

“Gazing Toward Heaven” In Clement of Rome:  
The Function of Vision in Clement’s Christology

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## ABSTRACT

The phrase “through him we gaze into the height of heaven” in 1 Clement 36.2 has received relatively little attention in terms of its background, meaning and function. One exception is found in Harold Bumpus’s *The Christological Awareness of Clement of Rome and Its Sources*. Bumpus suggests that this phrase and the other διὰ τούτου phrases found in 1 Clem. 36.2 share affinities with certain 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple Jewish texts, among which he includes *1 Enoch*. Bumpus concludes that these affinities point to a high priestly concept within 1 Clement similar to *1 Enoch* and *Testament of Levi*. The present study seeks to build on Bumpus’s connection to 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple Jewish vision elements and high priestly conceptions within 1 Clement by identifying and analyzing potential lexical and conceptual parallels to the phrase “gaze into the height of heaven.” The high priest concept in *1 Enoch* 13–16 is also compared to 1 Clement 36. The conclusion is that Clement appropriates a high priest concept from Jewish mystical and apocalyptic traditions, but within his own soteriological framework. The heavenly vision in 1 Clement is a function of Christ’s high priestly ministry and is described not only in terms of a revelation, but also as a transformative experience. The transformation is not one that happens outwardly, but one that happens within the heart and mind; it is a transformation from ignorance to knowledge.

## Introduction

In examining the background to the high-priest theme in 1 Clement, Harold Bumpus suggests that Clement bases his high-priest concept on *1 Enoch* and the *Testament of Levi*.<sup>1</sup> This suggestion is significant in light of the five “through him” (διὰ τούτου) phrases found in 1 Clem. 36.2 which bear elements strikingly similar to Jewish mystical concepts of vision.<sup>2</sup> In particular, the phrase “through him we gaze into the heights of heaven” (διὰ τούτου ἀτενίζομεν εἰς τὰ ὕψη τῶν οὐρανῶν<sup>3</sup>) is most conspicuous as a clue pointing to the potential connection to *1 Enoch*. While Bumpus elucidates this connection to a certain extent, his explanation of the meaning of these “through him” phrases is brief<sup>4</sup> and requires closer examination. Building on Bumpus’s observations, my goal is to understand the meaning and function of the phrase “gaze into the heights of heaven” as it relates to Clement’s high-priest concept. In order to accomplish this goal, the paper is structured in the following manner. First, I will briefly examine lexically similar phrases found in LXX Isaiah 38:14, Prayer of Manasseh 9, *Life of Adam and Eve* 33:2, and Acts 7:55 in order to identify how it is understood elsewhere in 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple Jewish texts. I will then turn to *1 Enoch* in order to outline the priestly role and concept of vision presented in that text, focusing primarily on *1 Enoch* 13–16. I will also consider how the phrase “gaze into the

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<sup>1</sup>Bumpus, *Christological Awareness*, 113, 122. The suggestion that Clement has appropriated elements from *1 Enoch* is not unique to Bumpus. W. C. van Unnik argued long ago that 1 Clem. 20 has close parallels with the wisdom elements of 1 Enoch 2–5, perhaps more than with Stoic elements. W. C. Van Unnik, “Is 1 Clement 20 Purely Stoic?” *Vigiliae Christianae* no. 3 (1950): 181-189.

<sup>2</sup>April DeConick defines early Jewish mysticism as “an esoteric tendency within Second Temple Judaism which is characterized by speculation about ascent into heaven and gaining a transforming vision of the *kavod*.” April DeConick, *Seek to See Him: Ascent and Vision Mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 32.

<sup>3</sup>The Greek text and translations of 1 Clement in this paper are based on Holmes’ critical edition: Michael W. Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations Third Edition* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007).

<sup>4</sup>He devotes only a few pages to discussing these particular phrases: *Christological Awareness*, 110-112.

heights of heaven” relates to the context of 1 Clement 36. Finally, I will offer an explanation of the meaning and function of the phrase in light of the lexical and conceptual parallels and contextual considerations.

