ARTICLES

The Spirit and "All Flesh": Developing an Incarnational Pneumatology That Embraces the Nonhuman Creature

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Abstract: This article explores the Holy Spirit's baptizing work on "all flesh," extending to animals and shaping an inclusive pneumatic soteriology for all nonhuman creatures. While current animal theologies predominantly focus on Christological aspects of soteriology, I leverage Frank Macchia's pneumatological framework to extend "deep incarnation," expanding our understanding of the Spirit's role in the lives of animals. Transitioning to incarnational pneumatology, Macchia links the incarnation and Pentecost, emphasizing Christ's role as the Spirit Baptizer for the entire creation. The Spirit's active role in the salvation of all creation, including nonhuman creatures, broadens traditional soteriology, presenting animals as Spirit-baptized participants in the unfolding eschatological future.

Key Words: pneumatology, incarnation, animal theology, Spirit baptism, deep incarnation, all flesh, soteriology

The landscape of animal theology has predominantly been shaped by an emphasis on Christological dimensions, particularly focusing on soteriology and incarnation. Scholars such as Andrew Linzey, David Clough, and Richard Bauckham have explored the theological implications of Christ's redemptive work and the incarnation within the context of human-animal relationships. Linzey (1998, 2016) has emphasized the significance of the incarnation for all creatures, arguing that the *Logos* identifies not only with humanity but also with all creatures of flesh and blood. Clough (2014), in his cosmic Christology, broadens the scope of the incarnation to include the life substance shared among humans and other animals. Bauckham (2010), on the other hand, probes into the ecological dimensions of the incarnation, asserting that the Word becoming flesh encapsulates the corporeal nature shared by humans and all living things. These perspectives have

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significantly advanced the field of animal theology, providing deep insight into how Christ's redemptive work encompasses and unites the whole of creation.

While acknowledging these notable contributions, this article seeks to extend the theological exploration beyond the Christological focus into the realm of pneumatology. The overarching goal is not to dismiss the importance of existing Christological discussions but to complement and expand them. By weaving a pneumatological thread into the established themes of soteriology and incarnation, this article endeavors to offer a fresh perspective on the place of animals within the divine narrative of salvation and the consequent "all flesh" baptizing work of the Spirit. The pneumatological lens becomes a guiding light, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of how the Spirit's baptizing work encompasses all creaturely flesh. In doing so, this article aims to foster a more inclusive theological discourse, recognizing the active participation of animals in the divine drama of redemption and expanding the existing literature in animal theology to include a pneumatological perspective.

POSITIONING ANIMAL SOTERIOLOGY

Within the biblical text, the Creator emerges not only as the originator of creation but also as the compassionate redeemer and savior of the world, a narrative encompassing animals. Existing animal theologies embrace animals as recipients of salvation, which I will broadly touch on in this section.

In his exploration of John Wesley's theological framework, Ryan Patrick McLaughlin (2014b) draws attention to the often-overlooked sermons "The General Deliverance" (1781) and "The New Creation" (1785), shedding light on their significance in unravelling Wesley's soteriology, with a particular focus on his perspectives on atonement. McLaughlin examines how Wesley's conception of salvation is deeply woven into the wider fabric of creation, noting the often-neglected role of nonhuman animals in the redemptive narrative. Yet, despite Wesley's firm conviction in the goodness, mercy, and justice of God, McLaughlin highlights a striking tension between Wesley's theological claims and the stark realities evident in the brutality of the natural world. Drawing parallels with Eastern Orthodox sacramentality, Wesley envisions the creation as a sacred space where the divine and the created converge, revealing a harmonious coexistence between humans, depicted as the natural image of God, and nonhuman creatures. However, McLaughlin (2014b) notes Wesley's controversial rejection of essential differences between humans and nonhumans, including the contentious issue of immortality (p. 8). Wesley's argument is that humans, endowed with the capacities for knowing, loving, and obeying God, play a sacramental role in the harmony with nonhuman creation. The rupture of this harmony is attributed to the rebellion of humans, resulting in cosmic chaos and the widespread suffering of all creatures.[1]

