

1 TIMOTHY 2:5-6 AS A CHRISTOLOGICAL REWORKING OF THE SHEMA

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Summary

This article draws upon Richard B. Hays's observations regarding the way in which an 'allusive echo' can signal a broad intertextual interplay with a precursor text. I argue that the affirmation in 1 Timothy 2:5 that 'there is one God' is an 'allusive echo' of the Shema which points the attentive reader to an extended and carefully crafted intertextual interplay with the Shema and its Deuteronomic setting. I trace the way that 1 Timothy 2:5-6 reworks the Shema in the light of the story of Jesus Christ to affect the christologically driven opening up of God's people to all nations.

1. Introduction

When 1 Timothy 2:5 states that 'there is one God', numerous interpreters have heard and noted the intertextual echo of Deuteronomy 6:4.¹ 'There is one God' (εἷς θεός) is a formulaic statement in the New

¹ Raymond Collins, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 60; James D. G. Dunn, 'The First and Second Letters to Timothy and the Letter to Titus' in *The New Interpreter's Bible: Second Corinthians–Philemon* (NIB 11; Nashville: Abingdon, 2000), 798; Burton Scott Easton, *The Pastoral Epistles* (London: SCM Press, 1947), 121-22; Gordon Fee, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 65; John Norman Davidson Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles: I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus* (London: Black, 1963), 63; I. Howard Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles* (ICC; London: Bloomsbury, 1999), 429; William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, ed. Ralph P. Martin (WBC 46; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 87; Lorenz Oberlinner, *Die Pastoralbriefe. Erste Folge. Kommentar zum Ersten Timotheusbrief* (vol. XI/2; Herders theologischer Kommentar zum NT; Freiburg: Herder, 1994), 74; Jerome Quinn and William Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy* (ECC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 182; Jürgen Roloff, *Der erste Brief an Timotheus* (Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar

Testament and can be considered ‘a crystallisation of the thought expressed in the Shema (Deut. 6:4)’.² But despite the fact that many have noted this intertextual echo of the Shema, there has been little or no consideration of what, if any, extended interplay 1 Timothy 2:5-6 might have with the Shema and its literary surroundings in Deuteronomy.³

The argument of this article is that 1 Timothy 2:5 does not just make a brief and passing allusion to the Shema before quickly moving on to other things. Rather, the affirmation in 1 Timothy 2:5 that ‘there is one God’ is an ‘allusive echo’ which points the attentive reader to a rich and extended interaction with the Shema and its literary context. This article will trace the way in which 1 Timothy 2:5-6 at each point reworks the theology of the Shema or its Deuteronomic context in the light of the story of Jesus Christ.

2. Methodology

Within the field of New Testament studies, ‘allusive echo’ was brought to prominence by the landmark monograph of Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*.⁴ It has been extensively discussed by scholars and has proved highly influential.⁵ Drawing upon the work

zum Neuen Testament 15; Zürich: Benziger, 1988), 110; Philip Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 180; Mark Yarbrough, *Paul’s Utilization of Preformed Traditions in 1 Timothy: An Evaluation of the Apostle’s Literary, Rhetorical, and Theological Tactics* (Edinburgh: Black, 2009), 81.

² Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 429. This is contrary to Peterson, who argued that, when used in early Christian documents, the phrase εἰς θεός is drawing upon Hellenistic rather than Jewish sources (Erik Peterson, *Eis Theos: Epigraphische, formgeschichtliche und religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (FRLANT 24; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1926)). For a critique of Peterson, see Christopher R. Bruno, *‘God is One’: The Function of Eis ho Theos as a Ground for Gentile Inclusion in Paul’s Letters* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 10-14.

³ Notably, Easton observed that 1 Timothy 2:5-6 ‘may well be described as a Christian version of the Jewish Shema’; however, in his accompanying discussion Easton did not elaborate on this comment (Easton, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 122). Holden poses but does not answer or discuss the question ‘Was [1 Tim. 2:5-6] an adaptation by this Christian congregation of the Jewish Shema, Deut. 6:4?’ (J. L. Houlden, *The Pastoral Epistles: 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), 67).

⁴ Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

⁵ For a sustained critical engagement with Hays’s methodology see Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, eds, *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993), 13-69; note Hays’s reply on pp. 70-96; also see below.

of John Hollander, Hays details Paul's use of a literary trope which Hollander calls 'transumption' or 'metalepsis', and which Hays refers to as 'allusive echo'. According to Hays, 'When a literary echo links the text in which it occurs to an earlier text, the figurative effect of the echo can lie in the unstated or suppressed (transumed) points of resonance between the two texts.'⁶ Thus a metalepsis 'places the reader within a field of whispered or unstated correspondences'.⁷ As Hollander has observed, 'the interpretation of a metalepsis entails the recovery of the transmuted material'.⁸ In other words, for an attentive reader with literary and historical sensibilities, the function of an allusive echo is 'to suggest to the reader that text B should be understood in light of a broad interplay with text A, encompassing aspects of A beyond those explicitly echoed'.⁹

More recently, Hays has argued that 'allusive echo' was a well-established literary practice within early Christianity and was characteristic of a variety of early Christian authors.¹⁰ The prevalence of 'allusive echo' in a range of early Christian authors is significant since the authorship of 1 Timothy is disputed,¹¹ and there is also debate as to whether verses 5-6 of 1 Timothy 2 were originally composed for the letter or whether they are a piece of pre-composed traditional material subsequently incorporated into 1 Timothy.¹² Regardless of who first wrote 1 Timothy 2:5-6 – whether it was Paul, a Pauline imitator, or someone else entirely – the widespread use of allusive echo in early Christianity prompts us to listen for it with attentive ears, and in 1 Timothy 2:5-6 we hear it in play.