*Lexical Parallels to ἀτενίζομεν εἰς τὰ ὕψη τῶν οὐρανῶν*

There are at least four close lexical parallels to the phrase “gaze into the heights of heaven” (ἀτενίζομεν εἰς τὰ ὕψη τῶν οὐρανῶν) that are relevant for this study.<sup>5</sup> They are LXX Isaiah 38:14, Prayer of Manasseh 9<sup>6</sup>, *Life of Adam and Eve* 33:2, and Acts 7:55.

Isaiah 38 recounts Hezekiah’s miraculous healing from his deathly illness. Verse 14 occurs in the midst of Hezekiah’s prayer in response to this act of deliverance from the Lord. In verses 10–13 Hezekiah is lamenting his sickness and his oncoming doom. Verse 14 expresses the climax of Hezekiah’s depression:

Isaiah 38:14 LXX: “Like a swallow, so will I cry out, and like a dove, so will I mutter, for my eyes have failed from *looking to the height of heaven* toward the Lord who rescued me.”<sup>7</sup>  
ἐξέλιπον γάρ μου οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ τοῦ βλέπειν εἰς τὸ ὕψος τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πρὸς τὸν κύριον, ὃς ἐξείλατό με

The rest of the prayer is essentially a psalm of praise/thanksgiving to the Lord for what He has done in rescuing Hezekiah from death. Although this phrase uses a different verb for seeing (βλέπω), what is significant is that it describes the place where Hezekiah sees the Lord as “the height of heaven.”

Similarly, the next text under consideration is also in the Septuagint in the context of a prayer—the Prayer of Manasseh. This penitential psalm centers around the author’s confession

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<sup>5</sup>I conducted several lemma searches on the TLG database. These were the two most fruitful: ἀτενίζω + ὕψος + οὐρανος (range: within 10 words); εἰς + ὕψος + οὐρανος (range: within 5 words). <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/>

<sup>6</sup>Prayer of Manasseh 9 (LXX) or in (*OTP* vol. 2 it is verse 10). In Rahlfs edition of the LXX, the Prayer of Manasseh is Ode 12.

<sup>7</sup>NETS translation.

of personal sin and appeal to the Lord for his grace.<sup>8</sup> Prayer of Manasseh 9 expresses the magnitude of the sin committed and it is in the midst of this lament over sin that we find the phrase “I am not worthy to gaze at and see the height of the sky” (καὶ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἄξιος ἀτενίσαι καὶ ἰδεῖν τὸ ὕψος τοῦ οὐρανοῦ). In addition to using the verb ἀτενίζω with the phrase τὸ ὕψος τοῦ οὐρανοῦ and thus providing a closer lexical parallel to 1 Clem. 36.2, Prayer of Manasseh 9 connects gazing into the height of heaven with the purity and worthiness of the one looking. A sinner is not able to experience the heavenly gaze. This theme is incredibly important as it shows up in both of the final two lexical parallels as well as in *I Enoch*.

*Life of Adam and Eve* 33:2 also connects worthiness and the character of the individual to her ability to see into heaven. In *LAE* 32, Eve confesses her sin to God and in the midst of her prayer is stopped by an angel. This angel acknowledges her prayer as an act of repentance and exhorts her to watch the spirit of Adam (who has just died) ascend into heaven (32:4). When Eve attempts to cover her face (33:1), the angel prevents her, tell her to “Lift yourself from earthly things.”<sup>9</sup> It is at this point that Eve experiences a vision of heaven. *LAE* 33:2: “and gazing into heaven, she saw a chariot of light”<sup>10</sup> (καὶ ἀτενίσασα εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἶδεν ἄρμα φωτὸς<sup>11</sup>). Lexically, the parallel with 1 Clem. 36.2 is close, yet here there is no τὸ ὕψος. However, the

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<sup>8</sup>Charlsworth, “Prayer of Manasseh: A New Translation and Introduction,” *OTP*, vol 2., 625. In Ode 12:8, the author speaks of needing repentance, which God provides for those who are unrighteous in general (“you did not appoint repentance for the righteous ones”) and for the author in particular “but you appointed repentance for me, the sinner.”