Prominent biblical passages portray the Creator as a God characterized by loving-kindness and fidelity, not merely as the originator of creation but also as the redeemer and savior of all that has been brought into existence, including animals. This perspective

finds explicit affirmation in Psalm 36, which boldly declares" "Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your judgments are like the great deep; you save humans and animals alike, O Lord." For Elizabeth Johnson (2019), this declaration unambiguously includes animals in the vast scope of God's saving grace, emphasizing their integral place in the divine plan of redemption (p. 265). Examining this verse, Johnson notes how Ken Stone (2018) brings attention to the significance of the verb translated as "save," *yasa*, within the Hebrew Bible. This verb, recurrent across diverse contexts, is a foundational term denoting salvation, deliverance, and liberation, often attributing these actions to God as the ultimate savior. Stone's (2018) insightful analysis yields a powerful realization: "By extending God's salvation to encompass animals alongside humans and utilizing such terminology to convey this concept, Psalm 36 . . . places animals firmly within the redemptive activity of God that is often understood as central to biblical religion" (p. 142).[2] This insight positions animals as active participants in the redemptive narrative, sharing in the divine plan of salvation.

Extending this idea eschatologically is Bauckham, as understood by Denis Edwards (2019), who envisions a universalization of this cocreaturely kinship in the resurrection, where the human particularity of Jesus is united with the divine capacity to be universally present. The risen Christ becomes the ecological center of creation, allowing all things to find their completeness in God. Bauckham sees the incarnate Word engaging with other species and inanimate nature in a relational manner. The transformative nature of the incarnation for the entire creation is attributed to the loving self-identification of the crucified Christ with creation, encompassing both its disharmony and decay, as well as its abundance and vitality.[3] Moreover, the risen Christ, as perceived by Bauckham, draws the entire creation into the eschatological newness of resurrection (Edwards, 2019, p. 111).[4] Therefore, the incarnation is understood by Bauckham as salvific for all creatures.

AN INCARNATIONAL PNEUMATOLOGY

I will now extend this connection between Christ's creaturely nature with the forthcoming discussion on the Spirit. The embrace of creaturely flesh in the incarnation lays the groundwork for understanding how the Spirit operates within and beyond the human experience. This relationship reveals a transformative communion between God and all living beings, underscoring the unified work of the Spirit and Christ in the continual unfolding of incarnation and redemption. Frank Macchia's (2018) framework expands our understanding of the incarnation as a transformative process that not only shapes human nature but also initiates a comprehensive harmony with the entirety of creaturely existence (pp. 126–127). The Spirit's work, intimately bound to the incarnate mediation of Christ, brings about a profound reordering that transcends human boundaries and embraces all forms of life. In this framework, Macchia's scholarship highlights a crucial aspect—the connection between the incarnation and the outpouring of the Spirit. This establishes the incarnation as a profound aspect of Christ's function as the Spirit Baptizer for the entire creation.

In navigating through Matthew Wenk's (2022) exploration of the Spirit's role in redemption, particularly in Romans 8:1–30, we encounter a shift from conventional Christological emphasis to a nuanced pneumatological perspective. Wenk emphasizes the empowerment to live in solidarity with a suffering creation, portraying the Spirit not just as a guarantee of salvation but as an active agent working toward the redemption of all creation, including nonhuman creatures. This stance challenges traditional soteriological perspectives, advocating for a broader understanding that aligns more accurately with God's passion for the world. Taken together, these insights open a rich pathway into incarnational pneumatology, where the dynamic relationship between Christ's embodiment, the Spirit's outpouring, and the redemption of creation unfolds, bearing particular significance for the theological understanding of animals.