⁶ Hays, *Echoes*, 20.

⁷ Hays, *Echoes*, 20.

⁸ John Hollander, *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 115.

⁹ Hays, *Echoes*, 20. For further elucidation of Hays's methodology and case studies on particular Pauline texts see Richard B. Hays, *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

¹⁰ See Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016).

¹¹ For an overview of the debate and literature see Mark Harding, *What Are They Saying about the Pastoral Epistles?* (New York: Paulist, 2001), 9-27. For an example of the case for Pauline authorship see Luke Timothy Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 2001), 55-99. For an example of the case for pseudonymity see Lewis Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy and Ethical Argument in the Pastoral Epistles* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986), 23-24, 54-66.

¹² See Yarbrough, *Paul's Utilization*, 79-86.

Before embarking on a close examination of 1 Timothy 2:5-6 it is worth citing these verses in full.

- 2:5 a Εἷς γὰρ θεός,
 b εἷς καὶ μεσίτης θεοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπων,
 c ἄνθρωπος Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς,
 2:6 a ὁ δοὺς ἑαυτὸν ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων,
 b τὸ μαρτύριον καιροῦς ἰδίῳις.¹³
 2:5 a For there is one God;
 b there is also one mediator between God and humankind,
 c Christ Jesus, himself human,
 2:6 a who gave himself a ransom for all –
 b this was attested at the right time.¹⁴

3. Listening for an Echo

Prior to any consideration of broad intertextual interplays, the first crucial interpretive step is to establish that the affirmation in 1 Timothy 2:5a that ‘there is one God’ is in fact an allusion to Deuteronomy 6:4, the opening verse of the Shema.¹⁵ There is of course no doubt that the Shema would have been ‘available’ to the author of 1 Timothy 2:5-6, and there is good reason to believe that in 1 Timothy 2:5a the echo resounds at an audible ‘volume’.¹⁶ As Hays has observed, the ‘volume’ of an intertextual echo depends upon ‘the distinctiveness, prominence, or popular familiarity of the precursor text’.¹⁷ He gives the example of Paul’s echo of the Shema in 1 Corinthians 8:6, arguing that ‘[e]ven though the number of words repeated from Deuteronomy is small, the Shema is such a familiar and foundational text within Judaism that only a slight verbal cue is needed to trigger the full-volume echo.’¹⁸ Despite

¹³ Nestle-Aland 28.

¹⁴ All English quotations of the Bible are from the NRSV unless stated otherwise.

¹⁵ In the present article, the title ‘Shema’ is used in reference not just to Deut. 6:4, but to Deut. 6:4-9; on this usage see Nathan MacDonald, *Deuteronomy and the Meaning of ‘Monotheism’* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 60.

¹⁶ ‘Availability’ and ‘volume’ are two of the seven tests of an echo proposed by Hays (see Hays, *Echoes*, 29-31). For a critique of the tests proposed by Hays, see Stanley Porter, ‘Allusions and Echoes’ in *As it is Written: Studying Paul’s Use of Scripture*, ed. Stanley Porter et al. (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 29-40; for a response to Porter, see Alec Lucas, ‘Assessing Stanley E. Porter’s Objections to Richard B. Hays’s Notion of Metalepsis’, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 76 (2014): 93-111.

¹⁷ Hays, *Conversion*, 36.

¹⁸ Hays, *Conversion*, 36.

the fact that 1 Timothy 2:5 and Deuteronomy 6:4 LXX have only two Greek words in common, εἷς and θεός ('one' and 'God'), Deuteronomy 6:4 echoes through Jewish and early Christian literature at such a high 'volume' that the intertextual allusion in 1 Timothy 2:5a is clearly audible, and, accordingly, very well attested in the 'history of interpretation'.¹⁹

4. Listening for an 'Allusive Echo'

Having heard this intertextual echo of the Shema in 1 Timothy 2:5a, the next interpretative step is to consider its *function*. How is this allusion utilised in 1 Timothy 2:5-6? How does it contribute to the argument of 1 Timothy 2:5-6? In particular, picking up on the terminology of Hays, we can ask, is this an 'allusive echo'? That is, is this an echo which 'functions to suggest to the reader that text B should be understood in light of a broad interplay with text A, encompassing aspects of A beyond those explicitly echoed'?²⁰ Following this line of enquiry, we might ask if there are multiple or significant points of 'thematic coherence'²¹ or contextual resonance between 1 Timothy 2:5-6 and the Shema or its Deuteronomic setting. If so, what bearing might they have on the meaning of 1 Timothy 2:5-6? Ultimately, we must ask, 'does the proposed reading make sense?'²² Does it offer 'a good account of the experience of a contemporary community of competent readers'?²³

My proposal in this article is that 1 Timothy 2:5-6 is indeed an 'allusive echo' of the Shema, and that at each point 1 Timothy 2:5-6 picks up on an aspect of the Shema or its Deuteronomic context and carefully reworks it in accordance with the story of Jesus Christ. First, picking up on the identification of Moses as the one mediator in Deuteronomy 5-6, 1 Timothy 2:5 instead identifies the one mediator as Christ Jesus; second, picking up on the Shema's positioning of Moses as the one mediator between God and Israel, 1 Timothy 2:5 instead identifies Jesus as the one mediator between 'God and humankind';

¹⁹ See references above. 'History of Interpretation' is another of the seven tests for an echo proposed by Hays (see Hays, *Echoes*, 29-31).

²⁰ Hays, *Echoes*, 20.

²¹ Hays, *Echoes*, 30.

²² Hays, *Echoes*, 31.

