Naked Bible Podcast Transcript
Episode 250
The Pastoral Epistles
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Episode Summary

Rick Brannan plays a lead role in the production of ancient language resources for Logos Bible Software. He has also published several books on apocryphal gospels, the apostolic fathers, and the Pastoral Epistles. In this episode our focus is Pauline authorship studies relative to the Pastoral Epistles and analyzing the vocabulary of those epistles. Since Rick's most recent work is on 2 Timothy, we discuss some interesting findings about whether 2 Timothy is really Paul's "last will and testament" and Paul's inclusion of angels in charge language (commands) in these epistles.

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 250: The Pastoral Epistles with Rick Brannan. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike, how are you doing?

MH: Pretty good. Can't complain.

TS: Well, I can, because I didn't make the Fantasy Football playoffs, [MH laughs] and you barely did. So congrats to you.

MH: Yeah, I'm in. Losing four out of the last five hurt. It dropped me, but I'm in.

TS: Yeah. That's more than I can say for myself, because it's been a rough year for me. At least our listeners haven't had to listen to too much Fantasy talk this year. [MH laughs] Maybe next year, that'll change. Alright, Mike, we have a great interview today. What are we going to be talking about?

MH: We're going to be talking with Rick Brannan, who is a friend of mine and a colleague at Logos, about the Pastoral Epistles.

Well, it's great to have Rick on with us again. Rick Brannan is a co-laborer colleague with me at FaithLife Corporation. Of course, that is the maker of Logos Bible Software. Rick has been on the show before, but we have a lot of new listeners, so Rick, I want you to start by introducing yourself. Just tell us who you are, a little bit of background, what you do at Logos with the software (or anything else you do there), and what your sweet spots are.

RB: OK, thanks, Mike. My name's Rick Brannan, and like Mike said, I do work at FaithLife, makers of Logos Bible Software. My responsibilities there involve managing the team that handles all of the original language data (all the Hebrew and Greek) at all the different levels (morphology, syntax, and discourse) and all of the reverse interlinear alignments that we produce. The team that I work on handles all of that data to make sure it works well in the system. So in a nutshell, that's it. All of our Bible data runs through our team. As far as me personally, my sweet spots… It's been probably 15 years ago, where the Pastoral Epistles just jumped on my radar, and haven't quite gotten off of it yet. [MH laughs] So the weird story there is… What happened was I really got involved in looking at the Pastoral Epistles, and that drove me into looking into other literature produced around the same time (before or after), other temporally cognate literature (the Septuagint, the Apostolic Fathers, Philo, the works of Josephus, Greek pseudepigrapha, and other classic works). So from the Pastorals, I got driven into this larger realm of early Christian literature. So where my sweet spot is now is Pastoral Epistles plus following literature. So what this all led to is, I wrote a commentary on 1 Timothy that is called a *Lexical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*. The first volume is on 1 Timothy. That was published in 2016. And what that's all about, really, is… One of the first things you need to do when you're exegeting a passage is you need to look at the words. That's not where you stop, but that is where you start. So what I did is to look at the important vocabulary in 1 Timothy, and I looked at how it was used, not only in the New Testament, and not only in the Septuagint, but also in literature like the Apostolic Fathers, and Josephus, and Philo, etc., to really understand what these terms would mean in the context of that time frame.

MH: Mm hmm. Now, we had either blogged or talked about on the podcast about the first volume. We can and will include the first volume in our discussion today, but you've come out with a volume now on 2 Timothy. But before we jump into that, people should know that these aren't just passing interests for you. You mentioned Apostolic Fathers and Septuagint. Give us a little bit more specifically what you've done. What did you work on that Logos has for the Septuagint or the Apostolic Fathers? I know you've actually published things on the Apostolic Fathers, so we want to mention that, as well. Give us more of a drill-down.

RB: Right. So, for Logos, I did an interlinear of the Apostolic Fathers' writings in Greek (so 1 Clement, 2 Clement, the Letters of Ignatius, the Writings of Polycarp, the Martyrdom of Polycarp, and a few other things like that). There is an interlinear that we put together that's available for Logos Bible Software. From

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there, I actually made a full translation into English of the Apostolic Fathers' writings, and that is available for Logos, but it's also published in print by Lexham Press. For the Septuagint, we did interlinears for the Septuagint for both the Rahlfs edition of the Septuagint and also H. B. Sweet's edition of the Septuagint. We actually turned the Sweet edition into a translation, as well, so we did further editorial work to turn that into a nice, readable, English translation. That has not been published in print yet, but it *is* available for Logos Bible Software. I also did work on the Greek Apocryphal Gospels, where I did translations of the major works available in Greek (the Protoevangelium of James, the Infancy Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Peter, plus a lot of fragmentary things that are actually really important for early Christianity—fragments of papyrus and things), where they mention things or they record things about Jesus that are not attested to canonically. There's a great one about where Jesus is walking in the temple, and he sees a priest go into the bath and out of the bath (the *mikvah*) again, and there's a great discussion there about cleaning yourself with Jesus. Right? [MH laughs] So there's just all sorts of cool stuff [laughs] going on in a lot of these fragments, too, so I've spent a lot of time there. Lexham Press has actually also published a print version of the Greek Apocryphal Gospels volume.