Moving first to Macchia's (2018) theological insights, he offers a unique perspective on the interconnection of the Word, the Spirit, and flesh within the context of the incarnation. Macchia presents the notion of the fleshly witness as a sacramental expression of the Spirit, underscoring the inseparable unity between the divine Son and his embodied humanity. This unity, according to Macchia, serves as a conduit for the Spirit's impartation to all flesh. Macchia's framework will help me expand the understanding of the incarnation as a transformative process that not only shapes human nature but also initiates a comprehensive harmony with the entirety of creaturely existence. The Spirit's participation in this dynamic, bound intimately to the incarnate mediation of Christ, brings about a transformative reordering that reaches beyond humanity to embrace all living creatures. The connection between the incarnation and the outpouring of the Spirit becomes a pivotal aspect for Macchia, as he positions Christ as the Spirit Baptizer for the entire creation (and subsequently, for all its creatures). For Macchia, the divine Word, or Son of the Father, not only imparts the Spirit to flesh but also through a fleshly medium. This medium, in Macchia's view, represents the self-declaration of the Son and operates as a sacrament of the Spirit. This distinct form of human witness, he argues, is uniquely equipped to partake in the impartation of the Spirit from the Father to all flesh. By participating in this Spirit-bestowing process, the fleshly medium of Christ's humanity becomes a representative before God for all humanity, rewriting the human narrative and embracing the diverse expressions of all flesh (Macchia, 2018, pp. 126–127).[5] Through this mode of Spirit impartation, Macchia argues that the incarnate Son incorporates all flesh into himself, shaping it in his image. The fleshly medium, participating in divine self-impartation through the Son and in the Spirit, must be so closely united with the divine Son that it fully engages in this divine incorporation. Essential to this perspective is the unity of identity (or person) between the Son and his humanity—essentially, the concept of incarnation. Macchia (2018) contends that this fleshly witness, deeply bound to the divine Son's act of imparting the Spirit, serves as a channel through which the incarnate life of Jesus Christ becomes a sacrament of the Spirit for all creation (pp. 126–127).

Broadening this view reveals that through the transformation of human nature, Jesus initiates a far-reaching harmony that unites all forms of creaturely existence within the movement of the Spirit. This transformative act brings about a deep reordering that

transcends humanity, embracing every living being and drawing animals, too, into communion with the Son through the Spirit's unifying presence.

According to Macchia (2018), the renewal of creation through the divine Spirit is deeply bound to embodied mediation, a theme central to the gospel. In this dynamic, the divine Son takes on human form, opening a path for humanity's participation in divine life, a process that reaches its fulfilment at Pentecost (Macchia, 2018, p. 124).[6] Macchia establishes a crucial link between the incarnation and Pentecost, affirming that this connection is achieved through the mediation of a life baptized. The significance of the Jordan River in this context lies in its implication that the incarnation is a complex event involving both the Word and the Spirit. Here, the Word assumes flesh through the agency of the Holy Spirit, with the Spirit's mediation at the incarnation holding a sanctifying role, as seen in the conception of Jesus as the holy Son of God. Moreover, Macchia recognizes Christ as the mediator of the Spirit's work, particularly in the role of a Spirit Baptizer. This mediation extends beyond the incarnation, as the outpouring of the Spirit is anticipated by the incarnate Christ. An intriguing question emerges: Does this Spirit baptism extend its impact to nonhuman creatures? I suggest that it does, as the incarnation and the consequent outpouring of the Spirit positions Christ as Spirit Baptizer both cosmically and creaturely.

Macchia (2018) probes into the concept of the eternal Word of the Father taking on flesh, facilitating the reception of grace from his fullness by all (John 1:14–16). Christ, identified as the "eternal life," manifests in the flesh as a mediator of life (1 John 1:2). This embodiment goes beyond mere appearance; Christ, functioning as a mediator, offers himself, and from his innermost being flows living water to baptize all flesh in the Spirit (John 1:33; 7:38). The significant connection between the incarnation and the outpouring of the Spirit positions the incarnation within the expansive significance of Christ as the Spirit Baptizer for the entire creation (Macchia, 2018, p. 124).[7]

The foundational embrace of creaturely flesh in the incarnation sets the stage for comprehending the Spirit's operation within and beyond the human experience, pointing toward a transformative communion between God and all living creatures. This relationship reveals the inseparable bond between the Spirit and Christ, establishing a continuous movement of incarnation and redemption that embraces the whole of creation. Transitioning into the theological insights of this section, Macchia (2018) establishes a crucial link between the incarnation and Pentecost, the Word, and the Spirit. The Spirit's role as a mediator in the incarnation holds a sanctifying significance, extending its impact beyond the human realm.

