

An Evocative Translation and Theology of the Hebrew לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם in Genesis 3:8

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Abstract

This study has examined the Hebrew expression לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם, “in the cool of the day” (NASB), to determine the correct translation, motif, and theology on the ground of the context. By the exegetical framework, the literary context and structure portray the discourse of the imminent judgment of God and the repercussion. The proposed translation *because of the Spirit of the day* adduces the motif of divine judgment with God appearing in theophany, the glory-Spirit presence. The particle לְ supports the causative motif (*because*) instead of the preposition *in*. The theophany, the voice of God, judicially provokes the first humans to appear sinful before God and receive divine remedy for their sin. In conclusion, the text foreshadows the eschatological hope of the coming Lord as Judge in the great day of judgment and hope for salvation.

Keywords: Judgment, nakedness, sin, spirit, theophany, and salvation.

Introduction

The Hebrew translation of the לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם, viz., “in the cool of the day”¹ of Gen 3:8 has been a research contention within the Pentateuchal scholarship addressing translation concern, exegetical and theological judgment.² Nahum M. Sarna and Michael Maher are aware of the problem.³ Some translations “in the decline⁴ or breezy time of the day,”⁵ or *pada hari sejuk*⁶ (Indonesian gloss) treat the preposition לְ and the familiar Hebrew רוּחַ loosely without theological weight. Here the renditions of the particle לְ seem to have reflected the general nuance of the preposition אֶל, *in, on, or upon*.⁷ The LXX chooses the Greek τὸ δειλινόν which means “toward evening” (afternoon).⁸ The translation entails a

¹Unless otherwise indicated, biblical citations in this study are from NASB.

²For a review of scholarly interpretation, see Gerhard F. Hasel, “Day,” *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE)*, completely rev. and reset ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979-1988), 1:887-88; Gary A. Anderson, *The Genesis of Perfection: Adam and Eve in Jewish and Christian Imagination* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2001), 18-20; Peter T. Vogt, *Interpreting the Pentateuch: An Exegetical Handbook* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2009), 71-73.

³See New JPS Torah and the Aramaic Bible (Tg. Genesis).

⁴New JPS Torah.

⁵The Aramaic Bible.

⁶New Indonesian Translation renders the term *pada* from the English on or in.

⁷Francis Brown, with S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament with an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic (BDB)*, based on the lexicon of William Gesenius (1952), s.v. “אֶל.”

⁸Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. And adapted by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, 2d ed., rev. and augmented by F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker (1979), s.v.

motion mark as commonly expressed by לְ. The matter should not be easy as nothing happened in the locus. The act of sin, including the course of treatment, becomes the springboard to God's action afterward. Second to this notion is that the temporal reference of divine vindication for the wrongdoing of the first humans befell specifically in the breezy of the day. The juncture seems illogical, which occurs after the fall of sin and the hideout of the first humans after hearing the sound of a divine walk entering the human presence. The walking on the particular state could probe into something much bigger than what the *prima facie* translation can contain.

Methodology

Since the expression refrains from verbatim repetition in the Hebrew Bible (HB), this study sets twofold interest in seeking the *leitmotiv* of the contextual narrative of Gen 3:8 and the possible translation as the interpretive solution utilizing an exegetical task.⁹ As part of the method, the analysis will pay attention to the literary elements for locating the integral structure of the text. The approach lies as a foundation for justifying a theological tenor of the self-contained unit of Gen 3.

Justifying the Translation

וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת־קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים
מִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּגֵן לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם
וַיִּתְחַבֵּא הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים
בְּתוֹךְ עֵץ הַגֵּן

And they heard the voice of the Lord God
walking Himself in the garden **because** [as] of the Spirit of the day [this day]
the man and his wife withdrew themselves from the face of the Lord God
amid the trees of the garden. (translation mine)

Both Masoretic Text (MT) and *Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) do not indicate a variant reading of Gen 3:8. Conversely, the LXX shows a slightly varied reading, as follows:

And they heard the voice of the Lord God,
walking in the garden during the evening.¹⁰ καὶ ἤκουσαν τὴν φωνὴν κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ
περιπατοῦντος ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τὸ δειλινόν

The LXX omits the word πνεῦμα, “spirit, wind, breath,” albeit the Greek δειλινόν corresponds to the temporal aspect of Hebrew הַיּוֹם. Nothing is indicated as to why the

δειλινόν; Barbara Friberg and Timothy Friberg, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament* (2000), s.v. δειλινόν.

⁹For pertinent hermeneutical guides, see Douglas Stuart, *Old Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*, 4th ed., (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009); Craig C. Broyles, “Interpreting the Old Testament: Principles and Steps,” in *Interpreting the Old Testament: A Guide for Exegesis*, ed. Craig C. Broyles (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 13-62; Anne Groom, *Linguistic Analysis of Biblical Hebrew* (Glasgow, UK: Paternoster, 2003), 131-51; Christo H. J. van de Merwe, “A Critical Analysis of Narrative Syntactic Approaches, with Special Attention to their Relationship to Discourse Analysis,” in *Narrative Syntax and the Hebrew Bible: Papers of the Tilburg Conference 1996*, ed. Ellen van Wolde (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1997), 135-36.