MH: Yeah. For our audience, I get asked all the time, "Hey, what's a good book on all that extra Jesus stuff?" or, "Can you recommend an English translation of the Septuagint?" Now, if you're in the software world (and honestly, let's just be blunt, you ought to be), if you have Logos as a tool, we have our own English translation of the Septuagint and it's very useable. When you reverse interlinearize these things, it really deals effectively with the language barrier. People should not presume that they have to have a degree in Greek to be able to use these sources and use them effectively. That's why we create what we create. But yeah, I'm asked all the time about resources and recommended books. So I'm hoping you're paying attention if you're listening, because I don't ever want to get that question again. [laughter] Because that's going to be my answer.

RB: One of the cool things about that Septuagint translation is if you look at other English translations of the Septuagint, there are problems with the way that names in the Septuagint are rendered. They're typically just transliterated. And what that means is if you know names from your study of the English translation of the Hebrew Bible, you can't follow the discussions in Greek because the names are different. So we actually did a lot of work to align the names where possible with actual forms that you would recognize if you only knew English translations of the Hebrew Bible.

MH: And that you'd search for, too.

RB: Exactly. So that way you can actually read things like some genealogies or even just regular stories and not have to have this filter of, "Now, who was that guy? Where was this again?"

MH: People would be familiar with this, just in terms of their English Bible. If you think about Noah in the New Testament, because you have this alternate spelling (I can't remember what verse it is) "Noe", and then you have "Noah." So depending on what Bible you're using, if you're trying to search for Noah in the New Testament, you're not going to get everything, because you don't know the alternate spellings.

RB: Right. And this comes out in the Septuagint, because if you're transliterating, then it's not Isaiah, it's probably something like "Isaius." Ezekiel you can probably track, but it's got ch's and looks kind of weird. Jeremiah gets even further out, and those are just the major names that you probably know already. When you get into some minor characters and the names are totally different, essentially, even though it's referring to the same person, you just can't track it. So that was one of the problems we wanted to solve with the English translation.

MH: Yeah. And the last thing I want to mention before we actually jump into the Pastorals is, you also have a book for Advent. So say something about that.

RB: Yeah. I was just thinking about that. Probably 10 years ago, I was part of a church that was planted from another church. And the first year we were together, I wrote a really short Advent devotional based on the Revised Common Lectionary passages. That's a really short question-and-answer type thing, in which you're offered the passage and then there are some very short questions about the passage, and then I give you the answers, too. Because my context for using this was at the dinner table at home, and I wanted something as brain-dead easy as possible. So that meant I had to include the answers, because I wasn't just going to have the question there and have to try to make it up or not have something where I could lead my kids to help understand what the answer was. So that was great, and we did it. And then Lexham Press heard that I had done that, and they said, "We kind of want to do an Advent devotional." So I filled out the rest of the cycle. The Revised Common Lectionary is a three-year cycle of readings. Advent is the beginning of the church year, so it follows that particular cycle of readings. So I've really got three Advent devotionals in one that can be used with any year of the liturgical cycle, with the scripture passages and questions and answers for each day of the Advent season.

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MH: Mm hmm. Yeah, we've used that. So it just popped into my head, too, and I'm glad it did, because this is the season for it. So if you're looking for something for Advent, either a little bit this year or subsequent years, that's one I would certainly recommend.

RB: Thanks, Mike.

MH: Let's jump into the Pastorals here. You've talked a little bit about what a lexical commentary is. When you go to study a passage, basically the first thing that you're going to jump into is the words. It kind of goes without saying.

RB: You read the passage and you kind of come to an understanding of it, but if you're going to dig into it a little bit, you need to know what's going on there.

MH: Mm hmm. So how do you present that? Because there are going to be people in the audience that are familiar with things like *Vine's Dictionary of New Testament Words* or other word study tools. So describe what they're going to encounter with this.

RB: Right, so what we're going to encounter… The commentary is basically organized according to the passages. So if you were studying 1 Timothy 2, at the beginning where it's talking about how all men are supposed to pray, you'd go to that verse and you would just look it up. I discuss the passage as it exists and I work through the words in the order in which they are, pretty much according to the English translation I use, which is the Lexham English Bible, which is a production of FaithLife. So I stop at each word that I determine is important (so not everything, but usually content-bearing words like nouns and verbs), and I identify the word in Greek. I also identify the other places where it occurs. I identify a few prototypical usages. So I usually have a citation from somewhere else in the New Testament. I like to work out from Paul to the rest of the New Testament, and then from there I will look at extra sources. So if the word has a particularly appropriate usage in the Septuagint, I'll go and bring in that use of the word. And the real distinctive here is that if you go and look at an academic commentary of some sort, a lot of the references that I make (not all of them, but many of them) you would probably find in a footnote where they'd say, "Go see Ezekiel 3:47," or whatever (if that even exists). But what I actually do is I bring the text in in translation right in the middle of the page. So there's this block quote where this thing that I say is relevant, I actually bring you in the text as well so you can read this source that I'm talking about. So we don't just do mini-citations to footnotes that nobody is going to look up. We say…

MH: [laughs] Right. Footnote in purgatory. [laughs]

RB: If it's important enough to mention, then it should be important enough to look at.

MH: Yeah.

RB: So I've done a lot of work sifting through all of those references and finding things that seem appropriate to the instance in the context we're in. So then from there, we would probably stretch out to some Apostolic Fathers or Josephus or Philo or even some Greek pseudepigraphal stuff, if that's appropriate, as well. But the distinction here is that I bring the use in context so that you can actually

read a sentence or a couple of sentences where that word is used to get an idea of how it's used elsewhere, and let that filter into how you understand the text that you're working through in the New Testament.

