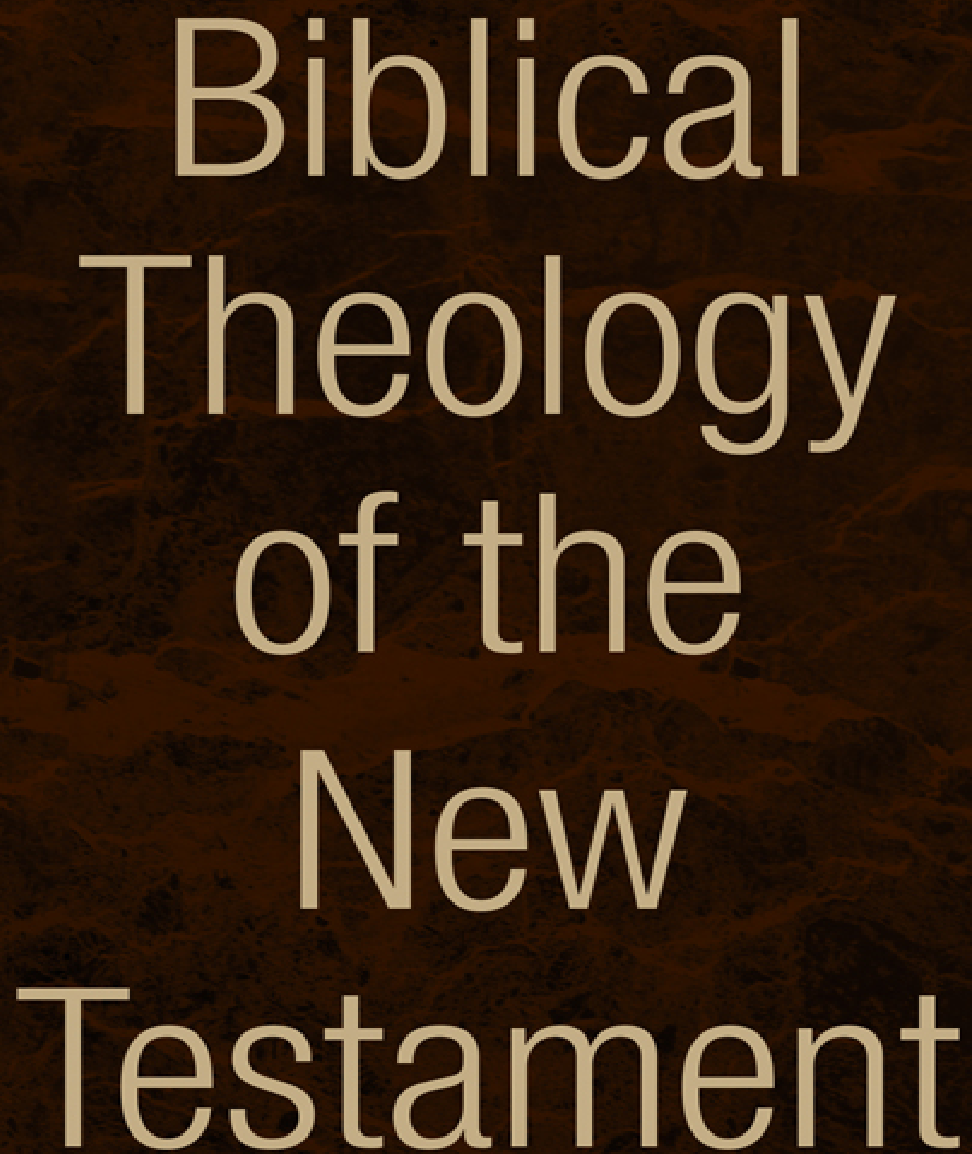

PETER STUHLMACHER

translated and edited by
Daniel P. Bailey

Biblical Theology of the New Testament

PETER STUHLMACHER

TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY
DANIEL P. BAILEY
WITH THE COLLABORATION OF
JOSTEIN ÅDNA

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Contents

Foreword by G. K. Beale

Translator's Preface

Preface to the English Edition

References and Abbreviations

Bibliography of New Testament Theologies

FOUNDATIONS

1. The Task and Structure of a Biblical Theology of the New Testament

BOOK ONE: THE ORIGIN AND CHARACTER OF THE NEW TESTAMENT PROCLAMATION

Part One: The Proclamation of Jesus

2. The Problem and Necessity of the Quest for the Earthly Jesus
3. The Chronology of Jesus's Ministry
4. Jesus and John the Baptist
5. God's Son and God's Kingdom
6. Characteristic Forms of Jesus's Proclamation
7. God's Uniqueness and Saving Power in the Proclamation of Jesus
8. God's Will in the Proclamation of Jesus
9. The Messianic Son of Man: Jesus's Claim to Deity
10. Jesus's Readiness to Suffer and His Understanding of His Death
11. The Consequence of Jesus's Mission: Passion and Crucifixion
12. Who Was Jesus of Nazareth?

Part Two: The Proclamation of the Early Church

13. Jesus's Resurrection from the Dead
14. The Development of the Confession of Christ
15. The Formation, Structure, and Mission of the First Churches

Part Three: The Proclamation of Paul

16. Sources, Chronology, and Nature of Paul's Career
17. The Origin and Starting Point of Pauline Theology
18. Paul and the Law
19. The World, Humanity, and Sin
20. Christ, the End of the Law
21. The Gospel, Justification, and Faith
22. The Sacraments, the Spirit, and the Church
23. Life and Obedience by Grace: The Pauline Paraclesis

Part Four: The Proclamation in the Period after Paul

24. The Proclamation of Christ in the Pauline School
25. The Understanding of the Church in the Pauline School
26. Paraclesis and Eschatology in the Pauline School
    Excursus: Eschatology and Apostleship in 2 Thessalonians
27. The Letter of James
28. The Theology and Proclamation of First Peter
29. The Theology and Proclamation of Hebrews
30. Apostolic Faith and Scripture Interpretation in the Church: The Struggle against Heresy in Jude and Second Peter

Part Five: The Proclamation of the Synoptic Gospels

31. The Origin of the Synoptic Gospels
32. The Gospel of Mark

33. The Gospel of Matthew
34. Luke and Acts

Part Six: The Proclamation of John and His School

35. The Tradition of the Johannine School
36. Johannine Christology
37. Life in Faith and Love
38. The Johannine View of the Church
39. The Significance of the Tradition of the Johannine School

BOOK TWO: THE PROBLEM OF THE CANON AND THE CENTER OF SCRIPTURE

40. The Formation of the Two-Part Christian Canon
41. The Center of Scripture
42. The Canon and Its Interpretation
43. Recent Work and Future Prospects

Biblical and Greco-Roman Uses of *Hilastērion* in Romans 3:25 and 4 Maccabees 17:22 (Codex S)
BY DANIEL P. BAILEY

Index of Subjects

Index of Modern Authors

Index of Scripture and Other Ancient Sources

Foreword

For the first time, English readers will now have access to Peter Stuhlmacher's two-volume *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (*Biblical Theology of the New Testament*; vol. 1, 2005³; vol. 2, 2012²). Daniel P. Bailey, in collaboration with Jostein Ådna, has translated and edited Stuhlmacher's work, a project that has taken years to complete. The new translation provides a window into both the world of German scholarship and debates about biblical theology. For example, the text offers an evaluative survey of the major German biblical theologies from the latter part of the twentieth century to the early part of the twenty-first century (17–27). A similar survey of Pauline theology is also provided (264–73).

Stuhlmacher asserts that biblical theology encounters two major problems: (1) the authoritative claims of the OT and NT and (2) the relationship of the authoritative writings in the NT to those in the OT. The book begins and ends with a discussion of the biblical canon. Stuhlmacher focuses on the complex relationship between the NT and OT. In contrast to most German biblical theologies, Stuhlmacher examines the use of OT texts in the NT as well as the wider theological framework of the OT.[1] The latter sheds light on the former and vice versa: "Neither can the Old Testament be interpreted apart from the New nor can the New Testament be interpreted apart from the Old" (802).[2] Accordingly, the OT is not "a preliminary stage to the New, the significance and worth of which will only be decided on the basis of the New Testament revelation."[3] Stuhlmacher's approach marked the beginning of a trend among NT theologies that attempt to understand the significance of Christ and his redemptive work in light of the conceptual categories of the OT.

One example of this is Stuhlmacher's argument that Jesus's Last Supper should be understood as an enactment of the festival of deliverance from Egypt, a typological celebration of a worldwide deliverance of those in spiritual bondage. Stuhlmacher understands the reference to "Isaiah the prophet" in Mark 1:1–2 as the basis for "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." The phrase "as it is written" never introduces a new sentence in the NT but always provides the grounds for something

prior. No period is needed between 1:1 and 1:2. These two verses are therefore to be translated continuously: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as it is written in the prophet Isaiah. . . . Mark intends to narrate the gospel of Jesus Christ just as it stands written (or promised) in the prophet Isaiah” (561). Mark thus presents Isaiah as the basis or essential content of his gospel.

Stuhlmacher distinguishes between the “Sinai Torah” and the “Zion Torah.” The latter refers to the eschatological time (1) when Israelites would be personally changed into a new creation by the Spirit; (2) when Israelites would live in peace and walk according to God’s statutes;[4] (3) when the new revelation of the law at Zion will supersede the provisional Sinai revelation of the Torah, the new Torah will not stand against people but will be written on their hearts, Torah instruction will not be needed (Jer 31:31–34); and (4) when the Messiah’s rule and new revelation of the law will be centered in Zion. As a result, Israel’s old Torah is “weighted in new and different ways” (288).

In contrast to the skeptical trend of German scholarship, Stuhlmacher follows the hermeneutical approach of his OT colleague, Hartmut Gese. Ernst Troeltsch established the hegemony of the historical-critical method, an approach marked by systematic skepticism (historical judgments are uncertain and cannot be the basis of faith), analogy (humans in the past are the same as humans today), and correlation (modern scientific natural law is assumed to be true). Stuhlmacher and Gese believe that these three principles are insufficient. Rather, principled historical skepticism must be overcome by a hermeneutic of “good will” or “critical sympathy.” Historical criticism must enter into serious discussion with the biblical texts “by agreeing as far as possible with their central kerygmatic statements” (12) or at least “allowing them to have their say” (cf. 742). Consequently, four criteria must control any biblical hermeneutic: it must be (1) historically appropriate to the NT, (2) open to the claims of revelation in the gospels, (3) related to the church’s experience of life and faith, and (4) transparent rationally.

Stuhlmacher sums up his approach as “intellect seeking faith” together with “faith seeking understanding” (13), although he appears to prefer the latter: “there is . . . no better instruction for the understanding of Scripture than Proverbs 9:10 (NIV): ‘the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,

and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding'" (805). Consequently, exegetes must "squarely face the truth claims" of the NT books and "get inside the 'underlying spiritual experience' in which both the [biblical] authors and recipients of these texts lived" (795). This means interpreters must "take into account the criticism of reason pronounced by the biblical texts themselves" (796), and they "must remain open to the miracle of God's self-disclosure through the texts" (804). In another book, Stuhlmacher observes that exegetical, hermeneutical, and theological methods are limited because "God and the Spirit cannot be confined to a method."[5]

In contrast to many biblical theologies written in North America, Stuhlmacher's biblical theology is like a NT introduction (it includes discussions of authorship, dating, and a survey of contents of NT books) with an emphasis on apologetics. Stuhlmacher defends the historical reliability of accounts in the Synoptic Gospels. For example, instead of assuming that the sayings of Jesus had their origin in the later tradition of the church, Stuhlmacher believes that there was a "well-preserved continuity of tradition between the pre-Easter band of disciples and the post-Easter church" (56). Accordingly, the beginnings of the Jesus tradition lie, not in the post-Easter church traditions, but in Jesus's own teaching that he imparted to his followers, who then maintained these sayings together with the accounts of the healing miracles. Therefore, Jesus's sayings and acts recorded in the Synoptic Gospels should be assumed to be historically reliable. Stuhlmacher maintains that a presupposition of historical reliability is in keeping with reading the gospels with "critical sympathy" (57).

Stuhlmacher finds Peter's narration of the preaching about Christ in Acts 10:36–43—leading up to the "mini-Pentecost" at the end of that chapter—to be a good and reliable summary about the historical Jesus (61–62). Acts 10:36 is a crucial part of this narration: "the word which he [God] sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all)." The notion of "God sending his word to Israel" borrows from Psalm 107:20 and the "preaching of peace" indicates that it was through Christ that the promise of end-time peace had begun its fulfillment in Christ (in accordance with Isa 52:7, cf. 79–80, 88, 180). "The designation that captures Jesus and his work most exactly is that of the messianic atoner and reconciler" (183; cf. 184). Paul uses the word "reconciliation" to "summarize atonement and justification" (354). An inclusive model of

Jesus's death closely integrates several ideas: sacrifice and place-taking, destruction of that which is unholy, surrender of life to God, forgiveness of sins, and new creation (218).

Stuhlmacher appears to collapse the concepts of justification and sanctification: "Sanctification for Paul does not mean anything additional to justification, but describes its inward dimension from the perspective of atonement theology; this dimension places believers into the new obedience" (411). Further, he writes, "If one considers the character of justification as sanctification and a change of lordship, then the apostle's dialectic understanding of freedom also becomes understandable" (414). Stuhlmacher never qualifies these statements.

I was pleased to see Stuhlmacher's proposal of the center of NT theology: "The early Christian resurrection confession becomes the all-decisive central datum of the biblical theology of the New Testament" (199). I reached a similar conclusion in my own *A New Testament Biblical Theology*.[6] Yet Stuhlmacher can also say that "the doctrine of justification is therefore the distinguishing mark of the Pauline gospel from early on" (256); likewise, from early on in Paul's ministry, "the doctrine of justification designates . . . the whole of Pauline theology" (367). Indeed, Stuhlmacher states that the doctrine of justification "can be designated as the center of Scripture by solid exegetical reasoning" (800). He understands both Christ's resurrection and the doctrine of justification to be the central ideas of a biblical theology.

Stuhlmacher concludes his work by briefly discussing areas in NT theology in which there needs to be further work: (1) the tradition behind the Synoptic Gospels, especially with respect to its early Jewish and Jewish-Christian presuppositions; (2) the three great pilgrimage festivals (Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles); (3) the earliest Christian education system and how this relates to the teaching tradition of the OT and NT; (4) the dialogue between exegesis and systematic theology; and (5) the notion of truth in the OT and NT and its hermeneutical significance.

The translation of Stuhlmacher's work by Eerdmans is a contribution both to scholarship and to the church.

G. K. Beale
September 30, 2017

1. See also Peter Stuhlmacher, *How to Do Biblical Theology*, Princeton Theological Monograph Series (Allison Park, PA: Pickwick, 1995), 79.

2. See also Stuhlmacher, *How to Do Biblical Theology*, 2–12.

3. Stuhlmacher, *How to Do Biblical Theology*, 79. Note also G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011) for further discussion.

4. Stuhlmacher appeals to Ezekiel 36–37 and Jeremiah 30–31 for these first two points.

5. Peter Stuhlmacher, *Historical Criticism and Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Towards a Hermeneutic of Consent* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 90.

6. See pages 227–356.

Translator's Preface

This book is a translation of Professor Peter Stuhlmacher's two-volume *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* with special attention to the needs of English-speaking theological students. I have aimed at a translation that is easily readable over long stretches with as smooth a style as possible. Professor Stuhlmacher read drafts at frequent intervals as I submitted portions of chapters, using highlighting to identify added transitional phrases of various lengths, almost all of which were approved. I used the German text to guide me to the exegetical insight of the author and then expressed that point as clearly as I could, with frequent recourse to the many English versions, one of which was usually the ideal rendering for the author's thought. The default translation for this edition is the NRSV at the author's request; slight modifications have usually been noted. Special attention has been paid to primary sources, as I looked up most of the texts I did not know, and then provided page references to the standard sources for extrabiblical literature to make reference slightly easier. The Old Testament versification follows the Hebrew text, with English or Septuagint versification consistently given in parentheses or brackets. Important Hebrew terms have also been given in transliteration. Qumran documents have been identified both by number and by short title to help students gain familiarity, while the front matter provides extensive orientation to the system of reference and the primary sources. Finally, each chapter contains two bibliographies at the end, "Original Bibliography" and "Further Reading." Citation of a work of secondary literature within the chapter with the author name and title but no date generally implies that the work is listed in the original bibliography; dates are usually given for other secondary literature cited within the chapter.

The starting point for this English edition is the latest German editions of the volumes containing chapters 1–23 and 24–43, namely, the third edition of volume 1 (2005) and the second edition of volume 2 (2012). However, the revision of volume 2 consisted mainly of converting Qumran document titles into the standard numbering system together with the correction of errors. There was no change to the German chapter

bibliographies in volume 2, which therefore reflect the date of the first edition of 1999.

In German a major revision was undertaken in chapter 1 for the third edition, in which Professor Stuhlmacher added new material, balanced against cuts of existing material, to avoid increasing the chapter's length at the publisher's request. But in our English edition a few pages of useful German material that had been cut have been reincluded. The most significant restored material is the mild criticism of Joachim Jeremias that begins with a quotation from Ernst Käsemann's essay "Blind Alleys in the 'Jesus of History' Controversy" (23–24).

For all chapters of this book, English-language supplemental bibliographies were provided at an intermediate stage in our process by Scott Hafemann and Alexander Kirk, as indicated in the author's preface. These generally run through 2010, but there are also more recent entries. The front matter additionally contains a list of twenty-seven New Testament theologies in English and German.

To bring the volume up to date regarding secondary literature, we were fortunate to have the cooperation of four authors of recent works of New Testament theology in English, who provided substantial summaries of their work in §5.3.12 of chapter 1. We are grateful for the contributions of Frank Thielman, Frank J. Matera, Thomas R. Schreiner, and Gregory K. Beale. Furthermore, in §5.3.11, Eugene M. Boring has provided a summary of Udo Schnelle's *Theology of the New Testament* (2007; ET 2009), of which he is the English translator.

I set out to gain a reasonably clear understanding of every topic addressed in this volume, for the sake of its readers as well as for my own learning. One result was that in chapter 40, on the canon, I substantially supplemented the text in various places and made in effect a second edition of it. In particular, an entirely new section of three thousand words on the Old Testament canon of Eastern Orthodoxy is added in §7.10 (762–68). This may be useful in part because in the United States, Bibles with the Apocrypha now include all the books that have been part of the Greek and Russian Orthodox (Slavonic) Bibles, including, for example, 4 Maccabees. I attempt to overview the situation as a journalist would, drawing particularly upon Eugen Pentiuc, *The Old Testament in Eastern Orthodox Tradition* (2014).

Chapter 40 also includes a new five-hundred-word excursus on Josephus's rationale (cf. *Ag. Ap.* 1.37–41) for counting twenty-two Hebrew canonical books rather than the traditional twenty-four (with no change in contents), drawing upon John Barclay's volume *Against Apion* (2007) in the Brill Josephus series (744–45). There is also an expanded treatment of the canonical status or otherwise of the "recognized," "disputed," "spurious," and "rejected" books of the New Testament as understood by Origen and Eusebius, summarized in an enhanced table on the model of Bruce Metzger (§7.4, [757–58]).

One very important collaboration occurred after Professor James D. G. Dunn had read a preliminary version of my translation of Professor Stuhlmacher's chapter 17, and asked by email whether it would be possible for us to refer to some of his more recent works on subjects pertaining to Paul and the law. I therefore corresponded extensively with both Professors Stuhlmacher and Dunn over Christmas 2015–2016 to produce an updated version of §1.5.4 of chapter 17 (270–73), mainly based on Dunn's clarifications in his long introductory essay to his collected essays *The New Perspective on Paul,* entitled "The New Perspective: Whence, What and Whither?,"[1] which appeared after the latest German edition of the present work. The extra material in this *Biblical Theology* begins with the reference in the text to Dunn's comprehensive new essay (271), and has been selected by me to create a kind of dialogue, although only Professor Stuhlmacher speaks in the first person.[2] I simulated a response by Professor Stuhlmacher, in which he interacts with passages where Dunn has summarized his views. Both professors have read and approved of the resulting presentation, which shows the lasting impact of characteristically Lutheran and Reformed understandings of justification and sanctification.

Beyond a unique example of editing like the one just explained, Professor Stuhlmacher kindly writes in his preface that I have "expertly augmented" (*fachkundig ergänzt*) his text (see below, xx). However, I would also like to make it clear that this statement is partly a reflexive one, as many of the ways in which I have tried to enhance the English text of this *Biblical Theology* have been a product of knowledge I gained while working with Professor Stuhlmacher and his Tübingen colleagues. Particularly important for my own academic development were my translation and annotation of Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhmacher, eds.,

The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources (Eerdmans, 2004), as well as research on the atonement conducted in both Tübingen and Cambridge.

While in *The Suffering Servant* I often enclosed my translator's additions within the double square brackets ⟦(Tr.) . . .⟧, I have not used that convention here in this *Biblical Theology*, and I use the tag "translator" only sparingly (e.g., 128, 159, 183, 219–20nn1–2, 352). I count at least forty more or less significant additions made to the text of this work, introducing a new issue or adding more evidence for existing points. These expansions generally augment the theological, philological, or exegetical infrastructure of English edition in support of Professor Stuhlmacher's superstructure. Nineteen examples in six categories are noted below.[3]

There are many people to acknowledge. First in historical order would have to be my University of Cambridge doctoral supervisor, Professor Morna D. Hooker. In her role as editor of the *Journal of Theological Studies* she gave me my first translation assignment, working with Professor Stuhlmacher's most esteemed colleague, Professor Martin Hengel, along with his research student Roland Deines. The project was a seventy-page English translation of a longer (at the time unpublished) German review article of two works by E. P. Sanders.[4] A year later I was invited as Professor Hooker's student to participate in the 1996 Baylor University Colloquium on Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins, where the other main speaker was Professor Stuhlmacher's Tübingen colleague Otto Betz. My paper, "Concepts of *Stellvertretung* in the Interpretation of Isaiah 53,"[5] began to popularize the English translation of the Tübingen German expression *einschließende* or *inkludierende Stellvertretung* as the "inclusive place-taking" of a sacrificial animal, or the Suffering Servant, or Jesus himself on behalf of the beneficiaries of atonement. My study was mainly based on Professor Otfried Hofius's use of the latter expression in the Tübingen volume on Isaiah 53, which I would later translate (as above),[6] while Hofius for his part had based his work on the seminal essay of Tübingen Old Testament Professor Hartmut Gese, "The Atonement."[7] This terminology of "inclusive place-taking" has since become mainstream in English and is now one of the topics in a popular book by Simon Gathercole.[8] It can be counted as a lasting contribution of the Tübingen

approach, which Professor Stuhlmacher attributes to very favorable collegial relationships with these and other Tübingen professors.[9]

My collaborator Jostein Ådna deserves special thanks for his outstanding contribution to the final editing of this book. After the translation had been largely completed, Jostein painstakingly read the entire work against the German. While he caught a few outright scribal errors, for which I am thankful, much more valuable to me was his deep knowledge of Professor Stuhlmacher's theology and the German theological scene in general, which helped give an added level of precision to our final text. In many cases he also found the ideal English word and generally gave me extra confidence in the soundness of our product. Finally, Jostein has influenced the book's vocabulary by introducing the increasingly standard terminology of Jesus's "action in the temple" or "temple act" for the traditional "temple cleansing" that stood in the German, supported by his dissertation and a related dictionary article.[10]

My friend and former student Kevin M. Franco helped with formatting of bibliographies and the writing of the extra section on the Orthodox canon in chapter 40, as well as looking up German works and their English translations for the painstaking page correlations (including a late night in the Regenstein Library). He also spent time away from his family on several Saturdays to try to help me organize the essay on Romans 3:25 and 4 Maccabees 17:22 that concludes this volume.

I also received help in translating languages I am not very familiar with. For Swiss German of the sixteenth century, my friend from college days, Professor Amy Nelson Burnett (University of Nebraska–Lincoln), translated two portions of Heinrich Bullinger's Zurich Confession of 1545 (761, 782).

For *katharevousa* Modern Greek, our chair of Classics and Mediterranean Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Professor Nanno Marinatos, helped me to understand a very formal letter of recommendation by an authority from the Orthodox Church in Greece, addressed to the director of the Greek Bible Society, and reproduced in their *The Holy Bible in Today's Greek Version with Deuterocanonicals* (1997). The letter recommends this modern Bible for personal study; but in part because its Old Testament is based on the Hebrew text rather than the

Septuagint, it also states that it is not to be used in the liturgy or in other church activities (see below, 766).

Finally, I must thank Professor Peter Stuhlmacher for the great privilege of learning from him and translating his magnum opus. The nearly three years I spent in Tübingen in separate visits in 1991 and 1992–1994 I recall as some of the happiest and most adventurous of my life.

I therefore feel privileged to have been able here to produce a new essay, which Professor Stuhlmacher has welcomed, on the interpretation of the crucial term *hilastērion*, entitled "Biblical and Greco-Roman Uses of *Hilastērion* in Romans 3:25 and 4 Maccabees 17:22 (Codex S)." My treatment unavoidably becomes a tribute to Stuhlmacher's own seminal essay of 1975, "Recent Exegesis of Romans 3:24–26."[11] In particular, his idea that the use of this term in 4 Maccabees 17:22 Codex S should be interpreted in the light of the Greco-Roman inscriptions, which show all such ἱλαστήρια to be concrete "propitiatory offerings," has influenced English Bible translation. Adopting Stuhlmacher's ideas as mediated in part through my unpublished University of Cambridge dissertation (now available online),[12] Professor David deSilva of Ashland Theological Seminary has replaced the RSV's expression "their death as an *expiation*" (with reference to the martyrs) with "their death as a *propitiatory offering*" for the ESV Apocrypha.[13]

It should be noted that my essay here contains arguments never before published about ἱλαστήριον, including a formal theory for distinguishing biblical and Greco-Roman usage as well as a less novel but still necessary criticism of the translation "atoning sacrifice" (which Professor Stuhlmacher asked me to include in the light of his interactions in 1975 with Eduard Lohse [cf. *Märtyrer und Gottesknecht*, 1955], who still holds this view). Nevertheless, the essay is not written in a strict journal-article style, but as a more expansive discussion of Greek intended to be accessible to students at various levels. As such, I cannot think of a place I would rather have it appear than in this *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, as a small token of gratitude for all I have learned by studying with Professor Stuhlmacher and translating his great work.

DANIEL P. BAILEY
Chicago
February 16, 2018

1. In Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul* (2008[2]), 1–97.

2. A key input for Professor Dunn came in the form of a May 2003 email from Professor Stuhlmacher that Dunn has preserved. Stuhlmacher wrote to Dunn in German in May 2003, and his message, according to Dunn's English translation, is: "Since all men are sinners, they themselves cannot be recognised as doers of the whole law, even if they have done some good. Without Christ and his intercession, they are lost" (Dunn, *New Perspective*, 91 with n. 379). Professor Stuhlmacher has indicated that the quotation sounds like something he might have written, although he does not remember the particular exchange.

3. **(1) Text criticism:** Luke 22:16, *οὐκέτι οὐ μὴ φάγω* (152); Rom. 16:7, Ἰουνιαν = "Junias" or "Junia" (238–39); Acts 11:20, "Hellenists," Ἑλληνιστάς vs. Ἕλληνας, "Greeks" (241); **(2) Greek word studies:** refutation of M. Karrer, *Der Gesalbte*, regarding τὸ χριστόν, Dan. 9:26b LXX (130–31); English translations of σάρξ, "flesh," in Paul (308); ἐπερώτημα in 1 Pet. 3:20 interpreted as in NRSV margin, "a *pledge* to God *from* a good conscience" (516–17); John 1:18 as the apposition μονογενής = θεός in 𝔓[66] ℵ* B C*, etc. (670–71); **(3) Sacrifice, atonement, and the mercy seat:** note 1: inaccuracies in J. Roloff, "ἱλαστήριον," *EWNT/EDNT* (219); note 2: impossibility of using *P. Fay.* 337 to argue ἱλαστήριον is a term for a victim of sacrifice (220; cf. 688, first full paragraph); Jesus as περὶ ἁμαρτίας, "sin offering," Rom. 8:3, with LXX statistics (88 times) (324–25; cf. 221); the mercy seat as physically a "top-piece" (ἐπίθεμα) on the ark (Exod. 25:17; Philo; Josephus) given various theological names: כַּפֹּרֶת, ἱλαστήριον, *propitiatorium* (and *oraculum*), *Gnadenstuhl*, "mercy seat" (160); also called "the very seat of the godhead" (J. Milgrom, 217); **(4) Theological German:** German scholars (e.g., C. Breytenbach) point out that the Greek expressions "to make atonement" (ἱλάσκεσθαι) and "to reconcile" (καταλλάσσειν) have different roots and meanings, whereas the corresponding German terms are etymologically related: *Sühne* and *Versöhnung* (or *Versühnung*) (352); German *Bürgerlichkeit* can be understood pejoratively as the conventional "middle class" way of life (cf. *bourgeois*); however, in the exegesis of the Pastoral Epistles it can also be used positively, as in "The Ideal of Good Christian Citizenship" (484); **(5) Expanded quotation of primary texts:** lists of verses are sometimes expanded as paragraphs, e.g., 38 statements of how Christ died or surrendered his life ὑπὲρ ἡμῖν/ὑμῖν/πάντων, "for us/you/all," and other related expressions (777, first two paragraphs; another example, 750–51, §5.3); **(6) Critical issues:** M. Hengel's theory of the authorship of John's Gospel, expanded in our ET (651–52, small type).

4. M. Hengel and R. Deines, "E. P. Sanders' 'Common Judaism,' Jesus, and the Pharisees: Review Article of *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah* and *Judaism: Practice and Belief* by E. P. Sanders," *JTS* NS 46 (1995): 1–70.

5. In *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins*, ed. W. H. Bellinger and W. R. Farmer (1998), 223–50.

6. See O. Hofius, "The Fourth Servant Song in the New Testament Letters," in *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*, ed. B. Janowski and P. Stuhlmacher (2004), 163–88.

7. H. Gese, "Die Sühne," in *Zur biblischen Theologie* (1977), 85–106; ET: "The Atonement," in *Essays on Biblical Theology* (1981), 93–116.

8. See S. Gathercole, *Defending Substitution: An Essay on Atonement in Paul* (2015), esp. "The Tübingen Understanding of Representative 'Place-Taking,'" which is the first topic of chapter 1 (pp. 30–38), followed by M. D. Hooker's "Interchange in Christ" (pp. 38–42).

9. On this topic of the Tübingen contribution to biblical theology as Professor Stuhlmacher sees it, we now have his retrospective article, which he has indicated may be his last, "Die Tübinger

Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments—ein Rückblick," *TBei* 48 (2017): 76–91. Stuhlmacher reviews the productive results for biblical theology of his collegial relationships with Tübingen Professors Hartmut Gese, Otto Betz, Martin Hengel, Gert Jeremias, and Otfried Hofius, and at a later time, Gese's former student Bernd Janowski. But he also seems to lament, while also accepting it as a not uncommon result in academic life, that this biblical theology is not being clearly carried forward by the current Tübingen biblical faculty, which is once again turning to the perspectives of the Bultmann school. On the whole, this essay provides an overview of Stuhlmacher's entire career and the exegetical results he considers most important.

10. Cf. J. Ådna, *Jesu Stellung zum Tempel* (2000); "Temple Act," *DJG* 947–52.

11. See P. Stuhlmacher, "Zur neueren Exegese von Röm 3,24–26," in *Jesus und Paulus*, FS W. G. Kümmel, ed. E. E. Ellis and E. Grässer (1975), 315–33, repr. in idem, *Versöhnung, Gesetz und Gerechtigkeit* (1981), 117–35; ET: "Recent Exegesis of Romans 3:24–26," in *Reconciliation, Law, and Righteousness* (1986), 94–109.

12. See "Jesus as the Mercy Seat: The Semantics and Theology of Paul's Use of *Hilasterion* in Romans 3:25" (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 1999; https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.17213), summarized in *TynBul* 51 (2000): 155–58.

13. On deSilva's translation of 4 Macc. 17:22 Codex S, see also the expression "the propitiatory offering of their death" in the running translation in D. A. deSilva, *4 Maccabees: Introduction and Commentary on the Greek Text in Codex Sinaiticus* (2006), 59.

Preface to the English Edition

The publication of my *Biblical Theology of the New Testament* in English is a risky venture. I wrote it twenty years ago, and it reflects the prevailing discussion in Germany at the time. In those days, it was hotly debated whether it would even make sense to write a theology of the New Testament that would no longer see the New Testament tradition as anchored only in Hellenistic syncretism, but first and foremost in the Hebrew Old Testament, the Septuagint, and the faith traditions of ancient Judaism. Likewise, it was (and remains) controversial whether access to the biblical texts can be obtained only with the help of the historical-critical method, or whether this method is rather to be embedded in the wider effort to understand the biblical texts as they understand themselves. Within the context of the Christian canon, they are testimonies of faith in the one and only God, who definitively revealed himself in Jesus Christ and has opened access to the knowledge of this revelation through his Spirit-filled word. To the extent that this is not about specific historical analyses but the study and exposition of biblical theology, in my opinion the testimony of the texts must be hermeneutically respected. Since the theological discussion in the United States and the United Kingdom is accented differently than in Germany, it remains to be seen whether and how my presentation fits into this other conversation.

This book is appearing only now in English for two reasons. For professional and health reasons, Dr. Daniel Bailey was unable to work as quickly on the translation as he originally planned. At the same time, I was so intensely occupied with caring for my sick wife at home for ten years that academic work was impossible. Only now can I get back to my desk. But now I no longer have the time and energy to revise the original two volumes once again. I have to let them go out as they were. I regret that, because much progress has been made in work on the theology of the New Testament. Ulrich Wilckens has completed his three-volume theology (in seven part-volumes), portions of which are due to appear in English, and has supplemented this with a criticism of methods of biblical interpretation that is worthy of consideration: *Kritik der Bibelkritik: Wie die Bibel wieder*

zur Heiligen Schrift werden kann ("Criticism of Biblical Criticism: How the Bible Can Again Become Holy Scripture," Neukirchener Verlag, 2012). However, although it was not possible to systematically interact with Wilckens's *Theologie* in the body of this work, I provide a summary of the contents and approach in chapter 1 (§5.3.10) and I have also published a review in *Theologische Beiträge*.[1] Donald A. Hagner has presented a theological introduction to the New Testament: *The New Testament: A Historical and Theological Introduction* (Baker Academic, 2012). This book also deserves attention. Furthermore, Nicholas Thomas Wright has enriched the discussion with profound monographs. His imposing magnum opus, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, criticizes the dogmatic interpretation of Paul coming out of the Reformation and attempts to place it back on its original biblical foundations. This ambitious undertaking requires a careful response, but although this could no longer be incorporated into my book, I have recently been able to comment on Wright in another venue.[2] Finally, although I have long been in conversation with James D. G. Dunn on the issue of justification by faith through the biennial Durham-Tübingen symposia and other opportunities, here in collaboration with the English translator I have only been able to provide a brief update by referring to the lead essay in the second edition of Dunn's *The New Perspective on Paul* (2008^2).[3]

Without the long-term collaboration based on mutual trust with my Tübingen friends and mentors Prof. Dr. Martin Hengel, DD (†), and Prof. Dr. Hartmut Gese, I could not have written my book. It remains dedicated to them. For the English translation, others are deserving of mention. First and foremost, I thank Dr. Daniel P. Bailey (University of Illinois at Chicago). He has translated the German original with remarkable expertise and sensitivity and has knowledgeably augmented the text. Prof. Dr. Jostein Ådna (Stavanger) has checked Dr. Bailey's translation, suggested improvements, and contributed significantly to the work's completion. He too deserves my heartfelt thanks. The same is true for Dr. Scott Hafemann (St. Andrews). He has advised me and worked together with his former assistant Dr. Alexander Kirk to produce the supplemental bibliographies. At my request, Dan Bailey and Jostein Ådna have taken over the task of copyediting and submitting the book. They thereby bear a burden that I as an old man would not have been able to shoulder. William B. Eerdmans

Publishing Company has ventured to publish this theology. I thank William B. Eerdmans Jr., James Ernest, and their entire team for the confidence they have placed in me and all who helped in the book's preparation.

PETER STUHLMACHER
Tübingen
March 17, 2017

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1. There are both a print version and a longer downloadable version of the review: Peter Stuhlmacher, "Nimm und lies!," review of *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, by Ulrich Wilckens, *TBei* 47 (2016): 224–29; idem, " 'Nimm und lies!' Zur Lektüre von Ulrich Wilckens 'Theologie des Neuen Testaments.' " See PDF: http://theologische-beiträge.de/index.php?id=4715.

2. See now Peter Stuhlmacher, "N. T. Wright's Understanding of Justication and Redemption," in *God and the Faithfulness of Paul: A Critical Examination of the Pauline Theology of N. T. Wright*, ed. M. F. Bird, C. Heilig, and J. T. Hewitt, WUNT 2/413 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 359–74.

3. See below, chapter 17, §1.5.4, esp. 271–73.

References and Abbreviations

Abbreviations generally follow those in *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies*, edited by P. H. Alexander et al. (1999), supplemented by the *Theologische Realenzyklopädie: Abkürzungsverzeichnis*, edited by S. M. Schwertner (1994[2]). A few abbreviations have been coined, the most important of which is *DSSSE* (see below).

General

col.	column(s)
diss.	dissertation
ed.	edited by, edition
ET	English translation
frag.	fragment
FS	Festschrift
Gk.	Greek
Heb.	Hebrew
idem	the same (i.e., same author as previously mentioned)
Lat.	Latin
NF	Neue Folge
NS	new series
par.	parallel
passim	here and there
plur.	plural
repr.	reprint
rev.	revised
sc.	*scilicet*, namely: to be supplied or understood

sg.	singular
s.v.	*sub verbo*, under the word (i.e., in a dictionary)
trans.	translated by

Biblical Text Types and Versions

LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
Tg.	Targum
Vulg.	Vulgate

Masoretic Text Versification

Citations of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament follow the versification of the Masoretic Text or MT (as in *BHS*), with which the English Translation or ET (i.e., NRSV) usually agrees. Where the ET differs, its versification is given in parentheses, for example, Psalm 8:7 (ET 8:6); Malachi 3:19–24 (ET 4:1–6).

English Bible

The basic default text of the English Bible is the NRSV, at the author's request. Occasionally "NRSV modified," "RSV modified," etc., signals a slight alteration in the text. Other English versions have been cited by the translator to illustrate various exegetical options considered in the German or to summarize exegetical issues most efficiently for students.

ASV	American Standard Version
CEB	Common English Bible
CEV	Contemporary English Version
CSB	Christian Standard Bible (i.e., 2017 revision of HCSB)
ESV	English Standard Version
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible

JB	Jerusalem Bible
JPS	Jewish Publication Society (1917)
KJV	King James Version
NAB	New American Bible
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NEB	New English Bible
NET	New English Translation (NET Bible)
NIV	New International Version (1984)
NIV11	New International Version (2011)
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
NJPS	*Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures: The New JPS Translation according to the Traditional Hebrew Text*
NKJV	New King James Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
REB	Revised English Bible
RSV	Revised Standard Version
RV	Revised Version
TEV	Today's English Version (also known as the Good News Bible)
TNIV	Today's New International Version

Standard Editions for Ancient Primary Sources: Biblical and Extrabiblical

Primary sources are quoted from the following standard editions unless otherwise indicated. The Loeb Classical Library (LCL) texts and translations are used for Philo, Josephus, the apostolic fathers, Eusebius, and relevant Greek and Roman writers. Both Brenton and NETS are used for the LXX (as indicated in the text). English editions of all other ancient primary sources are given in the text.

BHS (MT)	*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Edited by K. Elliger and W. Rudolph. Stuttgart, 1977
Brenton	Brenton, Lancelot C. L. *The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament: According to the Vatican Text, Translated into English.* London, 1st ed., 1844. Reprinted: *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English.* Grand Rapids, 1972
Danby	Danby, H. *The Mishnah.* Oxford, 1933
DSSSE	*The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*. Edited by F. García Martínez and E. J. C. Tigchelaar. 2 vols. Leiden and Grand Rapids, 2000
LCL	Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Mass.
LXX	*Septuaginta: Id est, Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes*. Edited by A. Rahlfs. Stuttgart, 1935
NA^{27}	*Novum Testamentum Graece*, Nestle-Aland, 27th ed. Stuttgart, 1993
NA^{28}	*Novum Testamentum Graece*, Nestle-Aland, 28th ed. Stuttgart, 2012
NETS	*A New English Translation of the Septuagint*. Edited by A. Pietersma and B. G. Wright. New York, 2007
OTP	*Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Edited by J. H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. New York, 1983
Soncino	*The Babylonian Talmud.* Edited by I. Epstein. London: Soncino Press, 1961
Tg. Isa.	*The Isaiah Targum.* The Aramaic Bible 11. Translated by B. D. Chilton. Wilmington, Del., 1987
Vulgate	*Biblia sacra: Iuxta Vulgatam versionem.* Edited by R. Weber. Stuttgart, 1969

Old Testament Pseudepigrapha

1 En.	*1 Enoch*
2 Bar.	*2 Baruch (Syriac Apocalypse)*

Apoc. Moses	*Apocalypse of Moses*
Jos. Asen.	*Joseph and Aseneth*
Jub.	*Jubilees*
L.A.B.	*Liber antiquitatum biblicarum (Pseudo-Philo)*
Let. Aris.	*Letter of Aristeas*
Liv. Pro.	*Lives of the Prophets*
Mart. Ascen. Isa.	*Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah*
Pss. Sol.	*Psalms of Solomon*
Sib. Or.	*Sibylline Oracles*
T. Ab.	*Testament of Abraham*
T. Benj.	*Testament of Benjamin*
T. Dan	*Testament of Dan*
T. Isaac	*Testament of Isaac*
T. Issachar	*Testament of Issachar*
T. Job	*Testament of Job*
T. Levi	*Testament of Levi*
T. Mos.	*Testament of Moses*
T. Sol.	*Testament of Solomon*
T. Zeb.	*Testament of Zebulu*n

Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Texts

Nonfragmentary texts from Qumran are referred to by column and line separated by a colon, like the chapter and verse of biblical texts, for example, CD 20:1; 1QS 9:11; 4Q171 3:16. Fragmentary texts follow this format: Fragment(s) (arabic numeral) column (roman numeral), line: for example, 4Q521 frag. 2 II, 12; 4Q398 frags. 14–17 II, 7. Relevant page numbers in the *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* are often given for convenience. Full titles of the documents, in *DSSSE* order (except for CD), are as follows:

CD	*Damascus Document* (CD-A, CD-B, *DSSSE* 550–81)
1QpHab	*Pesher to Habakkuk*
1Q27	*The Book of Mysteries* [1QMyst]
1QS	*Rule of the Community (Serek ha-Yahad)*
1Q28a	*Rule of the Congregation* (appendix a to 1QS)
1Q28b	*Rule of Benedictions* (appendix b to 1QS)
1Q32	*New Jerusalem* (1QNJ ar)
1QM	*War Scroll (Milhamah)*
1Q34+1Q34bis	*Festival Prayers*
1QH	*Thanksgiving Hymns*[a] (*Hodayot*)
2Q24	*New Jerusalem* (2QNJ ar)
4Q158	*Reworked Pentateuch*[a]
4Q160	*Vision of Samuel* (4QVisSam)
4Q171	*Psalms Pesher*[a]
4Q174	*Florilegium* (4QFlor)
4Q175	*Testamonia* (4QTest)
4Q232	*New Jerusalem* (4QNJ?)
4Q246	*Aramaic Apocalypse*
4Q252	*Commentary on Genesis A* (4QCommGen A)
4Q364–67	*Reworked Pentateuch*[b–e]
4Q380–81	*Non-Canonical Psalms A, B*
4Q397	*Halakhic Letter*[d] (*Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah,* 4QMMT[d])
4Q398	*Halakhic Letter*[e] (*Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah,* 4QMMT[e])
4Q400–407	*Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*[a–h]
4Q521	*Messianic Apocalypse*

4Q540	*Aramaic Apocryphon of Levi*[a]
4Q541	*Aramaic Apocryphon of Levi*[b]
4Q554–55	*New Jerusalem*[a–b] (4QNJ[a–b] ar)
5Q15	*New Jerusalem* (5QNJ ar)
11Q5	*Psalm 151 A, B* (11QPs[a])
11Q13	*Melchizedek* (11QMelch)
11Q18	*New Jerusalem* (11QNJ ar)
11Q19–21	*Temple Scroll*[a–c] (11QT[a–c] or 11QTemple[a–c])

Philo

Abr.	*On the Life of Abraham*
Alleg. Interp.	*Allegorical Interpretation*
Cherubim	*On the Cherubim*
Confusion	*On the Confusion of Tongues*
Creation	*On the Creation of the World*
Decalogue	*On the Decalogue*
Dreams	*On Dreams*
Embassy	*On the Embassy to Gaius*
Flight	*On Flight and Finding*
Heir	*Who Is the Heir?*
Moses	*On the Life of Moses*
Planting	*On Planting*
QE	*Questions and Answers on Exodus*
QG	*Questions and Answers on Genesis*
Spec. Laws	*On the Special Laws*
Unchangeable	*That God Is Unchangeable*
Worse	*That the Worse Attacks the Better*

Josephus

Ag. Ap.	*Against Apion*
Ant.	*Jewish Antiquities*
J.W.	*Jewish War*

Mishnah and Talmud Tractates

m. Mishnah, *b.* Babylonian Talmud, *y.* Jerusalem Talmud, *t.* Tosefta

Tractate names are occasionally abbreviated, as indicated:

Abot
Baba Batra (B. Bat.)
Baba Qamma
Berakot (Ber.)
Keritot
Makkot
Megillah (Meg.)
Menahot (Menah.)
Nedarim (Ned.)
Pesahim (Pesah.)
Sanhedrin (Sanh.)
Shabbat (Shabb.)
Sotah
Ta'anit
Yoma

Targumic Texts

Tg. Isa.	*Targum of Isaiah*

Tg. Ps.-J.	*Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*
Tg. Yer. I	*Targum Yerushalmi*

Apostolic Fathers

Barn.	*Barnabas*	
1–2 Clem.	*1–2 Clement*	
Did.	*Didache*	
Ignatius:		
	Eph.	*To the Ephesians*
	Magn.	*To the Magnesians*
	Phil.	*To the Philadelphians*
	Pol.	*To Polycarp*
	Rom.	*To the Romans*
	Smyrn.	*To the Smyrnaeans*
	Trall.	*To the Trallians*

Modern Reference Works, Journals, Series, and Source Collections

ABD	*Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York, 1992
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers. 1946–
ANF	*Ante-Nicene Fathers*
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung*. Edited by H. Temporini and W. Haase. Berlin, 1972–
APAT	*Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments*. Edited by E. Kautzsch. 2 vols. Tübingen, 1900
APOT	*The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*. Edited by R. H. Charles. 2 vols. Oxford, 1913

ArBib	The Aramaic Bible
BAG	Bauer, W., W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 1st ed. Chicago, 1957
BAGD	Bauer, W., W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 2nd ed. Chicago, 1979
BBR	*Bulletin for Biblical Research*
BDAG	Bauer, W., F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago, 1999
BDB	Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford, 1907
BDF	Blass, F., A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk. *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Chicago, 1961
BEvT	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie
BHH	*Biblisch-historisches Handwörterbuch: Landeskunde, Geschichte, Religion, Kultur*. Edited by B. Reicke and L. Rost. 4 vols. Göttingen, 1962–1966
Bib	*Biblica*
BibInt	*Biblical Interpretation*
BR	*Biblical Research*
BSac	*Bibliotheca sacra*
BSLK	*Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche*. Göttingen, 1930
BZ	*Biblische Zeitschrift*
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum: Series latina. Turnhout, 1953–

CD	*Church Dogmatics*. Karl Barth. 13 vols. Edinburgh, 1956–1975
CTJ	*Calvin Theological Journal*
CurBR	*Currents in Biblical Research*
CurBS	*Currents in Research: Biblical Studies*
Denzinger	Denzinger, H. *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*. Edited by P. Hünermann, R. Fastiggi, and A. Englund Nash. 43rd ed. 2012
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DJG	*Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. Edited by Joel B. Green, Jeannine K. Brown, and Nicholas Perrin, 2nd ed. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013.
DSSSE	*The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*. Edited by F. García Martínez and E. J. C. Tigchelaar. 2 vols. Leiden and Grand Rapids, 2000
DV	*Dei Verbum ("The Word of God"): Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation*. Second Vatican Council. Vatican City, 1965
EBR	*Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*. Edited by H.-J. Klauck et al. 30 vols. (projected). Berlin, 2009–
EDNT	*Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament.* Edited by H. Balz, G. Schneider. ET. Grand Rapids, 1990–1993
EKKNT	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
EKL	*Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon*. Edited by E. Fahlbusch et al. 4 vols. 3rd ed. Göttingen, 1985–1996
ETL	*Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*
EvQ	*Evangelical Quarterly*
EvT	*Evangelische Theologie*
EWNT	*Exegetisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*. Edited by H. Balz and G. Schneider. 3 vols. Stuttgart, 1978–

	1983
ExpTim	*Expository Times*
FC	Fathers of the Church
FZPhTh	*Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie*
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten [drei] Jahrhunderte
HALOT	*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. L. Koehler, W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm. Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden, 1994–1999
HBT	*Horizons in Biblical Theology*
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
IDB	*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Edited by G. A. Buttrick. 4 vols. Nashville, 1962
Int	*Interpretation*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JBTh	Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JPJ	*Journal of Progressive Judaism*
JSP	*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*
JTC	*Journal for Theology and the Church*
JR	*Journal of Religion*
JRH	*Journal of Religious History*
JSHRZ	*Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSP	*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
KD	*Kerygma und Dogma*
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue

	Testament (Meyer-Kommentar)
LCC	Library of Christian Classics. Philadelphia, 1953–
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LEH	Lust, J., E. Eynikel, and K. Hauspie, eds. *Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*. Rev. ed. Stuttgart, 2003
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., R. Scott, and H. S. Jones. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford, 1996
LW	*Luther's Works*. Edited by J. Pelikan and H. T. Lehmann. 55 vols. St. Louis, 1958–1986
MTZ	*Münchener theologische Zeitschrift*
Neot	*Neotestamentica*
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIDNTT	*New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology.* Edited by Colin Brown. 4 vols. Grand Rapids, 1975–1978
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NPNF	*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*
NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
ODCC	*Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. Edited by F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone. 3rd ed. rev. Oxford, 2005
OTP	*Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Edited by J. H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. New York, 1983
PL	Patrologia Latina. Edited by Jacques-Paul Migne. 217 vols. Paris, 1844–1864
RAC	*Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*. Edited by T. Kluser et al. Stuttgart, 1950–
RB	*Revue biblique*

REJ	*Revue des études juives*
RGG[3]	*Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. Edited by K. Galling. 7 vols. 3rd ed. Tübingen, 1957–1965
RPP	*Religion Past and Present: Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*. Edited by H. D. Dieter Betz et al. 13 vols. Leiden and Boston, 2007–2013
RTP	*Revue de théologie et de philosophie*
Schürer, *HJP*[2]	Schürer, E. *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)*. Revised and edited by G. Vermes and F. Millar. 3 vols. in 4 parts. Edinburgh, 1973–1987
SEÅ	*Svensk exegetisk årsbok*
SEG	Supplementum epigraphicum graecum
SJT	*Scottish Journal of Theology*
SNTSU	Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt
ST	*Studia theologica*
STJ	*Stulos Theological Journal*
Str-B	Strack, H. L., and P. Billerbeck. *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*. 6 vols. Munich, 1922–1961
TBei	*Theologische Beiträge*
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids, 1964–1976
TDOT	*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Edited by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren. Translated by J. T. Willis, G. W. Bromiley, and D. E. Green. 8 vols. Grand Rapids, 1974–
TGl	*Theologie und Glaube*
THAT	*Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament*. Edited by E. Jenni, with assistance from C. Westermann. 2 vols. Stuttgart, 1971–1976

THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
ThTo	*Theology Today*
TJT	*Toronto Journal of Theology*
TLOT	*Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Edited by E. Jenni, with assistance from C. Westermann. Translated by M. E. Biddle. 3 vols. Peabody, Mass., 1997
TLZ	*Theologische Literaturzeitung*
TQ	*Theologische Quartalschrift*
TRE	*Theologische Realenzyklopädie*. Edited by G. Krause and G. Müller. Berlin, 1977–
TRu	*Theologische Rundschau*
TS	*Theological Studies*
TTZ	*Trierer theologische Zeitschrift*
TWNT	*Theologische Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*. Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Stuttgart, 1932–1979
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
TZ	*Theologische Zeitschrift*
UBS	United Bible Societies
VF	*Verkündigung und Forschung*
WA	*D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (“Weimarer Ausgabe”). 80 vols. Weimar, 1883–2009
WA DB	*D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe: Die deutsche Bibel.* 12 vols. Weimar, 1906–1961
WA TR	*D. Martin Luthers Werke: Tischreden*. 6 vols. Weimar, 1912–1921
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZDPV	*Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins*

ZKT	*Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZTK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*

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Foundations

CHAPTER 1

The Task and Structure of a Biblical Theology of the New Testament

1 The discipline of New Testament theology offers an organized overview of the proclamation and the faith content of the New Testament books. This task requires a certain systematic approach and reflected method for selecting, organizing, and presenting the material. It is therefore necessary at the beginning to give an account of the task of a biblical theology of the New Testament and the principles underlying its presentation.

Our first principle reads: *A theology of the New Testament must allow the New Testament itself to dictate its theme and presentation.*

This principle is less self-evident than it seems. The problems become apparent as soon as one considers what the New Testament is and what claims it makes. Historically speaking, the New Testament is a selective collection of early Christian writings from the first 150 years of the Christian era. That it is only a selection is clear from Luke 1:1–4, John 20:30, 21:25, 1 Corinthians 5:9, 2 Thessalonians 2:2, etc. This collection of writings was read in the meetings of the early Christian communities. It presents the content of Jesus Christ's own testimony and the substance of faith in him, reflects these, and proclaims faith as the only effective way of salvation for Jews and Gentiles.

However, above and beyond the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, a whole series of other early Christian writings or fragments with similar contents and aims has been preserved. One immediately thinks of the apostolic fathers and the New Testament Apocrypha. We also possess early Christian writings from gnostic authors. In view of this literature, the preceding definition of the New Testament as a "selective collection" is insufficient. We must be more precise: this collection stands under a specific claim, that of being the *church canon* of twenty-seven individual books.

The New Testament canon was assembled by the ancient church from the middle of the second century AD in a differentiated process of retention of authentic tradition and faith content on the one hand and demarcation against secondary and heretical traditions on the other. This canon was finally

fixed at the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century. The standard documents for the fixing of the canon are in the eastern church the thirty-ninth Easter letter of Athanasius from AD 367 and in the west the answer of Pope Innocent I to the bishop of Toulouse in 405. The New Testament is therefore the church canon of early Christian books fundamental for the faith of the church, in whose origin and definition the church itself was inextricably involved. The church recognized the main writings of the New Testament (see below) as authoritative, and added a few other books to them. This was done by a certain principle of selection, namely, by the criterion of "apostolicity," which involved both historical and dogmatic considerations. Books that did not satisfy this criterion were not accepted into the canon.

New Testament theology is oriented to the church canon and therefore differs from a history of the early Christian religion that works with all the available source material from the time of Christian origins.

In his recent programmatic work *Beyond New Testament Theology* (2000[2]), H. Räisänen has once again advocated a history of religions approach to all the available early Christian literature. Räisänen thereby renews the appeal of the Wroclaw (Breslau) New Testament scholar W. Wrede. In his treatment entitled "The Task and Method of 'New Testament Theology'" (1897; ET in R. Morgan, *New Testament Theology* [1973], 68–116), Wrede advocated subsuming New Testament theology under a history of early Christian religion encompassing all of early Christian literature. G. Theissen has now carried out this program in a book that meets Räisänen's approval: *A Theory of Primitive Christian Religion* (1999; revised German ed., *Die Religion der ersten Christen: Eine Theorie des Urchristentums* [2003[3]]). The middle ground between the history of early Christianity and the theology of the New Testament is occupied by K. Berger's theological history of early Christianity, *Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums* (1995[2]). This is oriented strictly historically, dares to offer a new assessment of the entirety of early Christian literature, and includes important exegetical observations. However, because Berger not only rightly avoids premature application of the New Testament texts but also categorically rejects the quest for a theologically normative kerygma or "canon within the canon," a theological discussion can be had with him only with difficulty.

By beginning with the canon, New Testament theology immediately encounters two fundamental problems: first, how to do justice to the claims and authority of this canon, and second, how to relate the New Testament canon to the Old Testament, Israel's Holy Scriptures, which the early Christian churches shared through Jesus and the apostles. In the first century both Jews and Christians read the Holy Scriptures as the living word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit.

1.1 The church did not simply fix the boundaries of the New Testament in an authoritarian manner. Rather, it undertook a centuries-long process of preserving what was original and excluding what was secondary and foreign. This is best illustrated by the fact that there was almost no inner-church opposition to the reception of the main writings of the New Testament: the four Gospels, Acts, the essential Pauline Letters, Hebrews,

and 1 Peter. The only disputed major writings were Revelation and Hebrews. The main books of the New Testament do not owe their canonical authority in the first instance to a dogmatic decision of the church; they were and are a historical given for the church. The gospel attested by these books and the saving work of God in Christ underlying this gospel are foundational for the church (cf. Rom. 5:6–8).

Accordingly, the main writings of the New Testament as well as, for example, Hebrews and Revelation clearly make certain *claims* on their readers. For Paul's letters see 1 Thessalonians 2:13 and 1 Corinthians 2:6–16; for Matthew see Matthew 28:19–20; for John see John 20:30–31, 21:24–25; for Hebrews see Hebrews 13:22; and for Revelation see Revelation 22:18–19. The books of the New Testament are meant to be a witness of revelation. They therefore disclose themselves in their theological truth only to those readers who accept what they say as a prior given and think it through reverentially. At the same time, the New Testament books point out that acknowledging this truth involves not simply an intellectual act but a holistic commitment of life. According to John 7:16–17, only the person who dares to practice Jesus's teaching can know whether it is from God or rests only on human authority, while according to John 14:26, the whole Gospel tradition is indebted to a recollection of Jesus inspired by the Holy Spirit. Grasping the testimony of the Gospels and apostolic letters is therefore possible only through the confluence of several factors: intellectual, existential, and spiritual understanding; faith; and a commitment of life and thought (A. Schlatter). Only then is the truth of the gospel experienced and recognized as a saving revelation of God.

One can wholly or partly ignore these hermeneutical claims for the sake of academic questions. But if one lets them stand as an essential feature of the New Testament books, then one must approach these books in a way that gives the biblical testimony to truth its priority and weight over against all ecclesiastical Scripture interpretation and realizes the historical canonical process of acknowledgment of the original and demarcation of the secondary. A theology of the New Testament that wants to do justice to its subject matter cannot factor out the unique claims of this book.

Our second principle therefore runs: *The theology of the New Testament must do justice to both the historical claims to revelation and the*

ecclesiastical significance of the New Testament canon.

1.2 The question of the proper *relationship between the Old and New Testaments* has been raised throughout church history and is by no means finally solved. Because it involves the special historical and canonical character of the New Testament, this question must be considered here.

1.2.1 In the middle of the second century AD, Marcion, a rich shipowner from Asia Minor, provided a new canon to the churches that followed his (heretical) teaching. It contained only selected writings from the New Testament, namely, a version of the Gospel of Luke revised by Marcion in an anti-Jewish direction and ten similarly reworked letters of Paul. This new Marcionite canon was supposed to replace the Old Testament—read as Holy Scripture even by the Marcionites until then—as well as the wide variety of early Christian books. Marcion's attempt did not succeed in the church at large. Most churches accepted neither Marcion's reduction of the New Testament canon nor his substitution of the New Testament books for the Old Testament. Rather, in the churches these books were always only an *authoritative addition to the Old Testament*. The canonical expression "New Testament" achieved widespread currency in the church only from the time of Clement of Alexandria (died before AD 215) and Tertullian (died after AD 220) (cf. H. von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible*, 266–68). Nevertheless, this expression does suggest the proper relationship of the two divisions of the canon: the Old and New Testaments together form the two-part ecclesial canon of the Christian Bible, and the testimony to Christ sets the direction in which this canon is to be interpreted. The historical documents about the canon by Athanasius and Pope Innocent I (see above) refer not to the New Testament alone but to both Testaments. They determine the total scope of the two-part Christian canon for the East and West of the imperial church. *The Old and New Testaments can therefore be differentiated as the first and second parts of the biblical canon, but not separated*. Whoever separates them understands at least the New Testament from the wrong perspective both historically and theologically.

1.2.2 Jesus and the apostles were born Jews. They read Israel's Bible as the word of God, which remained equally valid for them. They gave the Christian churches that sprang up after Easter a stake in this Bible, and they referred to it as the (Holy) Scripture(s), even as the Jews did. This

expression is characteristic. The Scriptures are *God's holy word for all of early Christianity*. It remained this way even as the writings of the New Testament were gradually added to the collection that the Christians only later began to refer to as the "Old Testament." The γραφαὶ ἅγιαι (holy scriptures) form the Bible not only of the Jews, but also of the Christians. They read this Bible as the Spirit-inspired living word of the one God who created the world, chose Israel to be his own people, and sent the promised Messiah and Savior of the world in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Individual New Testament books admittedly use the Scriptures of the Old Testament eclectically or with varying degrees of intensity. But their common appeal to these Scriptures cannot be denied: it was and is fundamental to Christian faith. The New Testament witnesses did not simply continue the Old Testament, but founded a new tradition. Nevertheless, they consciously formulated their entire proclamation of Christ and their teaching about God's will on the basis of the Old Testament. The Old Testament was the decisive aid to understanding and articulation in formulating the New Testament gospel and paraclesis. It is therefore theologically the most important tradition basis that the New Testament knows.

Our third principle results directly from this: *To the extent that a theology of the New Testament takes its orientation and task from the New Testament itself, it must respect and work through the special rooting of the New Testament message of faith in the Old Testament.*

This third principle leads to a fundamental conclusion for our work: *The theology of the New Testament must be developed as a biblical theology of the New Testament that is open to the Old Testament, as a subdiscipline of a whole-Bible biblical theology encompassing both Testaments.* Such a biblical theology also strives for a theology of the Old Testament that is open to the New Testament, achieving its goal by working through the entire biblical tradition.

Impressive pioneering efforts to work out a biblical theology of the whole Bible have been undertaken by **B. S. Childs** and **C. Scobie**. Because both transcend the goal of my own biblical theology by working through the entire biblical tradition, I will evaluate them in detail only at the end of this work (see below, 812–18). Here we may simply note that our two authors take different starting points. In his *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (1992), Childs treats first the independent witness of the Old Testament and then the independent witness of the New Testament. Not until his concluding section does Childs take the whole Christian Bible and its teaching into consideration. The independent treatment of the Old and the New Testament witnesses is

programmatic for Childs, because he wants the Old Testament to be treated not as a prelude or background to the New Testament but as an independent part of the canon. Scobie proceeds differently from Childs. In his impressive book *The Ways of Our God* (2003), Scobie assumes the coherence of the two Testaments and deals with the whole biblical tradition in five long thematic chapters. Each chapter proceeds from the Old Testament "proclamation" and the Old Testament "promise" to the New Testament "fulfillment," followed by a preview of the "consummation" expected by the New Testament. A series of reflections on the present-day theological significance of these themes concludes each chapter. From a New Testament perspective, this presentation is to be welcomed.

1.2.3 A further consideration is necessary in order to understand the relationship of Old and New Testaments from a biblical-theological perspective. There are certain *differences* between the Masoretic canon of the Jews and the Old Testament of early Christianity, regarding both the scope and the language of the canon.

1.2.3.1 At the time of the writing of the main books of the New Testament, the scope of the Old Testament canon was not yet definitively fixed.

A schism that led to the separation of the Jews from the Samaritans occurred in the second century BC. Because the canon that the Samaritans took with them in the wake of this schism included only the Law, that is, the Torah in the form of the Pentateuch, we may conclude that the Torah had achieved canonical authority already in the third century BC. Moreover, the translator's preface to the Greek book of Sirach in the second century BC shows that at that time, the canon of the Prophets had already taken fixed form: that is, the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the Twelve Minor Prophets (according to the early Jewish reckoning). However, the scope of the third division of the Jewish Old Testament, containing the writings that the preface to Sirach calls "the rest of the books" (τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν βιβλίων), was not yet fixed. The relative openness of this part of the canon is suggested by the *4QHalakhic Letter*[d] (4Q397 [4QMMT[d]] frags. 14–21, lines 10–11) and the Scripture discoveries in Qumran as a whole. Books today counted among the "Scriptures," including Psalms, Job, and Proverbs; Ruth, Song of Songs, Lamentations, and Esther; Daniel; and Ezra, Nehemiah, and 1–2 Chronicles, still stood alongside books of the Apocrypha, some of which are preserved mainly or only in Greek, as in the Septuagint (i.e., Sirach, Tobit, Judith, Baruch, etc.). The so-called Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, especially those books with apocalyptic context (e.g., *Jubilees*, *1 Enoch*), came along in addition to the Apocrypha. These books are preserved mainly in eastern Christian daughter translations but were originally written in Hebrew or Greek and sometimes included among the Holy Scriptures; in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church they belong to the Bible until today. The relative openness of the third part of the Hebrew Bible remained into the first century AD. This can be seen from Luke 24:27, 44 ("the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms") as well as in the fact that in a few New Testament documents, books of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha are still treated as though they belonged to the Holy Scriptures (cf. Mark 10:19; 1 Cor. 2:9; and the Letter of Jude with its quotations and traditions from the *Assumption of Moses* and the Enoch tradition).

The definitive limitation of the Hebrew Bible to the symbolic number of twenty-two or twenty-four books (i.e., the thirty-six books listed in modern

editions of the Hebrew Bible, or the thirty-nine in the English Old Testament) did not occur until the end of the first century AD. But by this time the gospel of Christ had long since been formulated, together with the main writings of the New Testament. The oldest Jewish witnesses for the boundaries of the canon are Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.38–41 (see below, 744–45) and *4 Ezra* 14:1–48, esp. v. 45 (cf. also *b. B. Bat.* 14b).

1.2.3.2 Next to the Hebrew scriptural canon stood the *Greek Bible* in early Judaism and Christianity. This counted not as a second-rank translation but as a fully authoritative and inspired Holy Scripture. Both Jews and Christians measured the Greek Bible by the standard of the Hebrew texts and revised it in the light of them, but the Greek text also possessed revelatory authority in its own right.