¹⁰Translation mine.

omission is enforced. The LXX is a simplified gloss of the theologically weighty words לְרִנָּה הַיּוֹם (“in the cool of the day, NASB). Inserting the Greek πνεῦμα in the text perhaps would create literary and theological confusion since the word conceives a set of semantic fields and Greek philosophical influence.¹¹ However, the tradition of the biblical Greek πνεῦμα, “spirit” corresponds to a theological notion of the Spirit of God.¹² Nevertheless, the Hebrew Vorlage of Gen 3:8 sounds more unprecedented than the Greek to represent the Hebrew רִנָּה as *wind, breath, or Spirit* in unusual or general manifestation. These terms semantically are not alien to the latter biblical use of the Greek πνεῦμα, not limiting to a human spirit or divine spirit.¹³ Hence, the Hebrew רִנָּה characterizes the intense manifestation of the expression קוֹל יְהוָה, “the voice of YHWH.”¹⁴

Divine Judgment Motifs

As said earlier, the day is a prolepsis of the typical breezy day. The day signals a gravity of anticipation for an immediate divine act to verify and vindicate the first humans' wrongdoing. In the following structure, the immediate context highlights more than a temporal notion.¹⁵

- A Gen 3:7 They were naked [and afraid]
- B Gen 3:8a The voice of God
- C The Spirit of the day** (v. 8c)
- A¹ Gen 3:9 The Lord called
- B¹ Gen 3:10 He [they were] was afraid

¹¹For some instances from philosophers' discussion, see Roy Kenneth Hack, *God in Greek Philosophy to the Time of Socrates* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1931), 45-46. Adam Drozd, *Geek Philosophers as Theologian: The Divine Arche* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 238-40.

¹²See H. Kleinknecht, “Pneúma,” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT)*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 878-88; James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 76-77; Collin G. Kruse, *The Gospel According to John: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 108.

¹³Kleinknecht, “Pneúma,” *TDNT*, 878-88.

¹⁴Cf. The pseudepigraphical text in 3 Enoch 23:18 manifests a different context of the divine walk, referencing “daily wind.” It says, “He walked in the garden at the time of the daily wind. Amid the garden, they mingle and blow from one side to the other. They become fragrant from the perfumes of the garden and from the spices of Eden, until scattering, saturated with the scent of pure perfume, they bring the scent of the spices of the garden and the perfumes of Eden before the righteous and the godly who shall inherit the garden of Eden and the tree of life in time to come.” James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*, vol. 1 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 308. In this text, Rabbi Ismael introduces the Divine Presence as wind blowing and lists different kinds of wind and their impacts on nature and humans. It mentions unique winds regarding “the wind of jealousy” and the wind of YHWH. However, nothing further it says about the fallen first humans, although the garden of Eden appears prominent.

¹⁵Seventh-day Adventist Bible commentary accepts the interpretation denoting “the periodical visits [emphasis is supplied] of God towards the close of the day, when quite evening zephyrs refreshed garden.” “The Voice of God” [Gen 3:8], *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, rev. ed., ed. Francis D. Nichol (Washington, D.C.: Review & Herald, 1976-1980), 1:231.

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Notice that the structure's nucleus makes sense of the literary sequence.¹⁶ It leaves a situational interlude between A B and A¹ B.¹ (vv. 7 and 10).¹⁷ The dramatic scene continues consistently through the preceding discourse in vv. 1-6 throughout the eye-opening incident in vv. 7-8a to the point of the cool of the day (v. 8b). Within the context of Gen 3:1-22, the narrative advances from the beginning of vv. 1-7: the temptation and fall, vv. 8-13: divine discourse (in rhetorical questions), vv. 14-19: the curse and remedy (v. 15), and throughout the end in vv. 20-24: the expulsion from the Garden of Eden and restriction from the tree of life. Only when vv. 14-19, the context indicates the pronouncement of God's judgment corresponding to the disobedience committed by Adam and Eve. In the larger context of Gen 3-6 (yet chapters 6-9), the judgment theme is a well-connected whole, starting from the rebellion of Adam and Eve up to the account of the flood. Mary Sylvia C. Nwachukwu notes,

these two accounts represent two different but related instances of sin and judgment. One is the inaugural account of sin against God's rule of the universe; the other is the account of continuing human violence that represents the reversal of God's good creation. In both accounts, God's judgment reveals his ultimate purpose to salvage creation.¹⁸