²³ Hays, *Echoes*, 31-32.

third, picking up on the Shema's call for total and undivided devotion to God, 1 Timothy 2:6a depicts Jesus as one who '*gave himself*' as a sacrificial offering to God; fourth, picking up on the demand in Deuteronomy 6–7 that Israel must safeguard their total devotion to God via the cultic destruction and/or exclusion of the nations of the land, 1 Timothy 2:6a instead depicts Jesus as one who gave himself over to cultic destruction '*as a ransom for all*'; finally, picking up on the insistence of Deuteronomy 6 that the Shema/'the testimonies' were given in anticipation of 'tomorrow', the day when Israel would occupy the promised land, 1 Timothy 2:6b declares that 'the testimony' concerning Christ has come 'in its own time'. We will consider each of these points in turn.

4.1 'there is also one mediator ... Christ Jesus, himself human' (1 Tim. 2:5)

First, then, let us consider the way in which 1 Timothy 2:5 picks up on and reworks this idea of the 'one mediator'. In the lead up to the Shema, Deuteronomy 5 depicts Moses as the one mediator of the covenant between God and Israel. In Deuteronomy 5:4-5 LXX, Moses says to Israel: 'The Lord spoke with you face-to-face at the mountain, from the midst of the fire, *and I stood between* (μέσος) *the Lord and you at that time*, to report to you the words of the Lord' (NETS).²⁴ Note that the word μέσος ('between') used here in the Septuagint is a cognate of the word μεσίτης ('mediator') used in 1 Timothy 2:5. This depiction in Deuteronomy 5:4-5 of Moses as the one who stands between God and Israel is not just a momentary portrayal. Deuteronomy 5 again draws focused attention to Moses' role as mediator by relating an extended narrative episode in verses 22-33 which centres around Israel's fearful request to Moses that he continue to act as their go-between.²⁵ Israel says to Moses: 'Go near, you yourself, and hear all that the Lord our God will say. Then tell us everything that the Lord our God tells you, and we will listen and do it' (Deut. 5:27). Not only does the narrative recounted in Deuteronomy 5:4-5, 22-33 depict Moses as a mediator, but also, from a literary

²⁴ McConville comments that the concern in Deut. 5:4-5 is 'to stress Moses' mediatorial role' (J. G. McConville, *Deuteronomy* (Leicester: Apollos, 2002), 124).

²⁵ Regarding Deut. 5:22-33 McConville observes that '[t]he issue ... is the people's need of a mediator between them and God because of the danger to them of experiencing God's presence directly' (McConville, *Deuteronomy*, 131).

perspective, Moses is the ‘implied speaker’ right throughout Deuteronomy 5–6, including the Shema itself. So, although Deuteronomy 6:1 makes it clear that the Shema comes to Israel from the Lord God, still Moses himself can refer to the Shema and say ‘Keep these words that *I am commanding* you today in your heart’ (Deut. 6:6). We see then that the mediation of Moses is a prominent feature of Deuteronomy 5–6.²⁶

When 1 Timothy 2:5 affirms that ‘there is one God’, echoing the Shema, and then immediately proceeds to pick up on this Deuteronomic theme of the ‘one mediator’, this suggests to us that 1 Timothy is not unconcerned with Deuteronomy 5–6, but rather that it is carefully *reworking* it. The attentive reader who has heard the echo of the Shema in 1 Timothy 2:5 and is familiar with the Shema’s literary context would know that in Deuteronomy 5–6 the ‘one mediator’ is Moses. But instead 1 Timothy 2:5 identifies the ‘one mediator’ as ‘Christ Jesus’. In other words, 1 Timothy 2:5 reworks the Shema and Deuteronomy 5–6 by shifting mediators from Moses to Jesus.

4.2 ‘between God and humankind’ (1 Tim. 2:5)

Now because Moses’ work of mediation is specifically tied to the nation of Israel, the switch in mediators from Moses to Jesus throws open the doors to the people of God. Accordingly, the next step that 1 Timothy takes in its reworking of the Shema is to identify Jesus as the one mediator, not just between God and *Israel*, but between ‘God and *humankind*’.

Within the literary setting of Deuteronomy 6, the Shema sits squarely within the context of an exclusive covenantal relationship between YHWH and Israel. As MacDonald has observed:

It is not inconsequential that ... the Shema begins, not with the four words ‘YHWH – our god – YHWH – one’, but with an address to a particular people, YHWH’s people, Israel: ‘Hear, O Israel’ ... Reading the words of the Shema is to enter into a privileged conversation

²⁶ Fiore comments in regards to Hellenistic Judaism more generally that ‘[t]he primary mediator ... is Moses (Philo, *Moses* 2.116; *Dreams* 1.143; *Heir* 206; Josephus, *Ant.* 7.193; *T. Mos.* 1:14; 3:12; *Deut. Rab.* 3 [201], referring to Exod 34:1; *Pesiq. Rab.* 45 on Exod 34:30)’ (Benjamin Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles: First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007), 60); see also George Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation: A Study of Salvation Language in the Pastoral Epistles* (Exeter and Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006), 61–62. Regarding the identification within the Pauline tradition of Moses as Israel’s mediator see Bruno, ‘*God is One*’, 180–89.

between Moses and Israel. The words are not directed to any other nations, but to Israel alone.²⁷

There is a historical and national particularity to the Shema. It does not just profess that ‘YHWH is one’, but also that YHWH is ‘*our* God’, the God of Israel.

Therefore when 1 Timothy 2:5 echoes the Shema, but then identifies Jesus as the one mediator, not just between God and *Israel*, but between ‘God and *humankind*’, again we might conclude that 1 Timothy is not unconcerned with the Shema at this point, but rather is reworking it. This shift from Israel to humanity can be seen as a thoughtful and carefully worked revision of the identity of God’s people.