Septuaginta is the Latin word for "seventy" (LXX in roman numerals). Accordingly, *Septuagint* (LXX) is the name commonly given to the Greek Old Testament, since Jewish legend attributes this translation to seventy (or seventy-two) Jewish elders who rendered the Hebrew Bible, or at least the Pentateuch, into Greek. F. Siegert describes the Septuagint as a pioneering achievement of Hellenistic Judaism, which "made the *hieroi logoi* of an oriental people the most influential book in the world" (*Zwischen hebräischer Bibel und Altem Testament* [2001], 1). The Septuagint was used in all the Jewish congregations where people could no longer speak Hebrew or Aramaic; it was even used in the Hellenistic synagogues of Jerusalem itself (cf. Acts 6:9). Among the so-called Hellenists associated with Stephen (cf. Acts 6:1) and in the Gentile mission undertaken by Peter, Paul, John, and many unknown evangelists, the Septuagint was used next to the Hebrew Bible, but also apart from it. Contrary to the legends in the *Letter of Aristeas*, the Septuagint version of the Old Testament was not translated all at once, but rather in a long process that lasted until the second century AD. The Pentateuch was translated first in Egypt in the third century BC, then the Prophets and the Psalms in the second century BC. The rest of the Scriptures were not translated into Greek until the first or second century AD (see the chronological table in Siegert, 42). The Septuagint was never officially canonized by the Jews. A de facto canonization came about only because, unlike the Jews in the synagogues, the Christians continued reading the Septuagint after the first century AD, so that the use of the Septuagint Scriptures as practiced for example in Alexandria eventually became normative for Christians. In the great Christian Septuagint manuscripts such as codices Vaticanus (B), Sinaiticus (א or S), and Alexandrinus (A), the biblical books (and the Apocrypha) are ordered differently from the Hebrew Bible. Unfortunately, we do not (yet) know the antiquity of this order, which all Christian Bibles today have adopted. But scholars do recognize that there may be a hermeneutical significance to the order. The Hebrew Bible begins with the Torah, followed by the (Former and Latter) Prophets and the Writings, both of which expound the Torah. By contrast, the Septuagint order suggests more of a salvation-historical process. This order leads from the Torah, through the Historical Books to the Psalms and the Wisdom Books, and from there to the Prophets. The prophetic promise is then followed by the New Testament as the book of fulfillment.

One might imagine that the openness of the third part of the Hebrew Bible and the juxtaposition of the Hebrew Scripture and the Septuagint extending into the Christian era would be of only minor importance

theologically. However, this impression needs to be revised in the light of three considerations:

1. The New Testament authors concentrate their use of the Holy Scriptures on the Prophets (especially Isaiah), the Psalms, and the Pentateuch. For this they generally rely on the texts of the Septuagint. The Septuagint versions of these texts were therefore of great importance for the formation of the New Testament message of faith.

2. The letters of Paul and the Gospel of John show that important New Testament authors used the writings of the Septuagint in Christian instruction. Like the Jews, they used writings such as Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon as textbooks in mission and congregational instruction. Parts of the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha were probably also used in Christian instruction. Christian instruction about wisdom formed the foundation for the understanding of Christology (cf. 1 Cor. 1:30; 8:6; Col. 1:15–20; Heb. 1:1–4; John 1:1–18), sin and justification (cf. 1 Cor. 1:21–25; Rom. 1:18–32), and the whole gospel (cf. 1 Cor. 2:6–16; James 3:13–18).

3. Rabbinic tradition proceeds from the false assumption that the Hebrew biblical canon was already closed under Ezra and Nehemiah. If this theory is followed, then a yawning gap of four hundred years stands between the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. Dating the book of Daniel in the second century BC with critical scholarship reduces this gap by a good two hundred years, yet it remains significant. However, if one takes into account the openness of the third part of the Hebrew Bible, the origin of the Septuagint, and its Jewish and Christian use in the first century AD, then a different picture emerges. There is no more gap of centuries separating the two Testaments. Rather, this gap is filled by the translation work on the Septuagint and the origin in the second or first century BC of the Wisdom of Solomon and the *Psalms of Solomon* (included in A. Rahlfs's LXX), as well as of several pseudepigrapha. The formation of the New Testament message of faith under the influence of Old Testament tradition and the composition of the main writings of the New Testament then fall exactly into the period in which the Hebrew Bible gained its canonical form and the Septuagint its present extent. A finely differentiated but undeniable tradition-historical *continuity* between the Old and New Testaments therefore becomes evident. The formulation of the New

Testament tradition is remarkably closely intermeshed with the ongoing formation and closing of the Old Testament tradition.

1.2.3.3 These observations lead to two conclusions. The first concerns the Christian form of the Old Testament. From a New Testament perspective, *the early Christian Old Testament does not simply consist of the Hebrew Bible, but also encompasses the Scriptures contained in the Septuagint*.

In his essay on the unity of biblical theology, H. Gese concluded: “A Christian theologian can never affirm the Masoretic canon, for here the continuity to the New Testament is to a large extent broken. It seems to me that among the various influences of humanism upon the Reformation, this one was disastrous. For scholars confused the Pharisaic reduction of the canon with the Masoretic text tradition to which they appealed as a ‘humanistic’ source, thereby separating out the Apocrypha” (Gese, “Erwägungen zur Einheit der biblischen Theologie,” in *Vom Sinai zum Zion* [1990[3]], 16–17). The correctness of this conclusion is best observed in the origin of New Testament Christology. This is unthinkable apart from the teaching about wisdom documented in Proverbs 8:22ff.; Wisdom 9:1ff.; Sirach 24; etc.

The second conclusion is a corollary of the first: Jesus taught his disciples to pray for the hallowing of God’s name (יהוה, YHWH) (cf. Luke 11:2; Matt. 6:9), and he spoke of the one and only God as his Father (cf. Matt. 11:25; Luke 10:21; Mark 14:36 par.; etc.). The New Testament Scriptures repeatedly call the one God the “Father of Jesus Christ” (cf. Rom. 15:6; 2 Cor. 1:3; 11:31; Eph. 1:3; Col. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3; 1 John 1:3). Jesus and his witnesses therefore transcend a mere continuity of tradition by establishing a *continuity of confession* between the Old and New Testaments. This continuity is confirmed when one sees how seamlessly Paul proceeds in Romans 4 from the Jewish predication about God as the one “who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist” (4:17) to the identification of this God as the one “who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead” (4:24). *This continuity of tradition and confession forms a fundamental assumption for a biblical theology of the New Testament that is open to the Old Testament*.

Nevertheless, a special relationship also exists between Jews and Christians, which can be illustrated by their common possession of the Old Testament and their common confession of the one God who created the world and chose Israel to be his own people (Deut. 6:4–5). Ever since the appearance of Jesus on the scene, this relationship has been marked less by agreement than by deep differences, which broke out already in the first

century AD in mutual persecution and excommunication. The decisive question was (and is) whether Jesus of Nazareth is the *Messiah* promised to Israel and the nations (cf. Isa. 9:5–6 [ET 9:6–7]; 11:1–10; Mic. 5:1–4 [ET 5:2–5]), and whether one therefore should read the Holy Scriptures in the light of his arrival or should rather continue to read them from the perspective of the revelation of the Torah on Sinai. A biblical theology of the New Testament cannot ignore these ancient and painful questions. The New Testament authors understood the appearance of Jesus Christ as the crown of the revelation of the one God to whom the Old Testament bears witness (cf. Heb. 1:1–2); according to John 1:17 and 14:6, they even saw Jesus Christ as the revealer and incarnation of truth itself. The authors thereby raise the question of theological truth and connect it inextricably with the person and teaching of Jesus Christ. *Under these circumstances a biblical theology of the New Testament cannot remain content with the analysis and description of historical traditions and facts, but must rather lead beyond them to confession*. Methodologically this means that New Testament theology is not only a historical-descriptive discipline, but also simultaneously a dogmatic-assertive one.

2 *Jesus and all the essential New Testament authors were Jews by birth*. The Gentile mission also began in the Jewish synagogues, where it focused special attention on the Gentile "God-fearers" or "God-worshipers" who had remained uncircumcised.

In the book of Acts, Gentiles affiliated with the synagogue can be referred to either as the "God-fearers," *οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν*, "those fearing God" (Acts 13:16, 26; of Cornelius, 10:2, 22), or as the "God-worshipers." Hence Lydia and Titius Justus are explicitly described as "worshiping *God*," *σεβομένη*/*σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν* (Acts 16:14 in Philippi [i.e., apart from a synagogue]; 18:7), while "God" is implied in expressions like *οἱ σεβόμενοι προσήλυτοι*/*Ἕλληνες*, "the [God]-worshiping proselytes"/"Greeks" (13:43; 17:4), or simply *οἱ σεβόμενοι*, "the [God]-worshipers" (17:17).

Given the Jewish Christian authors of the New Testament and the synagogue context of mission, ancient Judaism must be seen as the decisive traditional context for the formation and understanding of the New Testament message of faith. Nevertheless, the New Testament background consists not only of ancient Judaism but also of the entire Greco-Roman or Mediterranean world. Ever since the campaigns of Alexander the Great in 336–323 BC, this world was marked by the cosmopolitan, cultural, and economic movement that scholars since J. G. Droysen have referred to as "Hellenism." Since the third century BC, Judaism and Hellenism

experienced many points of contact both in the Jewish motherland and in the Diaspora. These were already self-evident preconditions for the New Testament authors. In the political, cultural, and social situation of their day, they found the sphere in which they had to proclaim the message of faith both understandably and forcefully. Early Christianity's intense participation in the language, thought, and general sensibility about life in the Hellenistic and early Jewish world explains why the biblical testimony has taken on a note of historical reality and the concrete "form of a servant." As long as one does not wish to deviate from the original form of the biblical testimony, one must understand the message of the New Testament first as the kerygma for the Jewish-Hellenistic world of the first and second centuries AD. The church's experience of faith shows that the kerygma about Jesus Christ is not simply absorbed into this world, but transcends it. Nevertheless, this does not absolve us from the responsibility of understanding the biblical word of testimony historically as a message that was first true for Jews and Gentiles in the first and second centuries AD.

Therefore, without diminishing the essential connection between the Old and New Testaments, a fourth principle must be adhered to in a biblical theology of the New Testament: *Historically speaking, the message of the New Testament must be understood primarily as Christian faith testimony to the Greco-Roman world of the first and second centuries AD.* Systematic presentation of the content of the New Testament testimony by no means releases us from the obligation of dealing with the concrete historical, religious, social, and political situation in which the New Testament authors and their addressees found themselves. The more clearly their social and spiritual life situation stands before us, the more exactly the texts can be understood! Ancient religious and social-historical questions cannot be factored out of a biblical theology of the New Testament.

3 Since New Testament theology confronts us with such manifold tasks, it is necessary to consider carefully how to do justice to them academically and theologically. We must therefore ask about the *method* used to determine the biblical theology of the New Testament. This method must satisfy four criteria:

3.1 In order to gain a true hearing for the New Testament testimony in its original historical form, *the method of biblical theology must correspond*

to the biblical texts and help them express themselves in their own language.

According to H. Gese, the exegesis of biblical texts should proceed from the following fundamental principle: “A text is to be understood as it wants to be understood, i.e., as it understands itself” (*Alttestamentliche Studien* [1991], 249). This requires that the interpreters reflect historically and identify themselves with the texts to be interpreted. Gese therefore rightly calls for “a hermeneutic characterized by a willing acknowledgement, a historical self-identification, and a learning of the reality” intrinsic to the texts (265).

There is currently only one established method for achieving this lofty goal of interpretation, namely, the *historical-critical method* used by all historical disciplines. In practice this amounts to an entire ensemble of individual methods embedded within an overall procedure that follows certain principles. Ernst Troeltsch called them “criticism,” “analogy,” and “correlation.” But these three principles are not sufficient on their own to interpret the New Testament adequately.

3.2 The New Testament attests the *revelation* of the one God in the mission, work, and resurrection of Jesus from the dead. It calls its message the “kerygma” (cf., e.g., Rom. 16:25; 1 Cor. 1:21; 15:14; Titus 1:3) or the “gospel” (cf., e.g., Mark 1:1; Rom. 1:1, 16; 1 Cor. 15:1; 1 Pet. 4:17). The gospel of God concerning Jesus Christ is the decisive center of the New Testament. We would be ill advised to use a method that forced all statements of the gospel about God, Jesus, faith, and the world to be subjected to Troeltsch’s three principles without further ado. This would mean calling these statements into question from the start and undermining the kerygma’s claims to revelation as a matter of principle. If the texts of the New Testament are really supposed to be interpreted in keeping with their own intention, then the interpretive method must be open enough to allow the biblical testimony to stand as something that makes sense in its own right and to make the texts transparent in their kerygmatic intention. This is accomplished only when *historical criticism, together with its principles, is prepared to enter into a serious dialogue with the texts by agreeing as far as possible with their central kerygmatic statements*. The principled historical skepticism typical of academic scholarship must be overcome by a hermeneutic of “good will” (B. F. Meyer) or “critical sympathy” (W. G. Kümmel) toward the texts.

3.3 The individual New Testament writings and the canonical New Testament as a whole stood in the life context of the *Christian church* from

the very beginning. This context remains unbroken until today. The New Testament and the church's sphere of life belong essentially together. We must therefore ask as a matter of method how the New Testament texts are connected to the life of the church, emphasizing that *existential knowledge of revelation is possible only for those who take the risk of communal faith-existence in the church*.

3.4 Finally, scholarly exegesis stands under the obligation of *explaining all its reconstructions and interpretations rationally and exposing them to critical dialogue*. Our method must be academically rigorous to the extent that it explains its principles of judgment and exposes both its principles and results to criticism.

These four criteria place four requirements on our method: *It must be (1) historically appropriate to the New Testament, (2) open to the gospel's claim to revelation, (3) related to the church's experience of faith and life, and (4) rationally transparent and controllable.*

There are two fundamental ways of doing justice to these requirements: by means of an *intellectus quaerens fidem* ("intellect seeking faith"), the rational effort to gain knowledge of the biblical faith traditions combined with the readiness to become personally involved in them, and by means of a *fides quaerens intellectum* ("faith seeking understanding"), the rational effort to gain knowledge of one's own faith tradition and its biblical origins. The faith of which the New Testament speaks is not a human possession but a gift of God. Faith therefore cannot and must not be made a methodological prerequisite of biblical interpretation. The same can be said of the Holy Spirit, whose activity and effects the New Testament frequently mentions. Biblical interpretation must respect this activity of God and the limits that faith and the Holy Spirit place on human understanding of it. At the same time, biblical interpretation must try to plumb the depths of the special epistemic and experiential dimension of the Spirit-inspired πίστις or "faith" that the biblical texts attest.

4 We have now presented four major principles for working out a biblical theology of the New Testament (§§1–2), as well as four specific requirements for the method of biblical theology that follow from this (§3). If we accept these principles and requirements, then it becomes clear that *the task of biblical theology is not only a historical-descriptive one, but also a systematic-theological one. As it works through the books of the New Testament, the discipline of biblical theology has the two-part church canon of the Old and New Testaments in view, emphasizing the meaning of the New Testament message of Christ for the faith and life of the church(es).*

4.1 In its origin and canonicity the New Testament has a historical and qualitative lead over all church doctrine and tradition. The biblical testimony's priority over the ecclesiastical doctrinal tradition must remain

visible in our presentation. Therefore neither a thematic nor a dogmatic outline commends itself for a biblical theology of the New Testament, but rather *a historical outline that is open to the Old Testament and that culminates in a dogmatic statement and evaluation of the central teaching of the Scripture*.

The historical outline of the present work traces the origin of the New Testament gospel. The crucial beginning and content of that gospel are determined by Jesus. He was born a Jew and ministered in and for Israel. But Jesus's work did not remain confined to Israel. Jesus himself had the Gentile world in view, and the mission history of early Christianity shows that beginning with Jesus's road to the cross, passion, and resurrection, the call went out to make Jesus the Christ known to all people as "Lord and Messiah" (Acts 2:36). If one accepts these historical realities as prior givens, then part 1 of the presentation of the biblical theology of the New Testament must be dedicated to the proclamation and work of Jesus of Nazareth, despite the methodological and historical difficulties this raises. After this it must be shown in part 2 how the early Christian community remembered Jesus after Easter, formulated its confession of Christ and its proclamation of faith with the help of the Holy Scriptures, and formed its church life. Next comes a presentation of the theology of Paul in part 3 and of the proclamation of the church after Paul, as reflected in the other New Testament epistles, in part 4. The Synoptic Gospels are naturally drawn upon as a source for the historical Jesus in part 1, but since the synoptic Evangelists were not only collectors and tradition-bearers but also independent theologians, our presentation proceeds to include a theology of the synoptic writers in part 5. Finally, the proclamation of the Johannine writings must be dealt with in part 6.

These six parts compose book 1 of our biblical theology of the New Testament. The aim is to familiarize readers with the various types and models of early Christian proclamation and thereby to confront them with the fact and problem of the diversity of the New Testament witness. The shorter book 2 of our presentation has a different yet complementary purpose. It presents the factors that led to the formation of the two-part ecclesial canon of the Old and New Testaments. It also identifies the center and unified core of the diverse New Testament witness to faith, asking in conclusion about the current ecclesial-theological consequences of this center.

Despite examples to the contrary in the recent works of New Testament theology by F. Hahn and U. Wilckens (see below, 29–30, §5.3.9; 30–31, §5.3.10), I do not intend to include a "book 3" of my biblical theology that would summarize the entire New Testament tradition systematically and prepare the way thematically for a biblical dogmatics. There are three reasons for my reservation:

1. As already indicated, my outline needs to be supplemented by a theology of the Old Testament that is open to the New Testament. H. Gese has sketched a theology in broad strokes, but it still needs to be carried out exactly. Only when such an Old Testament theology is available can the tradition and teaching of the whole Bible be presented; Childs and Scobie show how differently this can be done (see above, §1.2.2, and below, chap. 43, pp. 812–18).

2. When one covers only the New Testament tradition, one is inevitably exposed to the temptation of making it self-standing and relegating its canonical connection with the Old Testament to the background. Moreover, one also risks undermining the intention of the Gospels (and Acts) to provide a reminder of the past. Following the Jewish pattern, the New Testament historical books seek to gather their readers and auditors around Jesus and the New Testament church. They do not want to supersede this concrete historical witness by an ecclesiastical dogma that all too quickly loses its salvation-historical moorings.

3. In the discipline of New Testament theology, historical work and dogmatic work necessarily overlap. Nevertheless, in my view New Testament scholars should not undertake to fulfill all the complex responsibilities of dogmatics merely as an appendix. R. Bultmann attempted to do so, but he

was justly criticized by H. Diem for his “hopeless leveling of all dogmatic problems” (Diem, *Dogmatik* [1960^3], 72). In view of such criticism, New Testament scholars will serve their churches and ecumenical relations better by showing as fully as possible that in the Pauline and Johannine literature, but also in other New Testament books, dogmatic principles and patterns of thought were already being developed. These remain valid for the church in all times.

The outline of the present work therefore runs:

Book 1: The Origin and Character of the New Testament Proclamation

- Part 1: The Proclamation of Jesus
- Part 2: The Proclamation of the Early Church
- Part 3: The Proclamation of Paul
- Part 4: The Proclamation in the Period after Paul
- Part 5: The Proclamation of the Synoptic Gospels
- Part 6: The Proclamation of John and His School

Book 2: The Problem of the Canon and the Center of Scripture

5 The proposed outline is by no means self-evident. This will become clear as we look at the current leading theologies of the New Testament and the many recent essays and articles dealing with the problem of the conception and execution of a (biblical) theology of the New Testament.

5.1 In his research report on twentieth-century New Testament interpretation, *Das Neue Testament im 20. Jahrhundert: Ein Forschungsbericht* (1970), W. G. Kümmel included a section entitled “Research on the Theology of the New Testament in Its Entirety” (“Die Erforschung der Theologie des Neuen Testaments in seiner Gesamtheit,” 123–46). He pointed out the great differences that continue to exist in this and other areas of New Testament scholarship and warned against a false sense of security: “In important areas, New Testament scholarship of the twentieth century has by no means achieved unanimous results. For all the great advances of scholarship, widely accepted results can be spoken of only with reservation. Therefore New Testament scholarship still has much to do and much to explain” (145–46).

Unfortunately, this summary also holds true at the beginning of the twenty-first century: the scheme of the present work also operates on the ground of debated hypotheses at almost every turn. Kümmel’s report is augmented by the historical theological studies of his pupil O. Merk. These

include his article on the biblical theology of the New Testament, “Biblische Theologie II. Neues Testament,” *TRE* 6:455–77, and his two research reports on the biblical theology of the whole Bible: “Gesamtbiblische Theologie: Zum Fortgang der Diskussion in den 80er Jahren,” *VF* 33 (1988): 19–40, and “Gesamtbiblische Theologie: Eine offene Diskussion,” in *Eine Bibel—Zwei Testamente*, ed. C. Dohmen and R. Söding (1995), 225–36. Merk shows that the main problems of New Testament theology are located especially in two areas: in the *outline* that structures the whole, and in the question whether the main point of the presentation should lie in *historical analysis and reconstruction, or in the interpretation of the content of the texts for the present day*. In any case, experts today agree that the New Testament does not present a timeless dogmatic unity but presents a historically grown plurality of witnesses whose dogmatic unity remains to be investigated.

5.2 There are two ways of summarizing the content of the New Testament proclamation systematically. One can begin with the main topics of church dogma and ask what the writings of the New Testament have to say about them. This approach has the advantage of settling the question of the ecclesial authority of the biblical statements in advance through the organization of the work: The New Testament provides the Scripture proofs and materials for church dogmatics. Moreover, in this approach the difficult question of the inner unity of the multifaceted New Testament witness need not be answered by the New Testament scholar alone. Rather, the scholar can rely on church tradition and teaching when searching for the authority and dogmatic unity of the New Testament. Whereas the so-called biblical theologies of the period of old Protestant orthodoxy were largely organized as testimony collections for individual dogmatic topics or loci, such as creation and redemption, this preparatory orientation toward dogmatic theology has been abandoned since the late eighteenth century and replaced by an independent historical presentation. A division of labor as well as history of religion considerations then led to separate treatments of the Old and New Testaments. Therefore in Protestant works today we no longer encounter the organization of New Testament theology around dogmatic loci.

In recent times the older dogmatic outline has been used only in the important but often overlooked *Theology of the New Testament* (1968–1976; ET 1971–1978) by the late Tübingen Roman Catholic exegete **K. H. Schelkle**. Schelkle’s theology is divided into four volumes: 1. *Creation: World—Time*

—*Man*; 2. *Salvation History, Revelation*; 3. *Morality*; 4. *The Rule of God: Church—Eschatology*. For Schelkle this outline has the advantage of presenting the biblical statements consciously in the light of Catholic teaching about faith while nevertheless allowing them their own weight and character. Schelkle understands New Testament theology as biblical theology for two reasons: “Theology that seeks to be biblical, as the Bible understands itself, will hold fast to the reality of God’s activity in the history of the Old and New Testaments” (1:89). Moreover, from the time of Jesus onward the church took the Old Testament with them from the synagogue; they made it into their own book “by increasingly discovering and proving how it was true in the life of the Messiah Jesus as well as in the history of the church” (2:54). Beyond these claims Schelkle makes clear in every major chapter how much the New Testament testimony depends on the Old Testament–early Jewish tradition and carries it forward. Within the framework of traditional Catholic thought, Schelkle’s achievement is considerable. But historically it has one major disadvantage: Schelkle fails to present the proclamation of Jesus or the theology of Paul or John first in context, and then to apply these results only as a whole to church doctrine.

5.3 The alternative to Schelkle’s doctrinal topical approach is to begin with the individual New Testament witnesses and order them chronologically. The advantage of this approach is that it gives full attention to the proclamation of Jesus, Paul, John, etc. The risk is that one can treat the New Testament more or less independently of the Old and pass over the question of the church’s canon. Furthermore, the important question of the unity and center of the New Testament message must be specifically asked in this approach, and the relationship of this message to church tradition and teaching specifically raised. Nevertheless, this type of presentation has long attracted the attention not only of Protestants, but also of Catholic exegetes.

Today a whole group of theologies follows this presentation, representing very different solutions. These include the New Testament theologies by R. Bultmann, H. Conzelmann, J. Jeremias, W. G. Kümmel, E. Lohse, L. Goppelt, G. Strecker, F. Hahn, and U. Wilckens (see below). On the Catholic side, this type of presentation is favored especially in the essays of H. Schlier and A. Vögtle (see bibliography). Furthermore, **J. Gnilka**, in his two books *Jesus of Nazareth: Message and History* (1990; ET 1997) and *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (1994), has shown that it makes good sense exegetically to present the great New Testament tradition complexes one after the other. Unfortunately, Gnilka’s work lacks more precise treatments of the meaning of Jesus’s proclamation and work for the theology of the New Testament. He leaves it to his readers to decide whether or not they will read his book on Jesus “as leading to theology” (*Theologie*, 11). In his *Theologie* Gnilka also fails to make clear how the different theologies that he finds in Paul, the Synoptics, the Johannine and post-Pauline writings, Revelation, and the Catholic Letters are to be related to each other and evaluated theologically. He simply identifies “the kerygma of the death and resurrection of Jesus” as the “unifying cord” between these theologies, finding in this kerygma “ultimately also the principle, the source, from which New Testament theology in its many developments originated” (*Theologie*, 462–63). Gnilka wishes neither to choose between these developments nor to harmonize them. Instead, he presents his readers with a process of church interpretation that was already emerging in the New Testament and is still under way. He invites readers to enter this process by “taking up the faith experiences created from the New Testament Scriptures, submitting to their effects, and translating them” (464). Gnilka therefore channels the New Testament tradition directly into the Catholic faith tradition.

5.3.1 Current Protestant discussion of the possibility of writing a New Testament theology is still largely determined by **Rudolf Bultmann's** magisterial two-volume work *Theology of the New Testament* (1948, 1953; ET 1951, 1955; cf. German in one volume, ed. O. Merk, 1984[9]). The work has recently been reprinted with a substantial new introduction and supplemental bibliographies by R. Morgan (Baylor University Press, 2007).

Bultmann's work rests above all on three theological premises that he mentions throughout his work and discusses especially in his epilogue (ET 2:237–51):

1. Since the main aim of the New Testament is the proclamation of God's saving act in Christ, the central topic of New Testament theology is the *kerygma about Jesus Christ*.

2. The saving power and authority of this kerygma lie not in objectifiable and transmittable faith formulas or ideas, but in God's call to a faith decision directed to each individual and affecting him or her existentially. The type of presentation of New Testament theology that fits this kerygma theologically is therefore not an analysis and overview of New Testament teachings or ideas about faith, as useful as this might be. Rather, the presentation must first focus on an analysis of the human condition in unbelief and in belief that is addressed by God's call. In Bultmann's terms, this means that the kerygma is presented theologically appropriately only when and where it is interpreted *existentially*, that is, when investigated for the understanding of the human condition before God that it presupposes and develops accordingly.

3. The constitutive element of the kerygma lies in God's own hidden and inaccessible activity in his word, not in salvation history. *Human history and God's final dealings through his word stand in tension*; the idea of a historical process of salvation accessible to human understanding and capable of being overviewed in its entirety is inappropriate to the kerygma.

These three premises in Bultmann's work are bound up with a series of historical hypotheses that Bultmann developed and defended in essays and monographs prior to his *Theology*.

1. Bultmann presupposes classical *form criticism*, which is supported by a particular view of Jesus characteristic of the radical Gospel criticism of J. Wellhausen and W. Wrede. According to form criticism, the synoptic Evangelists were primarily collectors and preservers of traditions, not independent theologians. The tradition they assembled consisted overwhelmingly not of authentic Jesus material but of formations of the post-Easter church. *The earthly Jesus was only a Jewish end-time prophet and rabbi*; he first began to be confessed as Messiah and Lord by the Christian church on the basis of the Easter events. Therefore Bultmann begins his work with the astounding statement: "The message of Jesus is a presupposition for the theology of the New Testament rather than a part of that theology itself. For New Testament theology consists in the unfolding of those ideas by means of which Christian faith makes sure of its own object, basis, and consequences. But Christian faith did not exist until there was a Christian kerygma; i.e., a kerygma proclaiming Jesus Christ—specifically Jesus Christ the Crucified and Risen One—to be God's eschatological act of salvation" (1:3).

Because the synoptic Evangelists are mere tradition-bearers in his view, Bultmann also has no need to offer a separate chapter on their theology.

2. According to Bultmann, Paul and John ought to be included in a type of early Christianity distinct from that of the early Palestinian church, namely, in the *Hellenistic church* influenced by Hellenistic syncretism. Therefore Bultmann precedes his presentation of Paul with the chapter "The Kerygma of the Hellenistic Church aside from Paul" (1:63–83) and also stresses at the beginning of his presentation of Johannine theology that certain fundamental categories of the Johannine proclamation first sprang up from the soil of "Hellenistic religions, and especially Gnosticism" (2:11), which Bultmann understood as a pre-Christian phenomenon.

3. Bultmann's (at the time pioneering) insight into the theological meaning of Paul's anthropological terms, his research into the Johannine tradition, and his view of the kerygma all contributed to his thesis that in the New Testament the kerygma is reflected and developed in a theologically appropriate way only in Paul and John. The presentation of Pauline and Johannine theology therefore represents the center of Bultmann's *Theology of the New Testament*. (In fact, Paul and John literally form the core of Bultmann's book in later editions; for while the German first edition and its English translation have four parts, with Paul and John respectively parts 2 and 3, the most recent German edition has only three parts, with Paul and John merged in the central part 2: see *Theologie*, 9th ed., 1984.) Finally, Bultmann deals with the later traditions of the New Testament in a fourth part of his *Theology* under the heading "The Development toward the Ancient Church" (2:93–236). These traditions are historically important, but not of decisive weight theologically.

4. For Bultmann the Old Testament is indeed constitutive for the message of Jesus and the preaching of the primitive Palestinian church. In the Hellenistic church as well, the Old Testament still counts as Holy Scripture and plays a large role in scriptural proofs. Yet the formulations of the kerygma no longer depend on Old Testament language alone; they also take up the terminology of Gnosticism with its redeemer myth. Furthermore, baptism and the Lord's Supper are interpreted in early Hellenistic Christianity with the help of the syncretistic mystery religions.

In its precision of formulation, rich offering of material, and consistency of theological interpretation, Bultmann's *Theology of the New Testament* is a masterpiece. At the same time, its overall outline appears from today's perspective to need *supplementation* and *correction* in both its theological premises and its historical hypotheses. We consider each in turn.

1. Bultmann's first theological premise, namely, his historical and theological interest in the early Christian proclamation or kerygma about Jesus Christ that forms the basis of Christian faith, is *unassailable* in my opinion. The New Testament witnesses indeed wish to proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord and Messiah.

2. More serious questions must be raised about Bultmann's second premise, his demand for existential interpretation (which simultaneously requires the demythologizing of the kerygma). Here we may note two concerns. First, Christian faith can address its own knowledge of the truth, pass it on, and defend it to others only by holding fast to specific ideas and contents of faith that transcend an individual Christian's existential response to God's call. Yet in its effort to free Christianity from being bound to such objectifying statements of faith, existential interpretation only condemns Christians to theological speechlessness. Moreover, Bultmann's interpretive program depends so heavily on specifically Western existential philosophical premises that it *cannot possibly be considered the only appropriate way to interpret the New Testament kerygma about Jesus Christ*.

3. The contrast that Bultmann sets up between the *kerygma* and *history* in his third premise is neither biblically nor dogmatically tenable. The gospel is constituted by the historical activity of God in the mission, ministry, passion, and resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ, which is the presupposition of Christian faith. In the story of Jesus Christ, God's act of electing and saving Israel reaches its all-decisive climax. This activity of God also gives history after Easter an eschatological goal involving the parousia of the crucified and risen Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment by which Jesus Christ will establish the final reign of God. Once one sees and accepts these connections, *the kerygma and salvation history no longer oppose but condition one another*.

Bultmann's four *historical hypotheses* have also proved incorrect:

1. The assumptions of the form criticism practiced so masterfully by Bultmann (and K. L. Schmidt and M. Dibelius) must be supplemented and revised. As H. Schürmann, H. Riesenfeld, B. Gerhardsson, R. Riesner, and others have shown, the elements of the synoptic tradition originate predominately not from spontaneous and anonymous "formations of the church" but from the teaching traditions that Jesus as the "messianic teacher of wisdom" (M. Hengel) opened up and entrusted to his own pupils or *μαθηταί*. The transition from the pre-Easter band of disciples to the primitive church therefore involved a *continuity of both personnel and tradition*. Such continuity would make it difficult for secondary Jesus traditions to arise. The passion narratives of the four Gospels are backed up by a description of the legal proceedings that agrees with the customs of the time (A. Strobel). The proceedings of the Jews and Romans against Jesus become understandable only on the basis of his messianic claims (M. Hengel). The earthly Jesus ministered as the messianic Son of Man and Son of God. After his so-called temple cleansing, now often called his "temple act" or "action" (cf. J. Ådna, *DJG* 947–52), Jesus was condemned by his Jewish opponents as a blasphemer of God because he claimed to be the messianic Son of God appointed to become the end-time judge. He was accused before Pilate of being a messianic pretender and condemned to death by crucifixion. *The picture of the rabbi and prophet Jesus whose ministry first begins to appear in a messianic light after Easter must be abandoned. Jesus's own proclamation is not merely the presupposition but the historical foundation of the theology of the New Testament.*

2. Bultmann's differentiation of a Jewish Christian Palestinian early church and a syncretistic Hellenistic church is likewise problematic. In his great work *Judaism and Hellenism* (ET 1974) and many other publications, M. Hengel has illustrated the considerably close connections between Judaism and Hellenism in Palestine and the Diaspora. Archeological research since the late 1960s has brilliantly confirmed Hengel's view. According to our current state of knowledge, Bultmann's differentiation of two types of early Christianity, one "Palestinian" and the other "Hellenistic," is invalid. Similarly Gnosticism, which Bultmann considered a pre-Christian phenomenon, now appears, on the basis of newly available sources, to be a syncretistic phenomenon that took up and fused Platonic as well as early Jewish and Christian traditions, beginning at the end of the first century AD. The full-blown Gnostic redeemer myth is of considerably later date than Bultmann assumed (C. Colpe). *Bultmann's religio-historical understanding of early Christianity therefore needs fundamental correction*.

3. Bultmann's understanding of the place and setting of Pauline and Johannine theology must also be critically reviewed. According to Acts 22:3, Paul was brought up and educated in Jerusalem, and he measures his missionary activity as beginning "from Jerusalem" (Rom. 15:19). The Johannine tradition also has strong Jerusalem roots.

Furthermore, while the significance of the theology of Paul and the Johannine circle is undisputable, neither can be made a star witness for the existential interpretation or demythologization of the kerygma that Bultmann requires and pursues. Nor can a New Testament theology stand on Paul and John alone. Both are preceded by the proclamation of Jesus, and they also presuppose essential traditions of Jerusalem and Antiochene missionary Christianity, as well as the basic data of the synoptic tradition. Christianity's development after Paul should also not be judged only as a process that flattens out theological differences in the transition to the ancient patristic church.

4. Finally, Bultmann in his *Theology of the New Testament* has not done justice to the significance of the Old Testament as the Holy Scripture of early Christianity, nor to the fact that Old and New Testaments belong together in the one canon of the church. Bultmann remains in an ambivalent position. He has historical respect for the Old Testament as an important document for the church, yet he separates the Old and New Testaments religio-historically and evaluates them theologically in terms of the Lutheran distinction of law and gospel. Bultmann sees the Old Testament above all under the aspect of the law. It shows in exemplary fashion how Israel, as representative of all sinners,

failed in its response to God's call to obedience and is saved only by the justification of the ungodly. Old Testament scholars including G. von Rad, W. Zimmerli, C. Westermann, and H.-W. Wolff protested against this view of the Old Testament without being able to persuade Bultmann to abandon it. From today's perspective another decisive point can be added to their criticism. Because the Gnostic redeemer myth that Bultmann postulated did not even exist at the time of the New Testament, it could not have exerted any decisive influence on the formulation of the (Hellenistic) kerygma about Jesus Christ. *The language of the kerygma by no means bears a syncretistic-Gnostic stamp, but an Old Testament–early Jewish stamp. This raises the question of how this form of language, consciously chosen by the early Christian witnesses, is to be evaluated theologically. This question cannot be answered from Bultmann's perspective.*

In sum, critical reflection on Bultmann's masterpiece shows that his view of New Testament theology can no longer point the way forward.

5.3.2. A modification and extension of Bultmann's approach, but not a replacement of his classic work, are provided by **Hans Conzelmann**'s brief book, *An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament* (1967; ET 1969).

Conzelmann's outline is organized tradition-historically. Departing from Bultmann, Conzelmann assumes that Christian faith would remain mute were it not for faith formulas capable of being transmitted and received. Therefore he understands theology in this work "not only in general terms, as the interpretation of the faith made at a particular time, but in a more special sense as an exegesis of the original *texts* of the faith, the oldest formulations of the creed" (ET, xv). Conzelmann leads his readers to reconstruct and comprehend the early Christian faith statements as a means of learning what theology is.

After an introduction to the problem of a theology of the New Testament and two chapters on the New Testament environment, Conzelmann begins his actual presentation with a first main part entitled "The Kerygma of the Primitive Community and the Hellenistic Community." The second main part is titled "The Synoptic Kerygma." Paul's theology is not dealt with until the third main part. The fourth part is "The Development after Paul," while the fifth is dedicated to John. Conzelmann was one of the pioneers of the redaction criticism of the Gospels. Therefore he views the synoptic Evangelists not only as collectors and preservers of tradition but also as independent theologians, and dedicates an entire main part to the synoptic kerygma. However, his book lacks a separate treatment of the proclamation of Jesus. Although Conzelmann wrote the long research article "Jesus Christus" in *RGG*^{3} 3:619–53, in his *Outline* he insists that "the 'historical Jesus' is not a theme of New Testament theology" (xvii).

Conzelmann's view of the Old Testament is also strangely ambiguous. He emphasizes that the Old Testament and early Jewish tradition are the decisive religio-historical presuppositions for the formation of the New Testament tradition. Yet he also believes that the Old Testament acquires a revelatory quality only in the light of the revelation of Christ. This rigid position caused the attempt to promote a theological dialogue between Conzelmann and the Old Testament scholar G. von Rad in a 1964 issue of *Evangelische Theologie* to break down. Von Rad wanted to have the basic question of God and salvation raised and answered not from the New Testament alone but from both Testaments, while Conzelmann opposed this approach. Biblical theology cannot be done on Conzelmann's premises.

5.3.3 An alternative to Bultmann's *Theology* has been presented by **Joachim Jeremias**: *New Testament Theology*, vol. 1, *The Proclamation of*

Jesus (German 1971[1], 1973[2]; ET 1971). Because a second planned volume unfortunately never appeared, a better understanding of the work can be achieved by reference to Jeremias's programmatic treatment in his brief booklet *The Problem of the Historical Jesus* (1960; ET 1964). Jeremias took up the main theses of this booklet in an added chapter at the end of the second German edition of his *Theologie*, called an *Überleitung*, or "transition" to the next volume (but not contained in the English translation). Written in the concise style of a senior scholar, Jeremias's *New Testament Theology* sums up his life's work, which was dedicated above all to the study of the proclamation of Jesus. The book is comparable with Bultmann's *Theology* in scholarly weight.

In five long chapters Jeremias deals with Jesus's mission, the dawn of the time of salvation in Jesus's work, the period of grace (i.e., Jesus's proclamation of the end times), the gathering of the disciples and the new people of God together with the commandments applicable to them, and finally Jesus's consciousness of his divinity, the passion, and the Easter events. According to Jeremias, Jesus's disciples experienced Easter "as an eschatological event, as a dawning of the turning point of the worlds" (309), even as an experience of the parousia that opened itself to them (310). The saving work that God undertook for the disciples in the mission of the earthly Jesus is therefore fully manifested in the Easter events.

Jeremias answers the question whether the synoptic tradition can bear the weight of this presentation with a resounding yes. Jeremias makes careful use of the so-called criterion of dissimilarity, which "finds the earliest tradition where a saying or a theme cannot be derived either from Judaism or from the early church" (2), and pays close philological attention to the idiosyncrasies of the Semitic style in the Jesus tradition. By using these methods Jeremias determines that the Synoptic Gospels show "so much faithfulness and such respect towards the tradition of the sayings of Jesus that we are justified in drawing up the following principle of method: In the synoptic tradition it is the inauthenticity, and not the authenticity, of the sayings of Jesus that must be demonstrated" (37). With this judgment Jeremias stands in diametric opposition to the methodological claim of form criticism, which insists that exegetes are obligated "to investigate and make credible not the possible inauthenticity of the individual unit of material but, on the contrary, its genuineness" (E. Käsemann, "The Problem of the Historical Jesus" [1954], in *Essays on New Testament Themes* [1964], 15–47, here 34). However, Jeremias is not concerned to demonstrate that the entire synoptic tradition is historically reliabile, but only that it contains enough reliable traditional material to allow an academically credible reconstruction of the proclamation (and work) of Jesus. The core of this proclamation is formed by what Jeremias calls the *viva vox* or *ipsissima vox* of Jesus, those sayings that undoubtedly go back to Jesus historically, above all in his parables.

Jeremias places such great weight on the historically reliable reconstruction of the proclamation and work of Jesus because he is convinced that salvation is guaranteed to us in the word and work of the earthly Jesus. Hence at the conclusion of the German second edition of his *Theologie* (not contained in the English translation, from the German first edition), Jeremias writes:

> Both entities, the proclamation of Jesus and the faith testimony of the church, the pre- and the post-Easter message, belong insolubly together; neither can be isolated. But they also must not be leveled. Rather, they are related to each other as call and response. . . . Although the call is delivered only in the context of the faith testimony of the church and is constantly repeated in this context, it was nevertheless issued uniquely and once for all. Golgotha is not everywhere; there is only one Golgotha, and it lies outside the gates of Jerusalem. The call stands over the response, because Jesus is the Kyrios and the Kyrios stands over his messengers. He alone, the Kyrios, is the beginning and end, the middle and measuring stick of all Christian theology. (Jeremias, *Neutestamentliche Theologie* [1973[2]], 295)

Jeremias presents us with a historically argued reversal of Bultmann's kerygma theology: the decisive ground of faith is not found for the first time in the apostolic preaching of the crucified and risen Christ, but already in Jesus's word and work, as reliably attested in the Synoptic Gospels. Certainly Jeremias's reference to the uniqueness and irreplaceability of the story and words of Jesus agrees with the witness of the Synoptics. But this must not be allowed to obscure the fact that Jesus can only be called upon as Lord and Savior of the world after Easter. Faith in Jesus Christ owes its existence above all to the Easter message (cf. Luke 22:32; John 14:26). A review of this debate shows the wider implications for both historical and theological reconstruction.

1. In his essay "Blind Alleys in the 'Jesus of History' Controversy" (*New Testament Questions of Today* [1969], 23–65, esp. 28), E. Käsemann has shown that Jeremias with unprecedented radicalism used the scholarly reconstructed proclamation of Jesus as a decisive support for faith. For Jeremias, faith in Jesus Christ is indebted to the preached word but is ensured by an appeal to the Jesus tradition discovered by historical-critical research. Hence Jeremias "does not shrink from really allowing faith to be dependent on insight mediated by scholarship" (28). Käsemann's objection is potentially serious. It means that some scholars who may wish to continue in Jeremias's direction will no longer be able to find fault with others who similarly want to found their Christian existence solely on the so-called historical Jesus, but who reconstruct his proclamation completely differently than Jeremias himself did. As a committed Lutheran, Jeremias naturally knew that a faith in the historical Jesus could not form the foundation of the church. Salvation and deliverance are found only by the faith that is directed to the biblical Christ proclaimed by the Old and New Testament witnesses (M. Kähler). Jeremias understood his position as a counterpoint to Bultmann and his school. Yet this theologically and historically sensible opposition must not blur the fundamental distinction between the scholarly construct "the historical Jesus" and the kerygmatically authoritative Christ proclaimed by the church.

2. Jeremias proposes the (overly sharply formulated) thesis that the church's proclamation is not itself revelation but only testifies or answers to God's revelation in Jesus. But here he finds himself contradicting Paul and the author of the Fourth Gospel, both of whom ascribe revelatory quality to the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul does so for example in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, Galatians 1:9, 1 Corinthians 15:1–11, 2 Corinthians 4:5–6, 5:20–6:2, Romans 1:16–17, 10:17, etc., and John does so in the sayings about the Paraclete, in particular in John 15:26–27 and 16:12–15. Jeremias's appeal to the uniqueness and irreplaceability of the story and words of Jesus is fully in keeping with the testimony of the Synoptics. But he must not obscure the fact that Jesus could be proclaimed as Lord and Savior of the world only from the perspective of Easter. Faith in Jesus as the Christ is indebted above all to the Easter message.

3. The historical origin of Christian faith should be dated not only to Jesus's public ministry, but also and especially to Easter, to the resurrection of Jesus and his appearances from heaven to previously chosen witnesses (Acts 10:41). The revelation of Christ is not complete apart from these appearances. It must therefore be asked whether Jeremias has not too strongly factored out "the truly historical, i.e., ongoing character of the revelation of Christ" (A. Vögtle, "Die hermeneutische Relevanz des geschichtlichen Charakters der Christusoffenbarung," 23). This means that *the revelation of God in Christ developed only by a process extending beyond the initial appearance of Jesus in his earthly ministry, a process additionally determined by the Easter events whose substantial significance was developed by the New Testament witnesses*. Easter and the gift of the Holy Spirit gave the early Christian witnesses and the New Testament authors decisive new insights into both the person and work of Jesus and the saving work of God as a whole. This is shown not only by Luke 24:25–27 but also by the Gospel of John (cf., in addition to 14:26 cited above, John 15:26–27; 16:12–14).

In conclusion, *we can develop a biblical theology of the New Testament only when we follow Jeremias in allowing the proclamation of Jesus to stand as an authoritative part of the New Testament testimony, while also adhering to the progressive development of God's revelation in Christ*. It is not simply a matter of asking how Jesus's proclamation was worded, but also of investigating how his word and work appear in the light of the Old Testament promises and what Easter as an act of God added to Jesus's proclamation. This twofold line of questioning must be maintained over against a mere kerygma theology on the one hand and a Jesusology that reduces the gospel to the proclamation of Jesus on the other.

5.3.4 In this context three works on New Testament theology by **Oscar Cullmann** must briefly be mentioned: *Christ and Time: The Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History* (1946[1], 1962[3]; ET, rev. ed., 1964), *The Christology of the New Testament* (1957[1], 1958[2]; ET 1959), and especially *Salvation in History* (1965; ET 1967).

In Germany Cullmann's work played almost no role in the exegetical-theological debate about the fundamental questions of New Testament theology. Nevertheless, in Catholic exegesis, the ecumenical world, and Old Testament scholarship, Cullmann's works found a sympathetic reception

among those who advocated a theological interpretation of the Old Testament from the perspective of the whole Bible.

Three of Cullmann's major ideas deserve special attention:

1. Early Christianity's view of time and history is not cyclical, but linear and teleologically oriented.

2. Although there are different accents, all the New Testament witnesses assume the following historical dialectic of God's saving activity and the church's experience of salvation: Salvation is *already* accomplished in Jesus's mission, death, and resurrection, but it is *not yet* consummated historically, because the parousia of Christ, the final judgment, and the ultimate establishment of the kingdom of God are still outstanding. This "already" but "not yet" gives the New Testament testimony to Jesus Christ an undeniable salvation-historical structure. This expresses God's saving activity in the history of Israel, which leads to the appearance of Christ and finds its all-decisive center in Christ, his word and work, his saving death, and his resurrection. This structure also gives the church after Easter its obligation and opportunity of mission and reaches its consummation in the parousia of Christ and the final salvation of Jews and Gentiles. According to Cullmann, this salvation-historical concept connects the New Testament to the Old Testament's theological view of history, especially as presented by G. von Rad.

3. In Cullmann's salvation-historical framework the proclamation of Jesus does not play a merely preparatory role (as in Bultmann), nor does it become accessible only in hindsight after Easter (as in Conzelmann). Rather, the life of Jesus is the foundation of all Christology. Cullmann writes: "The question 'Who is Jesus?' did not emerge for the first time with the early community's experience of Easter. The life of Jesus already provided the starting point of all Christological thought in a double way: in Jesus' own self-consciousness and in the concrete presentiment his person and work evoked among the disciples and the people" (Cullmann, *Christology* [1959], 317).

New Testament theology therefore receives its salvation-historical foundation already in the proclamation of Jesus.

5.3.5 **Werner Georg Kümmel**'s *Theology of the New Testament according to Its Major Witnesses: Jesus—Paul—John* (1969; ET 1973) is a notable book, because Kümmel is free from one-sided schools of thought

and follows his own perspective. Kümmel does not participate in existential interpretation, massive criticism of Cullmann, or the methodological one-sidedness of radical form criticism. Instead he attributes great significance to the proclamation of Jesus, the early Christian use of tradition, and the end-time historical consciousness of the early church; develops an independent interpretation of Paul; and includes historical perspectives from early Christianity. His studies of the canon (see below) still remain pioneering more than half a century later.

For Kümmel the "major witnesses" of the theology of the New Testament are Jesus, the early church, Paul, and John. Kümmel believes that they agree "in the twofold message, that God has caused his salvation promised for the end of the world to begin in Jesus Christ, and that in this Christ event God has encountered us and intends to encounter us as the Father who seeks to rescue us from imprisonment in the world and to make us free for active love" (Kümmel, *Theology*, 332).

Kümmel's summary has not only the biblical texts but also the Reformation tradition in view. This can be seen by comparison with some famous statements of Luther. As is well known, Luther located the "center of the Scripture" in the gospel of the justification of the ungodly. In the general preface to his translation of the New Testament in September 1522, he identified John's Gospel, Paul's letters, and 1 Peter as "the true and noblest books of the New Testament" and "the true kernel and marrow of all the books." Directly addressing the individual reader, Luther writes: "For in them you do not find many works and miracles of Christ described, but you do find depicted in masterly fashion how faith in Christ overcomes sin, death, and hell, and gives life, righteousness, and salvation. This is the real nature of the gospel" (WA DB 6:10, lines 7–8, 12–13, 15–19; *LW* 35:361–62). In his preface to the letters of James and Jude Luther further writes:

> All the genuine sacred books agree in this, that all of them preach and inculcate [or promote: *treiben*] Christ. And that is the true test by which to judge all books, when we see whether or not they inculcate Christ. For all the Scriptures show us Christ, Romans 3[:21]; and St. Paul will know nothing but Christ, 1 Corinthians 2[:2]. Whatever does not teach Christ is not apostolic, even though St. Peter or St. Paul does the teaching. Again, whatever preaches Christ would be apostolic, even if Judas, Annas, Pilate, and Herod were doing it. (WA DB 7:384, lines 25–32; *LW* 35:396)

As early as 1950 Kümmel had shown in his essay on the canon, "Notwendigkeit und Grenze des neutestamentlichen Kanons" ("Necessity and Limits of the New Testament Canon"), how one can give Luther's valid Reformation insight a form that does justice to modern historical exegesis and thought. Today the center of the New Testament is not to be sought after only dogmatically, but also exegetically and theologically. This is done by comparing the most important tradition complexes of the New Testament: the Jesus tradition, the faith message of the early church, the proclamation of Paul and of the Johannine circle—precisely those "major witnesses" to whom Kümmel's *Theology* is dedicated. Kümmel wants to enable his readers to see for themselves whether or not the New Testament's main witnesses "promote Christ."

5.3.6 A readable and didactically well-organized textbook is **Eduard Lohse**'s *Grundriss der neutestamentlichen Theologie* ("Outline of New Testament Theology," available only in German: 1974[1]; 1989[4]). This is now complemented by Lohse's *Theological Ethics of the New Testament* (1988; ET 1991).

According to Lohse, New Testament theology must present in coherent fashion "the development of the proclamation of the crucified and risen Christ in the preaching that founded the church, as available in the New Testament" (*Grundriss*, 9). The preaching that founded the church is the gospel of Jesus Christ, "who died for our sins, was raised by God, and showed in his appearances" himself as Lord (14). This Christ event is proclaimed in the New Testament "as God's eschatological act of salvation in which the promises of the Scripture are fulfilled" (14). If one asks Lohse how the kerygmatic unity of the New Testament is presented, he replies that all the New Testament writings "presuppose the Christ event and the early Christian kerygma, which the writings for their part take up and interpret" (163). One may therefore critically evaluate these writings by how they express this "common Christian kerygma" (163). For Lohse the standard of criticism is Luther's idea of "promoting Christ" (see above, 26).

In his historical and theological intention Lohse therefore agrees with Kümmel. But in the exegetical realization of this intention Lohse differs from Kümmel by trying to combine the theological impulses of R. Bultmann, E. Käsemann, and H. Conzelmann with the perspectives of his own teacher J. Jeremias. As an expert in ancient Judaism, Lohse recognized much more clearly than Bultmann, Käsemann, Conzelmann, or even Kümmel the foundational role that the Old Testament played in forming the message of faith for the New Testament witnesses. In the early Christian understanding the promises of the Scripture are fulfilled in the Christ event. Therefore, according to Lohse, the New Testament cannot be read independently of the Old. Rather, the promises of the Old Testament point to the New Testament in advance. Lohse has expressly agreed with the proposal of developing the theology of the New Testament as a biblical theology that is open to the Old Testament (cf. *EvT* 35 [1975]: 153).

5.3.7 The two-volume *Theology of the New Testament* by **Leonhard Goppelt** is an important work (1975–1976; ET 1981–1982). Unfortunately, Goppelt did not live to complete it; the work was posthumously edited by J. Roloff. However, the first volume, *The Ministry of Jesus in Its Theological Significance*, was almost completely formulated by Goppelt himself, while the second volume, *The Variety and Unity of the Apostolic Witness to Christ*, remains a fragment. Nevertheless, Goppelt's work leaves a substantial legacy to the discipline of New Testament theology. Goppelt worked self-consciously in continuity with the "salvation-historical" school of historical biblical scholarship as represented in the nineteenth century by J. C. K. von Hofmann and in the twentieth century by A. Schlatter, G. Kittel, and J. Schniewind. Goppelt writes: "Jesus takes as his own starting point the God of the Old Testament and is himself understood in the New Testament . . . as God's conclusive revelation" (1:280). He also adds: "It

would appear to this writer to be fundamental for [the] self understanding of the New Testament—without wishing to minimize all the variations in its individual writings—that it wishes to attest to a fulfillment event coming from the God of the Old Testament and having Jesus at its center" (1:281). Because the New Testament intends to be understood in the light of its claims to revelation, Goppelt believes that it cannot be judged only from a critical distance. He does not simply presuppose the historical-critical method. Instead, he writes: "We shall seek to bring the principle of historical-critical scripture research, critique, analogy, and correlation, into a critical dialogue with the self-understanding of the New Testament. . . . As conclusion to the intended critical dialogue, we are seeking to arrive at a picture of New Testament theology in its breadth of variation, which is the product of historical-critical reflection, and is, at the same time, understandable in terms of substance. As such, therefore, it can establish its own credentials" (1:281).

Goppelt also does not hesitate to apply the Old Protestant orthodox hermeneutical rules of the *analogia fidei* (cf. Rom. 12:6) and the *analogia Scripturae Sacrae* to his scriptural interpretation. Both rules are in keeping with New Testament precedents. They proclaim that individual scriptural statements are to be interpreted in the framework of the whole self-interpreting Scripture and in agreement with the entire faith tradition of the church.

Not only Goppelt's hermeneutical principles but also his presentation of the *proclamation of Jesus* deserves attention. He sees the Synoptic Gospels as proclamatory works that report the work of the earthly Jesus, which is relevant for Christian faith at all times. According to the Gospels' testimony, which is determined by the Easter events, Jesus was the "Son of God," in whose work God's covenant is realized as salvation for sinners. *Jesus's work climaxes in the accomplishment of universal atonement*. By surrendering his life on the cross according to God's commission, Jesus vicariously takes on himself the death sentence passed on sinners, thus establishing the decisive new life-giving relationship of God with people. In the resurrection and exaltation of the crucified one, Jesus's work is acknowledged by God as eschatologically valid: "In the resurrected One, God's active engagement toward the world was present with ultimate validity" (1:237). Following A. Schlatter, Goppelt comprehends the development of the post-Easter preaching of Christ from the historical *effect* that the crucified and risen Christ exercised upon his chosen witnesses. Christology is therefore the leading idea of the second volume of Goppelt's *Theology*. Goppelt's view is as superior to Jeremias's scheme of call and response as it is to the existential interpretation of the early Christian witnesses. As one can see from Goppelt's history of early Christianity, *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times* (ET 1970), in addition to claiming support from the available early Christian writings, his observations can be extended into the mission history of early Christianity.

Although at the end of his second volume Goppelt was no longer able to treat systematically the question of the biblical canon and its center that he always had before him, his *Theology* is a *decisive aid to the development of a biblical theology of the New Testament that corresponds to the New Testament texts*.

5.3.8 **Georg Strecker** was similarly unable before his death to complete his *Theology of the New Testament* (1996; ET 2000), which he had been preparing for many years. In accordance with Strecker's wishes, F. W. Horn assembled the work from the manuscripts Strecker left behind and also supplemented it by treatments of 2 Thessalonians, 1 Peter, Jude, and 2 Peter. Strecker concentrates on the canonical books of the New Testament and gives his interpretation a theological accent from the start, because "the church in its current form and contemporary Christian self-understanding must allow itself to be measured by this claim and demand" of the New Testament texts (3–4). After an introduction to the task of the discipline of New Testament theology, Strecker's *Theology* begins with a large-scale treatment of Paul. Here he tries to show that Paul fully developed his teaching about faith, justification, and the law only in Romans. Strecker's presentation of Paul is followed by a chapter entitled "Early Christian Tradition to the Composition of the Gospels." Although this includes an analysis of the proclamation of Jesus, this has only a historical function for Strecker and is not the basis of faith. Faith is based on "the eschatological promise of the word of God as it has occurred in the Christ event" and "on the Easter message as proclaimed at the first by the witnesses of the resurrection." Therefore "historical inquiry as to what lies behind the early Christian kerygma is not only not necessary for faith, but also inappropriate in terms of its [i.e., faith's] own subject matter" (252). Further chapters treat the Synoptic Gospels and the writings of the Johannine school. Strecker (rightly) places the Johannine epistles before the Gospel of John, which is to be interpreted in their light, and also deals with Revelation, because it was written in the surrounding field of the Johannine school. The textbook closes with two chapters on the deutero-Pauline and the Catholic Epistles. Unfortunately a concluding theological summary is missing. Strecker's line of thought reflects the influences of Bultmann and Conzelmann, but his historical and theological judgment is thoroughly independent.

5.3.9 **Ferdinand Hahn**'s two-volume *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (2002) is a monumental work (1,727 pages) into which Hahn has

incorporated the theological summation of a lifetime of exegesis. He can rely not only on an abundance of earlier essays, but also on such important monographs as *The Titles of Jesus in Christology* (1963; ET 1969) and *Mission in the New Testament* (1963; ET 1965).

In his first volume Hahn begins with an instructive overview of the history and tasks of New Testament theology. He then treats in eight main parts the proclamation and ministry of Jesus, the proclamation and theology of the earliest Christian churches, the theology of Paul, the theology of the Pauline school, the theological conception of the Hellenistic Jewish Christian writings of early Christianity independent of Paul, the theological conception of the Synoptic Gospels and Acts, Johannine theology, and the transition into the history of theology in the second century as represented in Jude, 2 Peter, and the apostolic fathers. Under these eight headings we find forty-five chapters, each further subdivided into sections and finally into short instructive paragraphs. These make it easy to recognize Hahn's opinions, but harder for the reader to engage with the exegetical contexts. Where it appears necessary to him, Hahn begins with short summaries of research and only then describes the relevant statements from the texts.

The second volume is arranged like the first. Here Hahn turns from textual description to theological evaluation, offering a thematic presentation of the New Testament teaching and its unity. This volume is divided into five main parts. In the first Hahn gives a brilliant presentation of the significance of the Old Testament as the Bible of early Christianity. The second part treats the revelatory act of God in Jesus Christ, while the next three parts point out respectively the soteriological, ecclesiological, and eschatological dimensions of this revelatory act. Although he by no means denies divergences and contradictions in the New Testament, Hahn gives the impression of a coherent whole that outweighs them, even speaking of "a self-contained whole" (2:806). This whole is supported by two unifying components. On the one hand the early Christian message is firmly bound to the Old Testament testimony about God's work of salvation borne by prophetic promises and faith in the one God. On the other hand, on the basis of the Christ event, this message achieves and attests to a "qualitative transformation" of the Old Testament history of promise: "God's revelatory act attested in the Old Testament culminates in the person and story of Jesus Christ, which is the consistent orientation of early Christian testimony" (2:806).

By dividing his work into a descriptive exegetical volume and a systematic summarizing one, Hahn sets a new standard (on the problem see above, 10–11, end of §1; 16–17, §§5.2–3). The two volumes document in impressive fashion how an ecclesially and ecumenically minded exegete, coming from the school of G. Bornkamm yet working independently, has penetrated and theologically evaluated the entire New Testament tradition. Hahn surpasses his exegetical teachers in many ways. Yet even Hahn continues to hold a set of hypotheses that were common in the circle of the Bultmann school but have become questionable in the meantime. Despite Jesus's striking claims about himself in the Gospels, all christological titles are supposedly post-Easter formations. The Palestinian and the Hellenistic-Jewish churches are to be clearly differentiated according to Hahn. The synoptic tradition is thoroughly permeated by secondary formations. Hahn seeks to show with reference to the Gospel of Mark that New Testament Christology at first had only the man Jesus in view. Jesus was granted the Holy Spirit in his baptism by John, but exhaled it again at his death on the cross (cf. Mark 15:37–39). Only after Easter did Christology develop into a high Christology. The interpretation of Jesus's death on the cross in terms of sacrifice and atonement is similarly supposed to be an early Christian formation that developed only gradually. Hahn gives no indication who created all these new formations, or when this occurred. He also does not explain how and why these new formations were received without reservation in the Palestinian and the Hellenistic Jewish Christian church. His judgments on these matters therefore remain unsatisfying. However, many of Hahn's other observations deserve attention. These include not only his presentation of Johannine theology oriented around the idea of revelation, but also many exegetical details. Hahn's finely nuanced presentation of the constitutive meaning of the Old Testament for the New shows that he has sat at the feet not only of G. Bornkamm but also of the Old Testament specialists W. Zimmerli and G. von Rad. He approaches the project of writing a biblical theology of the New Testament with keen interest and goodwill.

5.3.10 **Ulrich Wilckens** is also a student of G. Bornkamm. Yet to a much greater extent than Hahn, Wilckens has freed himself from the judgments and methodological standards that were dominant when he began his career and has written a massive, 2,568-page *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* in three volumes divided into seven part-volumes (2002–2017) that marks an exegetical new beginning. Behind Wilckens's approach stands not only his new exegetical insights but also his experience as a bishop in the German Lutheran church (see the preface to the English edition above, xix–xx).

Wilckens's first volume, *Geschichte der urchristlichen Theologie* ("The History of Early Christian Theology"), consists of four part-volumes. It offers a historical presentation of Jesus and the early church that concentrates on what is theologically significant and concludes with the origin of the New Testament canon. Equivalent English titles of the part-volumes include: I/1, "The History of Jesus's Ministry in Galilee"; I/2, "Jesus's Death and Resurrection and the Origin of the Church of Jews and Gentiles"; I/3, "Early Christian Letters: Paul and His Pupils and Theologians from the Realm of the Jewish-Christian Mission to the

Gentiles”; I/4, “The Gospels, Acts, Letters of John, Revelation, and the Origin of the Canon.” The second volume bears the title *Die Theologie des Neuen Testaments als Grundlage kirchlicher Lehre* (“The Theology of the New Testament as Foundation of Church Doctrine”) and consists of two part-volumes: II/1, “Foundations” and II/2, “Superstructure.” This volume sets out to explore the dogmatic diversity of the New Testament’s theological themes and present their unifying core. Wilckens sees this core in the reality of the one and only God, who has already accomplished end-time salvation in the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; this corresponds to the name of God as expounded in Exodus 34:6.

In his third volume, which has just appeared, *Historische Kritik der historisch-kritischen Exegese: Von der Aufklärung bis zur Gegenwart* (“Historical Criticism of Historical-Critical Exegesis: From the Enlightenment to the Present,” 2017), Wilckens exposes the systematic and methodological presuppositions that determine his entire presentation. He seeks to provide a critical presentation of the development of historical-critical biblical exegesis, and finally to show how the reality of God can be grasped intellectually and spoken of appropriately. Historical work leads to the praise of God and thus acquires doxological character.

Wilckens emphasizes the surprising amount of agreement that exists between his hermeneutical approach and my own. Therefore, there are close points of contact in our presentations when it comes to the evaluation of the Old Testament tradition, the identification of Jewish traditions of faith and thought in the New Testament, and the presentation of Jesus’s ministry, passion, and resurrection. I am not convinced that the presentation of a New Testament theology must include all the elements that Wilckens places in his second volume. Nevertheless, I stand with him in the conviction that New Testament scholarship will once again gain a clear picture of the wealth and character of the New Testament traditions not by insisting on the present critical consensus, but by daring to plumb the depth of the texts anew and by adapting its methods to the special character and spiritual claim of these texts.

5.3.11 **Udo Schnelle**’s *Theology of the New Testament* (2007; ET 2009) is, like the work of Strecker, another recent German theology available in English.

Schnelle is a Lutheran New Testament scholar who taught at Halle-Wittenberg. Though influenced by his teacher Georg Strecker, he has developed his *Theology of the New Testament* along independent and creative lines. Since New Testament theology is a historical discipline, Schnelle argues that understanding how history is made and written is crucial. Because history is always interpretation, New Testament theology concerns the meaning-formation (*Sinnbildung*) accomplished by early Christian believers and the New Testament authors in response to God’s act in the Christ event. While Jesus’s life and teaching do not per se belong to New Testament theology, he is “the

basis and beginning of all New Testament theology" (61). Schnelle presents the meaning-formation of New Testament theology in terms of four transformations. The *first transformation* was the emergence of Christology; although the reality of Jesus and his teachings are indispensable, New Testament theology interprets the Christ event in light of the resurrection, utilizing the language and conceptuality of both Judaism and the wider Hellenistic world. The *second transformation* comprises the early Christian Gentile mission and Paul's theological reflection. In treating the New Testament texts here and in the final two transformations, Schnelle uses nine rubrics: theology proper, Christology, pneumatology, soteriology, anthropology, ethics, ecclesiology, eschatology, and historical setting. The *third transformation* considers the creation of the Gospel as a new literary genre that both expresses the faith and provides an innovative response to crises (e.g., the founders' deaths, the parousia's delay, the destruction of Jerusalem, etc.). The Synoptic Gospels preserve the significance of Jesus's life and message, having a common theological core based upon Jesus's reality, and yet each has a distinctive theology, representing a new event of meaning-formation for each particular historical situation. The *fourth transformation* is the "Gospel in the World," comprising later New Testament writings such as the deutero-Pauline and Catholic Letters and the writings of the Johannine community, including the Gospel of John (considered by Schnelle to be the capstone of New Testament theology). While Schnelle sees New Testament theology as being in continuity with Israel, the Old Testament, Judaism, and Jesus, he rejects the idea that Christ can be found in the Old Testament and therefore holds that it is not possible to compose a single biblical theology embracing both Old and New Testaments.