The repercussion of human sin against God leads to the promulgation of a history of human affliction (curse) and the expulsion from the Garden of Eden. Divine vindication characterizes divine omniscience, omnipotent, and justice. The text leaves no room for the unawareness of YHWH about such a dramatic scene of the fallen state. Humanity and creation are now in great tension. God banishes Adam and Eve from paradise and impede them from approaching the Tree of life. It is questionable if one would explain that the place where God planted the Tree of life is still considered where God takes a walk in the garden.¹⁹ The divine response towards the fall is thematically grounded on the motifs of sin, judgment, and execution. Behind these themes are the administration of divine holiness, justice, and mercy. Several recurring elements evoked such theological motifs include the

¹⁶According to this literary sequence, it is not impossible to group vv. 7-10 into a small unit, whereas its larger unit accounts for up to v. 15 based on the BHS division. Furthermore, the narrative continues with the woman's curse in vv. 16-19 and closes with the epilogue on the divine discourse banishing Adam and Eve from the tree of life (vv. 20-24).

¹⁷Based on the scheme, the plot continues consistently through the preceding discourse in vv. 1-6 throughout the eye-opening incident in vv. 7-8a. Then, the phrase "in the cool of the day" appears (v. 8b), which abruptly changes the intensity of the storyline in the context of the moral fault of disobedience committed by Adam and Eve. For further study of the context in Gen 3, see John Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology: Israel's Gospel* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003), 145-49; Richard M. Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2007), 55-58. Richard M. Davidson offers a special section about the fall narrative in Gen 3 (Ibid.). See also Susan Niditch, *Genesis, Women's Bible Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 17; Roy E. Gane, *Cult and Character: Purification Offerings, Day of Atonement and Theodicy* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 202, Roy E. Gane discusses moral faults and disobedience in the context of impurities that cause death morally (spiritually) and physically (see also pp. 200-01).

¹⁸Mary Sylvia C. Nwachukwu, *Creation-Covenant Scheme and Justification by Faith: A Canonical Study of the God-Human Drama in the Pentateuch and the Letter to the Romans* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 2002), 69.

¹⁹Cf. 2 Enoch 8:3, "And the tree of life is in that place, 'under which the Lord takes a rest when the Lord takes a walk in Paradise.'" And that tree is indescribable for the pleasantness of fragrance. Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 115.

Hebrew עִירָם “nakedness” (Gen 3:7, 10, 11), אֵיכָּה “where are you?” (v. 9, 11, 13), and אָרַר “to curse” (v. 14, 17). These elements bring the idea of God’s impending judgment before the execution. Each part of the facets develops a sequential structure, as follows:

A עִירָם “nakedness”	law-breaking A
B אֵיכָּה “where are you?”	ratifying law-breaking B
C אָרַר “to curse”	repercussion/God’s judgment C

The idea prescribed in Gen 3:8 is utterly implied here. It does not mean that the text is located in parenthesis. The structure displays the earliest form of divine judgment. Again, the verse interrupts the operation flow of divine judgment where YHWH appears after the cognizance of nakedness. From the phases, the gradual flow begins with the disclosure of sin and guilt, followed by God’s assessment or investigation based on preliminary evidence, and finally ends with God’s retribution.

Nakedness

The Hebrew עִירָם, "nakedness," is also attached in Gen 2:25 when Adam and Eve become one flesh—flawlessly one after the twoness. Their nakedness suggests a highly symbolic meaning of Adam and Eve’s innocence and unawareness besides physical exposure. In contrast, the nakedness in Gen 3:7 departs from the initial state to the openness or the knowledge of being unclothed rather than a sexual consciousness.²⁰ The withdrawal from the supposed veiled nakedness compromises human wholeness concerning God’s image and likeness. This physical and spiritual degradation laments a divine remedy to clothe their openness as the secondary need. For the primary call, God provides a life-sustaining provision for spiritual death.²¹ In the proceedings, God’s presence and imminent judgment infuse the atmosphere to present the evidence on the surface. The nakedness arouses human moral conscience and responsibility (influence) to endure the oddity of the fall and disability of self-healing. The never-done hiding from God’s presence, defenseless and helpless, mark human condemnation in the presence of divine judgment.

Rhetorical Questions

The three questions (1) Where are you? Or why are you hiding from me? (2) who told you that you were naked? Or why did you believe Satan rather than me, your Creator (3) what is this that you have done? Or are you ready to take consequences for it? fit typical rhetorical questions. The literalness permits no answers to the questions. For instance, in the first question, although the rhetoric demands the locality of the humans’ whereabouts, if the literalness is the priority for the answer, then a theology of divine foreknowledge and the value of the rhetoric may be dubious. Like the impact of nakedness, all three rhetorics contextually ratify forceful changes, human sufferings, and the pronouncement of impending death.²² Three questions in one meaning suggest God’s irresistible judgment over sin and humans’ reaction toward their iniquity. On the human side, blame and seeking a rationale for God’s judgment become a compulsive nature of the villains against God’s decisive action.

²⁰Brown, BDB, “עִירָם.”