In accord with this depiction of Jesus as the one mediator between ‘God and humankind’ is the description of Jesus which immediately follows. 1 Timothy 2:5c, following the word order of the Greek text, describes him as ‘the human, Christ Jesus’ (ἄνθρωπος Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς).²⁸ By identifying Jesus as ‘the human’, or at least as ‘a human being’,²⁹ 1 Timothy 2:5c highlights Jesus’ affinity not just with Israel, but with humanity more broadly.

In effect, what is undertaken in 1 Timothy 2:5 is a remapping of the logic of monotheism and election. In Deuteronomy, a coherent line of thought can be traced from the one God (YHWH) via the one mediator (Moses) to one chosen nation (Israel). There is a particular logic at work there. But instead 1 Timothy 2:5 traces a coherent line of thought from the one God via the one mediator (Jesus) to humanity (seen as one undivided whole). The foundational premise is the same – the One God – but from that same monotheistic premise 1 Timothy has remapped the logic of election. Through Jesus it traces a different line of thought and so arrives at a different destination, encompassing not just Israel but the nations.

Significantly, there is a precedent for just this kind of remapping in the undisputed Pauline letters.³⁰ In Romans 3:29 Paul asks: ‘Or is God

²⁷ MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 151.

²⁸ As per the translation of Towner (Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 181).

²⁹ For the purposes of my argument here, we do not need to consider whether ἄνθρωπος should be translated with or without a definite article, nor whether it is best understood in reference to a Pauline Adam-Christology (cf. Rom. 5:15; 1 Cor. 15:21-22,45; see Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 63; Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 431).

³⁰ See Bruno, ‘*God is One*’.

the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also' (Rom. 3:29). Why is it that the God of the Jews would also be the God of the Gentiles? Paul continues: 'Yes, of Gentiles also, *since God is one* [εἷς ὁ θεός]; and he will justify the circumcised on the ground of faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith' (Rom. 3:29b-30). Commenting on Paul's logic here in Romans 3, Moo identifies the monotheism of the Shema as Paul's key premise: 'The "oneness" of God was confessed by the pious Jew every day: "the LORD our God is one LORD" (Deut. 6:4). Yet if this is so, then God must be God of the Gentiles; else they would be left with no god.'³¹ Coming back to 1 Timothy 2, the point is that, in a pattern of thought typical of the Pauline tradition, 1 Timothy 2:5 reworks the identity of the people of God so that it might include not just Israel, but humanity more broadly.

4.3 'who gave himself' (1 Tim. 2:6)

The third point of intertextual interplay between 1 Timothy 2:5-6 and the Shema also rests on the logic of monotheism. Picking up on the way that the monotheism of the Shema yields a demand for total and undivided devotion to God, 1 Timothy 2:6 depicts Jesus as one who 'gave himself' as a sacrificial offering to God.

To begin with, then, let us consider the logic of the Shema. In the Shema, there is a logical move from monotheism to total and undivided devotion. Precisely because there is only one God, Israel should not apportion out their devotion amongst various deities. They should not love one particular god with their heart, love another god with their soul, love some other god with strength. No: because there is only one God – the Lord – Israel should love him and him alone with the entirety of their heart, soul, and strength.

In 1 Timothy 2:5-6, the writer picks up on and retains the logical move from monotheism to undivided devotion that we see in the Shema. But according to 1 Timothy 2:5-6 the Shema's call for undivided devotion has been fulfilled by Jesus. The way that Jesus expressed his total and undivided devotion to God was that he 'gave himself'. When 1 Timothy 2:6 says that Jesus 'gave himself', this is a way that early Christian authors referred to Jesus' crucifixion as a

³¹ Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 251.

cultic act of self-sacrifice (cf. Mark 10:45; Gal. 1:4; 2:20; Eph. 5:2; Titus 2:14).³² Clearly crucifixion, by its very nature, is not undertaken as a half-measure. In so far as Jesus' crucifixion is perceived as a cultic act of self-sacrifice then it is an act of total and undivided devotion to God. In his crucifixion Jesus did not hold back; he gave the fullness of himself. Here 1 Timothy 2:6 has retained the Shema's logical move from monotheism to undivided devotion, but has fleshed it out in reference to Jesus' self-offering at the cross.

The influence of the Shema at this point is further evident when we bring Mark 10:45 into the conversation. There is a widespread acknowledgement amongst commentators that when 1 Timothy 2:6 declares that Jesus 'gave himself as a ransom for all' it is echoing the statement in Mark 10:45 that the Son of Man came 'to give his life as a ransom for many'.³³ For our present purposes the point of interest here is that, whereas Mark 10:45b says that the Son of Man came to give 'his life/soul' (τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ), 1 Timothy 2:6a instead says that Jesus gave 'himself' (ἑαυτόν). One common explanation for this change is that removing the Semitism 'his life/soul' and replacing it with the reflexive pronoun 'himself' is 'an improvement in the Greek'.³⁴ However, this explanation cannot be taken for granted, since, if preformed traditional material 'exists as material not written by the author, it is generally understood that the material will not reflect the particular author's usual lexical and grammatical choices'.³⁵ Moreover, if 1 Timothy 2:6a alludes to Mark 10:45b as a way of appealing to the acknowledged authority of the early Jesus-tradition, then would not the rhetorical power of the allusion to Jesus' words be lessened by altering

³² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 183-84; see also Richard Longenecker, *Galatians* (WBC 41; Dallas: Word, 1990), 7.

³³ Norbert Brox, *Die Pastoralbriefe* (5th edn, Regensburger Neues Testament; Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1989), 128; Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 43; Dunn, 'The First and Second Letters', 798; Fee, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*, 66; Hanson, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 69; Houlden, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 68-69; Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 63; Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 431; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 89; Oberlinner, *Die Pastoralbriefe*, 75; Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 186; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 183.

³⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 184; Friedrich Büchsel, 'ἀντίλυτρον', *TDNT* 4:349; see also Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 43; Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 432; Oberlinner, *Die Pastoralbriefe*, 75; Roloff, *Der erste Brief an Timotheus*, 111.

³⁵ Yarbrough, *Paul's Utilization*, 50.

his words? In this context it is worth looking for explanations that go beyond the author's personal preference to improve the Greek.³⁶

One substantive explanation for this change to the wording of Mark 10:45b is an ongoing intertextual interplay with the Shema. As we have seen, in the Shema there is a logical move from monotheism to total and undivided devotion. The Septuagint's rendering of Deuteronomy 6:5 specifies that 'you shall love the Lord your God with the whole of your mind [or heart] (καρδία) and with the whole of your soul (ψυχή) and with the whole of your power (δύναμις)' (NETS). In this rendering of the Shema the 'soul' (ψυχή) is *just one aspect* of a person, and it is complemented by the references to their 'heart' and their 'power'. However, in Mark 10:45b the word 'soul' (ψυχή) is not used in this same way and does not refer to *just one aspect* of a person's being, but to the *totality*. This is evident when Mark 10:45b states that the Son of Man came to give 'his soul' (τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ), which is clearly a reference to Jesus giving the fullness of himself over to death. We see then that the word 'soul' (ψυχή) carries starkly contrasting connotations in Deuteronomy 6:5 LXX and Mark 10:45b. The desire to avoid this clash of connotations offers a plausible and substantive explanation for why 1 Timothy 2:6a does not use the word 'soul' (ψυχή), despite the fact that the word is found in both the Shema and Mark 10:45b. If 1 Timothy 2:6a had retained the exact wording of Mark 10:45b at this point and thus had described Jesus as the one who gave 'his soul' (τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ) as a ransom, this would have created dissonance for any reader who has just heard the echo of the Shema in 1 Timothy 2:5a and thus is expecting the one mediator between God and humanity to give not just his 'soul', but the whole of his heart, and soul, and power. In effect, the determinative factor here is not maximal lexical repetition but thematic coherence: by omitting reference to the 'soul' (ψυχή) and simply stating that Jesus gave 'himself' as a ransom, 1 Timothy 2:6a succeeds in conveying both the substance of Jesus' statement in Mark 10:45b and the Shema's monotheistic logic which demands full and undivided devotion.

³⁶ I am not here disputing that poetic or contextual considerations might prompt changes in the rendering of traditional material when it is re-appropriated into a new context. Such poetic considerations might include the need for metric balance, alliteration, syntactic symmetry, or a great many other factors. However, no considerations such as these are raised by those who claim that 'his soul' was changed to 'himself' in 1 Timothy 2:6a in order to improve the Greek.

4.4 'who gave himself as a ransom for all' (1 Tim. 2:6)

Now, having observed the logical move from monotheism to undivided devotion, the next step is to consider how that undivided devotion was to be expressed with regards to the nations. In Deuteronomy 7 a corollary of the logical move from monotheism to undivided devotion is that Israel is commanded to safeguard their undivided devotion to the Lord via the cultic destruction or exclusion of the nations living within the promised land.³⁷ The instruction to Israel in Deuteronomy 7:2 is that 'when the LORD your God gives [the nations of the land] over to you and you defeat them, then you must *utterly destroy them*'. In the Hebrew this instruction to 'utterly destroy them' (הִחָרֵם תִּחָרֵם אֹתָם) employs cultic terminology³⁸ for the dedication of something or someone to the Lord for destruction (cf. Exod. 22:19[20]; Lev. 27:28-29; Num. 18:14; 21:2-3; Deut. 13:16-18[15-17]; Josh. 6:17-21; 8:26; 10:28; 11:11).³⁹

Continuing in Deuteronomy 7, Israel are commanded: 'Make no covenant with them, and show them no mercy. Do not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons' (Deut. 7:2b-3). The rationale for these commands to destroy or exclude the nations of the land is given in verse 4: 'for they would turn away your sons from following me to serve other gods; then the anger of the LORD would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly' (Deut. 7:4 RSV). Monotheism leads to undivided devotion to the Lord, and Israel is commanded to safeguard their exclusive devotion by force of arms. Along with their doctrine of

³⁷ As MacDonald has observed, 'Deuteronomy's most striking and disturbing articulation of the nature of loving YHWH is found in the *hērem* legislation of Deuteronomy 7. That the chapter is to be understood as another expression of what fulfilling the Shema might mean is demonstrated by the chapter's structure and content. ... The content of Deuteronomy 7 links it tightly to the Shema. Devotion to Israel's one god is expressed in the destruction of Canaanite cultic paraphernalia. Such acts are grounded in Israel's election by YHWH (7:6-10), a correlative of YHWH's oneness' (MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 108-109, emphasis original).

³⁸ Allan C. Emery, '*hērem*' in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander et al. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 384.

³⁹ For the purposes of this article we do not need to decide whether or not the *hērem* legislation in Deuteronomy 7 was intended to be taken literally or metaphorically, nor whether or not it was ever carried out. Here it is sufficient to note its hostile stance towards the nations of the land and its expectation that they should be excluded from Israel. For a discussion of various interpretations of the *hērem* legislation, with further references, see Jeffrey Tigay, *Deuteronomy* (JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 470-72; MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 108-23.

monotheism, another rationale for Israel's hostility towards the nations of the land is Israel's doctrine of election, their unique status as the Lord's chosen people.⁴⁰ Deuteronomy 7:6 explains: 'For you are a people holy to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured possession.' In keeping with this, Deuteronomy reinforces Israel's identity as the Lord's chosen and beloved people by reiterating the fact that Israel alone has been 'redeemed'. Deuteronomy 7:8 is a reminder to Israel that 'the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and *redeemed* [LXX: λυτρόω] you from the house of slavery'.