<sup>9</sup>M. D. Johnson, “Life of Adam and Eve,” *OTP* translation.

<sup>10</sup>This likely is part of the Merkavah mysticism tradition.

<sup>11</sup>Greek text from D. Bertrand, *La Vie grecque d' Adam et d' Eve*, Paris: Librairie Adrien Maisonneuve, 1987: 68-106.

concept of highness is still present (especially since Adam's spirit ascends). Again, the gift of vision into heaven is connected to worthiness, more specifically to repentance.<sup>12</sup>

Acts 7:55 is set within the larger context of Stephen's stoning and the vision of Christ that he experiences. Stephen's harsh rebuke of the religious leaders<sup>13</sup> in the speech immediately preceding incites them to violently dispose of him. Both the content of the speech and characterization of Stephen<sup>14</sup> within the narrative function to juxtapose the belief/righteousness of Stephen with the unbelief/unrighteousness of the religious leaders.<sup>15</sup> In Acts 7:55, as those in the Sanhedrin are rushing towards Stephen in a blind rage, Stephen "gazed into heaven (*ἀτενίσας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν*)<sup>16</sup> and saw the glory of God, and Jesus at the right hand of God."

There are a number of significant elements in this statement, but perhaps most importantly for our study, Stephen is depicted as the only one who sees this vision. Those whom the narrative portrays as faithless (i.e. the religious leaders) cannot see into heaven, as is evident by the fact that Stephen must tell them what he sees.<sup>17</sup> Their response is revealing: they cover their ears. Not only are these unrighteous individuals unable to see, they take pains to remain in their ignorance. The function of this response to Stephen's announcement of his vision is to serve as a further indictment of the religious leaders' unrighteous character. In contrast, the narrative

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<sup>12</sup>As with Ode 12. See footnote 10 above.

<sup>13</sup>Specifically, the Sanhedrin (Acts 6:12, 15), including the high-priest (7:1).

<sup>14</sup>Acts 6:8, 10, 15. Also, Acts 7:59-60 is a clear allusion to Christ's words on the cross (cf. Luke 23:46 and Matt 5:44).

<sup>15</sup>Acts 7:51-53.

<sup>16</sup>Luke uses the verb ἀτενίζω more than any other NT author. In fact, all but two of the fourteen occurrences of this verb in the New Testament are in either Luke (two) or Acts (ten)— the other two occurrences are in 2 Corinthians.

<sup>17</sup>Acts 7:56

depicts the vision as a divine confirmation of Stephen's innocence and righteous character. Lexically, the phrase is almost exactly the same as in *Life of Adam and Eve*, meaning that it is a close parallel to 1 Clem. 36.2 aside from lacking τὸ ὕψος. This final lexical parallel is significant as well in that it connects gazing into heaven with seeing God's glory and seeing Jesus standing at God's right hand. The themes represented here overlap both with *1 Enoch* and 1 Clement.

### **Enoch's priestly role in *1 Enoch***

In *1 Enoch* 13–16, the biblical figure Enoch is depicted as a mediator for fallen angels (“Watchers”) who have sinned against God and seek his forgiveness. A major aspect of this mediation is Enoch's ascent into the celestial temple, described in *1 En.* 14:8ff. Before examining this scene, a few important contextual elements should be noted. Enoch is described as “the blessed and righteous man of the Lord” whose “eyes were open,” who saw a “vision from the heavens” shown to him by angels and as result Enoch “heard from them everything” and understood.”<sup>18</sup> As with the examples above, heavenly vision is for the one who is worthy to see it and to whom God graciously chooses to reveal it. This connection between vision and righteous character is further confirmed in *1 En.* 13:5, where the Watchers are not able to “raise their eyes unto heaven as a result of their sins which have been condemned.” For this reason, the Watchers beg Enoch to intercede to the Lord for their forgiveness (13:4). Ultimately, the Watchers are condemned, which includes a prevention from their ascending into heaven (14:5). But more importantly, Enoch's intercession includes a vision into heaven which is relevant for our discussion of 1 Clement.