Wenk (2022) focuses on the Spirit's role in redemption, with Romans 8:1–30 emerging as a pivotal locus for Paul's pneumatological perspective. In the first 17 verses, Paul unveils a conception of justification and the formation of a new people by the Spirit, transcending legal constraints to include both Jews and gentiles. The redemptive creation, marked by reconciling power, holds eschatological significance, ultimately aiming for the redeemed people to lead to the liberation of the entire creation. The shift in focus from individual believers to the cosmic dimension is noteworthy, echoing themes found

in Ezekiel 36:26–35 and Isaiah 32:15–18, where the Spirit's renewing and life-giving power extends to the entirety of creation. This cosmic vision reinforces Paul's conviction that God's renewing work embraces the entirety of creation, moving beyond a narrowly individualized view of salvation (Wenk, 2022, p. 193). The passage signifies a cosmic vision of liberation, with salvation experienced by the children of God serving as a testament to the imminent eschatological salvation for all creation. Subsequent discussions will further clarify the details of the Spirit's work in Romans 8:18–30. The formulation "first-fruit of the Spirit" is interpreted either as the Spirit itself being the first fruit or as the Spirit bringing forth the first fruit in believers' lives. This Spirit, given to believers, is not merely a down payment but actively produces the first fruits of eschatological salvation: stirring hope, interceding in weakness, and groaning in solidarity with creation. Paul emphasizes that the Spirit's work extends beyond individual believers to the entire creation (Wenk, 2022, p. 193).[8] The Spirit's mission involves new life, hope, solidarity, and intercession for a creation experiencing suffering. The Spirit endures the pain of a groaning creation and anticipates its liberation, serving as a guarantee for the future of creation. The sufferings mentioned in this context are general life struggles, not specifically "on behalf of Christ." This view accords with the understanding that creation, still awaiting resurrection with Christ, continues to experience suffering, even as the Spirit remains present with and sustains all creatures during this interim.

While unpacking Romans 8:18–30, Wenk (2022) introduces a distinctive pneumatological perspective in Paul's soteriology, deviating from the conventional Christological emphasis. In Romans 8:18–30, Paul shifts the association of God's solidarity with a suffering creation from the crucified Jesus to the Spirit (Wenk, 2022, p. 195). This reflects a view in which the liberation of the individual is inseparably linked to the liberation of the wider creation. Wenk draws connections to Old Testament descriptions of eschatological renewal through the outpouring of the Spirit, particularly referencing Isaiah 32:15–18 and Ezekiel 36:25–35. Notably, he suggests that limiting the Spirit's role to transformative power overlooks the Spirit's enduring and grieving attributes and emphasizes the Spirit's active role in overcoming impediments to life (Wenk, 2022, p. 195). Wenk asserts that Romans 8:18–30 introduces a nuanced dimension often overlooked in discussions of the Spirit's transformative power: the empowerment to live in solidarity with a suffering and groaning creation. The passage also portrays the Spirit not merely as a guarantee of salvation but as an active agent working toward the salvation of all creation, including nonhuman creatures (Wenk, 2022, p. 195). This viewpoint affirms that the Spirit of Christ is dynamically involved in renewing the whole creation (including animals), bringing forth life and rescuing it from the threat of annihilation.[9] Wenk calls for an expanded understanding of soteriology, proposing a "soteriology of the Spirit" that moves beyond the legalistic frameworks often characteristic of Western theology. He argues that incorporating motifs such as resurrection, renewal of life (including its ecological dimensions), and reconciliation among all beings is essential for a fuller account of salvation. This broader perspective, he suggests, enlarges the church's theological vision and more faithfully reflects God's redemptive concern for the whole world, both human and nonhuman (Wenk, 2022, p. 195).

ANIMALS AS ALL-FLESH PARTNERS

Transitioning from the transformative communion between God and creatures within incarnational pneumatology, the lens broadens to include animals actively participating as partners in this cosmic narrative. The holistic Spirit immersion in all creaturely flesh becomes a bridge, inviting us to see animals not merely as passive participants but as cocreaturely recipients of divine life, liberated from present corruption toward an eschatological future.