²¹For further biblical-theological interpretation, see Munster H. Niehr, “עִירָם,” *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 11:351-54. See also, Claass Stefan, “עִירָם,” *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament (TWOT)* (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 1:1588.

²²Millard J. Erickson, *What Does God Know and When Does He Know It?: The current Controversy over the Divine Foreknowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 67; see also Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, Word Biblical Commentary 1 (Waco, TX: Word Book, 1987), 99.

The Curse

The Hebrew אָרַר, "curse," in the context of Gen 3:14, 17 is the curse sayings and declaration of divine punishment rather than the utterance of threats.²³ The continuity of the curse passes after the fall through the ages. One cannot escape from divine judgment—humanity, Serpent, and nature.²⁴ Curse and condemnation are closely related as elements of ongoing divine judgment. Abiding curse under divine evaluation removes the Edenic blessing and the glory of the clothing.

Microstructure of the Text

The literary texture of Gen 3:8 consists of an integral microstructure communicating the manifestation of divine presence in the judgment scene. The flow of the communication line (thought) is as follows:

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking Himself in the garden,	}	Segment 1
because [as] of the Spirit of the day (this day)	}	Peak Segment
and/then the man [Adam] and the woman withdrew themselves from the face of the Lord God amid the threes of the garden	}	Segment 2

Table 1: Microstructure of Gen 3:8

Segment 1	Segment 2
וַיְשָׁמְעוּ waw consecutive	וַיְשָׁמְעוּ waw consecutive
יְשָׁמְעוּ third person plural (they)	אָדָם וְחַוָּה Adam and Eve
יְשָׁמְעוּ imperfect form	אֶת־פְּנֵי־יְהוָה imperfect form
Segment 1	Segment 2
קוֹל־יְהוָה "the voice of the Lord"	פְּנֵי־יְהוָה "the face of the Lord"
יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים "Lord God"	יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים "Lord God"
because/for the Spirit of the day [the man and the woman withdrew themselves from the face of the Lord God"]	
בְּגֶן "in the garden"	בְּתוֹךְ עֵץ הַגֶּן "in the midst of the trees in the garden"

²³Victor H. Hamilton, "אָרַר," *TWOT*, 1:168. See also Gen 3:14,17; 4:11; 5:29; 9:25; 12:3; 27:29; 49:7; Exod 22:27; Num. 5:18, 22,24, 27; 22:6, 12; 23:7; 24:9; Deut 27:15; 28:16; Jos. 6:26; 9:23; Judg 5:23; 21:18; 1 Sam 14:24, 28; 26:19; 2 Kgs 9:34; Job 3:8; Ps 119:21; Jer 11:3; 17:5; 20:14; 48:10; Mal 1:14; 2:2; 3:9.

²⁴Bruce K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 265-67, sums up Gen 3:14-19 in the context of judgment on the Serpent, the man, and the woman. The judgment brought the unpleasant condition for them to live in the cursed ground. See also Douglas Stuart, "Curse," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1:1218-19; S. T. Foh, "What is the Woman's Desire?" *Westminster Theological Journal* 37 (1975): 377-83; S. Kempf, "Gen 3:14-19: Climax of the Discourse" *Journal of Translation and Textlinguistic* 6 (1993): 354-77; John H. Hayes, *Introduction to the Bible* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1971), 141-43.

The flow of the text explicitly presents the progression of thought without interruption. Each segment forms coherency in the main story. The second segment could shed light on the first in a repetition covering a similar idea of lexical parallelism. The close relation between segments 1 and 2 is marked mainly by two related linguistic elements *the voice of the Lord* and *the face of the Lord*. Such a literary marking does not constitute emphatic redundancy but establishes a continued narrative.²⁵ Notice that the peak segment marks the role in the text as a climatic point of the dramatic situation of the Edenic fall account. The peak episode, the Spirit of the day, serves the primary purpose of hearing and facing (hiding from) the face of YHWH. Furthermore, each segment is filled with the manifestation of YHWH as the active participant/agent of the passage. In a more abbreviated look, the structure is arranged as follows:

A	They heard the voice of God	-----	the main line
B	The Spirit of the day	-----	the cause
C	They hid from the face of God	-----	result

This discourse structure of the three clauses suggests a crescendo point that leads to the first humans hiding due to the hearing (clause A) on *the Spirit of the day* (clause B). Clause B remarkably creates the cause of the tension between life and death or evaluation and punishment for Adam and Eve (clause C). Having this in mind, while the temporal aspect may not be dismissed from a textual impression, God’s immediate ministering for the sin should not be the least. However, the progressive plot of the fall should be the narrative’s focal point. Then, the perception of temporal literalness is no longer in view. Putting this idea in mind would give room for overly homiletical exposure and allegorical interpretation. The disposition toward spiritualizing concepts or experiences is at best in this dealing. The point of time should be understood as the reality of justice manifested by the divine presence in the locus. For emphasis, the structure pattern does not isolate Gen 3:8 but provides a logical relationship and ground for the first and the second segments. God appears as the causative power (retribution) behind all the Edenic affairs in these two segments.