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<sup>18</sup>All of the English translations are from E. Isaac, “1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch: A New Translation and Introduction,” in J.H. Charlesworth ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, I (New York: Doubleday, 1983): 5-89.

Enoch begins his journey as an ascent up into heaven (14:8-9). Ascent is a critical element of Enoch's heavenly vision; it is a prerequisite for seeing the Glory of God.<sup>19</sup> After his ascent, Enoch passes through a wall and comes to a building, which he enters. The heavenly building is divided into two parts (vv. 10 and 15). This would perhaps be an incidental detail if not for the fact that the second part is where God's Glory resides, shining on a throne (14:20).<sup>20</sup> Enoch describes seeing the Glory on the throne which is also "the face of the Excellent and the Glorious One" (14:21). Enoch is the only one who is allowed to look, among angels or humans. When Enoch hides his face (14:24), God lifts him up to face Him and addresses Enoch as "Enoch, righteous man, scribe of righteousness" (15:1) and intercessor for the Watchers (15:2). The final detail of significance for our study is that the Watchers have "abandoned the high, holy, and eternal heaven" (15:3).

Clearly, this depiction of Enoch is one loaded with all sorts of symbolism, not least of which is a priestly function (i.e. high priest entering the Holy of Holies as a mediator).<sup>21</sup> The heavenly building is a celestial sanctuary and Enoch stands before the presence of God's Glory in his priestly ministry, *face to face* with God. One significant aspect of Enoch's priestly role is that it lacks an atonement, or at least an atonement in terms of a sacrifice or offering. What is important to note with regard to Enoch is that he serves a mediating role to sinful beings on earth (who cannot ascend to see God's Glory), his ascension precedes his vision into heaven, his

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<sup>19</sup>Christopher Rowland, "Visions of God in Apocalyptic Literature," *Journal For the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 10, no. 2 (1979), 141.

<sup>20</sup>Rowland does not see a celestial temple here. See Rowland, "Visions of God," 140-141.

<sup>21</sup>Andrei Orlov observes that both the Enochic and Merkabah traditions "appear to stress Enoch-Metatron's role as the celestial high priest, since he approaches the realm where ordinary creatures, angelic or human, are not allowed to enter." Andrei Orlov, *The Enoch-Metatron Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 114.



vision into heaven includes seeing God's glory and knowledge and understanding of things no one else has access to (19:3).

### *Context of 1 Clement 36*

1 Clement 36.1–6 concludes the section of the letter which began with the exhortation to follow the “ways of blessing” (1 Clem. 31:1).<sup>22</sup> Clement begins this section with a reference to “the way” (ἡ ὁδός). This “way” is described positively as that “in which we find our salvation” and is a continuation of Clement’s discussion of the “way of truth” referenced in 35.5 and 35.12.<sup>23</sup> The pronoun αὕτη may thus be understood as referring back to the “way of truth” (τῇ ὁδῷ τῆς ἀληθείας) of 35.5. In other words, Clement is explaining that this way of truth is the way in which salvation has been found for the believer, and that salvation is Jesus Christ.<sup>24</sup> Clement also identifies Jesus as “the high priest of our offerings” (τὸν ἀρχιερέα τῶν προσφορῶν ἡμῶν). This word ἀρχιερεύς is used as a title for Christ three times in 1 Clement,<sup>25</sup> but it is with this first instance that the concept is explicated in the most detail.

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<sup>22</sup>Bumpus, *Christological Awareness*, 106.

<sup>23</sup>Robert M. Grant and Holt H. Graham, *The Apostolic Fathers: A New Translation and Commentary*, Vol 2: First and Second Clement (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1965), 63. Grant does not see Jesus as being “the way” for Clement (so John 14:6), but the way is how God’s salvation is found and Jesus is God’s salvation.