5.3.12 In Great Britain and North America, the German-language New Testament theologies of R. Bultmann, H. Conzelmann, J. Jeremias, W. G. Kümmel, L. Goppelt, G. Strecker, U. Schnelle, and others are well known in English translation. But the conditions under which English-speaking scholars work on the theology of the New Testament are very different from those of German-language theology. This can be seen with admirable clarity in **Robert Morgan**'s two books, *The Nature of New Testament Theology* (1973) and, together with coauthor and Old Testament scholar J. Barton, *Biblical Interpretation* (1988), as well as in Morgan's article "Theology, New Testament," *ABD* 6:473–83. These give an impression of the secular research situation in which all efforts to gain a hearing for the biblical testimony by writing a theology of the New Testament must try to succeed. For the religious or canonical situation, see now R. Morgan, "Historical and Canonical Aspects of a New Testament Theology," *BibInt* 11 (2003): 629–39. For the history and problems of the discipline see **Gerald F. Hasel**, *New Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate* (1978).

The following are some of the more important developments in New Testament theology in English. With the exception of the works by Caird and Matera below, the greatest interest in New Testament theology, especially in canonical or biblical-theological approaches, is seen among scholars affiliated with the historic evangelical Protestant faith tradition.

In 1974, **George Eldon Ladd** published a conservative textbook that has since become a time-honored standard: *A Theology of the New Testament*. This was edited and revised by D. A. Hagner in 1993. Ladd treats in order the testimony to Jesus in the Synoptics and John, the confession and message of the primitive church, the theology of Paul, the teaching of Hebrews and the Catholic Epistles, and Revelation. In the revised edition Ladd's treatments are supplemented by a section on Matthew, Mark, and Luke by R. T. France. This covers the area of redaction criticism that Ladd did not sufficiently consider. An appendix, "Unity and Diversity in the New Testament," by D. Wenham concludes the book.

The standard work on the theme of unity and diversity was produced by **James D. G. Dunn** in 1977: *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* (see now 1990[2]). Dunn brings out clearly the different forms of the New Testament testimony to Christ, but he also refers in conclusion to the theological significance of the (New Testament) canon. The Christ event is authentically attested by the canonical books of the New Testament, in remarkable variability, but also in clear distinction from later tendencies in ancient Christianity, which are entitled to no canonical rank in the church. Dunn has also written on other major themes of New Testament theology, in works such as *Christology in the Making* (1980; 1989[2]) and *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (1998), and has recently completed a major trilogy entitled *Christianity in the Making* that includes *Jesus Remembered* (2003), *Beginning from Jerusalem* (2009), and *Neither Jew nor Greek: A Contested Identity* (2015). See also his *New Testament Theology: An Introduction* (2009). After trying to give Pauline studies a new direction with his "New Perspective on Paul" (see below, 270–73, §1.5.4), in his *Jesus Remembered* Dunn also seeks to develop a "new perspective" for Gospel studies. Whether and to what extent this will establish itself remains to be seen.

In 1981, **Donald Guthrie** submitted a weighty New Testament theology. Guthrie is interested in the New Testament testimony that is authoritative for the church. Therefore he arranges his theology not tradition-historically, but thematically. It covers the New Testament teaching about God, humans, and their world, deals with Christ and his mission in particular detail, and also goes into the Holy Spirit, the Christian life, the church, the future coming of Christ, and the New Testament understanding of ethics. The book closes with a chapter on Holy Scripture. Here Guthrie refers to the meaning of the Old Testament for the New and draws attention to the fact that the New Testament authors already refer to the meaning of their writings for the church.

New Testament Theology (1986) by **Leon Morris** offers little more than a sketch. It begins with Paul, summarizes the testimony of the Synoptic Gospels and Acts, then turns in the third part to the Johannine writings and in the fourth to the Catholic Epistles. The concluding summary is formulated in characteristic understatement: According to Morris, the New Testament contains "some permanently valid facts about God, about Christ, about the Holy Spirit, about sinful mankind, about the Church of God, and about the kind of service the redeemed should render. Such teachings are the common stock of the Christian church: they are not the private views of this or that teacher" (332).

Of much greater weight is *New Testament Theology* by **G. B. Caird**, completed and published by his student L. D. Hurst in 1994. Caird was equally at home with the Old and the New Testament. His theological judgment carries weight, and the plan of his *Theology* is most original: Caird gathers the apostolic witnesses of the New Testament into a kind of new apostolic council and has them say their piece on central theological themes: on the economy of salvation history, on the world's need of salvation, on the realization of salvation, on the eschatological expectation, and on the bringer of salvation. At the conclusion he brings their discussions back to Jesus's own theology. According to Caird, Jesus was the Son of Man who understood his mission not only from Daniel 7 but also from Isaiah 53, and his "theology" was not a doctrine, but a living message. The book, which is well worth reading, concludes with a retrospective entitled "Jesus and the Apostolic Conference" and an epilogue, which treats the uniqueness and meaning of the New Testament witness to history.

New Testament Theology by **I. Howard Marshall** (2004) sums up a lifetime of exegetical work. This theology concentrates consciously on the canonical books of the New Testament. After an informative introductory chapter on the task and methods of the discipline of New Testament theology, there follow thirty chapters divided into four major sections: “Jesus, the Synoptic Gospels, and Acts,” “The Pauline Letters,” “The Johannine Literature,” and “Hebrews, James, 1–2 Peter, and Jude.” “Diversity and Unity in the New Testament” concludes the book. In each section Marshall begins with the analysis of the individual New Testament books. He first presents the discrete testimony of each relevant New Testament writing in individual chapters before carefully bringing together the various claims of these writings at the conclusion of each major section. Marshall can claim support for this procedure in the outline of F. Hahn’s theology. At the conclusion of the book Marshall then draws the sum of the whole. He believes that the commonalities between the various witnesses and their testimonies are greater and more important than their undeniable differences. The New Testament as a whole attests the divine work of redemption accomplished in the mission, passion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The biblical testimony to redemption wants to and ought to be accepted by faith. In view of the rootedness of the New Testament message in the Old Testament and ancient Judaism, Marshall welcomes efforts to produce a biblical theology. He often judges matters similarly to Wilckens and myself. Marshall’s *New Testament Theology* is important not only for its exegetical and theological content but also for its readability as a textbook. The only unfortunate outcome is that Marshall offers no separate chapter on the proclamation of the earthly Jesus, despite claiming that his task includes both “jesusology” and “christology” (46). His theological judgments also remain very reserved due to his cautious approach.

Frank Thielman’s *Theology of the New Testament* (2005) argues that the New Testament contains both the earliest witnesses to Christian theology and a unified message about the significance of Christ. It is possible, then, to produce a New Testament theology that is (1) grounded in the history and culture of its own world, (2) examines the particular theological concerns of each New Testament text, and (3) describes the unified witness of these texts to Christ’s significance. The book is arranged in five sections. The introduction situates Thielman’s contribution within the discipline’s history while the conclusion summarizes the themes that give the New Testament its theological unity. Between these two chapters, Thielman describes in three large sections the theological witness of the New Testament’s major parts: the Gospels and Acts, the Pauline Letters, and the non-Pauline letters and the Revelation of John. Each section includes a chapter on current scholarship and then analyzes the primary theological concerns of each biblical book in the section, concluding with a chapter on the theological diversity and unity found in the texts. The section on the Gospels and Acts maintains that these documents comprise the earliest and most reliable texts for understanding the historical Jesus and that the church has historically considered it theologically important to allow each discrete text to bear its own witness to Jesus. The section on the Pauline Letters argues for a particular understanding of the history of Paul’s apostolic labors and surveys the theological concerns of Paul’s letters within this historical framework. Thielman considers all thirteen letters to be authentically Pauline and believes that marginalizing the disputed letters depicts Paul as less flexible and pastorally robust than the evidence actually indicates. The section on the non-Pauline letters and the Revelation of John focuses on how these disparate documents respond in various ways to misinterpretations of the Pauline and Johannine theological traditions as well as to the continuing challenge of Christianity’s marginalization from wider Greco-Roman society. The book amounts to a case for the interdependence of historical and theological study of earliest Christianity.

The work of **Frank J. Matera**, *New Testament Theology* (2007), is a Roman Catholic contribution to the discipline of New Testament theology. It begins with two assumptions: (1) there is a rich diversity in how the writings of the New Testament express the experience of God’s salvific work in Christ; (2) despite this diversity, there is an underlying unity to the diverse theologies of the New Testament. After an introductory chapter on the history and method of New Testament theology,

Matera divides his project into four parts, dealing with the synoptic tradition (the Synoptic Gospels and Acts), the Pauline tradition (the thirteen Pauline Letters), the Johannine tradition (the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine letters), and other voices (Hebrews, the Catholic Epistles, and Revelation). Whereas the starting point for the theology of the synoptic tradition is Jesus's preaching about the kingdom of God, the starting point for the theology of the Pauline tradition is God's redemptive work in the death and resurrection of Christ, and the starting point for the theology of the Johannine tradition is the incarnation. These different starting points, according to Matera, account for the diverse theologies of the New Testament writings. Given the diversity of writings in his fourth group, however, Matera does not identify an overarching starting point for the theology of the "other voices" of the New Testament. After examining the theologies of these four great traditions, he concludes with an extended essay that highlights the underlying unity of the New Testament writings. This unity, he argues, is grounded in an experience of salvation and an underlying master story that can be summarized as (1) humanity in need of salvation, (2) Christ the bringer of salvation, (3) the community of the sanctified, (4) the moral life of the sanctified community, and (5) the hope of the sanctified community. Although it gives attention to the historical situation out of which the New Testament writings arose, this work is primarily literary and theological in approach. For example, rather than begin with Jesus's theology, as in the works of Hahn as well as the present volume, it focuses on the theology of the synoptic writers. And while it admits a distinction between the disputed and non-disputed Pauline letters, it treats the letters as part of a Pauline corpus.

Thomas R. Schreiner's *New Testament Theology* (2008) developed from primary study of the New Testament texts, originally without reference to secondary sources, in order to achieve an independent thematic presentation. The appendix surveys the state of New Testament theology and offers proposals for how New Testament theology should be conducted. In particular, Schreiner argues that the New Testament documents contain a human word and a divine word, and the former does not preclude the authority of the latter. The thematic approach enables Schreiner to emphasize the unity of the New Testament's witness to God's saving action in Jesus Christ. The book is split in four sections. The first segment considers the fulfillment of God's saving promises and focuses on the eschatological tension in the New Testament. In other words, the promises made to Israel and fulfilled in the church are inaugurated but not consummated. The second section of the book centers on God's saving work in Jesus Christ, focusing on who Jesus is and what he has done to accomplish salvation. The third section of the book considers the role of human beings in the New Testament. Salvation is needed because of human sin, and it is accessed through faith and obedience. Lastly, the community of the redeemed in its life together and their future destiny is examined. Schreiner's study reflects an ongoing dialogue with other New Testament scholars and includes the contribution of every New Testament author, seeing a common emphasis on God's saving work in Jesus Christ for the glory of God.

Gregory K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (2011), contains a number of unique traits compared to previous New Testament theologies. (1) Rather than beginning with the proclamation of Jesus or the theology of the Evangelists, Beale's book begins by plotting the theological story line of the Old Testament, which consists of a synthetic formulation about God's purposes in creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. (2) Next, Beale examines how important components of the Old Testament story line are understood and developed in Judaism, and how these interpretations compare or contrast with those of the New Testament. (3) The majority of the book traces the major facets of this story line into and throughout the New Testament, demonstrating the fulfillment of the Old Testament in the New. This approach distinguishes itself from those that organize the New Testament writings chronologically, individually, or thematically, and leads to a greater focus on the New Testament's unity than on its diversity. (4) The scheme of Beale's book resembles that of the New Testament *biblical* theology of Hans Hübner (see below, 41–43; 809–12, §2). Yet in contrast to Hübner, who believes New Testament writers' perspective "in Christ" overrides the original contextual meanings of Old

Testament texts, Beale wants to focus not only on the particular contextual use of Old Testament texts in the New, but also on the wider theological framework of the Old Testament. This approach may be compared with that of C. H. Dodd's relatively short but profound book, *According to the Scriptures* (1952); he argued that New Testament authors used the Old Testament with broad contextual awareness and that the Old Testament formed the "substructure" of New Testament theology. Beale contrasts with Dodd by beginning with the Old Testament story line itself, while agreeing that the New Testament authors interpreted Old Testament quotations and allusions according to their original context.

5.3.13 Looking back, we see that W. G. Kümmel's judgment that international New Testament scholarship during the twentieth century failed to achieve "widely accepted results" also applies to the discipline of New Testament theology (cf. *Das Neue Testament im 20. Jahrhundert*, 17–18, 146). The methodological and historical consensus on which Bultmann's *Theology of the New Testament* was built has irrevocably broken down, and the New Testament evidence itself must also be freshly examined and evaluated. For this reason my outline as well is dedicated above all to reconstruction. *We seldom have recourse to undisputed textual and traditional foundations and must first work through them step by step*. This is especially true in the area of biblical theology.

6 As we draw to the conclusion of this review of works of New Testament theology, it must explicitly be pointed out that *the attempts to develop a biblical theology of the New Testament that is open to the Old Testament, and especially to sketch a biblical theology of the whole Bible, are highly disputed*. Publications tending in either of these two directions have drawn massive criticism and have stimulated an intensive discussion of materials and methods that is by no means concluded. C. Dohmen and T. Söding have summarized this discussion in the essay collection *Eine Bibel—Zwei Testamente* (1995).

6.1 One concern of scholars is that biblical theology might reverse the independence biblical theology has from dogmatic theology that was fought for by G. L. Bauer and J. P. Gabler at the end of the eighteenth century, as well as the independence of Old Testament and New Testament theological exegesis insisted upon by J. G. Eichhorn. In view of the foundations worked out by these scholars, the agenda of biblical theology has been found to be hermeneutically unclear. It has also been censured for supposedly compromising the critical radicality which was and must remain the particular quality of historical-critical exegesis.

To these charges and concerns it may be replied: (1) The academic division of labor between the theological exegesis of the Old Testament and of the New Testament makes good sense. But it must not obscure the close tradition-historical and canon-historical relationship of the two Testaments. (2) The separation of biblical and dogmatic theology has had the effect of distancing critical biblical exegesis further and further from the realm of church tradition and experience. Exegesis gained freedom through this secularization, but lost its theological significance and became a field of experimentation for ever-changing methodologies without any corresponding gain in knowledge. One can curb this unwanted development only by carefully reminding biblical exegesis of its dogmatic obligations and leading it back to the context of church life from which it has broken free. (3) Finally, one must ask Old and New Testament exegetes not to see historical criticism as an end in itself, but to approach the epistemic and dogmatic problems inherent in this type of criticism, as Goppelt has done.

6.2 A second group of objections to biblical theology covers a broad field of concerns. On the one hand, scholars complain that in tradition-historically oriented biblical theology, the Old Testament no longer finds its independent voice next to the New Testament. On the other hand, they object that Old Testament statements and early Jewish faith traditions are one-sidedly privileged over other currents in the environment of the New Testament. Finally, it is objected that biblical theology revives an emphasis on the New Testament’s Scripture proofs from the Old Testament that has long since been shown untenable, and arbitrarily relates texts from the two Testaments.

These objections can be met by the following replies:

1. Protestant exegesis (and dogmatics) still finds it very difficult to evaluate the formation and meaning of the biblical traditions in a historically and systematic-theologically appropriate way. It is also opposed to biblical concepts of reality and a whole set of Jewish and Jewish Christian ways of thinking (including anamnesis, aspective thought, etc.) that mark the biblical witness. The problems show up particularly clearly in the controversy about a tradition-historical outline of biblical theology that has been under way for decades. H. Gese has drawn attention to the pan-biblical process of tradition, in which the revelation of the one and only God takes an increasingly comprehensive shape and content until it reaches its *telos* in the Christ event. Gese by no means overlooks the fact that this process is not simply linear and is anything but homogeneous in content. For Gese it can “include the sharpest contrasts” (“Über die biblische Einheit,” 39). Nevertheless, Old Testament scholars such as B. S. Childs do not accept these remarks. They fear that in Gese’s approach the Old Testament testimony loses its “vertical” dimension and is flattened into a “horizontal stream of tradition from the past whose witness has been limited to its effects on subsequent writers” (*Biblical Theology: A Proposal*, 52). Childs and his students insist on reading the Old Testament as an independent part of the Christian Bible and on appreciating its testimony independently of the New Testament. This insistence complies with the demands of the modern research situation (and the Jewish-Christian dialogue). But it must not mislead New Testament exegesis into the unhistorical conclusion that the New Testament authors would already have recognized an “Old Testament” as something standing independently over against the New Testament. Rather, as already stressed, the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament—in Hebrew *and* Greek—were the absolute source of biblical revelation for the New Testament authors. It is only with the help of these Scriptures that they could understand and interpret the Christ event at all. This foundational reference to the Holy Scriptures must not be simply evaded

or factored out in the exegesis of New Testament texts. It had, and has, good exegetical justification. The same applies to the reception of the Old Testament–early Jewish tradition of faith and experience that we encounter again and again in the New Testament. Without this tradition the Christian message of faith could not have been formulated, nor would it have been received had it lacked respect for this tradition.

2. On the basis of precise religio-historical investigations, it can be claimed today that ancient Judaism was the primary and decisive framework for the formation of the New Testament traditions. Jesus, the apostles, and the other New Testament witnesses were born Jews. For them ancient Judaism was not only the "environment" but also the homeland of faith. This special life setting must not be simply relativized in the history of religions.

3. In the New Testament, the Holy Scriptures (of the Old Testament) are heard and interpreted as the living word of God (see above). The proof from Scripture pursued on this basis does not proceed simply from the original historical sense of the texts, but also presupposes the later Old Testament and early Jewish interpretive traditions. Those who wish to avoid unhistorical interpretation must thoroughly appreciate these circumstances when evaluating the New Testament's scriptural proofs. It is unacceptable in both method and content to abandon the early Christian conviction that the Holy Scriptures testify about the same one and only God whom the New Testament calls the Father of Jesus Christ.

4. Although the danger of drawing speculative connections between Old and New Testament texts is not to be underestimated, biblical-theological exegesis cannot afford to consider only the explicit and obvious Scripture citations in the New Testament. It also has to examine what relationships might have existed between the New Testament and the Jewish festivals and liturgical traditions that were familiar to many Jews (and Jewish Christians) from childhood on. These include the three Jewish pilgrimage festivals—Passover, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles—as well as the Feast of Dedication of the temple (Hanukkah), the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), and the liturgies of the Jerusalem temple. On all these occasions Old Testament texts were recited, and their relationship to the New Testament must be rediscovered.

6.3 In the fourth edition of *Einführung in die neutestamentliche Exegese*, coauthored by G. Strecker and U. Schnelle (1994), we find the statement that biblical theology stands in danger of "making Jesus Christ unrecognizable as the *proprium* of the New Testament by its tradition-historical leveling" (148). Although Schnelle did not retain this statement in his new edition of *Einführung* after Strecker's death (2000^5), Strecker himself, in his contribution to the collection *Eine Bibel—Zwei Testamente* as well as in his *Theology of the New Testament*, has expressly strengthened it. He is convinced that the Christ event attested by the early Christian kerygma cannot be fitted into or under the scheme of a "biblical theology." Strecker writes:

> The Christ-event to which the early Christian kerygma testifies is the decisive point of orientation from which the theological conception of the New Testament authors proceeds. The kerygma is not to be subordinated to the schema of a "biblical theology." The kerygma

> breaches the material unity of Old and New Testaments, since despite the continuity with Old Testament tradition, from the point of view both of literary history and theology the New Testament stands in a relation of discontinuity to the Old Testament. The kerygma is not the guarantee of the integrity of the biblical canon, since the material content it affirms not only stands in diastasis [separation, tension] to the Old Testament [*sic*], but also in the New Testament is interpreted in different ways. (Strecker, *Theology of the New Testament*, 8)

This view must be flatly contradicted: (1) Strecker seeks to criticize biblical theology by making it claim what its proponents do not: It is not claimed that the New Testament simply continues the Old Testament, but that it attests the Christ event in an independent way, even as Strecker insists (see above, §1.2.2). Yet against Strecker, the New Testament does not view the Christ event as one separated from or in "diastasis" to the Old Testament, but as the salvation-historically decisive event of fulfillment accomplished by the one and only God (Goppelt). (2) When one takes historically seriously that Jesus ministered as the messianic Son of Man for Jews and Gentiles and that he was crucified for claiming to be the messianic representative of the living God, as biblical theology does, then Jesus's uniqueness is not obscured but comes clearly to the fore. (3) The New Testament understands this uniqueness of Jesus from the perspective of Jesus's relationship to God: Jesus, the Christ, is the (messianic) representative of God, to whom the Holy Scriptures point forward. He is the revelation of God in person. Therefore the New Testament witnesses speak of Jesus, his work, his passion, his resurrection, and his destiny of reigning for all eternity in self-consciously Old Testament–Jewish categories. (4) This linguistic characteristic of the New Testament witness belongs to the concrete historical "servant form" of the biblical word of God. This characteristic must not be erased from God's word, but must be retained and worked through theologically.

6.4 From another perspective, it is objected that it is exegetically and theologically inadmissible to place the idea of atonement and reconciliation (closely related in German: *Versühnung* [or *Sühne*] and *Versöhnung*), which appears in isolated places in the Bible and becomes prominent only from Paul onward, at the center of a biblical theology of the New Testament. It is materially more appropriate, it is claimed, to talk of God's love in and through Christ, or only of the "Christ event," which is attested in different ways in the various New Testament writings.

Ever since the sixteenth century, enlightened theologians have found the language of the reconciliation of God with the world and of the world with God through the sacrificial atoning death of Jesus to be difficult and offensive. Nevertheless, such language is clearly attested by the New Testament texts. It appears already in the Jesus tradition (cf. Mark 10:45 par.; 14:22–25 par.), is taken up by the primitive Christian kerygma (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3–5), forms the basis of Paul's message of atonement and reconciliation (cf. 2 Cor. 5:14–21; Rom. 3:21–26), and underlies the testimony to Christ not only in 1 Peter and Hebrews (cf. 1 Pet. 1:18–21; 2:21–25; Heb. 9:11–14; 10:11–18) but also in the Johannine writings (cf. Rev. 1:5–6; 5:9–10; 1 John 2:1–2; 4:10; John 1:29; 11:50; 15:13; 18:14; 19:30, 36). We meet here the core of the New Testament's soteriological message. 1 John 4:9–10 defines God's love precisely in terms of his having provided an atoning sacrifice for sins by

sending Christ. It is therefore precisely this language of an atonement in and through Christ, which achieves an "at-one-ment" or state of reconciliation between God and his world, that allows us to apply content criticism (*Sachkritik*) to the Bible: Where in the Bible—or outside it—is God's love in Christ spoken of theologically appropriately in this sense, and where is it spoken of only provisionally or totally inadequately? For this reason it is better to hold on to the original historical form and language of the Bible's testimony to atonement and reconciliation than to replace it by (supposedly) more appealing descriptions of the saving event for hermeneutical reasons.

7 The above criticisms show that work on the biblical theology of the New Testament *places fundamental questions of exegetical theology as a whole on the line.* Nevertheless, efforts to write a biblical theology of the New Testament—or of the whole Bible—are by no means hopeless. This is shown by several recent works in addition to those encompassing both Testaments by Childs and Scobie already mentioned (see §1.2.2). These include *Der Gott der ganzen Bibel: Biblische Theologie zur Orientierung im Glauben*, by the Old Testament scholar H. Seebass, with whom I have interacted elsewhere (cf. the dialogue between Seebass and myself in *Einheit und Vielfalt biblischer Theologie*, JBTh 1 [1986], 91ff., 115ff.); H. Klein, *Leben neu entdecken: Entwurf einer Biblischen Theologie* (1991); and the two-volume biblical theology of both Testaments by Gisela Kittel, *Der Name über alle Namen*, I: *Biblische Theologie/AT* (1989) and II: *Biblische Theologie/NT* (1990). A new monograph series entitled Topics in Biblical Theology has been inaugurated by Mohr Siebeck publishers. Its first installment, a collaboration between a New Testament and an Old Testament scholar, R. Feldmeier and H. Spieckermann, *God of the Living: A Biblical Theology* (German/ET, 2011), "seeks to present the Christian Bible's understanding of God as a coherent scheme" (ix). Of special importance in the present review is the three-volume work by H. Hübner bearing the same title as my own, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (1990–1995).

Hans Klein's book is intended for a wide readership and sketches the biblical testimony to the one "God who gives life" under the headings of "life" for the Old Testament and "new life" for the New. His biblical theology views "the Old Testament as a description of the lived life and the New as the pattern for the new life." Biblical theology therefore covers "life in its totality" (225). Despite variations in their testimony to the saving event, "all New Testament authors, and even Jesus himself, share the knowledge that in Jesus, his words and deeds and his death and resurrection, God has accomplished salvation for humanity, a salvation that is received through repentance and faith in the gospel (Mark 1:15)" (132). Over against the Old Testament's announcement of new life, "in the understanding of the New Testament, new life has dawned with Jesus's deeds and especially with his resurrection." The church therefore awaits final salvation "with the awareness that God has already done the decisive thing for their salvation" (133).

Gisela Kittel has written a two-volume textbook of biblical theology intended to introduce students of religion and religious education to the grand narrative of the Bible. She sees the Old and New Testaments as closely bound together because both testify to revelation as the self-attestation of the one God, which reaches its historical climax in the mission, atoning death, and resurrection of Jesus and justifies hope for the completion of the new creation of the world already begun in and through Christ. Kittel presents God's self-attestation to Israel in the first volume and continues into the New Testament in the second. She begins with the testimony to Christ in Philippians 2:6–11 and the Easter experience and Easter confession of the first witnesses. Then she sketches the New Testament's theologically central event of reconciliation through the atoning death of Jesus, proceeds to the "faith that fastens itself to Jesus," and turns in conclusion to Jesus's proclamation of the kingdom of God, the New Testament view of the people of God, and the theme of new creation.

After many years of preliminary labors, **Hans Hübner** has produced the three-volume *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (1990, 1993, 1995). The first volume is subtitled *Prolegomena* and explains the fundamental theological basis on which Hübner does biblical theology. Because biblical theology by definition involves the theological relationship of the two Testaments, Hübner believes that "*working through the theological treatment of the Old Testament by the New Testament authors is the primary and fundamental task of a biblical theology*" (1:28). His *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* proceeds from the *Vetus Testamentum in Novo receptum*, from the Old Testament as received in the New. Nevertheless, Hübner does not intend to take into account only the obvious Old Testament quotations in the New Testament, "but also the allusions, although they are admittedly harder to prove. For it must be made clear how much of an Old Testament spirit as a whole is revealed in the New Testament, whether unbroken or broken, accepted or rejected" (1:30). Hübner deals in detail with the history of the Old Testament canon and also considers the idea of revelation in the Old and New Testaments. With admirable clarity he presents the significance of the Septuagint for the New Testament. Hübner does not simply presuppose the theological continuity of the Old and New Testaments, but discusses in detail the relationship of continuity and discontinuity between them. He even goes so far as to ask "*whether* the Yahweh of Israel, the national God of this people, is actually identical to the Father of Jesus Christ, the God of all humanity" (1:240), although he ultimately answers this question in the affirmative at the end of his third volume.

The second volume of Hübner's work presents the theology of Paul together with its later effects in the New Testament. For Hübner the center of the biblical theology of the New Testament lies with Paul. Hübner's third

volume is dedicated to Hebrews, the Gospels, and Revelation. It concludes with a series of epilogues to the whole work. Here one finds very worthwhile remarks about the Old and New Testaments, New Testament Christology, and God's way of revealing himself. On this Hübner writes: "[The New Testament authors] appeal to the [Old Testament] Scripture because in the *authority structure* of *Holy Scripture* and *Christian kerygma* they see one and the same God in his self-revelation. The God who has spoken—and still speaks!—in Israel's Scriptures as the promising God is also the God who has revealed himself in the historical *event* of Jesus Christ. For the New Testament authors the God of Scripture is *their God*. The God of Scripture is *the divine Father of Jesus Christ*" (3:276).

Hübner deserves our recognition and thanks for pointing out so many discussion-worthy perspectives for the execution of a biblical theology of the New Testament. However, his remarks also raise a whole set of critical questions.

1. The distinction of *Vetus Testamentum per se* (the Old Testament as such) and *Vetus Testamentum in Novo receptum* (the Old Testament as received in the New) is canon-historically and hermeneutically problematic. This would have been as alien to the New Testament authors as it was to their Jewish addressees and opponents. By their eclectic reference to certain Old Testament books and their marginalizing of others, the New Testament authors were working no differently with the Holy Scriptures than were the Essenes of Qumran or Philo of Alexandria. If one really wants to do biblical theology from the testimony of Scripture, then one must not prematurely replace the horizon of hermeneutical questions native to the New Testament authors by one alien to them, unless one wants to relativize the truth claims of the texts from the beginning.

2. In his exegesis Hübner usually adopts the standard historical-critical judgments of the texts. Unlike Wilckens and myself, he does not see any critical need to question these judgments by asking once again, for example, about the emergence and transmission of the synoptic tradition, about the distinctions and commonalities of the Pauline homologoumena (accepted books) and antilegomena (disputed ones), or about individual tradition texts such as Colossians 1:15–20 or Matthew 28:16–20. By forgoing such fresh investigation, Hübner deprives himself and his readers of the possibility of seeing the tradition units in the New Testament differently and more appropriately from a biblical-theological perspective than they might now appear apart from such questioning.

3. Hübner seeks to apply the biblical texts theologically by interpreting them existentially in the manner of R. Bultmann. But because the deficiencies of existential interpretation have long since been recognized, it is regrettable that Hübner repeats (almost) all the same mistakes; this type of interpretation is of little use for biblical-theological work.

Like all theology, biblical theology for Hübner is not the thing itself, the substance of revelation, "*but only reflection on the thing*" (3:276). However, to the extent that thinking theologians not only speak with academic detachment about the biblical texts but also confess the one God as

believing Christians, their believing and thinking will merge into one existentially. Hübner therefore thinks that biblical theology leads its practitioners beyond mere reflection to “a more intense encounter with God. Theology begins with the revealing God; theology ‘ends’ with the revealing God. *Principium et finis theologiae est Deus se revelans* [‘the beginning and the end of theology is God revealing himself’]” (3:276–77). These remarks can only elicit theological agreement. But this agreement does not in itself settle the question whether the discipline of biblical theology (of the New Testament) does well to commit itself to Hübner’s program (including, for example, his existential interpretation). That is not advisable in my opinion. Rather, I believe that the important subject matter under consideration is better served if biblical theology concentrates on reconstructing the Old and New Testament traditions and bringing out their truth claims. It should take up the questions of interpretation and application only so far as necessary for the field of dogmatics to grasp them and take them further (see below, chap. 41 introduction).

8 In view of the hardly silenced criticisms of the possibility of producing a biblical theology (of the New Testament) and the diverging attempts at developing one, it is important to proceed methodologically as thoughtfully as possible. The basic principles of our approach have already been explained. Therefore it remains only to point out that those working in the field of biblical theology have not merely carried on intensive discussions of the methods and material of biblical theology for many years; these discussions have also yielded at least two important results.

8.1 *The biblical theology of the (Old and) New Testament is constituted by the Bible’s kerygmatic witness to the one God who created the world, chose Israel as his own people, and sent Jesus as the Christ in order to provide for the salvation of Jews and Gentiles.* U. Schnelle has rightly emphasized that one can speak of the unity of the two-part Christian canon only on the basis “of a christocentric theology and a theocentric Christology” (*Einführung in die neutestamentliche Exegese* [2000[5]], 186).

8.2 In its concrete work on the texts and in its overall perspective, biblical theology must work with a diversified fourfold method: (1) Where it is meaningful and possible, biblical theology must avail itself (critically) of the established methods of historical criticism, including research into the history of words and concepts. (2) Beyond this, it has to follow up the

various tradition-historical connecting lines pointing from the Old Testament into the New and from the New Testament into the Old. (3) Biblical theology must also allow the many direct and indirect New Testament references to Old Testament texts to lead to a presentation that highlights the orientation of the New Testament kerygma to the speech and action of the one God, as witnessed by the Holy Scriptures. (4) Finally, biblical theology must not forget that broad parts of the New Testament have inherited from the late Israelite wisdom tradition a certain picture of the world order and human life that colors the experience and argumentation of its authors.

This diversified fourfold approach captures the advantages and limits the one-sidedness of biblical-theological work as it has been practiced so far. Such an approach will show that *the gospel of Christ cannot be detached from the testimony to God in the Old Testament Scriptures, nor can it be understood independently of the tradition, language, and thought mode of the Old Testament*.

The newness and uniqueness of the gospel of Christ show up precisely in the fact that the gospel takes up the Old Testament testimony to the uniqueness of God and then proclaims Jesus of Nazareth to be the only-begotten Son of this one and only God. The New Testament's testimony to Christ remains incomprehensible without the Old Testament's testimony to God. Christian faith atrophies where it tries to separate itself from its rootedness in the Old Testament. Since the Holy Scriptures belong to Jews and Christians together, these facts imply a theological obligation never to exclude Israel and its traditions from reflection on the truth of the gospel.

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BOOK ONE

The Origin and Character of the New Testament Proclamation

PART ONE

The Proclamation of Jesus

CHAPTER 2

The Problem and Necessity of the Quest for the Earthly Jesus

The place of Jesus’s own proclamation within a biblical theology of the New Testament can no longer be taken for granted today because of problems arising from the history of research, source criticism, and dogmatics. We therefore begin with an account of these factors.

1 From the *history of research* we learn that the attempts undertaken since the nineteenth century to write a “life of Jesus” were doomed to failure by the available sources. The main sources for our knowledge of Jesus are the four New Testament Gospels. These books explain Jesus’s work and life with the intention of presenting him as the Son of Man and Messiah promised to Israel and as reconciler of Jews and Gentiles. The Jesus tradition summarized in the Gospels takes the form of a historical narrative, and to this extent has a biographical character. But it has been preserved, selected, and composed by the Evangelists in the interests of faith in the crucified and risen Christ. No biography of Jesus can be drawn from this material, but only a historically plausible picture of Jesus’s messianic mission. Yet even this is highly contested.

In chapter 1 we encountered the controversial question of whether one should exclude a presentation of the proclamation of the earthly Jesus from the theology of the New Testament on the grounds that Jesus’s person and work gained a fundamental significance for Christian faith only after Easter, as R. Bultmann and H. Conzelmann have suggested. The other alternative is to follow J. Jeremias, O. Cullmann, W. G. Kümmel, and L. Goppelt in assuming that the divine revelation on which faith depends already took shape in the proclamation and person of the earthly Jesus. If the latter is true, then the theology of the New Testament must naturally begin by presenting the proclamation of Jesus.

The controversial research climate in which we live prevents us from taking a naive historical approach to the Evangelists’ presentation of Jesus. But it also requires us to consider carefully both the historical possibility and the dogmatic necessity of the quest for Jesus.

2 Because of a lack of sufficient outside *sources*, no critical presentation of Jesus’s ministry can be produced apart from the canonical Gospels. Yet as soon as we turn to the Gospels to sketch the proclamation of Jesus, we are confronted with a multifaceted problem that presents both theological and methodological challenges.

The Gospels self-consciously present Jesus as the messianic Son of God and Lord in whom Christians believe. Therefore every researcher who works with the Gospel tradition must face the question of whether and to what extent this tradition is correct in its kerygmatic presentation of Jesus. An answer can be reached only by presupposing a certain picture of Jesus’s person and work and then either appealing to the Gospels for support or questioning the Gospels critically. *Critical Jesus research therefore involves a certain amount of circular reasoning, which makes careful consideration of its methods all the more urgent*.

The Gospel tradition complicates historical investigation of the proclamation of Jesus in yet another way. It explains Jesus as he appears to the eyes of Christian faith, and then only makes a beginning in the quest for original and trustworthy traditions as distinct from secondary ones (cf., e.g., Luke 1:1–4; John 19:35; 21:24–25). *Before one can differentiate between pre-Easter and post-Easter elements of the tradition, one must have a precise picture of the character and origin of the Gospel tradition*. Much depends on this picture, and in current research two almost contradictory alternatives have emerged.

2.1 The most widely accepted method of approaching the Gospel sources today is still based upon the *form criticism* pioneered by M. Dibelius, R. Bultmann, and K. L. Schmidt, together with the *redaction* or *composition* criticism built upon it. Proponents of this method admit that the Synoptics (and John) contain quite a number of historically original Jesus sayings and also a few authentic reports of Jesus’s miracles and other activities. However, these same scholars also regard large stretches of the material to be post-Easter in origin and therefore a “community formation” of the church. Because the composition of the four Gospels was possible only after Easter, this understanding of the sources implies that *the presentation of Jesus in the Gospels is, on the whole, of post-Easter origin and therefore reveals only in broad outlines who the earthly Jesus is*.

Determining the proclamation of the earthly Jesus while working on the assumption of a largely post-Easter Gospel tradition requires *methodologically practical criteria* for differentiating the material belonging to Jesus in a strict historical and chronological sense from the later post-Easter tradition that grew up around it. Three such criteria are in widespread use. (1) The first criterion, which English speakers often call the *criterion of dissimilarity* (*Differenzkriterium*), is sometimes referred to in German as the *Unableitbarkeitskriterium*, literally the *criterion of nonderivability* from other ancient sources or traditions. This criterion is almost universally acknowledged. After complaining that there is otherwise "an almost complete lack of satisfactory and water-tight criteria" for authentic Jesus material, E. Käsemann defined the criterion this way: "In only one case do we have more or less safe ground under our feet; when there are no grounds either for deriving a tradition from Judaism or for ascribing it to primitive Christianity, and especially when Jewish Christianity has mitigated or modified the received tradition, as having found it too bold for its taste" ("The Problem of the Historical Jesus," 37).

To strengthen and confirm the results of the criterion of dissimilarity, scholars also use (2) the *criterion of multiple attestation*. Traditions that are not "derivable" from any source other than Jesus (the first criterion) and that moreover appear not just once in the Gospels but several times throughout various layers of the sources (the second criterion) can be made part of a critical reconstruction of the life of Jesus without hesitation. However, the criterion of dissimilarity, combined with that of multiple attestation, leads to only a few key sayings of Jesus, forcing all the other texts in which Jesus speaks or acts as a Jew or as the founder of post-Easter faith traditions into a secondary role. Neither a historically concrete nor a coherent presentation of Jesus's message and ministry can be produced by means of this criterion. It has therefore become common to use, additionally, (3) the *criterion of coherence*. By this criterion scholars group together with the demonstrably authentic and (where possible) multiply attested sayings and stories of Jesus those additional sayings and reports that do not contradict them, even though they may still reflect Jewish or may already reflect early Christian coloration—precisely the sort of material that the criterion of dissimilarity is supposed to exclude. In this way some of the original historical contexts for Jesus's discourse and ministry may become visible, especially when (4) the *criterion of historical*

plausibility is included: “Whatever helps to explain the influence of Jesus and at the same time can only have come into being in a Jewish context is historical in the sources” (Theissen and Merz, *The Historical Jesus*, 116).

The enterprise of finding and confirming authentic Jesus tradition by means of these four criteria is bound to remain plagued by uncertainties as long as critical scholarship fails to establish plausible and methodologically practical *countercriteria* for proving that certain traditions attributed to Jesus are secondary. B. F. Meyer called for the establishment of such countercriteria for years. *Therefore, Jesus scholarship working with classical form and redaction criticism remains saddled with great historical and material uncertainties to this day*.

2.2 Already in our contrast of the positions of R. Bultmann and J. Jeremias in chapter 1, it became clear that Jeremias did not share this sweeping skepticism against the historical trustworthiness of the Gospel tradition, but rather viewed the synoptic tradition of the sayings of Jesus as thoroughly reliable (see above, 18, item 1; 19, item 1; with 22–24, §5.3.3). O. Cullmann is of the same opinion. In his book *Salvation in History*, he writes:

> When a saying of Jesus accords with a tendency in the Church, only in the following cases will I reckon with the probability of a “community formation” and therefore exclude the saying from my reconstruction of Jesus’s teachings: first, when a saying contradicts another saying of Jesus found in the tradition so that they are mutually exclusive; second, when a saying presupposes a situation that was really unthinkable at the time of Jesus, and in his surroundings; third, when a literary comparison of the Synoptics suggests or urges the conclusion that a saying was created late. I lay down these principles not for apologetic, but for scientific reasons, not because of conservatism, but because of a concern for a true critical sense that must be alert when confronted with particular favourite ideas. (192 [word order modified])

The view of Jeremias and Cullmann is strengthened when one recalls that the overall picture of the origin of the synoptic tradition developed by form criticism has now been refuted for some time. H. Schürmann began by drawing attention to the “*well-preserved continuity of tradition* between the pre-Easter band of disciples and the post-Easter church” (*Jesus—Gestalt*

und Geheimnis, 387, italics added). The post-Easter Palestinian and Hellenistic churches were not the only communities that could provide the Jesus tradition with a *Sitz im Leben*. Rather, according to Schürmann, "the pre-Easter band of disciples already formed a communal structure" where it is possible to imagine "the transmission of sayings of the Lord" (390). It is above all B. Gerhardsson and R. Riesner who have taken research further in this direction. When one presupposes that the earthly Jesus ministered as the "messianic teacher of wisdom" (M. Hengel) and that his manner of teaching was not fundamentally different from the teaching and learning style of early Jewish (wisdom) schools, then form criticism's historically uncertain assumption of many anonymous "community formations" appears highly unlikely. *The beginnings of the Jesus tradition lie rather in the instruction that Jesus himself gave to his "disciples" or "pupils" (μαθηταί).* The men and women surrounding Jesus learned his sayings by heart in accordance with the early Jewish pattern, preserved them in their memory, and passed them on to others. Because the same men and women formed the core of the early church of Jerusalem according to Acts 1:13–14, Schürmann's proposed continuity of tradition between the pre-Easter band of disciples and the post-Easter church can be grasped in a concrete and personal way. Jesus's μαθηταί brought into the church the teaching of Jesus which they had received, and in this way it became part of the "teaching of the apostles" (cf. Acts 2:42).

In fact, one can take the argument of Schürmann, Gerhardsson, and Riesner a step further. When one considers the fact that some of Jesus's disciples were sent out to announce the in-breaking of God's kingdom to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," to heal the sick, and to cast out demons even as Jesus himself did (cf. Matt. 10:6–8/Luke 9:2), then it becomes clear that in their own pre-Easter ministry, the disciples had an immediate need for the sayings of Jesus that they had learned. Furthermore, *the tradition that was handed down about Jesus's exorcisms and healing miracles also originated with the pre-Easter band of disciples.* As those commissioned for healing, they needed models and reports of Jesus's healings in order to legitimize themselves and minister as Jesus himself did.

Scholarship needs to take fuller account of the facts: The men and women in Jesus's inner circle were not the only ones who lived through the events of the passion and Easter; the synoptic and Johannine traditions also

mention other hearers or eyewitnesses of these events above and beyond the circle of the disciples (Mark 14:51–52; 15:21, 43 par.; John 18:15; 19:25–27). Once this is presupposed, *it is no longer necessary to see the passion and Easter stories as wholesale post-Easter tradition formations; we may instead approach them as sources containing historically authentic reports*. This is all the more appropriate now that it has been shown that the Evangelists' reports on the trial and passion of Jesus agree with ancient legal custom (A. Strobel).

On the whole, the following perspective emerges from our discussion of the Gospels as potential sources of information about the historical Jesus. *If we are to approach the Gospels not with wholesale skepticism—which in the final analysis is uncritical—but rather with the "critical sympathy" they deserve (W. G. Kümmel), then our method must presuppose the historical reliability of the Gospels, not their unreliability*. At the core of the Gospel tradition stands the *living tradition of instruction and storytelling* that the circle of Jesus's disciples formed and collected before Easter. After Easter, the same disciples handed this tradition on to the church and personally vouched for it as church members. Because the tradition was a living one, in the course of its being handed down to the church and translated from Aramaic into Greek—a process that began already in Jerusalem—it was supplemented and partially reformulated and brought up to date. But it was not fundamentally changed or created out of nothing, only to be placed back into the mouth of Jesus after the fact.

Form criticism presupposed such secondary formation of tradition on a grand scale, appealing to the early Christian prophets' utterances of sayings from the exalted Jesus (cf. Rev. 3:20; 16:15). Form critics assume that during the course of transmission, such *prophetic utterances* were given the same status as the sayings of the earthly Jesus and were eventually written into the Gospel tradition itself. But several factors speak against this still widespread assumption. It is true that we know of early Christian prophets (cf., e.g., Acts 11:28; 21:10–11; 1 Cor. 12:10, 28; Rom. 12:6; etc.), and various sayings of the exalted Christ have also been transmitted to us (e.g., 2 Cor. 12:9; Acts 9:4–5; 22:7; 26:14–15; Rev. 3:20; 16:15). But these sayings are clearly differentiated from the utterances of the earthly Jesus, and none of them is included in the Gospels. There is not a single compelling example of form criticism's hypothetical prophetic formation of sayings of the earthly Jesus throughout the entire New Testament. Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:10, 12, and 25 is very much aware of the difference between a transmitted word of the Lord and his own apostolic instructions, and he respects it. Moreover, in the Synoptics, the church is warned against following false prophets who speak in the name of Jesus (cf. Mark 13:6, 21–23 par.). Both these factors make the origin and positive reception of secondary Jesus tradition in the churches very improbable. In his great work *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World*, D. Aune has subjected the theory of a later prophetic formation of considerable parts of the Jesus tradition—championed mainly by German scholars—to a critical investigation. His conclusion speaks for itself: "German NT scholars, it

appears, have seized the hypothesis of the creative role of Christian prophets because it both accounts for the additions to the sayings tradition and absolves the early Christians from any culpability in the forging of inauthentic words of Jesus. In spite of the theological attractiveness of the theory, however, the historical evidence in support of the theory lies largely in the creative imagination of scholars" (245).

In view of these findings, it is advisable to lay at the foundation of our following investigations not the picture of the origin of the synoptic tradition presupposed by classic form criticism, but rather the historically better-supported picture developed by J. Jeremias, B. Gerhardsson, and R. Riesner. This view is finding increasing acceptance.

3 Our presentation would be lopsided if we failed in this context to draw attention to the striking *differences between the synoptic and Johannine traditions*. The Gospel of John, whose final redaction must be dated a considerable time after the Synoptics, documents in its special tradition the changes and expansions that the Jesus tradition experienced in a particular early Christian apostolic "school." The Fourth Gospel differs clearly from the Synoptics in its language, terminology, structure, and presentation of Jesus, and in the entire aim of its proclamation. Therefore it is debated to this day whether the author(s) of this Gospel even knew the synoptic tradition. As the Paraclete sayings (John 14:15–17, 25–26; 15:26; 16:5–11, 12–15) and the repeated references to the "disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20) show, the Gospel of John understands itself as a witness that expresses "all the truth" (John 14:26; 16:13) given to the "beloved disciple" by Jesus and made accessible to him by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Like the Synoptics, the Johannine tradition rests upon earlier tradition from the time of the earthly Jesus. However, in rendering this tradition in the language of their own school, John and his pupils proceeded decisively and even recklessly with the historical events as compared to the carriers of the synoptic tradition, so as to create a special presentation (cf., e.g., the historically impossible description and theologically significant early placement of Jesus's temple action in John 2). Although the Fourth Gospel does not simply contain freely composed post-Easter "community formations," it does contain bold restatements and interpretations of Jesus tradition within the framework of John's "school." *Therefore, in reconstructing the proclamation of the earthly Jesus, the Johannine tradition about Jesus cannot simply be equated with the synoptic tradition; it needs its own special analysis*.

4 Because of the nuanced picture that the Jesus tradition presents in the Gospels, *the question of the biblical-theological legitimacy and necessity of the quest for the earthly Jesus must be raised explicitly*. The question is urgent for three reasons: (1) because of the Old Testament and the early Jewish expectation of salvation; (2) because of the need to explain the earliest Christian confession and early Christian preaching about Jesus; and (3) because of the duty laid upon all Christians in 1 Peter 3:15–16 to be ready to provide a defense of their faith and the reason for their hope at any time.

4.1 Approaching the person and proclamation of Jesus from *the Old Testament and the early Jewish expectation of salvation* not only does justice to the presence of both Old and New Testaments in the church's single canon; it also takes seriously the question posed already in Jesus's lifetime as to who the man from Nazareth really was (see Matt. 11:3/Luke 7:19; Mark 8:27–28 par.). Asking this question shows clearly how Jesus's word and work stand in a dialectical relationship of both connection and contradiction, completion and criticism, over against the Old Testament–Jewish expectations of the Messiah and his saving work. Thus, for example, Jesus as a Jew confessed the one God who bears the name Yahweh, but in a novel way he also calls him "Father" (αββα). Or again, Jesus preached in a way that was partially enlightening for his disciples, but deeply offensive to the main groups of contemporary Judaism, especially when he claimed that both God's kingdom and the world's salvation were at stake in his own person. Jesus confessed before his Jewish judges that he had been sent as the Messiah, thus ensuring that he would be condemned as a "seducer" and "false prophet" according to Deuteronomy (cf. 13:2–12 [ET 13:1–11]; 17:2–7; 18:20) and handed over to the Romans for crucifixion as a pseudomessiah. Finally, after Easter, Jesus was viewed by the Jews in Jerusalem as one justly cursed by God (cf. Deut. 21:23), while the members of the early church saw him as the promised one whom God had exalted to his right hand according to Psalm 110:1—the one whom God had made "both Lord and Messiah" (Acts 2:36). From an Old Testament–Jewish perspective, then, Jesus appeared as the *disputed Messiah*, before and after Easter.

4.2 Continuing the quest for Jesus with *the post-Easter Christian confession and kerygma* gives Jesus a fully theological profile. Because they considered Easter to be the full investiture of Jesus in his status as

“Son of God with power” (Rom. 1:4), Christians could speak of the unsurpassable revelation of salvation from God that occurred in his name (Acts 4:10–12). They also proved from the Holy Scriptures that Jesus had to suffer and die (cf. Luke 24:26–27, 44–47; Acts 8:30–35; 1 Cor. 15:3–5). At the same time, the earliest Easter confessions appeal to the person of Jesus as the Isaianic Servant of the Lord, in whose fate God has effected salvation for Jews and Gentiles (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3b–5; Rom. 4:25). Such appeals to Jesus also characterized the early Christian missionary message (cf. Acts 10:34–43; 1 Thess. 1:9–10). However, the Jewish Christian recollection of Jesus also appeals to his incarnation and sees it as an unparalleled event of messianic fulfillment (cf. Matt. 1:22–23; Luke 1:30–34, 46–55, 68–79; 2:14, 29–32). These traditions legitimize the quest for Jesus. The quest encounters the question posed by the Old Testament and early Judaism of whether Jesus is the “coming one” and answers it with a resounding yes.

E. Käsemann, in his programmatic essay “The Problem of the Historical Jesus” (1954/ET 1964), and G. Bornkamm, in the introductory chapter of his book *Jesus of Nazareth* (1956/ET 1960), have shown that behind the early Christian kerygma’s reference to the person and work of the earthly Jesus stands a fundamental theological conviction: *the historical appearance of Jesus confronts Christian faith with a realized salvation that chronologically precedes such faith; therefore the person and history of Jesus are the central content of the gospel*. One can infer this both from Romans 5:6–8 and from the overall understanding of history in the Gospels. Here God’s grace surpasses all human understanding when he delivers up his only-begotten Son for the ungodly while they were still unbelieving sinners. The Gospel of Mark sees Jesus as both the proclaimer and the essential content of the gospel (cf. Mark 1:1, 14–15). Matthew’s fulfillment quotations present Jesus of Nazareth as the messianic “Immanuel” promised to the people of God (Matt. 1:23; 28:20). According to Luke 1:1–4, the Gospel of Luke pursues an explicitly historiographical agenda and dates the Gospel era from Jesus’s birth and the beginning of Jesus’s public ministry (cf. Luke 2:10–11; 16:16). Finally, John’s Gospel uses the story of the revelatory work of Jesus, the divine creative word become flesh, to lead to faith in Jesus as the Messiah and thereby to eternal life (John 20:30–31). Everything here speaks of the conviction that the Savior of the world promised by the one God of the Old Testament has stepped onto the scene in Jesus, so that his appearance constitutes the core of the gospel.

4.3 In 1 Peter 3:15–16 it is precisely those Christians who are harassed and persecuted for the sake of their faith who are charged: “Always be ready to make your defense (ἀπολογία) to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear.” Today this capacity to provide an ἀπολογία, or “defense,” to interested and critical questioners includes the ability to give a clear presentation of Jesus’s ministry as well as plausible historical support for it. *The presentation of the proclamation of Jesus and the quest for his historical person and work are therefore necessary for the sake of the gospel and the defense of the faith.*

5 In this connection we must explicitly recall the dogmatically significant difference between the historical Jesus and the earthly Jesus, who is proclaimed by his witnesses as the God-sent Messiah and Savior of the world. As the messianic revealer, the earthly Jesus is constitutive for the Christian faith. This is not true of the historical Jesus. The historical Jesus—as A. Schweitzer’s *Quest of the Historical Jesus* and as modern Jesus literature since E. Käsemann’s programmatic essay “The Problem of the Historical Jesus” adequately show—is an artificial scholarly construct whose profile changes with the personality of the individual researchers, their methods, and the reigning Zeitgeist. But insofar as faith in Jesus Christ is founded according to the New Testament confession upon God’s work in and through Christ and not upon scholarly portraits of Jesus constantly facing critical revision, it is only the earthly, not the historical, Jesus who can be the content of faith.

No one saw this more clearly than M. Kähler. In his famous lecture *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic, Biblical Christ* from 1892 (ET 1964), he writes:

> Certainly faith does not depend upon a christological dogma. But it is just as erroneous to make it depend on uncertain statements about an allegedly reliable picture of Jesus that has been tortuously extracted [from the Bible] by the modern methods of historical research. . . . For in relation to the Christ in whom we may and should believe the most learned theologian must be in no better or worse a position than the simplest Christian. No better, I say, for he comes no nearer to the living Savior than the simple Christian; and no worse, for if his faith has to overcome stumbling blocks, so does that of the simple Christian. For

> both there exists only one royal way of overcoming these stumbling blocks: “Repent and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15)—Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, was buried, and on the third day rose again according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. 15:1–5). (72–73)

As dogmatically correct as Kähler’s conclusions are, in today’s discussion and in the framework of a biblical theology of the New Testament, they need supplementation by three additional points: (1) According to the testimony of both Old and New Testaments, God reveals himself savingly in history, and this self-revelation takes on its decisive form in Jesus. If this is true, then the gospel of Christ must be able to stand up to questions concerning whether the facts surrounding Jesus really are the way Christians confess them to be. Faith in Jesus Christ does not depend upon the changing results of critical historical research, but faith also has no reason to be anxious or evasive about such research. This is especially true when we are supposed to discover who Jesus was and what he accomplished. (2) The exegetical problem in differentiating between the historical Jesus and “the historic, biblical Christ” lies in the fact that both become accessible to us only through the biblical tradition about Jesus Christ. Unless one wishes to totally abandon historical research into the Scriptures, one must participate in the quest for the earthly Jesus in order to catch sight of the biblical Christ in the uniqueness that faith in him presupposes. (3) Whenever Jesus is investigated either from the perspective of the Old Testament and early Judaism or from the perspective of the early Christian kerygma, it becomes clear that one and the same Jesus was both believed in as Messiah in the light of the Scriptures and executed as a seducer of Israel into false faith. The question of how this extremely polarized reaction to Jesus could have occurred can only be answered if we do not evade the critical historical quest for Jesus. *We cannot appeal to Kähler in order to opt out of critical Jesus research*. We must only make sure that our way of joining the quest for Jesus stays on track from a biblical-theological perspective.

In practice this means that a biblical theology of the New Testament that seeks to be controlled by the texts themselves must speak of the proclamation and work of Jesus, because these are constitutive for the gospel of God concerning Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:1–2). In this context a presentation of Jesus worked out with the help of historical criticism has

value as an academically responsible approximation to the word and work of the earthly Jesus. But it cannot itself be the content of faith because of its hypothetical character.

6 As a pattern for our way of raising and answering questions about the historical person of Jesus, we are offered the report of Jesus's mission in Acts 10:34–43 which, although stylized by Luke into a sermon of Peter, is pre-Lukan in its fundamental features. This text combines Old Testament prophecies of Jesus, the kerygmatic historical report of Jesus's ministry, and the Easter confession of Jesus as the crucified and risen Messiah. The text runs:

> [34]Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, [35]but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. [36]You know *the message he sent to the people of Israel* [Ps. 107:20], *preaching peace* [Isa. 52:7; Nah. 2:1 (ET 1:15)] by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. [37]That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: [38]how *God anointed* Jesus of Nazareth *with the Holy Spirit and with power* [Isa. 61:1]; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for *God was with him* [Isa. 58:11]. [39]We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by *hanging him on a tree* [Deut. 21:22–23]; [40]but God raised him *on the third day* [Hos. 6:2] and allowed him to appear, [41]not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. [42]He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. [43]All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." (Acts 10:34–43)

Our investigations into the proclamation and word of Jesus will be guided by the New Testament texts themselves and therefore legitimized to the extent that they follow the (pre-)Lukan claims of the report in Acts 10:34–43 and seek to verify the boundaries staked out by these claims through critical historical reasoning.

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CHAPTER 3

The Chronology of Jesus's Ministry

In order to appreciate and understand the ministry and proclamation of Jesus as a historical person, we must first collect the few data we have from his time before proceeding to his words and works.

1 Jesus's life falls in the period of Roman rule in Palestine that began with the arrival of the Roman general Pompey in the Middle East in 64–63 BC. Because Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, his local ruler was Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great. From 4 BC to AD 39 this Herod was "tetrarch" of Galilee and Perea, a regional ruler dependent upon the Romans for power. Ever since Herod's brother Archelaus was deposed by Caesar Augustus in AD 6, the regions of Samaria and Judea, which bordered Galilee to the south, were an imperial procuratorship under a Roman prefect with his capital in Caesarea. From 26 to 36 the office of prefect was held by the *praefectus judaeae* Pontius Pilate, a man from the Roman equestrian class of Pontiers. In matters of religious law the procurator's realm was administered by the Jewish high council, or Sanhedrin. At its head stood the high priest as the supreme religious representative of Israel. The high priestly office was held by Ananias I from AD 6 to AD 15 and by his son-in-law Caiaphas from 18 to 36.

2 According to Luke 1:5, 26ff., and Matthew 2:1, the birth of Jesus fell within the reign of Herod the Great, which ended in 4 BC. This result is obtained not only from these texts but also from the astronomical possibility of identifying the star of Matthew's magi (Matt. 2:2, 7, 9–10) with a remarkable conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in 7–6 BC that shook the ancient world.

In contrast to these traditions about the time of Herod the Great in Luke 1 and Matthew 1, Luke 2:1–2 associates Jesus's birth with a registration or census for taxation purposes carried out in Samaria and Judea by Quirinius. This report about a census does not easily harmonize with the reports of the birth of Jesus under Herod, because the only recorded census in this region around this time occurred in AD 6, about ten years after Herod's death, when Quirinius was the Roman civil legate or governor of the imperial

province of Syria (cf. Acts 5:37). After the deposition of Archelaus (see above), Quirinius became responsible for having taxes collected in the newly created imperial procuratorship of Judea. It is possible that Luke has allowed an earlier, otherwise unrecorded financial administrative policy from Herod's time to become identified or confused with this well-known later policy of Quirinius in AD 6, but this is not certain. *Therefore Jesus's birth can be dated only approximately to the turn of the era*.

The actual *event of Jesus's birth* is approached in the New Testament from different angles. While the Johannine prologue boldly declares that the divine Word or Logos "became flesh" (John 1:14; cf. Phil. 2:7), John 6:42 nevertheless presupposes that Jesus is the son of Joseph and that his father and mother are known. Mark 6:3 is similar. Here Jesus is called "the son of Mary"; his brothers are mentioned by name and his sisters without names. Paul speaks of Jesus's birth only in a Jewish Christian formulaic text, Galatians 4:4–5. The figure of speech *γενόμενος ἐκ γυναικός* or יְלוּד אִשָּׁה (*yəlûd ʾiššâ*) is the usual Jewish expression for a human being as one "born of a woman" (cf. Job 14:1; 1QH 13:14; 18:12–16; *4 Ezra* 7:46, 65ff.; Matt. 11:11; etc.). Galatians 4:4 therefore suggests that Jesus was born as a true "flesh-and-blood" human being. Whether the expression in the context of this formulaic text also points to the virgin birth—which Paul does not otherwise mention—cannot be affirmed or denied by the semantics alone. However, it is conceivable in terms of both Christology and transmission history that Paul knew this tradition.

The Lukan and Matthean birth stories are of Jewish Christian origin. From a biblical-theological perspective they speak of the *birth of Jesus Christ from a virgin* according to Isaiah 7:14.

The noun עַלְמָה (*ʿalmâ*) in the Hebrew text of Isaiah 7:14 means "a young woman who has not yet given birth" (H. Gese, "Natus ex Virgine," 143). However, as H. Gese rightly says, the question as to "whether the Septuagint's translation of עַלְמָה in Isaiah 7:14 by παρθένος, 'virgin' already presupposes the idea of the virgin birth of the Messiah at the time of translation, no later than in the middle of the second century BC, remains unanswerable." Gese continues: "The Septuagint translator could have used παρθένος as a conscious archaism, imitating earlier Greek, with the sense 'young girl / young woman.' The use of παρθένος to translate נַעֲרָה [*naʿărâ*, NRSV: 'girl'] in Genesis 34:3 attests such a practice" (145). Nevertheless, Luke and Matthew clearly presuppose the idea of the virgin birth.

Whereas Luke calls attention to the saving event of the virgin birth of Jesus announced by God through angels, Matthew emphasizes the birth of the promised messianic redeemer as a fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 and the acceptance of this child into the line of David (cf. Matt. 1:18–25). Taking the statements of both Gospels seriously from a biblical-theological standpoint, we may see them as the culmination and fulfillment of those Israelite traditions that say (1) that the messianic ruler and Son of God will be sent to the people of God as "Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14), and (2) that through the birth of this child God himself will finally take up residence on Mount Zion in Israel, the land of his inheritance (cf. Pss. 2:7; 110:3; Isa. 7:10–17; 9:5–6 [ET 9:6–7]; Mic. 5:2 [ET 5:3]; Prov. 8:22ff.; Sir. 24:8ff.; and in the New Testament especially Col. 1:19). According to this tradition, Jesus is more than those wished-for children who have been (and will be) granted to pious but infertile couples by God's creative intervention; he is more than Isaac (cf. Gen. 18:9–14), Samuel (1 Sam. 1:20), or even John the Baptist (Luke 1:36, 57; cf. with Matt. 11:11/Luke 7:28). He is the true Son of God. *The birth of Jesus realizes the messianic promise of the one God in such a way that all Jewish hopes and concepts are fulfilled to the bursting point.* Nevertheless, as important as the tradition of the virgin birth is for Christology (see below, 213–15, §3.4.2), it offers little basis for drawing conclusions about chronology or historiography.

3 Of *Jesus's youth* we know historically no more than that he came from a pious Jewish family of craftsmen that apparently owned some real estate in Bethlehem. Jesus's parents were named Joseph and Mary, and they had other sons besides Jesus, as well as daughters (cf. Mark 3:31; 6:3; John 6:42; 1 Cor. 9:5). The best known of them, mentioned also by Josephus (*Ant*. 20.200), was James (cf. 1 Cor. 15:7; Acts 15:13; 21:18). Since outside the Lukan and Matthean prehistories (Luke 1:5–2:52; Matt. 1:1–2:23) Joseph is mentioned only in Luke 3:23, 4:22 and John 1:45, 6:42, it is possible that he died before the beginning of Jesus's public ministry. Jesus's family apparently traced its origins back to David (Matt. 1:1–16; Luke 3:23–38; Rom. 1:3–4; 2 Tim. 2:8).

Mention of Jesus's Davidic descent is more than simply a *theologumenon*. During the reign of the Roman emperor Domitian (AD 81–96), two men were brought to trial for being "of the family of David" and therefore possible agitators. But their Davidic descent also attests to Jesus's ancestry, for Eusebius describes them as "the grandsons of Jude, the brother of the Savior according to the flesh" (*Historia ecclesiastica* 3.19.1); compare the description of Jude as "a servant of Jesus Christ and

brother of James” (Jude 1). After Domitian recognized from their callused hands that they were only harmless farmers, he set them free (see *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.20).

Jesus was circumcised after eight days (Luke 2:21). His mother tongue was the Aramaic spoken in Galilee. His name was pronounced *Yeshu* in Galilee and *Yeshua* (יֵשׁוּעַ) in Judea, from whence we get the Greek Ἰησοῦς (cf. also below, 213–15, §3.4.2). Jesus appears to have been instructed in reading and writing in a Jewish school (cf. Luke 4:16ff.; John 8:6, 8). He certainly knew Hebrew and probably some Greek as well. He was well acquainted with the religious texts and customs of Israel from his parents’ home and the synagogue. He took part in the great Jewish pilgrimage festivals even as a child (Luke 2:41). Like his father, Jesus was a τέκτων, or “carpenter,” a skilled builder in wood and stone (cf. Mark 6:3/Matt. 13:55).

During his public ministry Jesus ceased practicing his profession and separated himself from his family (cf. Mark 3:21, 31–35), despite the highly regarded commandment to honor one’s parents (Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16) and the sharp measures against the “rebellious” son in Deuteronomy 21:18–21 (cf. Matt. 11:19/Luke 7:34; Mark 6:4 par.; Luke 4:28–30). But if there is a historical core in John 19:26–27, then Jesus ensured before his death that his mother would be cared for in the circle of the disciples.

4 According to Luke 3:23, Jesus began his *public ministry* when he was “about thirty years old,” after his baptism by John the Baptist. John’s mother, Elizabeth, and Jesus’s mother, Mary, are called συγγενίδες, or “relatives,” in Luke 1:36. This means that Mary probably came from a priestly family as well, and that Jesus and John were related not only as teacher and student but also through family ties. According to Luke 3:1–3, John appeared on the scene publicly “in the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius” in “the region around the Jordan.” Tiberius was the Roman emperor from AD 14 to AD 37, but he had already been coregent since AD 12–13. Because in the Roman provinces an emperor’s reign (ἡγεμονία) was dated from the time of his de facto exercise of power and not from his later reception of the title Caesar with the associated imperial rule (βασιλεία), Luke’s chronological information about Tiberius brings us to AD 26–27 for the beginning of John’s ministry.

The duration of Jesus’s public preaching cannot be determined with certainty from the Gospels. The Synoptics compress Jesus’s ministry into a

single year (though see Matt. 23:37/Luke 13:34). By contrast, John's Gospel speaks of three Passovers within the period of Jesus's ministry: the first, when he met Nicodemus (John 2:13); the second, when he fed the five thousand (John 6:4); and the final Passover of his passion (John 11:55). John's Gospel therefore assumes at least a two-year ministry of Jesus.

During his last trip to Jerusalem, Jesus provocatively performed his temple action (cf. Mark 11:15–17, 27–33 par.). He was arrested shortly thereafter at the instigation of the high priest and his Sadducean followers, accused of being a messianic pretender (cf. Mark 14:64 par.), and charged before the Roman prefect Pontius Pilate as a messianic agitator. After a brief Roman judicial hearing he was executed on the cross outside the gates of Jerusalem.