Essentially, in Deuteronomy 6:1–7:11 there is a three-part cocktail – monotheism, election, and redemption. There is just one God who has chosen just one nation and by his own hand he has redeemed them from slavery. Together this particular mix of monotheism, election, and redemption is the rationale for Israel's hostile stance towards those who would lead them away from the Lord. In Deuteronomy 7:1-11 this is the rationale for the command to 'destroy' the nations of the land.

But in 1 Timothy 2:5-6 this cocktail of monotheism, election, and redemption has been re-mixed. We have already seen above the way that 1 Timothy 2:5 has remapped the logic of monotheism and election to include not just Israel, but humanity more broadly within the identity of the people of God. 1 Timothy 2:6 is following that trajectory and taking it further, and it does so in two ways. First, 1 Timothy 2:6 portrays a reworking of cultic practice. Against the backdrop of Deuteronomy 7:1-11 and its call for the nations of the land to be subjected to cultic destruction, 1 Timothy 2:6 instead depicts Jesus as having sacrificially offered up *himself*. Second, 1 Timothy 2:6 portrays a reworking of redemption. Here it must be noted that the word 1 Timothy 2:6 uses for 'ransom' (ἀντίλυτρον) is a cognate of the word 'redeemed' (λυτρόω) used in Deuteronomy 7:8 LXX. Whereas Deuteronomy 7:6-8 speaks of Israel alone as the nation that has been chosen and 'redeemed' by the Lord, 1 Timothy 2:6 instead declares that Jesus 'gave himself as a ransom for *all*'. Following on in such close proximity from the depiction in 1 Timothy 2:5 of Jesus as the

⁴⁰ 'The underlying reason for the uncompromising line taken on other peoples and their worship is that Israel is "holy" to Yahweh (7:6). The holiness of Israel in Deuteronomy is always explained in terms of Yahweh's having chosen them as his own people "out of all the nations on earth" (cf. 14:2; 26:19; 28:9)' (McConville, *Deuteronomy*, 155).

human mediator between God and ‘humanity’, this reference to ‘all’ in 1 Timothy 2:6 should be taken in broad terms as inclusive of both Jews and Gentiles. It is not just that Jews and Gentiles share in the one mediator; more than that, 1 Timothy 2:6 says that, in Jesus, they share in the one ransom.

4.5 ‘this was attested at the right time’ (1 Tim. 2:6)

1 Timothy 2:5-6 closes with the phrase, literally, ‘the testimony in its own time’ (τὸ μαρτύριον καιροῦς ἰδίοις), and once again it is no coincidence that in Deuteronomy 6 the Shema itself may be characterised as ‘testimony’ and its timing is a prominent concern. This is yet another thoughtful interaction with the Shema and its Deuteronomic context.

The characterization of the Shema (and also the Decalogue) as ‘testimony’ is seen in Deuteronomy’s use of the threefold phrase ‘the testimonies and the statutes and the ordinances’.⁴¹ This threefold phrase occurs only twice in the Old Testament – once in the Law’s prologue⁴² (Deut. 4:45) and then once again looking back on the Law in the so-called ‘family catechism’⁴³ (Deut. 6:20) – and these two occurrences of the phrase form an *inclusio* around the Decalogue (Deut. 5:1-21) and the Shema (Deut. 6:4-9) and characterize them as ‘the testimonies and the statutes and the ordinances’. Moreover, when Deuteronomy 6:20 uses this threefold phrase it has a particular tie to the Shema. Within the Shema itself there is an explicit expectation that the words of the Shema will be taught to one’s children (Deut. 6:7).⁴⁴ When Deuteronomy 6:20-25 picks up on this expectation that Israelite children will be taught the Shema,⁴⁵ the child refers to what he has been taught as ‘*the testimonies* (LXX: τὰ μαρτύρια) and the statutes and the ordinances’ (Deut. 6:20). The implication here is that the Shema is, amongst other things, ‘testimony’.⁴⁶

Here we must also observe that Deuteronomy 6 repeatedly brings to attention the *timing* of the Shema/‘the testimonies’. From a literary

⁴¹ MT: והעדות והחוקים והמצוות; LXX: τὰ μαρτύρια καὶ τὰ δικαιώματα καὶ τὰ κρίματα.

⁴² Daniel I. Block, *Deuteronomy* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 152.

⁴³ Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 82.

⁴⁴ MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 124-33.

⁴⁵ Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 82.

⁴⁶ As per Georg Braulik, ‘Die Ausdrücke für “Gesetz” im Buch Deuteronomium’, *Biblica* 51 (1970), 63-64.

perspective, ‘the testimonies’ were given to Israel in anticipation of a particular time, figuratively referred to as ‘tomorrow’ (Deut. 6:20), when they will dwell in the promised land (Deut. 6:23; see also Deut. 6:17-18). Likewise, the introduction to the Shema specifically states that the Shema was given to Israel to be observed ‘in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy’ (Deut. 6:1). Of course, this is not to say that Deuteronomy implies the Shema is irrelevant or inapplicable at other times, but nonetheless Deuteronomy 6 is explicit that the Shema/‘the testimonies’ were given with a view to a particular time in Israel’s history, ‘tomorrow’, the day when they would occupy the promised land.