I begin with David Cunningham's (2009) exploration of the term "all flesh" and its multifaceted usage in the Old and New Testaments. Cunningham contributes to a clearer understanding of how "all flesh" extends beyond humanity to encompass animals. He notes how the word "flesh" is employed in various contexts, including instances in the Old Testament where consuming the flesh of a person is a form of punishment, yet in the New Testament, Paul frequently uses "flesh" as a euphemism for sin. However, a recurring theme emerges as the term is consistently applied to describe all living creatures, often accompanied by the qualifier "all."[10]

Pentecostal scholars have made significant pneumatological headway in their contributions to ecotheology. Particularly, A. J. Swoboda (2011) creatively coins the term "Eco-Glossolalia" to symbolically refer to a Spirit-baptized creation, or a baptism of "all flesh" (p. 103).[11] Swoboda's metaphor broadly unites humanity with creation as eschatological partners through the empowerment of the Spirit and the outpouring of charismatic gifts. In this sense, the distinctive pneumatological strengths of Pentecostal theology permit the embedding of ecotheology into a Pentecostal worldview. Within the context of his Spirit-baptized creation metaphor, Swoboda (2013) renders Pentecostal pneumatology and its definition of Spirit baptism simply as "immersion" (p. 241). This immersion includes powerful experiences of encounter with the living God. It includes healing, empowerment for witness, and eschatological preparation, all of which implicate the community of faith. He argues that the holistic Spirit helps us "conceptualise both the role of the individual in the church and the role of every partner in creation" and see "the church and creation as holistic bodies that are interdependent and interdynamic" (Swoboda, 2013, p. 221). Swoboda considers that his concept of a Spirit-baptized creation may face challenges when considering the New Testament narrative. According to this narrative, Spirit baptism is linked to ecclesial purposes rather than creational purposes (Swoboda, 2013, p. 241).[12] However, in his development of a "Creation Pneumatology," Macchia (2016) explains that while the whole earth longs to live for God and reach for God to the point of "groaning in travail for the liberty of the Spirit," creation requires complete transformation and restoration by the Spirit so that it may come into union with its Creator (p. 129). Macchia (2016) affirms that the ultimate fulfillment of creation is its transformation into "the dwelling place of the Spirit in the image of the risen Christ" (p. 129).

Amos Yong (2005) advances the idea of the "Spirit poured out on all flesh" in a far more expansive way for animals. He uses the example of the pneumatological vision of the Prophet Isaiah and "links the charismatically anointed Messiah with the healing and

reconciliation of creation's destroying forces" (Yong, 2005, p. 300).[13] This includes the Spirit poured out on all creaturely flesh, including the wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, "all of whom are included in the blessings of God promised under the covenant of Noah" (Yong, 2005, p. 300). God's establishment of an eternal covenant with Noah and every living creature of all flesh ensures that "humans are not the only creatures that are addressed by God and called to live lives in response to God" (Clough, 2014, p. 41).[14] In groaning solidarity with all creatures, the same Spirit that dwells in the risen Christ intercedes on behalf of creation and serves as a guarantee that the future of creation, which is vulnerable to decay, will not be destroyed.[15]

Building on the covenant established with Noah, Jürgen Moltmann's (1999) exposition of "all flesh" extends beyond the confines of human boundaries, encompassing all living beings without discrimination (p. 57). This notion finds resonance in his portrayal of the ultimate manifestation of God's Spirit, whereby humanity undergoes a transformative metamorphosis, collectively becoming a prophetic community. The outpouring of God's Spirit sends ripples through the entire fabric of creation, bringing renewal to every form of life and restoring the shared community of living beings that inhabit the Earth.

Taking a more eschatological turn, Moltmann posits that all creatures are part of the "all flesh" that will be resurrected (McLaughlin, 2014a, p. 26). In an article exploring the eschatological implications for animals, McLaughlin (2014a) highlights Moltmann's cosmic community as one that requires "laws to safeguard the integrity of its members" (p. 30). McLaughlin argues that if animals are classified as "all-flesh" partners with humans, then animals are validated before God as creatures of worth. Therefore, animals can equally partake in the rights afforded to this cosmic community and share in the spoils of cosmic transfiguration (McLaughlin, 2014a, p. 30). For Moltmann, the encounter with God, catalyzed by the advent of the Spirit, transcends the limitations of particular individuals, groups, or even species. It extends its embrace to encompass the boundless breadth of creation, embracing "all flesh" in its expansive, creaturely entirety (Moltmann, 1999, p. 57).[16] This expansive vision corresponds with his understanding of the Spirit's work as extending beyond the human realm, resonating with every form of life.