Regarding the *date of the crucifixion*, the Synoptics and the Fourth Gospel exhibit an important difference that cannot be harmonized. According to the synoptic presentation, Jesus was executed on Friday, the 15th of Nisan, that is, on the first day of the seven-day Festival of Unleavened Bread, *Mazzot* (מַצּוֹת), which begins only after the preceding Passover night, including the Passover meal on Thursday evening. In John's Gospel as well, Jesus is crucified on a Friday, but this Friday was only the 14th of Nisan and therefore the day of preparation for the Passover (John 19:14, 31, 42). In the early afternoon on this day, it was customary for the Jews to slaughter the paschal lambs in the Jerusalem temple and then to prepare them for consumption in smaller groups of table fellowship during the approaching Passover night. Therefore, according to John, Jesus dies at the precise hour on Friday when the paschal lambs were being slaughtered in the temple on the day of preparation. John's chronology makes understandable the course of the events of Jesus's passion—including the midnight trial of Jesus by the high priests and other members of the Sanhedrin beginning on Thursday evening, his delivery to Pilate, and his execution outside the gates of Jerusalem—without positing serious infractions against Jewish festival and purity regulations on the part of the Jewish leadership (cf. John 18:28). It is therefore often considered more historically probable than the synoptic chronology. The disadvantage of John's presentation is that Jesus's final meal with his disciples is not the Passover meal, as in the Synoptics, but a normal evening meal (cf. Mark 14:17–25 par. with John 13:1–30; 6:52–58).

If we wish to convert the synoptic and Johannine dates of the passion into historical dates on the Julian calendar with the help of astronomical calculations, we must account for the following historical facts. The Jewish Passover festival was (and is) always celebrated on the night of the first full moon after the spring equinox. The Jewish calendar is a lunar-solar calendar. In Jesus's day, the individual months of the year were still determined empirically from the new light of the moon that became visible in the evening one or two days after the new moon. Because of the uncertainty of the natural conditions of visibility, certain discrepancies were possible. Taking this into account yields the following possibilities. The 14th of Nisan possibly fell on a Friday on April 11, AD 27, and certainly fell on a Friday on April 7, 30, and on April 3, 33. The 15th of Nisan perhaps fell on a Friday on April 11, 27, and certainty did so on April 23, 34. Therefore, depending on the visibility conditions which affected the determination of the beginning of the month, Friday, April 11, 27, could have been dated as either the 14th or the 15th of Nisan in the Jewish calendar, allowing for either the synoptic or the Johannine chronology. But in AD 30, 33, and 34, it is no longer possible to date the respective Friday as either the 14th or the 15th of Nisan.

In order to determine the date of the crucifixion exactly, we must coordinate the one or more years of Jesus's ministry with the public appearance of John the Baptist and then synchronize this with the astronomical dates mentioned above. If we follow John's information about Jesus's ministry and his passion on the 14th of Nisan, then Jesus could have been crucified as early as April 11 (= Nisan 14), 27, or three years later, on April 7 (= Nisan 14), 30. This second date fits better with the appearance of John the Baptist in the year 26–27 and is therefore considered by scholarship as *the most probable date of Jesus's death*. By contrast, if we follow the synoptic presentation, then Friday, April 11 (= Nisan 15), 27, is the only date that comes into consideration for the crucifixion; the theoretically possible date of April 23, 34, can hardly be reconciled with the rest of the synoptic dates for Jesus's ministry. The Synoptics and John therefore differ by three years (27 or 30) in their presentation of the death of Jesus.

Two aspects of the chronological difference between John and the Synoptics require further explanation:

(1) When one compares the Johannine and the synoptic dating of the passion, it is clear that the date of Jesus's death is given a conscious typological interpretation in John but not in the Synoptics. According to the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is understood from John 1:29 onward as the (paschal) lamb and Suffering Servant, who takes up and takes away the sin of the world. John 19:36, with its citation from Exodus 12:46 (cf. Num. 9:12), "None of its (or *his*) bones shall be broken," makes the same point and affirms with Paul that "our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed" (1 Cor. 5:7). John's presentation of Jesus's passion has therefore been thought through in a precise typological manner. John's different dating of the death of Jesus from the Synoptics, on Nisan 14 rather than Nisan 15, *could* have been motivated by a typifying memory, that is, a desire to identify the crucified Jesus with the Servant and paschal lamb of Christian faith. Such freedoms of presentation are not unusual in the Fourth Gospel. No comparable theological leitmotif can be identified for the synoptic presentation of the passion and dating of the crucifixion. Therefore, although the Johannine passion chronology raises fewer historical problems than the synoptic chronology, the relatively untendential synoptic presentation *may* reproduce the actual circumstances of Jesus's death more accurately than John.

(2) From early church history we know of the controversy that broke out in Asia Minor in the second century concerning the correct Christian date for Easter/Passover. This controversy, involving the so-called Quartodecimans, or "Fourteeners" (cf. *quartadecima die mensis*, "on the fourteenth day of the month," Lev. 23:5), concerns "the early custom in some places of following Jewish practice in always observing Easter, i.e. the Christian Passover, on the 14th day of the month of Nisan, whatever the day of the week, and not (as elsewhere) on the following Sunday" (*ODCC* [2005[3]], 1364–65, at 1364; cf. *RPP* 10:575–76). The Quartodecimans in Asia Minor celebrated Passover and Easter as a single festival beginning in the afternoon-evening of Nisan 14–15, appealing to the Gospel of John for support, while Christians in the West held to the synoptic passion chronology. Eventually, the "orientals" from Asia Minor had to yield their customs at the Council of Nicea (325) under the combined pressure of the Western bishops. The date of Christian Easter was fixed as the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox. The whole debate *could* go back to an unresolved conflict that existed already in New Testament times between two ecclesiastical groups: the Asia Minor "school" of John on the one hand and the tradition of the apostles, especially Peter, represented in the Synoptics, on the other. As the one who stands behind Mark's Gospel, Peter is considered in church tradition to be the key witness of the primitive synoptic tradition. Peter is also the one who in the Fourth Gospel is indeed treated with respect, but also consistently takes second place to the "beloved disciple" (cf. John 13:23f.; 18:27 with 19:26; 20:4, 8; 21:21–22). If one asks about the root of the dispute between the two groups, one encounters the calendrically ambiguous date of the 14th or 15th of Nisan (= April 11) in the year 27. The school of John, which, according to M. Hengel, goes back to John the Elder, who came from priestly circles in Jerusalem (*The Johannine Question* [1989], 124–35), composed 2 and 3 John, and is mentioned by Papias (Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.39.3–4), would then have wanted to promote the more "correct" dating and evaluation of Jesus's passion on the 14th of Nisan. By contrast, the Synoptics not only dated Jesus's birth early, in the period of Herod the Great (which would certainly agree well with an early date of Jesus's death in 27), but also dated Jesus's passion according to the conventional Jewish calendar, in which April 11 in the year AD 27 was the 15th of Nisan. Therefore, April 11, 27, should also continue to be considered as a possibility for the crucifixion of Jesus, and the historical plausibility of Johannine passion narrative is no reason to prefer it conclusively over the synoptic presentation if we assume this date.

The fact that the chronological alternative between the Synoptics and John has not been decided convincingly one way or another has methodological implications. We must differentiate as a matter of principle

between *the level of the historical event in the life and passion of Jesus and the level of testimony in the Synoptics and the Fourth Gospel.* One and the same historical event is presented and evaluated differently in the synoptic and the Johannine Gospel testimony, and this difference extends even to matters of chronology.

5 If we compare the results obtained above with the narrative tradition of Acts 10:34–43, we find considerable convergence and expansion: Jesus came from a pious Jewish family that traced itself back to David, and therefore he stood fast since his childhood in the Israelite-Jewish faith tradition. In the Jewish Christian “prehistories” of Luke and Matthew, Jesus’s birth was already understood as a unique event of messianic fulfillment. God’s sending of Jesus is evaluated similarly in Acts 10:36 (cf. the allusion there to Ps. 107:20 and Isa. 52:7; Nah. 2:1 [ET 1:15]). Jesus began his public ministry only after he had heard John the Baptist’s preaching of repentance and submitted to John’s baptism. Acts 10:37–40 presents a similar perspective. After one or more years of ministry in and for Israel, Jesus was accused by the officiating high priest Caiaphas of being a messianic “deceiver” of Israel, and he was handed over to the Roman prefect Pilate, charged with being a messianic agitator potentially dangerous to Rome. Pilate had him executed on the cross. The date of Jesus’s death falls on April 11, 27, according to the Synoptics, or on April 7, 30, according to John. Acts 10:37–40 agrees with this overall picture and presents Jesus’s death on the cross in the light of Deuteronomy 21:22–23 and Hosea 6:2: Jesus’s opponents delivered him up on the cross to God’s curse, but God raised the crucified one on the third day and made him the end-time savior for Israel and the nations. In his name all believers are guaranteed (end-time) forgiveness. Therefore, Acts 10:34–43 and its supporting traditions can be confirmed historically. Early Christianity’s kerygma of Christ proclaims the saving activity of the one God in the history of Jesus Christ for the whole world.

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CHAPTER 4

Jesus and John the Baptist

1 To evaluate the figure of John the Baptist and relate him properly to Jesus, we must know the time and circumstances of his ministry. Despite the uniqueness of his baptism, John belongs to a long series of Jewish end-time prophets who appeared in Palestine in the first century AD. They awakened hope in the Jewish people for the end-time deliverance of Israel and therefore appeared dangerous to those in political power: one got rid of them as soon as one could. Acts 5:36 mentions a certain Theudas, who according to Josephus parted the Jordan River as a Joshua *redivivus* and wanted to free the Jewish land from foreign domination (cf. *Ant*. 20.97–98). Acts 5:37 mentions Judas the Galilean in a similar light. Josephus furthermore speaks of an "Egyptian" whom he does not identify by name, who in about AD 55 wanted to repeat the miracle of the conquest of Jericho and only narrowly escaped the Romans (*Ant*. 20.169ff.); Acts 21:38 documents the expectation that this Egyptian might reappear. Josephus also tells in his *Jewish War* 6.300ff. of the ecstatic prophet of doom Jesus son of Ananias, who appeared in Jerusalem in AD 62 and met his death at the hands of the Romans during the siege of the city. Finally, Josephus reports about *John the Baptist* and his execution by Herod Antipas in his *Jewish Antiquities* 18.116–119.

Because Herod Antipas had dismissed his first wife, the daughter of the Nabatean king Aretas, and had married his sister-in-law Herodias instead (cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 18.109–115 and Mark 6:17–29 par.), Aretas waged war against him and decimated his troops in AD 37. Josephus writes:

> But to some of the Jews the destruction of Herod's army seemed to be divine vengeance, and certainly a just vengeance, for his treatment of John, surnamed the Baptist (Ἰωάννης ὁ ἐπικαλούμενος βαπτιστής). For Herod had put him to death, though he was a good man and had exhorted the Jews to lead righteous lives, to practise justice towards their fellows and piety towards God, and so doing to join in baptism (βαπτισμός). In his view this was a necessary preliminary if baptism (βάπτισις) was to be acceptable to God. They must not employ it to gain pardon for whatever sins they committed, but as the consecration of the body implying that the soul was already thoroughly cleansed by right behaviour. When others too joined the crowds about him, because they were aroused to the highest degree by his sermons, Herod became alarmed. Eloquence that had so great an effect on mankind might lead to some form of sedition (στάσις), for it looked as if they would be guided by John in everything that they did. Herod decided therefore that it would be much better to strike first and be rid of him before his work led

> to an uprising, than to wait for an upheaval, get involved in a difficult situation and see his mistake. Though John, because of Herod’s suspicions, was brought in chains to Machaerus, the stronghold that we have previously mentioned, and there put to death, yet the verdict of the Jews was that the destruction visited upon Herod’s army was a vindication of John, since God saw fit to inflict such a blow on Herod. (*Ant*. 18.116–119; LCL 9:81–85)

The popular report about the death of the Baptist in Mark 6:17–29 par. mentions the prophetic criticism which John directed against the marital practice of his local ruler. Antipas’s dismissal of Aretas’s daughter and his marriage to Herodias, the wife of his half brother Philip, was an infraction against Leviticus 18:16 and 20:21 that John branded as such. The Baptist’s criticism was an important religious motive but not the decisive political reason for his martyrdom. This lay in the messianic expectations that the Baptist stirred up in the people, which appeared politically threatening to Herod Antipas.

Why such messianic expectations were bound up with the appearance of the Baptist can be seen from the biblical writings themselves. The Baptist’s appearance in the wilderness by the Jordan stood in a typological relationship to the Old Testament and early Jewish Elijah tradition. Malachi 3:1 announces that before the final day of judgment, God’s messenger will appear to prepare the people for God’s arrival by preaching repentance. According to Malachi 3:23 (ET 4:5), this messenger is the prophet Elijah, who is to come. He will call Israel back to a renewed study of the Torah that is open to repentance; as God says, Elijah will “turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse” (Mal. 3:24 [ET 4:6] RSV). In Sirach 48:10–11 the returning Elijah is not only given the tasks of Malachi 3:23–24 (ET 4:5–6); he is also supposed to restore the tribes of Jacob, just as the Servant in Isaiah 49:6 is to do. In view of these expectations, apocalyptic-messianic hopes could very well have been associated with John the Baptist’s appearance in the footsteps of Elijah.

Luke 1:5–25 and 57–80 come from Jewish Christian circles that regarded the Baptist very highly. The two texts report the birth of the Baptist as announced by an angel of the Lord and accompanied by a sign from God, ending with Zechariah’s benediction in Luke 1:68–79. John is presented in this psalm as the end-time prophet like Elijah who goes before the Κύριος (i.e., Jesus Christ). He is the forerunner of the Messiah, whose appearance fulfills the prophecies of Isaiah 60:1–3, Zechariah 3:8, and

Numbers 24:17. The Messiah is Ἰησοῦς Χριστός. The final stanzas of Zechariah's song run:

> [76]And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
> for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways [Mal. 3:1],
> [77]to give knowledge of salvation to his people
> by the forgiveness of their sins.
> [78]By the tender mercy of our God,
> the dawn [better: the Branch (cf. Zech. 3:8; 6:12 LXX: Ἀνατολή)] from on high will break upon us,
> [79]to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
> to guide our feet into the way of peace. (Luke 1:76–79)

In this benediction the Baptist is placed prior to the Messiah and is associated with him. But according to the Elijah tradition, John can also be understood messianically as being himself the last messenger prior to the coming of God. In fact, a few of John's disciples did precisely this during the first and second centuries AD, thereby contesting the messiahship of Jesus (cf. Acts 19:1–7; *Sib. Or*. 4:158–169; *Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions* 1.54, 60 [*ANF* 8:91–93]). The effects of these disputes are especially clear in the Fourth Gospel. In John 1:6–8, 15, 19–28 the Baptist is decisively subordinated to Jesus, and he is publicly denied the status of being either the Χριστός or the Elijah who is to come. Therefore, in evaluating the New Testament tradition about the Baptist, one must keep in mind the rivalry between the followers of John and the disciples of Jesus.

2 According to Luke 1:5–25, John the Baptist was born at the time of Herod the Great. He was from a priestly family and related to Jesus (cf. Luke 1:36, 40). In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, around AD 26–27, John appeared publicly in the wilderness of the lower Jordan valley as an end-time preacher of repentance (cf. Luke 3:1–3). He wore Old Testament dress, the prophetic cloak of hair and the leather belt which likewise belonged to prophetic attire (cf. Mark 1:6 par.). Both the place of his public appearance and his dress have typological meaning. From an Old Testament, Jewish viewpoint, the wilderness is the place of the new exodus

and of the establishment of new end-time fellowship with God (cf. Hos. 2:16ff. [ET 2:14ff.]; Isa. 40:3–5; Bar. 5:7–9; 1QS 8:13; 9:19–20). The Jordan is the traditional boundary of the Holy Land (cf. Josh. 3). Here Elijah repeated the miracle of parting the waters at the Sea of Reeds (cf. 2 Kings 2:8), and he was dressed like the Baptist (cf. 2 Kings 1:8). According to Mark 1:3–6 par., Matthew 11:7–19/Luke 7:24–35, John is to be associated with the returning Elijah (cf. esp. Matt. 11:14). *Standing in this Elijah tradition, John the Baptist embodies the prophetic end-time expectations of Israel with which Jesus was confronted (cf. Luke 16:16).*

3 The Baptist's preaching of repentance has the following characteristics: (1) A greatly heightened expectation of judgment: "Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire" (Matt. 3:10/Luke 3:9). In the light of the coming judge, one cannot rely on Israel's special place in salvation history, because God can raise up new children of Abraham from the stones when the old ones fail (cf. Matt. 3:7–9/Luke 3:7–8). (2) This acute expectation of judgment is matched by a radical call to "repentance" (*μετάνοια*) and to obedience to God's commandments. It is illustrated by John's sermon to people in different walks of life in Luke 3:10–14, which is oriented around Malachi 3:5. Because God's end-time messenger will accuse "adulterers" and others according to Malachi 3:5, John's criticism of Herod Antipas's adulterous behavior also belongs here (cf. Mark 6:18 par.; see above). (3) John announces the coming of one "more powerful" than he, who baptizes in the Spirit and fire and will destroy the unrighteous with fire but graciously accept those prepared for repentance (cf. Mark 1:7–8 par.).

John the Baptist's "coming one," of whom he is unworthy even to perform the menial task of untying his sandal thongs (cf. Mark 1:7 par.), is a messianic figure. But he cannot be God himself (despite Ps. 98:9), because the anthropomorphic metaphor that John uses does not apply to God. Rather, as F. Lang has shown, "the 'more powerful one' announced by the Baptist . . . bears a close resemblance to 1 Enoch's Son of Man, who is already connected with Daniel 7; Isaiah 11; 42:6; 52:15 and is associated with the motif of 'coming' (Dan. 7:13)" (Lang, "Erwägungen zur eschatologischen Verkündigung Johannes des Täufers," 471).

Once God himself is excluded as a possibility, the "coming one" could be the Messiah or the Son of Man. As to the Messiah, Genesis 49:10 (cf. NRSV margin) speaks of the coming of "Shiloh" (שִׁילֹה), and early Judaism saw the Messiah in this mysterious figure (cf. 4Q252 [4QCommGen A] 5:1–4; *b.*

Sanh. 98b). Psalm 118, which was also interpreted messianically in early Judaism, speaks of "the one who comes in the name of the LORD" (Ps. 118:26; cf. Mark 11:9 par.). The "coming one" in biblical thought has to do with the Messiah, who will establish the kingdom of God. However, the *Son of Man* will also "come with the clouds of heaven" according to Daniel 7:13. The book of *1 Enoch* also talks about this Son of Man (cf. *1 En.* 46:2–3; 48:2; 62:5, 7, 14; 63:11). With Isaiah 42:1 in the background, he is referred to here as both God's "chosen" or "elect one" (cf. *1 En.* 45:3–4; 49:2; 61:5, 8) and "the anointed," that is, the Messiah (*1 En.* 48:10; 52:4). His appearance will cause the rulers of the nations to be astonished (cf. *1 En.* 46:4; 62:3 with Isa. 52:15). He is given the gifts of the Spirit that belong to the Messiah, according to Isaiah 11:2 (cf. *1 En.* 49:3; 62:2). In keeping with Psalm 110:1, God seats him as his messianic representative upon the "throne of his glory" (cf. *1 En.* 61:8; 62:2); he presides over the world judgment and so establishes the kingdom of God (cf. *1 En.* 61–63). *The messianic "chosen one," 1 Enoch's Son of Man and judge of the world, incorporates and unites all the characteristics of the coming "stronger one," ἰσχυρότερος (cf. Matt. 11:3/Luke 7:19), mentioned in Mark 1:7–8 par*. It is not insignificant to add that according to Micah 5:1 (ET 5:2), the Messiah's origins go back to earliest times. Moreover, *1 Enoch* 48:3–6 says both that the name of the Son of Man was known to God before the creation of the sun, moon, and stars, and that the Son of Man himself was already "concealed in the presence of (the Lord of the Spirits) prior to the creation of the world." Therefore, it is the preexistent Messiah chosen before the beginning of time who appears in the person of the Son of Man.

In sum, John the Baptist announced the Son of Man and Judge of the World who would soon appear in judgment, and he understood himself to be his prophetic messenger.

4 John the Baptist's apocalyptic preaching of repentance was accompanied and irrevocably stamped by his *baptism*. John's baptism was supposed to guarantee those ready for repentance the forgiveness of their sins and protection against the coming judgment by fire: "Whoever confessed their sins and vowed to avoid future sins received in the Baptist's water-bath the purity that allows them to escape the imminent judgment by fire (cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 18.117; Mark 1:4–5 par.)" (O. Böcher, *TRE* 17:176). The "baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Mark 1:4) is much more than a ceremonial washing. It is a onetime eschatological act of purification. Its performance earned John the nickname "the Baptizer" or "the Baptist" (ὁ βαπτίζων, ὁ βαπτιστής), which is recorded even by Josephus (*Ant*. 18.116). The driving force behind John's appearance on the scene with this baptism—which was without analogy in early Judaism—may have been the prophetic announcement of Ezekiel 36:24–27:

> [24]I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. [25]I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all

> your idols I will cleanse you. [26]A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. [27]I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances.

According to 1QS 4:20–23, the Qumran Essenes expected the fulfillment of this prophecy in the end times. It is quite possible that this end-time expectation also filled the Baptist and motivated his ministry of baptizing. It fits well with this that in the tradition of Elijah, the Baptist calls those prepared for repentance into the wilderness in order to baptize them there in the Jordan. For, as H. Gese writes:

> The Jordan is the boundary of the Holy Land, through which the entry to the land took place, and for this reason it was here that the event of the Sea of Reeds was reenacted (Joshua 3–4; the miracle at the Sea of Reeds was repeated at the Jordan by Elijah, the Moses *redivivus*, in 2 Kings 2:8, 14). The waters of the Jordan have their eschatological and also protological meaning. By passing through them the true people of God accomplished its entry into the kingdom of God. As waters of the Sea of Reeds and waters of chaos (cf. Isa. 51:9–11) they are less waters of cleansing than waters of death. All that is at enmity with God is submerged by them. Following here on the confession of sin, being immersed has the ritual and symbolic significance of dying, but on rising out of the waters, one enters into the new being—a rite of rebirth, yes of a new creation. John's baptism is the ritualizing of the eschatological birth of which Isaiah 26:17–19 and other passages speak. (H. Gese, "The Prologue to John's Gospel," 220–21)

For those baptized by John, his call to repentance and baptism meant being singled out of the crowd of the unrepentant majority of Israel and entering into a life marked by deep earnestness for God's commandments in the expectation of the near end of the world.

5 According to the reports of all four Gospels (Mark 1:9–11 par.; John 1:29–34), Jesus listened to the preaching of the Baptist and submitted to baptism in the Jordan. The Gospels present the baptism of Jesus as the act that called him into his public messianic ministry. Their stories are marked

by faith in Jesus Christ, and the words of God’s voice in Mark 1:11 par. are carefully formulated with the help of the Holy Scriptures (cf. Isa. 42:1; 44:2; Ps. 2:7). Nevertheless, they offer no reason to doubt the reported event historically. Even Jesus, in his disputes with his opponents about his messianic authority, pointed to John’s baptism, which he had undergone, as the event of calling that was decisive for his ministry (cf. Mark 11:27–30 par.). If one combines Mark 1:9–11 par. and 11:27–30 par., then one can see Jesus’s baptism by John as the event authorizing him for his public messianic task of testimony.

The baptism story in Mark 1:9–11 par. is usually understood in current research as Jesus’s initiation as the Messiah: the man Jesus of Nazareth is *adopted* by God as the royal son according to the royal ritual of Psalm 2 (cf., e.g., E. Schweizer, *TDNT* 8:367–68). But this provides only an inadequate christological interpretation of Mark 1:9–11 and its parallels. According to John 1:32–34, it is the preexistent and incarnate Logos who undergoes baptism and is attested by the Baptist as the “Son of God,” thereby excluding an adoptionist understanding of the event. Similarly in Matthew and Luke, the narrative context reveals that it is precisely as the Son of God born of the chosen παρθένος, or “virgin” (Isa. 7:14), that Jesus is inaugurated in his “office” as the “beloved Son” by baptism. Mark’s baptism story is to be understood no differently. According to Mark 1:1, the gospel concerns “Jesus Christ, the Son of God” and corresponds to the Isaianic prophecy (cf. Mark 1:2 with Isa. 52:7; 61:1–2). In Mark 1:2–3 the public appearance of John and the baptism of Jesus are preceded by an ancient prologue of Scripture passages. As in Matthew 11:10/Luke 7:27, Mark combines Exodus 23:20 with Malachi 3:1 in such a way that “the saying becomes an address of God to the Christ who as the preexistent one was always with God” (A. Schlatter, *Markus—Der Evangelist für die Griechen* [1984^{2}], 15). God informs his Son that he will send his messenger to prepare the way before him, a messenger identified as “the voice of one calling in the wilderness” (cf. Isa. 40:3). The setting of this prologue can only be past eternity or heaven. When the Baptist in Mark 1:7–8 announces the “more powerful one” who comes after him but is eternally superior to him in authority, and when Jesus’s baptism is narrated immediately following in 1:9–11, both statements refer to the preexistent Son of God of Mark 1:1–2. Mark, like the other Evangelists, sees the baptism of Jesus as an investment with authority and not as an adoption. Jesus, Son of God from all eternity, is now called to be God’s beloved Son before the eyes of the world. Therefore no christological adoptionism can be based on Mark 1:9–11 par., and because Romans 1:3–4 also cannot be interpreted adoptionistically (see below, 210–11, §3.2), adoptionism never finds any *Sitz im Leben* in the New Testament tradition.

6 Returning from the testimony of the Gospels to the level of the historical events, we are faced with the task of fitting together John’s announcement of the Son of Man–Messiah who would come after him, chosen by God and hidden with him before all time, with the baptism of Jesus and the subsequent events of his temptation (Mark 1:12–13 par.) and his entrance into public ministry (Mark 1:14–15 par.). This raises the complex question of how Jesus and the Baptist are related.

6.1 Jesus's baptism by John is historically well attested. In the light of other spiritual experiences in his life (cf. above all Luke 10:18), it is quite conceivable that at his baptism Jesus was granted a special visionary spiritual experience. Jesus therefore came from the circle of those baptized by John, and it is clear from John 1:35–40 that some of the disciples whom Jesus chose, including Andrew, were also followers of the Baptist. From John 4:1–3 we may add that Jesus ministered for a while in a very similar way to John, and that his disciples seem to have practiced their own version of John's baptism (cf. also Acts 19:1–4). It is therefore no accident that according to Mark 8:28 par., Jesus was considered to be John the Baptist raised from the dead after his martyrdom. There are certainly *similarities* between Jesus and John. Both called for repentance (cf. Matt. 3:2/Luke 3:3 and Mark 1:14–15 par.), and both initially used baptism as a way of forming a bond between themselves and their pupils (*μαθηταί*).

6.2 Throughout his life Jesus always paid the Baptist the highest respect (cf. Luke 7:24–35/Matt. 11:7–19). He acknowledged John as the coming Elijah *redivivus* and designated him as "the greatest person among those born of women" (cf. Luke 7:28). Nevertheless, the immediately following clause, "yet the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he" (Luke 7:28/Matt. 11:11; cf. also Luke 16:16), expresses "the extraordinary certainty that in Jesus there exist not only a greatness and dignity surpassing those of the Baptist himself, but there exists also the whole Kingdom of God" (E. Schweizer, *The Good News according to Matthew* [1975], 261–62). Jesus's claim suggests a *qualitative difference* between himself and the Baptist.

6.3 This difference is decisively rooted in the fact that in the period following his baptism, the so-called temptation, Jesus learned to differentiate himself from the Baptist. The three temptation texts (Mark 1:12–13; Matt. 4:1–11/Luke 4:1–13) were first formulated after Easter in the light of the Holy Scriptures. Nevertheless, they give no reason to doubt the facts of a time of fasting in the wilderness immediately following Jesus's baptism. They rather show that Jesus's task during this time was to prepare himself for his public ministry. F. Neugebauer has tellingly designated the temptation as "Jesus' initial choosing of his way" (*Jesu Versuchung*, 4). *During his temptation (πειρασμός) Jesus learned obediently to affirm the messianic task that God had given him. Having just been*

affirmed as the "Son of God," Jesus realized that he once again needed to identify himself in his own personal way with the one the Baptist proclaimed as the "coming one," the messianic Son of Man and Judge of the World. Henceforth Jesus spoke secretively and suggestively of himself as the "Son of Man." This self-designation included for him not only the authority to minister in God's name (cf., e.g., Mark 2:28 par.), but also—in a way entirely new and unheard of in the early Jewish tradition of the Son of Man—his task of suffering (cf. Mark 10:45 par.). This newfound messianic self-consciousness constitutes the decisive difference between Jesus's public appearance and that of the Baptist (cf. Matt. 11:18–19/Luke 7:33–34). Jesus appeared as the messianic evangelist to the "poor," to whom the Anointed One, the Χριστός anointed with the Holy Spirit, is especially sent according to Isaiah 61:1–2 (cf. Luke 4:16–30 with Isa. 61:1–2 and Mark 1:14–15 with Isa. 52:7; Nah. 2:1 [ET 1:15]). Like John, Jesus called the people to repentance and announced the nearness of God's kingdom. But he also dared to make this kingdom a symbolic reality in miracles of healing and acts of forgiveness. By his own behavior Jesus enacted and accomplished the gracious acceptance of the sinner by God (cf. Mark 2:10 par.; Matt. 11:18–19/Luke 7:33–34; Luke 15:2).

6.4 Jesus's novel and unexpected behavior led the Baptist to ask whether Jesus himself was "the coming one" (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) whom he had proclaimed, or whether he should wait for another (cf. Matt. 11:2–6/Luke 7:18–23). In an answer filled with scriptural allusions, Jesus points to his acts of healing and his proclamation to the "poor": "The blind receive their sight [Isa. 29:18; 35:5], the lame walk [Isa. 35:6], the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear [Isa. 35:5], the dead are raised [Isa. 26:19], and the poor have good news brought to them [Isa. 61:1]. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me" (Matt. 11:5–6).

This saying of Jesus involves more than simply a general announcement of the dawning of the age of salvation in Jesus's ministry in the light of Isaiah 29:18–19, 35:5–6, 42:6–7, and 61:1–2. For these passages do not speak of cleansing lepers, nor of the offense that could be taken to the one God has sent. Rather, the saying points to the messianic deeds of healing (for Israel) announced in Psalm 146:7–8; Isaiah 26:19; 29:16, 18; 35:5–6; and 61:1–2, whose realization the Essenses hoped for in the messianic age of salvation according to the *Messianic Apocalypse* (cf. 4Q521 frag. 2 II, 8,

12–14). Jesus tells the Baptist that he is already performing these saving acts here and now in an entirely concrete way for "the poor." By contrast, the Qumran Essenes cited Leviticus 21:17–23 and Numbers 5:2 to prove that the blind, lame, leprous, and deaf should be considered unworthy of meeting directly with God in the cult or in God's city, which was equated with the holy camp of Israel (cf. 1Q28a 2:4–9; 11Q19 [11QT[a]] 45:11–18; 48:10–17). But it is precisely these "unworthy ones" whom Jesus accepted and to whom he brought God afresh. Matthew 11:5–6 and Luke 7:22–23 reflect this in authentic form. Jesus's living out the arrival of God's kingdom in this way was something fundamentally new and potentially offensive to the Baptist, with his prophetic preaching of repentance oriented to the Torah. *It was Jesus himself who realized that, as the "coming one," he must also be the messianic evangelist and savior of the "poor" (Isa. 61:1–2).*

6.5 In sum, Jesus differentiated himself from the Baptist by ministering as God's representative in his proclamation and acts of healing, thereby exploding the contemporary Jewish expectation of the Messiah and the Son of Man with which the Baptist was familiar. In contrast to the Baptist's followers, the Jews captivated by Jesus's call and deeds did not simply form a circle of people prepared for repentance; they were a congregation of people motivated to a new fear of God and hope for God's coming kingdom by their joy and thankfulness for the good they had already experienced through Jesus.

Comparing this result with our leading text for reconstructing the ministry of Jesus in Acts 10:36–43 confirms its testimony: God himself is the one who sent Jesus as his word of promise in human form. In and through Jesus, God preached the dawning of his kingdom and messianic peace (cf. Acts 10:36 with Ps. 107:20; Isa. 52:7), and Jesus's major influence throughout all Judea began "after the baptism that John announced" (Acts 10:37).

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CHAPTER 5

God’s Son and God’s Kingdom

1 If one were to describe the center of Jesus’s proclamation in a single expression, it would have to be “the kingdom of God” (ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ)—in short, the *basileia*. Even the statistics show that this was characteristic of Jesus’s teaching. Two findings are important here. First, the expression “kingdom of God” occurs unusually often in the Synoptics but much less frequently in the Fourth Gospel and the post-Easter church tradition. Moreover, several distinctive figures of speech involving the expression ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ are characteristic of the synoptic Jesus but find virtually no parallels in early Jewish texts. These include ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, “the kingdom of God has come near” (Mark 1:15 par.; Matt. 10:7 par.; etc.); ἔρχεται ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, “the kingdom of God is coming/will come” (Mark 9:1; Matt. 6:10 par.; Luke 17:20; etc.); ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἐντὸς ὑμῶν ἐστιν, “the kingdom of God is in your midst” (Luke 17:21, NIV11); or ἔφθασεν ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, “the kingdom of God has come to/upon you” (Matt. 12:28/Luke 11:20). One can safely proceed from the assumption that the language of the kingdom of God was characteristic of the proclamation of Jesus.

2 To clarify the roots and meaning of this lexeme, we must turn to the Old Testament and early Jewish tradition. The Greek expression for “the kingdom of God,” ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, also appears in early Jewish texts (e.g., *Pss. Sol.* 17:3). Underlying the Greek expression are the following Semitic equivalents: מַלְכוּתָא דִּיי, *malkûtāʾ dî YHWH*, in the targums; מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם, *malkût šāmayim*, the “kingdom of heaven,” in the rabbinic writings (first attested there around AD 80), and מְלוּכָה, ***məlûkâ***, מַלְכוּת, *malkût*, and מַלְכוּת־אֵל, *malkût ʾēl*, “the kingdom of God,” in the Qumran texts (4Q401, 403, 405, etc.; 1QM 6:6 and 12:7). The expression therefore clearly goes back to Semitic-speaking early Judaism and has its roots in the Old Testament (cf. Ps. 22:29 [ET 22:28]; Obad. 21). The abstract term מַלְכוּת is

a noun of action, and like its Greek counterpart, βασιλεία, it signifies the exercise of dominion, the lordship (of the king). Therefore, מַלְכוּת־אֵל or ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ denotes in the first instance *the active rulership of God, his dominion as king*. These essential elements of the meaning of ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ are also derived from the Old Testament and early Judaism.

3.1 Ever since the eighth century BC and probably before, Yahweh has been called upon as king of Israel and the heavenly powers (Isa. 6:5 and Num. 23:21 [Elohist] provide the earliest literary attestation). The psalms that used to be called “enthronement psalms” but are now simply called “kingship of Yahweh” hymns (e.g., Pss. 47; 93; 96; 97; 98; 99) are all stamped by the exclamation יהוה מָלָךְ (*YHWH mālak*), translated “The LORD reigns!” (RSV) or “The LORD is king!” (NRSV; cf. also the more literal predication of the term for “king,” *melek*, in Ps. 10:16, יהוה מֶלֶךְ). This ascribing of rule or kingship to Yahweh is part of Israel’s cultic worship; such praise makes the congregation aware of Yahweh’s royal power. Yahweh’s kingship is therefore understood cosmically: Yahweh is the creator and (sole) ruler of the world.

Israel’s earthly king, who lived in Jerusalem since the time of David, was never considered to be a physical descendant of the deity (as were the kings in Egypt), but always only a delegate or representative of Yahweh. According to the law in Deuteronomy 17:14–20, the king had to obey the Torah strictly. The pattern for his reign was Yahweh’s kingdom: several psalms indicate that the king should realize God’s rule upon the earth (cf., e.g., Pss. 2:7–9; 110). This includes especially the idea that as Yahweh’s representative, the king guarantees the well-being of earthly life and helps legally vulnerable people get justice. Psalm 72 develops a regular pattern for such ideal royal dominion, and therefore it became a model messianic text (cf. *Pss. Sol.* 17:26–38).

In view of the historical catastrophes that Israel suffered and the apparent weakness of Israel’s God that these events seemed to attest, from the sixth century BC onward, the inbreaking of the absolute kingdom of God became the focus of Israel’s future hope. Using the expression יהוה מָלַךְ (אֱלֹהִים) already well known from the kingship of Yahweh hymns, the prophet Second Isaiah announces to the exultant worshipers Yahweh’s immediately impending entrance into his reign, which also signifies salvation:

[7]How beautiful upon the mountains
    are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,

who brings good news,
who announces salvation,
who says to Zion, “Your God reigns (מָלַךְ אֱלֹהָיִךְ).”

[8]Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,
together they sing for joy;
for in plain sight they see
the return of the LORD to Zion.

[9]Break forth together into singing,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the LORD has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem. (Isa. 52:7–9)

The language of God’s kingship or reign also occurs in postexilic prophecy (cf. Mic. 2:12–13; 4:6–8; Zeph. 3:14–15; Zech. 14:6–11, 16–17; Isa. 24:23). In Zechariah 12–14 and in Daniel this language is concentrated on Jerusalem and Mount Zion. From this point the language acquires a double function that becomes characteristic of the subsequent period: it can be used both to designate God’s present lordship (Zech. 12:2–13:6; Dan. 4:31 [ET 4:34]) and to represent the essence of the future hope for God’s eternal dominion on Zion, the “Zion βασιλεία,” which the heavenly “Son of Man” will establish (Zech. 14:6–11; Dan. 2:44; 7:14). This is equated with “the holy ones of the Most High” (i.e., end-time Israel) being freed from their earthly oppressors and having absolute dominion over all the nations (cf. Dan. 7:27). *God’s dominion and God’s kingdom are therefore identical in this view of the future.* In the Enoch tradition of the first centuries BC and AD, the messianic Son of Man appears as the end-time judge, appointed by God himself, who has established God’s dominion over all nations (cf. *1 En.* 61–63).

3.2 In the Judaism of Jesus’s time, the expression “the kingdom of God” was used in accordance with these biblical traditions, especially in the Jerusalem temple cult, in the celebration of the New Year and the Feast of Tabernacles (cf. Pss. 47; 48; 87), and in the synagogue liturgy. The kingship of Yahweh hymns was situated in the setting of the temple cult, as was the formula “blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom for ever and

ever": "On the Day of Atonement—and indeed on other festival days—the priests, presumably with the people, used this formula to respond to the high priest after his audible pronunciation of the name of Yahweh (cf. *m. Yoma* 4:1–3; 6:2). . . . The formula found an abiding place in the synagogue liturgy in the recitation of the *Shema*" (A. M. Schwemer, "Gott als König und seine Königsherrschaft in den Sabbatliedern aus Qumran," in *Königsherrschaft Gottes und himmlischer Kult*, ed. M. Hengel and A. M. Schwemer [1991], 45–118, here 48).

The great significance within early Judaism of calling upon Yahweh as king and praising his (present) kingdom in a cultic context is evident in the Sabbath songs of Qumran. The songs "describe the worship service of the angels in the heavenly sanctuary, in which the earthly congregation participates" (A. M. Schwemer, "Gott als König," 48). God is called "king" in these songs unusually often—fifty-five times—and his rule is called מלכות, "the kingdom," twenty-one times. In the Sabbath songs the liturgy of the Jerusalem temple, which the Essenes considered contaminated, was continued. Accordingly, the heavenly cult appears as the archetype of the earthly cult: "In the cycle of Sabbath songs, the priestly community joins the angels in their praise during the heavenly worship service; the community therefore 'raises' itself into the heavenly temple" (ibid., 76).

Praise and acknowledgment of the present kingdom of God were then transferred to daily life by the rabbis. By daily reciting the Shema, Israel's fundamental confession from Deuteronomy 6:4–9, 11:13–21, and Numbers 15:37–41, and by obeying the Torah, faithful Jews took upon themselves "the yoke of the kingdom of heaven" (*m. Ber.* 2:2). By the same token, the ungodly who despise the Torah "cast off the kingdom of God from themselves."

At the Feast of Tabernacles (cf. Pss. 47; 48; 87), in the *War Scroll* of Qumran (1QM 6:6; 12:7), and in synagogue texts, the complete establishment of Yahweh's kingdom rule is the object of hope and the essence of salvation. People prayed for its speedy arrival and thereby naturally articulated messianic expectations, as in Psalm 80:18 (ET 80:17), "the man at your right hand, the son of man you have raised up for yourself" (NIV), Psalm 84:9–10 (ET 84:8–9), and *Psalms of Solomon* 17–18. Similarly the Kaddish, the closing prayer of the synagogue service, which shares language with the Lord's Prayer, runs: "Exalted and hallowed be his great name in the world which he created according to his will. May he let his kingdom rule in your lifetime and in your days and in the lifetime of the whole house of Israel, speedily and soon. Praised be his great name from eternity to eternity. And to this, say: Amen" (trans. in J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 198).

Next to the Shema, the praying of the Eighteen Benedictions was the second main part of the Jewish worship service. Since the benedictions are mainly petitions, taken as a whole they can be called simply the *Tefillah* (הַתְּפִלָּה), "*the* prayer" par excellence (cf. Schürer, *HJP*[2] 2:456). At the time of Jesus, faithful Jews had to pray this prayer every day. The tenth and eleventh benedictions in the older Palestinian recension run: "(10) Proclaim our liberation with the great trumpet and raise a banner to gather together our dispersed. *Blessed art thou, Lord, who gatherest the banished of thy people Israel*. (11) Restore our judges as in former times and our counsellors as in the beginning; and reign over us, thou alone. *Blessed art thou, Lord, who lovest judgement*" (trans. Schürer, *HJP*[2] 2:460–61).

In Jesus's day, then, the language of God's "kingdom" or "reign" was current in the temple liturgy and in synagogue worship. It encapsulated the essence of eschatological salvation and of a daily life oriented around prayer and the Torah. It designated the present heavenly kingdom of God and the Israelite hope for the future, which were fixed upon God's absolute reign over a world without war and suffering, centered upon God's holy mountain, Zion, from which God's *torah*, or "instruction," would go forth to all the nations (cf. Isa. 2:2–4; Mic. 4:1–3). The kingdom determined the behavior of the faithful in their daily lives in the world. It was concrete, because the kingdom of God is always about the effectiveness and establishment of God's saving righteousness. This righteousness guarantees and creates peace and order for all creatures (cf. Pss. 97:1–6; 99:1–5; 103:1–22; Isa. 9:1–6 [ET 9:2–7]; 11:1–9; Jer. 23:5–6).

4 Jesus spoke of the βασιλεία (τοῦ θεοῦ), the kingdom of God, just as his Jewish contemporaries did, understanding it as both present and future. Nevertheless, in Jesus's preaching the kingdom of God never appears as a formulaic abstraction, but always as a life-determining reality. As the Matthew tradition tellingly formulates it, Jesus's message is "the gospel of the kingdom," τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; cf. Mark 1:14–15). The βασιλεία consists of the kingdom or rule of God over the people of God of the end time, which Jesus as the messianic Son of Man was beginning to gather together. Jesus distinguishes himself from John the Baptist by this: at the center of Jesus's proclamation of the βασιλεία stood not the threatening final judgment of the one who would baptize in fire, but

rather the readiness of God graciously to accept the poor and the sinners—a readiness symbolically lived out by Jesus himself.

4.1 From the beginning of his public ministry, Jesus called for conversion and for faith in his message of God’s coming kingdom (cf. Mark 1:14–15 par.). In the introduction to the Lord’s Prayer, he teaches his disciples to pray for the coming of God’s kingdom, as previously exemplified in the Kaddish (cf. Luke 11:2/Matt. 6:10). He himself looks forward to the pilgrimage of the nations to Zion (Matt. 8:11–12/Luke 13:28–29), and he announces in his farewell Passover supper, “I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God” (Mark 14:25 par.). Jesus understands the βασιλεία here in the concrete sense of Isaiah 25:6–9, which he has directly in mind. But he decisively rejects apocalyptic calculations of the date on which the kingdom of God will begin. Instead he points to its secretive presence in his own person: “The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There it is!’ For, in fact, the kingdom of God is already in your midst (ἐντὸς ὑμῶν ἐστιν)” (Luke 17:20–21).

The expression ἐντὸς ὑμῶν ἐστιν could mean that the kingdom of God will be “(suddenly) in your midst” without people having hoped for it (J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 101; similarly R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 1:6). However, one can also interpret the logion as saying that the kingdom of God is already present in Jesus himself and the things happening around him. The second interpretation is more probable and leads to the conclusion that “Jesus is not only the proclaimer but the representative of God’s kingdom” (H. Merklein, “Jesus: Künder des Reiches Gottes,” 152).

There is a special connection between Jesus’s word and work and the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. According to Matthew 11:2–6 par., Jesus saw the βασιλεία dawning with his own deeds of healing and his message for the poor based on Isaiah 61:1–2 (see above, 79, §6.4). In Luke 11:20 (Matt. 12:28) he points directly to this: “But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you.” Through Jesus’s exorcisms God wins back here and now the dominion over those who were possessed by evil spirits. An inbreaking of God’s kingdom also occurs in Jesus’s teaching. Several parables presumably formulated on the basis of Jesus’s own preaching, such as the parables of the sower (Mark 4:3–9 par.), the mustard seed (Mark 4:30–32 par.), the yeast (Matt. 13:33/Luke 13:20–21), and the growing seed (Mark 4:26–29), all speak of

the beginnings of God’s kingdom which are already present in Jesus’s proclamation—apparently insignificant but nevertheless guaranteeing the whole. This is the kingdom that God himself will establish αὐτομάτως, “of itself” (cf. Mark 4:28), without the zealous or strenuous activity of people. *In and through Jesus, God himself creates the all-important beginning, but this beginning points beyond itself to the consummation*. The present and the future of the kingdom of God therefore do not exclude one another according to Jesus, but rather condition one another.

4.2 The difficult saying about those who take the kingdom by force in Matthew 11:12–13/Luke 16:16 points to the fact that *the βασιλεία that is breaking in with Jesus’s ministry is still opposed and contested, and therefore not complete*. Jesus’s proclamation of the kingdom of God attracted opposition from his enemies especially because Jesus, seemingly unconcerned about the liturgical majesty of the kingdom and the law and religious custom, performed *healings on the Sabbath* (cf., e.g., Mark 3:1–6) and preferentially promised the *poor and marginalized* a share in God’s kingdom and reign even though these people, because of their life situation, were barely or not at all involved in keeping the Torah. The poor are the addressees of the first beatitude of Jesus (Luke 6:20/Matt. 5:3), and the Lukan composition of the blessings and woes (Luke 6:20–23 and 6:24–26) forbids every rash spiritualizing of this promise of salvation. Nor did Jesus leave it with a merely verbal promise. He allowed the poor positively to experience and feel that God has mercy on them and that he wants to accept them afresh. A primary sign of this is the *table fellowship* that Jesus had with tax collectors and sinners (cf. Mark 2:15–17 par.; Luke 19:1–10).

These occasions of table fellowship were not about feeding the poor but were *messianic symbolic actions*: “For the oriental every table fellowship is a guarantee of peace, of trust, of brotherhood. Table fellowship is a fellowship of life” (J. Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* [1966], 204, referring to 2 Kings 25:27–30). This explains why in the Old Testament and early Judaism the kingdom of God is repeatedly represented by the picture of a heavenly banquet. According to Isaiah 25:6–9, the essence of the completed βασιλεία lies in the thanksgiving banquet that God himself will prepare on Zion for the nations. In *1 Enoch* 62:14 the righteous who are acknowledged in the judgment are promised that they will some day enjoy table fellowship with the Son of God–Messiah before God in all eternity. (Further examples can be found in the extensive collection of material in Str-B IV/2:1146ff.) That Jesus shared this expectation is shown by Luke 13:29/Matthew 8:11; Mark 14:25 par. (see above). In his meals with tax collectors and sinners, Jesus anticipated the end-time table fellowship of the βασιλεία, showing how the values of table fellowship could be reversed: the preferred table guests of the Son of Man Jesus of Nazareth are not those found righteous in the judgment, as in *1 Enoch*, but rather lawless people disqualified for the cult, whom Jesus accepts in God’s name. “The oriental, to whom symbolic action means more than it does to us, would

immediately understand the acceptance of the outcasts into table fellowship with Jesus as an offer of salvation to guilty sinners and as the assurance of forgiveness" (Jeremias, *Eucharistic Words*, 204). Jesus's experiences of table fellowship are therefore part of his testimony about the kingdom of God that is breaking in with his ministry.

This highly conspicuous and provocative behavior earned Jesus a reputation: "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them" (Luke 15:2; cf. Mark 2:16 par.), or even more pointedly: "Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!" (Matt. 11:19/Luke 7:34; cf. with Deut. 21:20). This criticism, taken together with the religiously devastating objection against his exorcisms—"He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons" (Mark 3:22 par.; cf. with Deut. 18:10–12)—illustrates the heatedness of the argument in which Jesus got involved for the sake of his testimony about the βασιλεία and its symbolic realization.

4.3 The saying "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick" (Mark 2:17 par.) and the parables of the lost sheep (Luke 15:3–7), the lost coin (Luke 15:8–10), and the lost son (Luke 15:11–32) show that such criticisms did not deter Jesus from what he was doing. For him, the messianic Son of Man, testimony to the βασιλεία was the quintessential task of his life (Luke 13:32). But Jesus's warning about the one unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit (Mark 3:28–29 par.) also shows what was at stake for his opponents. Whoever defames or rejects "the finger of God," that is, the Spirit of God which animated Jesus and empowered him for his proclamation (cf. Luke 11:20 with Matt. 12:28 and Mark 1:10 par.), is liable to judgment. Or to put it another way: the entrance to the kingdom of God is barred to those who close themselves to the call to conversion and the testimony of Jesus about this kingdom (Matt. 21:28–32). In Jesus and through his message of the kingdom of God, people meet with the one God who takes more pleasure in the repentance and life of the ungodly than in their death (cf. Ezek. 18:23). Nevertheless, all who close themselves to Jesus and his gospel of the βασιλεία are liable to the divine judgment of wrath.

4.4 If one compares Jesus's testimony about the βασιλεία with the Old Testament and early Jewish tradition of God's kingly rule on and from Mount Zion (the Zion-βασιλεία) sketched at the beginning of this chapter, then both continuity and discontinuity are apparent. For Jesus the βασιλεία

is both present and future. He, too, looks toward Jerusalem, the temple, and Mount Zion; he honors the *βασιλεία* in prayer and makes it part of his daily life. But the way he does this is decisively new and different from the tradition. *In Jesus's words and deeds God is immediately present, and this presence explodes the boundaries set by the Torah and the cultic order of clean and unclean, righteous and unrighteous. In the opposition that this testimony awakened lie the beginnings of Jesus's passion.*

5 The facts before us allow us to see *the special mission consciousness in which Jesus did his work*. Jesus presupposed the Baptist and his preaching of repentance and sought in his proclamation those ready for repentance, even as John had done. But he was more than God's last messenger before the world judgment, and his testimony about the kingdom of God was more than simply one last prophetic call to repentance and decision. Jesus's person, behavior, and word must be understood as an embodiment of God. Jesus was not only an end-time prophet sent by God; he testifies to God's kingdom as God's parable in person (E. Jüngel and E. Schweizer).

The biblically most appropriate designation for Jesus's closeness to God is the title *Son of God*. With respect to the Baptist, Jesus emphasized that even the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he (Luke 7:28/Matt. 11:11). This indirect self-attestation of Jesus must be carefully noted, because it clarifies the difference between him and John the Baptist: the Baptist belongs to humanity, but Jesus to God and his kingdom (see above, 78–79, §6.2–3). Jesus addressed Yahweh, the great king of heaven and earth (Matt. 5:34–35), using a child's form of address that was totally unusual as an address to God in early Judaism: *αββα*—Aramaic אַבָּא—"Dear Father!" (Mark 14:36). In the Lord's Prayer he also gave his disciples a share in this form of address (Luke 11:2). For this reason alone, one can hardly call him anything other than the Son of God. This is confirmed by the Savior's jubilant call transmitted in Luke 10:21–22/Matthew 11:25–27: "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise (*σοφοί*) and the intelligent (*συνετοί*) and have revealed them to infants (*νήπιοι*); yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him" (Matt. 11:25–27).

In early Jewish tradition wisdom is not the business of the νήπιοι (infants) but of the σοφοί (wise), and it is identical with the Torah (cf., e.g., Sir. 24:23–29). In Luke 10:21–22/Matthew 11:25–27 this traditional evaluation and identification is turned around in a way totally characteristic of Jesus. As the Son of his heavenly Father, Jesus ministers as the teacher of wisdom for the "weary and heavy-laden," and the yoke of the new teaching that he lays upon them is characteristically different from that of the scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 11:28–30).

From 2 Samuel 7:14, Psalm 2:7, and Psalm 89:27–28 (ET 89:26–27) the designation "Son of God" has a messianic ring to it, and this is the sense in which it is applied to Jesus in Mark 1:11 par., 9:7 par., and 14:61 par. This will be investigated more fully in chapter 9. At the moment, we need to anticipate this only in its most elementary sense: *Because he testifies to and teaches the gospel of the kingdom of God, Jesus is the Son who lives and acts in the name of the Father.*

6 This corresponds once again to the formulation in Acts 10:36 (influenced by Ps. 107:20; Isa. 52:7; Nah. 2:1 [ET 1:15]), which says that as the God-sent "word," Jesus is the preacher of the divinely promised messianic peace. *Jesus and God, Jesus's gospel of the kingdom and God's kingdom, belong together in terms of the incarnation*. Therefore it pleased God, the king of kings (1 Tim. 6:15), to confront his chosen people with the realization of his kingdom in and through the Son he had sent into the world.

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CHAPTER 6

Characteristic Forms of Jesus’s Proclamation

Jesus lived and ministered as the “Son” whom God had chosen to testify to his kingdom. In Jesus’s testimony, which involved both teaching and messianic symbolic actions, God’s βασιλεία (kingdom) began to dawn. When considering Jesus’s teaching and actions, we shall need to differentiate between those that were part of his public ministry and those shared only in private with his disciples.

The Synoptics and John have preserved several characteristic forms by which Jesus testified to the kingdom of God in word and deed. All of them are marked by what G. Bornkamm has appropriately called the *immediacy of God’s presence* in Jesus’s ministry. It is from this that Jesus’s authority derives: “Jesus’ teaching . . . never consists merely in the interpretation of an authoritatively given sacred text, not even when words from Scripture are quoted. The reality of God and the authority of his will are always directly present, and are fulfilled in him. There is nothing in contemporary Judaism which corresponds to the immediacy with which he teaches” (Bornkamm, *Jesus of Nazareth*, 57).

We can identify at least four forms of testimony to the βασιλεία which are especially characteristic of Jesus.

1 Jesus spoke of the kingdom of God in the form of *parables*. These are usually short, but occasionally they involve quite extensive presentations of the βασιλεία in metaphorical language. Hence the parable of the treasure in the field in Matthew 13:44 consists of only a single verse; the exemplary story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:30–37 has eight verses, while the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11–32 has twenty-two verses.

1.1 Jesus’s teaching in parables is part of an Old Testament and early Jewish tradition. We know of comparisons and parables already in preexilic prophecy: the parable of Nathan in 2 Samuel 12:1–7 is just as well known as Isaiah’s parabolic song of the vineyard in Isaiah 5:1–7, while the parable of the farmer in Isaiah 28:23–29 is less well known. Parables and fables are also occasionally found in the later writings of Israel. Examples include

Proverbs 6:6–10 (about the ant); *1QGenesis Apocryphon* 19:14–17 (Abraham's dream about a cedar and a palm tree, *DSSSE* 39); *4 Ezra* 8:41–44 (a parable about a farmer); etc. Parables were above all a part of the fixed repertoire of instruction among the rabbis. Such parables and fables belong to the larger genre of pictorial sayings and riddles, מְשָׁלִים (*məšālîm*).

1.2 Within this larger genre, Jesus's parables stand out for three reasons:

(1) Like the wisdom tradition, the parables of Jesus work with the *knowledge and experiences of everyday Jewish rural life*. Hence they speak about sowing and reaping (Mark 4:3–9 par.), shepherds (e.g., Luke 15:4–7), the relationship of a farmer to his sons (Luke 15:11–32), leasing (Mark 12:1–12 par.) and daily wages (Matt. 20:1–16), debt (Matt. 18:23–35) and financial gain (Matt. 25:14–30), poverty and riches (Luke 16:19–31), the situation of those without legal rights (Luke 18:1–8), the wedding banquets of the rich (Matt. 22:1–14), etc. Because of their reference to such universal experiences, Jesus's parabolic teachings address people "immediately."

(2) The parables of the rabbis were for the most part woven into exegetical lectures, serving as a didactic help for the better understanding of the Holy Scriptures. Jesus only rarely taught in this way (cf. Luke 10:25–28 with 10:29–37; Mark 12:1–9 with 12:10–11); he usually used parables for direct instruction about the βασιλεία.

(3) Instead of speaking abstractly about God's love, Jesus tells the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11–32). He teaches about God's generosity by the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matt. 20:1–16). This *metaphorical manner of speaking* awakens the interest and the opposition of the listeners in equal measure. Listeners are moved by Jesus to identify with one of the two sons in Luke 15:11–32, and as they "play along" with the story (G. Eichholz), they are forced to take a position on the behavior of the Father; this also reflects the behavior of Jesus toward sinners that the Pharisees and Essenes found so offensive. The parable of the laborers in the vineyard is no different. The parable of the sower (Mark 4:3–9) invites listeners to connect the behavior of the sower with Jesus's message as it encounters opposition, while the parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18:23–35 teaches listeners about the riches as well as the limits of the forgiveness that Jesus guarantees to sinners. In each case the addressees of the parable are enveloped in a *metaphorical process of*

understanding and are forced to orient themselves in one way or another to Jesus and the βασιλεία. This is precisely what makes the parables one of our main sources for Jesus's understanding of the kingdom of God.

1.3 With their artful narrative form and metaphorical linguistic world, Jesus's parables are *carefully structured instructional narratives*. We can confirm this by three observations:

(1) To this day we possess no Jewish parables transmitted in Aramaic. Therefore it can be said with some certainty that "the language of Jesus' parables was Hebrew and not Aramaic." In Jesus's day Hebrew was still "the language of the temple service and synagogue worship as well as instruction in the law" (Rüger, "Die hebräische und aramäische Sprache als Hilfsmittel zum Verstehen des Neuen Testaments," 133). Jesus's parables are therefore to be understood as elements of the *teaching* he impressed upon his disciples.

(2) Although the narrative world of Jesus's parables stands very close to that of the Jewish wisdom tradition, it also repeatedly stands in *contrast* to it. This affects both the rhetoric and the content of Jesus's parables, as may be inferred from Matthew 11:25–27/Luke 10:21–22. Hence the behavior of the "prodigal" Father in Luke 15:11–32 contradicts the duty of careful stewardship of the family fortune which wisdom requires (W. Pöhlmann). By the same token the full daily wage that the owner of the vineyard in Matthew 20:1–16 paid to the workers whom he had hired last is unjust and financially ruinous. The wasteful farming technique of the sower in Mark 4:3–9 par. stands in contrast to *Jubilees* 11:23–24, where the young Abraham is credited with the invention of a simple drilling machine that prevented the seed from going to the birds. The lack of concern of the farmer in Mark 4:26–29 contradicts the carefulness of the farmer highlighted in Isaiah 28:23–29. Many similar examples could be given.

(3) Jesus's parables include repeated *allusions to biblical traditions*. Hence the parable of the wicked tenants in Mark 12:1–11 par. refers to Isaiah 5:1–2, 5; the parable of the growing seed in Mark 4:26–29 alludes to Joel 4:13 (ET 3:13); the parable of the mustard seed in Mark 4:30–32 has in view Psalm 104:12 and Daniel 4:9, 18 (ET 4:12, 21); etc. The metaphorical linguistic world of Jesus's parables also includes many preformulated expressions: hence "king" and "shepherd" stand for God (and the Messiah), the "meal" symbolizes the kingdom of God, "sowing" stands for

proclamation, the “planting” or “herd” stands for God’s congregation, etc. If one takes these references and allusions into account, then a whole series of Jesus’s parables become linguistically so variegated that they seem to require explanation. *Jesus’s parables were by no means all self-evident; they needed interpretation and application even before Easter*. According to Mark 4:10–12 par., Jesus also spoke privately with his disciples about the understanding of the parables, so that at least the *start* of the allegorical interpretation of the parables handed down in Mark 4:10–20 par. and Matthew 13:36–43 goes back to this original “school” of Jesus.

It is therefore no longer advisable to continue interpreting the parables according to the simplistic dictum that all the authentic parables of Jesus were originally purely pictorial sayings which the post-Easter church interpreted allegorically and supplied with Scripture references.

2 The many *wisdom sayings, aphorisms, and riddles* that he transmitted identify Jesus as the “messianic teacher of wisdom” (M. Hengel). As in the case of the parables, these proverbial sayings of Jesus also belong to the larger genre of the *meshalim*. They are “parables in miniature” and differentiate themselves from the sayings of the Greek philosophers and Jewish teachers by the messianic undertone attached to them. As Matthew 12:42 and Luke 11:31 confirm, with Jesus “something greater than Solomon is here!”

2.1 Like the Psalter (cf. Pss. 1:1; 84:5–6 [ET 84:4–5]; etc.), the wisdom literature (cf. Sir. 25:7–11), and the apocalyptic writings (*1 En.* 58:2; *2 En.* 42:6–14), Jesus makes use of the genre of the *beatitude*, or *μακαρισμός*. In Luke 6:20–23 (cf. Matt. 5:3–12) he uses beatitudes to promise the poor, the hungry, the weeping, and those hated for his sake a present share in the kingdom of God. Similarly, Jesus’s saying in Luke 7:23/Matthew 11:6, “blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me,” is a beatitude that invites the emissaries of John the Baptist to acknowledge him as “the coming one” (see above, 79, §6.4). The counterpart to these beatitudes are the *woes* (cf. *οὐαί*) in Luke 6:24–26. They find their model in prophetic scoldings (Isa. 5:8–13, 18–23; Hab. 2:6–20; NRSV translates הוֹי, *hôy*, by “Ah!” rather than “Woe!” [הוֹי = *οὐαί*]), in wisdom (Eccles. 10:16), and in apocalyptic (*1 En.* 94–103). With his woes Jesus announces God’s judgment to the rich, well fed, and carefree.

2.2 In the *wisdom maxims* that he passed on, Jesus does not only take up general rules of experience, as in Mark 2:21–22 or Matthew 5:15/Luke 8:16; he also expresses especially the *messianic counterwisdom* that God entrusted to him.

Hence in Mark 8:35 par. Jesus says, "For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it." Similarly Mark 10:42–44 par. reads: "Among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all." In Matthew 11:28–30 Jesus, drawing upon Isaiah 55:1–2 and alluding to traditional wisdom teaching (cf. Sir. 24:19–22; 51:23, 26; Prov. 9:3–5), invites people to follow his new teaching: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." This saying implies a fundamental contrast. Jesus distances his own "yoke" or instruction (ζυγός) and his "burden" or commandment (φορτίον) from the teaching of the "scribes and Pharisees," who lay unbearably heavy burdens (φορτία) upon people by their interpretation of the Torah, according to Matthew 23:4.

2.3 Especially impressive are finally those *sayings* of Jesus that are so open as to require interpretive work by the listeners to become meaningful.

Here belongs for example the *mashal* about the homeless Son of Man which constitutes an indirect self-revelation of Jesus as the Son of Man: "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20/Luke 9:58). Or the saying in Mark 12:17 par. by which Jesus resolves the serious and potentially embarrassing question about the legitimacy or illegitimacy of paying the poll tax to the hated Romans: "Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." The emphasis in this sovereign *mashal* does not lie upon the amicable paralleling of religious and political areas of life, but upon the second half of the proverb: in comparison to the demands that God and his kingdom place upon people, paying the poll tax is a relatively inconsequential matter, an *adiaphoron* that one can accept without further ado.

2.4 Following B. Gerhardsson, R. Riesner assumes that *didactic summaries* are to be seen in many of these sayings of Jesus and that "a large part of the synoptic sayings tradition goes back to didactic summaries bearing the mark of Jesus" (*Jesus als Lehrer*, 361). Teachers in the Hellenistic schools made use of didactic κεφάλαια, or "headings," while the rabbis summarized their teachings in כְּלָלִים (*kəlālîm*); Jesus seems to have proceeded similarly. Jesus's characteristic introduction of many of his sayings with the words ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, "truly I tell you" (cf., e.g., Matt. 5:18; 6:2, 5; Mark 3:28; 8:12), could have been his special way of indicating the importance of these summaries.

3 In the Synoptics and John, Jesus is repeatedly addressed as “rabbi” (cf., e.g., Mark 9:5; 10:51; 11:21; John 1:38; etc.). Nevertheless, this was not yet a fixed title in his day, but only a token of respect. Jesus was not educated as a professional scribe, nor did he show any signs of typical scribal behavior. Hence he did not live in one fixed location and run his own school there, he was not constantly occupied with the Torah, and he did not spend his time in specialized exegetical debates. He did not support himself from the work of his own hands during his public ministry, and he certainly did not limit his company only to men and students. Jesus did know the Holy Scriptures well, but in comparison with the scribes he was a self-taught charismatic teacher, who caused people to be astonished by his wisdom and learning (cf. Matt. 23:10; John 7:15).

3.1 Interestingly, formal *exposition of the Holy Scriptures* did *not* lie at the heart of Jesus’s proclamation. However, when Jesus did interpret the Scriptures, his interpretations evidenced the same independent and novel *messianic traits* that also characterized his teaching in parables and sayings.

Hence when the Sadducees question him about the resurrection of the dead using an imaginary story involving a woman and her seven dead husbands that alluded to the duty of levirate marriage in Deuteronomy 25:5–6 and Tobit 3:7–9 (another story of a woman with seven dead husbands), Jesus sovereignly counters from Exodus 3:6 that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is not a God of the dead but of the living (cf. Mark 12:18–27 par.). Or again, at the center of his answer to the question about the greatest commandment in Mark 12:28–34 (par. Matt. 22:34–40; Luke 10:25–28), Jesus places his own independent combination of Deuteronomy 6:4–5 and Leviticus 19:18, and to the follow-up question about the identity of the “neighbor” who must be loved according to Leviticus 19:18, Jesus responds with the exemplary story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29–37). Finally, in the exegetical controversy about the Messiah as the Son of David in Mark 12:35–37 par., Jesus interprets Psalm 110:1 by means of Psalm 8:7 (ET 8:6), thereby providing a reason for the superiority of the Son of Man over the Davidic Messiah.

Jesus dared publicly to present his own arrival on the scene as the *fulfillment* of the prophecy about the Spirit-filled anointed one in Isaiah 61:1–2, which was interpreted messianically in early Judaism (cf. Luke 4:16–21; Matt. 11:5/Luke 7:22). If this is taken seriously, then we may also assume that the post-Easter confession of Hebrews 1:1–2, “Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by the Son,” similarly points back to experiences that Jesus’s disciples had with him and his teaching during his lifetime.