MH: Yeah. A lot of people in this audience are going to be familiar with at least the phrase "word studies." They're also going to have taken a whack at doing word studies, and I hope, if that's you (and I know there are a lot of you out there) that you're paying attention, because what you just heard described is light years beyond Strong's tools. Getting usages in context where you don't have to… "Oh, boy, I guess I have to go buy a translation of the pseudepigrapha to go look that up." If you're not living the software world, and even if you are, if you don't have those resources, there you go. Rick's bringing it right to you. And he's in Paul, so he starts with Paul—wider New Testament, wider literature, and then actually showing you examples. To have that in one resource is significant. You already know that if you have taken a crack at doing word study. So Rick, you wanted to jump in there.

15:00

RB: I did, but I forgot what I was going to say, Mike, to be honest.

MH: [laughs] Well, I think most people, when they graduate beyond Bible reading, the next thing they do is, "I have to go get a concordance. I have to start doing word studies, because I hear about them, or the pastor mentions this. What do the words mean in Greek and Hebrew?" They penetrate the English, which is all obviously good—it's just something we need to do. But I know, because I know you and I'm familiar with the other volume, this is something that really not only gives you good data, but it presents it conveniently where you don't have to just chase things.

RB: Right. And in hindsight it's almost documentary of my journey, in the sense that I started with the Pastorals—working through that text, translating it, annotating it, looking at it in all sorts of different directions, reading everything I could find in commentaries that had been written about it. And then I got pulled into this extra literature. Because the thing about the Pastorals (we'll probably talk about in a little bit) is that sometimes the vocabulary is a little bit wacky or it's different. There's a lot of single-use words in the Pastorals. So then I was driven out into other sources to say, "If this word is used only two or three times in Paul, or even the New Testament, well why not look and see where it's used elsewhere and try to understand how it's used outside of the New Testament so that I can better understand what's going on in the New Testament?" So then I got driven into the Apostolic Fathers and I translated that, and the Septuagint, and we did a translation of that. All of these things come back together in the *Lexical Commentary* volumes because they end up bringing back into English things that help you understand what's going on with the vocabulary.

MH: Mm hmm. Now, as a segue to get us into… There are three things I have sitting here in front of me that I want to be sure to get into with you in our time

today. But when you start hearing things like, "The Pastoral Epistles have a lot of vocabulary that only occurs once or twice," and then you're forced to look at other literature to get usage in context for that particular word (or words), that invariably raises certain questions. Because let's say that you find, "This word was really used a lot at the end of the first century" so (I'm just making this up here) in a period that postdates the life of Paul. When scholars run across stuff like that, that is one factor that would lead them to look at this particular portion of the Pastoral Epistle (we'll say, whichever one it might be), and they'll think thoughts like, "Hmm. I wonder if Paul really wrote this, because of the vocabulary choices. If it was somebody living 20 or 30 years after Paul, this would make sense, because this word was in vogue or it just shows up a lot." So the vocabulary is one of the things that will lead scholars to question (in this case) Pauline authorship. So you spent a lot of time in the Pastorals. And a lot of people in our audience are going to be familiar with the fact that Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles *is* a hot debate. It's quite disputed. It's disputed in other regards, too. When we went through Colossians, we got into this because of the whole Gnostic question. But the Pastorals is a hotbed for this discussion. So can you explain to the people listening why Pauline authorship is disputed for the Pastoral Epistles? Just give us a few examples (a few trajectories) that would help people understand this.

RB: Well, there wasn't a whole lot of dispute about who wrote the Pastorals until the late 1700s, early 1800s (somewhere in there, I don't remember exactly). Schleiermacher was probably the first guy to say, "Hey, there's a lot of vocabulary in the Pastoral Epistles—a lot of these single-use words (or *hapax legomenon*) that exist in the Pastorals." There are so many of them compared to other books that Paul wrote. So the thought there was the Pastoral Epistles seem to use this vocabulary that isn't witnessed elsewhere in stuff that Paul wrote, so did Paul really write it? So there's one initial thought that goes back to Schleiermacher. I think he was one of the first who published on that back in the 1800s. From there, it was picked up by a guy named Percy Neale (P. N.) Harrison, who wrote a book called *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles*. It was published in 1922, I think. And Harrison picked up on this, and he documented that the proportion of *hapax legomenon* in the Pastoral Epistles was higher than the proportion in other Pauline epistles and in other New Testament books. So his argument was basically that if you look at word usage the Pastorals are different, and one explanation of that might be that Paul didn't write it. Harrison noted a few other things about it as well. One easy example would be that in the Pastorals sometimes the same thing was said, but with different language. So Paul in other epistles talks about give thanks, or "I have thanks." He's giving thanks for something. That happens in most of his epistles (most of them, I'll say). When that happens in the Pastorals, it's said differently. It uses a phrase (*charin echo*), which is "I have thanks," whereas outside of that it would use a verb for giving thanks.

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So one of Harrison's points was that even things that should be the same in the Pastorals are different. Why are they different? Scholars have taken off from there to try to isolate differences between what happens in the Pastorals and what happens in other Pauline epistles, and even take that to other Pauline epistles, such as Colossians (like you mentioned) and Ephesians. There are questions about which one was first, were they both written at the same time, or was one cribbed off with the other. It's just a big question that people have. A lot of those same things happened with the Pastorals. Another thing that people would look at would be, instead of the number of single-use words (or *hapax legomenon*) that occur in a text, what words do they use all the time? And are those same words used all the time in other things that this guy supposedly wrote?