<sup>24</sup>The syntactical relationship of Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν to the rest of the sentence is difficult to ascertain, since some scholars seem to take it as the antecedent of the pronoun αὕτη<sup>24</sup> but it makes the most sense to take it as an accusative in simple apposition to τὸ σωτήριον, which the following translation makes explicit: “This way of truth is the way in which we obtained our salvation, *who is* Jesus Christ”. See Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 198-199. Wallace’s illustration of Eph. 1:7 for the accusative in simple apposition demonstrates a strikingly similar syntactical situation as 1 Clem. 36.1– preposition ἐν + relative pronoun + ἔχω + accusative + accusative in simple apposition: ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτωσιν διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ, **τὴν ἄφεσιν** τῶν παραπτωμάτων

<sup>25</sup>36.1, 61.3, and 64.1

Having described Christ as the salvation of believers, high priest, benefactor and helper of weakness, Clement turns in 36.2 to relaying a litany of Christological descriptions introduced by διὰ τούτου “through him”:

διὰ τούτου ἀτενίζομεν εἰς τὰ ὕψη τῶν οὐρανῶν  
 διὰ τούτου ἐνοπτρίζομεθα τὴν ἁμωμον καὶ ὑπερτάτην ὄψιν αὐτοῦ  
 διὰ τούτου ἠνεώχθησαν ἡμῶν οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ τῆς καρδίας  
 διὰ τούτου ἡ ἀσύνητος καὶ ἐσκοτωμένη διάνοια ἡμῶν ἀναθάλλει εἰς τὸ φῶς  
 διὰ τούτου ἠθέλησεν ὁ δεσπότης τῆς ἀθανάτου γνώσεως ἡμᾶς γεύσασθαι<sup>26</sup>

Robert Grant understands these five descriptions as Clement providing “a rhetorical account of the work of revelation through Christ: five cola beginning with ‘through him,’ two emphasizing what is seen, two speaking of that which sees, and one referring to taste.”<sup>27</sup> Grant’s observations are helpful, though perhaps incomplete. Though these descriptions seem to break up Clement’s apparent adaptation of Hebrews in 36.1, 3-6, the διὰ τούτου clauses actually may be seen as a continuation of Clement’s explanation of Christ as the means/agency of salvation (36.1).<sup>28</sup> One could even see the “way” imagery complementing the διὰ τούτου language in terms of Christ being the pathway to the soteriological realities reflected in these descriptions. That there is likely a soteriological dimension to these descriptions is evident from the Light-Darkness language in the context of Clement’s Name theology.<sup>29</sup> Michael Harris explains Clement’s soteriology as “a process of moving from ignorance to knowledge.”<sup>30</sup> This “knowledge” consists

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<sup>26</sup>1 Clem. 36.2 “Through him we gaze into the heights of heaven; through him we see as in a mirror his faultless and transcendent face; through him the eyes of our hearts have been opened; through him our foolish and darkened mind springs up into the light; through him the Master has willed that we should taste immortal knowledge.”

<sup>27</sup>Robert M. Grant and Holt H. Graham, *The Apostolic Fathers: A New Translation and Commentary*, Vol 2: First and Second Clement (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1965), 63.

<sup>28</sup>Bumpus, *Christological Awareness*, 111.

<sup>29</sup>Michael D. Harris, “Christological Name Theology in three Second Century communities,” (2013), *Dissertations (2009 -)*, Paper 270, p. 132. [http://epublications.marquette.edu/dissertations\\_mu/270](http://epublications.marquette.edu/dissertations_mu/270)

of the Name and the knowledge that is given to the believer in the context of Name activity.<sup>31</sup> In other words, knowledge of the Name is salvific for the believer.<sup>32</sup>