3.2 The *antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount* (Matt. 5:21–48) will be dealt with in more detail in chapter 8 (see below, 119–21, §4.3). Here we may simply point out the fundamental messianic exegesis that underlies them.

In rabbinic scholastic debates it was normal for one scribe to set his interpretation over against another's with the expression וַאֲנִי אֹמֵר (*waʾănî ʾōmēr*) = ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω, "but I say." As E. Lohse comments: "When Jesus sets his sayings over against the current interpretation of the traditional commandments with the expression ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν, his use of this expression is fully comparable with the rabbis' use of the expression *wa'ănî 'ōmēr*, 'but I say'; both present opinions that depart from the generally accepted view" (Lohse, "'Ich aber sage euch,'" 80). As a comparison of Matthew 5:31 with Matthew 19:7 shows, the passive verb ἐρρέθη ("it was said") in Matthew 5:21, 27, 38 points in the first instance to the speech or teaching that Moses addressed to "those of ancient times" (οἱ ἀρχαῖοι), that is, the generation of Sinai; because this speech was considered to be God's revelation, ἐρρέθη must be read as a divine passive, "it was said *(by God)*" (cf. Matt. 2:15–17; Rom. 9:12, 26). *Departing from the Jewish scribes of his time, Jesus used the expression ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν to set his own teaching over against the instruction that God gave the Sinai generation through Moses.*

Because Jesus in his six antitheses partly deepens the command of God, but also partly replaces it by his own new commandment, we are confronted by the astonishing fact that he dared to proclaim his instruction both in continuity and in discontinuity with the Torah of Sinai. *Jesus was not only more than Solomon (Luke 11:31/Matt. 12:42); he was also more than Moses, teaching the messianic Torah that completes the law of Sinai* (see below, 121–24, §5).

4 Jesus claimed to be the messianic representative of the one God on earth (see above). This becomes apparent not by his teaching alone, but also by the *messianic symbolic actions* that accompanied his words. What fascinates people today about Jesus's proclamation in word and deed, and both impressed and annoyed his contemporaries, is that he testified to the dawning kingdom of God with the totality of his life, which he lived as God's witness. This behavior has its analogy in the Old Testament prophets, but Jesus's healing methods also undoubtedly resemble the practices of contemporary Jewish exorcists and other healers. Yet despite these similarities, the reports of Jesus's healings and exorcisms have been transmitted because they were characteristic of his own testimony to the βασιλεία and provided models for the disciples who were sent out to proclaim the kingdom, heal the sick, and cast out demons in the same manner as Jesus did (cf. Mark 3:14–15; 6:7; Luke 9:1–2 par.). Hence Mark

very instructively records the details of Jesus's words and actions during his healings and exorcisms (cf. Mark 5:8–10, 40; 7:33–34; 9:25; etc.).

4.1 Jesus's *healing miracles*, which are reported in all four Gospels, are to be counted among his messianic symbolic deeds according to Matthew 11:2–6/Luke 7:18–23 (see above, 79, §6.4). The reason for this can be seen especially clearly in the close connection between the forgiveness of sins and healing in the story of the paralytic lowered through the roof in Mark 2:1–12 par. Here Jesus as a human being exercises the authority to forgive sins that Jewish tradition reserved for God alone, and his words "Son, your sins are forgiven" lead to a healing miracle. Jesus therefore acts exactly like Yahweh, "who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases" (Ps. 103:3). This healing with divine authority was no isolated incident, as the report of the healing of the epileptic in Mark 9:14–29 par. shows. Jesus drives out the sickness demon as the earthly representative of God, for whom "all things are possible" (cf. Mark 9:24–27 with Mark 14:36 and Pss. 115:3; 135:6). Luke 11:20 shows how Jesus himself viewed his healing ministry: "But if it is by the finger of God (cf. Exod. 8:15 [ET 8:19]) that I cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you." To this corresponds Jesus's cry of jubilation in Luke 10:18: "I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning" (cf. with Isa. 14:12–15). The image of lightning is an echo confirming the exorcisms and healing miracles that Jesus and his followers were enabled to perform. The criticism of Jesus's opponents, that he drives out demons only by the ruler of the demons (Mark 3:22 par.), puts it historically beyond doubt that his proclamation of the βασιλεία was accompanied by miracles and deeds of power.

Jesus took his stand as the "Son of God" in the battle against evil, which opposed God's kingdom in the form of sicknesses that distanced people from God and pushed them into the sphere of death. By healing the sick, he re-created the life of those whose illnesses had driven them from God's presence and excluded them from the cult. A Jewish tradition says: "Four are accounted as dead: A poor man, a leper, a blind person, and one who is childless" (*b*. *Ned*. 64b). Jesus won back all these types of people for their life with God by his exorcisms and healings, and thus those accounted "dead" began to rise at his hands (cf. Matt. 11:5/Luke 7:22 and Luke 15:32).

One must be careful not to devalue Jesus's healing miracles in comparison with his preaching ministry. It is not for nothing that the old kerygma of Acts 10:36–43 considers Jesus's ministry of miracles and healings to be one of the focal points of his proclamation of the gospel of God.

M. Hengel comes much closer to the historical facts than does the implicit modern criticism of Jesus's healing miracles when he writes: "Probably Jesus' activity as an 'exorcist' and 'healer of the sick' awakened among the simple Galilean population at least as much attention and enthusiasm as his preaching" (*The Charismatic Leader and His Followers*, 66).

4.2 The conviction that in Jesus's proclamation and person God's saving righteousness has arrived on the scene is also reflected in the reports of Jesus's so-called *nature miracles*. These include the stories about Jesus calming the storm (Mark 4:35–41 par.), walking on the water (Mark 6:45–52 par.), feeding the five thousand and the four thousand (Mark 6:32–44 par.; 8:1–10 par.), raising people from the dead—including Jairus's daughter in Mark 5:21–43 par. (interwoven with the account of healing the woman with the flow of blood), the son of the widow of Nain in Luke 7:11–17, and Lazarus in John 11:1–44—and performing his wine miracle at the wedding in Cana (John 2:1–12). In all these reports it is hardly possible anymore to probe behind the testimony level of the texts and establish critically which events "really" underlie them. Nevertheless, they all reflect concrete experiences of salvation and healing by Jesus. He therefore appears in these texts as the Son of God who establishes the kingdom of God in the face of death, danger, vulnerability, and need.

4.3 Jesus's symbolic actions include his *table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners* (cf. Mark 2:15ff.; Luke 15:1–2; 19:1–10). This has already been covered above (see 85–86, §4.2).

4.4 A fourth example of Jesus's symbolic actions is his creation of the *circle of the Twelve* (cf. Mark 3:13–19 par.). There are no historically compelling reasons for regarding this circle as something first formed after Easter on the basis of 1 Corinthians 15:5. In founding it, Jesus performed a messianic sign. He laid claim to the full twelve-tribed people of Israel, even though, as Jeremias notes, "at the time of Jesus . . . there were only two and a half tribes left; Judah, Benjamin, and half Levi." Therefore gathering together the remaining nine and a half tribes of Israel that were "lost" in the fall of the Northern Kingdom, so as to restore the full people of the twelve tribes, was considered to be God's saving work in the end times (J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 235). Jesus dared to undertake this task. He surrounded himself by twelve disciples, involved them in his proclamation of the βασιλεία (cf. Mark 3:14 par.; 6:7–11 par.; Luke 9:1–6/Matt. 10:1, 7–11, 14), and began with their help to gather those prepared for repentance among "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 10:6).

Jesus seems to have understood the final destiny of the Gentiles on the model of Isaiah 2:2–3 and Micah 4:1–3 (cf. Matt. 8:11–12/Luke 13:28). In the Twelve he saw the “little flock” of those whom God would give a share in his kingdom (cf. Luke 12:32 with Dan. 7:18, 27), and he promised them that they would one day preside as judges over the twelve tribes of God’s end-time people (cf. Matt. 19:28/Luke 22:30). The circle of the Twelve was also the nucleus of Jesus’s end-time “family” (cf. Mark 3:31–35; 10:28–31 par.). After Easter this circle was freshly called together by Peter in Jerusalem, and by the choice of Matthias it was supplemented to make up for the man who had fallen out, Judas Iscariot. The Twelve then formed the spiritual leadership of the early Jerusalem church (cf. Acts 1:15–26).

4.5 The *temple action* of Jesus (Mark 11:15–17 par. and John 2:13–17), must also be viewed as a messianic demonstration. Comparable early Jewish texts point in the same direction, connecting the appearance of the Davidic Messiah with the purifying and reestablishing of the Jerusalem temple (cf. 4Q174 [4QFlor] frag. 1 I, 21, 2, lines 1–13, *DSSSE* 353; *Pss. Sol.* 17:30; *Sib. Or*. 5:414–433; *Tg. Isa*. 53:5–6). The historical place of Jesus’s action may have been Solomon’s Portico on the south side of the temple, where the important temple business was transacted. The goal of Jesus’s action was to force the Jerusalem priesthood to stop conducting the usual sacrificial cult without reference to Jesus’s proclamation of the βασιλεία, and instead to prepare themselves in the temple for the time of the new worship service. Jesus’s symbolic action was an immense provocation. It made the priesthood Jesus’s enemies and triggered the passion events (see below, 173–74, §4.3.1).

Jesus’s temple saying in Mark 14:58 par., “I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands,” was probably spoken during the temple action and indicates what Jesus was aiming at. The saying presents a messianic prophecy which is to be understood from Exodus 15:17–18. As A. M. Schwemer says, “the earthly temple was built by human hands, but the eschatological temple will be established by God’s hands [Exod. 15:17], and then the kingdom of God will come [Exod. 15:18]” (Schwemer, “Irdischer und himmlischer König,” in *Königsherrschaft Gottes und himmlischer Kult*, ed. M. Hengel and A. M. Schwemer [1991], 309–59, here 356).

The essential characteristics of Jesus’s proclamation and teaching now stand before our eyes. As we proceed to the main contents of his message, these characteristics will continue to confront us.

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CHAPTER 7

God’s Uniqueness and Saving Power in the Proclamation of Jesus

The βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, or “kingdom of God,” is the center of the proclamation of Jesus. But Jesus did not only announce the coming of the βασιλεία, as John the Baptist did; he also understood it as the inbreaking of God’s kingly rule (cf. Matt. 11:2–6/Luke 7:18–23; Luke 11:20). *Jesus’s understanding of God can be seen very clearly in the Lord’s Prayer, which sums up the essential content of his proclamation*.

The *Lord’s Prayer* is transmitted to us in Luke 11:2–4, Matthew 6:9–13, and *Didache* 8:2. Because *Didache* 8:2 is based on the Matthean tradition (cf. K. Niederwimmer, *The Didache* [1998], 135–37), we need to compare only Luke’s and Matthew’s versions. Both begin with “you” language (“your name,” “your kingdom,” etc.) but then transition to “we” language (“our daily bread,” “our sins,” etc.). Both versions also lack the closing doxology in the earliest manuscripts. A short form of this doxology is added in *Didache* 8:2: ὅτι σοῦ ἐστιν ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, “For yours is the power and the glory, forever,” while today’s well-known wording of the later manuscripts of Matthew adds the saying about the kingdom together with the concluding “Amen”: ὅτι σοῦ ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας· ἀμήν, “For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen” (Matt. 6:13 KJV; cf. with 1 Chron. 29:11–13). Both the *Didache*’s and Matthew’s version of the doxology probably go back to the response of the congregation to the praying of the Lord’s Prayer by the worship leader.

Luke’s version, with its seven petitions or elements (printed as separate lines in the Nestle text), is shorter than Matthew’s, with ten. This brevity suggests that Luke’s version is older than Matthew’s, which follows Luke’s structure. Instead of Luke’s brief Πάτερ, “Father” (Luke 11:2), Matthew has the liturgically more resounding but also more distant address, Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, “Our Father in heaven” (Matt. 6:9). Matthew also supplements Luke’s petition for the coming of the kingdom by adding the two-line petition, “Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10). However, Luke 11:3 and Matthew 6:11 speak in unison of “our daily bread,” ὁ ἄρτος ἡμῶν ὁ ἐπιούσιος; the difficult to interpret and rare adjective ἐπιούσιος (see below, 108–9) is also solidly attested in *Didache* 8:2. In verse 11 Matthew uses the term σήμερον (today) instead of Luke’s τὸ καθ’ ἡμέραν (each day), while in verse 12 Matthew speaks not of ἁμαρτίαι, “sins,” as in Luke 11:4, but of ὀφειλήματα, “debts” (traditionally “trespasses”). Matthew formulates this sentence about forgiveness differently than Luke does, using the comparative particle ὡς (Luke: γάρ) and the aorist ἀφήκαμεν (Luke: ἀφίομεν): “And forgive us our debts, *as* we also *have forgiven* our debtors” (NRSV). Finally, in verse 13 Matthew supplements the prayer for protection from πειρασμός, or “temptation” (NRSV: “the time of trial”), by the addition of ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ, “but deliver us from evil” (so RSV; NRSV: “the evil one”).

The unvarying tradition in Luke, Matthew, and the *Didache* of the rare word ἐπιούσιος shows that a Greek version of the Lord's Prayer must have been formed very early in the development of Christianity. The texts in our three sources are variants of this original version. While Luke wishes to preserve the Jesuanic original of the Lord's Prayer, Matthew presents the liturgical version common after Easter.

If one seeks to go behind this early Greek version by translating Jesus's prayer back into the original Aramaic (cf., e.g., J. Jeremias, "Das Vater-Unser im Lichte der neuren Forschung," in *Abba: Studien zur neutestamentlichen Theologie und Zeitgeschichte* [1966], 160, ET: "The Lord's Prayer in the Light of Recent Research," in *The Prayers of Jesus* [1967], 94, or H. Gese, "Bemerkungen zum Vaterunser," 412), one encounters rhyming Aramaic prose. It also becomes clear that the wording of Matthew 6:11, 12 is closer to the Semitic original than the more Greek-sounding version in Luke. Scholars therefore usually find *the oldest available version of the Lord's Prayer in the lines as they are laid out in Luke, but they give priority to the particular wording of Matthew's text where it is formulated more "Semitically" than Luke's.*

1 No human cry to God more tellingly summarizes God's reality as Jesus himself experienced and taught it than the brief πάτερ, "Father!" of Luke 11:2, corresponding to the Aramaic אַבָּא, "Abba!" (Gk. αββα).

1.1 The designation of the deity as "father" is widespread in the history of religions. In the creation myth in Plato's dialogue *Timaeus*, which was so important for late antiquity and early Christian theology, God is designated as ποιητὴς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦδε τοῦ παντός, "Maker and Father of this universe" (*Timaeus* 28c, LCL 9:51). Corresponding with this, the world appears as the image of the eternal deity which is accessible to sense perception. Likewise in the famous hymn to Zeus of the Stoic Cleanthes, Zeus is called the father who directs the universe by his wisdom (frag. 537 line 34). Humans gifted with reason are therefore considered to be related to God, especially when they follow the law of reason which Zeus has established in this world. According to the Greek rhetorician and popular philosopher Dio Chrysostom, all the great Greek poets "call the first and greatest God Father (πατέρα) of the whole rational family collectively . . . and King (βασιλέα) besides" (*Oration* 36.35, LCL 3:453). Therefore, in the Greek tradition, the language of God as "father" designates God as the origin and spiritual reference point of the world.

1.2 Designating the deity as "father" was also an established practice in the world surrounding ancient Israel, above all in Egypt. In the background stood the idea of the original fathering or begetting of the world by God. This begetting is repeated on earth in the union of the Egyptian king and queen, so that the royal child produced by this union is regarded as the

physical descendant of God (cf. W. Beyerlin, *Religionsgeschichtliches Textbuch zum Alten Testament* [1975], 53–56).

1.3 In contrast to the Greek and Egyptian texts, *Israel's relationship to and understanding of God are determined by its exclusive personal relationship to Yahweh*, grounded in Israel's election and the obligation that Yahweh laid upon his chosen people at Sinai. Israel's relationship to God comes to classic expression in the first commandment (Exod. 20:2–3; Deut. 5:6–7) and in Deuteronomy 4:7–8: "For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is whenever we call to him? And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today?"

In the course of time the genealogical understanding of the naming of God as father current in Israel's environment (above, §1.2) was transformed and integrated into the Israelite faith tradition. In preexilic texts the language of the *fatherhood of Yahweh* comes up in two contexts: (1) when presenting Israel as the creation and inherited possession of Yahweh (cf. Deut. 32:3–7) or when describing the special ties of Yahweh to his people (cf. Hos. 11:1–9); and (2) when ensuring Yahweh's abiding support for the royal house of David (cf. 2 Sam. 7:12–14). This promise of Yahweh's fatherly care for the Davidic king as his chosen "son" is furthermore found in Psalms 2:7 and 89:27 (ET 89:26), texts which help form the basic structure of the Old Testament–Jewish messianic expectation.

(3) After the exile the language of Yahweh as "our father" appears in the people's lament in Isaiah 63:15–16 and 64:6–8 (ET 64:7–9) (cf. 63:7–64:11 [ET 63:7–64:12]):

[15]Look down from heaven and see,
  from your holy and glorious habitation.
Where are your zeal and your might?
  The yearning of your heart and your compassion?
  They are withheld from me.
[16]For you are our father,
  though Abraham does not know us
  and Israel does not acknowledge us;
you, O LORD, are our father;
  our Redeemer from of old is your name. (Isa. 63:15–16)

[7]There is no one who calls on your name. . . .
[8]Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;

we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

[9]Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity forever.

Now consider, we are all your people. (Isa. 64:6–8 [ET 64:7–9])

(4) In addition to this calling upon God as the father who chose Israel and is graciously inclined toward it, we find scattered references in the wisdom literature to Yahweh as the father of the righteous individual. These include expressions such as “O Lord, Father and Master of my life” (Sir. 23:1) or “Father and God of my life” (23:4); “Lord, you are my Father” (51:10); and “he boasts that God is his father” (said by the wicked about the righteous, Wis. 2:16). However, God is addressed as father of the righteous only once in the Qumran Hymns (1QH 17:35–36).

(5) In Jesus’s day, to call upon God as father was not a frequent form of address, even though it is part of the biblical tradition. The expression “our father” from Isaiah 63:16, 64:7 (ET 64:8) does indeed reappear in the great synagogue prayer of repentance known as *Abinu Malkenu*, “Our Father, our King,” which has its roots in the first century AD. Nevertheless, the more usual way of addressing God at this time was not as “our father” but as “God of our fathers” or “shield of our fathers,” as may be seen in the first of the Eighteen Benedictions (cited in the older Palestinian recension): “Blessed art thou, Lord, God of our fathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac and God of Jacob, great, mighty and fearful God, most high God who createst heaven and earth, our shield and the shield of our fathers, our trust in every generation. *Blessed art thou, Lord, shield of Abraham*” (trans. Schürer, *HJP*[2] 2:460).

1.4 Over against this tradition of Israelite and Jewish prayer, the address of God by the mere vocative πάτερ, “Father!” (אַבָּא or αββα), that introduces the Lord’s Prayer in Luke 11:2 is strikingly direct, simple, and independent. This address of God as “father” is furthermore recorded in Matthew 11:25–26/Luke 10:21 (see above, 87–88, §5) and Mark 14:36 par. It is taken up by Christians in Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6, and was apparently characteristic of Jesus. *Jesus spoke with God as the intimately familiar son, who loved and honored his father*.

The independence of Jesus’s address of God as father becomes clear from a study of the word אַבָּא/αββα. This is first of all a babbling word of babies etymologically related to our word “papa.” But it also serves as the familiar address of children to their father and finally as the respectful form used by students to address their teacher (cf. the use of “abbot” in a monastery) and by extended family members to address the *paterfamilias*. Nevertheless, until now we know of only a few Jewish instances of the address of God as אַבָּא. They come from two miracle-working rabbis who lived in the second half of the second century AD (cf. *b. Ta‘anit* 23a–23b).

Jesus called upon God with a rare directness; he spoke with God as his chosen Son, who loved and honored his father with filial love. Furthermore,

according to Luke 11:1–2, Jesus formulated the Lord’s Prayer specifically for his disciples or *μαθηταί*. The purpose of the prayer is therefore not to give an example of Jesus’s own prayer but to instruct the disciples in prayer. The Lord’s Prayer gives the disciples a share in Jesus’s special relationship to God; they may call God “Abba” just as their teacher does.

2 The first petition of the Lord’s Prayer is formulated in “you” language: “Hallowed be your name.” It stands in the tradition of the “Holy, holy, holy” of Isaiah 6:3, which had its fixed place in the temple cult and the synagogue liturgy; praying people bow down in reverential fear before the holy God and expect him to sanctify or hallow his name. Ezekiel 36:22–32 (cf. with Ezek. 39:26–29 and 1QS 4:20–23) shows what this means. God himself will once again magnify and sanctify his great name, which Israel has profaned among the nations (cf. Ezek. 36:23). He will gather his people from all nations, cleanse them, and renew them for true obedience by the gift of the Holy Spirit. The “name” of God in the Lord’s Prayer (Luke 11:2/Matt. 6:9) can only be understood as in Exodus 3:13–14. It is the name יהוה or Yahweh, the name of the God whom Israel confesses as the one God in the Shema (“Hear, O Israel!”) of Deuteronomy 6:4, the God who created the world and chose Israel to be his own people. Jesus repeatedly points to this one God (cf. Mark 10:18 par.; 12:26–27 par.; 12:28–34 par.). Moreover, because language about the one creator’s care for his creation appears several times in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:45; 6:25–34/Luke 12:22–32), it is clear that it was not only Jesus himself who addressed Yahweh familiarly as Abba, “(dear) father.” Rather, Jesus also encouraged his disciples to address the one God in this way. *According to the Lord’s Prayer, Yahweh is the holy father of all those who are Jesus’s disciples.*

These findings prohibit us from making any fundamental theological distinction between the Old Testament and early Jewish view of God and that of Jesus and the New Testament; both belong most closely together. *This has far-reaching consequences for biblical theology*. Jesus and his disciples speak of the one God, just as Israel does. Yet their discourse also reveals a special dimension to their understanding of God: *Yahweh is and remains unique and holy to Jesus and his followers, but he may nevertheless be understood as the “dear Father” (αββα) of all those whom Jesus “welcomes” (cf. Luke 15:2) and who follow his call to repentance.*

3 Jesus’s special understanding of God comes to expression not only in his language of prayer, but also in his entire practice of proclamation.

3.1 The first indication of this is found in *Jesus’s parables*, beginning with three of the most famous ones: In the parable of the prodigal son, God is presented as a father whose mercy and love move him to give a new life to his errant son (Luke 15:11–32). The older brother who broods about the behavior of the father is called to share the joy in his father’s life-creating behavior. The father himself goes out to the older son, urges him to come in and join the celebration, and says to him: “Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found” (Luke 15:31–32). God is described in very similar terms by Jesus in the parable of the workers in the vineyard (Matt. 20:1–16): The owner of the vineyard takes care of all his workers. But he reserves the right to be as generous as he wishes, so that none of his workers falls short in the absolute necessities of life, not even the one who—whether guilty or not—heeds the Lord’s call only in the last hour. According to Jesus, God, out of fatherly righteousness and generosity, helps sinners on to the right path, and this helping righteousness of God is lived out and attested by Jesus himself. Finally, according to the example story of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9–14), God accepts the introspective, self-loathing tax collector, despised by many Jews as a lawless man, but does not accept the Pharisee. The concluding statement in Luke 18:14 is written in Semitic Greek and must be translated antithetically: “I tell you, this man [the tax collector] went down to his home justified [i.e., freed from guilt] rather than the other [i.e., the Pharisee, who did not go away justified].”

As J. Jeremias has shown in his book on the parables, the Pharisee in this parable is by no means caricatured by Jesus. The Babylonian Talmud preserves a Pharisaic prayer that corresponds to Luke 18:11–12 exactly:

> I give thanks to Thee, O Lord my God, that Thou hast set my portion with those who sit in the Beth ha-Midrash and Thou hast not set my portion with those who sit in [street] corners, for I rise early and they rise early, but I rise early for words of Torah and they rise early for frivolous talk; I labour and they labour, but I labour and receive a reward and they labour and do not receive a reward; I run and they run, but I run to the life of the future world and they run to the pit of destruction. (*b. Ber.* 28b, Soncino ed.; cf. also J. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* [1963], 142)

By contrast, the tax collector’s cry of repentance stands in the tradition of Psalm 51:16 (ET 51:14):

Save me from bloodguilt, O God,
the God who saves me,
and my tongue will sing of your righteousness. (NIV)

The three parables mentioned above not only stress God's fatherly generosity and righteousness but also hint at the flip side: the proclamation of God's unreserved father love, generosity, and righteousness sometimes incurs the displeasure of others—of the older brother, of the other workers tired from their long labors, and naturally also of the vainly praying Pharisee. Precisely through his proclamation of God's generosity and saving righteousness to put sinners right with him, Jesus made enemies of some of the Pharisees and Essenes. Jesus expressly invited them to join the celebration for the salvation of sinners who had been reclaimed for a life with God, but he also clearly preached judgment to them in case they should refuse this invitation. *Whoever does not want the gracious God that Jesus proclaims falls under the wrathful judgment of the distant God*.

3.2 The sayings of Jesus express his understanding of God as clearly as do his parables. Jesus certainly believed that people are sinners who, whether willingly or unwillingly, transgress God's will and are separated from him. But God will not let these people fall. Jesus saw himself called "to seek and to save the lost [before God]" (Luke 19:10), and sinners are the truly needy patients assigned to him as the divine physician (Mark 2:17 par.). The first beatitude belongs in the same context:

"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God." (Luke 6:20b; cf. Matt. 5:3)

Following an old Jewish linguistic tradition stretching back to the prophets, the Greek expression here translated "the poor" (*οἱ πτωχοί*) refers to the same group as the Hebrew עֲנָוִים (*ʿănāwîm*), as in Isaiah 61:1–2, which speaks of "good news to the *oppressed*." Accordingly, "the poor" are not only the economically deprived; Jesus uses the expression for people driven away from God's presence, including the "rich" tax collectors. The expression predominantly refers to "the disreputable, the *ʿammē hā-ʾāreṣ*, the uneducated, the ignorant, whose religious ignorance and moral behavior stood in the way of their access to salvation, according to the convictions of the time" (J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 112).

The flip side of Jesus's proclamation of salvation mentioned above is also reflected in the sayings material: Those who do not see themselves as

in need of Jesus's acceptance of "the poor" fall under his end-time "woes." Jesus pronounced woes upon unrepentant rich people (Luke 6:24–25), teachers of the law (Luke 11:52/Matt. 23:13), and the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum that resisted his message (Luke 10:13–15/Matt. 11:20–24).

3.3 The *messianic symbolic actions* that most clearly reflect Jesus's understanding of God include his acts of *table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners* (see above, 85–86, §4.2) and his *healing miracles*. Matthew 11:2–6 and its parallel Luke 7:18–23 show why: Yahweh, the one God of Israel, sent his Son, the messianic "Anointed One" (cf. Isa. 61:1), to incorporate the "poor" into his βασιλεία.

4 The healing stories speak repeatedly of the πίστις, or "faith," of those who are healed (cf. Mark 2:5 par.; 5:34 par.; 9:23–24 par.; Luke 7:2–10/Matt. 8:5–10; 17:19–20; etc.). Since Jesus's healing miracles are so important for his testimony to the βασιλεία (see above, 84–85, §4.1), we must beware of assuming that they simply involve a theologically insignificant belief in miracles.

4.1 The story of the healing of the epileptic boy (Mark 9:14–29 par.) brings together in a unique way the themes of God's will to heal, Jesus's ministry, and the faith of the father worried about his child. In this story about a sickness that Jewish understanding considered incurable, Jesus appears as the Son of the God who can do whatever he pleases (cf. Pss. 115:3; 135:6) and who does so through Jesus. Jesus's claim in verse 23 that "All things are possible for the one who believes" (πάντα δυνατὰ τῷ πιστεύοντι) does not refer to Jesus's own faith, since neither the Synoptics nor the Gospel of John characterizes Jesus's special relationship to God by the term "faith." It is rather the faith of the boy's father in the God for whom all things are possible that is at stake. In response to the father's cry for help, "I believe; help my unbelief!" (v. 24), Jesus accomplishes the saving will of his heavenly father, for whom all things are possible (cf. Mark 14:36 par.), by overcoming the sickness demon. *To have faith (πίστις, πιστεύειν) in this context means that the praying person must ask the almighty God to act through Jesus on his or her behalf.*

4.2 Matthew adds to this instructional context the saying about faith that can move mountains from the sayings source: "Truly I tell you, if you

have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you” (Matt. 17:20). The picture of the mustard seed shows the great importance of faith. As God’s gift faith is not quantifiable; it nevertheless determines the authority of Jesus’s disciples.

4.2.1 Mark uses the same logion in another context. During his last visit to Jerusalem, Jesus teaches his disciples: “Have faith in God (πίστις θεοῦ). Truly I tell you, if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and if you do not doubt in your heart, but believe that what you say will come to pass, it will be done for you. So I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours” (Mark 11:22–24).

According to the Old Testament, God alone has the power to establish mountains (Ps. 65:7 [ET 65:6]) and to remove them again in his anger (Job 9:5; Jer. 51:25). His word of creation and judgment accomplishes what he desires (Pss. 33:9; 148:5; Isa. 55:11). Against this background it becomes clear what Jesus means: Whoever prays to God with an undivided heart receives the almighty God’s help along with the gift of faith, so that this person can effect both salvation and judgment with divine authority. Matthew 17:20 focuses on salvation and Mark 11:24 on judgment; this is made clear by the context of Mark 11:24, with its symbol of the cursing of the unproductive fig tree, that is, Israel (cf. Jer. 8:13).

Paul seems to have viewed the authority of the faith that can remove mountains in the context of “binding” and “loosing” (cf. Matt. 18:18). Therefore he can say in 1 Corinthians 13:2 that even a person who has faith to remove mountains is nothing without love.

4.2.2 Luke 17:6 offers a parallel logion to the faith that can move mountains. Jesus says to his disciples who have asked him to increase their faith: “If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.” Once again the sense is similar. The mulberry tree has especially deep roots. To “uproot trees” is an Old Testament picture for judgment (cf. Jer. 1:10 and the LXX recension of Dan. 4:14). In the third century, people called a rabbi who could make pointed judicial arguments a “tree uprooter” (cf. Str-B 1:759). Again, the meaning is that faith can effect judgment and salvation with divine authority, thereby doing what is impossible for humans.

4.3 If one compares these sayings of Jesus with the Old Testament–Jewish language of faith (noun אֱמוּנָה, verb הֶאֱמִין; *ʾĕmûnā*, *heʾĕmîn* [hif. of אמן]), one quickly discovers that no Jewish prophet or teacher since Isaiah (cf. Isa. 7:9; 28:16; 30:15) and Habakkuk (cf. Hab. 2:4) spoke of faith as Jesus did. "Faith" in the postexilic period meant faithfulness to God's "commandments, statutes, and laws" (Gen. 26:5; cf. Sir. 32:24); among the Essenes of Qumran, Habakkuk 2:4 was interpreted in terms of faithfulness to the interpretation of the law advocated by the Teacher of Righteousness (cf. 1QpHab 7:16–8:3). Compared to this postexilic, early Jewish faith tradition, Jesus espoused a totally novel view of *πίστις*. This is especially telling for his understanding of God: Faith is a gift of God; as such it is also *πίστις* θεοῦ, "faith in God" (Mark 11:22). It becomes the shared possession of all who ask God for it. Faith's power and authority lie in the fact that God accepts praying people on the basis of their faith and acts on their behalf by his sovereign power. By faith, praying people may participate in God's power (G. Ebeling).

As we have seen, several of the healing stories show that the faith of those seeking healing during his ministry is already directed both directly and indirectly at Jesus's person. Therefore, we stand before the interesting transition point between the theoretical understanding of faith in Mark 11:22 and the faith in Jesus Christ that became characteristic of the post-Easter tradition.

4.4 Jesus's concept of faith allows us to see the entire Lord's Prayer as a school of faith into which Jesus has enrolled his disciples or *μαθηταί* (G. Strecker). The roots of Jesus's instruction lie in the Psalter, the Jewish wisdom tradition, and his own messianic charisma.

By addressing God as "Father" (Luke 11:2), praying people enter his presence and entrust themselves to his care in Jesus's name. The liturgically fuller address of God as "Our Father in heaven" in Matthew 6:9 fits the Jewish tradition of prayer (cf. Str-B 1:410). While this expression includes the *μαθηταί* in the praying congregation before God, the phrase "Our Father *in heaven*" also marks the distance between earthly praying people and the heavenly God.

The first two petitions are expressed in "you" language: "your name" and "your kingdom." Both have a present and a future ring to them: Praying people bow in reverential fear before the name of the holy God, expecting that he himself will glorify his holy name before the eyes of the world (see above). The people then ask God to establish his kingdom soon over Israel and the whole world. With these first two petitions the praying *μαθηταί* glorify the one God and subordinate themselves to his kingdom for the future. The third "you" petition ("your will") is included only by Matthew, but it fits well with the other two. It asks God to bring upon the earth a full acknowledgment of his will, which is established in heaven before the beginning of time and has been revealed in the Torah (cf. Ps. 19:2–11, 12–15 [ET 19:1–10, 11–14]; Isa. 45:23–24). Once again this implies that the praying

μαθηταί are the first to acknowledge God's "will" or *θέλημα*. With his Gethsemane petition "your will be done" (Matt. 26:42), Jesus prayed just as he had taught his disciples to pray.

The three "we" petitions that follow ("our daily bread"; "our trespasses"; "lead us not . . .") consider the life of the *μαθηταί* in its orientation to the dawning *βασιλεία*. This is immediately clear in the petition about *bread*. "Bread" or *ἄρτος* is regarded as the daily staple in ancient Judaism and in the Jesus tradition (e.g., Matt. 7:9; Mark 6:41 par.; 7:2 par.). However, the word can also be used for the bread that will be served at the heavenly meal (cf. Luke 14:15). The adjective translated "daily" in traditional versions, *ἐπιούσιος*, has no certain parallel in ancient Greek literature and occurs in the New Testament only in the context of the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:11; Luke 11:3; cf. *Did*. 8:2). It can therefore be interpreted only on the basis of its etymology and this context. BDAG gives four possible definitions or derivations (p. 376, s.v. *ἐπιούσιος*):

1. "deriving it fr. *ἐπὶ* and *οὐσία* *necessary for existence*."

2. "a substantivizing of *ἐπὶ τὴν οὖσαν* sc. *ἡμέραν* *for the current day, for today*."

3. "*for the following day* fr. *ἡ ἐπιοῦσα* sc. *ἡμέρα*." The sense would then be "Our bread *for tomorrow* (*τὸν ἐπιούσιον*) give us *today*" (*σήμερον*, Matt. 6:11) or "*day by day*" (*τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν*, Luke 11:3). Philologically, this is the best-supported meaning, since the elliptical expression *ἡ ἐπιοῦσα* (sc. *ἡμέρα*), "the next (sc. day)," is attested in both nonbiblical and biblical Greek (nonelliptically *τῇ ἐπιούσῃ ἡμέρᾳ*, Acts 7:26; elliptically *τῇ ἐπιούσῃ*, Acts 16:11; 20:15; 21:18).

4. "deriving it fr. *ἐπιέναι* 'be coming'—(a) on the analogy of *τὸ ἐπιόν* = 'the future,' *bread for the future*."

Because the third definition fits Luke's wording of the Lord's Prayer as well as Matthew's, it is to be preferred over the others. With this petition, "Our bread for tomorrow give us today" (Matt. 6:11), the disciples, who normally live in a situation of need, plead to be provided with at least the bread necessary for the next day (cf. Luke 9:3/Matt. 10:9–10, but also Luke 11:3–8). Since they are only asking for "bread to provide nourishment for the next day, *ἐπιούσιος ἄρτος* is a designation of *quantity*" (Gese, "Bemerkungen zum Vaterunser," 421); compare Proverbs 30:7–9. This understanding also fits the iterative form of the bread petition in Luke, "Our bread for tomorrow give us *each day*/*day by day*" (Luke 11:3). Moreover, this interpretation causes no conflict with the instruction in Matthew 6:25–34 par. not to worry about food for the future. It is therefore to be preferred to the eschatological understanding of the bread petition, in which *ἄρτος* is interpreted as the bread of the heavenly table (cf. Luke 14:15): "Our (heavenly) bread give us today (in advance)." According to Jerome's commentary on Matthew 6:11 (PL 26:44C), believers standing in the Palestinian Christian interpretive tradition of the *Gospel of the Nazarenes* actually understood *ἐπιούσιος* in this eschatological sense: "Our bread for tomorrow, that is for the future, give us today" (*Panem nostrum crastinum,* id est *futurum, da nobis hodie*). In evaluating this eschatological interpretation, we must not forget that Jesus's acts of table fellowship do indeed prefigure the communal meal in the *βασιλεία*; that his feedings of the multitudes, when he distributed bread to the gathered people of God, anticipate the heavenly meal (cf. Mark 6:32–44 par.); and that he himself looked forward to the messianic thanksgiving meal (Mark 14:25 par.; cf. Luke 22:28–30). It becomes clear that the eschatological understanding of the bread petition is not a foreign element in the proclamation of Jesus. But it fits only Matthew's text and suggests itself less clearly than the third interpretation, concerning bread for the next day.

The *petition for forgiveness* is once again formulated iteratively or continuously in Luke 11:4: "as we *forgive* everyone," using the present tense, *ἀφίομεν* (*ἀφίημι*). The aorist *ἀφήκαμεν* in Matthew 6:12 has a more punctiliar sense. This can be either ingressive, stressing the point at which the disciples extend forgiveness to others, "And forgive us our debts, as we [hereby] *forgive* our debtors" (KJV), or constative, summarizing in a globalizing manner the disciples' practice of forgiveness as a

whole: “as we also *forgave (have forgiven)* our debtors.” In the New Testament ἀφίημι does not form a perfect but uses the aorist with perfective force. Nevertheless, the underlying Aramaic perfect would favor the ingressive translation of the Greek. Otherwise the result is a conditional sentence: “Forgive us our debts, as we also have [already] forgiven our debtors” (NRSV). This conditional understanding raises theological problems and contradicts the *imitatio dei* in which Jesus’s disciples stand, since it is clear from Matthew 5:43–45 and Luke 6:35–36 that inasmuch as the disciples forgive their debtors their sins, they become “imitators of God.” In and with the forgiveness that they themselves receive from God, they participate by unmerited favor in God’s fatherly generosity and pass it on. The disciples are not only enabled but are obligated to pass on God’s forgiveness, or suffer the consequences (cf. Matt. 6:14–15; 18:23–35 and Sir. 28:1–2). The rare word ὀφείλημα, “debt,” in Matthew 6:11 (where Luke 11:4 has the more common ἁμαρτία, “sin”) is understood as a moral debt and corresponds to the Aramaic חוֹבָא (*ḥôbāʾ*), “sin, transgression.” Yet the expression τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, “our debts,” retains some of the technical judicial and financial overtones that this same language has in the parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18:23–35 (cognates from the ὀφείλω group are used, though not ὀφείλημα itself). It involves individual transgressions here and now. But the petition for forgiveness also gains an end-time dimension, because the forgiveness of sins is a sign of final redemption (cf. Jer. 31:34; Ezek. 36:25–32 and Isa. 55:6–7).

The *final “we” petition*, “lead us not into temptation” (NRSV: “the time of trial”), also has end-time overtones. Jeremiah 20:14–18 and Job 7:20–21; 10:8–9, 14, 18 show that God’s servants can be put into situations that their faith can hardly withstand. According to Daniel 12:7–12 (cf. with Rev. 3:10), the coming of God’s kingdom will be preceded by a final period of “testing” or “trial” (πειρασμός) of humanity that will ultimately determine who remains faithful to God and who does not. Jesus here teaches his disciples to pray that they be spared from any πειρασμός that their faith is not ready for (cf. Luke 22:32). The Matthean addition to this petition pleads for deliverance from “evil” (RSV), that is, from Satan and his machinations. Matthew calls the tempter ὁ πονηρός, “the evil one,” in 5:37; 13:19, 38 and understands “evil” (τὸ πονηρόν) here in 6:13 as his sphere of influence (cf. Matt. 5:11, 39; 9:4). The verb for deliverance, ῥύομαι, is used in Matthew 27:43 for deliverance from present peril, but it can also be used for final deliverance (cf. Luke 1:74; 1 Thess. 1:10; Rom. 11:26; etc.). The petition in Matthew 6:13 therefore asks for protection from trial and temptation here and now, not excluding the last, terrible πειρασμός.

The Lord’s Prayer is instruction for end-time faith existence in the form of a prayer. As part of Jesus’s authoritative teaching, it is “an expression of the grace that precedes the circle of disciples” (U. Luz, *Matthew 1–7* [2007], 325). It is given to a group of pupils committed to discipleship and longing for the final coming of the βασιλεία.

5 An appreciation of Jesus’s understanding of God requires special attention to the second “you” petition, concerning the coming of the βασιλεία. As in the Jewish liturgical prayer known as the Kaddish, this petition asks God to establish his kingdom soon over the whole world.

5.1 This petition cannot be understood without first realizing that Jesus’s proclamation, at least to some extent, presupposes the *imminence* of the kingdom of God. This is suggested not only by the urgency of Jesus’s

call to repentance, his temple saying (Mark 14:58, see above, 97–98, §4.5), and his announcement of his parousia as the Son of Man (Mark 14:62 par.), but also by his promise that he would soon drink wine in the kingdom (Mark 14:25 par.) and that some of his disciples would not taste death until the kingdom comes (Mark 9:1 par.). To be sure, Jesus did reckon with a span of time between his death and the parousia (Mark 2:18–20 par.; 12:1–12 par.; Luke 17:22–37 par.; Matt. 10:22–23 par.), but he saw it as relatively short (cf. Luke 13:6–9). Yet we must also not overlook the fact that Jesus himself rejected more precise calculations of the date of the parousia (Luke 17:20–21; Mark 13:21–22 par.). In the filial obedience that characterized his life, Jesus left the timing of the last day to his heavenly Father (Mark 13:32 par.).

This explains why the so-called delay of the parousia did not in fact become the fundamental theological problem for early Christianity that A. Schweitzer and others saw in it (cf. Schweitzer, “Das Messianitäts- und Leidensgeheimnis: Eine Skizze des Lebens Jesu” [1901], and the analysis by E. Grässer, *Albert Schweitzer als Theologe* [1979], 64ff.). Overtones of this problem are heard in several places, but it is dealt with in detail only in 2 Thessalonians 2:3–12 and in 2 Peter.

5.2 Jesus saw himself bound up with the coming of the kingdom in four ways: as caller to repentance, as messianic evangelist of the “poor,” as Savior, and as end-time judge.

5.2.1 Jesus’s *call to repentance* (Mark 1:14–15 par.) must not be domesticated. It sets its stamp upon a whole series of Jesus’s parables (cf., e.g., Luke 13:6–9; Luke 14:15–24/Matt. 22:1–14; Luke 15:11–32; 16:1–8) and sayings (e.g., Luke 13:1–5; Mark 10:23–27 par.). It also stands behind the instruction about the house built on the rock (cf. Luke 6:46–49 par.) and expresses itself above all in the *radical call to discipleship* that Jesus directed to his immediate followers.

Jesus himself remained unmarried for the sake of the βασιλεία (Matt. 19:11–12), and he made a break with his family for the sake of his messianic work (Mark 3:21 and 3:31–35 par.). As Elijah expected of Elisha (cf. 1 Kings 19:19–21), so also Jesus expected the μαθηταί he called to leave their occupations and families (Mark 1:16–20 par.). He required people who wanted to follow him to separate themselves from both possessions (Mark 10:17–22 par.) and family members (Luke 14:26/Matt. 10:37). Jesus placed a great divide between life in the (old) world and the βασιλεία dawning with him and his work, thus separating old from new and death from life. This found its characteristic expression in a discipleship saying that was extremely offensive in the early Jewish context: “Let the dead bury their own dead” (Luke 9:59–60/Matt. 8:21–22).

The repentance to which Jesus calls people is only tangentially motivated by the coming world judgment. Its decisive motive is joy in the dawning βασιλεία (Matt. 13:44) and in fellowship with God opened afresh through the encounter with Jesus (Luke 19:1–10). Jesus sought to intensify this joy by pointing out that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance (Luke 15:1–7). At the same time, he was fully aware that his call to repentance often fell on deaf ears. He therefore compared his contemporaries to children whose playmates—namely, John the Baptist and Jesus himself—could do nothing to please them (Luke 7:31–35/Matt. 11:16–19). Nor did he shy away from pronouncing "woes" upon the unrepentant (Luke 10:13–15 par.).

5.2.2 *The dawning of the βασιλεία in Jesus's saving deeds* (Matt. 11:2–6/Luke 7:18–23; Luke 11:20) has been considered several times before, as has the notion that his critics' opposition to Jesus's behavior threatened to exclude them from entrance into the kingdom of God (see above).

5.2.3 Jesus saw himself sent by God *to seek and to save that which was lost before God* (Luke 19:10) and to establish the βασιλεία in so doing. As opposition to him increased, he taught his disciples that both his and their path of discipleship might end in the *cross* (Luke 14:27/Matt. 10:38). He himself was prepared to stand in before God with his life for all those who will not be able provide a ransom in the final judgment for their own forfeited lives of sin (cf. Mark 8:34–38 par.).

5.2.4 According to the Old Testament–Jewish end-time expectation, the kingdom of God is ultimately established through the final judgment that God himself or his representative, the messianic Son of Man, will carry out (cf. Joel 4:15–17 [ET 3:15–17]; Dan. 7:10–14, 26; *1 En.* 61–63). This expectation also sets its stamp on the Jesus tradition of the Gospels: Jesus saw himself sent as the serving Son of Man to prepare Israel for this imminent world judgment. His vicarious surrender of life is intended to protect all who confess him from perishing in the final judgment. *But Jesus also expected that after fulfilling his ministry, he would be installed by God as the judge of the world* whom no one will bypass (cf. Mark 14:62 par.). It is therefore no surprise that the synoptic tradition contains a whole series of sayings that talk about the *conditions under which people will be able to*

enter into the kingdom of God (cf., e.g., Mark 9:43–48 par.; 10:15, 23–27 par.). These, too, are characteristic of Jesus's understanding of God.

Jesus called his followers to fearless *confession of his person and mission*, and he promised the same in return: "Everyone who acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God; but whoever denies me before others will be denied before the angels of God" (Luke 12:8–9 par.). The Son of Man's "acknowledgment" or "confession" of believers before the angels of God refers to his intercession for them in the final judgment (cf. Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1). This end-time perspective is important, since the parables of the weeds among the wheat (Matt. 13:24–30, 36–43) and of the net (Matt. 13:47–50) warn the disciples not to judge prematurely between the righteous and the unrighteous. Already during his earthly ministry, Jesus acknowledged the "little flock" of *his followers, whom he promised a share of the Zion-βασιλεία* (see above; cf. Luke 12:32 with Dan. 7:27). He especially acknowledged the Twelve (see above, 97, §4.4), who had stood by him in his trials (*πειρασμοί*), designating them as his heavenly table guests and as judges over the end-time people of the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke 22:28–30 par.). In his parable of the last judgment, using the figure of the sheep and the goats (Matt. 25:31–46), Jesus made known the standard by which he as the Son of Man will judge in the world judgment: he will be a gracious judge to all those who have followed the "way of righteousness" (Matt. 21:32) that he (and John the Baptist) taught, who have done good to the needy with food, drink, shelter, clothing, and visitation—in early Jewish terms, those who have done "works of righteousness," that is, deeds of mercy, for the needy. Jesus knew himself to be so closely bound up with God as the "Son" that the entrance into the βασιλεία was determined by his person, his call to discipleship, and his commandment.

6 *Jesus's testimony to the βασιλεία in word and deed divided people*. This is exactly as he wanted it. According to Luke 12:49–51, Jesus came with his gospel of the kingdom not to bring a superficial peace but an eschatological fire. Together with the "apostles" (Matt. 10:2) whom he sent into the cities and villages of Israel with his authority and message (Matt. 10:1, 6–7, 11, 23), Jesus wanted to bring about the end-time "division" (διαμερισμός), the spiritual parting of the ways, which will be completed and

confirmed at the final judgment (Luke 12:51–53/Matt. 10:34–36; cf. Mic. 7:6).

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CHAPTER 8

God's Will in the Proclamation of Jesus

Like the Old Testament and early Judaism, Jesus assumed that the whole creation, especially Israel, stands under the claim of the God who created the world in perfect order, chose Israel as his own people, and revealed his holy will to this people in the Torah of Sinai. As the messianic Son of Man, Jesus appeared on the scene with the call to repentance: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:15). The repentance that Jesus requires involves the return of those separated from God to God, the merciful Father. The new life of the repentant is marked by joy and freedom, but it also stands under the obligation of conforming to the will of the gracious God whom the people have abandoned but who has once again "welcomed" them through Jesus (Luke 15:2).

1 God's fundamental ethical demand for his people Israel is found in Leviticus 19:2: "You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy." Jesus too held up before his disciples the holy obligation of conforming to the action and will of the "Father." This obligation underlies the parable of the unmerciful servant in Matthew 18:23–35, conditions the petition of the Lord's Prayer for forgiveness of sins (Luke 11:4/Matt. 6:12; see above, 109–10; cf. also Matt. 6:14–15), and grounds the command to love one's enemies in the Sermon on the Plain and the Sermon on the Mount. In Luke 6:36 (cf. Matt. 5:48) it says (exactly as in *Targum Yerushalmi I* on Lev. 22:28): "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful." If one remembers this demand for conformity to the Father and recalls that Jesus called his followers away from all old conditions (Luke 9:59–60/Matt. 8:21–22), expecting his servants to be "salt of the earth" and "light of the world" (Matt. 5:13, 14), then one can say with J. Jeremias that the ethical demands of Jesus "concern the order of life in the coming reign of God, which regulates the life of the disciples even now" (*New Testament Theology*, 204). Just as God's kingdom is in the midst of people in Jesus's person (Luke 17:21) and dawns in Jesus's exorcisms (Luke 11:20), so also his kingdom is extended wherever Jesus teaches God's holy will. According to

Matthew 11:28–30, Jesus considers his teaching about God's will to be an "easy yoke" and a "light burden" for the weary and heavy-laden, saddled by the scribes with unbearable burdens (cf. Matt. 23:4).

2 Jesus's instruction materially revolves around *love for God and neighbor* (cf. Mark 12:28–34 par.). It is connected in its own independent way with the Old Testament–Jewish tradition of the love commandment.

2.1 In the Old Testament the demand of love for neighbor is not yet as predominant as it is in the Jesus tradition. But where it is emphasized it already stands under the sign of conformity to the behavior of Yahweh, who chose Israel and freed her from Egyptian bondage. The book of the covenant (i.e., Exod. 20:22–23:33, J and E sources) says that God's people must help their enemies (LXX: ἐχθρός) in emergencies and that poor Israelites and resident aliens (גֵּר, *gēr*) must not be deprived of their legal rights (Exod. 23:4–9). In the Holiness Code of Leviticus 17–26 it then says: "You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD" (Lev. 19:17–18).

This instruction is expanded in the same chapter of Leviticus: "When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God" (Lev. 19:33–34).

Deuteronomy expresses itself similarly: "For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Deut. 10:17–19).

The "stranger" here is once again the resident alien who owns no land and is without legal rights and therefore needs protection from free persons. In the Old Testament the love commandment is framed by Yahweh's election and acceptance of Israel and by Israel's duty of doing justice to this acceptance. The "neighbor" includes both the fellow Israelite and the resident alien in Israel.

2.2 The love commandment came to first-century Judaism embedded in the Torah as a whole (see below). Here the commandment carries both emphasis and limitations.

2.2.1 In the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (dated in the first century BC or AD), which are close to the Qumran texts, as well as in the sayings of Rabbi Akiba (died AD 135), the love commandment appears as one of the main rules of the Torah by which all social interaction of the

pious Jew is judged. The *Testaments* base this above all on the exemplary behavior of Joseph toward his brothers (cf. *T. Jos.* 17:1–8). *Testament of Gad* 6:3 commands explicitly: “If anyone confesses and repents, forgive him.” Rabbi Akiba mentions the love commandment as a fundamental commandment that holds for every Jew (*Sifra* Lev. 19:18 [89b]). The rabbinic writings and Hellenistic Judaism then contain the broad instruction, based on Exodus 23:4–9 and Proverbs 24:17, 28–29; 25:21, that God-fearing persons should not repay evil for evil, but should do good to their enemies and lead them to repentance (cf. Nissen, *Gott und der Nächste im antiken Judentum*, 308ff.).

2.2.2 Nevertheless, the high evaluation of the love commandment expressed here is also limited by two factors: this “main commandment of the Torah” (Rabbi Akiba) is to be practiced only in the light of the whole Torah, exemplarily rather than exclusively; therefore it comes to an end wherever the validity of the Torah and consequently also of God’s just claim upon humanity and the world is doubted or opposed. The person depicted as praying in the Psalms is already committed to “hating” God’s impious enemies. In Psalm 139:21–22 it says,

> Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD?
> And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?
> I hate them with perfect hatred;
> I count them my enemies.

The Qumran Essenes adopted this attitude and stressed the idea that unbelievers (i.e., all who do not confess the way of the Essene community) are to be hated. Those entering the Qumran community must therefore vow “to love all the sons of light, each according to his lot in God’s plan, and to hate all the sons of darkness, each according to his guilt in God’s vengeance” (1QS 1:9–11; cf. also 9:21–22, *DSSSE* 71, 93). “Hating” in every case means the affective loathing of those who are godless (cf. E. Jenni, *TLOT* 3:1256–60, s.v. שׂנא, *śnʾ*, “to hate”). Early Judaism held to this duty of isolating the godless. Therefore in Jewish thought the love commandment was highly regarded, but was also bounded by the faithfulness to the Torah that constituted Israel’s identity. The possibility that the love commandment, as God’s will, could transcend the boundaries of the Torah was not taught in the Jewish tradition, as far as we know.

3 When Jesus appeared on the scene, he took up this Old Testament–Jewish understanding of the love commandment, yet did so in his own characteristic *freedom and messianic authority*.

3.1 *Jesus did not acknowledge the Jewish limitation of the love commandment*. In his example story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30–37), highly provocative to his Israelite audience, Jesus dared to present a Samaritan, whom contemporary Judaism considered an apostate from faith

in Yahweh, as the model of the love of neighbor that God requires. In the parable of the final judgment separating the “sheep” from the “goats” (Matt. 25:31–46), Jesus identified himself with “the least of these” in such close solidarity that he could say, “just as you did [good] to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me” (Matt. 25:40; cf. with Prov. 14:31). In both cases the command of love of neighbor reaches far beyond the boundary of the Jewish people, demanding help for every person in need. *In Luke 6:27–36 and Matthew 5:43–48 Jesus expressly extends the love commandment to the enemies and persecutors of his followers*. Whereas the above-mentioned psalms and Essene texts call for “hating” those who disregard the Torah, the love Jesus requires is also meant for the Jewish denouncers and pagan opponents of the Jesus movement. *For Jesus himself, the love of enemies became the “constitution” guiding him as he endured the passion*, saying, “Father, forgive them” (cf. Luke 23:34 with Isa. 53:12).

3.2 These observations about the love commandment are confirmed in the so-called Golden Rule. A. Dihle showed in his 1962 book on the topic (*Die Goldene Regel*) that this *regula aurea* was widespread in ancient popular ethics. In the Sermon on the Mount the rule reads, “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets” (Matt. 7:12; cf. Luke 6:31).

This “positive” version of the rule, which we can confidently attribute to Jesus, is differentiated from the “negative” versions in Tobit 4:15 (“And what you hate, do not do to anyone”), the *Letter of Aristeas* 207 (“Insofar as you do not wish evils to come upon you, . . . put this into practice with your subjects”), the medieval Hebrew *Testament of Naphtali* 1:6 (God created the world “that none should do to his neighbour what he does not like for himself”) (H. W. Hollander and M. de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* [1985], 446), and from Hillel around 20 BC. As the famous *baraita* about Hillel and his counterpart Shammai says: “A certain heathen came before Shammai and said to him, ‘Make me a proselyte, on condition that you teach me the whole Torah while I stand on one foot.’ Thereupon he repulsed him with the yardstick which was in his hand. When he went before Hillel, he said to him, ‘What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour: that is the whole Torah, while the rest is the commentary thereof; go and learn it’ ” (*b. Shabb.* 31a).

Unlike Hillel, Jesus did not make the Golden Rule the entryway to the teaching of the Torah with all its individual commandments. He rather saw it as the summary of God’s will in its social dimension. Therefore he formulates the rule unconditionally and positively. For Jesus it is not simply a matter of avoiding mutual unpleasantries, as in our modern saying, “Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you.” It involves actively turning to others in everything they need.

3.3 For Jesus the love commandment, including the love of enemies, is closely bound up with the first commandment, just as in the Old Testament: *love for neighbor and enemy corresponds to love for God*. Jesus's answer to the question about the greatest commandment in Mark 12:28–34 (cf. Matt. 22:34–40/Luke 10:25–37) documents his sovereign interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. The form in which this tradition has been handed down to us reflects in part the post-Easter conversation between the church and Greek-speaking Jews prepared for conversion. Nevertheless, at its core the tradition contains a highly original combination of Deuteronomy 6:4–5 and Leviticus 19:18, resulting in a *double commandment to love both God and neighbor*. No Jewish parallel for this coupling has yet been discovered (cf. Nissen, *Gott und der Nächste im antiken Judentum*, 394). The coupling therefore gives classical expression to Jesus's emphasis upon the unreserved honoring and acknowledgment of the one God whom he calls "Abba," who involves those who obey him in his work of divine mercy.

We have seen (above, 101–2, §1.3) that Israel's particular existence grows out of the election and obligation she received from Yahweh. *For Jesus as well, the love and honor of God have priority over all social activities*. In the "initial choosing of his way" in his temptation (Mark 1:12–13; Matt. 4:1–11/Luke 4:1–13; see above, 78–79, §6.3), Jesus submitted himself entirely to his Father, and he kept up this obedience until the "final choosing of his way" in Gethsemane (Mark 14:32–42 par.) and on the way to the cross. In the Lord's Prayer he teaches his disciples to pray in such a way that the "you" petitions come before the "we" petitions; the same structure is present in the double love commandment. However, those who in Jesus's person and teaching have encountered God as the merciful Father are also obligated to meet their neighbors as God has met them. Therefore he says in Luke 6:36, "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful," and those praying the Lord's Prayer obligate themselves to reciprocal forgiveness (Luke 11:4/Matt. 6:12; cf. with Mark 11:25 par. and Sir. 28:2: "Forgive your neighbor the wrong he has done, / and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray").

Finally, the double love commandment also helps us to see *how Jesus understands love*. In Deuteronomy 10:12, "loving" God is equated with "fearing" and "serving" him or with "walking" in his ways. For Jesus too the love of God is marked by the fear of God: Jesus teaches and acts as his "Son" only by God's "gracious will" or εὐδοκία (Luke 10:21–22/Matt.

11:25–27; cf. also John 4:34). Love for God affectively moves both human emotions and will. The commandment to love one's neighbor works on the same principle; otherwise Jesus could never have extended love to the difficult task of loving enemies. This too involves both the emotions and the will in actions, including forgiveness (cf. Matt. 18:21–22), intercession (Matt. 5:44/Luke 6:28), and concrete helps: the "acts of love" or "mercy" (cf. Luke 10:30–37; Matt. 25:35–36).

The currently popular notion that "love cannot be commanded" has its roots in Romanticism and is only marginally true of Jesus's teaching. Although the disciples' obligation to love grows out of their experience of acceptance by God through Jesus, it also addresses its appeal for loving God and humanity to the human will, which in turn needs the love commandment in order to stay on task and not get off track.

4 With this interpretation of the will of God, which places everything on the love of God and neighbor, Jesus set himself in opposition to the Pharisaic ideal of keeping priestly purity in daily life and honoring God's holy commandments above oneself.

4.1 If one wishes to gain a picture of ancient Judaism's *understanding of the law*, one must account for at least the following fact: Ever since the book of Deuteronomy and the public reading of the Torah by Ezra to the jubilant returnees during the Festival of Booths at the beginning of the fourth century BC (cf. Neh. 8), the Torah of Sinai counted as the document of revelation and the rule for life par excellence, which God had graciously given Israel. The pious give thanks and delight in the decrees of this Torah (Ps. 119:7, 14). It reveals the wisdom by which God made the world (cf. Sir. 24). Therefore the Torah encompasses heaven and earth and determines the life of every person down to the details.

According to the rabbinic counting, the Torah contains 613 individual instructions, including 248 positive commands and 365 prohibitions. This corresponds to the rabbinic anthropology, according to which the human being as God's creation consists of 613 bodily members (*Targum Yerushalmi I* on Gen. 1:27 mentions 248 members and 365 sinews or arteries; see below, 289, §2.6.3). Of these 248 positive commands, R. Judah bar R. Simeon is credited with having said, "Two hundred forty-eight positive commands were given to correspond to the two hundred forty-eight parts of the body, each and every one of these parts saying to a man, 'I beg you, perform through me the commandment that applies to me' " (*Pesikta de-Rab Kahana* 12:1, trans. W. G. Braude and I. J. Kapstein [2002[2]], 304). We are therefore presented here with a proper "Torah ontology" (M. Hengel).

Israel's great advantage over the Gentiles is that they know the Torah directly by virtue of the Sinai revelation, whereas the pagan peoples can

discern God's will only indirectly from the works of creation and the stirrings of their conscience regarding good and evil (Wis. 13:1–9; 17:10; cf. also Rom. 2:14). For the Jew the fear of God consists above all in keeping the commandments (Sir. 2:15ff.; 7:29ff.). Sabbath observance and circumcision (especially in the Diaspora) were the signs of Israel's election par excellence.

4.2 All this had been well known and familiar to Jesus ever since his childhood. Nevertheless, after his baptism by John, Jesus taught differently from the way John taught or expected Jesus to teach. He summarized the will of God in the double commandment of love for God and neighbor (see above). He declared himself and his behavior to be the Lord and standard of the Sabbath (Mark 2:28 par.). Like the great prophets before him, he considered cultic piety of little value unless accompanied and confirmed by deeds of justice and mercy (cf. Mark 7:15 par.; Luke 11:42/Matt. 23:23 with Amos 4:4–5; 5:21ff.; Mic. 6:8). He raised sharp protest when the commandment to honor one's parents was undermined and contradicted (Mark 7:6–13 par.). He even attacked the sacrificial practice of the temple, so long as it was practiced without regard to his messianic call to repentance (Mark 11:15ff. par.). In all this Jesus did not want to set aside the law but wanted rather to freshly empower the misunderstood and disregarded will of God. *Jesus appeared on the scene claiming to be the messianic interpreter and perfecter of the law for his disciples*.

4.3 Jesus's messianic claim can be clearly seen in the *antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount* (Matt. 5:21–48). These six antitheses get their name from their typical contrast formula: "You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times. . . . But I say to you. . . ." They are reminiscent of the exegetical debates of Jewish teachers of the law. Scholars have therefore tried to view the antitheses as selections from Jesus's exegetical debates, in which he presents his own opinions over against those of other Torah interpreters all the way back to Moses. However, Jesus's "But I say to you" goes far beyond such merely contrasting opinions, which were conventional in contemporary Jewish exegesis. In four of the six antitheses (cf. Matt. 5:21, 27, 38, 43), what "was spoken" (ἐρρέθη) to the ancients was precisely something commanded by God in the Pentateuch: see Exodus 20:13 (murder), 14 (adultery); 21:23–25 (eye for eye, tooth for tooth, etc.); Leviticus 19:18 (love of neighbor). *Therefore, in these antitheses Jesus is*

setting his own teaching over against the tradition that "the ancients" (οἱ ἀρχαῖοι), the Sinai generation, received through Moses (see above, 94–95, §3.2).

Every Gospel synopsis shows that in terms of transmission history, the six antitheses stem partly from the so-called sayings source (Q) and partly from Matthew's special material. The *Q source* already contained the traditional material for the following antitheses: the third concerning divorce in Matthew 5:31–32 (cf. with Luke 16:18); the fifth concerning revenge in Matthew 5:38–42 (cf. with Luke 6:29–30); and the sixth concerning the love of enemies in Matthew 5:43–48 (cf. with Luke 6:27–28, 32–36). *Matthean special material* is present in the first antithesis concerning murder (Matt. 5:21–26), the second concerning adultery (Matt. 5:27–30), and the fourth concerning the swearing of oaths (Matt. 5:33–37). The *antithetical form* is probably original in these first, second, and fourth antitheses, which then provided the template for the antithetical stylizing of the third, fifth, and sixth antitheses.

The first, second, and sixth antitheses (and not the first, second, and fourth, as we often hear today) involve a *two-step exegetical argument*: the existing commandment of the Mosaic Torah is *deepened and radicalized*; it is thereby brought into a form that truly corresponds to God's will according to Jesus. Not only consummated murder but also anger and insult against a brother or sister fall under God's judgment (Matt. 5:21–26); not only consummated adultery but merely the wink at a married woman (γυνή) inviting adultery fulfills the condition of adultery, prohibited in Exodus 20:14 and Deuteronomy 5:18 (Matt. 5:27–30); the commandment to love one's neighbor in Leviticus 19:18 is not limited to fellow Jews but also includes the Jewish or pagan opponents and persecutors of the Jesus movement (Matt. 5:43–48).

In antiquity religion and the rest of life were much more closely interconnected than they are today. Therefore, even if Jesus's commandment concerning love of enemies originally had in view mainly religious opponents, it still expressed *the greatest expansion of the love commandment conceivable in ancient times*. The popular modern notions that Jesus commanded "merely" the love of religious enemies but not of political ones, or that the question of the justice or injustice of war cannot be answered from Matthew 5:43–48, are therefore not above criticism. Even the plural ἐχθροί speaks against the privatization of the category of the "enemy" (W. Schrage). Moreover, in the Septuagint ἐχθρός is the translation equivalent for enemies as such (U. Luz). We must therefore assume that Jesus commanded his disciples to love *even* their religious opponents, who already in antiquity were the most fanatical and cruel enemies. Opponents at war and ideological enemies are included in Jesus's commandment.

In the teaching of Jesus the will of God is deeper and more comprehensive than can be determined by a mere reference to the literal wording of the Torah. Jesus recognized that the wording of the law can

easily be manipulated and twisted by sinners. But God sees into human hearts and makes a total claim upon a person.

However, in the third, fourth, and fifth antitheses Jesus also sets himself against the literal wording of the Torah, thereby *touching upon the formal authority of the law*. Moses's permission for a man to hand his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away (cf. Matt. 19:7/Mark 10:3–4 with Deut. 24:1, 3) is criticized by Jesus as an ungenerous concession that transgresses the will of the Creator (Matt. 5:31–32; cf. with Mal. 2:16). While only a false oath or perjury in God's name is forbidden according to Leviticus 19:12, according to Jesus even oaths in God's name that make a positive promise or assume a supposedly fulfillable obligation should be avoided in favor of straightforward, truthful speech (Matt. 5:33–37; cf. James 5:12). The law of retribution or *lex talionis* (Exod. 21:23–25) contradicts God's will; the tormentor or persecutor should rather be won over by love (Matt. 5:38–42).