So there are a lot of different axes of comparison on vocabulary that can be gone through. Harrison started down the road to that. The apex of that (I think, at least from my perspective)… Probably the mid to late '90s, there was a book (I forget what it's called) that Cambridge University Press published in their New Testament series that essentially argued that Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles was semi-genuine in the sense that these are just a bunch of fragments that some… This is the extension of Harrison's argument, actually, that there was a dedicated Paulinist who had assembled some fragments from genuine Pauline material and that those were the basis for (this is a huge form-critical argument) the Pastorals. Harrison thought that he isolated seven different fragments that were genuine Paul, compared against the rest that was expanded on. This guy at Cambridge, for his doctorate in the late '90s (again, I forget the book. I can find that later), essentially took the fragmentary hypothesis to the apex—like every argument in scholarship seems to go: "I can one-up you," right? [MH laughs] So this last guy sort of one-upped everybody else and from there it's gone back downhill, I think. So that's really where it ends up is people have this fragmentary hypothesis of the Pastorals where there are areas of genuine Paul in there, like "there are five verses here that had to have come from Paul because they use this great Pauline image and vocabulary, but the rest of this stuff… somebody who kind of knew Paul had to add it because it's not quite like Paul," is what they would say.

MH: Most of this kind of stuff I deal with is Hebrew Bible side, and you're dealing with editors and redactors and whatnot. This is obviously similar. But two things that I would imagine pop up in this is… one objection. If somebody is unnerved about questioning Paul's authorship on either the Pastorals or something else, they would say, "Well, if Paul is writing about different *subjects*, doesn't that dictate different vocabulary?" And you've already sort of addressed that by saying even with the stuff that is the same you still get different vocabulary. But nevertheless, different subject matter is going to call for different vocabulary, which is (on its own just on the surface) kind of obvious, but it's not going to be like a silver bullet objection. And the other thing is the use of the amanuensis. Now, we got into this in Colossians and we actually also got into it in a Q&A

where I quoted some different scholars on this. There's actually not just one method of dictation or being an amanuensis or using an amanuensis. There's a spectrum of ways this can happen. So is this part of this discussion where somebody might say, instead of just a Paulinist, but, "Hey, there was this amanuensis that Paul used. We may not know his name, maybe we do." But he would have felt free, knowing Paul, and having worked for Paul and having done this for Paul, with Paul in the room (so to speak), that maybe some of that is just his handiwork as well. Because that was one of the modes of using an amanuensis, of producing a letter, where you would tell your amanuensis, "Hey, this is what I want to say. Now you take a whack at it and I'll look at it." That kind of thing.

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RB: Right. Yeah. That's totally why this isn't as simple as counting words and seeing what proportions are. Because that's just not a way that you could actually measure style. There's a lot that would go into that. Even just measuring style is a huge question. But there are a few different axes that we're talking about here. One is the words, but you mentioned one in that there are different topics in here. The other large difference is that the other epistles of Paul are letters to churches and the Pastoral Epistles and Philemon are letters to individuals. So you have to ask, "Is there a register change? If I'm writing a letter to a church, is that going to be different than if I write a letter to my co-worker, Timothy, who I've known for 10 years, and has worked beside me, and who I sent over to Ephesus, and now he's doing this stuff, and I've got to…"

MH: He's going to be privy to some things that others are not, and you'd speak to him a little bit differently than you would somebody that you haven't spent 10 years with.

RB: Right. What differences would that make in the narrative, in the text? The other amanuensis question is a really good one because there's probably a strong case to be made, I think, that (I'm not saying this is the way it happened) Luke totally could have been the amanuensis for the Pastoral Epistles.

MH: That's true.

RB: There are books written on that subject. It's not a far-out speculation. That's actually something that's really realistic, because in the Pastoral Epistles you run into more vocabulary that is in common with the Septuagint than the rest of the New Testament. You run into more vocabulary that is in common with Lukan material than the rest of the New Testament. On the other side of that equation is that Luke wrote half of the New Testament between Luke and Acts (word-count wise) so there's a lot to compare to there. But there's a lot of affinity between the way things are expressed in the Pastoral Epistles and the way they're expressed in Lukan material, and then also the reliance that both Luke and the Pastorals have on Septuagint lexicography (or Septuagint words). And then at the end of 2 Timothy, which is ostensibly the last letter… Because most people think the

composition history of the Pastorals would have gone 1 Timothy, Titus, 2 Timothy. There are some people who think differently. But that's probably the way it happened. So 2 Timothy was the last one. And at the end of 2 Timothy, you have Paul asking for Luke to come back to him because he's useful. No, Mark is useful, and Luke is with him, I believe.

MH: Yeah.

RB: So you have that as well, where Luke is placed in the room. So he has proximity, access, and he has a history with the man. So it very easily could have been Luke, as far as we're concerned, looking at this. We don't know any different.

MH: It's reasonable.

RB: It's reasonable. I'm not saying that's exactly what happened because we will never know, but as far as possible versus probable, Luke is both possible and it could also be argued as probable as well.

MH: Yeah. And for those who are listening who might have missed the episode on the end of the letter to the Colossians or the Q&A, the book that I quoted was by E. Randolph Richards called *Paul and First Century Letter Writing: Secretaries, Composition, and Collection*. So if anybody's really interested in this topic, that's a good thing to drill down on.

RB: Yeah, I would agree on Randolph Richards because he has the scholarly book, his dissertation (which is published), and then also the Tyndale House, which published the one I think you're talking about.