*Meaning and function of ἀτενίζομεν εἰς τὰ ὕψη τῶν οὐρανῶν in 1 Clement*

It is within this context that the phrase “through him we gaze into the heights of heaven” (διὰ τούτου ἀτενίζομεν εἰς τὰ ὕψη τῶν οὐρανῶν) occurs as the first διὰ τούτου statement. In addition to describing salvation, these statements should be understood as functions of Christ’s priesthood. In distinction from the high-priest concept in Hebrews, Christ’s priestly ministry here is described in terms of mediating a heavenly gaze, culminating in the tasting of “immortal knowledge.” At this point, it is helpful for us to draw upon the early examinations of the lexical parallels. We noted that with most all of those parallels (save LXX Isaiah 38:14), the heavenly gaze was only for the one who was worthy to receive it. In 1 Clem. 35, Clement establishes this very same connection: it is only those who “patiently wait for him” through faith (35.3, 4, 5), follow the way of truth, avoiding all unrighteousness (35.5), etc. who receive the blessed and marvelous gifts of God (35.1, 4). But this righteous living and avoidance of sin exhorted in 35:1-12 is complicated by our weakness (36.1). That is where Christ’s high priestly ministry as benefactor and helper comes in. Thus, we can obtain salvation, which is defined as seeing God face to face, but it is through Christ’s ministry as high priest to make our offerings acceptable.

Like Enoch then, Christ does stand in the celestial throne room of the Glory of God, face to face with the Divine Presence. But in a radical departure from the Enochic priest, Christ brings

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<sup>30</sup>Harris, “Christological Name Theology,” 132.

<sup>31</sup>Harris, “Christological Name Theology,” 132.

<sup>32</sup>Harris, “Christological Name Theology,” 132-133. Harris cites numerous texts that point to Light-Darkness language carrying soteriological weight: Isaiah 50:10 “those who walk in darkness – they have no light; trust in the Name of the Lord,” Jesus’ reference to Himself as light and to his hearers as potential “children of light” (John 8:12; 12:35-36), hearers who bring light in Matt. 5:14-16, as well as the light and dark imagery in the Two Ways theology expressed in Barnabas 18-20, the Community Rule (1QS), and the War Scroll (1QM).

those who are unable to see the glory into the celestial throne room with him. More precisely, he shows the celestial throne room to the believer who is otherwise incapable of seeing into heaven and experiencing the presence of the divine Glory. In other words, ascending is not a prerequisite for seeing in Clement. Ascending is no longer necessary, because Christ himself he is the very effulgence of God's majesty.<sup>33</sup> It is less clear how Christ mediates heavenly vision to the believer, but he clearly sees Christ as currently residing in the heavenly throne room and ruling.<sup>34</sup> Bumpus notes another distinction from Jewish mystical traditions is that there is no evidence of angelology.<sup>35</sup> Nor does there appear to be any hint of angelomorphism. In this way, Clement follows the high-priest concept of Hebrews as Christ being superior mediator and revealer to angels because of his superior name.<sup>36</sup>

Within the *δια τούτου* statements there may also be somewhat of a progression resulting in transformation, a common Jewish mystical element.<sup>37</sup> The order of these statements is important; there is a kind of progression. Although for Clement there is no ascending of the believer, the idea of height is still present. The believer gazes up into the heavenly heights, then sees the face of God (reflected in Christ), then is given internal vision ("eyes of our hearts are opened")<sup>38</sup>, so that the mind may be transformed from foolishness and darkness to light and

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<sup>33</sup>(ἀπαύγασμα τῆς μεγαλωσύνης) as in Wis. 7.25-26 and Heb. 1:3.

<sup>34</sup>1 Clement 36:5; Bumpus notes that in Clement the "High-priest title...sees Jesus as the ruling Lord presenting us and our petitions before the throne of God." Bumpus identifies this concept as "in the same stream as the priest in the Testimonies of the Twelve Patriarchs and the Elect One in 1 Enoch." Bumpus, *Christological Awareness*, 122.

<sup>35</sup>Bumpus, *Christological Awareness*, 112.

<sup>36</sup>1 Clem. 36.2; Heb 1:4

<sup>37</sup>DeConick, *Seek to See Him*, 32.