The Spirit of the Day

Again, the expression *Spirit of the day* retains the bona fide narrative of Gen 3, highlighting the presence of God amid human peril. God’s presence is a theophanic judgment upon the fallen beings.²⁶ The standard translation “in the cool of the day” emphasizes a reasonably low temperature between sunrise and sunset (dawn and dusk). Also, the word “cool” may refer to the time of the westerly afternoon wind.²⁷ To a particular contemporary setting, this would point to a time when people might be free from becoming restrained and anxious.²⁸ On the contrary, the Edenic nature does not restrict itself to the

²⁵Notice that the particle *waw* conjunction occurs three times in the text. For a pertinent reference on syntactical narrative guide, see van de Merwe, “Narrative Syntactic Approaches,” 133-51.

²⁶The Second Temple tradition on Gen 3:8 supposes the term “sound,” as a continual practice of YHWH since paradise is part of the heavenly complex. Ezekiel 28:13 calls Eden “the garden of God,” and Gen 13:10 knows about “Yahweh’s garden,” which is the ultimate fertility and prosperity.

²⁷Hasel, “Day,” *ISBE*, 1:877. In postexilic and NT times, the day was divided into twelve hours (Cant 2:17; John 9:11; cf. Matt 20:1-2). And the hour's length differed in summer and winter depending on the sunrise and sunset (cf. Exod 14:24; Judg 7:19; Neh 9:3).

²⁸Cf. Henoah 23:18 or Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 308. The context of this passage does not retain the account in Gen 3:8, neither the text claims about the origin of sin and the

temporal motion nor atmospheric pressure before the human expulsion as contrasted with “the heat of the day” (Gen 18:1). The expression קָרָה בַּיּוֹם “the cold of the day” found in Prov 25:20 probably may contribute to the meaning of “the cool of the day” in Gen 3:8 about the intensity of the coolness (cf. “the heat of the day,” Gen 18:1; 1 Sam 11:11).²⁹ Genesis 2:10-14 can be another look for describing the Edenic physical climate. The text tells about the four divided rivers (Pishon, Gihon, Tigris, and Efrat) formed from a river that springs out of Eden and waters the garden. No doubt, the flowing headwaters and watering of the garden naturally create a stabilized and refreshing climate, including the ground per se. While this earth cooling might be dependable, Gen 2 fits well with such genesis cosmology. The context shifts obviously in Gen 3 with the genesis of anthropology, sin, and human death.

The Meaning of רוּחַ

The Hebrew רוּחַ (*ruakh*) has the Aramaic cognate רוּחַ and the Syriac *rāḥ*. Similar roots are also found in the Ugaritic *rḥ* and the Arab *rīḥ* and *rūḥ*. All these cognates have the most fundamental meaning, defined as “blowing” or “to breath.”³⁰ The basic idea of רוּחַ is connected to energy or power manifested by a movement or force as the life-giving source. Similarly, some references indicate the word as the active agent of creation.³¹ Moreover, the wind of YHWH in the setting of judgment also describes the breath of YHWH depicted as blasts out of His anger to bring judgment and punishment (Job 4:9; Ps 48:7 [8]; Jer 18:17; Ezek 17:10; Hos 13:15; Jon 4:8).³² About the expression לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם, Gen 3 cannot stand alone from the preceding two chapters (Gen 1-2). Meredith G. Kline’s study has shed light on the transcendent nature of the Spirit. In his analysis, Gen 3:8 finds the twofold allusion in Gen 1-2 related to the *conjunction* of the Spirit ((רוּחַ) and day (יוֹם) and the *relationship* between them.³³ The close connection between the Spirit and the day is seen through the role of the Spirit of God (Gen 1:2), whose Spirit’s creative act had brought light over the darkness—daylight (day one).³⁴ The day itself is a creative image of the divine glory-Spirit. With this understanding, Kline claims that “the characterization of the day (יוֹם) there, prepares for its appearance in Gen 3:8, with the connotation of the (day-) light of judicial exposure.” In this context, the Spirit is introduced as the Creator-Spirit and the Creator-Lord of the day.³⁵

The following association is intriguing. Divine satisfaction after His good or perfect creation (טוֹב) is numbered seven times (Gen 1:4, 10, 12). The first three times are with the

curse issue. One line of the text says, “God walks in the garden at the time of daily wind.” The idea asserts a perfect condition or controlled garden temperature for a human home.

²⁹See also another subdivision of the day like the “height of the day” (Gen 29:7; Prov 4:18); “late afternoon,” which is literally “the declining of the day” (Judg 19:8), and “evening time” (Gen 15:12, 17).

³⁰Brown, BDB, s.v. “רוּחַ.” See also Miles V. Van Pelt, Walter C. Kaiser, and Darrell I. Block, “רוּחַ,” *NIDOTTE*, 3:1073-75.