MH: Yep.

RB: Which is a really great look at who the amanuenses are, what they did, how they operated, and how plausible it is that Paul could have used one of these people.

MH: He uses lots of classical examples, too. He's not just making stuff up. He's drawing on the literary world of letter-writing, so it's an informed discussion and really quite detailed, to be honest.

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Now, there's one other issue that you're kind of into that I want to let you introduce people to before we get into 2 Timothy and the two things I want to talk about there. And that is stylometry. So that's probably a term that a lot of our listeners have not heard of. Can you tell us what it is and how it relates, in some way, to authorship—specifically the Pastorals and that whole debate?

RB: So stylometry would be a term that people would use as a way to describe how to measure style, if style is a thing that can be measured. The classic book here is one that was published in the early '80s by a guy called Anthony Kenny. The book is called *A Stylometric Study of the New Testament*. You'll probably never find one anywhere, because they're hard to come by. [MH laughs] And if you do find one, it's going to be $100.

MH: [laughs] Right, one of those.

RB: One of those. We all have lists of books like that, right, Mike? [laughter] Anyway, it's a slim little volume. What he does, for the first time… Why Kenny is notable is it's the first thing that is a stylometric study that actually uses an analyzed text. So Kenny's textual basis is the 1979 era version of the *Friberg Morphology of the Greek New Testament*. What that means is, every word of the Greek New Testament has been analyzed grammatically for part of speech and other morphological form criteria, as well as lexical form. What that means is, in Kenny's study, he has isolated 99 things that he tests for. The way he works is he says… You have these questions. They're yes or no questions that you ask of every word in the New Testament. Then, you track all of those answers and derive statistics from them. These yes or no questions are things like, "Is the word a verb?" It either is or it isn't. "Is the word *kai*?" This is a very common connective— a conjunction in Greek. "Or is the word in the perfect tense?" So there are all of these questions based on the grammar or the word form that he can ask (that he *did* ask), and that's…

MH: Is he looking for patterns?

RB: He's looking for patterns, and he ends up tracking them in a 50-word window, so that he can see things going up, down, and across the text and what the associations are. So the other impressive thing about this, Mike, is that Kenny hand-counted it, because his only source for *Friberg's* was microfiche.

MH: [laughter] Oh my goodness.

RB: So he went through every word in the Greek New Testament, and he hand tallied answers to all of these questions for every word, and then he did all of the math… I don't know, by longhand? [MH laughs] This is 1981 or 1982, so he probably had a calculator.
MH: Is this, like, a prison sentence...? [laughter]

RB: It sounds like the third or fourth level of Dante, right? [laughter]

MH: Yeah.

RB: Pretty horrible. But anyway, this is the work that the man did. It's incredible. But he specifically applied this. He has a few cases in his book where he applies

the data to come up with an answer or something. One of the reasons why Kenny is so well respected is that he doesn't make any wild accusations or wild claims. He's a very reasoned and very cautious and he just approaches it well.

MH: Yeah. Just think of… When I say that he's looking for patterns, whether we realize it or not, when we write we fall into patterns. They just become unconscious. We'll tend to use a particular phrase and either never vary from it or only vary from it in a specific context. Greek is an inflected language, which means its verbs and nouns will be affected by adding endings and sometimes prefixes. So a guy like Kenny would look for, "Okay, here we have this particular verb. It's in this particular grammatical form. It has this person and number. It's interesting that Paul uses this twenty times in this form," or something like that. So he's looking for where the patterns are. Where does the writer place conjunctions? Because in Greek, that's variable. Greek word order is not like English word order. Where are words placed? Which kinds of words are used? Which vocabulary words? What's the grammatical form? All of these things to a native Greek writer would be unconscious. It's just the way he would do it without even thinking about it. So somebody like Kenny, looking after the fact, is looking to detect (we would do this with computers now, which is what makes his work just kind of crazy)… He's looking for patterns and where patterns break and that sort of thing.

RB: Right, there are patterns. And even more than patterns… It's more like they're trends. It's not like he's establishing rules. "Now if Paul wrote this, then he is going to use this word two times and that word form five times." And it's even less than that because he wants to develop a distribution throughout the text. So he actually does some serious statistical work to tie all of these counts into something meaningful. So when he throws his data at the Pastoral Epistles (that particular problem), what he does is he compares the way that his 99 features (he calls them) work out across the Pastorals, and compares them to the so-called undisputed Paulines (although they're not all undisputed at this point in time). So what he finds, essentially, is that… These are his findings. He basically says that Titus is… If any of them is going to be rejected, it's probably Titus if you look at his criteria. Strangely enough, he says that that one is kind of an outlier. But even in the sense of it being an outlier, it's really close. It's just that the other Paulines are bundled a little bit closer and this Titus is sort of on the outside. So even him saying that it's on the outside doesn't mean he doesn't think it's Pauline. It just means that of the group, that's the one that trends out.

MH: Right. That one's a little less Pauline than the other ones. [laughs]

RB: Exactly. And that's the thing that's the problem with a lot of these studies (that Kenny doesn't necessarily fall into), that, "Hey, I'm going to test all of the Paulines. Hey, look, the Pastorals ended up all in this ball, kind of outside." But if your ball is 100, and all of Paul's stuff is in the 90s, and your Pastorals are 97, is

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that really outside? Or is that still…? Even if it's different, does different mean that he didn't author it? Is it different enough?