1 Timothy 2:5-6 again picks up on this Deuteronomic background. Just as Deuteronomy characterised the Shema as testimony, so too 1 Timothy 2:6b characterises the christologically reworked Shema (i.e. 1 Tim. 2:5-6a) as ‘testimony’.⁴⁷ But whereas the testimony of the Shema was addressed to just one nation (‘Hear O Israel’), the substance of the christologically reworked Shema in 1 Timothy 2:5-6 indicates that it is testimony addressed to a much broader audience – ‘humanity’ (2:5b) or ‘all’ (2:6a). Moreover, 1 Timothy 2:6b now declares that this testimony is given ‘in its/his own time’ (καιροῖς ἰδίοις),⁴⁸ or ‘at the right time’ (NRSV). The claim of 1 Timothy 2:6b is that a new season for testimony has arrived, a season distinct from the times of Israel’s past spoken of in Deuteronomy 6. For this reason, and in light of the climactic nature of ‘the testimony’ announced in 1 Timothy 2:5-6a, ‘the right time’ of 2:6b can be understood as ‘the right *eschatological* time’.⁴⁹

5. Synthesis: a Broad Interplay with One Targeted Effect

Having traced in some detail the intertextual interplay between 1 Timothy 2:5-6 and the Shema (and its Deuteronomic context), we are now in a position to pan back and survey the whole. My contention is that the targeted effect of this reworking of the Shema is *to remap the*

⁴⁷ Taking ‘the testimony’ to be in apposition to verses 5-6a, as per Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation*, 64-65.

⁴⁸ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 186; cf. ‘ἰδιοῖς’, BDAG, 467.

⁴⁹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 186 (emphasis added).

identity of God's people, plotting each new point in reference to Christ, thereby opening up God's people to all nations. Each of the five points outlined above contributes to this end. First, the identification of Jesus as the 'one mediator' gives him (not Moses) the integral place in the people of God. Second, the description of Jesus as 'the one mediator between God and *humanity*' (rather than God and Israel) then sets the trajectory towards all nations. Third, channelling the Shema's logical move from monotheism to the demand for Israel's undivided devotion, Jesus is then depicted as the one who has given '*himself*'. Fourth, with the trajectory already set towards 'humanity', the next step is the declaration that this act of self-giving by Jesus was a ransom not merely for Israel, but for '*all*'. Fifth, this line of thought reaches its endpoint not with the testimony of the Shema to the children of Israel in the promised land, but with a new and distinct season of testimony, the testimony concerning Christ addressed to all 'in its own (eschatological) time'.

These five points are not a series of random intertextual interconnections arranged to no particular end, but rather what we have in 1 Timothy 2:5-6 is an 'allusive echo' of the Shema cohesively crafted towards one targeted effect – the christologically driven opening up of God's people to all nations.

6. Testing This 'Allusive Echo'

From this vantage point we may now subject this alleged allusive echo to some further tests. The criteria of availability, volume, and history of interpretation have been addressed above, and it is clear that within the Pauline tradition the Shema satisfies the criterion of 'recurrence'.⁵⁰ It remains then to consider the criteria of 'thematic coherence', 'historical plausibility', and 'satisfaction'.

6.1 Thematic coherence

To begin with, we may ask whether the alleged echo coheres well with the wider Pauline tradition: is the precursor text echoed elsewhere in the Pauline tradition, and if so is it used to generate a similar meaning effect?⁵¹ As noted above in our discussion of Romans 3:29-30, the

⁵⁰ See Bruno, '*God is One*'.

⁵¹ Hays, *Echoes*, 30.

answer is an emphatic yes: in the Pauline tradition it was typical to use an echo of the Shema as a ground for Gentile inclusion.⁵²

The next point of consideration is whether the alleged echo coheres with its immediate literary context: ‘How well does the alleged echo fit into the line of argument that [the author] is developing?’⁵³ Here note, first, that there is coherence at the level of *topic*: 1 Timothy 2:1-8 is a passage concerning prayer and the Shema was the preeminent Jewish prayer.⁵⁴ Second, note that there is strong coherence at the level of *theme*: the central theme of 1 Timothy 2:1-8 is the concern for ‘all’⁵⁵ – prayer is to be made for ‘all’ (πᾶς) people (2:1), including ‘all’ (πᾶς) in authority (2:2); God’s desire is for ‘all’ (πᾶς) people to be saved (2:3-4); Paul has been appointed an apostle to ‘the Gentiles’ (2:7); men are to offer prayers in ‘every (πᾶς) place’ (2:8). In this context of prayer for ‘all’, the christologically reworked Shema coheres seamlessly. By exemplifying the christologically driven opening up of God’s people to all nations, it serves as a carefully laid theological foundation for the passage as a whole.

6.2 Historical plausibility

‘Could [the author] have intended the alleged meaning effect? Could his readers have understood it?’⁵⁶ Whoever the author of 1 Timothy 2:5-6 may have been, the precedent of the early Pauline tradition may still offer general support for the historical plausibility of my proposed reading. Accordingly, a noteworthy precedent is 1 Corinthians 8:6, which serves as an example of a text that not only echoes the Shema but Christologically reworks it by means of a series of carefully crafted intertextual interplays.⁵⁷ Moreover, its targeted effect is the reworking of another pillar of Second Temple Judaism, the identity of Israel’s God.

We find further support for the historical plausibility of my proposal regarding 1 Timothy 2:5-6 when we consider it in the context of 1 Timothy. 1 Timothy depicts the antagonists as aspiring teachers of

⁵² See Bruno, ‘*God is One*’.

⁵³ Hays, *Echoes*, 30.

⁵⁴ MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 60-62.

⁵⁵ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 76.

⁵⁶ Hays, *Echoes*, 30.