³¹See Job 27:3; 33:4; Ps 104:29.

³²See Job 4:9; Ps 48:7 [8]; Jer 18:17; Ezek 17:10; Hos 13:15; Jon 4:8. See also Pelt, Kaiser, and Block, “רוּחַ,” *NIDOTTE*, 3:1074.

³³Meredith G. Kline, “Primal Parousia,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 40 (Spring 1978): 245-80. Cf. David T. Williams, “The Spirit in Creation,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 67, no. 1 (2014): 1-14; Admiel Kosman, “‘And the Spirit of God Hovered’: A Dialogic Reading of the Opening Lines of Genesis,” *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women’s Studies & Gender Issues*, no. 33 (Fall 2018): 7-19.

³⁴Kline, “Primal Parousia,” 250.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 251.

first group of day 1 to day 3, and four times are with the second group of day 4 to day 6 (vv. 18, 21, 25). The seventh one utterly summarizes all pronouncements with the phrase “very good” (טוֹב מְאֹד). Kline relates this seven-character to the imagery of the seven eyes and the seven Spirits of God who were “sent forth into all earth” (Rev 5:6) on judicial missions.³⁶ In Revelation, the seven eyes symbolize the seven torches of fire burning before the majestic throne of judgment (Rev 4:5). John the author sees the One sitting upon the throne as the kingly power and authority to rule the kingdom of heaven (Rev 4:3). In the following verses (8, 11), he identifies Him with “our Lord God.” Thus, with numerical emphasis, the seven Spirits of God are the totality of the work and activity of the Holy Spirit.³⁷ The seven judicial eyes of the Spirit with the seven-fullness acts of the Spirit are the Spirit-Creator with the judicial-declarative voice proclaiming “it was very good” (Gen 1:31).³⁸ Kline further asserts,

Glory-Spirit and light and divine action, creative and judicial—all these features are present in the paradigmatic day of the Spirit-Lord in the creation Prologue of Genesis. Beyond these, there are distinctive elements found in the seventh day of creation and its peculiar relation to the Spirit, which fill out the prototypal representation of the eschatological day of the Lord.³⁹

On the Sabbath matter, Kline expresses that the seventh day is a “realization of the judicial sovereignty of God that came to expression in the Glory-Spirit.”⁴⁰ On the seventh day, the Glory-Spirit was translated into a temporal-eschatological dimension. The weekly Sabbath, thus is a copy of the Glory as translated into the sabbatical day of the Lord. The Genesis Sabbath in Gen 2:3 is a transcript of the Spirit/breath of the day in a symbolic day of the Spirit.⁴¹ The divine Sabbath, as the day of the Lord, can expose its symbol to the reality of the future redemptive plan in the Parousia of the Spirit Lord. It is likely a prophetic sign of the day of the Lord, a revelation of God fulfilled in the eschatological judgment.⁴² In this

³⁶Kline, “Primal Parousia,” 251.

³⁷Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, 2nd ed., (Berrien Spring, MI: Andrews University Press, 2002), 191. There is ongoing debate concerning the two subject matters in Rev 4-5 between the interpretation of investigative judgment or the enthronement of Christ. For a good reference, see Norman R. Gulley, “Revelation 4 and 5: Judgment or Inauguration,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 8, no. 1-2 (1997): 59-81. R. Dean David, “The Heavenly Court Scene of Revelation 4-5” (PhD diss., Andrews University, 1986), 60-64.

³⁸Kline, “Primal Parousia,” 260.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Kline, “Primal Parousia,” 262.

⁴¹Ibid. “Isa 63, reflecting on Deut 32 mentions the Angel of the Glory-Presence as the one who bore Israel (v. 9) and variously denotes the divine Presence as the Holy Spirit or Spirit of the Lord (vv. 10, 11, 14) or as his arm of Glory (v. 12; cf. v. 15). And the prophet attributes to the Glory-Spirit the guidance of Israel through the depth of the sea (vs. 13; cf. Deut 32:10; Gen 1:2) on to the Sabbath-rest in the land of their inheritance: “The Spirit of the Lord brought him to rest” (v. 14; cf. Deut 12:9). In effect, the prophet says that in the exodus re-creation there was a recapitulation of the role of the Glory-Spirit in creation from Gen 1:2 to 2:2.” Ibid.