In sum, in the first, second, and sixth antitheses Jesus teaches God's will in connection with the Torah, while in the third, fourth, and fifth he develops God's will in explicit criticism of the Torah. On the whole, we may conclude from Matthew 5:21–48 par. that *Jesus teaches the will of God in such a way that he simultaneously deepens, questions, and supersedes the Torah of Sinai*.

4.4 In Matthew 5:17 Jesus counters the suspicion that he wanted to "abolish" the law and the prophets with the claim that he came instead to "fulfill" them, realizing them in his actions and teaching. R. Bultmann and many other exegetes object that this logion cannot possibly be a genuine saying of Jesus (*Theology of the New Testament*, 1:16). But what we actually encounter here in Matthew 5:17–19 is a summary of the very subject we need to consider, which was also highly provocative to Jesus's pious Jewish contemporaries. Jesus here formulates an instructional saying (כְּלָל, *kəlāl*): He sees himself called by God to interpret and realize the law and the prophets in *his* sense. He does not abolish them with his novel messianic manner of teaching. *Rather, he "fulfills" or realizes them, bringing God's Torah and its interpretation by the prophets to its salvation-historical consummation*.

J. Jeremias has pointed out that Matthew 5:17 is one of the very few Jesus sayings that have found an echo in the Jewish Talmud (*New Testament Theology,* 83–85). Unfortunately, the version of the

saying reproduced in *b. Shabbat* 116b brings us no closer to the original meaning of Matthew 5:17: “I did not come to take away from the law of Moses; rather, I came to add to the law of Moses” (based on another text, the Soncino ed. reads: “I came not to destroy the Law of Moses *nor* to add to the Law of Moses”; see Jeremias, 83–84n7). Behind the Talmud’s version stands a long inner-Jewish history of interpretation that takes Deuteronomy 4:2, 13:1 (ET 12:32) as a starting point (cf. J. Maier, *Jüdische Auseinandersetzung mit dem Christentum der Antike* [1982], 88–93). In order to interpret Matthew 5:17 correctly, we must start from Matthew’s version. In the Septuagint Matthew’s verb “to fulfill,” *πληρόω*, is a common translation of the Hebrew verbs מלא and תמם; in the New Testament it is used for the fulfillment of the commandments (e.g., Rom. 8:4; 13:8; Gal. 5:14) and of the prophecies of Scripture (Luke 24:44; John 17:12; 18:9; 19:24; James 2:23). In the Gospel of Matthew, which is the determinative macro-context of the saying, *πληρόω* is used exclusively for the fulfillment of the Scripture and of God’s instructions in Jesus’s life and behavior (cf. Matt. 3:15; 5:17; and the “fulfillment citations” in Matthew 1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; etc.). U. Luz therefore calls *πληρόω* “an exclusively christological verb” (*Matthew 1–7* [2007], 217). Nevertheless, the use of Matthew’s favorite verb *πληρόω* in Matthew 5:17 does not necessarily mean that Matthew invented the saying. It could very well be an old Jesus saying that Matthew has incorporated.

The following two verses, Matthew 5:18–19, are usually understood as secondary, strictly Jewish Christian formulations that obligate readers to the minute keeping of all the individual precepts of the Torah, thus contradicting the following antitheses of Jesus. But R. Deines has recently found a way of understanding these two verses in an original Jesuanic sense. The traditional reference (cf. RSV) to the “iota” (*ἰῶτα*, יוֹד) and the “dot” (*κεραία*, כְּרָעָא) that will not pass from the law refers in good rabbinic fashion to the smallest “letter” and “stroke of a letter” (NRSV) in the Hebrew Bible, so that verse 18 says: The Torah will remain unchanged until it has found its proper fulfillment through Jesus and his way and teaching. For Matthew the concluding expression “until all is accomplished” (*ἕως ἄν πάντα γένηται*) points beyond Jesus’s earthly life to his parousia. Verse 19 should be interpreted, according to Deines, in the light of Matthew 11:30. It refers to the “light” (Matt. 11:30), yet at the same time “weighty” (cf. Matt. 23:23) commands of Jesus that the Pharisees and scribes tended to neglect. Despite this devaluation, Jesus’s disciples should uphold his commandments and pass them on to others.

5 We therefore stand before an extraordinarily important (and therefore controversial) finding for biblical theology: from the perspective of Matthew 5:17–19, *Jesus appears as the messianic perfecter and completer of the Sinai Torah (as well as the Prophets)*. Jesus did not teach as Moses taught; in him one “greater than Moses” is on the scene (to borrow a phrase from Matt. 12:6, 41–42). In contrast to the interpretation of the law by the scribes and Pharisees, the Torah taught by Jesus is an “easy yoke” (*ζυγὸς χρηστός*) and a “light burden” (*φορτίον ἐλαφρόν*) (Matt. 11:30). Jesus lays this upon people so that by walking in the “way of righteousness” (Matt. 21:32) that his teaching points out, they can find “rest for their souls” before God (Matt. 11:28–30; cf. Jer. 6:16).

Jesus’s teaching about the law is of great importance for biblical theology:

5.1 In Galatians 6:2 (ὁ νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ) and 1 Corinthians 9:21 (ἔννομος Χριστοῦ), Paul speaks of the "law (Torah) of Christ" (cf. also Rom. 8:2). James, moreover, writes of "the perfect law of liberty" (1:25). Both mean the teaching of God's will as established by Jesus. Together with the Gospel of Matthew, Paul and the Letter of James show that *early Christianity indeed saw Jesus as (among other things) the messianic teacher of the law*.

5.2 To be sure, Jesus's teaching about the law also encountered massive opposition, especially from some Pharisees and rabbis. Following the dominant trend of the early Jewish understanding of the law (see above, 118–19, §4.1), they did not expect in the messianic age any new Torah, but only "the complete and final understanding of the existing Torah" (P. Schäfer, "Die Torah der messianischen Zeit," 205). According to the Jewish future expectation, "God will not bring a new Torah; rather he stands, as does the Messiah, within the living and continuing process of the transmission and interpretation of the Torah of Sinai, even in the end time" (ibid., 206–7). From this standpoint Jesus's dictum of Matthew 5:17 and his criticism of the Torah appear as severe religious offenses. The high priests and Sadducees reached the same conclusion when Jesus in his temple action (Mark 11:15–17 par.) and temple saying (Mark 14:58 par.) publicly attacked the cultic order of the Jerusalem temple prescribed by the Torah. For this Jesus's opponents condemned him to death as a seducer toward false doctrine and a messianic pretender according to Deuteronomy 13:7–12 (ET 13:6–11), 17:8–13, and 18:9–22 (see below, 173–74). *It was precisely Jesus's teaching about the law that contributed substantially to the fatal conflict between him and the Jewish leaders.*

5.3 *However, from the Scriptures one could (and can) come to another conclusion concerning Jesus's teaching about the law*. In Ezekiel 20:25–26, Ezekiel dares to say that Israel received some statutes from God in the wilderness that were "not good": "Moreover I gave them statutes (חֻקִּים) that were not good and ordinances (מִשְׁפָּטִים) by which they could not live. I defiled them through their very gifts, in their offering up all their firstborn, in order that I might horrify them, so that they might know that I am the LORD" (Ezek. 20:25–26).

However these statements are to be interpreted in detail, they show that for the prophet-priest Ezekiel, the existing Torah points beyond itself to a new and complete revelation of the law that will

allow Israel to have life before God rather than to be excluded from it. According to K. Koch (*TRE* 13:46), "a corresponding prophecy is found in Jeremiah's (secondary) saying in Jeremiah 31:31–34 about the new covenant that will implant the divine Torah into human understanding":

> [31]The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. [32]It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. [33]But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. [34]No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more. (Jer. 31:31–34)

What is decisively new in this new "obligation" (or covenant) is that God's instruction no longer stands over against the people written on tablets (cf. Exod. 24:12; 34:1, 4); it will be written on their hearts. The people's sins are forgiven, and the Torah becomes their inner possession from God. The law of Sinai thereby acquires an ontologically new revelatory form and quality.

According to Psalm 50:2–3, God reveals himself to sinners from Zion with his new instruction. Isaiah 2:2–4 and Micah 4:1–3 announce that in the end time, "instruction" (תּוֹרָה) will go forth from Zion as the highest of the mountains to all people, making them capable of peace. If one combines these passages with Jeremiah 31:31–34 in the context of biblical theology, then one can speak with H. Gese of the eschatological "Zion Torah" corresponding to the Sinai Torah. It is new in the sense that in it the holy will of the one God who created the world and chose Israel as his own people no longer appears provisionally, as in the Torah of Moses, but ontologically complete.

5.4 If one considers Jesus's preaching about the will of God in the light of this conception of the "Zion Torah" and recalls that in his Last (Passover) Supper Jesus inducted the Twelve, as representatives of the end-time Israel, into fellowship with God in the new "covenant" corresponding to the Sinai covenant and characterized by the forgiveness of sins (Mark 14:22–25 par. Matt. 26:26–29; Luke 22:15–20), then one can say that *in Jesus's new teaching of the will of God, the "Zion Torah" has arrived*. Even if one prefers to avoid the artificial term "Zion Torah" which has been disputed in recent scholarship (cf. H. Räisänen, "Zion Torah and Biblical Theology"), H. Gese is correct when he writes: "The Torah of Jesus is more than a simple and questionable freedom from Torah; it is the foundation of complete and perfect *shalom*, in which God's holiness penetrates the furthest depths of the world" ("The Law," 88).

From a biblical-theological perspective, therefore, Paul and James are perfectly correct when they understand Jesus's teaching of the will of God as the "Torah of Christ" (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21) or as the "perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25).

6 Jesus summarized the *will of God* in the twofold commandment of love for God and neighbor and did not hesitate to criticize and reinterpret the Torah of Sinai by this standard. Upon those burdened by the Pharisaic interpretation of the law he laid the “easy” yoke of his instruction (Matt. 11:30), and in the name of his heavenly father he freshly welcomed the “poor” (Isa. 61:1–2) into fellowship with God. What unifies this obligation of believers to do God’s will and this revival of God’s grace?

According to the Lord’s Prayer, Yahweh is the “Abba,” and there is no contradiction between his holiness and fatherly condescension and his children’s obligation to comply with his will (including mutual forgiveness). The same unity appears in Jesus’s teaching and actions: as the messianic Son of Man sent by God, he is Savior and Lord in one person. Jesus teaches his disciples to pray the Lord’s Prayer and to live by it. In Jesus’s presence (through the Spirit), in shared discipleship, and in the common life in Jesus’s family they experience God’s holy love as liberation and obligation at once, learning in prayer to respond to both these realities obediently. *The unity of Jesus’s acceptance of the “poor” and his teaching concerning the will of God lies in the fact that both are equally an expression of grace*. But this grace is experienced as such only by those who heed Jesus’s call to repentance and lead a new life, praying the Lord’s Prayer at his side. In Jesus’s proclamation of the βασιλεία, doctrine and life belong inseparably together.

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CHAPTER 9

The Messianic Son of Man: Jesus's Claim to Deity

Jesus's public ministry and proclamation were provocative even in his own day, and novel enough to raise questions among friend and foe alike about who this man really was (cf. Mark 8:27–30 par.; Matt. 11:2–3/Luke 7:18–19; Mark 11:27–33 par.). Historically this is an unavoidable question, and therefore it is also necessary theologically to consider the much-discussed question of Jesus's personal claim to deity.

1 If one approaches Jesus as his contemporaries did, from the perspective of the Old Testament and early Judaism, then there are several possible ways of understanding him. Mark 8:27–30 par. records that people could see Jesus as John the Baptist risen from the dead after his martyrdom, as the prophet Elijah who was to come again before the final judgment (cf. Mal. 3:23 [ET 4:5]), as one of the prophets of the end times (see above, 72), or as the Messiah. The same tendency is evident in the Baptist's question of whether Jesus was the expected "coming one," ὁ ἐρχόμενος (Matt. 11:2–3 par.). The proclamation of Jesus Christ in Acts 10:34–43, which provides the framework for our theological work (see above, 61–62), looks back to the story of Jesus from Easter. It stresses that in Jesus's fate God's word of promise has become historical reality and presents Jesus as the one anointed with the Holy Spirit, that is, as Lord and Messiah (cf. Acts 2:36).

If one works in both directions, moving forward from the Old Testament and early Judaism as well as backward from the post-Easter proclamation about Christ, the *theological significance* of the question about Jesus's mission consciousness becomes clear. *The answer to this question determines the historical justification of the early Christian gospel proclamation. This speaks of Jesus as the "only-begotten" Son of God and Messiah and testifies that the one God who created the world and chose Israel as his own people has made atonement in and through Jesus for the salvation of all people even before they came to faith* (cf. Rom. 5:6–8).

2 The question of Jesus's claim to messianic authority has been answered in extremely different ways and remains controversial today. Following W. Wrede, R. Bultmann and H. Braun hold that the earthly Jesus

lived merely as a rabbi and end-time prophet and was designated Messiah and Lord only after Easter. At the other end of the spectrum, scholars including O. Betz, L. Goppelt, J. Jeremias, M. Hengel, and A. M. Schwemer follow A. Schlatter by assuming that Jesus knew himself to be the Messiah already during his earthly life and that, together with the Twelve, he gathered the end-time people of God. A third group of researchers, including H. Conzelmann, G. Bornkamm, E. Käsemann, E. Lohse, and F. Hahn, take a middle position. They posit a unique relationship with God and a virtually messianic self-consciousness of the earthly Jesus, but nevertheless think that all christological titles applied to Jesus in the Synoptics, the early Christian kerygma, and the Gospel of John are of post-Easter origin. These highly diverse positions point to great aporias in research. They can be held together theologically only as long as the exegetes agree that Jesus's message and destiny represent a historically unique and unrepeatable act of God, deciding between salvation and disaster for all people, Jews and Gentiles.

3 If we wish to make progress, we will do well to follow E. Schweizer's way of thinking. In his 1968 book on Christology, *Jesus* (ET 1971), he placed the question of Jesus's proclamation and divine consciousness with good reason under the heading "Jesus: The Man Who Fits No Formula" (p. 13; German: "Jesus, the Man Who Bursts All Schemes," p. 18). It can in fact be shown that Jesus saw himself as God's representative on earth and that he simultaneously lived as a truly obedient human being before God, even dying on a cross. Yet he did so in a completely novel way over against the Old Testament–Jewish expectation of the Son of Man and Messiah. Among Roman Catholic exegetes, a very similar view is held for example by H. Merklein. He assumes that while Jesus lacked a "titular self-understanding," he possessed a "*unique, immediate relationship with God*." Merklein adds that "in the unique event (also when considered from the history of religion) that Jesus proclaims, none of the traditional messianic or eschatological titles can adequately express the specific role of Jesus" ("Jesus, Künder des Reiches Gottes," 150, 151). In 1987 Schweizer decided to speak about Jesus with E. Jüngel as the "parable of God" (see above, 87), while Merklein says that Jesus was "not only the proclaimer but the representative of the kingdom of God" (ibid., 152). This language also makes good sense. For Jesus's word and

work in fact reveal who God is for people, and what people are for and before God.

3.1 The approach of Schweizer and Merklein can be made exegetically more precise and the question of Jesus's divine consciousness can also be answered historically if we once again follow our earlier thesis (see above, 75; 78–79, §§6.3–4): *As the completely obedient "Son," Jesus identified himself with the "stronger one" heralded by John the Baptist, the messianic Son of Man and Judge of the World*.

This view is unavoidable if we follow the *narrative plan* of the Synoptic Gospels. After Jesus's baptism by John and his temptation, the "initial choosing of the ways" (F. Neugebauer), the Synoptics present him as beginning his public ministry in Galilee. Not until after Peter's confession in Caesarea Philippi does Jesus make his way to Jerusalem to seek his decisive moment. After his "final choosing of his way" in Gethsemane and his confession before the Sanhedrin, Jesus meets his death on the cross (cf. Mark 15:24ff. par.). As Jesus makes his way from Galilee to Jerusalem, Jewish opposition to him grows with his messianic claim. This claim then becomes the scarlet thread running through the report of his final ministry in Jerusalem and his passion (Mark 11:1–16:8). The Gospel narrative is therefore held together by the confession of Jesus as the messianic Son of God. In our view this confession is in keeping with historical reality: *Jesus lived, ministered, and suffered as the very Christ that Christian faith confesses him to be*.

3.2 If one examines the first three titles applied to Jesus in Mark 8:27–30—John the Baptist; Elijah; one of the prophets—it quickly becomes apparent that he transcends them.

3.2.1 It is understandable that people found in Jesus, the "master student" of John the Baptist, the fresh embodiment of the spirit and voice of the Baptist whom Herod Antipas had executed. Nevertheless, Matthew 11:2–6/Luke 7:18–23 as well as Jesus's own testimony about the Baptist in Matthew 11:7–19/Luke 7:24–35 document that *Jesus was more than the Baptist* (see above, 77–80, §6).

3.2.2 Although his arrival on the scene had unmistakable prophetic features (cf. Luke 13:33), Jesus also transcends the designations "Elijah" and "one of the prophets." To be sure, Jesus called his disciples to follow him as Elijah had called Elisha (cf. 1 Kings 19:19–21), and he made the same radical demand that they renounce all previous ties (cf. Mark 1:16–20 par.; Luke 9:59–62/Matt. 8:21–22; Mark 8:34 par.) in favor of fellowship with the homeless Son of Man (Luke 9:58/Matt. 8:20). Jesus applied the prophetic promise of Isaiah 61:1–3 to himself and his ministry (cf. Luke 4:16–30; Matt. 11:2–6 par.), and he even saw his death as an analogy to the death of the prophets (cf. Luke 13:31–33). Nevertheless, his claim far

exceeds that of an eschatological prophet as these prophets used to appear in the first century in Palestine (see above, 72). The clearest sign of this is Jesus's choosing of the twelve disciples, by which he laid claim to the end-time people of the twelve tribes (see above, 97, §4). Jesus saw John the Baptist as the returning "Elijah" (Matt. 11:14), yet *Jesus himself with his own call to repentance was "more than Jonah"* (Matt. 12:41). In the transfiguration scene in Mark 9:7 par., Jesus's disciples are commanded to "listen to him"; this suggests that Jesus is the messianic prophet of Deuteronomy 18:15 to whom the people must also "listen" (cf. Acts 7:37).

3.2.3 When we recall that Jesus was also not a Jewish rabbi educated in a rabbinic house of instruction, and that as a teacher of the alternative wisdom God had given him (Matt. 11:25–30 par.) he was "more than Solomon" (Luke 11:31/Matt. 12:42) (see above, 92–94, §2), then the only remaining possibility is to understand Jesus's mission *messianically* (cf. Mark 8:29 par.).

4 As we have already seen, a whole line of exegetes, up to the present, holds that all christological titles applied to Jesus in the Gospels, including Messiah, Son of Man, Son of God, etc., originated only after Easter.

Thus E. Käsemann writes: "I consider all passages in which any kind of Messianic predicate [Translator's note: ET renders incorrectly: 'Messianic *prediction*'; the German *Messiasprädikat* here refers to a messianic *title* predicated of Jesus] occurs to be kerygma shaped by the community" ("Das Problem des historischen Jesus," 211 = "The Problem of the Historical Jesus," 43). G. Bornkamm holds the same view in his book on Jesus (*Jesus of Nazareth* [1960], 226–31), while E. Lohse, in his *Grundriss der neutestamentlichen Theologie*, says: "Jesus did not apply any of the messianic titles of Judaism to himself, but he spoke and acted with incomparable authority" (43).

Three historical considerations tell against this view: (1) A Jesus who avoided any self-designation is a historically unreal abstraction, which has only grown up out of the aporias of current Gospel research. This view assumes that despite his highly conspicuous and provocative behavior, Jesus placed no value on being understood by his contemporaries, not even by his own disciples. (2) The synoptic tradition rests upon a continuum of traditions and persons stretching from the circle of Jesus's disciples to the early Jerusalem church, and from the church to the "teaching of the apostles" (Acts 2:42) which was foundational to the Gospels (see above, 55–58, §2.2). Therefore the synoptic presentation of Jesus cannot be rejected outright as unreliable. (3) *This blanket criticism takes the easy way out with the messianic texts and the Son of Man sayings*. Both general

historical considerations and the findings of the synoptic tradition speak against this widespread thesis of a "lack of a titular self-understanding with Jesus" (H. Merklein).

5 We have seen that Jesus was more than a Jewish teacher of the law and wisdom, but also more than an eschatological prophet or a student of John the Baptist. It remains to examine *Peter's confession* in Mark 8:29 par., "You are the Christ" (σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστός), and to relate this to Jesus's own confession in Mark 14:61–62 par.

In order to understand Peter's confession and the self-confession of Jesus, we must first understand how a claim that Jesus is the Messiah could arise in the circle of Jesus's followers and be opposed by his enemies.

5.1 According to the messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, the Messiah is above all the royal Davidide sent by God. As the bearer of the wisdom, righteousness, and power of God, he is supposed to establish the time of salvation for Israel (cf. Isa. 9:1–6 [ET 9:2–7]; 11:1–8; Ps. 72; etc.). His origin goes back to prehistory (Mic. 5:1 [ET 5:2]), and he is promised to stand before God in the special relationship of the "Son" (2 Sam. 7:14; Pss. 2:7; 89:27 [ET 89:26]). 2 Samuel 7:10–14 and Psalms 1:1, 2:1–2 are interpreted messianically in 4Q174 (4QFlor) and applied to the "branch of David" (4Q174 frag. 1 I, 21, 2, line 11, *DSSSE* 353), while in 1Q28a 2:12, 14, 20 he is called "the Messiah of Israel." *The expectation of the Davidic Messiah was current in early Judaism and had full-blown national and political implications.* According to the *Psalms of Solomon* (first century BC), the Messiah will gather the people of Israel, redeem them from foreign domination by the Gentiles, purify them, and rule over them in righteousness as God's people (*Pss. Sol.* 17 and 18). Very similarly it says in the fourteenth of the Eighteen Benedictions (according to the older Palestinian recension): "Be merciful, Lord our God, with thy great mercies, to Israel thy people and to Jerusalem thy city; and to Zion, the dwelling-place of thy glory; and to thy Temple and thy habitation; and to the kingship of the house of David, thy righteous Messiah. Blessed art thou, Lord, God of David, who buildest Jerusalem" (trans. Schürer, *HJP*^{2} 2:461).

Finally, *4 Ezra* 13 speaks of the work of the Messiah. The *filius dei* (son of God) will walk atop Mount Zion in the end time, execute judgment, gather the people of the twelve tribes, and protect them forevermore.

5.2 With respect to this dominant form of the messianic expectation, one must however not forget that *the picture of the Messiah in the Old Testament and early Judaism was extremely diverse*. Zechariah 9:9–10 presents the Messiah as the humble prince of peace, whereas in Zechariah 12:10 he appears as the martyr who has fallen in the end-time battle. Moreover, the term “anointed one” (מָשִׁיחַ, *mašîaḥ*, χριστός) is not reserved for the Davidide alone. Already in Isaiah 45:1 the Persian king *Cyrus* is called Yahweh’s “anointed,” and according to 1 Kings 19:16, Isaiah 61:1–2, Sirach 48:8, and CD 2:12, Elijah and other *prophets* counted as anointed ones. The same is true according to Leviticus 4:3, 5, 16 and Sirach 45:15 of the high priest. Therefore, in a few early Jewish texts the messianic high priest or the *Messiah from the house of Aaron* enters beside the Davidic Messiah. He appears partly alone (*T. Levi* 18), partly together with the Davidic Messiah (1QS 9:11; 1Q28a 2:12, 20; CD 20:1). According to the 4Q540–541 *Aramaic Apocryphon of Levi*, a priestly figure (cf. 4Q541 frag. 24 II, 5), presumably an anointed one, can even display traces of a suffering figure from Isaiah 53 (cf. M. Hengel with D. P. Bailey, “The Effective History of Isaiah 53 in the Pre-Christian Period,” 106–18, below, chap. 10 bibliography). In *11QMelchizedek* (11Q13) Isaiah’s messianic language is applied to Melchizedek as the future heavenly redeemer (cf. *DSSSE* 1206–9). Melchizedek is “the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation,” etc., from Isaiah 52:7 (11Q13 2:15–16, 18–19; cf. 2:23). He is also the one who is “to proclaim liberty to the captives” from Isaiah 61:1 (11Q13 2:4, 6) and “to comfort all who mourn” from Isaiah 61:2 (11Q13 2:19–20). Nevertheless, the author’s Scripture proofs for Melchizedek are mixed, so that the reference to Melchizedek as an “anointed one” comes not from Isaiah (cf. 61:1, “The spirit of the Lord . . . has *anointed* me”), but from Daniel (Dan. 9:26, cf. 11Q13 2:18). In *1 Enoch* the *Son of Man* appears as the anointed one (48:10; 52:4) and simultaneously as the chosen Servant (45:3–4; 49:2; 61:5, 8). According to *1 Enoch* 61:8, 62:2, he is set upon the end-time judgment throne by God in keeping with Psalm 110:1 and is given the Spirit of truth and righteousness (from Isa. 11:1–5). His appearance will astonish the powerful upon earth (cf. *1 En.* 46:4; 62:3; 63:11 with Isa. 52:15). Finally, the late Armenian text of *Testament of Benjamin* 3:8 as well as rabbinic texts speak of the *Messiah ben Joseph* who is warlike and dies for the godless.

According to M. Karrer, *Der Gesalbte*, "The Anointed" (1991), the early Christian confession "Christ died," *Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν* (1 Cor. 15:3), first arose as an "immediate response to the death of Jesus" (406). It is indebted to a specific early Jewish idea of anointing centered on the Jerusalem temple cult and the holy of holies: "In the popular consciousness the Holy of Holies was until its destruction in AD 70 the anointed place, 'the anointed thing' *par excellence*: *τὸ χριστόν* (Dan. 9:26b LXX)" (176; cf. also 161n84). Jesus as the Christ supposedly takes the place of the holy of holies in early Christianity from Easter onward: "As God's sphere of blessing radiated from the Holy of Holies according to the inherited belief about the cult, so now it radiates in the new faith experience from Jesus, the Anointed One who is the focus of Christian faith" (406). Nevertheless, three considerations tell against Karrer's view: (1) The general abstract equation of Jesus Christ with the innermost space of the sanctuary, the holy of holies, is unknown in early Christianity; passages such as Mark 15:38 par., Romans 3:25, Hebrews 9:1–28, and John 2:18–22 formulate the matter differently and in more detail. (2) According to general Greek usage, the substantive *τὸ χριστόν* denotes an "ointment" (W. Grundmann, *TDNT* 9:495, §2). It is therefore no accident that *τὸ χριστόν* is never used as a technical term for the anointed holy of holies in early Jewish and Christian literature. (3) In the LXX or Old Greek version of Daniel 9:26, the genitive *μετὰ τοῦ χριστοῦ* on which Karrer builds his case is not the neuter *τὸ χριστόν* as he supposes (161n84; 176 with n. 15; cf. *TDNT* 9:510n74), but rather the masculine *ὁ χριστός* (the gen. *χριστοῦ* can formally be either gender). Against Karrer, the whole phrase *βασιλεία ἐθνῶν φθερεῖ τὴν πόλιν καὶ τὸ ἅγιον μετὰ τοῦ χριστοῦ* (Dan. 9:26 LXX) concludes with a reference to an anointed *person*, not an anointed *thing* such as the temple: "A kingdom (NETS: king) of the Gentiles will destroy the city and the Holy Place [i.e., the temple] *along with* (*μετά*) *the anointed one*," where the "anointed one" (*χριστός*) refers to the Messiah or the messianic high priest. The LXX version arrives at this rendering not by following the MT vocalization עַם נָגִיד, which makes the Gentile prince and his people into the destroyers, "The city and the sanctuary *they* (lit. 'it,' sg.) will destroy, [namely] *the people* (עַם, sg.) of the (Gentile) prince (נָגִיד:)," but rather by revocalizing עַם as עִם, "with," so that the prince is no longer the destroyer but is destroyed *along with* the temple: "The city and the sanctuary *it* (the Gentile kingdom) or *he* (the Gentile king) will destroy *along with* (עִם = *μετά*) the (Jewish) prince (נָגִיד)" (see *BHS* apparatus at Dan. 9:26). The LXX then interprets this "destroyed" prince as the Messiah, *μετὰ τοῦ χριστοῦ*, "*with* the Messiah," while Theodotion's later Greek version interprets him as a ruler, *σὺν τῷ ἡγουμένῳ*, "*with* the ruler." Therefore Karrer's claim that the LXX's *μετὰ τοῦ χριστοῦ* refers to the temple cannot be supported either exegetically or philologically and tradition-historically. In the meantime he has slightly modified his thesis (cf. M. Karrer, *Jesus Christus im Neuen Testament*, 136–37).

5.3 The question whether messianic expectations could be associated with Jesus's ministry is to be answered in the affirmative. Jesus's saving deeds for "the poor," including his table fellowship and healing miracles, already bore messianic traits from Isaiah 61:1–2. But above all, the claim Jesus made upon the people of the twelve tribes by choosing the twelve disciples, his demonstrative entrance into Jerusalem (Mark 11:1–10 par.), and his action in the temple (see above, 97–98, §4.5) must have appeared as messianic signs not only to Jesus's disciples but also to his Jewish contemporaries. Jesus's Davidic descent (see above, 66, §3), his ministry as "messianic teacher of wisdom" (see above, 92–94, §2), and his sovereign

interpretation of the Torah of Sinai (see above, 118–22, §4) also come together with this. *It therefore lay historically near at hand to see Jesus as the Messiah or to suspect him of messianic claims.* The title on the cross (Mark 15:26 par.), which alluded critically to Jesus's kingship and was formulated in a Roman rather than Christian manner, and the admission of the disciples on the road to Emmaus after Jesus's crucifixion that they had hoped that Jesus would "redeem" Israel (Luke 24:21) provide the documentation that Jesus was in fact seen this way.

5.4 Examining Peter's confession in *Mark 8:27–33 par.* against the background of these findings yields important results.

From a literary standpoint the text is composed of three elements: (1) the actual confession scene, which has a precise geographic location and concludes with a command of silence (vv. 27–30). (2) Jesus's passion prediction, beginning with "And he began" (*καὶ ἤρξατο*) and concluding with "And he was stating the matter plainly" (*καὶ παρρησίᾳ τὸν λόγον ἐλάλει*) (vv. 31–32a). (3) Peter's rebuke of Jesus and its sharp rebuttal by Jesus (vv. 32b–33).

The command of silence in Mark 8:30 makes good historical sense in the context of the story. Here the verb *ἐπιτιμάω* means (as in Mark 3:12) to "command" or "sternly order," whereas in verses 32–33 it is to be translated "rebuke" (cf. Mark 4:39; 9:25). But judging by this word choice in verse 30 and comparing with Mark 9:9, where a similar command of silence is given at the transfiguration (though using a different verb, *διαστέλλω*), verse 30 could also be a remark first added redactionally by the Evangelist. The introductory phrase in verse 31, "And he began to teach" (*καὶ ἤρξατο διδάσκειν*), is one of Mark's favorite expressions (cf. 4:1; 6:2, 34). However, *παρρησίᾳ* ("plainly, openly") and *προσλαμβάνω* ("to take aside") in verse 32 occur only here in the Gospel of Mark. The mention of "his disciples," *οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ*, in verse 33 is common in Mark (cf. 2:15, 16, 23; 3:7, 9, etc.), whereas the equation of Peter with Satan is extraordinary in both language and content. Assuming that the Evangelist has not already taken over verses 27–33 as a unit but has created the context himself, the decisive connecting thread lies between verse 30 and verse 31, with verses 32–33 securely tied to verse 31. A direct connection between verse 33 and verse 29 can be established only by artificially and violently removing verses 30–32 from the context (so, e.g., E. Dinkler, "Petrusbekenntnis und Satanswort," in idem, *Signum Crucis* [1967], 283–312, or F. Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology*, 223–28).

None of the three compositional elements of this text originates first and foremost from the reflection of the church. The text rather suggests that people's opinions about Jesus were divided and that the disciples nourished the hope that Jesus was the Messiah. Peter was their spokesman. His viewpoint was not simply rejected by Jesus nor rebuked as a tempting request (cf. v. 33). It was rather accepted, but subjected to the command of silence. Jesus apparently did not put any stock in being prematurely and publicly hailed as the Messiah in order to direct the people's widespread political hopes of redemption to himself. He therefore immediately supplemented Peter's confession by his first lesson to the disciples about his coming suffering. This instruction as well should not be judged indiscriminately as a secondary "passion summary." Although Mark 8:31 is clearly intended to have a literary effect as the first passion prediction in Mark's Gospel, the statement as such need not fall historically by the wayside. It is rather to be judged (from the perspective of Mark 9:31) as historically authentic at its core (see below, 138–40, §7.3.2). Peter's rebuke of Jesus is directed against this passion prediction, and Jesus's exceptionally sharply formulated (and therefore also pre-

Easter) counterrebuke is directed against Peter's unwillingness to face up to this teaching about Jesus's passion (and not against his confession of Jesus as Messiah).

The text as a whole leads to a clear result that was highly unusual in the realm of Jewish tradition: *According to Mark 8:27–33, Jesus did not wish to be publicly hailed as the Messiah by his disciples; he wanted to be the Messiah only as the suffering Son of Man.* Jesus's attitude transcended the current early Jewish picture of the Messiah as well as the expectation of the Son of Man that the Baptist had placed upon him. Early Judaism merely hinted at the suffering of the Messiah in a few texts (Zech. 12:10; 4Q540–541; *T. Benj.* 3:8; see above) and knew nothing of a suffering Son of Man. E. Schweizer's observation that Jesus "bursts all schemes" (*Jesus Christus im vielfältigen Zeugnis des Neuen Testaments*, 18) also holds true for the titles Messiah and Son of Man, which can be applied to Jesus only with modification.

5.5 In *Matthew 16:13–20*, the Matthean parallel to Mark 8:27–30, Peter's confession is supplemented in two ways. In verse 16 Jesus "the Christ" (ὁ χριστός) is further identified as ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος, "the son of the living God" (see below). Verses 17–18 add the famous saying about Peter as the rock from Matthew's special material: "And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it'" (Matt. 16:17–18).

These verses can easily be translated back into Aramaic. The formulations have close parallels in the Qumran texts: the Teacher of Righteousness was installed "to found the congregation" (4Q171 [4QPsalms Pesher[a]] 3:16, *DSSSE* 345); similar expressions include "you [God] place the foundation upon rock" (1QH 14:25–27, *DSSSE* 177) and the plea "establish for them a rock from of old" (4Q160 [4QVisSam] frags. 3–5 II, 3, *DSSSE* 313). In this sense Matthew 16:18 also resembles Isaiah 51:1–2, "Look to the rock from which you were hewn. . . . Look to Abraham." Peter is given the name Cephas (from the Aramaic כֵּיפָא, "rock"). He is the foundation stone of Jesus's "church" (ἐκκλησία). The Semitic equivalent for ἐκκλησία is probably קָהָל (*qāhāl*), "assembly, convocation, congregation," though it could also be עֵדָה (*ʿēdâ*), denoting the assembly or "cultic congregation." The saying speaks of the structure of the messianic people of God to which Jesus saw himself called and for which Peter was supposed to play his literally foundational role. After Easter Matthew 16:17–19 was applied to the founding of the early church through this "rock man," Cephas (cf. 1 Cor. 15:5). The future tense "*I will build* (οἰκοδομήσω) my church" points beyond Jesus's lifetime but does not exceed the bounds of Jesus's own imminent expectation of the future (see below, 141–43, §7.3.3). Linguistically and materially there is no reason to deny Jesus this logion.

6 A complement to Peter's confession is found in *Jesus's own confession of himself as Messiah in Mark 14:61–62 par.* In his judicial hearing before the Sanhedrin, Jesus is asked by Caiaphas the high priest whether he is ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ, "the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One." This Jesus affirms, expanding as follows:

> ἐγώ εἰμι, καὶ ὄψεσθε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ δεξιῶν καθήμενον τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ ἐρχόμενον μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.

> "I am; and 'you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power' [= God] and 'coming with the clouds of heaven.'" (Mark 14:62 NRSV)

As the NRSV indicates by its use of quotation marks, Jesus's answer involves literal borrowing from the Old Testament. In his decisive hour before the Jewish authorities, Jesus confessed his messianic mission and announced to them that they would soon have to answer to him as the Son of Man and Judge of the World whom God will exalt to his right hand according to Psalm 110:1 and who will return with the clouds of heaven according to Daniel 7:13. This clear appropriation of divine prerogatives earned Jesus the accusation of blasphemy and ultimately cost him his life.

6.1 Before we investigate Jesus's answer to the Sanhedrin in more detail, we must first assess the *historical value of Mark 14:61–62 par.* This is usually denied today. Hence E. Lohse writes: "The possibility that the Jewish high priest should have spoken in one breath of the Messiah and the Son of God can be excluded in view of the great restraint that Judaism exercised regarding the title Son of God. On the other hand the formulations of both the high priest's question and Jesus's answer, which combine the two scriptural sayings from Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13, are completely understandable from the confession of the Christian church" (*Grundriss der neutestamentlichen Theologie* [1989^4], 45).

H. Conzelmann and A. Lindemann express a very similar opinion about Mark 14:61–62 in their workbook *Interpreting the New Testament*: "It is . . . clear that this scene is devoid of a historical core, for the presentation of the trial is altogether determined christologically. The question of the high priest presupposes that the designations Messiah and Son of God are ultimately identical—a linguistic usage that is foreign to Judaism. The passage Mk 14:61f. was very obviously drawn up as a compendium of the community's Christology; it is intended to show that all of the messianic titles—Messiah, Son of God, Son of man—are of equal value" (*Interpreting the New Testament* [1988], 323–24).

On the other hand, A. Strobel, in his study *Die Stunde der Wahrheit* (1980), emphasizes the conspicuous congruence of Mark 14:61–62 with Jewish formulations. About 14:62 he writes: "We stand before a tradition that is peculiar to its core. Its content, which is probably largely accurate, is

Jesus’s own expectation of exaltation, expressed even before the highest court of the Jewish people. At issue here is the historical core of Jesus’s expectation and mission” (75).

6.1.1 The following considerations make it necessary to temper the wholesale criticism of Mark 14:61–62: (1) Jesus’s public ministry, including his entrance into Jerusalem and his temple action, must have awakened messianic expectations (see above). Therefore the Sanhedrin could indeed have discussed whether and how to hand over Jesus as a pseudomessiah. (2) Early Jewish texts like 11Q13 (11QMelch), *1 Enoch* 45–50, 61–64, and *4 Ezra* 13 show that messianic titles were used not exclusively but functionally and *cumulatively* in early Judaism (so already R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 52–53). (3) According to 2 Samuel 7:14 and Psalms 2:7 and 89:27–28 (ET 89:26–27), the Davidic Messiah stands over against Yahweh as his “Son.” Already from this perspective the accumulation of titles in Mark 14:61–62 appears completely plausible in the context of early Judaism. The publication of the fragments of the Aramaic Daniel Apocalypse 4Q246 (*4QAramaic Apocalypse*) has led still further. In the interpretation of a text from Daniel the designations “son of God” (ברה די אל) and “son of the Most High” (בר אליון) occur in parallel in a single line and applied to a single ruler figure with divine claim (4Q246 2:1, *DSSSE* 494). This figure has been identified with the end-time opponent of God (cf. 4Q175 [4QTest] 23–30 with *Did.* 16:4), but it is even better to relate him to the Son of Man of Daniel 7:13. The designations “son of God” (cf. Matt. 16:16) and “son of the Most High” and their relationship to the book of Daniel are therefore attested in these original Essene texts of the pre-Christian period; people from that time could have used such ideas to expose Jesus as a pseudomessiah. (4) From the Talmud it can be seen that well into the third century AD the rabbis debated the manner of the Messiah’s coming. Without recognizable Christian influence, they inquired whether the Messiah would come majestically with the clouds of heaven according to Daniel 7:13, or humbly on a donkey according to Zechariah 9:9: “R. Alexandri said: R. Joshua opposed two verses: it is written, And behold, one like the son . . .] lowly, and riding upon an ass!—If they are meritorious, [he will come] with the clouds of heaven; if not, lowly and riding upon an ass” (*b. Sanh.* 48a). This text shows that the messianic exegesis of Daniel 7:13 was a Jewish interpretive tradition that as such need not bear any specifically Christian stamp. (The two rabbis mentioned were active circa AD 270 and 250, respectively.) (5) Finally, *1 Enoch* 61:8 and

62:2 show that Psalm 110:1 was already at home in the early Jewish Son of Man tradition (for the Jesus tradition, cf. Mark 12:35–37 par.).

6.1.2 It follows from the above that *the high priest's question and Jesus's answer in Mark 14:61–62 were completely possible linguistically and conceptually in Jewish tradition before Easter.* Provided that one thinks Jesus and his opponents capable of any messianic reflection at all—which can hardly be doubted in light of the Roman formulation of the title on the cross in Mark 15:26 par.—A. Strobel takes the correct view of Mark 14:61–62 against E. Lohse and H. Conzelmann–A. Lindemann.

6.2 The following interpretation results for Jesus's self-testimony in Mark 14:61–62 par. The Jewish trial against Jesus was above all about the question of the identity of the Messiah. Jesus allowed the use of the title Messiah in his circle of disciples, but he did not claim it publicly for himself. He performed messianic signs up to and including his action in the temple, and finally at the insistence of the high priest who questioned him on the night before his execution, *he confessed his messianic mission openly*. This confession then served to incriminate Jesus before Pilate and is the historical basis for the Roman title on the cross. Jesus placed his messianic mission in the light of the Son of Man tradition both with his disciples and before the Sanhedrin.

This result for Jesus's self-testimony in Mark 14:61–62 par. confirms what we learned from Peter's testimony in Mark 8:27–33 par.: *Jesus identified himself in his own independent way with the "coming one" announced by John the Baptist and saw himself as the messianic Son of Man. With this identification he not only reformulated early Jewish expectations of the Davidic Messiah, but also gave decisively new features to the early Jewish picture of the Son of Man (see below).*

7 Familiarity with the Old Testament–Jewish background is also essential for understanding the *Son of Man tradition* in the New Testament.

7.1 The Hebrew and Aramaic equivalents to the Greek expression for the "son of man," *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, are respectively בֶּן־אָדָם, *bēn-ʾādām* (found 107 times in the Hebrew OT, e.g., Num. 23:19), and בַּר אֱנָשׁ, *bar ʾĕnāš* (Dan. 7:13), or בַּר (אֱ) נָשָׁא, *bar* (*ʾĕ*) *nāšāʾ*. They mean the person as a member of the human race, a human being. The terms בֵּן and בַּר are therefore used to single out a member of this group (K. Koch, *Das Buch*

Daniel [1980], 217). Both expressions may be translated as a mortal "person" (generic "man" in older English usage) or "individual human." This generic usage is common in the Old Testament and is particularly evident in the pairing of "man (human being)" (אֱנוֹשׁ) with the "son of man" (בֶּן־אָדָם) (Job 25:6; Ps. 8:5 [ET 8:4]; Isa. 51:12; 56:2). We also find an individual expression for a "man" (a male, אִישׁ, *ʾîš*) paired with a "son of man" (Num. 23:19; Job 35:8; Ps. 80:18 [ET 80:17]; Jer. 49:18, 33; 50:40; 51:43). In the book of Ezekiel "son of man" (NRSV: "mortal") occurs conspicuously 93 times as a designation of the prophet himself (cf. Ezek. 2:1, 3, 6, 8; 3:1, 3, 4, 10, 17, 25; 4:1, 16; 5:1; 6:2; etc.). In part of the Old Testament–Jewish tradition, however, the generic "son of man" as a human being grows into a special designation for a person who *represents* others. Hence in Psalm 80:18 (ET 80:17) Israel's king is called "the *son of man* (בֶּן־אָדָם) whom thou hast made strong for thyself" (RSV, obscured in NRSV: "the *one* whom you made strong"). Similarly in Daniel 7:13 the בַּר אֱנָשׁ is the representative of the Zion-*βασιλεία* (see above). The scene is as follows: In the vision of the four world kingdoms in Daniel 7, four terrifying beasts first appear to symbolize the sequence of the four kingdoms of Babylon, Media, Persia, and Macedonia (Dan. 7:1–8). Verses 9–14 then present the last judgment: the four beasts are deprived of their power and the end-time kingdom of God is established. This is signaled by a new symbolic figure, the "son of man," who stands over against the four beasts:

> [13]I saw one like a son of man (NRSV/NJPS: human being)
> coming with the clouds of heaven.
> And he came to the Ancient of Days
> and was presented before him.
> [14]To him was given dominion
> and glory and kingship,
> that all peoples, nations, and languages
> should serve him.
> His dominion is an everlasting dominion
> that shall not pass away,

and his kingship is one
that shall never be destroyed. (Dan. 7:13–14)

Comparison of Daniel 7:13–14 with 7:27 proves crucial. The son of man's kingship and dominion from 7:14 are given to "the people of the holy ones of the Most High" in 7:27. Therefore, just as Israel's king represents Israel as the son of man in Psalm 80:18 (ET 80:17), so also the son of man in Daniel 7:13 is the representative of God's people, Israel. However, "son of man" does not yet function as a divine title in Daniel 7. But Daniel 7:13 is also interpreted further in the Similitudes, that is, chapters 37–71 of the book of *1 Enoch* (i.e., *Ethopic Enoch*, first century BC or AD, *OTP* 1:5–89). Here the "Son of Man" (thirteen times in *1 Enoch* in *OTP*)—also called God's "Elect One" (eighteen times) or "Chosen One" (*1 En.* 48:6)—is a preexistent *end-time ruler figure* who will exercise judgment in God's name and so will establish salvation and righteousness (*1 En.* 45:3ff.; 46:1ff.; 48:2ff.; 49:1ff.; 61:5–62:16; 71:13ff.). This salvation is described among other things as eternal table fellowship of the righteous and chosen ones with the Son of Man: "The Lord of the Spirits will abide over them; they shall eat and rest and rise with that Son of Man forever and ever" (*1 En.* 62:14). In the book of *1 Enoch*, Enoch, the God-pleasing descendant in the seventh generation from Adam (cf. Gen. 5:22–24; Sir. 44:16; 49:14; Jude 14), is taken up to heaven and installed in the "office" of the preexistent Son of Man (cf. *1 En.* 71:5–17 and *OTP* 1:50 note "*s*" on the language of *1 En.* 71:14). Moreover, the Son of Man is identified with the Messiah (*1 En.* 48:10; 52:4) and, as indicated, as God's Elect or Chosen One (i.e., the Servant) (see above, 130, §5.2). Yet hints of the *suffering* of this Son of Man are completely absent in *1 Enoch*, as in Daniel 7. John the Baptist's announcement concerning the coming "stronger one," the Son of Man and Judge of the World, similarly makes no suggestion about his suffering.

7.2 The "Son of Man" tradition in the New Testament is *almost completely concentrated in the four Gospels (eighty-two occurrences), where the expression occurs only in the sayings of Jesus.* The expression does occur four times in the New Testament outside the Gospels, yet three of these borrow from the Old Testament: Hebrews 2:6 cites Psalm 8:5–7 (ET 8:4–6), while Revelation 1:13 and 14:14 allude to Daniel 7:13. Only in Acts 7:56 is there an independent post-Easter logion: Stephen sees the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God (cf. Dan. 7:13 and Ps. 110:1). The fact that we have only this single independently formulated post-Easter Son of Man logion contradicts the assumption that Son of Man is a divine title applied to Jesus only after Easter. It is much more likely that the Gospel tradition has preserved a historical fact: *The title Son of Man was characteristic of the proclamation and teaching of Jesus, and for this very reason it seems very rarely to have been used independently after Easter.*

7.3 It has long been customary to divide the many synoptic Son of Man passages (sixty-nine occurrences) into three groups: sayings about *the presently ministering, the suffering,* and *the coming Son of Man*.

7.3.1 The sayings about the *presently ministering Son of Man* occur in the following passages: Mark 2:10, 28 par.; Luke 9:58/Matt. 8:20; Luke 7:34/Matt. 11:19; and Luke 12:10/Matt. 12:32. On earth the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins, is Lord of the Sabbath, has no place to lay his head, eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners, and forgives those who speak a word against him.

According to the shared opinion of R. Bultmann (*Theology of the New Testament*, 1:30), J. Jeremias (*New Testament Theology*, 261–62), and C. Colpe (*TDNT* 8:430–32), these sayings are indebted to the translation (or mistranslation, according to Bultmann) of the originally generic sense of (אֱ) בַּר נָשָׁא as a human being into Greek, where the designation ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, "son of man," was supposedly misunderstood as a christological title. The Christology of the Greek-speaking church possibly (Jeremias and Colpe) or certainly (Bultmann) stood behind this (mis)translation. But historical investigation shows that even these apparently nonchristological statements about Jesus's present ministry as the Son of Man were characteristic of his messianic self-understanding. They include for example the statements, "For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon'; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, [a man who is] a glutton and a drunkard (ἄνθρωπος φάγος καὶ οἰνοπότης)' " (Matt. 11:18–19/Luke 7:33–34), and "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20/Luke 9:58). This vivid third-person reference to the "human being" or "son of man" corresponds to the parabolic language of prophets (cf., e.g., Ezek. 33:1–9; Jer. 3:1–5; 8:4–7; 2 Cor. 12:2–5). We are therefore faced with riddles of Jesus, which force readers and listeners to ask and answer for themselves who the "man" or human being in these sayings actually is.

As E. Schweizer showed long ago (*The Good News according to Mark* [1970], 166–71), the sayings about the presently ministering Son of Man are characteristic of Jesus's self-understanding to the extent that one may compare them to the Old Testament language of the prophet Ezekiel as "son of man" (see above). From this perspective Jesus's words show that he *understood himself as the "man" singled out by God from among people as their comrade* (Ger., *Genosse*) *and representative.* As such, people called him a "glutton" and "drunkard," and during his public ministry he was less well housed than foxes and birds. But when Jesus designated himself as the (son of) "man" who heals and forgives sins by God's authority (Mark 2:10 par.) and is Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:28 par.), this points beyond the usage in Ezekiel: *the "man" who acts this way is not only the true human before God but also at the same time God's representative among people*.

One cannot obscure this double dimension of the son of man language by a linguistic theory of mistranslation of (אֱ) בַּר נָשָׁא into Greek. Compared with the Baptist's announcement of the coming "stronger one," Jesus's language appears as new and extraordinary: in Jesus, the true human, the coming "stronger one" (and through him the only true God) is already on the scene.

7.3.2 The sayings about the *suffering Son of Man* lead a decisive step further. They are found in the three synoptic passion predictions (Mark 8:31 par.; 9:31 par.; 10:33–34 par.) and in the ransom saying of Mark 10:45 par.

7.3.2.1 The three *passion predictions* have the literary function (especially in Mark) of preparing readers for Jesus's passion. They are "passion summaries" before the passion story (Mark 11:1–16:8) and are therefore usually judged as *vaticinia ex eventu*, put into Jesus's mouth after the fact. But here too we must be careful about jumping to conclusions. J. Jeremias has shown that at least one authentic riddle of Jesus lies behind these summaries (*New Testament Theology*, 281–82, 295–97): "God will (soon) deliver the man to men" (Mark 9:31; cf. with Luke 9:44). The logion contains an Aramaic wordplay and is formulated with an echo of Isaiah 43:4 and 53:12. Isaiah 43:3–5 contains the following saving promise of God to Israel:

[3]I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.
[4]Because you are precious in my sight,
and honored, and I love you,
I give people in return for you,
nations in exchange for your life.
[5]Do not fear, for I am with you.

Moreover, in Isaiah 53:11–12 it says about the Suffering Servant:

[11]Out of his anguish he shall see light;
he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge.
The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.
[12]Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;
because he poured out himself to death,
and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors (LXX: and he was delivered up for their sins).

If one reads Mark 9:31 (Luke 9:44b) in the light of these two passages, Jesus appears as the (Son of) Man whom God in his love delivers up for Israel, in order to save his own people. Or put differently: Jesus (even as the Son of Man) is the vicariously suffering Servant for Israel. Romans 4:25 (ὃς παρεδόθη διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν), with its clear allusion to Isaiah 53:12 LXX (διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν παρεδόθη), shows that this logion of Jesus was in fact understood in this way.

7.3.2.2 The ransom saying in *Mark 10:45/Matthew 20:28* leads to the same conclusion. Its origin with Jesus is hotly debated, and it is usually considered a creation of the church. But once again precise exegesis of the text leads to the opposite result.

In 1 Timothy 2:5–6 the original ransom saying has been incorporated into an early Christian confessional formula and reworked linguistically for the better understanding of the Greek-speaking church. Hence the original "son of man" (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) becomes simply "the man (Christ Jesus)," ἄνθρωπος Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς; "to give his soul" (δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ) becomes simply "to give himself" (δοῦναι ἑαυτόν), while λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν, "a ransom for many," becomes ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων, "a ransom on behalf of all." Mark 10:45 (Matt. 20:28) is obviously a tradition from which early Christianity took its christological bearings.

The synoptic form of the logion is found in Mark 10:45/Matthew 20:28. It is easy to translate back into Aramaic. (Luke 22:24–27 contains a variant tradition to Mark 10:42–45. It is redactionally fitted to the situation of Jesus's farewell discourse at the Last Supper and reflects terminologically the developed practice of the church. Compare the expressions of Luke 22:26–27 with the "younger men" or the "humble" of Acts 5:6; 1 Tim. 5:1; Titus 2:6; 1 Pet. 5:5; and Sir. 32:1; with the "elders" and other "leaders" of Acts 14:12; 15:22; Heb. 13:7, 17, 24; and with the idea of "serving" in Acts 6:1–2; 19:22; 1 Tim. 3:10, 13.) The ransom saying moreover stands in marked contrast to the picture of the ruling and judging son of man in Daniel 7:13–14, the Similitudes of *1 Enoch*, and the preaching of John the Baptist: instead of sitting on God's judgment throne, executing the last judgment with the help of angels, and receiving the homage of the nations, this "Son of Man" sees himself sent by God to serve humanity and to be for them the λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν, or "ransom for many."

Part of the background of Mark's ransom text in 10:45 is provided by expressions from Isaiah 53:11–12 such as "the many" (רַבִּים, *rabbîm*; οἱ πολλοί) and "to give one's life." Here Mark's δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ, "to give his life/soul," recalls Isaiah's הֶעֱרָה לַמָּוֶת נַפְשׁוֹ, "he poured out his soul to death" (RSV); LXX reads παρεδόθη εἰς θάνατον ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ, "his soul was delivered to death." But even more decisive for Mark's wording is the background in Isaiah 43:3–4 (W. Grimm). For only in Isaiah 43:3–4 (and not in Isa. 53) is there talk of a "ransom" (כֹּפֶר, *kōper*; LXX: ἄλλαγμα) which God gives "in your place" (תַּחְתֶּיךָ, *taḥtêkā*; LXX: ὑπὲρ σοῦ) and which moreover consists of other "people" (אָדָם, *ʾādām*, sg.; LXX: ἀνθρώπους, plur.). Although Mark's λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν is formally independent of the Septuagint of Isaiah 43:3–4 (cf. λύτρον, "ransom," instead of ἄλλαγμα, "exchange," and ἀντί instead of ὑπέρ), his idea of the Son of Man taking the place of other people corresponds more closely to the thought and wording of Isaiah 43:3–4 than of Isaiah 53:11–12.

In its present form, the ransom saying of Mark 10:45 (Matt. 20:28) is not derivable either from early Jewish tradition, which has no knowledge of a suffering Son of Man, or from early church tradition, which rather built its

confession in 1 Timothy 2:5–6 upon the ransom saying. We are dealing with a *“nonderivable” or “dissimilar” saying* in the strict methodological sense of the word, and therefore with an *original Jesus saying*.

The traditions of the second passion prediction in Mark 9:31 (Luke 9:44b) and the ransom saying in Mark 10:45 speak for themselves: both times the divine Son of Man tradition is reinterpreted in terms of a theology of suffering, with Isaiah 43:3–5 and 53:11–12 providing the leitmotifs. The possibility of a connection between the Son of Man and Servant traditions was already anticipated in *1 Enoch* 46:4, 62:3, but only in the Jesus tradition are the suffering features of the Servant brought into the Son of Man tradition. *During his earthly ministry Jesus wanted to be the God-sent messianic Servant by exchanging his existence for that of “the many,” both Israel and the nations*.

7.3.3 The third group of synoptic passages consists of Jesus’s sayings about *the coming Son of Man*. These include the need of believers not to be ashamed of the Son of Man in Mark 8:38/Luke 9:26 (cf. with Matt. 10:32–33/Luke 12:8–9), the parable of the last judgment separating the sheep from the goats in Matthew 25:31–46, Jesus’s answer before the Sanhedrin in Mark 14:62 par., the desire of the Son of Man to find faith on the earth at his second coming in Luke 18:8, and the debate about David’s Son or David’s Lord in Psalm 110 found in Mark 12:35–37 par.

Scholarly positions concerning this group of Son of Man sayings tend to fall into one of three schemes: (1) The first position holds that these cannot be authentic Jesus sayings because the immediacy with which Jesus speaks of the kingdom of God which dawns and comes with him does not allow him to interject between himself and the βασιλεία yet another figure, the coming Son of Man. This argumentation, adopted, for example, by P. Vielhauer and E. Käsemann, fails to recognize that in early Judaism the Son of Man is not a competing figure with God but the messianic emissary of God. It also fails to consider that according to Daniel 7:13–14, 27 the end-time kingdom of God which is to be given the “holy ones of the Most High” is represented by the Son of Man himself. This first scheme therefore involves a historically unconvincing modern critical construction. (2) Ever since J. Wellhausen and R. Bultmann, scholars in the second group have attributed several of the sayings about the coming Son of Man to the preaching of Jesus but have claimed that, like John the Baptist, Jesus expected the heavenly Son of Man to be a judge figure distinguished from himself. But in view of the analysis of the Jesus sayings about the presently ministering and the suffering Son of Man, as well as the analysis of Jesus’s self-testimony in Mark 14:62 par., this view is not very probable. Jesus’s style of dividing the references to himself between the first and third person is already anticipated in prophetic language about God (cf. Amos 5:4–12 and K. Berger, *Theologiegeschichte* [1995^2], 665). Such variation is evident in Luke 12:8–9 (cf. with Mark 8:38): “And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges *me* before others, the *Son of Man* also will acknowledge before the angels of God; but whoever denies *me* before others will be denied before the angels of God.” The point of this passage is precisely not that Jesus and the coming Son of Man

are different, but that they belong together. (3) The third interpretive scheme is represented, for example, by C. Colpe, L. Goppelt, J. Jeremias, and W. G. Kümmel. It assumes that *the earthly Jesus aligned himself in a considerably close relationship to the coming Son of Man*, and it does the most justice to the texts under consideration.

In the *parable of the growing seed (Mark 4:26–29)*, the present and future ministry of Jesus as the Son of Man are connected exactly as in the third scheme above. The parable speaks of the miracle of the seed of the word (of Jesus) that ripens for the harvest by itself from inauspicious beginnings:

> [26]He also said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man (*ἄνθρωπος*: see below; NRSV: 'someone') would scatter seed on the ground, [27]and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. [28]The earth produces of itself (*αὐτομάτη*), first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. [29]But when the fruit (*καρπός*, NRSV: 'grain') is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come." (cf. Joel 4:13 MT/LXX [ET 3:13])

Two motifs of the parable immediately stand out: (1) The carefree attitude concerning the growth of the seed, which is strange and almost ironic for a careful farmer (cf. Isa. 28:23–26). (2) The identity of the sower and the reaper, who according to Joel 4:13 (ET 3:13) "puts in the sickle" (Mark 4:29). However, one should not separate verse 29 from the original text of the parable as a later allegorizing addition, as is sometimes suggested, for there is no support for this in the manuscript tradition. Moreover, the quotation of Joel 4:13 in Mark 4:29 is not based strictly on the Septuagint text, which reads "Send forth *sickles*, because the *vintage* has come" (cf. Brenton, against NETS "harvest"). Against the Septuagint's plural *δρέπανα* Mark reads the singular *δρέπανον*, "sickle," following the MT and *Targum Jonathan*. Mark also reads *θερισμός*, "(grain) harvest," instead of the Septuagint's *τρύγητος*, "vintage." The parable's metaphors involve double entendre: "harvest" is a common metaphor for the final judgment (cf. Jer. 51:33; Rev. 14:15); "seed" is likewise common for the proclamation of the word (*4 Ezra* 8:6; 9:31, 36; cf. also Philo, *Dreams* 1.199; *Spec. Laws* 3.29; and the interpretation of the sowing in Isa. 28:24 in terms of the prophetic proclamation and its reception in *The Isaiah Targum* [ed. B. D. Chilton, p. 56]). In an early Jewish context, the language of "automatic" growth carries the connotation of the miraculous activity of God. For example, the *αὐτόματα ἀναβαίνοντα* or "spontaneous aftergrowths" in Leviticus 25:5, 11 are the plants that spring up of themselves without human effort during the years of Sabbath and Jubilee. Philo (*Creation* 167) and Josephus (*Ant*. 1.46) use the same word for the fruit available without labor to people in paradise. "Fruit" is a common picture for the produce of piety and obedience (cf., e.g., *Let. Aris.* 232), while "when the fruit/grain is ripe" is a circumlocution for the date of the judgment set by God in his own time. Although the parable is not a full-blown allegory, its meaning depends upon its vivid language. The "man" (*ἄνθρωπος*) who sows can do his work in calm assurance because he is confident that growth and harvest are miraculously produced by God. The obvious question for Jesus's Jewish listeners confronted with such a metaphorical presentation heightened by the citation from Joel would be, Who is this *ἄνθρωπος* who so confidently goes about his work of sowing and puts in his sickle at the right time? The answer is found in the proclamation of Jesus: It is Jesus himself; he is the "man" who now proclaims and teaches the word but some day will judge the world; he is the presently working Son of Man of Daniel 7:13 and *1 Enoch*. Finally, in Revelation 14:14–16 the sickle and reaping of Joel 4:13 are combined with the one like a Son of Man seated on the cloud from Daniel 7:13 (though Revelation cites both passages according to the original Hebrew or Aramaic rather than the LXX). The book of Revelation therefore confirms our proposed understanding of Mark 4:26–29: *The parable of the growing seed exhibits exactly the same mysterious connection between the "man" Jesus and the coming Son of Man and Judge of the World that is also characteristic of Mark 8:38 par., where the coming Son of Man will be ashamed in the judgment of*

those who have been ashamed of Jesus, and Luke 12:8 par., where the Son of Man will confess in the judgment those who have confessed Jesus.

Jesus considered himself to be the Son of Man who serves and works secretly on earth, who will be exalted by God and appear at the world judgment. The verbs used reciprocally in Luke 12:8–9 and Mark 8:38, “confess,” “deny,” and “be ashamed of,” point to the situation of the final judgment: the Son of Man, whom God will exalt to his right hand and entrust with the final judgment, will speak out as the eschatological judge in favor of those who were faithful to him while he still worked secretly on earth. On the other hand, he will reject those who denied or opposed him on earth. From this developed the early Christian expectation of the exalted Christ’s intercession and advocacy for those who belong to him (cf. Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1–2).

Jesus’s expectation of his own exaltation is attested not only by his self-testimony in Mark 14:61–62 par. (see above) but also in the debate about David’s Son and David’s Lord in the *controversy of Mark 12:35–37 par*. This passage deals with an exegetical antinomy: according to early Jewish expectation, the Messiah is the Son of David, but in Psalm 110:1/LXX 109:1 the psalmist, whom early Judaism identified with David, speaks of the coming Messiah as *ὁ κύριός μου*, that is, David’s Lord. How are these two related? The answer suggested by our text is that even though Jesus lived on earth as the serving Son of David, David’s coming Lord is superior to the earthly Son of David. The one seated at the right hand of God in Psalm 110/LXX 109, to whom everything is subjected, must be identified with the “son of man” of Psalm 8, to whom God has likewise subjected everything: “You have subjected all things under his feet,” *πάντα ὑπέταξας ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ* (Ps. 8:7 MT/LXX [ET 8:6]; cf. 1 Cor. 15:27; Heb. 2:8). In fact, in the quotation of Psalm 110:1/LXX 109:1 in Mark 12:36, the last words of Psalm 109:1, *ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου*, “a *footstool* for your feet,” are replaced by *ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν σου*, “*under* your feet,” from Psalm 8:7 (ET 8:6). This linking means that Psalm 110 (LXX 109):1 has been interpreted from Psalm 8:7 according to the rabbinic principle of analogy and therefore refers to the Son of Man. The controversy of Mark 12:35–37 testifies to both Jesus’s consciousness of his messianic mission and his expectation of his exaltation; it also provides the perspective for the Jewish Christian formula about the (earthly) Son of David and the (exalted) Son of God that Paul cites in Romans 1:3–4.

Jesus’s sayings about the coming Son of Man therefore show that he lived in the expectation that after his earthly ministry, he would be exalted to the right hand of God according to Psalm 110:1 and become the judge in the end times. Just as Jesus’s task on earth was to proclaim the kingdom of God and to “serve the many” by vicariously surrendering his life, so his end-time “office” will be to establish God’s kingdom through the final judgment. Paul connects directly with this tradition in 1 Corinthians 15:23–28.

8 If we consider all this together with Jesus’s parable about the great world judgment in Matthew 25:31–46 and our analyses of Peter’s confession in Mark 8:27–33 par. and Jesus’s self-testimony in 14:61–62 par., the end result is clear: Jesus identified himself in a truly novel way with the Son of Man and Judge of the World announced by John the Baptist. He accepted the title Messiah in the circle of his disciples, but he wanted to live his earthly life in humility as the Suffering Servant of God by

sacrificing himself for “the many” (cf. Isa. 43:3–4; 53:11–12). Finally Jesus openly confessed his messianic mission before his Jewish judges and expressed his expectation that he would be exalted to the right hand of God according to Psalm 110:1 and installed in the end-time office of the Son of Man to execute the final judgment “coming with the clouds of heaven” (Dan. 7:13). *As the messianic Son of Man, Jesus combined in himself the being of the true human before God, of the Suffering Servant, and of the Son of God who truly accepts people*. He represented humanity to God in his obedience as the Son and his obedience to suffering, and he represented God to humanity as messianic evangelist to the poor, as completer of the Torah of Sinai, and as self-sacrificing Servant. Jesus was in one and the same person the true “human” or “(son of) man” who lives in the fear of God (Ps. 8:5–6 [ET 8:4–5]) and the messianic “Immanuel” (Isa. 7:14).