MH: Who determines how much of a difference matters for drawing some sort of conclusion?

RB: Exactly. So Kenny doesn't fall into that trap. And the other interesting thing that Kenny says is that 2 Timothy (which is one that people routinely discount as not Pauline)… He says that according to his criteria, it's as Pauline as 2 Corinthians.

MH: [laughs] Well, that's 180 degrees.

RB: So even though it uses words that aren't the same and there might be some different conjunctions, as far as looking at this whole complex of features that he's put together based on the analysis that he was using, he says the distributions are such that they're basically… He says, "It's as near the center of the constellation as 2 Corinthians."

MH: Wow. That's interesting.

RB: And most people don't have a problem with 2 Corinthians. So as far as stylometry, that's where Kenny lies on the Pastorals, anyway.

MH: Wow. I think that gives people enough exposure to… This is the kind of work that academics do. Now, of course, back in Kenny's day they were doing it by hand. But now, they can put these analyzed texts (that have all of the grammatical information applied to each word) into computers, and then computers would look for this kind of information. You could put Kenny's criteria in there and the computer would produce the patterning (or not) that he was looking for. It's like data management in some other field. This is the kind of thing that scholars will be doing. Not all of them. Some Greek scholars and New Testament scholars, they're not going to have any time for this or really any interest. But there are people out there that are doing this kind of work. So I think it's useful that people know that.

RB: And I think the other thing to mention about Kenny is that he was not a New Testament guy. He was a classicist. So it's not like he was going to the New Testament to try to prove something on his own. I don't even know if the man's a believer or not. I don't even know if he's alive. But all of his published work is not religious studies. It's not New Testament. So he was just looking at stylometry, and I guess he came across and analyzed text and figured he'd go to town on it.

MH: Sure. Why not?

RB: Why not? I guess my point is, he wasn't coming to the text (I don't think) with a dog in the fight. You know what I mean?

MH: Yeah. And that's important, too. Well, let's talk about 2 Timothy (your second lexical commentary) here. And as we chatted a couple of weeks ago, when I saw the announcement on Twitter come out that this was ready, I saw a few other things. And there were two things that caught my eye. So I'm going to ask these together. There was a comment about the presence of "charge language" (essentially commands) where Paul commands Timothy in the presence of God (deity figure or angels and other sorts of stuff). So that drew my eye, naturally. And then, there was this possibility (this other theory—maybe we can call it a theory, you can use a better word if there is one) that 2 Timothy was not Paul's last will and testament, because that's basically what you see all the time. So can you jump in to both of those things? Because I'm sure you discuss these in the lexical commentary. But what's going on here? What's charge language? Let's just start there.

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RB: Charge language. So this is something I picked up from a guy called Craig Smith. His dissertation was published in 2006 by Sheffield Phoenix Press. It's called *Timothy's Task, Paul's Prospect: A New Reading of 2 Timothy*. So his dissertation basically combined both of these elements that we're talking about here. One, talking about "what is a charge?" He's looking more in the formal sense of a charge. There are two ways to define things. One would be semantically, or what's he really trying to say. And the other would be, "Are there formal criteria that he's using that show that this is what he's trying to accomplish?"

So an example of a charge that's not in 2 Timothy, but in 1 Timothy 5:21 (and this is a doozy)... It says:

> **[21]I testify solemnly before God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing according to partiality.**

And then he goes on and says,

> **[22]Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.**

And he goes on. This is 1 Timothy 5. So what a charge is… There are basically four different formal elements in the charge.

1) One would be the charge verb. In this case (1 Timothy 5:21), it's "I testify solemnly." The Greek word is *diamartyro* (or *diamartyromai* is actually the word in the text) for "testify solemnly." So there is a particular charge verb, and he's isolated a list of things that that tends to be. It might also be a semantic range, or

a Louw-Nida semantic domain-type thing. You could probably tie it that way as well.

2) There are people who are charged. So he says, "I charge you" to do this kind of thing, or "I charge these people to do that."

3) There's an authority phrase, and that's where we talk about "before God," "in Christ Jesus," and "the elect angels." So like in 1 Timothy 5:21, he's bringing out all the big guns. This isn't just Paul, because Paul starts out the letter, "Hey, I'm an apostle. I'm writing this to you. I'm thinking that's enough." Right? [laughter] But for whatever reason here, he's not just saying it on his own authority; he's appealing to a much higher authority as witnesses to him doing this thing. So he's not just saying, "I'm telling you to do it." He's saying, "I'm telling you to do it and these guys are watching. And you need to make sure you're going to do this, because I'm invoking these people, these authorities, as I'm doing this."

So after that, there's the content of the charge. "What are you telling me to do?" "I testify solemnly," "you need to do this," "before God and the angels and Christ Jesus and everybody else," and "here's what has to be done." So there are those four common elements.

There's sometimes a fifth element, which has more to do with the implications of what the charge is, and we get into that more in 2 Timothy. Because the reason why this is important in 2 Timothy is because of the part in 2 Timothy that most people say is Paul's last will and testament, which is 2 Timothy 4:1-8… What this guy, Smith, says is that's not a will and testament. It doesn't adhere to the formal qualities (the formal definition) of a will and testament. He also goes through that in his book. What are the formal things that make up a will and testament or a testamentary piece of literature here? And he says that 2 Timothy doesn't really fit that. So because of the way 2 Timothy is structured and the content of it, people say, "Oh, well, Paul must be about ready to die and he must be passing his ministry on to Timothy." He says in verse 6 of chapter 4, "I'm already being poured out as a drink offering. My departure is near. I've fought the good fight. I'm done." So people say, "Oh my goodness, Paul must be getting ready to die. "The crown of righteousness is reserved for me." All of this stuff, which we look at today and we say, "Wow, Paul's getting ready to just kind of die here." Smith goes through and he shows how a lot of that stuff we today read it that way because that's how we've been trained to read it, not necessarily because that's what it's saying. And he gets there by saying, "this is a charge" because it's charge literature. So we have to look at it through that form—through that way that it's put together.