⁴²Ibid. It is still arguable that if the seventh-day Sabbath or the day of the Lord is conceived as the day of the judicial authority of YHWH, consummating His vindication for the judgment day on the Sabbath day. Since the verbs in Gen 2:3 inform the readers about God’s creative acts. Perhaps, Kline should include some reasons for the exclusion of the verbs בָּרַךְ “to bless,” קִדְּשׁ “to make holy,” “to sanctify,” and שָׁבַת, “to cease” in his biblical interpretation. A reasonable argument on the Sabbath day concerning the eschatological context makes more sense if it is seen as a prototypal relation to the glory of the God’s final judgment in the eschaton. In other words, the Hebrew יוֹם may be correctly seen as a

relation, the term יוֹם in the Genesis prologue adduces a divine action in the day of the Spirit. The day fills the prototypal representation of the eschatological day of the Lord. This is the day the prophets uttered about fulfilling the biblical prophecies of the coming divine judgment.⁴³ The illumination about the day of the Lord, thus, finds its origin through the inspiration of Gen 3:8, “the Spirit of the day.”⁴⁴ The day when the first humans breached the covenant, then in response, the Lord came in the Spirit of judicial light as the Glory-Presence, bringing “the day of the Spirit” as the day of the Lord.⁴⁵

The Particle *Lamed* (לְ)

The use of the preposition לְ (*le*) is worth noting. The particle לְ appears with a significant contribution to the translation of the text. The proposed translation in this study for the expression לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם, “because of the Spirit of the day” (emphasis added) dismisses the notion of a temporal aspect in the text. The role of a particle לְ is a key to unlocking the rationale for the first humans’ hideout from the fear of the voice of the Lord. The particle לְ semantically has basic meanings “to, for.”⁴⁶ Since the preposition occurs 20,321 times thus, it is fluid.⁴⁷ In light of the judgment context of Gen 3, the preposition has a causative power behind the action.⁴⁸ The preposition לְ + the other two nouns רוּחַ and הַיּוֹם is the causative instrument of the voice of YHWH in Eden. It shows the reason for what seriously happens in the locus. Similarly, the following texts are examples of the use of the causative לְ (*because or for*).⁴⁹

Gen 4:23

אִישׁ הֲרַגְתִּי לְפַצְעֵי וְיָלַד לְחַבְרָתִי

“I have killed a man *for* wounding me” (emphasis mine)

Deut 14:1

לֹא-תִשְׂמְרוּ קַרְחָה בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם לְמַת

“You shall not cut yourself or shave your foreheads *because* of the dead”

Theology of Divine Appearance

A theological agenda of the text is a sacred ramification of the unerring

preformation of the eschatological revelation of YHWH as the Creator and the life-giving source.

⁴³Ibid., 263.

⁴⁴The Babylonian Talmud (BT) also records the Glory-Presence of YHWH. It says, “Ten times did the Shekhina descend upon the earth. Once in the Garden of Eden, as it is written (Gen 3:8), ‘And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden.’” B. T. *Avot* 11.5.

⁴⁵See also P. A. Verhoef, “יוֹם,” *NIDOTTE*, 2:422.

⁴⁶Brown, BDB, s.v. “לְ.”

⁴⁷The number is based on the counting of Garry D. Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 51. See Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 111.

⁴⁸Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006), 75.

⁴⁹Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 110-11.

understanding of the text itself. As such, the text without correct translation can mislead the unity of divine revelation. The chosen translation of the Hebrew expression לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם “the Spirit of the day” of Gen 3:8 has shaped a theological understanding of the first divine judgment upon the first humans’ rebellion. This translation helps the readers understand the sequential scene and the peak of the event, which underlines the presence of YHWH in His theophanic manifestation (voice and walk) to vindicate the righteous and the fallen. Hearing and knowing God walking amid the fallen humans provoke them to fear and to remember the threat of death because of their transgression and guilt in the presence of God. The imminency of divine judgment is not an option. The voice of YHWH is not His casual manifestation. The divine sound heard by the two ought to be a theophanic shaking of a shattering thunder of God’s advent on judicial review of His judgment.⁵⁰ The first humans’ experience of fear evokes the absolute sovereignty of God and is a call for submission and repentance.⁵¹ The glory of theophany in such self-revelation is to deliver judgment and vindicate the righteousness of God in the presence of evil.⁵² The appearance of God in the post-fall condition binds humans to the covenantal relationship and knowledge of God toward sin. The coming of the Lord expressed by the *Hithpael* participle מְתַהַלֵּךְ, “to walk/walking” denotes the movement of the divine plan (mission).⁵³ The text in Deut 23:15 adduces,

Since the LORD your God walks in the midst of your camp to deliver you and to defeat your enemies before you, therefore your camp must be holy; and He must not see anything indecent among you lest He turn away from you (NAS).

In comparison, both texts, Gen 3:8 and Deut 23:15, shows the motions of God among Israel. The texts employ the same verbal *Hithpael* and the word בְּקֶרֶב, “in the midst” in Deut 23:15, although Gen 3:8 chooses the term בְּתוֹךְ “in the midst.” The words however are semantically corresponding.⁵⁴ The use of *Hithpael* in Deut 23:15 shares a similar motif

⁵⁰The basic lexical meaning of the word קוֹל does not cover the domains of noise and thunder. In many occurrences, the term denotes a significant theology of divine revelation that appeared through His judgment, evoking fear and emotion. See the following texts, Exod 9:23; Deut 5:23, 25; 18:16; Ps 29:3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9; Isa 66:6; Mic 6:9). The expression קוֹל יְהוָה in Psalms has an allusion of Gen 3:8. The voice of YHWH here is always affected on earth. Psalmist views the voice as thunderstorms; the thundering displays the glory, power, and majesty of YHWH. Sometimes the voice is also personified by earthen nature, like the waters, rain, and seawater, fire, as a personification of sound.