One final point may be added: Before Easter Jesus’s messianic consciousness of deity was shrouded by a *threefold veil of secrecy*: First, Jesus remained a controversial figure throughout his public ministry (cf. Mark 3:21–22; 6:1–6; Luke 7:33–34/Matt. 11:18–19; Luke 13:31–33; 13:34/Matt. 23:37; Mark 14:61–62 par.). Second, Jesus spoke about his special mission mainly in riddles, parables, and internal teachings among his disciples, which were met with reservations and lack of understanding even there (cf. Mark 8:32–33 par.; 9:9–10 par.; 9:32 par.; Luke 22:31–34). Finally, the new setting that Jesus gave to the titles Messiah and Son of Man from the perspective of Isaiah 43:3–4 and 53:11–12 was so unusual, and the fact of his execution on the cross against the background of Deuteronomy 21:22–23 (see below) so shocking, that an understanding of Jesus’s true historical being could only be established from the perspective of the Easter events in the circle of those who remembered Jesus’s teaching and believed him to be the Lord and Messiah (Acts 2:36), raised by God and exalted to his right hand according to Psalm 110:1 (Acts 2:33).

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CHAPTER 10

Jesus's Readiness to Suffer and His Understanding of His Death

If we want to understand Jesus's passion, we must first recognize that his death on the cross was the historically inevitable consequence of his provocative ministry as the messianic Son of Man. While the historical event and causes of the passion will be dealt with in the next chapter, in this chapter we follow up our presentation of Jesus's understanding of his identity (see chap. 9) by asking what we can know about his understanding of his death.

1 Like many other problems of Jesus research, the question of Jesus's understanding of his suffering and death is answered in extremely different ways today.

In his 1959 study "The Primitive Christian Kerygma and the Historical Jesus," R. Bultmann claimed that "we cannot know how Jesus understood his end, his death" (23). Bultmann considered all the Gospel passion predictions to be *vaticinia ex eventu* ("prophecies after the event"), and he regarded E. Fuchs's claim that Jesus had the Baptist's demise in mind during his final journey to Jerusalem to be merely an "improbable psychological construction" (ibid.). Bultmann was also not convinced by G. Bornkamm's thesis that Jesus went to Jerusalem purposely to seek a final verdict in the Holy City. Even if this was the case, Bultmann continues,

> [Jesus] scarcely reckoned on execution at the hands of the Romans, but only on the imminent appearing of the kingdom of God. But these are only assumptions. What is certain is merely that he was crucified by the Romans, and thus suffered the death of a political criminal. This death can scarcely be understood as an inherent and necessary consequence of his activity; rather it took place because his activity was misconstrued as a political activity. In that case it would have been—historically speaking—a meaningless fate. We cannot tell whether or how Jesus found meaning in it. We may not veil from ourselves the possibility that he suffered a collapse. (ibid., 24)

Nevertheless, several of Bultmann's prominent students did not follow him in this principled historical skepticism. E. Fuchs and especially G. Bornkamm assumed that Jesus faced the possibility of his martyrdom already on his way to Jerusalem. But because they joined Bultmann in considering the passion predictions, the ransom saying of Mark 10:45 par., and the eucharistic texts to be products of the early church, Jesus's own understanding of his death remained historically inaccessible to them.

On the other hand, scholars including W. Manson, H. W. Wolff, J. Jeremias, and L. Goppelt have used precise analyses of the passion predictions, Mark 10:45 par., and the Lord's Supper tradition to defend the thesis that Jesus not only counted on his suffering, but also understood his death as a

sacrificial one for the sins of "the many." In view of these texts, H. W. Wolff, in his dissertation *Jesaja 53 im Urchristentum* (1984[4]), concludes: "Jesus in describing himself with the words of the prophecy of Isaiah 53 speaks of something completely self-evident" (69). J. Jeremias's judgment is very similar:

> Everywhere we find the explanation of this suffering to be the vicarious act (*Stellvertretung*) for the many (Mark 10.45; 14.24). The only answer to the question how it could be possible that Jesus attributed such unlimited atoning power to his death must be that he died as the servant of God, whose suffering and death is described in Isa. 53. It is innocent (v. 9), voluntary (v. 10) suffering, patiently borne (v. 7), willed by God (vv. 6, 10) and therefore vicariously atoning [i.e., atoning for others] (vv. 4f.). Because it is life with God and from God that is here given over to death, this death has an unlimited power to atone. (*New Testament Theology*, trans. J. Bowden, 299 [modified])

Recent investigations by O. Betz, M. Hengel, and R. Pesch have confirmed this view.

2 In order to arrive at one's own opinion, one must first turn to the following Jesus sayings: the saying about the death of the prophets in Luke 13:31–33, the passion prediction in Mark 9:31 (Luke 9:44b), and the ransom saying in Mark 10:45 (par. Matt. 20:28). The contribution of the Lord's Supper tradition in Mark 14:22–25 par. must also be investigated.

2.1 *Luke 13:31–33* belongs to Luke's special material:

> [31]At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." [32]He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me, 'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. [33]Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.' "

From its wording, the scene's originality can hardly be doubted. It shows that, like John the Baptist (see above, 72–73), Jesus had to fear persecution from his local ruler Herod Antipas, but that he paid no attention to the warnings about this from well-meaning Pharisees. *Jesus reckoned with the possibility of his death in Jerusalem, understanding it by analogy to the martyrdom of the prophets (cf. also Luke 13:34/Matt. 23:37).*

Jesus's language about martyrdom becomes comprehensible when one looks at the Jewish *Lives of the Prophets* from the first century BC or AD (*OTP* 2:385–99) and at the Deuteronomistic sayings about the fate of the prophets who warned Israel against falling away (cf. Neh. 9:26; 2 Chron. 24:17–22; 36:14–16). According to early Jewish legends, the great prophets of Israel, above all Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, became victims of their own proclamation. In Jesus's day they were venerated

in Jerusalem as martyrs whose souls had already been taken up into heaven (cf. Rev. 6:9) and whose (undecayed) bodies were awaiting the resurrection of the dead and future glorification (Dan. 12:3). People made pilgrimages to the tombs of these martyred prophets and prayed to them (cf. *Liv. Pro.* 71:9 with Matt. 23:29–30). They saw them as helpers in time of need, whose heavenly intercession could bring God's mercy to Israel (*Liv. Pro.* 12:13; 42:14). Jesus knew these ideas and practices and foresaw his own death in Jerusalem. Yet he also knew that with his own arrival, something "more than Jonah" was on the scene (Matt. 12:41).

2.2 We have already analyzed the passion prediction about the Son of Man being "betrayed" or "delivered up" in Mark 9:31 par. and the ransom saying in 10:45 par. (see above, 138–40, §§7.3.2–7.3.2.2). These are authentic sayings of Jesus, based on Isaiah 43:3–4 and 53:11–12. The soteriological dimension of both sayings is determined by the early Jewish tradition about a "ransom" and by the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. As the Son of Man, Jesus saw himself called to follow the way of the Servant who suffers vicariously for "the many," whose life is delivered up by God as an end-time ransom for Israel.

2.2.1 B. Janowski has shown that the term "ransom" (כֹּפֶר) in Isaiah 43:3–4 is taken from the judicial sphere. In Exodus 21:29–30 the ransom is a substitute payment of damages to an injured party, offered instead of payment by the offender's own life. It is the "redemption of a forfeited individual life, . . . a substitution of existence, a life-equivalent" (Janowski, *Gottes Gegenwart*, 14). In the Septuagint the expression is translated partly by *τὸ λύτρον*, partly by *τὸ (ἀντ)άλλαγμα*, something "given in exchange" and therefore a ransom, equivalent, or substitute. In Isaiah 43:3 the idea of a ransom is carried over into the realm of God's final judgment of Israel and the nations, but is used in a special sense: the ransom is paid by God for Israel, even though God himself is the injured party because of Israel's sins (cf. 43:24). The payment is his act of redemption out of pure love for his chosen people (43:4, 25). The formulations "for you" and "for your life" in 43:4 show that the act of paying the כֹּפֶר actually involves a "substitution of existence" (*Existenzstellvertretung*). According to Isaiah 43:3, "Yahweh gives Cyrus (as recipient of the כֹּפֶר) Egypt, Ethiopia, and Seba, the whole of the then-known northeast Africa, for the release of Jacob-Israel from the exile, thus preserving the life of Israel (cf. also Isa. 45:14–17)" (Janowski, ibid., 29). Isaiah 43:3–4 is applied to the final judgment in early Judaism, with the understanding that the wicked will be given as a ransom for Israel in the judgment of annihilation (cf. *1QLiturgical Prayers* [1Q34 + 1Q34bis]

frag. 3 I, lines 5–6, *DSSSE* 144–45; *Sifre* §333 on Deut. 32:43, in J. Neusner, trans., *Sifre to Deuteronomy*, 2:382, §333.V.2). According to rabbinic texts, the wicked Gentiles are delivered over to Gehinnom, the fiery hell, for Israel's sake (cf., e.g., *Mekilta* on Exod. 21:30, in J. Z. Lauterbach, *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael*, 3:87–88).

If one views Mark 9:31 (Luke 9:44) and Mark 10:45 from this early Jewish perspective, it becomes clear that *Jesus was prepared to perform a "substitution of existence" for Israel, or more precisely for the ungodly who were supposed to be handed over for Israel's salvation in the final judgment.* Perhaps Jesus already had the ungodly Gentiles in mind here. In any case, Mark 9:31 (Luke 9:44) and Mark 10:45 par. provide a precise pattern for God's incredibly loving act of surrendering his own son to death for the ungodly, proclaimed by Paul in Romans 5:6, 8 (cf. 8:32).

Jesus's readiness to die must be seen in terms of the *final judgment*. This is clear from Mark 8:36–37 par.: "For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return [lit. as an exchange, *ἀντάλλαγμα*] for his life?" (RSV). Verse 37 alludes to Psalm 49:8–9 (ET 49:7–8), "the ransom of life is costly," and in early Judaism from *1 Enoch* 98:10 onward, this psalm passage, partly combined with Isaiah 43:3–4 (cf. *Mekilta* on Exod. 21:30), is applied to the situation of the final judgment: No one can pay a ransom for his or her forfeited life in the final judgment; all the wicked are destined for demise. Only God can and will protect Israel from eternal separation from him by means of the ransom he himself has chosen (cf. Isa. 43:3–4). Jesus affirms this principle of judgment. Acting on God's behalf, he was prepared to die, making his life the divinely appointed ransom for the salvation of "the many."

2.2.2 In the background of Mark 9:31 par. and 10:45 par. stands not only Isaiah 43:3–4 but also the Song of the *Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53* (i.e., Isa. 52:13–53:12). Mark 9:31 alludes to the Lord's delivering up the Servant in Isaiah 53:6, while Mark 10:45 alludes to Isaiah 53:11–12.

The Hebrew text of Isaiah 53:10 speaks of the Servant's אָשָׁם (*ʾāšām*), typically translated as "an offering for sin" (NRSV). The Septuagint similarly understands this as *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, a "sin offering" (cf. Rom. 8:3 NRSV margin), although it requires the sin offering from a group of people rather than from the Servant (*ἐὰν δῶτε* [plur.] *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, etc.). However, according to R. Knierim, "אָשָׁם," *TLOT* 1:191–95, an אָשָׁם does not involve a ransom or a sin offering per se, but rather the discharging of the *debt* that arises from being guilty before God. When humans behave sinfully, for example, by attacking justice or oppressing the righteous, they infringe upon God's rights and privileges on the earth, and a liability arises that needs to be discharged as one would discharge a debt of guilt (Ps. 68:22 [ET 68:21]; Prov. 14:9; Jer. 51:5). In the cultic arena this discharge is accomplished by sacrificing a guilt offering (cf. Lev. 5:14–16; 7:7, 37), whereas outside the cult some type of material restitution is required, such as items of gold (1 Sam. 6:3–5). Isaiah 53:10 is to be understood outside the cultic realm from the perspective of the final judgment. In verses 11–12 it is interpreted in terms of a theology of justification: "the many" have become guilty before God because of their iniquities,

but the obligation arising from their guilt is taken over by the Servant and discharged by his vicarious surrender of his life, so that the guilty escape destruction in the judgment. The Servant or *Ebed* (עֶבֶד) is God's own tool, effecting liberation from guilt and a new life before God for the many; God sends "his" Servant (Isa. 52:13; 53:11) and directs him in his course of sacrifice. As in Isaiah 43:3–5, 22–25, the absolute gulf between God's holiness and human injustice is not simply jumped over; instead, out of his free grace God takes care of those destined for death and provides justice for them by surrendering his Servant. Isaiah 53 shows that the ideas of sacrifice, vicarious suffering, and justification were connected in the Old Testament long before the formation of the New Testament message about Christ.

Modern scholarship often identifies the *Suffering Servant* of Isaiah 53 with the prophet Second Isaiah, but sometimes this designation is applied collectively to the "ideal Israel." The context of the book of Isaiah favors the collective interpretation, which applies the passage to Israel, more precisely to that part of Israel deported to Babylon, which gave up its existence vicariously for the whole people of Israel and the world of the nations (cf. Isa. 49:3). Isaiah 53 seems to have left its stamp upon the presentation of the priestly figure from the house of Aaron who suffers, but not vicariously, according to the *Aramaic Apocryphon of Levi* 4Q541 (cf. 1QS 9:11). Wisdom 2:12–20 and 5:1–7 apply Isaiah 53 to a paradigmatic individual suffering righteous person. (For analysis of Wisdom and 4Q541, see M. Hengel with D. P. Bailey, "The Effective History of Isaiah 53 in the Pre-Christian Period," 106–18, 129–32; overview in Bailey, "Suffering Servant.") According to Acts 8:34, the Greek text of Isaiah 53 could be applied either to the (suffering) prophet Isaiah or to the Messiah (Jesus). In the later Aramaic Targum to Isaiah 53, we once again encounter a messianic understanding of the Servant Song, which however reinterprets the suffering to apply to others than the Messiah, for example, the Gentiles or the wicked in Israel (J. Ådna).

Jesus's application of Isaiah 53 to his own suffering as the messianic Son of Man (which was continued by the early Christian witnesses) *stands at the crossways of the interpretations already being considered in early Judaism*. According to Mark 9:31 (Luke 9:44), Mark 10:45 par., and the difficult but probably authentic logion about the "two swords" and Jesus being "counted among the lawless" (cf. Isa. 53:12) in Luke 22:35–38, Jesus saw his path of suffering marked out in Isaiah 53. By vicariously taking the liability of the guilt of the many upon himself and blotting it out by the surrender of his own life, he created for them the righteousness that they need for their life before God. However, Jesus's vicarious discharge of the liability of the guilt of the many is neither a sacrifice to appease God's wrath nor an act of satisfaction for the insult done to God's majesty by the sins of the many (as later in the theology of Anselm). It is rather a substitution of existence made possible by God himself through his Servant Jesus out of God's love and mercy toward Israel. *The Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 is the mediator and tool of the saving will of God*. Through the surrender of his life he leads the many back into the relationship with God that was broken by their guilt:

The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous,
    and he shall bear their iniquities. (Isa. 53:11)

This is the "making righteous" or justification that Jesus wanted to put into effect for "the many." *One can therefore see in Mark 9:31 (Luke 9:44), Luke 22:37, and Mark 10:45 par. that the early Christian and Pauline doctrine of justification has taken up the interpretation of Jesus's sacrifice begun by Jesus himself with the help of Isaiah 53, and has further reflected upon it from a post-Easter perspective*.

3 Mark 10:45 (par. Matt. 20:28) stands materially very close to the *words of institution that Jesus spoke to his twelve disciples at the Last (Passover) Supper: Mark 14:22, 24 par.* The analysis of these words is complicated, but helps us to recognize broad salvation-historical and eschatological horizons for the understanding of the death of Jesus.

3.1 That the *Lord's Supper tradition* is not simply a formation of the early church but a tradition that is to be *traced back to Jesus* is the conclusion to be drawn not only from our general method of viewing the synoptic tradition (see above, 54–58, §§2.1–2), but also from 1 Corinthians 11:23. Here Paul expressly says that the Lord's Supper tradition which he handed on was one which he received *ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου*, "from the Lord." The wording of this verse shows clearly that the Κύριος is not simply the exalted Christ but simultaneously the earthly Jesus. Paul assumes that the Lord's Supper tradition which he received as teaching and passed on to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 11:23–25 (or 26) goes back to the earthly Lord who was raised by God.

3.2 The *analysis* of the New Testament texts concerning the Lord's Supper must be approached very carefully. The four records of the "words of institution" in the Synoptics and Paul (Matt. 26:26–29; Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:14–20; 1 Cor. 11:23–26) are very tersely formulated, and every word is chosen with care. In spite of great similarities, the four reports are nevertheless so variously formulated and stand in such different contexts that one must be prepared for both agreements and differences in the Lord's Supper tradition. If one adds to this the Bread of Life discourse in John 6:52–58 and the Last Supper scene in John 13:1–30, one stands before a highly *complex tradition*.

3.2.1 The most important *differences* in the reports of the Lord's Supper are the following:

(1) The Synoptics relate Jesus's Last Supper in the context of a continuous passion narrative, whereas Paul presupposes the passion story, alluding only briefly to the events "on the night when he was betrayed [by Judas]" or "delivered up [by God]" (1 Cor. 11:23, where the passive παρεδίδετο, "he was betrayed/delivered up," bears this double sense; cf. in Rom. 4:25 the similar divine passive παρεδόθη, sc. ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, "by God"), and provides the text as an agenda for the celebration of the Lord's Supper in Corinth.

(2) The three synoptic texts are of different length. Mark and Matthew report about Jesus's passion and the institution of the Lord's Supper in a similarly concise and condensed form. In Luke, by contrast, we find an extensive report that is firmly embedded in the special passion tradition of Luke's Gospel. The text-critical apparatus at Luke 22:14–20 shows that the text was continually reworked by scribes. Not until the discovery of the famous third-century papyrus 𝔓75 could we even be sure that verses 19b–20 (including "do this in remembrance of me" and the second cup saying) belonged to the tradition from the beginning. Today we can assume that the so-called long version of Luke's text is original and that it was shortened only subsequently by the elimination of the apparent doublets in verses 19b–20.

(3) The words of institution that Jesus speaks to his disciples at the Last Supper have different wordings. The formulations of Mark and Matthew are very similar to each other, as are those of Luke and Paul, but these two pairs of texts are so different that it remains undecided whether the oldest form of the words of institution is preserved by Mark (and Matthew) or by Paul (and Luke).

(4) In Mark and Matthew, Jesus's declaration that he will henceforth refrain from drinking wine until he can drink it "new in the kingdom" is placed at the *end* of the Last Supper account: "Truly I tell you, I will *never again* drink (*οὐκέτι οὐ μὴ πίω*) of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God" (Mark 14:25; cf. Matt. 26:29). This implies that Jesus did partake of the Passover meal, including the third cup, the "cup of blessing," which he introduced with his cup saying and shared with his disciples as leader of the Passover celebration (see the outline by J. Jeremias below, 154–55). But in Luke's account, Jesus's corresponding declaration that he will refrain from partaking of the food and wine of Passover is placed *before* the commencement of the meal (cf. Luke 22:16, 18). Therefore, whereas one gets the impression from Mark and Matthew that Jesus ate the main course of the Passover together with his disciples, interpreted the bread and wine during this meal, distributed both to the disciples, and turned his attention to the heavenly table fellowship only at the conclusion, in Luke Jesus was looking forward to the end-time meal of fulfillment in the βασιλεία right from the beginning of the meal: Jesus presided over the meal but did not partake of it with his disciples—at least according to the preferred text of Luke 22:16. For in the shorter text, preferred in Nestle-Aland$^{26–28}$, Jesus says absolutely, "I will not eat it [the Passover] until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God" (ASV, RSV, NRSV, NJB, ESV), whereas the longer text "I will not eat it *again*" or "never eat it *again*" (*οὐκέτι οὐ μὴ φάγω*), accepted in NA^{25} (1963) and some translations of its period (NEB, NASB, NIV, NAB) and afterward (CSB), appears to be a harmonization with the *οὐκέτι* of Mark 14:25. In Luke, then, Jesus distributes only to his table guests the bread and wine over which he had spoken the words of institution.

(5) To compound the difficulties, the Gospel of John narrates Jesus's Last Supper very differently than the Synoptics. While they report that Jesus kept the Passover with his disciples and celebrated the Lord's Supper in this context, Jesus was already resting in the grave on Passover evening according to the Johannine passion chronology. The final supper presented in John 13 takes place on the eve before the Passover, and centers on the foot washing; nothing hints at the institution of the

Lord's Supper. Instead of this the bread discourse of John 6:22–59 alludes so clearly to eating Jesus's flesh and drinking his blood (cf. John 6:[51b], 52–58) that one suspects that the Johannine interpretation of the Lord's Supper is to be found here; but in part one also assumes that the questionable verses were added to the bread discourse only later.

3.2.2 The New Testament texts about the Lord's Supper therefore raise quite a few historical questions, not every one of which is finally answerable. Not a few scholars therefore believe that the tradition is so opaque that one must refrain from reconstructing the original situation of the supper and the words of institution spoken by Jesus himself. But while it should be admitted that every attempt at reconstruction remains saddled with considerable uncertainty, in view of the generally reliable continuum of transmission of the synoptic tradition, wholesale skepticism over against the texts is once again out of place.

3.3 A historically plausible result can be obtained when one takes into account not only the differences but also the *commonalities* of the tradition and considers the following factors:

3.3.1 All the New Testament texts of the Lord's Supper stem, from a literary standpoint, from the testimony of the post-Easter witnesses. It is possible to reason backward from these texts to the history of the Lord's Supper only to the extent that the post-Easter witnesses allow it. Because the synoptic reports and the Pauline Lord's Supper tradition explicitly want to explain what Jesus said and did on the evening before his death, *they themselves suggest a historical quest for the Last Supper.*

3.3.2 In the reconstruction of the Lord's Supper, not a single strand of the tradition, let alone a single text, is to be followed; rather, all the available data that the Lord's Supper texts offer are to be brought together.

3.3.3 As a rule, one comes closer to the teaching of the earthly Jesus through the continuum of the synoptic tradition than through the Johannine tradition, whose main accent lies on the Spirit-inspired post-Easter understanding of Jesus (cf. John 14:26). Because the synoptic passion reports assume that Jesus's Last Supper was a *Passover* supper, this presentation is to be laid at the foundation initially, then departed from only when historically necessary.

3.3.4 According to the Gospel of John, Jesus dies as the true Passover lamb at the time when the Passover lambs were slaughtered in the temple (cf. John 1:29, 36; 18:28; 19:36). Because of its interest in this

christological presentation, the Gospel cannot offer a report of the institution of the Lord's Supper; instead we find the Johannine interpretation of the Lord's Supper in John 6:52–58 (see above). Because John 13, dramatically speaking, follows the Lukan report in Luke 22 (K. T. Kleinknecht) and John 13:10, 26 points to a Passover meal tradition that also underlies John's presentation, there is *no reason* to prefer the presentation of John 13 over that of the Synoptics (on the problem of the "Passover amnesty" for Barabbas, which is sometimes thought to favor John's passion chronology, see below, 174).

3.3.5 In the quest for the original wording of the words of institution, the shortest and most difficult version deserves the preference in as far as this most readily explains the origin of the other versions. *The briefest and most difficult form of the words of institution lies in Mark 14:22–24*.

4 If one wishes to understand Jesus's Last Supper with his closest disciples in the light of these considerations, one must first recall that for Jesus and his Jewish contemporaries, the celebration of a meal in God's presence was the essence of the *βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ* (see above, 86, excursus). The end-time feast of the nations upon Zion (cf. Isa. 25:6–8) is something Jesus repeatedly held before his disciples (cf. Luke 13:29/Matt. 8:11f.; Luke 14:15–24/Matt. 22:1–14). The prospect of this feast marked the Last Supper in Jerusalem as well (cf. Mark 14:25 par.). *Jesus's Last Supper is different from his table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners in that it was a Passover meal and included only the Twelve who were gathered around Jesus*. According to Luke 22:28–30/Matthew 19:28, the Twelve represent the end-time people of the twelve tribes.

The *Passover meal* is for the Jews until today much more than a festal family gathering around a meal; it is rather the *reenactment of the deliverance of Israel from Egypt in the form of a shared ritual meal*. At the time of Jesus, the slaughter of the Passover lambs was only possible and allowed in the temple in Jerusalem (cf. Deut. 16:5–6). Outside Jerusalem Passover evening had to be celebrated without a Passover lamb. (After the destruction of the temple in AD 70, this type of celebration necessarily became the general manner of celebration for all Jews; only the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim have retained the slaughter of the Passover lambs.) For this reason every year thousands of Jews made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for Passover in order to celebrate it there in its fullest form. The festival pilgrims had a custom of forming meal parties big enough to consume one Passover lamb in the evening (Exod. 12:43–46). The meal had to be held in Jerusalem, and the concluding Passover night also had to be spent there (cf. Deut. 16:7). Jesus adopted this custom. He instructed his disciples to prepare everything for the meal (perhaps in the house of John Mark and his mother? Cf. Mark 14:12–16 par. with Acts 1:13; 12:12). Then in the evening he himself came to Jerusalem in order to celebrate the meal in the circle of his closest confidants. Luke 22:15 emphasizes that this last shared Passover celebration before his suffering lay especially on his heart.

According to the Old Testament Passover regulations in Exodus 12:1–14, 13:3–10, and Deuteronomy 16:1–8 as well as the Jewish Passover haggadah (the “telling” of the Passover story, but also the order of the Passover liturgy), one practices in this festival an act of *remembrance*: One recalls Israel’s departure from Egypt and the ratifying of the covenant at Sinai according to Exodus 24 (and also the gift of the Torah, guidance into the promised land, and the building of the Jerusalem temple for atonement for sins). People sang together Psalms 113–118, the Passover *hallel*, and mutually encouraged each other in the hope of final salvation. Mishnah tractate *Pesahim* 10:5 says: “In every generation a man must so regard himself as if he came forth himself out of Egypt, for it is written, *And thou shalt tell thy son in that day saying, It is because of that which the Lord did for me when I came forth out of Egypt* (Exod. 13:8).” During the Passover celebration the past and the present become one: present celebrants participate in the exodus from Egypt and experience that past event of salvation as their own history.

Regarding Jesus’s behavior at his last Passover meal, the synoptic Lord’s Supper texts and the Pauline tradition are concerned only with the actions and statements of Jesus that went beyond the usual custom for the festival and that were important for the post-Easter celebration of the Lord’s Supper.

According to the reconstruction of J. Jeremias (*The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* [1966], 85–86), the Passover meal at the time of Jesus took the following course:

Preliminary Course

Word of dedication (blessing of the feast day [קִדּוּשׁ = *kiddush*] and of the cup) spoken by the *paterfamilias* (head of family; father) over the first cup (the *kiddush* cup).

Preliminary dish, consisting among other things of green herbs, bitter herbs, and a sauce made of fruit purée.

The meal proper (see third item: main meal) is served but not yet eaten; the second cup is mixed and put in its place but not yet drunk.

Passover Liturgy

Passover haggadah by the *paterfamilias* (in Aramaic).

First part of the Passover *hallel* = Psalms 113–114 (in Hebrew).

Drinking of the second cup (haggadah cup).

Main Meal

Grace spoken by the *paterfamilias* over the unleavened bread.

Meal, consisting of Passover lamb, unleavened bread, bitter herbs (Exod. 12:8), with fruit purée and wine.

Grace (*birkat hammazon*) over the third cup (cup of blessing).

Conclusion

Second part of the passover *hallel* = Psalms 115–118 (in Hebrew).

Praise over the fourth cup (*hallel* cup).

Mark 14:17, 22 simply presupposes this knowledge of the course of a Passover celebration, and even Luke’s more extensive account only hints at it in 22:14–20. Therefore, during the process of

transmitting the New Testament reports, the Jewish Passover was eventually forgotten, and early church celebrations of the Lord's Supper became separated from the date and custom of the Passover. Consequently, the original embedding of Jesus's last supper in the context of a Passover meal became controversial. The controversy continues to draw strength from John's different witness to the Lord's Supper and therefore remains until today.

If one follows the united witness of the first three Gospels and fits Jesus's words and actions into the ritual course of the Passover meal, then two results emerge: *Jesus enacted with the Twelve the festival of Israel's deliverance from bondage in Egypt. Yet in so doing he celebrated much more than just the redemption of Israel from Egyptian slavery*.

As any reader who is familiar with the Jewish custom can see from Mark 14:17–25 par., but especially from Luke 22:14–20, Jesus concentrated his special actions at the beginning and end of the main course of the Passover meal. The first two parts of the celebration, the preliminary course and the Passover liturgy, were apparently celebrated by Jesus in the customary fashion; the unleavened bread and the bitter herbs will have been interpreted at this time. But for the main course, the Passover haggadah no longer gave any fixed rules. The only customary feature was for the father of the house to say grace at the beginning over the (unleavened) bread, then to break it and distribute it to the table guests. Jesus took advantage of this custom in order to add his bread saying after the usual blessing. The whole Passover meal followed after this saying. At its end it was customary for the master of the table to take the third cup "after supper" (*μετὰ τὸ δειπνῆσαι*; cf. Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25) and to say over it the grace or blessing for the meal. This third cup was therefore called "the cup of blessing," *τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας* (1 Cor. 10:16), and the blessing was called the בִּרְכַּת הַמָּזוֹן (*birkat hammazôn*, grace after a meal with bread). Then all participants in the meal normally emptied their glasses individually. But this custom gave Jesus the opportunity of first speaking the cup saying and then, against the usual custom, allowing the Twelve to drink from a single cup of blessing.

According to early Jewish expectation, at the end-time feast of the nations on Mount Zion, all Israel will be given to drink from a single great "cup of salvation" (Ps. 116:13), over which David will say the blessing to God's glory (cf. Str-B IV/2:1163–65). Jesus had the Twelve drink from the common cup in anticipation of their drinking from it together in the *βασιλεία*. This fits well with the prospect of the messianic thanksgiving banquet on Mount Zion in Mark 14:25/Luke 22:15–16.

Jesus celebrated his last meal with the Twelve at the borderline between his upcoming death and the new life in the messianic fulfillment of the

kingdom of God (Luke 22:16, 18). In so doing he openly declared that his vicarious death makes his table companions participants in the new covenant, which replaces and completes the Sinai covenant (cf. Exod. 24:1–8 with Jer. 31:31–34 and Mark 14:24/Matt. 26:28 with Luke 22:20/1 Cor. 11:25). As a result they may participate in the eschatological feast in the Zion-*βασιλεία*, which according to Isaiah 24:23, 25:6–8 corresponds to the meal that Moses, Aaron, and the seventy elders of Israel were allowed to eat before God on Mount Sinai (cf. Exod. 24:9–11).

5 In the *interpretation of the words of institution*, it is best to follow the wording of the texts as exactly as possible, neither deconstructing them prematurely through literary criticism nor giving them meanings that they are known to have only in the interpretation of the early church.

5.1 First of all, it is striking that Jesus never compares himself directly with the slaughtered Passover lamb, either in the bread saying or in the cup saying. We do indeed find such a comparison in 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Peter 1:19; John 1:29, 36; 19:36; and perhaps also in Revelation 5:6, 12, and 13:8. But this comparison seems to stem only from the post-Easter perspective on Jesus's completed passion and resurrection. Therefore the original interpretation of the words of institution is, if possible, to be sought without reference to the Passover lamb.

5.2 As far as the bread saying is concerned, Jesus spoke the usual blessing over the bread at the beginning of the main meal. But then he immediately added that his disciples were not merely eating the unleavened bread that the Passover liturgy calls the "bread of affliction" (Deut. 16:3). Rather, by eating the bread that Jesus broke and distributed to them, they were gaining a share in Jesus himself, who was about to go to his death for them.

In its simplest form, transmitted in Mark, Jesus's word of institution says: *λάβετε, τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου*, "Take; this is my body" (Mark 14:22). Matthew adds to this "taking" (*λάβετε*) the idea of "eating" (*φάγετε*): "Take, eat . . ." (Matt. 26:26), while in the tradition of Luke and Paul, the bread saying is clarified by a further addition, involving *ὑπέρ*: *τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν* (*διδόμενον*), "This is my body *for* you" (1 Cor. 11:24) or "*given for* you" (Luke 22:19). To the Greek word *σῶμα* the closest correspondence is the Hebrew גּוּף (*gûp*) or the Aramaic

גּוּפָּא (*gûpāʾ*), “body, person.” The equation of *σῶμα* with *σάρξ*, “flesh,” that is, Hebrew בָּשָׂר (*bāśār*) or Aramaic בִּשְׂרָא (*biśrāʾ*), is indeed possible from the perspective of John 6:52–58, but somewhat artificial: the bread with which Jesus identifies himself and which he distributes is not simply his “flesh,” but himself in person.

Because in Hebrew and Aramaic as a rule no copulative verb is required, the bread saying and the cup saying were originally nominal clauses in which the Greek verb “is,” *ἐστίν*, was lacking. The original meaning of the sayings should therefore not be sought from this *ἐστίν*, even though this has traditionally been a focus of debate in historical discussions about the nature of the elements of communion (i.e., Roman Catholic *transubstantiation*, in which the consecrated element actually becomes or “is” the body or the blood; Lutheran *consubstantiation*, in which the body and blood of Christ are present *alongside* the bread and wine; Reformed theology of the *real presence* of Christ in the Lord’s Supper; and the *memorial-sign* view of Ulrich Zwingli and most Baptists, in which the verb “is” means “signifies”). For Jesus the supper involved a total life-giving procedure: by hearing Jesus’s blessing of the bread and his additional words to them, then taking and eating the bread he broke and distributed to them, the disciples gained a share in the one who was about to go to death for them vicariously. *The “bread” that Jesus distributes to his table guests is he himself, who gives them new life before God through his sacrificial death and prepares them a place at the heavenly table.* Jesus’s blessing of the bread, the breaking of the bread, the word of institution, the distribution to the disciples, and the eating combine to form a messianic symbolic act in which fellowship (*κοινωνία*) is established before God between Jesus and his table companions, for whom he offers up his life (cf. 1 Cor. 10:16–17).

The main Passover meal followed after this initial bread saying. The time could have been spent in “table talk” about what Jesus meant by his word of institution, and what sorts of hopes and obligations might follow for the disciples from Jesus’s readiness for sacrifice. Luke 22:21–38 seeks to give an impression of such parting conversations, including Peter’s rash offer to accompany Jesus to his death and Jesus’s advice that his disciples buy swords in the face of coming persecution.

5.3 The issues with Jesus’s cup saying are very similar to those surrounding the bread saying. The Jewish table custom provided only for a short word of prayer or blessing to be spoken at the end of the main meal

over the “cup of blessing.” But Jesus raised the cup, spoke this blessing, then added: *τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν*, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many” (Mark 14:24). He then had the Twelve drink from this one cup. As with the bread saying, the Markan version of the cup saying is the most primitive and its content the most difficult. It explains the parallel versions more easily than the assumption that the wording of Mark 14:24 (Matt. 26:28) developed only subsequently from Luke 22:20 or 1 Corinthians 11:25. What Mark’s saying means becomes clear only when one exactly follows the biblical language and expectation surrounding it.

Exegetically, it is to be observed that the Greek phrase *τοῦτό* (*γάρ*) *ἐστιν*, “this is,” in Mark 14:24 (Matt. 26:28) refers by metonymy to the cup and its contents, and that the helping verb *ἐστίν* once again was added only at the stage of translation into Greek. (The same holds for 1 Corinthians 11:25 if one seeks to translate the Pauline text back into Aramaic.) Again it is important to pay attention not only to the identification of the cup’s contents with Jesus’s blood, but also to the whole context of action surrounding the cup saying: *Jesus’s blessing over the cup, the common drinking of all disciples from this one cup, and the word of institution once again form a messianic symbolic action.*

What this symbolic action means is shown by the individual formulations. As we have seen, the *common cup* that Jesus passed around the table already has great symbolic value: In anticipation of the messianic feast on Zion, Jesus gives each of his twelve disciples a drink from the one “cup of salvation” that will be extended to Israel (cf. Ps. 116:13). But this cup gives a share in Jesus’s “blood of the covenant” that is “poured out for many.” Again Jesus gives himself to his disciples with the greatest thing he has to give—his life, contained in his shed blood, offered up for “the many.” By their common drinking from the one cup, Jesus’s disciples gain a share in his atoning death’s saving power. This opens the way to their participation in the end-time feast of the thanksgiving sacrifice on Mount Zion (Isa. 25:6–8).

The language of the *blood of the covenant* in the context of the Passover meal recalls the ritual of Exodus 24:8. After the reading of the book of the covenant, Moses sprinkled the “blood of the covenant” upon the assembled people in order to seal the covenant (obligation) which God established

(and made obligatory) for Israel at Sinai. Although the connection of this blood with atonement (cf. כפר) is not made in the Hebrew text of Exodus 24, the ancient Aramaic Targums already speak about the atoning power of the blood of the covenant. *Targum Onqelos* on Exodus 24:8 says (with words not in the Hebrew text italicized): "Moses took the blood and sprinkled it *on the altar to atone for the people,* and he said, '*Here, this* is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words'" (trans. B. Grossfeld, ArBib 7). The presentation of *Targum Yerushalmi I* is almost identical.

From this historical standpoint there need be no controversy about the *atonement-theological meaning of Jesus's "blood of the covenant."* That such controversy nevertheless continues to flare up today depends above all on the sense of theological foreignness that the biblical atonement tradition has aroused since the Enlightenment in Europe. But exegetically and dogmatically, this ought not keep us from facing the idea of atonement that is constitutive for the biblical understanding of the death of Jesus.

In order to understand the biblical *atonement tradition*, one must have a clear historical idea of two contexts: the Old Testament and early Jewish view of the life order determining all creaturely being, and the atonement texts themselves.

The payment of a "ransom" for the forfeited life of an individual or the entire people (see above, 148–50, §2.2) is required because otherwise the life order destroyed by human misdeeds cannot be restored. Behind this practice lies a concept encountered particularly in the wisdom texts of the Old and New Testaments of a *fixed connection between a human action and its results*, to which K. Koch has drawn attention by speaking of "a deed's fate-determining sphere" (*schicksalwirkende Tatsphäre*). In the essay collection he edited in 1972, *Um das Prinzip der Vergeltung in Religion und Recht des Alten Testaments* ("The Principle of Retribution in the Religion and Justice of the Old Testament"), Koch describes the fundamental principle of the wisdom literature's understanding of order as follows: "The deed forms an invisible sphere around the doer through which the corresponding fate will be effected; the deity watches over this interpersonal order and continually reinforces it where it threatens to weaken" (xi; cf. further K. Koch, "Is There a Doctrine of Retribution in the Old Testament?"). This so-called "action-consequences connection" (*Tun-Ergehen-Zusammenhang*) determines biblically speaking not only the social world of experience but also the transcendental realm: Only the vicarious surrender of life by the innocent Servant made possible by God, understood partly as a discharge of guilt (Isa. 53:10), partly as a ransom, is able to deprive the misdeeds of the many of their force, thus creating for the many a new right of existence before God. Because the Old Testament word for a "ransom," כֹּפֶר (*kōper*), is derived from the root כפר (*kpr*), "to make atonement," certain commonalities exist between the ideas of ransom and atonement.

Atonement is spoken of in the Old Testament and early Judaism in noncultic and cultic contexts. As far as cultic atonement is concerned, there can be no talk whatsoever of the idea summarized by the Latin phrase *do ut des*, "I give in order that you might give," that is, the human attempt to appease the wrath of God with the help of a ritual sacrifice, as assumed in research up to and including L. Köhler, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (1953[3]), 188. (Translator's note: Unfortunately, Köhler's emphasis on the cultic aim of the "appeasement" or *Beschwichtigung* of God is completely lost on the English translator, A. S. Todd. He understands a *Beschwichtigungsgeruch* or "appeasing fragrance" as nothing more than a "sweet savour," and *was zur Beschwichtigung Gottes dient*, "what serves for the appeasement of God," as simply "what God likes"! Cf. Koehler, *Old Testament*

Theology [1957], 196–97.) Atonement rather involves *appropriating something God himself has instituted*: Yahweh allows and enables Israel to meet with him despite all their iniquity, without requiring that the individual or the nation perish before him in their earthly guilt and fallibility. The nonnegotiable founding principle of the cultic-priestly type of thinking is that God in his holiness cannot and will not coexist with sin and its effects. Impurity, sin, and unrighteousness must rather perish before God (cf. Isa. 6:5; Exod. 33:20). The helpful and wonderful thing about the atoning cult is that it makes possible a meeting between the holy God and the unholy people: God has allowed and made a way for things that are evil and unholy to be deprived of their force and destroyed through priestly mediation, so that new fellowship is established between God and Israel. This happens through the transfer of both the personal subject and the personal guilt of an individual or group onto a pure, ritually unblemished sacrificial animal. Instead of the person or persons, the animal is killed and its blood dedicated to the holy altar. This symbolic sacrificial consecration is both a “surrender of life to the holy” (*Lebenshingabe an das Heilige*) and a “coming to God that consists of passing through the death sentence” (*ein Zu-Gott-Kommen durch das Todesgericht hindurch*), as H. Gese has nicely formulated it in his essay “Die Sühne” (98, 104; cf. ET: “The Atonement,” 107, 114).

By means of the *tāmîd* offering, the “regular” or “perpetual” burnt offering that had to be offered every day at morning and evening (cf. Num. 28:3–8; Exod. 29:38–42; *Jub*. 6:14; 50:11), Israel could daily be redeemed from its guilt. The atoning cult reaches its high point in the *Day of Atonement* ceremony which is to be performed once a year, and whose ritual is described in a rudimentary form in Leviticus 16 (and in the Mishnah tractate *Yoma*). The place of “atonement” (German: *Versühnung* [cf. *Sühne*]) and therefore also of “reconciliation” (*Versöhnung*) between God and humanity is this time not the altar alone, but includes also the temple’s most holy place, the holy of holies. Within this sacred chamber, withdrawn in the dark from all human eyes, is the so-called ark of the covenant. Upon this chest containing the covenant is a “top piece” (Gk. ἐπίθεμα) consisting of a flat golden slab or plate with the figures of cherubim at either end, beaten into shape from the same material as the plate (for ἐπίθεμα, cf. Exod. 25:17; Philo, *Moses* 2.95, 97; *Flight* 100; Josephus, *Ant*. 3.135, 137). While this object is physically a “top piece” upon the ark, theologically it is a one-of-a-kind artifact that has always been given a special name—Hebrew: כַּפֹּרֶת (*kappōret*); Greek: ἱλαστήριον; Latin: *propitiatorium*; German: *Gnadenstuhl*; English: “mercy seat” (the term “cover” in REB, NJPS, and NRSV margin at Exod. 25:17–22 is philologically inappropriate to the Hebrew כַּפֹּרֶת and too pedestrian to capture the object’s significance; see below, 833–35, on Philo’s understanding of the Pentateuchal ἱλαστήριον in *Moses* 2.96). According to Exodus 25:22, the mercy seat is the place where Yahweh will meet his people and from which he will deliver his commands to them. On the Day of Atonement the high priest, as the representative of Israel, enters the holy of holies, fills it with incense, and sprinkles the blood of the sin-offering goat delivered to death in place of the people seven times before the mercy seat and once upon the mercy seat. With this rite of sacrificial consecration (see above), the priest establishes new fellowship between God and Israel. Returning from the holy of holies, he gives the blessing of Aaron to the people waiting before the temple as a sign of their having been atoned for (cf. Sir. 50:20–21).

How little this cultic procedure has to do with a human attempt to appease the angry God is shown by the wording of Leviticus 10:17 and 17:11. According to Leviticus 10:17, the sin offering is “given” by God, while Leviticus 17:11 says in the form of a divine address: “For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you for making atonement for your lives on the altar; for, as life, it is the blood that makes atonement.”

The blood is the carrier of the life that belongs to God, and the atonement ritual (of Lev. 16:14) is accomplished by the medium of blood that God has both ordained for atonement (Lev. 17:11) and withheld from all human use (Lev. 17:10). The whole atonement procedure is therefore a symbolic act of grace: *God himself opens the way of the cultic ritual; he establishes sacrifice and provides*

blood as the means of atonement. By this means the people that is otherwise under the judgment of death is atoned for and reestablished in its existence before God. Atonement, forgiveness of sins, and new creation belong most closely together in the atonement ritual (cf. Heb. 9:22).

If the idea of atonement is transported into the extracultic realm, nothing changes in its basic conception. The intercessions of Moses (Exod. 32:30), Aaron (Num. 17:11–12 [ET 16:46–47]), or the Levites (Num. 8:19) likewise did not appease God's wrath but rather pleaded for God's forgiveness and gracious dealings for the benefit of those concerned. Atonement remains God's own act of grace. Therefore we may compare the confession of the worshiper in 1QH 17:34–36 and especially in 1QS 11:13–15 (*DSSSE* 99):

He will draw me near in his mercies,
and by kindnesses set in motion my judgment;
He will judge me in the justice of His truth,
and in his plentiful goodness always atone for all my sins.
In his justice he will cleanse me
from the uncleanness of the human being
and from the sin of the sons of man,
So that I can give God thanks for his justice,
and The Highest for his majesty.

The cup saying of Mark 14:24 is clearly at home in the extracultic realm and is to be related to the events of the end. Jesus's "blood of the covenant" is therefore credited with the power to make end-time atonement: Jesus's life is contained in the blood of the covenant, and he gives it up vicariously in order to open a new life before God to the "many." In the Old Testament the expression *to shed blood* (דָּם שָׁפַךְ) means "to put a person violently to death" (cf., e.g., Gen. 9:6; Num. 35:33; Deut. 21:7; etc.). Therefore when Jesus speaks in Mark 14:24 par. of his "blood of the covenant . . . poured out for many," he is thinking about the violent death he has to undergo and the vicarious surrender of life to be accomplished in this death "for many"—ὑπὲρ (Matthew: περὶ) πολλῶν. The expression οἱ πολλοί, "the many," means the uncountable great throng and alludes (as in Mark 10:45) to Isaiah 53:11: "by his suffering my servant will justify *many* by taking their guilt upon himself." Although the πολλοί are to be understood as including first and foremost Israel according to Isaiah 53:11, from the perspective of Isaiah 52:14–15 the Gentile nations are also in view.

In the cup saying Jesus appears again as the Lord’s Servant, who through his vicarious suffering and death establishes end-time justification for Israel and the nations. If one takes together the passion prediction of Mark 9:31, the ransom saying of Mark 10:45 par., the bread saying, and the cup saying, one can see that the ideas of an end-time ransom, of discharge of guilt or of the guilt offering, of justification through the vicarious death of the Servant, and of eschatologically effective atonement through Jesus’s blood of the covenant all belong most closely together. As in Second Isaiah (cf. Isa. 43:1–5; 53:5–6, 10–12), these ideas formed a unit in the proclamation of Jesus that functioned as a given for the kerygma of the early church.

Exodus 24:9–11 relates that Moses together with Aaron and his sons and seventy of the elders of Israel climbed Mount Sinai after the people were sprinkled with the blood of the covenant. At the top they were able to behold God and have a meal before him without perishing as sinners before his glory: “God did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; also they beheld God, and they ate and drank” (Exod. 24:11). In his cup saying Jesus apparently had this meal scene in view, and from its perspective he looked forward to the end-time table fellowship before God (cf. Isa. 25:6–8). The perspectival combination of the meal on Mount Sinai with the meal of the nations on Mount Zion is already present in Isaiah 24–27: In Isaiah 24:23 the anticipation of the eschatological meal of the nations in Isaiah 25:6–8 is typologically connected to God’s manifestation of his glory before the elders in Exodus 24:9–11. As the messianic Son of Man whom he will yet declare himself to be this very night before the high priest (cf. Mark 14:61–62), Jesus does not wish to lend force only to the Sinai covenant of Exodus 24 with his “blood of the covenant.” Rather, beginning with the Twelve, whom he has symbolically gathered around him, Jesus wants to make the “many” his table guests at the end-time fellowship meal upon Mount Zion, corresponding to the meal on Mount Sinai in Exodus 24:11. This is the meal of “fulfillment” to which Jesus looks forward in Luke 22:16 and Mark 14:25 par. Jesus’s blessing over the cup, his word of institution, his passing of the one cup around the circle, and the common drinking from it belong together: *by hearing Jesus’s word, taking the cup of blessing offered to them as the cup of salvation (Ps. 116:13), and drinking together out of it, the Twelve gain a share in Jesus’s blood of the covenant, experiencing the saving power of Jesus’s death that freshly and finally unites them with God. A place is reserved for them at the messianic table, at which they may live in peace with God and their meal companions, singing the thanksgiving song of Isaiah 26:1ff.*

The *(Markan) cup saying* is unusually densely formulated, with each element full of meaning and content. Although it needs no literary correction or decomposition, it does need to be followed exactly. One cannot very well claim that the bread saying and the cup saying are schematically parallel in Mark if one wishes to allow each its original wording.

The Markan cup saying (Mark 14:24) is once again the origin of the parallel versions. This can be seen by the further interpretation of the Markan version both in Matthew and in the tradition of Paul and Luke. Matthew provides the saying of Mark 14:24 with an addition about *forgiveness*: *τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυννόμενον εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*, "for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many *for the forgiveness of sins*" (Matt. 26:28). This expanded interpretation is materially fully justified, because the goal of the event of atonement that God put into effect through Jesus is the establishment of new life through the forgiveness of sins.

The striking similarity between Luke's and Paul's text is explained most readily by the assumption that both go back to the proto-Lukan passion tradition that was at home in Antioch and originated in the tradition of the Jerusalem "Hellenists" around Stephen. Both Luke 22:20 and 1 Corinthians 11:25 point out that Jesus took the cup only "after supper." In Luke's narrative this means that the cup Jesus took was the third cup, which concludes the main Passover meal—the so-called cup of blessing, *τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας* (1 Cor. 10:16). But his interpretation does not dwell on this—liturgically by no means unimportant—detail. Instead it addresses the question that remains open at the superficial level of the texts in Mark 14:24/Matthew 26:28: For what type of "covenant" has Jesus shed his "blood of the covenant" (Exod. 24:8)? The fully correct biblical answer involves the new covenant according to Jeremiah 31:31–34, opened through Jesus's vicarious surrender of his life. Therefore the cup saying in 1 Corinthians 11:25 reads: *τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ αἵματι*, "This cup is the new covenant [sealed] in my blood," while Luke clarifies it by the addition of a *ὑπέρ* clause: *τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐν τῷ αἵματί μου τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐκχυννόμενον*, "This cup is the new covenant [sealed] in my blood, *which is poured out for you*" (Luke 22:20). With this formulation the tradition of Paul and Luke leads forward in a sensible way, yet at the same time avoids the suspicion that could easily arise for Jewish ears in Mark's version that Jesus required the Twelve at his last supper to drink his own blood (prohibited in Lev. 17:10–11). The content of Luke and Paul's version of the cup saying is more easily understood than that of Mark and Matthew, and less offensive for both Jewish and Gentile Christians. It thereby shows itself to be a further development, perfectly understandable in a missionary context, of the old but potentially offensive cup saying of Jesus preserved by the apostles' memory and contained in Mark.

It is often assumed that the Pauline-Lukan cup saying is original and took on the more difficult and readily misunderstood form in Mark and Matthew only in the course of transmission. But this assumption can hardly be verified: in its original setting the tradition of the "new covenant" that later appears in Paul and Luke was inherently connected neither with the motif of the blood (of the covenant) nor with the messianic feast of Isaiah 25:6–8. The connection of the new covenant with both of these themes in 1 Corinthians 11:25 and Luke 22:20 results only from Mark 14:24–25, where Exodus 24:8–11, Isaiah 24:23, and 25:6–8 are coupled with Jesus's end-time act of atonement in the form of the shedding of his "blood of the covenant." Because Paul by his formulation in 1 Corinthians 10:16–17 also betrays a knowledge of the Markan tradition of institution, from the tradition-historical standpoint there is much more in favor of proceeding from Mark to Paul and Luke than vice versa.

Jesus's cup saying (like the bread saying) may have been followed by a series of conversations with his disciples at the last Passover (cf. Luke 22:21–38). When the conversations were over, the disciples together with Jesus sang the second part of the Passover *hallel* (Pss. 115–118) and drank the fourth or *hallel* cup. Then they went out to the Mount of Olives (Mark 14:26). The fact that Jesus did not spend the night as usual in Bethany (cf. Mark 11:11b par.) but in the Garden of Gethsemane finds its explanation in the regulation of Deuteronomy 16:5–7 that the Passover night should be spent in

the place of God’s choosing, which by this time meant the city precincts of Jerusalem. In order to make room for the pilgrim masses that streamed to Jerusalem for the Passover festival, the city area was extended for Passover night to the Mount of Olives, on which the garden lies. Judas, who obviously knew Jesus’s plan, gained his opportunity to betray Jesus to the temple guard in this way (cf. Mark 14:32ff. par.).

How the early Christian “Lord’s Supper” (1 Cor. 11:20) developed out of Jesus’s last (Passover) supper is a topic for later discussion (see below, 234–37, §§2.5.2–4). The aim here has merely been to reconstruct what Jesus said and did during his last Passover supper with the Twelve in Jerusalem, and what can be inferred from this about his understanding of his suffering and death.

This reconstruction is nevertheless decisively important for the *understanding and formation of Christian celebrations of the Lord’s Supper*: ever since the early church was founded, the celebration has been determined not in the first instance by Jesus’s symbolic table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners or by the symbolic feeding of the people of God (cf. Mark 6:34–44; 8:1–8 par.), but by Jesus’s supper activities “on the night when he was betrayed [by Judas]” or was “delivered up [by God]” (1 Cor. 11:23; cf. Rom. 4:25). The remembrance, or anamnesis (ἀνάμνησις), expressly required of the celebrating church in 1 Corinthians 11:24–25 and Luke 22:19 corresponds to the requirement in Exodus 12:14; 13:3, 8; and Deuteronomy 16:3 that the Passover celebration include remembrance of Israel’s salvation history, and it constitutes the Christian counterpart to the remembrance required of later Jewish generations in the Mishnah tractate *Pesahim* 10:5 (see above, 154–55). In the act of remembering during the Lord’s Supper, the Christian church, as the vanguard of the new people of God, continues the remembrance of Israel’s salvation history and expands it to include Jesus’s passion. The church practices this remembrance under the hope expressed by the prayer *μαράνα θά*, “Our Lord, come!” (1 Cor. 16:22), until the day of the parousia (1 Cor. 11:26). Looking back from the perspective of Easter upon Jesus’s mission, passion, and resurrection, the church once again takes part in Jesus’s last supper and the events “on the night when he was betrayed [by Judas]” and “delivered up [by God].” In this way the church becomes aware of its salvation-historical place on the way of the people of God from Sinai to the end-time Zion, and is strengthened in its hope of the parousia.

6 Looking back, we can see that the question of how Jesus understood his suffering and death need not remain unanswered. The conclusion to be drawn from the tradition of the death of the prophets in Luke 13:31–33, the passion prediction of Mark 9:31 par., the ransom saying of Mark 10:45 par., and the two words of institution of Mark 14:22, 24 par. is clear and unmistakable: *Jesus knowingly and willingly went to his death. He understood this as a vicarious atoning death for the many, both Israel and the nations.* The atoning death of Jesus is not an act of appeasement or satisfaction over against the angry God. Rather, it is the vicarious saving act of the messianic Son of Man in the name and authority of the God who out of love for his chosen people Israel (cf. Isa. 43:3–4) wants to bring

justification and salvation to the guilty many through the sacrifice of his Servant.

This result is of great theological significance: the soteriological interpretation of the death of Jesus in the early Christian kerygma (cf., e.g., 1 Cor. 15:3b–5; Rom. 4:25) does not in the first instance originate from the interpretive will of the post-Easter church to explain the event of the cross on Golgotha from Isaiah 43:3–4, 52:13–53:12, and the Old Testament atonement tradition. Rather, it corresponds to the messianic will of Jesus to complete his mission and sacrifice, about which he told his disciples already before Easter. The saving dimensions of the early Christian missionary gospel are therefore precisely prefigured for the church in Jesus's teaching and destiny. If one wants to summarize this content in a christologically precise way, one can say that *Jesus took suffering and death upon himself out of love for God and humanity. Because he was the messianic "mediator and reconciler"* (to borrow the language of the Reformation [see below, 83), *the apostolic missionary gospel became the "word of reconciliation,"* ὁ λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς *(2 Cor. 5:19).*

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CHAPTER 11

The Consequence of Jesus's Mission: Passion and Crucifixion

The summary of the gospel message in Acts 10:36–43 has thus far shown itself to be historically well founded. About the goal reached by Jesus's mission the report says merely: "We [apostles] are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree" (Acts 10:39). Behind this terse formula dependent on Deuteronomy 21:22–23 are hidden the passion events, including Jesus's death. In turning our attention to these events, we proceed from the thesis established in chapters 9 and 10: *Jesus's passion and death were the historically unavoidable consequence of his mission as the messianic Son of Man, taken up willingly and without reservation*. This will become clear as we study the opponents that Jesus encountered in the course of his ministry, why he had to reckon with his death from the beginning of his ministry in Galilee but nevertheless proceeded to Jerusalem, how he behaved during his last Jerusalem appearance, and what his death on the cross meant for his friends and foes.

1 All the Gospels report that even in Galilee, Jesus's ministry encountered not only mutual love but also harsh rejection (cf. only Mark 3:6, 21, 22; 6:4–6 par.). Agreement and opposition also marked his way from Galilee to Jerusalem (cf. Luke 9:51–56; 13:31–35). Eventually this opposition reached a critical mass, when Jesus's personal claims and his message about the imminent kingdom of God caused both the representatives of the major Jewish groups and the political authorities in the land to turn against him.

1.1 Jesus opposed the *Pharisaic ideal* of Levitical piety and purity in everyday life and the *Essene* halakah oriented to the priestly standards by several means: by his leveling of the distinction between clean and unclean (cf. Mark 7:15 par.; Matt. 23:23–24), by his novel understanding of the double commandment of love for God and neighbor (cf., above all, Luke 10:25–28, 29–37, and Matt. 25:40, 45), and by his messianic claim to be the fulfiller of the Torah (cf. Matt. 5:17). Jesus's seemingly totally free behavior

regarding the Sabbath and his demonstrative contacts with the uneducated, non-law-keeping common people of his day only added another reason to make the Pharisees and Essenes his enemies (cf. Luke 7:34/Matt. 11:19; Luke 15:2).

1.2 The militant apocalyptic zeal of the *Jewish Zealots* was opposed by Jesus's parables of growth, which speak of the hidden growth of the kingdom of God and dissuade the listeners from trying to establish the kingdom through their own power (cf., e.g., Mark 4:26–29). But it is not only Jesus's proclamation that must have alienated the Zealots; he also extended the love commandment to apply to the Roman oppressors and the Zealots' religious opponents (cf. Matt. 5:41, 43–48 par.) and declared the Zealots' religiously based opposition to the Roman poll tax to be a matter of indifference (cf. Mark 12:13–17 par.; see above, 93, §2.3).

1.3 The *Sadducees* constituted the lay and priestly nobility in Jerusalem, and at the time of Jesus they also formed the majority in the Sanhedrin. Therefore they must already have felt attacked by Jesus's woes against the rich (Luke 6:24–25; cf. also Mark 10:23, 25 par.). Jesus's temple action with its demonstrative undermining of the trade in sacrificial animals and currency exchange (Mark 11:15–17 par.; John 2:13–22), both of which were carried out on the orders and with the blessing of the high priestly families, as well as Jesus's saying about the destruction of the temple (Mark 14:58 par.; John 2:19), were an almost unsurpassable provocation for this group. Because of this behavior, they lobbied for Jesus's execution, and they were also the ones in Jerusalem who after Easter persecuted first the apostles Peter and John (Acts 4:1–22), then Stephen and his circle (Acts 6:8–7:60), and finally the Lord's brother James, who was put to death in AD 62.

1.4 Jesus's Galilean ruler *Herod Antipas* had already had John the Baptist executed for fear of an uprising (see above, 73). Because Jesus's ministry likewise attracted public attention, and because his movement could have developed into a political revolt just as easily as had John the Baptist's, Herod and his clientele had a hostile attitude toward Jesus (cf. Mark 3:6; 8:15; 12:13 par.; and Luke 13:31–33). The fact that Pilate, after a little hesitation, also entered judicial proceedings against Jesus and asked Herod about the charges against him (cf. Luke 23:6–12) is no accident, but

results from the interest of the Roman occupying power to nip in the bud any uprising in the land.

At the close of his ministry, Jesus therefore saw himself literally standing against a whole world of enemies; the most powerful among them were the Sadducees (and the Romans).

2 Although the martyrdom of Jesus's teacher John the Baptist served as a warning, Jesus nevertheless made his way to the Passover festival in Jerusalem in AD 27 or 30 (see above, 67–68), following the Jewish pilgrimage custom (cf. Deut. 16:5–7). The warnings of well-meaning Pharisees and the reservations of his disciples did not dissuade him from this path. Jesus apparently wanted one more opportunity to confront the Jews who were streaming from the whole world to the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread with his message (G. Bornkamm and T. Holtz). He was aware that he could meet his death more quickly in this way (cf. Luke 13:31–33; Mark 8:31–33 par.). The mysterious logion about his needing to undergo a baptism of death (cf. Mark 10:38 par.) also points in this direction. If this saying as well as the one in Mark 11:29–30 par. are understood from the perspective of Jesus's baptism by John the Baptist, then it shows that *from the beginning of his call to public ministry, Jesus saw himself on a course of suffering that would end in Jerusalem*. If one adds that Jesus's temple action, which happened immediately after his arrival in Jerusalem, was a messianic symbolic act challenging the temple priesthood to heed his call to repentance (see below), then the following perspective results: *Jesus went to Jerusalem not only willingly, but self-consciously seeking a decision about his ministry*. He fully expected to be persecuted by the Sadducean priesthood if the Jewish leaders closed their minds to him and his message.

This perspective, combined with the one arising from Jesus's sayings about his readiness to undergo vicarious atoning death for Israel and the nations in chapter 10, contradicts R. Bultmann's critical assumption that on his journey to Jerusalem, Jesus "scarcely reckoned on execution at the hands of the Romans, but only on the imminent appearing of the kingdom of God" (146). According to Luke 13:31–33 and Mark 9:31 par., it was no secret to Jesus how numerous and powerful his opponents were. He therefore anticipated both a hearing and resistance in Jerusalem.

There is still more: If Jesus did not want to give up on his mission as messianic Son of Man and wanted to avoid handing over to divine judgment all who had opposed him, despite their rejection of his person and message (cf. Mark 8:36–38 par.; Luke 13:34–35/Matt. 23:37–39), then he had only one last chance of acting for their salvation: he could hold open to them the possibility of repentance and future protection from the divine death sentence through his intercession and vicarious atoning death as the Servant (cf. Luke 22:31–32; 23:33–46). Instead of seeing his mission as a failure, fleeing, or irrevocably burdening his enemies with the charge of having resisted the call to repentance of the God-sent messianic Son of Man, Jesus chose the way of vicarious death for his friends and foes, holding open to them the way of faith and future salvation according to Isaiah 53:11–12. If one sees matters in this way, then Jesus's words about the suffering before him in Jerusalem, his deliberate entrance into the Holy City, and his concern for a decision of the Jewish leaders about his person and message constitute not a contradiction but the completion of his messianic mission. *Jesus traveled to Jerusalem as the messianic "mediator and reconciler" and suffered death on the cross, fulfilling his very being.*

3 Before we deal further with these contexts, we must face the radical (historical) criticism that has long been exercised on the passion narratives of all four Gospels. This can be summarized in exemplary fashion by a quotation from H. Conzelmann. About the historical reliability of the four accounts of Jesus's passion, Conzelmann writes: "The scope of what we can ascertain for certain is minimal. The certain core fact is that Jesus was crucified. From this it can be deduced that he was arrested and brought to trial, and that this trial was a Roman one, since crucifixion is a Roman, not a Jewish death penalty. All else in the course of events is contested. There is agreement, however, that the passion story as we read it bears the marks of intensive theological interpretation" ("Historie und Theologie in den synoptischen Passionsberichten," 74–75).

As a development from Bultmann (see above, 146), Conzelmann's view is consistent. But it originates from a one-sided criticism that is not conducive to a well-founded and differentiated historical judgment. It must also be acknowledged that J. Blinzler, in his book *The Trial of Jesus* (*Der Prozess Jesu* [1969^4]), which summarizes decades of historical work, reaches a completely different conclusion from Conzelmann, favoring the almost total reliability of the passion traditions. Although this raises the opposite suspicion of a one-sided apologetic for authenticity, the contrast of Conzelmann and Blinzler in any case forces us to form our own opinion. In so doing we ought not overlook the study of A. Strobel, *The Moment of Truth: Studies of the Penal Proceedings against*

Jesus (*Die Stunde der Wahrheit: Untersuchungen zum Strafverfahren gegen Jesus* [1980]). Strobel shows that most of the modern criticism of the passion presentations of the Synoptics and John becomes superfluous as soon as one proceeds from legal history and accounts for the following fact: Jesus was seen by the high priests and the members of the Sanhedrin as a false prophet (cf. Deut. 13:2–6 [ET 13:1–5]) and a religious "impostor," "beguiler," or "deceiver," Greek ὁ πλάνος, as in Matthew 27:63 (cf. Deut. 13:7–12 [ET 13:6–11]). The πλάνος leads the people away from the Lord, as in LXX Deuteronomy 13:6a (ET 13:5a), πλανῆσαί σε ἀπὸ κυρίου, "to lead you astray from the Lord." There are two corresponding Hebrew expressions: (1) מַדִּיחַ, *maddîaḥ*, the hifil ptc. of נדח, "to entice," "to seduce" (*HALOT* 2:673), derived from Deuteronomy 13:6b (ET 13:5b), "to *seduce* you from the way"; (2) מֵסִית, *mēsît*, the hifil ptc. of סות, "to mislead, incite" (*HALOT* 2:749), derived from Deuteronomy 13:7 (ET 13:6): "if your brother *entices* you." Significantly, we know that these laws from Deuteronomy 13 were still in force in the Second Temple period: see 11Q19 (11QTemple) 54:8–56:11. Jesus was therefore sentenced to death in accordance with Deuteronomy 13:2–12 (ET 13:1–11), 17:12 (and 18:20).

According to the Mishnah and Tosefta, Jewish law considered the case of a religious deceiver, *maddiah* or *mesit*, to be so serious that it allowed various forms of entrapment, not allowed in other cases, to catch the suspect "by stealth" (ἐν δόλῳ), as in Mark 14:1 par. See *m. Sanhedrin* 7:10: "they may not set witnesses in concealment against them [i.e., people who may become subject to the death penalty] except only in this case" of a *mesit* (similarly *t. Sanh.* 10:11). Furthermore, one cannot kill the false prophet or deceiver just anywhere or at any time, but only in Jerusalem at festival time (cf. Mark 14:2 par. with *m. Sanh.* 11:4). The execution is supposed to do justice to Deuteronomy 17:12–13: "that person shall die. So you shall purge the evil from Israel. All the people will hear and be afraid, and will not act presumptuously again." Strobel's reconstruction is consistent with the finding that the Jewish accusation of Jesus as a "deceiver" repeatedly had to be dealt with (and refuted) by Christians, from Matthew 27:63 (πλάνος) through John 7:12 (πλανᾷ τὸν ὄχλον) and on to the second century with Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 69.7 (λαοπλάνος), 108.2 (πλάνος) (text: M. Marcovich, ed., *Iustini Martyris Dialogus cum Tryphone*, 191, 255). J. Gnilka objects that "seducing" or "beguiling" in the Jewish legal texts means only leading the people astray to worship idols, of which Jesus could not have been accused (*Jesus von Nazaret*, 308n69). But this objection does not take into account the texts from Matthew, John, and Justin, and misunderstands on the Jewish side the breadth of the possibility for incrimination as a *maddiah* or *mesit* according to Deuteronomy 13:2–12 (ET 13:1–11), 17:12 (cf. with Mark 14:60–64 par.; John 18:19–23), and 18:20. Moreover, the connotations of the *Aramaic Apocalypse*, 4Q246, must be considered (see above, 135). If one follows Strobel, then the high priests and the Sanhedrin did not pervert the Jewish legal practice in their proceedings against Jesus.