<sup>38</sup>The expression ἡμῶν οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ τῆς καρδίας is used in 59.3 and Eph. 1:18 but nowhere else is this expression found in LXX or NT (Hagner, *Use*, 223). In the context, this expression indicates that Christ's agency contributes to a true enlightenment which leads to light and knowledge (as the following

finally partake of immortal knowledge. This transformation is not an outward, bodily transformation (as in angelomorphism), but an internal transformation from ignorance to knowledge, from blindness to sight, and thus to salvation.<sup>39</sup>

### Conclusion

For Clement, the phrase “gazing into the heights of heaven” takes on a more specific meaning than simply that Christ reveals and reflects God.<sup>40</sup> Clement appropriates the high-priest

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clauses reveal). From 59.3, this expression may also be understood as the beginning of knowing God (εἰς γινώσκειν σε) and his Name (59.2 and cf “hope in your Name” in 59.3). Here the enlightenment or “opening of the eyes of our heart” is presented in terms of a past event (aorist indicative ἀνοίγω, whereas the previous verbs in 36.2 are present), though in 59.3 Clement petitions God for this to happen. Of course, one must be careful to make too much of grammatical variations, though Clement does seem to be consistent in establishing a kind of order: first comes opening the eyes of the heart, then comes knowledge. This order is consistent with the imagery in 38.3—at creation, humanity was in a state of darkness before God acted:

“Let us acknowledge, brothers, from what matter we were made; who and what we were, when we came into the world; from what grave and what darkness the one who made and created us brought us into his world; having prepared his benefits for us before we were born.” (Holmes translation, 97).

Harris sees both themes of creation and salvation combined here as well as in 59: “It is the creator who saves. The state from which the creator saves is a dark grave. The opposite state, which is ‘his world’ into which the believer is brought, is implied to be characterized by light and life.” Harris, “Christological Name Theology,” 136-137.

<sup>39</sup>This transformation can be seen especially in the word ἀναθάλλει. The term ἀναθάλλει “grows up/springs up” is a horticultural term that carries with it the notion of a plant blooming or sprouting (Harris, “Christological Name Theology,” 134). Lightfoot brings this out in his marvelous paraphrase, “Our mind, like a plant shut up in a dark closet, had withered in its growth. Removed thence by His loving care, it revives and shoots up towards the light of heaven” (Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers* 1.2, 112). Clement pictures the believer as a helpless plant needing Christ’s agency (διὰ τούτου) to push through the state of darkness into God’s light (i.e. saving knowledge); without Christ, the believer can’t break into the light (Harris, “Christological Name Theology,” 135). The phrase ἡ ἀσύνετος καὶ ἐσκοτωμένη διάνοια ἡμῶν alludes to Rom. 1.21 and possibly Eph. 4.18. For Hagner, Rom. 1.21 is to be preferred since it is better attested elsewhere (Hagner, *Use*, 217 and 225). However, that “a darkened understanding” and “ignorance” leads to alienation from the life of God in Eph. 4:18 complements by way of implication what Clement presents in 36.2 and 59.2—that those who have not been enlightened to the knowledge of the Name cannot attain to the light and life of God.

<sup>40</sup>Bumpus, *Christological Awareness*, 111, 122. Hagner explains this phrase as “most probably alluding to the free access to the very presence of God which is ours through our great High Priest,” citing Hebrews 10:19ff and Hebrews 4:14 as possible connections. Hagner, *Use*, 183. This insight is helpful, but still somewhat generic.

concept within Jewish mystical and apocalyptic traditions, but within his own soteriological framework. This heavenly vision is a function of Christ's high-priestly ministry and is described not only in terms of a revelation, but in fact as a transformative experience. The transformation is not one that happens outwardly, but one that happens within the heart and mind; it is a transformation from darkness to light, meaning ignorance to knowledge. Through Christ the believer sees the very face of God in the sense of an internal "seeing," resulting in a saving knowledge of God. Within other Jewish and Christian texts, gazing into the heavens is something that only the righteous are able to do. Clement draws upon this concept, but explains the basis for it: Christ is the high priest who mediates this ability to those who otherwise are too weak and sinful to achieve it.

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