emphasis
Jonathan	1x	Son of king	Oath
Abner	1x	Commander	Oath
Lamech	1x	Cain descendent	Summons to listen
Jacob	1x	Patriarch	Summons to listen
Balaam	1x	Diviner	Summons to listen
Samuel	1x	Priest, Prophet, Judge	Trial Setting/Historical era
Deborah ?	1x	Judge	Characterization of speaker
Naaman ?	1x	Commander	Characterization of speaker
Job ?	3x		Characterization of speaker

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ABSTRACT

THE ILLEISM OF JESUS AND YAHWEH: A STUDY OF THE
USE OF THE THIRD-PERSON SELF-REFERENCE IN THE
BIBLE AND ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN TEXTS AND
ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR CHRISTOLOGY

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This study explores the relationship between the use of the third person for

self-reference by Jesus and Yahweh and suggests the potential for both divine and royal

themes associated with this manner of speech. Chapter 1 highlights that this issue has

received little attention in scholarship. In order to offer a thorough evaluation, the study

offers a comprehensive survey of illeim in the Bible, highlighting its prominence and

various rhetorical implications.

Chapter 2 surveys the use of illeism in antiquity in order to address whether

illeism was a common manner of speaking. Though various Greek historians refer to

themselves in the third person, evidence indicates that this was a rhetorical effort

sometimes used to give a sense of objectivity to their works. No evidence was found that

would indicate that illeism was commonly used in direct speech.

Chapter 3 surveys the Old Testament and categorizes the various uses of

illeism. The study highlights the similar and prominent use by both OT kings and

Yahweh. Chapter 4 explores the ANE literature for occurrences of illeism and notes the

relatively prominent use among both ANE kings and preeminent pagan gods. Chapter 5

addresses the illeism of Jesus, the only person in the New Testament to use illeism in

direct discourse, and finds a similar manner of use and rhetorical intention as that of Old

Testament and ANE kings and that of Yahweh. In each case the illeism serves to emphasize the speaker's unique identity and authority associated with royal and/or divine status. The study also notes the illeism of Yahweh and Jesus share the common characteristics of prominence of occurrences, a shifting between first and third person, a variety of distinct self-references, and similar rhetorical intent.

Chapter 6 summarizes the study and highlights the suggestive nature of the evidence. In light of the evaluation of the use of illeism by Jesus and Yahweh, based on the similar usage among Old Testament and ANE kings, and ANE gods, as well as the analysis of the various rhetorical implications of illeism, the evidence suggests that a royal and divine theme may be associated with the third-person self-references of Yahweh and Jesus. Furthermore, in light of the parallels between the two uses, the study suggests this manner of speech may be yet another way Jesus presents himself "as God."

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