CONCLUSION

The objective of this research is to facilitate the development of a more nuanced and comprehensive pneumatic soteriology that acknowledges and includes all nonhuman creatures. I contend that integrating a pneumatological perspective into the ongoing discourse on Christology would validate an incarnational pneumatology as a holistic framework. This framework would affirm animals as recipients of Spirit baptism, thereby aligning them with humans toward a common eschatological destiny. This contribution holds significant implications, particularly for Pentecostal scholarship, offering a robust theological framework that recognizes the spiritual significance of all living creatures within the divine plan of salvation.

Notes

1. McLaughlin (2014b) examines Wesley's connection of all creaturely suffering and death to the Fall, acknowledging potential scientific challenges to this theological stance. He highlights Wesley's speculative reflections on the extent of loss experienced by nonhuman creatures, proposing a degradation in their understanding, will, and liberty. The acknowledgment of predatory nature in some creatures introduces the concept of "original sin" in the nonhuman realm.

2. In response to this inclusive salvation, Johnson (2019) notes that animals are depicted as actively seeking and waiting for the Lord (Psalm 145:15), actions described using the same verb employed elsewhere when a human expresses hope for God's salvation (Psalm 119:166). Within the encompassing circle of salvation, animals place their trust in their Creator, whose loving-kindness extends to care for their lives. This depiction reinforces that animals, too, find refuge and hope in the salvific actions of their Creator (Johnson, 2019, p. 265).

3. When considering the incarnation, theologians have traditionally interpreted the term "flesh" to signify Jesus's human nature, taking an anthropocentric position that equates "flesh" specifically with humanity. However, contemporary scholars such as Linzey, Clough, Bauckham, Edwards, and Wallace have largely departed from an anthropocentric understanding, advocating for a broader interpretation. They extend the significance of "flesh" beyond the human realm, implicating a more inclusive context that goes beyond humanity and the human experience. This idea, more popularly known as "deep incarnation," was originally coined by Niels Gregersen (2001, p. 205) and originated as a concept for comprehending Christology within an evolutionary framework. This expanded perspective has not only challenged the traditional anthropocentric view, but also influenced the animal theologies of pioneering scholars in this field.

4. Denis Edwards (2009) adds, "I think it can be said that God does not forget any creature that God loves and creates, but inscribes it eternally in the divine life" (p. 96).

5. While Leopoldo Sánchez (2015) has humans primarily in view, he explains that while the Son's primary task is the incarnation, the Spirit's specific role is to sanctify human nature through this indwelling (p. 96).

6. Linzey (2016) has also noted the connection with the baptizing Spirit on all flesh and the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost (pp. 78–79).

7. Jeffrey Lamp (2016), who also discusses this idea of a Spirit-baptized creation, captures how Pentecost provides a unique perspective on the Spirit's presence in the new creation. Lamp (2016) would agree with my thinking here, as he notes how Macchia further expands this perspective by reimagining the Pentecostal experience of Spirit baptism that moves beyond a human-centric framework to encompass the entirety of creation (pp. 10–11, citing Macchia, 2018). From an ecotheological perspective, Lamp proposes that the signs of the Spirit's outpouring, as described in both Joel and Acts 2, include not only manifestations among humans such as dreams and visions but also natural phenomena—both cosmic and terrestrial. The concept of creation as an active and significant character in Joel 1–2, receiving the word of the Lord and lamenting for salvation, aligns with the insights of John Griffiths (2021), who argues for a broad ecological understanding of the term *basar* (p. 55).

8. Wenk (2022) describes Romans 8:18–30 as centred on the Spirit's solidarity and intercession for a suffering creation that longs for liberation. Paul here is not only concerned with personal character transformation, but also with the eschatological liberation of creation, leading to newness of life in fellowship with God's children (Romans 8:21). Although the text does not provide explicit ethical instructions, the broader Pauline context suggests that believers are encouraged to participate in the Spirit's mission in the world, as "the church is to be where the Spirit is, in solidarity with the suffering world."