⁵⁷ For details and bibliography see 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, 2008), 27-30, 210-18.

the Mosaic law (1:7).⁵⁸ This is important because it makes it likely that the author of 1 Timothy would compose (or incorporate) an allusive echo of the Shema and expect that at least some of the implied audience would understand.⁵⁹

A further clue regarding the antagonists comes in the exhortation to Timothy that he ‘instruct’ (παραγγέλλω) the antagonists not to teach ‘different doctrine’ (1:3). This indicates that the antagonists are under Timothy’s authority, at least in principle. From this we can infer that the antagonists identified themselves as Christians and that at least some of them were still present in the church community.⁶⁰ This too is important: if the antagonists were aspiring teachers of the Law *who identified themselves as Christians*, this helps to explain why the author of 1 Timothy might have expected that at least some of his readers would discern not just an echo of the Shema, but a christological reworking of it.

6.3 Satisfaction

The criterion of ‘satisfaction’ looks broadly at the letter and the proposed echo and asks questions such as ‘[D]oes the proposed reading make sense? ... Does it produce for the reader a satisfying account of the effect of the intertextual relation?’⁶¹ With regards to 1 Timothy 2:5-6, consider firstly the *practical* and *liturgical* effect of the proposed intertextual relation. Once these verses are recognised as a christological reworking of the Shema, we realise that when the author composed (or incorporated) verses 5-6 he was not content merely to offer the reader another few lines of argumentation, a few more reasons to pray for ‘all’; instead, he was offering readers a profound piece of Christian liturgy, a form of words to guide and shape their intercessions for the nations.

Consider, second, the *polemical* and *rhetorical* effect of the proposed intertextual relation. The antagonists wanted to be teachers of the Jewish law (1 Tim. 1:7). As Towner has observed, in 1 Timothy

⁵⁸ See Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 169; Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 372; Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 95-102.

⁵⁹ Regarding the distinction between the implied audience and the real audience, see Christopher Stanley, ‘Paul’s “Use” of Scripture: Why the Audience Matters’ in *As it is Written*, 125-56.

⁶⁰ Paul Trebilco, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 211.

⁶¹ Hays, *Echoes*, 31.

1:8-11 '[t]he mistake at issue is in knowing *for whom* the law was established.'⁶² The author's initial response is to declare that the Mosaic law, as originally 'laid down' (κεῖμαι),⁶³ was 'not for the righteous (δίκαιος), but for lawbreakers and rebels' and so forth (1 Tim. 1:9 NIV). Essentially, this initial response seeks to *negate* the antagonists' ambition to teach Christians ('the righteous') the law as originally laid down. But this still leaves open the way for the author to offer the aspiring teachers of the law a positive way forward, a reconfiguration of the law in light of the gospel. Accordingly, in 1 Timothy 2:5-6 the author puts forward the Shema – the summation of the Jewish law⁶⁴ and a touchstone of Jewish identity – christologically reworked, at each point remapping the identity of God's people in relation to Christ. This is directly relevant to the agenda of the antagonists. They sought to teach the law but did not understand whom it was for. Here they are offered a Christian version of the Shema that is for 'humanity' (2:5b), for 'all' (2:6a). Moreover, it is not just offered to them as a teaching, but as a prayer. It is precisely because this Christian version of the Shema is a prayer that it is not incorporated into the argument in 1:8-11, but is held over until 1 Timothy addresses prayer at length in 2:1-8. Also, holding it over allows the author, in the interval, to underscore that Christ came to save '*sinner*s – of whom I am the foremost' (1:15; see 1:12-17), and this too prepares the way for the exhortation in 2:1-8 to pray for '*all*'. For our present purposes, the crucial point in all this is that this christological reworking of the Shema is perfectly tailored to the polemical and rhetorical needs of the letter: it is a relevant corrective to the agenda of the antagonists; it is carefully situated in the wider argument of the letter; and it leverages its authority off both the Shema and also the words of Jesus (Mark 10:45), two sources that would speak with tremendous persuasive power to antagonists within the church who esteemed both the law and Christ.

⁶² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 124 (emphasis added); similarly, Trebilco, *The Early Christians*, 217.

⁶³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 124.

⁶⁴ MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 61-62.

7. Conclusion

Easton once observed that 1 Timothy 2:5-6 ‘may well be described as a Christian version of the Jewish Shema’, but did not in any way elaborate.⁶⁵ This article has sought to carefully chart the relationship between these two texts. The literary catalyst for this enquiry is the affirmation in 1 Timothy 2:5a that ‘there is one God’, which is an ‘allusive echo’ of the Shema pointing the attentive reader to a rich and extended interaction with the Shema and its literary context. I have traced the way in which, at each point, 1 Timothy 2:5-6 picks up on the themes and logic embedded in the Shema and its Deuteronomic context and carefully reworks them in the light of the story of Jesus Christ. The targeted effect of this is to remap the identity of God’s people, plotting each new point in reference to Christ, thereby opening up God’s people to all nations. This coheres seamlessly with the argument of the letter and its polemic backdrop. Significantly, we have seen that there is no point at which 1 Timothy 2:5-6 does not perceivably draw upon the substance or logic of the Shema or its context. However, after the initial affirmation that ‘there is one God’, there is no point at which 1 Timothy 2:5-6 incorporates the substance of the Shema or its context without refracting it through the lens of the Christian gospel. This is perhaps why more commentators have not recognised it for what it is. 1 Timothy 2:5-6 is not a regurgitation of the Shema; it is not a version of the Shema that has just been watered down, loosely rendered, or haphazardly thrown together. Rather, 1 Timothy 2:5-6 is a thoughtfully constructed and thoroughly *Christian* version of the Jewish Shema.

⁶⁵ Easton, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 122.