⁵¹The ancient people believed that the divinity or deity spoke in the thunder. See Job 37:2-5; 38:33; Pss 18:14; 68:34; 77:17; Jer 25:30; Amos 1:2; Joel 4:16. Cf. Elmer A. Martens, “קול,” *NIDOTTE*, 3:903-04. See also Kline, “Primal Parousia,” 277.

⁵²Kline puts his statement this way,

The purpose of the coming of the Lord denoted by this verb in Genesis 3:8 was to execute judgment. And the voice of Yahweh that signaled this coming was a terror going before him, driving the guilty pair into hiding from the Face of their Maker (Gen, 3:8b). This advent recorded in Genesis 3:8 thus corresponds fully in its purpose and effect to the awesome approach of the Glory met with elsewhere in Scripture, the approach with which a thunderous voice of Yahweh is regularly associated. There is every reason, therefore, to perceive God’s movement through the garden in Genesis 3 as an advent in the terrible judicial majesty of his Glory theophany and to hear the voice that heralded this advent as the characteristic theophanic thunder. Kline, “Primal Parousia,” 277.

⁵³The simple meaning of *Hithpael* is a verbal causative reflexive in the intransitive form. For further note, see Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 47-52. Deut 23:15; cf. 1 Sam 12:2; 2 Sam 7:6; Est 2:11; Ps 68:22; Prov 20:7; 24:34.

⁵⁴Brown, BDB, s.v. “הלך.”

of theophany in Gen 3:8. In both references, divine presence⁵⁵ The holy camp provides a good rationale for evaluating the people of Israel because of the offense and their unaccepted conduct. To Eugene H. Merrill, the *Hithpael* stems narrating God as walking and stepping is “tantamount to the exercise of sovereignty” where God mediates judgment and blessings.⁵⁶ During the wilderness wanderings, YHWH walks amid the camp often connect to a theophanic context, in which the coming of YHWH to His people mediates judgment and blessings (see 2 Sam 7:23; Ps 80:2[3]).⁵⁷

The voice of theophany impacts everything about Edenic life. The temporal concern is part of a more significant effect thereof. The presence of God could only be difficult and dreadful for the condemned. On the one hand, the glory-presence of God is a life-changing point for the first humans when hope for redemption is experienced (Exod 32:32; Dan 7:10; Mal 3:16). Compassionate theophany occurs beyond the Edenic fall. That is a redemptive model of divine work presenting salvation when humans are vindicated by divine holiness. The Spirit of the day anticipates the day of the Lord, the eschatological consummation in the Parousia.⁵⁸ A great noise will precede the arrival of the Lord Christ, the loud sound of trumpets to bring vengeance for the villain, and the reward for the redeemed (2 Matt 24:31; Pet 3:10).

Conclusion

The theology of God appearing in the Spirit of the day of Gen 3:8 is preparatory and forward-looking onto the climax theophany on earth, the great theophany (Matt 5:17). The present sin impacts not only the present day but influences the life to come. The appearance of God in Eden is an earthly judicatory model of God’s administering the problem of sin. The proposed translation has shown that divine appearance always involves order, justice/mercy, holiness, and truth. God’s theophany makes the hiding of sins impossible. YHWH, as Judge, presides in prudence and wisdom for every sin committed. At the same time, He presents a covenant relationship as perpetual promises for life and hope. Theophany of God provides settlement for sinners through God’s perfect way despite the curse to leave Eden, wandering for the face of God and His whole presence as in the Edenic time. The Spirit of the day foreshadows such hope through His judgment in the eschatological arrival of Lord Christ in His flesh. The glory-Spirit theophany in Gen 3:8 must be ended with Christ accomplishing the final redemption from the first humans toward the end of the living on earth.

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⁵⁵J. G. McConville, *Deuteronomy*, Apollos Old Testament Commentary (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 350, the presence of God is not limited to the progress of Israel through the wilderness, but it also reminds Israelites of God’s walking in the midst of the camp during wars against the Philistines and other enemies in the land. In their journey, God’s glory appeared and was symbolized by the ark of the covenant (1 Sam 4:3-4).

⁵⁶Eugene H. Merrill, “הלך,” *NIDOTTE*, 1:1034.

⁵⁷Another theophanic overtone is used in Ezek 1:13. The word is related to the fiery appearance in Ezekiel’s vision, “Fire moved back and forth among the creature (מְהַלְכֵת) along the creatures; it was bright, and lightning flashed out of it.”

⁵⁸See Rom 2:16; 1 Cor 1:8; 1 Cor 3:13; Phil 1:6.

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