9. Edwards (2009) would concur with Wenk. Edwards (2009) explains that in the Word made flesh, God embraces the whole labor of life on the earth, with all its evolutionary processes, including death, predation, and extinction, in an event that is both a radical identification of in love and an unbreakable promise (p. 95). As previously noted, the notion of "all flesh" extending beyond humanity and into the creaturely sphere is an idea that can be attributed to Linzey (1998, p. 7).

10. Cunningham (2009) underscores the significance of God's relationship with "all flesh," evident in pivotal biblical narratives. For instance, during the decision to flood the earth, the focus extends beyond humanity to encompass all flesh. The covenant postflood is not exclusively with humans but includes all flesh, emphasizing a broader divine connection with all creaturely life. The term "flesh" facilitates a nuanced understanding of both commonality and differentiation among living beings. While all creatures share in having fleshly bodies, distinctions exist within the category of flesh. Cunningham notes the biblical recognition of different kinds of flesh, such as that of cold-blooded and warm-blooded animals. This mirrors empirical observations, allowing for the identification of shared aspects with other species while acknowledging differences. For Cunningham, the Fall affects all creatures, placing "all flesh" under divine judgment. He notes the cosmological significance of the Fall, indicating a broader disturbance in the created order, underscoring the need for healing in "all flesh" (Cunningham, 2009, pp. 114–117).

11. Swoboda's (2011, 2013) metaphor is constructed on the communal understanding of Pentecost (as described in Acts 2:17), where the Spirit baptizes "all flesh." Swoboda clarifies that his thesis of a Spirit-baptized creation is developed from the creational narratives of Genesis 1–3, a portrait "of God's Spirit giving life and taking life in every element of the created realm" (Swoboda, 2013, p. 241).

12. While Swoboda (2013) explains that Spirit baptism is unique to Christian experience, he does not entirely disqualify a shared experience by nonhuman agents.

13. The precise wording used in Isaiah 66:23 and Psalm 145:21, which includes the Hebrew phrase *kol basar* (meaning "all flesh"), can be understood to refer to all living creatures, including humans, animals, or all of humanity. It is unlikely that these verses exclusively refer to animals or to the physical human body alone. This leaves two possible interpretations: either all humans or all humans and animals. In the Hebrew Bible, the use of *kol basar* to refer to both humans and animals is not uncommon and is found in various passages (such as Genesis 6:13, 17; 9:11, 15, 16, 17; Leviticus 17:14; Numbers 18:15; Psalm 136:25). In fact, some argue that when animals and humans are intended to be referred to together, the phrase "all flesh" is typically used (Eaton, 1967, p. 316). Linzey (2016) also makes this connection (p. 79).

14. For Ambrose of Milan (2015), the flood narrative holds a symbolic connection to the sacrament of baptism. According to Ambrose, the deluge symbolized a baptism for the earth, purging it from sin and paving the way for renewal. The ark and the cross of Christ act as instruments of salvation: "Noah was saved by wood, as you also are saved by the wood of the Cross" (Ambrose, 2015, Book 1, Chapter 3). This declaration draws a parallel between Noah's deliverance and the redemptive power of Christ's crucifixion. Ambrose further discerned the dove released by Noah as a representation of the Holy Spirit. Just as the dove brought peace and signalled a new beginning after the flood, Ambrose envisioned the Holy Spirit as the transformative force through baptism. Expanding on Ambrose's insights, one might explore the notion that the flood, conceptualized as a baptism for creation, is succeeded by the inclusion of nonhuman creatures through the Spirit. This perspective posits that the flood serves not only as a symbol of cleansing and renewal for humanity but also extends to the natural world, including its covenant with nonhuman creatures.

15. Lamp (2016) connects the Spirit's outpouring on "all flesh" in Joel's language, raising the question of whether more than just human beings are included in this divine outpouring. Lamp (2016) argues that the creational language in the passage, particularly the mention of "all flesh," may imply a broader scope, especially considering Paul's usage in 1 Corinthians 15:38–39, which extends the concept to include nonhuman creation (p. 10).

16. Upon reflecting on the Noahic covenant, Moltmann deduces that the term "all flesh" encompasses not only the human race but also extends inclusively to embrace all living beings.

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