MH: That's interesting (the whole last will and testament thing) that it doesn't actually conform to the way those things are done, because scholars have looked at lots of things Paul does where he *does* conform to literary conventions,

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in other areas. So that's kind of striking. I've never heard that before. What do you think of that? What's your take?

RB: Well, I suppose my basic take is that I think Smith is probably right. I might be a little bit star-struck by his argument. I don't know. But it seems pretty solid to me. Because he goes through most of those things, where we would read them and say, "Wow, that must mean Paul is ready to die." Or "He's ready to hand this over to Timothy," because that's the way we've been conditioned to read it. And Smith walks through each one of those pieces and shows how there's an alternate and possibly better explanation about how, at the word level (which is the important part for the commentary that I picked up)… At the word level, for instance, "being poured out as a drink offering," "the time of my departure is imminent," that kind of stuff doesn't have to refer to death. It refers to a drink offering being made. And "the time of my departure" is more language of release.

There's a spot in Philo which uses the same exact language, only it's talking about a governor giving up his term and moving on to something else. The thought from Smith is that at this point in 2 Timothy, Paul pretty much knows he's getting released from prison. So Paul isn't saying, "Yo, dude, I'm getting out of prison. Take my ministry and go." If Paul was going to do that, he probably would have done it already. What Paul is saying is that he's getting energized, because he knows that he has more work to do. And he's saying to Timothy, "You need to go back. You need to go do your work and do it as excitedly as and in the same way that I'm going to go do it. I'm already poured out. I'm going to do this. I've fought this fight, and I'm going to do it. This crown of righteousness I'm going to get. And he'll award it to me on that day." But he's not ready for that day to happen yet. Paul's got more work to do and he's excited about it. He's saying to Timothy, "*You* need to go out and do the work that *you're* charged with, too." Not, "You need to go out and finish my job." He's like, "Timothy, you've got to go out and do your own job, and go do your own thing."

MH: Hmm. That's really interesting. What have you come across as far as commentaries about (and I'm sure you discuss this, because you're dealing with vocabulary) the "elect angels" phrase?

RB: Yeah. I would have to look back at my 1 Timothy stuff. And I actually wrote an article in *Bible Study Magazine* about that phrase—about that charge—in the Pastoral Epistles issue, Mike. What do I think about it? I would have to remember. I'm sure you run into this sometimes, too. But it's like you write things down, and you can go look at them. I just don't have the book with me to go back and look at it right now.

MH: Well, the stuff that I've looked at (and I did this for the *Angels* book) shows there are a number of scholars that take the phrase "elect angels" and they say it's a way of referring to loyal members of the heavenly host, in order to deliberately contrast them with fallen angels—that sort of thing.

RB: Right. So I just looked up, because I have this Logos software, and my 1 Timothy commentary is inside Logos as well. [laughter]

MH: There you go. [laughs] So did you do anything with that?

RB: Yeah! So that's the third witness in the charge. Strangely, the Apocalypse of Moses uses the same phrase. The context is… (I'm reading this straight from the commentary. This is why it's so cool.) "Then Eve rose and went out and fell on the ground, and said, "I have sinned, O God. I have sinned, O Father of all. I have sinned against you. I have sinned against your chosen angels. I have sinned against the cherubim. I have sinned against your steadfast throne. I have sinned, O Lord. I have sinned much. I have sinned before…" I guess there was some sin going on. [MH laughs] This was at Eve's repentance, I guess. "If all sin in creation has come about through me…"

So she's using the term "elect angels." This is a laundry list of divine beings that Eve has offended and sinned against, and that's included in there. So that was the key that I had going out there, as far as how it is used elsewhere—that when Eve is repenting and she's saying that she has sinned and she's confessing this to the higher beings, she includes chosen angels in that.

MH: Yeah, my take on this kind of thing is that I do think it's generally reasonable in the New Testament context to look at this as though elect angels are the ones who are loyal to God. Okay, I get that. In view of that example, what that says to me… There's a reference in 1 Enoch 39:1 that describes the angels as elect ("elect angels"), and it's a forward look that some of these angels are going to go down and sin on the earth. So the bigger picture to me is order. In other words, Eve is violating the order that God wants, and he includes (and she includes) the angels in that discussion (or in that context) because they are charged with keeping things in order the way God wants in their realm, and then God has also created human imagers to order things here the way he wants. So when we sin against God, we violate the way that God wants things—the good order that God wants to be perpetuated—to be ongoing. So to me, that's not too far afield for a writer to put this in the mouth of Eve and include them. It's not that they're sovereign, but they are part of God's good order, and this is a violation. This is an aberration, an anomaly.

RB: Right, and there's actually (I looked back) a spot in 1 Timothy 3:16 where it talks about the angels being witnesses, and that hymnic section at the end of 1 Timothy 3. From there, I went into a spot in Testament of Levi (Testament of Levi 19) where it says, basically, "Their father said to them, 'The Lord is my witness and his angels are my witnesses, and you are my witnesses, and I am witness, concerning the word from your mouth.'" So we have that delineation of roles that you were talking about. And then Josephus uses something similar in Josephus Wars 2:4:1. He says, "I call witness to your sanctuary and the holy angels of God

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and this country common to us all that I have not kept back anything that is for your preservation." So Josephus' typical role there is trying to cover his own behind, I guess.

MH: Yeah, he does that… [laughter]

RB: My gosh. Talk about revisionist history sometimes, right? [MH laughs] It's a long trend. But anyway, he's also calling the angels of God as witnesses. You might even be able to call that a charge there in Josephus because it has some of the same elements. But he's calling in the angels of God as a witness to what he's doing.

MH: Yeah, and that has Old Testament roots. It was a little far afield from what I was doing in the New Testament section of my *Angels* book, because I don't know that you can really say that this is in mind of the New Testament writer. Because in the Old Testament, this is always covenantal context. So in some of these instances, I don't know that we can really tie it in with that, but you get… In the ancient Near East, when treaties were made and somebody would write up a formal treaty, you would call the gods (the pantheon, the council) to bear witness to what was going on. Sometimes they'd actually list the names. Sometimes it would be a generic reference. And the whole idea is that if either you or I violate this covenant, well, the gods are going to kick our butts now. Because they're watching. They're approving of this. So if we violate it, we're in big trouble (not just with each other, but with them). And so there might be something like that going on, but that's just part of the bigger motif of *order* (the way God wants things), as opposed to chaos. God doesn't want things chaotic; he wants things done as he created them to function. The language isn't that surprising. It's just that we don't really think angel-ologically enough, typically, to have a category for that. But it's really not that far out in left field, at least to my ear. But I spent a lot of time thinking about that kind of stuff. So that's really interesting. Both of those elements… Because when Paul is charging Timothy or commanding somebody, it's easy to read over the fact that on a couple of occasions the heavenly host is included in that. Very easy to read over that, so I'm glad we mentioned that. And then the… If Smith's work is correct… What's the title of his book again? We ought to post that as well.

RB: The title is *Timothy's Task, Paul's Prospect*.

MH: Okay. Yeah, if he goes through this element by element and really finds some serious gaps or outliers with the normal testament language, that really would call for us to rethink what's going on there. So that's very interesting.

RB: Yeah. Basically, according to his own testimony in the book, in his conclusion, he says that he compared the structure of testaments and farewell speeches, including the last words and deathbed speeches in rabbinic literature with 2 Timothy 4:1-8, and it was readily apparent that on structural grounds, 2

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Timothy 4:1-8 didn't really fit any of those models (those forms, didn't have the correct formal elements).

MH: Well, this has been good. To wrap up, I want to alert listeners. I don't just bring on people who have come out with something new, and it's like, "Oh, let's try to sell copies of that." I mean, I hope you do buy the book. When I do have somebody on, it's because there's something about their work that I think is really beneficial to this audience. And what I want you to notice here is all discussions (let's not even use the word "commentary") of biblical material are not the same. In Rick's case, he has his head in a lot of nuts and bolts kind of stuff, but he's making an effort (this is our consistent pattern here on the Naked Bible Podcast)… I look for people who are doing serious work in the text and then trying to produce something that helps the non-specialist benefit from their work. It's a simple formula. And this is one of those. A lot of this stuff is heady scholarship, but I don't think there's anything here in this episode of the podcast that people who are interested in Paul, interested in issues of authorship, interested in the Pastoral Epistles, and (at the end there) even interested in angelology… This is a discussion you can follow, and these are tools that you can use. So if you want something that's cutting edge, is really based on primary texts (nuts and bolts kind of stuff) that you can root what you're saying and thinking about in relation to Bible study in the actual text, this is the kind of stuff you should have.

RB: Thanks, Mike.

TS: Alright, Mike. I hope our audiences enjoy these types of episodes. It's fun bringing scholars on, seeing how you're using the tools, what kind of stuff you're digging up. I think it's a prime example of what we're trying to do here at the Naked Bible Podcast.

MH: Yeah. Every once in a while, we want people to know that tools are out there so that they can use them. And in my case, Pastoral Epistles isn't a big interest of mine, so I'm probably not going to wind up there doing a book study. So it's nice to have Rick on to talk about it because he just loves them. He's been into it for years.

TS: And next week, Mike, we're going to have Dr. Allert on. What are we going to be talking about with him?

MH: Oh yeah. Dr. Craig Allert has a book on Patristic (Early Church) interpretation of Genesis 1 (specifically creation). So that's going to be really interesting, because the Church Fathers (the Patristic Fathers) are often used as ammunition to justify one approach to the creation story in Genesis 1 over another. So they get used to beat somebody's opponent over the head quite frequently. And Craig's book is going to talk about not only "Is that really fair?" "Is that really wise?" but the diversity of opinion in the fathers about how Genesis

should be interpreted, and of course was interpreted by them. So I think it's going to be an interesting episode, because we don't do a whole lot of church history on the podcast. But in this case, because it's Genesis, I thought it was really worth doing. It is going to take us into this whole issue that we do talk about on the podcast, about being a slave to literal interpretation and what that is. So believers—really smart people—have not only struggled with what to do with Genesis for millennia, but they also were quite willing to move beyond a simplistic literalistic approach to those early chapters.

TS: Alright. Looking forward to that one, as always. So I just want to thank everybody else for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God Bless.