The current radical historical skepticism concerning the Gospel narratives of the passion events can therefore be countered by the kerygmatic stories of the four Evangelists. According to our analysis and Strobel's book, the Evangelists have given us a clear view of the historical basis and course of the legal proceedings against Jesus: *because of the offensiveness of his messianic claim, Jesus was arrested by the Jews, accused of the religious deception of Israel, and handed over to Pilate with the charge of being a messianic impostor worthy of death*.

4 In support of this conclusion, the following considerations may be advanced:

4.1 According to our current understanding of source criticism, the synoptic and Johannine presentations of the passion are supported on the whole by three strands of source material: a pre-Markan, a pre-Lukan, and a pre-Johannine passion narrative; Matthew's passion story builds upon the Markan narrative and therefore does not represent an independent source. The three strands speak in unison about the passion of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, but they also have individual kerygmatic tendencies.

The (probably oldest) narrative in Mark presents Jesus's path of suffering according to the basic pattern of the "suffering righteous one," best known from Psalms 22 and 69 (but also, e.g., Wis. 2:12–20; 5:1–7; cf. with Isa. 52:13–53:12). God uses the suffering righteous one to establish his kingdom, demonstrating in this figure his saving power for all the pious. If one keeps this tradition in view and recalls that Jesus actually understood his way of suffering from Isaiah 43:3–4 and 52:13–53:12, then Mark's passion presentation, including the final scene in Mark 15:38–39, becomes understandable: with Jesus's death on the cross the temple curtain, which separated the holy of holies from the rest of the temple and which could be passed through only once a year by the high priest on the Day of Atonement (cf. Lev. 16:2–15), was torn in two from top to bottom, freeing up the Most Holy Place. This means that Jesus's atoning death as the suffering righteous one or Servant opens up "access to God," *ἡ προσαγωγὴ εἰς τὸν θεόν* (Rom. 5:2), without any further priestly cultic mediation. The cross on Golgotha does away with the Jerusalem temple as the place of atonement and reconciliation of humanity with God.

The *Lukan passion narrative*, which is independent of Mark, likewise sees Jesus's suffering as the passion of the suffering righteous one and Servant (cf. Luke 22:35–38; 23:14, 47), who obediently follows the way that God has set out for him in the Holy Scriptures (cf. Luke 24:44–45). But Luke stylizes Jesus's death beyond Mark in terms of Jewish martyr theology, so that Jesus goes to his death with the certainty of immediate glorification. One sees this new accent already in the composition of Jesus's prayer struggle in Gethsemane (Luke 22:43–44), in his intercession as the crucified one for his enemies (cf. Luke 23:34 with Isa. 53:12), in his conversations with the two other crucified men (Luke 23:39–43), and in his last word of confidence in Luke 23:46, quoting Psalm 31:6 (ET 31:5). However, whereas the Jewish martyr prays for his people in the light of approaching death, but hands over his enemies to God's judgment (cf. 2 Macc. 7:30–38), the Servant, according to Isaiah 53:12 (and *Tg. Isa.* 53:12), makes intercession for the transgressors. (The presentation of Stephen's martyrdom in Acts 7:54–60 shows how highly Luke values this passion presentation: Stephen is the first Christian blood witness, and he dies like his Lord; cf. Acts 7:59–60 with Luke 23:34, 46.)

The main accent of the *Johannine passion narrative* lies in its presentation of Jesus as the messianic king who has gone unrecognized by his opponents, whose kingdom is not of this world (cf. John 18:36), and who completes his mission of saving the world (cf. John 3:16) by making atonement for the sins of his "friends" (John 15:13–15) through being "lifted up" on the cross (cf. John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 34). The saying with which Jesus concludes his life runs as follows: *τετέλεσται*, "it is finished" (John 19:30). This alludes to Genesis 2:2 and Isaiah 55:11, making the death of Jesus, the Logos sent by God (John 1:1), the basis of the new creation (M. Hengel).

In sum, in all three passion narratives Jesus's suffering is interpreted in dependence upon the Old Testament as an end-time saving work of God, in and through his son Jesus, for humanity separated from God because of sin.

4.2 If one seeks to penetrate these three kerygmatic historical narratives to their historical core, one encounters an obviously very *old scheme of the passion presentation*.

As J. Jeremias has shown in his book *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 89–105, this early narrative scheme included at least the following elements, which can be identified by their location in Mark's Gospel:

the Jewish leaders' decision to seek the death of Jesus (Mark 14:1–2 par.)

Jesus's prediction of Judas's betrayal, and the betrayal itself (Mark 14:10–11, 18–21, 43–47 par.)

Jesus's final decision in Gethsemane (Mark 14:32–42 par.)

Jesus's arrest (Mark 14:43–47 par.)

Jesus's trial by the high priests and members of the Sanhedrin (Mark 14:53–65 par.)

Peter's denial (Mark 14:66–72 par.)

Jesus's handing over to Pilate (Mark 15:1 par.) and his trial before him (Mark 15:2–5 par.)

Barabbas's release (Mark 15:6–14 par.)

Pilate's condemnation of Jesus to death (Mark 15:15 par.)

the soldiers' mocking of Jesus (Mark 15:16–20a par.)

the carrying of the cross (Mark 15:20b–21 par.)

the crucifixion on Golgotha (Mark 15:22–37 par.)

the burial of Jesus (Mark 15:42–47 par.)

in various forms: the discovery of the empty tomb on Easter morning by women from Jesus's home area, and the Easter appearances (Mark 16:1–8 par.)

In all four Gospels this narrative scheme is preceded by the report of Jesus's entry into Jerusalem (Mark 11:1–10 par.), his temple action (Mark 11:15–17 par.), and the so-called question of authority (Mark 11:27–33 par.). (John reports the temple act already in 2:13–17 and has the Sanhedrin's death sentence grow out of the interest that many Jews took in Jesus's raising of Lazarus; cf. John 11:45–53.)

Whether the overall complex of the Lord's Supper tradition (Mark 14:12–31 par.) also originally belonged in this narrative cycle is not certain. But neither is it improbable, in view of the remark contained already in the pre-Pauline tradition, "that the Lord Jesus *on the night when he was betrayed* took a loaf of bread" (1 Cor. 11:23), and the traces of the Johannine reworking and reformulation of the synoptic tradition in John 13:10, 26.

4.3 This old narrative scheme must once again be checked for historical content; for each of the individual scenes reported by the Evangelists, it must be critically asked which presentation has the greatest historical probability. If one proceeds in this way and controls the results by reference to the historical and judicial circumstances, one arrives at a presentation in

which considerably more authentic data are preserved than simply the fact of Jesus's crucifixion by the Romans.

4.3.1 Jesus went to Jerusalem on the occasion of the Passover festival of AD 27 or 30. He did not only accept his salutation as the Messiah of peace, but soon thereafter he also symbolically carried out his *messianic action in the temple.* This action is "the immediate occasion for the measures taken against Jesus by the authorities" (Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 145 [modified]).

We have already made clear that the temple action in all probability was a messianic symbolic action of Jesus and that it took place mainly in the Royal Portico, in which temple business was conducted (see above, 97–98, §4.5). The oldest and at the same time most precise report of the event lies in Mark 11:15–17. Matthew follows the pattern of Mark and intensifies it (cf. Matt. 21:12 with Mark 11:15), but he leaves out the difficult detail in Mark 11:16 that "he would not allow anyone to carry [any vessel] through the temple" (see below). Luke 19:45–46 gives only a short report dependent on Mark. The Gospel of John reports about the temple action (intentionally) already in John 2:13–17, going beyond the original historical details (cf. John 2:14–15 with Mark 11:15) and providing material for later reflection by the disciples (cf. 2:17, 22 with 12:16; 14:26). Nevertheless, there are two historically believable elements in John's report: First, the temple action and the question of authority apparently belong immediately together (cf. John 2:18–22 with Mark 11:27–33 par.). Second, Jesus's saying about the destruction of the old temple and the building of a new one by God (John 2:19; cf. with Mark 14:58 par. and Exod. 15:17–18), which the Jews eventually brought against him, seems to have been said in the course of the temple action in Jesus's dispute with his priestly opponents. The saying contains a messianic prophecy (see above, 97–98, §4.5) and is reinterpreted in John 2:21 as a prophecy by Jesus of his own death.

As to the meaning of this symbolic action of Jesus, E. P. Sanders believes that it was an advance announcement of the destruction of the temple. But if one follows the text (of Mark) exactly, it is more probable that Jesus actually wanted to cleanse the temple for the new messianic worship service.

This interpretation is suggested above all by Zechariah 6:12–13, 14:20–21, and Jesus's concrete actions directed against the conducting of business in the temple: For three weeks before the Passover, the money changers had their tables set up where festival pilgrims could exchange their

money for the Tyrian currency that was valid in the temple; the pilgrims could also get ritually pure sacrificial animals from the animal dealers. Hindering both of these demonstratively, as Jesus did, meant fundamentally calling into question the basic business of the temple, together with its sacrificial cult. The detail from Mark 11:16, which is difficult and therefore original, points in the same direction: "he would not allow anyone to carry anything [literally any *vessel* (σκεῦος)] through the temple" (NRSV; cf. ASV). Jesus wanted to prevent the carrying of special containers "between the temple market and the interior parts of the temple" (J. Ådna, *Jesu Stellung zum Tempel*, 264). Early Jewish texts consider the Sadducean high priesthood corrupt because of its wealth and its brutal collection methods for past-due contributions, for example, the tithe (cf., e.g., Josephus, *Ant*. 20.181, 206–207, and *b. Pesah*. 57a; *t. Menah.* 13:21). According to Mark 11:17, Jesus's action stood under the aegis of Isaiah 56:7 on the one hand ("My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples") and the prophetic scolding in Jeremiah 7:11 of the people of Judah who were treating the temple like a "den of robbers" on the other hand (cf. also Zech. 14:21).

A profaning of the temple by corrupt priests and an "atoning" cult that continued to operate independently of his messianic call to repentance is something that Jesus could and would no longer tolerate. With his symbolic act in the temple, he challenged the priesthood to repent, give up its exploitative business, and follow his message. As Jesus was drawn into debate with the chief priests and other leaders and asked about his authority to do such things (cf. Mark 11:27–33 par.), he alluded to the divine commission given to him through baptism by John. This was, so to speak, the last straw, providing the concrete occasion for suspecting that Jesus was a *mesit* or *maddiah* according to Deuteronomy 13 (see above). Accordingly, the extremely provoked high priests, together with a few scribes, that is, Sanhedrin jurists, devised a plan to get rid of Jesus (cf. Mark 11:18; 14:1–2 par.).

4.3.2 After further sharp debates between Jesus and the Jewish leaders and scribes (cf. Mark 12:1–12 par. and 12:38–40 par.) and Jesus's pronouncement of judgment upon the unrepentant city of God and the temple (cf. Luke 13:34–35/Matt. 23:37–39; Mark 13:1–2 par.), a man from the circle of the Twelve, Judas Ἰσκαριώθ (i.e., probably "Judas from Kerioth," cf. BDAG 480), offered the high priest his help in capturing Jesus (Mark 14:10–11 par.). Why Judas made this offer cannot be determined from the oldest text.

If one follows the Synoptic chronology, then Jesus was arrested on the night of the 15th of Nisan by the Jewish temple guard in Gethsemane, a garden plot on the Mount of Olives (cf. Mark 14:43–52 par.). That Jesus after his last Passover supper with the Twelve went to Gethsemane and not, as usual, to Bethany (cf. Mark 11:11 par.) is explained by the fact that the

Passover night had to be spent in Jerusalem and that the western slope of the Mount of Olives on which Gethsemane lay was considered part of the city area of Jerusalem for this one night (see above, 163). Judas must have known these night quarters. As he used a welcome kiss to show the temple guards which man they had to apprehend, Jesus did not seek to avoid arrest either through flight or self-defense.

4.3.3 Jesus was first brought to the head of the high priestly clan, Annas, who had been high priest himself during the years AD 6–15. He was also the father-in-law of the current high priest Caiaphas, who held office AD 18–36. After preliminary discussions with Annas, Jesus was taken bound to Caiaphas, and in his palace, before the quickly assembled members of the Sanhedrin, he was tried for his messianic claims (cf. Mark 14:53–65 par. with John 18:13–24). That their suspicion was well founded and that Jesus's behavior fulfilled the conditions of Deuteronomy 13:2–12 (ET 13:1–11), 17:12, 18:20 in the eyes of his opponents is something we have already made clear. According to Mark 14:61–62 par., Caiaphas was able to force Jesus to make a public confession of his messiahship and to convict him of blasphemy when he said that he was destined, as the Son of God, to become the future Son of Man and Judge of the World (see above, 133–36, §6). On the basis of this confession the Jewish leaders were able to bring charges against Jesus and hand him over to the prefect Pilate accused of being a messianic impostor who was also dangerous to Rome (cf. Mark 15:1–5 par.). Handing him over to Pilate was necessary because the Sanhedrin could not carry out the death penalty by itself (cf. John 18:31).

In the light of the Jewish charges, the Roman governor had to inflict a summary punishment (*coercitio*). Jesus was accused of high treason (*perduellio*) and impairment of the Roman government authority (*crimen maiestatis imminutae*). To Pilate's surprise, Jesus made no attempt during the trial to defend himself against these accusations. Because Pilate apparently was not convinced that Jesus was guilty of any serious crime, he first attempted to present him as "a religious enthusiast who posed no threat to public life" (Strobel, *Die Stunde der Wahrheit*, 117), and he sought to exchange Jesus for Barabbas, who was supposed to receive the Passover amnesty. Barabbas is called a "rebel" (στασιαστής) in Mark 15:7 and a "bandit" (λῃστής) in John 18:40.

According to Mark 15:6 par., the Passover amnesty was a regular judicial custom. It is confirmed by Josephus, *Antiquities* 20.208, and by *m. Pesahim* 8:6 and *b. Pesahim* 91a (see Strobel, 118ff.). It is one of the main arguments in favor of the Johannine passion chronology, on the assumption that the prisoner would be released on the day of preparation for the Passover (cf. John 19:14, 31). But in favor of the synoptic chronology, it is possible that Pilate kept Barabbas in custody over the Passover night because, as a "rabble-rouser," he was especially dangerous to Rome, then sought to prevent his release the next day by offering to free Jesus instead of him.

When this maneuver failed, Pilate finally found it necessary to have Jesus flogged and then to sentence him to crucifixion (Mark 15:6–15 par.).

Crucifixion in the Roman Empire was the usual cruel deterrent for political agitators of low status. As such, it was also applied to Jesus. Cicero describes it as the *crudelissimum taeterrimumque supplicium*, the most "cruel and disgusting penalty" that can be laid on a person (*In Verrem* 2.5.165, *The Verrine Orations*, LCL 2:650–51). Josephus likewise sees it as "the most pitiable of deaths" (θανάτων ὁ οἴκιστος) (*J.W.* 7.203).

The title on the cross was a Roman and not a Christian formulation: ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, "the king of the Jews" (a Christian version would have read: ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ, "the king of Israel"). It demonstrates that Pilate had Jesus executed for the possible political consequences of his messianic claim (cf. Mark 15:26 par.). The time and place of the crucifixion were meant by the Romans to serve as a warning, but in fact they also corresponded to the procedure in Deuteronomy 13:12 (ET 13:11) and *m. Sanhedrin* 11:4, according to which a "deceiver" had to be executed in the presence of all Israel in Jerusalem during one of the pilgrimage festivals. In Jesus's time the place of execution, Golgotha, was located in the midst of an open quarry directly before the city gates, perfectly visible to everyone.

4.4 Jesus's downfall was therefore brought about by the Jewish leaders and Pilate together because of his claimed messianic mission, which both sides found intolerable. Pilate rendered a suspected messianic agitator harmless at the right time. The high priests and the members of the Sanhedrin eliminated a *maddiah/mesit* whose ministry had shaken the foundations of the traditional faith of Israel. According to all four passion narratives, the Jewish leaders generally prosecuted Jesus in a legally correct way. (As if aware that a nighttime trial would have been illegal—cf. later *m. Sanhedrin* 4:1—Luke says that the full Sanhedrin did not meet for a verdict against Jesus until the morning of the crucifixion; cf. Luke 22:66. Nevertheless, the objection remains that according to the Mishnah, the Sanhedrin should not have met on a festival day and should have allowed at

least two days for a capital case; see again *m. Sanhedrin* 4:1, end. Perhaps the procedure at the time of Jesus was less regulated.) By contrast, Pilate vacillated back and forth and finally followed political expediency. Jesus did not even attempt to avoid the threatened outcome. His execution on the cross was therefore a willingly borne *consequence of his messianic mission*. Bultmann’s critical idea that Jesus may have suffered a breakdown in view of his impending death (see above, 146) can be substantiated only if one considers all sayings in which Jesus speaks of his death or his fear of it to be secondary, and declares any historical reconstruction of the Jewish and Roman legal proceedings against him to be impossible. Such a principled historical skepticism is justified neither by the synoptic nor by the Johannine source material.

5 Against the foregoing analysis there could be brought at this point only one more potential problem, namely, the *scene of Jesus’s death* described in Mark 15:33–37 par. Jesus’s last word is a cry of dereliction in the Aramaic language, transliterated in Greek letters (ἐλωϊ ἐλωϊ λεμα σαβαχθανι; = “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?”) and then translated into Greek for Mark’s readers: ὁ θεός μου ὁ θεός μου, εἰς τί ἐγκατέλιπές με; “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mark 15:34 par.). This depicts Jesus on the cross separated from God in the deepest possible earthly isolation. Nevertheless, this last word does not signal Jesus’s failure. It is dependent upon Psalm 22:2 (ET 22:1), and its Aramaic version specifies it as a very personal cry of prayer. The word presents Jesus in a God-forsakenness which he must endure as the “suffering righteous one” until he loses his life (cf. Ps. 22:3, 12–16 [ET 22:2, 11–15]), but from which he will also be saved by God’s will for eternal life before and for God (cf. Ps. 22:23–32 [ET 22:22–31]). According to the kerygmatic presentation of Mark 15:34–36 par., Jesus appears not as the one in doubt of God or his mission, but rather as the obediently suffering righteous one, who in the throes of death prayerfully entrusts himself to “his God,” thereby hoping to share in the final deliverance from the death sentence. Jesus dies according to Mark in the “confident despair” of the Son of God, who has been obedient to his heavenly Father even to the point of death on a cross.

If one follows the biblical texts instead of critical speculations, then the following picture results: *Jesus took upon himself the passion and crucifixion as a consequence of his messianic mission. He did so with the*

goal of opening up future access to and peace with God even for his enemies by means of his own life, surrendered to make atonement for "the many." According to Romans 5:1–2, 11, this is the quintessence of καταλλαγή, the atonement and reconciliation made possible by God through Jesus's sacrifice. In his readiness for suffering and sacrifice, Jesus understood himself to be carried by Israel's existing faith traditions about the suffering of the prophets and the righteous (Pss. 22; 69), the ransom given by God himself for the redemption of Israel from judgment (Isa. 43:3–5), and the Suffering Servant (Isa. 52:13–53:12). It would be historically arbitrary to assume that this entire Old Testament–early Jewish tradition complex was projected onto Jesus's fate only after Easter and used to make soteriological sense of his death on the cross after the fact.

6 Finally, there is the question of how the historical event of Jesus's crucifixion and death affected his followers and opponents. The answer can be given in a single sentence: *For Jesus's followers his death on the cross was a terrible event without parallel, but for his opponents it was the deservedly cursed death of a pseudomessianic "deceiver" and blasphemer prefigured by the Torah*.

6.1 How deeply Jesus's arrest and crucifixion affected his disciples and followers can best be seen from the fact that despite all the prophecies of his death, they all deserted him (cf. Mark 14:50, 53–54, 66–72 par.). When Jesus was crucified and died, he was surrounded, according to Mark 15:40–41 par., only by women from his home area, namely, Mary from the city of Magdala in Galilee, Salome, and Mary the mother of Joses; according to John 19:25–27, there were also Mary the wife of Cleopas, Jesus's mother Mary, and "the disciple whom Jesus loved." A well-meaning member of the Sanhedrin, Joseph of Arimathea, asked Pilate for the body, kept it from being desecrated, and arranged for its quick interment in a stone tomb in a garden near Golgotha that Joseph had ordered to be made for himself (cf. Mark 15:42–47 par. with Deut. 21:23 and Josephus, *J.W.* 4.317). Except for a very few, Jesus's followers had scattered out of fear of persecution and disappointment of their messianic ideals and hopes (cf. Luke 24:21). The synoptic and Johannine traditions are not silent about the failure of the disciples, but at the same time they also make clear that before Easter, Jesus's disciples had been unable to comprehend his teaching about his vicarious death, including his eucharistic words of institution. Jesus's death robbed them of their power, and the only way still open to them appeared to

be the one followed by the disciples of John the Baptist: to venerate their dead leader as a martyr, to preserve his deeds and words in their memory, and, in view of his grave, to hope for his resurrection on the last day.

6.2 Matters stood very differently with the Jewish opponents of Jesus. For them Jesus had met his end on the cross as one cursed by God (Deut. 21:22–23); he died the death he deserved for his insolent attempt to mislead Israel into a new type of faith in God.

In all historical probability, the proven application of Deuteronomy 21:22–23 to Jesus's crucifixion found in Paul (Gal. 3:13) and the speeches in Acts (cf. Acts 5:30; 10:39; 13:29) is to be traced back to Jewish roots. Deuteronomy 21:23 says, according to the Masoretic Text as well as the Septuagint, that everyone who hangs on a "tree," that is, on a cross, is cursed by God. As the Qumran *Temple Scroll* documents, this Scripture verse was applied already in pre-Christian Judaism to the crucifixion of Jews who had betrayed or done evil against their people; hanged on the cross, they counted as "those cursed by God and man" (cf. 11Q19 [11QTemple] 64:6–13, esp. line 12, *DSSSE* 1287). Therefore it was only natural for the Jewish leaders of his day to view the pseudomessiah Jesus, nailed to the cross, as a person cursed by God. Jewish interpretation of Jesus's death on the cross against the background of Deuteronomy 21:22–23 is then attested in the middle of the second century by the Jew Trypho in Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* 32.1; 89.2 (cf. D. P. Bailey, "'Our Suffering and Crucified Messiah,'" 373–79, 383–84, 389–99, 390n83, 402–6). (On the whole issue see G. Jeremias, *Der Lehrer der Gerechtigkeit* [1963], 133 with n. 6.)

6.3 For the Romans, finally, Jesus's execution was a politically expedient shock tactic. This is clear from the title on the cross. They did away with a seemingly dangerous messianic impostor from Galilee, like many other potential or actual rabble-rousers before and after him (cf. Acts 5:35–37), in order to solidify their own rule in Palestine.

If one keeps in view this threefold reaction to Jesus's crucifixion, then it can be seen that Jesus's ministry would have remained an early Jewish prophetic episode had the Easter events not confirmed his prophecy of his death and expectation of exaltation, and provoked a new interpretation of the passion events and his mission as a whole.

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CHAPTER 12

Who Was Jesus of Nazareth?

Jesus's ministry ends with an open question: Who was this man and what should we think of him? The question was posed differently for Jesus's disciples and for his opponents, yet Jesus's death on the cross made it unavoidable for both. Under these circumstances it is fitting for us as well to form a concluding opinion about Jesus's person and work before moving on to the Easter events.

Up until now we have been studying Jesus by asking about the historical foundation of the old sermon about his life and mission in Acts 10:34–43 (see above, 61–62, §6), and supplementing this with the question about the messianic horizon of the Old Testament and early Judaism, which points forward to Jesus. Now it is time to summarize.

1 Looking back at Jesus's proclamation and work, we can confirm that *the narrative kerygma about Christ in Acts 10 has proved itself to be historically well founded*. Acts 10:36 borrows language from Psalm 107:20, Isaiah 52:7, and Nahum 2:1 (ET 1:15) to present Jesus as the word of God in person promised to Israel and the nations, through whom God himself preaches end-time "peace" (i.e., salvation) and the dawning of his kingdom. As long as one does not devote oneself to principled skepticism over against the sources but rather follows their witness with "critical sympathy" (W. G. Kümmel), this view of Jesus appears neither arbitrary nor as a subsequent formation of faith. Rather, it corresponds objectively to Jesus's claims about his messianic mission and his proclamation of the kingdom of God: Because Jesus ministered as the messianic Son of Man—that is, as representative of God before humanity and of humanity before God—and suffered death on the cross, the Easter witnesses have every right to see him as the God-sent messianic evangelist of the end-time peace. It is, moreover, appropriate for them to do so because Jesus himself applied Isaiah 61:1ff. and 52:7 to his messianic mission (cf. Luke 4:16–21; Luke 7:18–23/Matt. 11:2–6; Mark 1:14–15). But this means that the preaching in the early Christian churches and mission is a historically legitimate proclamation

about Jesus as the Christ of God. Or to formulate it with A. Schlatter: *The earthly Jesus was none other than the Christ of faith*.

2 A second conclusion is that *Jesus's mission and work stand at the crossroads of the Old Testament and early Jewish expectation of the messianic future*. This expectation includes the following five components: (1) God and his kingdom; (2) God's mediator; (3) God's people; (4) the Torah; and (5) God's dwelling place or inheritance. Jesus's proclamation fits closely together with each of these themes:

2.1 The dawning of God's "kingdom" (βασιλεία) and the kingdom of Zion itself stood at the center of Jesus's proclamation (Mark 1:14–15 par.). Jesus saw Yahweh as the one God of Israel, the "Father" (αββα), and he taught his disciples to pray for the hallowing of God's name and the coming of his kingdom (cf. Luke 11:2/Matt. 6:9–10). At the same time, he dared to live out the kingdom of God in a symbolic manner: the kingdom gains ground as the merciful love and saving righteousness of God, working through Jesus's words and actions, and helps the "poor," exemplarily mentioned in Isaiah 61:1–2, to achieve new life before and with God. God's kingdom is consummated in the messianic feast upon Mount Zion (cf. Luke 13:28–29/Matt. 8:11–12; Mark 14:25 par. with Isa. 25:6–8). By his sacrificial death Jesus consecrated the Twelve as representatives of the new people of God in the kingdom of God (Mark 14:22–24 par.).

2.2 The prophetic announcement of the coming of the messianic "son of God" (2 Sam. 7:14; Pss. 2:7; 89:27–28 [ET 89:26–27]; Isa. 11:1–8; etc.) and Son of Man (cf. Dan. 7:13) was familiar to Jesus from the Holy Scriptures. John the Baptist, in his preaching of repentance, had pointed to the "stronger one" (ἰσχυρότερος) coming after him, that is, the messianic Son of Man and Judge of the World. Ever since his baptism by John, Jesus publicly identified himself with this stronger one and thereby decisively modified the early Jewish expectation of the Son of Man: Jesus lived out his earthly witness as the Son who is completely obedient to God (cf. Luke 4:8/Matt. 4:10; Mark 14:36 par.) and as the Servant of God who out of love gives his life as the ransom for Israel and the means of discharging the guilt of the many (cf. Mark 10:45; 14:22–24 par.). Jesus's answer to the messianic expectation of his day therefore says: I myself am the promised one (cf. Matt. 11:2–6/Luke 7:18–23), who gives himself up for Israel and

the nations in God's name, thereby newly establishing God's kingdom over a world separated from him (cf. Mark 8:29–30; 9:9; 14:61–62 par.).

2.3 It is soteriologically fundamental already for the Old Testament that God has chosen his own people out of free grace and that despite all the people's unfaithfulness and failure, God does not terminate his faithfulness but rather out of love and mercy helps the people reach salvation and the end-time kingdom (cf. Hos. 11:8–9; Isa. 43:1–7; Dan. 7:13–14, 18, 27). By choosing twelve disciples and involving them in his work of proclaiming the kingdom of God (Mark 3:13–19 par.), by making them rulers of the end-time people of the twelve tribes (Luke 22:28–30/Matt. 19:28), and by shedding his "blood of the covenant" for them (and for his enemies) as the Servant (Mark 14:24), Jesus strengthened and realized the Old Testament expectation of salvation. In the mission of Jesus and his disciples, God was and remains gracious and faithful to his chosen people Israel. Jesus also gave those Gentiles who were called to faith a share in the salvation of the end-time people of the twelve tribes (cf. Mark 7:24–30 par.; Luke 7:1–10/Matt. 8:5–13; Mark 11:17). His vicarious surrender of life on the cross was also meant for them according to Isaiah 52:13–53:12. Nevertheless, before Easter they were only the indirect addressees of the gospel of the kingdom of God (cf. Matt. 10:5–6; 15:24).

2.4 Jesus had considerably high regard for the Sinai Torah and the will of God it contained. For this reason he saw himself sent not to destroy the law but to fulfill it (Matt. 5:17), particularly in the double commandment of love for God and neighbor that Jesus heightened into the love for enemies (Matt. 5:17; Luke 6:27–36/Matt. 5:38–48). In this way God's instruction at Sinai entered into the Torah of the messianic Son of Man.

2.5 For Israel it stood (and stands) as an established belief that in the end time, God and his chosen people will possess the land of their inheritance. God will take up residence in Israel in his sanctuary on Mount Zion, and by his dwelling among them, the land promise will be fulfilled (cf. Ezek. 37:26–27; 43:7, 9; Zech. 2:14–15 [ET 2:10–11]; Sir. 24:7–12). The nations will make a pilgrimage to Mount Zion, from which instruction will go forth to the whole world (Isa. 2:2–4; Mic. 4:1–4). On this mountain God himself will host a feast for all nations and destroy "the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations" (Isa. 25:6–8). Jesus's compassion for Jerusalem (Luke 13:34/Matt. 23:37), his cleansing

of the temple as "a house of prayer for all nations" in accordance with Isaiah 56:7 (Mark 11:15–17), and his expectation of the meal of the thanksgiving sacrifice upon Mount Zion (Mark 14:25 par.) can be explained only in the light of this expectation, which Jesus both shared and strengthened.

If one looks back at Jesus's person and work in this way, then it becomes clear that *Israel's messianic expectations found very specific confirmation in Jesus's proclamation*. They will find their final fulfillment in the parousia of the Son of Man, expected by Jesus himself and hoped for by early Christianity.

3 Under these circumstances, it can be helpful for the ongoing presentation to find a theological designation under which Jesus's person and work can henceforth be summarized and understood.

From a historical standpoint the first terms that suggest themselves are the traditional biblical expressions "Messiah" and "Son of Man." They are already given to us in the Gospel tradition and together express who Jesus was and what his earthly mission was about. The problem is that Jesus put such a new stamp on these terms, compared to their usual meaning in the Old Testament and early Judaism, that he burst their boundaries (E. Schweizer). By living his life before God in the consistent obedience of a son and desiring no homage as the Son of Man, but rather offering up his life for friends and foes and confessing during his Jewish and Roman trials that he was a Messiah without earthly claims to power, Jesus pursued his mission in a way that cannot be derived in a straight line from the Old Testament–early Jewish tradition. Jesus was more than a prophet filled with God's Spirit, more than the Davidic Messiah, and also more than the messianic Son of Man of the Enoch tradition. He ministered in independent divine authority as the *Son of God* (cf. Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 10:21–22/Matt. 11:25–27), and he suffered as the *Servant of God* (Mark 10:45 par.; 14:22–25 par.). By being both the Son of God and the Servant of God, Jesus gave the predicates "Son of Man" and "Messiah" a new dimension. What both titles say from a Christian perspective has ever since been determined not by the Old Testament–Jewish tradition alone, but above all by Jesus himself: *he was, in one person, the representative of God on earth and the representative of humanity before God*.

Jesus's goal was to establish new fellowship between God and Israel. His mission climaxed in the vicarious surrender of his life for the many on the cross on Golgotha. This is intended to benefit both Jesus's friends and foes, and both Jews and Gentiles. If one wants to find a term to summarize Jesus's being and ministry from the perspective of his passion and atoning death, then the Reformation concept of Jesus as the "reconciler/atoner and mediator" ("Versuhner [*sic*] und Mittler," cf. 1 Tim. 2:5) in the Augburg Confession 21:2–3 commends itself (*BSLK* 83b, §§2–3; the partially parallel Latin text has "mediator, mercy seat [*propitiatorium*], high priest, and intercessor"). For Jesus as mediator and reconciler/atoner elsewhere in the Book of Concord, see the Apology 21:17, "Mittler oder Versühner," for Latin "propitiator" (*BSLK* 320, §17) and 24:57, "mediator et propitiator" (366, §57). (Translator's note: Translations in R. Kolb and T. J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord* [2000], corrected to read *propitiatorium* = "mercy seat" in Confession 21:2–3, rather than the "atoning sacrifice" of the translator E. Gritsch, which reflects the NRSV at Rom. 3:25 rather than the original Latin; cf. ibid., vii, 58n118, and further criticism below, 855–56.)

The designation that captures Jesus and his work most exactly is that of the messianic atoner and reconciler (almost indistinguishable in German: *Versühner*, *Versöhner*). Jesus ministered and died on the cross as the messianic reconciler, who was controversial on earth because of his work and will always remain controversial.

4 When we designate Jesus as the messianic atoner and reconciler, then his message about the kingdom of God, together with its implicit teaching about the will of God, gains a clear contour. Jesus knew that people can receive the kingdom of God and salvation only like little children (cf. Mark 10:15 par.). They themselves can neither realize the kingdom nor force it to come with a Zealot's zeal; they can only request its coming from God (cf. Luke 11:2/Matt. 6:9–10). While it therefore depends on God alone to establish the salvation of the world, he has obligated those whom Jesus has accepted in his name to follow the double commandment of love for God and neighbor (cf. Mark 12:28–34 par.). With this double commandment Jesus aimed at getting people to worship the one God whom he called his "Father" and to practice love for their neighbors, which he intensified into love for enemies. Jesus's disciples are to practice this kind of love in response to God's love and mercy toward them. Those who follow Jesus are

not expected to do everything possible, but the one thing necessary: by the practice of love they must prove themselves to be Jesus's witnesses and God's children. Out of the reconciliation they have experienced in and through Jesus, they should promote reconciliation and thereby provide a sign that the kingdom of God has already dawned in Jesus's mission. Although the βασιλεία is not a goal that can be reached by human action, for Jesus's disciples it is both the motive for action and the object of hope.

5 Except for a very few, Jesus's followers stumbled over his death in Jerusalem, while Jesus's opponents saw the crucified one meet his end under God's curse (cf. Deut. 21:23). It must therefore be asked precisely in view of the cross what became of Jesus and the reconciliation he established. The post-Easter church could not have stood up to the world or won Jews and Gentiles to faith in Jesus Christ had their only answer been: Jesus was (and remains) an exemplary witness of faithfulness and humanity whose ethical cause we must now carry on. As worthy of consideration as such a judgment about Jesus may be, it is insufficient to account for the work of world mission. *Early Christianity gained its astonishing historical strength only by experiencing that Jesus had been raised by God and exalted to his right hand*. Because Jesus appeared to his disciples (μαθηταί) not only before but also after Easter as the messianic atoner and reconciler with whom God has identified himself once for all, they received power to confess him as "Lord and Christ" and to proclaim him as such among Israel and the nations (cf. Acts 2:36).

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PART TWO

The Proclamation of the Early Church

With Jesus the reality of salvation about which Christian faith speaks made its historic and promising entrance into the world. This became completely clear when shortly after Jesus's crucifixion on Golgotha and burial, historically completely unexpected developments took place.

Carried along by the confession that God had raised Jesus from the dead and made him "Lord and Messiah" (Acts 2:36), the disciples of Jesus returned to Jerusalem from their journey to Galilee (cf. Matt. 28:7, 10, 16–20), and under Peter's leadership, formed the first Christian church in the Holy City. Jerusalem was the citadel of Jesus's opponents, but it was also the focus of all of Israel's end-time hopes (cf. Isa. 2:2–4; 25:6–26:6; Mic. 4:1–4; etc.). Ever since the first Feast of Weeks after Jesus's crucifixion (cf. Exod. 23:14–17; 34:22; Lev. 23:16; Deut. 16:9), that is, since Pentecost, this church congregation began to develop global missionary impulses and rapidly grew into two groups: a primarily Aramaic- and Hebrew-speaking group and a Greek-speaking group of converted Jews—the so-called "Hebrews" (Ἑβραῖοι) and "Hellenists" (Ἑλληνισταί) (cf. Acts 6:1). For their communal religious life, both groups needed confessions and teaching texts, prayers and liturgical rules for the celebration of baptism and the Lord's Supper; they also had to develop doctrinal statements and forms of communication for their mission. *Therefore, already in the early church in Jerusalem, there was a need of thoughtful penetration of the faith with a view to its essential contents and goals, that is, of theological reflection and the formation of Christian teaching.* Formulas needed to be developed for both groups in the church and hence in both Aramaic (Hebrew) and Greek.

After Stephen's martyrdom and the expulsion from Jerusalem of the Hellenists gathered around him (cf. Acts 7:54–8:3), the mission church in Antioch of Syria, on the Orontes River, was founded by the scattered members of Stephen's circle. It was in Antioch that believers in Jesus were first called "Christ-partisans" or *Christians*, Χριστιανοί (cf. Acts 11:26). From Jerusalem the Christian mission advanced as far as Rome (cf. Acts

2:10 with Rom. 16:7), while from Antioch, Christian missionaries evangelized Syria, Asia Minor, and Greece. Like the Jerusalem church, the Antioch church also needed theological reflection and Christian teaching for its life and mission.

Most of the missionaries and witnesses who carried on the Christian life and mission in Jerusalem and Antioch are no longer known to us. Their testimony and the early "teaching of the apostles" (*ἡ διδαχὴ τῶν ἀποστόλων*) that they followed (cf. Acts 2:42) are now reflected only in the reports of the Acts of the Apostles, the letters of Paul, the three Synoptic Gospels, partly in the Gospel of John, and probably also in the Letter of James. Because this "teaching of the apostles" forms the foundation upon which Peter, Paul, John, and all later figures built and which they further developed theologically, a biblical theology of the New Testament cannot fail to trace the basic lines of this early tradition.

The next three chapters focus on Jesus's resurrection, the beginnings of Christology, and the early understanding of the church and its practices. In terms of both method and content, these topics require considerable effort. All the traditions of the initial period must be made to emerge from the New Testament books, which were written or finally edited only decades after the foundation of the churches of Jerusalem and Antioch. However, as long as the theology of the New Testament is not to disintegrate into a disparate collection of different faith testimonies but is rather to be understood as an admittedly nonhomogeneous, but nevertheless coherent, whole determined by Jesus and his historical ministry, then the attempt to reconstruct the beginnings of early Christian instruction must be made.

CHAPTER 13

Jesus's Resurrection from the Dead

Historically speaking, the disappointment and fear of Jesus's disciples and the triumph of his opponents did not prevail. Some of the women who had followed Jesus, including Mary of Magdala, Mary mother of James, Salome, and others, found Jesus's tomb empty on the third day after his crucifixion (Mark 16:1–8; John 20:1–18). From that day forward Jesus appeared to many people. These include well-known disciples like Peter and John, as well as unknown figures like the two disciples on their way to Emmaus (Luke 24:33–35). They include the circle of the Twelve constituted anew by Peter in Jerusalem, then a crowd of more than five hundred brothers at one time, then James the Lord's brother (cf. Mark 3:20–21; John 7:5) and the assembled group of "all the apostles" (perhaps gathered around James), and finally Paul. All these witnesses appeared on the scene publicly confessing that Jesus of Nazareth had appeared to them in new heavenly life and that God had therefore raised the crucified one from the dead (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3–8; John 20:11–21:14).

The old kerygma attributed to Peter in Acts 10:34–43, which we have already used as a guide for the presentation of Jesus's proclamation (see above, 61–62, §6), ties together these events in the following way (vv. 39b–43):

> [39]They [sc. the Jews] put him to death by *hanging him on a tree* [Deut. 21:22–23]; [40]but God raised him *on the third day* [Hos. 6:2] and allowed him to appear, [41]not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. [42]He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. [43]All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

This presentation nicely illustrates three things: that the disciples considered Jesus's appearances to be an act of God without parallel; that

Jesus appeared not just to anyone but only to a certain circle of persons; and that these appearances led to mission. One can see in Acts 10:39–43 that Easter was the decisive date for at least three developments: the (re)awakening of faith in Jesus as “Lord and Messiah,” the establishment of fellowship (including table fellowship) with the risen Jesus and therefore the establishment of his church, and the formation of the Christian missionary witness. *Only the Easter events enabled the Christian revelation to develop out of the exciting messianic work of Jesus which had ended in the dark riddle of the cross*. In the light of Easter, Jesus’s proclamation and passion received their due weight, and his resurrection by God made him finally appear as the “Son of God with power” (Rom. 1:4) who is superior to all prophets and martyrs and has been installed as the end-time Savior and judge. Easter “completed” (A. Vögtle) God’s revelation in and through Jesus so that he, as the crucified Messiah exalted to God’s right hand, became the essential content of the gospel. The enormous significance of Easter calls for an exact consideration of what happened historically after Jesus’s burial and how the early Christian Easter message developed.

1 In order to reach an appropriate understanding of the New Testament Easter texts, one must keep three considerations in view.

1.1 No New Testament author or character claims to have seen the event of Jesus’s resurrection or to have been able to describe it as an eyewitness. Not until the apocryphal *Gospel of Peter* in the middle of the second century is the resurrection presented in legendary fashion as an event that happened publicly before the eyes of the Roman guards at the tomb (cf. Matt. 27:62–66) and the Jewish elders who were rushed to the scene from Jerusalem (cf. *Gospel of Peter* §§28–49, in W. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 1 [1991^2], 185–86). There can be no doubt that this is a tendential apologetic presentation. By contrast, the New Testament texts present Jesus’s resurrection *not as an observation of a fact, but in the form of a confession.*

1.2 The New Testament texts dealing with Jesus’s resurrection can be divided into three main groups: (1) *confessional formulas* (cf., e.g., Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:3–5; Rom. 4:25; 10:9; etc.); (2) *reports of the discovery of the empty tomb* (cf. Mark 16:1–8 par.; John 20:1–13); (3) *short reports or longer stories about Jesus’s appearances*—whether to individuals among the earliest disciples and women companions of Jesus (cf. 1 Cor. 15:5; John

20:1–18; 21:1–14), to several disciples gathered together (cf. 1 Cor. 15:7; Luke 24:13–35, 36–43; John 20:19–23, 24–29; Matt. 28:16–20), to James the Lord's brother (1 Cor. 15:7), or to Paul (1 Cor. 15:8). In addition, we find direct and indirect testimonies about the resurrection in the *titles of Christ* (cf., e.g., Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5), in *early Christian sermons* (cf., e.g., 1 Thess. 1:10; Acts 2:31ff.; 5:30–31; 10:39ff.; 13:29ff.), and in the *stories of Paul's call* (cf. 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8; 2 Cor. 4:1–6; Gal. 1:12, 15–16; and Acts 9:3ff.; 22:6ff.; 26:12ff.).

1.3 These various materials were subjected to certain tendencies of presentation in the course of the formation and transmission of the resurrection traditions:

1.3.1 Resurrection appearances that were originally set in Galilee or outside Jerusalem, but also in the Holy City, were concentrated upon Jerusalem. This had the effect of locating the decisive revelatory event at the holy place specially chosen by God (cf. Luke 24:33–53; Acts 1:3–11; John 20:1–29).

1.3.2 In view of doubts among Christians (cf. Luke 24:36ff.; John 20:24ff.; Matt. 28:17) and from the side of their opponents (cf. Matt. 27:62–66), Jesus's appearances were historically concretized and chronologically fixed. Accordingly, whereas in confessional, hymnic, and formulaic texts like 1 Corinthians 15:3–5, Romans 1:3–4, Philippians 2:6–11, Acts 2:32–36, etc., Jesus's resurrection and exaltation to God's right hand are seen together from the perspective of Psalm 110:1 and his appearances from heaven are understood in part as visionary experiences (so, e.g., 1 Cor. 15:5–8; Gal. 1:12, 16; 2 Cor. 4:5–6), in the Gospel stories Jesus's appearances are materialized (cf., above all, Luke 24:33–53; John 20:24–29), while in Luke they are furthermore compressed into the period between Jesus's resurrection and ascension (cf. Luke 24:33–53; Acts 1:1–11). Against the suspicion of a hurried clandestine removal of Jesus's body (cf. Matt. 27:64; John 20:13), Christians pointed to the neatly folded grave clothes (cf. John 20:6–7) and the watch kept over the tomb by the Roman soldiers (cf. Matt. 27:62–66). Finally, in the *Gospel of Peter* the event of the resurrection is demonstrated before the very eyes of Jesus's unbelieving opponents.

1.3.3 A final point to consider is that extended dialogues of the risen one with his disciples are sometimes inserted into the reports of the

resurrection appearances (cf., e.g., John 20:15–17, 27–29) and that the stories are used as a framework for church formulaic material (cf., e.g., Matt. 28:16–20 and Mark 16:9–20).

The tendencies of the tradition sketched above are so unmistakable as to suggest that when presenting the Easter events and the oldest testimony to the resurrection, it is advisable to proceed above all from the texts that have not yet been subjected to apologetic reworking. These include the confessional statements in 1 Corinthians 15:3–5 (cf. with Luke 24:34), the report of the discovery of the empty tomb in Mark 16:1–8 (cf. with John 20:1–18), and the reports about Jesus's appearances before many witnesses, James, all the apostles, and Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:6–8. As far as the transmission of the other Easter texts is concerned, one must assume that the formulaic texts were supplemented and illustrated by the Easter narratives in the churches of Jerusalem, Damascus, and Antioch. They are therefore to be interpreted not as alternatives to one another but as traditions that intersect one another.

2 All these texts become understandable in their particularities only when one first makes clear the uniqueness of the Old Testament–Jewish expectation of resurrection, in whose horizon the Christian confession of Jesus's resurrection from the dead was formed.

2.1 The history of the Old Testament tradition shows that during the first centuries of its history, Israel got along without a detailed view of resurrection. The early traditions concentrate upon the exclusive relationship of the one God to his chosen people Israel established by election (cf., e.g., Hos. 11:1, 3–4; Exod. 20:2). Such concentration was theologically necessary because the Israelite tribes that had wandered into Canaan found the world of death dominated by Canaanite ideas about the spirits of the dead and rituals for conjuring them up. The Israelites therefore had to be warned against getting involved in this idolatrously administered world of death (cf., e.g., Lev. 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deut. 18:11; etc.). According to the Israelite view, the dead were gathered to their fathers and thereby removed from the fellowship with God and praise of God practiced by the living (cf. Pss. 88:11–13 [ET 88:10–12]; 115:17–18; Isa. 38:10–12). Although at first only the realm of earthly life was the place of the worship of God, the Israelites declared war from an early period against the Canaanite belief in the spirits, and praised the one God who had created the

world and chosen Israel to be his own people as the Lord of life and death. Hannah's song of praise (1 Sam. 2:1–10), which is continued in Deuteronomy 32:39 and taken up in the Magnificat (Luke 1:46–55), says, for example:

> [6]The LORD kills and brings to life;
>   he brings down to Sheol and raises up.
> [7]The Lord makes poor and makes rich;
>   he brings low, he also exalts.
> [8]He raises up the poor from the dust;
>   he lifts the needy from the ash heap,
> to make them sit with princes
>   and inherit a seat of honor.
> For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's,
>   and on them he has set the world. (1 Sam. 2:6–8)

Next to this praise of the all-encompassing rule of Yahweh, the preexilic texts contain only occasional statements that individual righteous persons like Enoch (cf. Gen. 5:24) or prophets such as Elijah (cf. 2 Kings 2:11) have gone to be with God and are considered worthy of his eternal presence without tasting death.

2.2 The scene changed only with the Babylonian exile. Ezekiel compares the new creation of the people of Israel who had died in exile with the resurrection of a whole valley full of dry bones (cf. Ezek. 37:1–14). At the same time, there appeared in the Psalms formulations that speak of the unshakable belonging of the pious with God and of suffering righteous people being taken up to God after the pattern of Elijah. The dividing line between earthly life and eternal existence with God was thereby crossed. The best-known biblical example is Psalm 73:24–25 (NJB modified): "You will guide me with advice, and will draw me in the wake of your glory. Who else is there for me in heaven? And being with you, I desire nothing on earth" (cf. also v. 26). Psalm 49:15–16 (ET 49:14–15) and Job's complaint in Job 19:25–27 may also be mentioned: "I know that I have a living Defender and that he will rise up last, on the dust of the earth. After my awakening, he will set me close to him, and from my flesh I shall

look on God. He whom I shall see will take my part: my eyes will be gazing on no stranger” (Job 19:25–27 NJB).

2.3 In the postexilic period, Israel’s faith continued to develop. In the Isaiah Apocalypse (Isa. 24–27), victory over death is praised as the greatest achievement of God’s righteousness that creates salvation and well-being. In Isaiah 25:8 it says:

> He will swallow up death forever.
> Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces,
> and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,
> for the LORD has spoken.

In Isaiah 26:19 there follows a promise for Israel, which in the context of the Isaiah Apocalypse means more than simply the promise of continued existence for the earthly people:

> Your dead shall live, their corpses shall rise.
> O dwellers in the dust, awake and sing for joy!
> For your dew is a radiant dew,
> and the earth will give birth to those long dead.

Israel did not simply take over the Persian idea of resurrection after the exile, but independently developed its hope in Yahweh’s raising the dead. Theologically this involves trusting that *God’s righteousness and faithfulness do not end at the borders of the shadow world or Sheol but encompass the whole world, and that the relationship God has entered with his people and individual persons reaches beyond earthly life*.

2.4 Faith in Yahweh was threatened by religious persecution from the Syrians in the second century BC. In response, the Jewish martyrs endured death in the certainty that the one God of Israel will give the righteous killed for their faith a share in his glory and eternal life. At the same time, they believed that God will judge the wicked and Israel’s enemies by handing them over to eternal destruction. In the biblical texts this double expectation is best attested in Daniel 12:1–3:

> [1]At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of anguish, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall

> be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. [2]Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. [3]Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

The same expectation determines the presentation of the Jewish martyrdoms in 2 Maccabees 7, and returns once again in the Wisdom of Solomon, written in Egypt during the first century BC (cf. Wis. 2:21–3:12; 4:7–5:23). Such formulations attest an intensification and broadening of the faith in Yahweh beyond its original experiential horizons. This is not the case of an originally Old Testament idea being syncretistically extended under Persian influence. It rather represents a theological "language gain" (E. Fuchs): Guided by the old confession from 1 Samuel 2:6–8, Israel had learned to speak more comprehensively and deeply about God and his saving righteousness by the first century BC than had been possible prior to the Babylonian exile.

2.5 In the first half of the first century AD, the resurrection hope was not yet universal in Judaism. A few Jewish groups, certainly including the Sadducees, considered the expectation of the end-time resurrection of the dead to be a novelty not anchored in the Pentateuch (cf. Mark 12:18). However, while the *4QMessianic Apocalypse* (4Q521) frag. 2 II, 12 still speaks of God making the dead alive only metaphorically (cf. Isa. 26:19), for the Pharisees and other Jews gathered in the synagogues, the expectation of the resurrection of the dead was an element of their *confession*. In the second of the Eighteen Benedictions, it says (according to the older Palestinian recension): "Thou art mighty, humbling the proud; strong, and judging the violent; thou livest forever and raisest the dead; thou blowest the wind and bringest down the dew; thou providest for the living and makest the dead alive; in an instant thou causest our salvation to spring forth. *Blessed art thou, Lord, who makest the dead alive*" (trans. Schürer, *HJP*[2] 2:460).

Jesus himself, his disciples, and Paul were all Jews. They prayed the Eighteen Benedictions and lived in the hope of the resurrection (cf. Mark 12:18–27 par.; Rom. 4:17, 24). For them the confession of Yahweh as creator and raiser of the dead expressed their trust in the righteousness of God that keeps every created thing in order.

The Hebrew expressions for the resurrection of the dead are the hifil causative הֵקִים, "cause to rise, raise" (from קום, *qwm*, "to rise"), and the piel חִיָּה, "to give life, restore to life" (from חיה, *ḥyh*, "to live"). The Greek equivalents are ζωοποιέω, "to make alive"; ἀνίστημι, "to raise, raise up"; and ἐγείρω, "to raise" or "rise." In biblical writings the verb ἐγείρομαι can be used, according to the

context, either in a true passive sense, “to be raised,” or in an intransitive sense, “to rise.” The important thing to remember with respect to the Christian language of the resurrection of Jesus is that both the “raising” (ἔγερσις) and the “rising” (ἀνάστασις) of Jesus occur only by the power of God the creator (cf. J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* [1971], 278n1). It must also be remembered that in early Judaism, the resurrection of the dead was an object of *hope*. Even at the tombs of the prophets and martyrs in Jerusalem, Antioch, and elsewhere, people still had to look forward to the resurrection of these righteous ones. While the souls of the righteous were already with God (cf. Wis. 3:1 with Rev. 6:9), their bodies and bones were still lying in the grave awaiting the last day; only then might they take part in the general (double) resurrection of the dead (cf. Dan. 12:1–3; *1 En.* 51:1–5). Nowhere in the early postbiblical Jewish texts do the authors speak of the bodily resurrection of a dead person as something that has already taken place historically and been attested by many witnesses—certainly not of a man crucified under the curse of the Torah.

3 The New Testament confession of the resurrection takes a bold step forward with respect to the Old Testament–early Jewish tradition. *It calls the one God who created the world and chose Israel as his own people the God “who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead”* (Rom. 4:24; 8:11; 10:9; 1 Pet. 1:21; etc.). Through the resurrection God affirmed Jesus in his work and sacrifice, as promised to the Servant in Isaiah 52:13–53:12 and to the Messiah in Psalm 110:1. Because God has identified himself with the Son of Man and Servant in such a unique way and because Jesus has risen from the dead, he has become the messianic “mediator and reconciler” for all time. This confession of the New Testament witnesses is without analogy.

The texts that name God as the one who raised Jesus from the dead—Romans 4:24, 8:11, 10:9, and 1 Peter 1:21—and the texts about the resurrection of Jesus (Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:3–5) are *confessional statements*. They are grounded in a twofold observation and in an experience: the women and men from Jesus’s home area had his crucifixion and burial before their eyes and also discovered the empty tomb on Easter morning. At the same time, resurrection appearances were made to them in various places. *The confession “God raised [Jesus] from the dead” (Rom. 10:9) has been formulated under the influence of these Easter appearances, and in view of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus on the one hand and Jesus’s tomb, found open and empty in Jerusalem, on the other hand*. Therefore the confession is not simply a repetition of an observed fact, but the *daring interpretation of experiences and facts against the background of the early Jewish confession of God as the raiser of the dead*.

3.1 Our oldest preserved Easter text, to be dated in the early years of the Jerusalem church, is *1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 (+ 6–8)*. The interpretive

structure of the Christian confession of the resurrection is clearly visible in this text.

Paul's formulations in 1 Corinthians 15:1–3a show that 15:3b–5 (+ 6–8) is a *summary of early Christian catechesis concerning the passion and resurrection* (NRSV modified):

> [3a]For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: [3b]that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, [4]and that he was buried, and that he was raised [or rose] on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, [5]and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. [6a]Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time [6b](most of whom remain until now, though some have fallen asleep). [7]Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. [8]Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

Structurally the text as a whole consists of several elements. First there is a Pauline introductory formula in verses 1–3a. Following this we find in verses 3b–5 a formulaic text of parallel members divided into four ὅτι clauses, signaled in English by the repeated *that*—"*that* Christ died . . . , *that* he was buried, . . . *that* he was raised . . . , and *that* he appeared." In verse 6 the four ὅτι clauses transition into the main clauses in verses 6–8, each of which is introduced by a temporal adverb: "Then. . . . Then. . . . Last" (ἔπειτα, ἔπειτα, ἔσχατον). Verses 3b–5 are therefore supplemented by three sentences listing further resurrection appearances. The introduction in 1 Corinthians 15:1–3a, Paul's use of the "I" style in verse 8, and the piling up of typically Pauline words in the parenthesis of verse 6b, ἐξ ὧν οἱ πλείονες μένουσιν ἕως ἄρτι, τινὲς δὲ ἐκοιμήθησαν, "*most* of whom *remain* until now, though some have *fallen asleep*" (οἱ πλείονες, μένω, and κοιμάω are frequent in Paul) all suggest that we have in verses 3b–8 a *teaching text used in the "school" of Paul* (cf. Acts 18:7, 11). In verses 3b–5, 6a, and 7 the text reproduces pre-Pauline traditional material, which the apostle supplements and comments upon in verses 6b and 8.

The traditional character of 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5, 6a, and 7 can be established by the following observations:

(1) 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5, 6a, and 7 contain *non-Pauline formulations*. In his own independent statements Paul never uses the plural "sins," ἁμαρτίαι (v. 3), but rather the singular "sin." Similarly, Paul otherwise never uses the general expression "according to the scriptures," κατὰ τὰς γραφάς (vv. 3, 4), but rather other citation formulas. The divine passive in the perfect tense, ἐγήγερται, "he was raised" (sc. by God) (v. 4; or intransitive: he rose), belongs to the confessional style, as 2 Timothy 2:8 shows (ἐγηγερμένον). The aorist ὤφθη, "he appeared" (the passive is intransitive: *not* "he was seen"), is predicated of Jesus in the Pauline corpus only here in 1 Corinthians 15:5–8 and in the hymnic fragment in 1 Timothy 3:16 (but cf. Luke 24:34; Acts 13:31; 26:16). The adverb "more than," ἐπάνω (v. 6), occurs nowhere else in the Pauline Letters, while the term ἐφάπαξ, which in verse 6 means "at one time," is used in Romans 6:10 (as well as in Heb. 7:27; 9:12; 10:10) in the sense "once for all." The expression "all the apostles," οἱ ἀπόστολοι πάντες (v. 7), refers to the apostles as a whole who were called before Paul (cf. Rom. 16:7), but among whom Paul can count himself only with the greatest effort, because he appeared to his opponents to be "one untimely born" (ἔκτρωμα) in the circle of the apostles (v. 8).

(2) Verses 3b–5 are composed in a *Semitic style*. Their distinguishing features include the parallelism of members, the second attributive position of the ordinal numeral in "on the third day" (τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ), the divine passive ἐγήγερται ("he was raised"), and the Aramaic name Cephas for Peter (Κηφᾶς, כֵּיפָא).

(3) In verse 3a Paul emphasizes that he himself had received the “gospel” (*εὐαγγέλιον*) that he quotes in verses 3b–5. In verse 8 he counts himself temporally the last (and least) of the Easter witnesses, and in verse 11 he emphasizes that the quoted “gospel” involves kerygmatic faith material held in high esteem by all the apostolic witnesses. Because the Jerusalem church was bilingual and all the witnesses listed in verses 5–7 point back to Jerusalem, one may assume that *in verses 3b–5, 6a, and 7 an old Jerusalem confessional and historical tradition has been preserved.* This tradition could have been used for example among the Hellenists. Paul took over this tradition when called to be an apostle two or three years after Jesus’s crucifixion. In the context of 1 Corinthians 15:1–11, verses 3b–5 appear as the main message which is “of first importance” (*ἐν πρώτοις*, v. 3a). This is easy to memorize because of its division into four *ὅτι* clauses. Paul himself learned it and passed it on in his basic instruction to the Corinthians, supplementing it by the list of additional witnesses in verses 6–8. (We can only note in passing the interesting parallelism thereby created between Cephas and the Twelve in verse 5 and James and all the apostles in verse 7, and between the five hundred in verse 6a and Paul in verse 8.)

According to 1 Corinthians 15:1–3a, 11, the formula of verses 3b–8 summarizes what was taught as “gospel” from Jerusalem to Paul. Therefore it may be assumed that 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 (6–8) contains a summary of the materials explained and discussed in more detail in Christian (baptismal) instruction. According to verses 3b–5, these topics included the passion and Easter stories as well as reports of Jesus’s appearances to Peter and the circle of the Twelve. Additional stories according to verses 6–8 included Jesus’s appearance to more than five hundred brothers at one time (at Pentecost?), his appearance to James and the whole group of the apostles, and Paul’s call to be a witness to the gospel (cf. Gal. 1:15–16, 23 with Acts 9:1–29; 22:3–21; 26:9–20).

3.2 The uniqueness of the four-line gospel summary in 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 is evident when compared to the old two-line formulas most similar to it, Romans 4:25 and Luke 24:34.

In Romans 4:25 Paul quotes a Semitically styled Christ formula dependent on the Hebrew and Greek text of Isaiah 53:11–12 (cf. J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 296–97n5): “He was delivered up [by God] because of our transgressions, and was raised [by God] because of our justification” (NASB). The difficult statement of verse 25b can be most easily explained by Romans 8:34: the risen Christ enters before God on behalf of believers and intercedes for them (*ἐντυγχάνει*), so that they are justified for his sake all the way to the final judgment. This active entrance of Christ can only be understood from the Hebrew text of Isaiah 53:12, because only here does it say that the Suffering Servant “made intercession (יַפְגִּיעַ) for the many.” (The Septuagint of Isaiah 53:10–11, by contrast, speaks of God’s intention to justify or vindicate the Servant: *κύριος βούλεται . . . δικαιῶσαι δίκαιον εὖ δουλεύοντα πολλοῖς*, “The Lord wills . . . to justify/vindicate the righteous one who serves the many well.” This forms the background to the christological use of *ἐδικαιώθη* in 1 Timothy 3:16, “he was vindicated by the Spirit.”) Romans 4:25 is formulated as an echo of Isaiah 53:12 LXX (*καὶ διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν παρέδοθη*). This dual reference of Romans 4:25 to both the Hebrew and the Greek text of Isaiah 53 shows that this confessional formula originated from “the Palestinian, Jewish-Christian community” (Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 297).

In Luke 24:34, Luke reproduces a brief Jewish Christian formula: “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!”

The summary in 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 *differs* from the formulas in Romans 4:25 and Luke 24:34 in the following ways: (1) the title *Χριστός*;

(2) the language of the death of Jesus "*for* our sins," *ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν*; (3) the twofold proof "according to the scriptures," *κατὰ τὰς γραφάς*; (4) the statement that "he was buried"; (5) the date: he was raised "on the third day"; and (6) the expanded report: he appeared first to Peter and "then to the twelve." The frequently voiced opinion that verses 3b–5 represent an Easter confession formulated independently of the Gospel passion tradition and without explicit interest in the historicity of Jesus's atoning death, burial, and resurrection appearances is incorrect according to this analysis. The summary takes an express historical and theological interest in the events it enumerates.

3.2.1 In Luke 24:34 and Romans 4:24–25 Jesus, as the one who was crucified and was raised by God's power, is called "(our) Lord," *ὁ κύριος* (*ἡμῶν*). In 1 Corinthians 15:3b he is designated by the title Χ*ριστός*. This title connects the backward look at the passion Jesus suffered as the messianic Son of Man with the confession of his resurrection and exaltation according to Psalm 110:1. How closely *κύριος* and Χ*ριστός* belong together in the light of Easter is documented in Acts 2:34–36 (cf. with Ps. 110:1).

3.2.2 Whereas *Jesus's death* is simply presupposed in Luke 24:34, in Romans 4:25 it is interpreted from the Hebrew text of Isaiah 53:11–12 as a vicarious sacrificial death. In 1 Corinthians 15:3b his death is interpreted with reference to the Holy Scriptures as the vicarious surrender of life by the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. The expression ὑπὲρ (*τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν*), "*for* (our sins)," recalls the Lord's Supper tradition, in which the ὑπέρ is especially rooted (cf. Mark 14:24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Cor. 11:24), as well as Isaiah 53:11–12.

3.2.3 Luke 24:34 and Romans 4:25 do not mention *Jesus's burial*, but in 1 Corinthians 15:4 this forms a special element of the four-line main formula: *καὶ ὅτι ἐτάφη*, "and that he was buried." This does more than simply confirm the reality of Jesus's death (cf. Luke 16:22), for if one recalls the origin of the formula in Jerusalem and its general use by the apostles (cf. 1 Cor. 15:11), one will be able to see a reference to Jesus being laid in the tomb (cf. Mark 15:42–47 par.). Furthermore, Isaiah 53:9 MT (cf. "his tomb with the rich") seems to be in view: after his God-ordained death "for our sins," God's Messiah lay in a tomb that was well known to the church.

3.2.4 In Luke 24:34 *Jesus's resurrection* is confessed to be an act of divine power by means of the aorist ἠγέρθη (divine passive, "the Lord has certainly *been raised*" [HCSB], though usually translated as intransitive passive: "the Lord has *risen*" [NRSV]), while in Romans 4:25 the same form, ἠγέρθη (divine passive: "he was raised" [sc. by God]), is interpreted soteriologically from Isaiah 53:11–12 (MT). (Luke's strengthening adverb ὄντως, "he has been raised *indeed*," was perhaps first added by Luke; cf. Luke 23:47 with Mark 15:39.) 1 Corinthians 15:4b similarly emphasizes that Jesus's resurrection "on the third day" was a divine event (cf. 15:4 with 15:15) that must be understood from the Holy Scriptures.

3.2.5 The expression "on the third day" (τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ) recalls the discovery of the empty tomb on the third day after Jesus's crucifixion (cf. Mark 16:1–8 par.) and makes an exact verbal allusion to Hosea 6:2 LXX, which likewise speaks of resurrection on the third day, though with a different verb: ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ ἀναστησόμεθα, "on the third day we shall rise." Because Hosea 6:2 is frequently applied in Jewish texts to the end-time resurrection of all the dead (cf. Str-B 1:747, 760), the formulation is apparently intended to suggest that Jesus's resurrection is the beginning and the promising preliminary display of the general resurrection (so also 1 Cor. 15:20–22 and Rom. 1:4).

3.2.6 Whereas in Romans 4:25 no resurrection appearances are mentioned, Luke 24:34 and 1 Corinthians 15:5 both use the intransitive aorist passive ὀφθῆναί τινι, "to appear to someone," to refer to the (first) appearance of Jesus to Peter. In Luke 24:34 he is called by his Semitic name, Simon, and in 1 Corinthians 15:5 he is called by his Aramaic honorary title, Cephas, "Rock" (Κηφᾶς, כֵּיפָא), which identifies him as the bedrock of the church (cf. Mark 3:16; Matt. 16:18; see above, 133, §5.5). The church built on Peter the rock is the end-time people of the twelve tribes headed by Jesus Christ; in the circle of the Twelve gathered anew by Peter in Jerusalem, the twelve-tribed people has its end-time ruling council, which has been confirmed by a further Easter appearance of Jesus (cf. Luke 22:29–30/Matt. 19:28).

In sum, 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 contains a four-line confession that looks back at Jesus's sacrificial death and burial and is supported by references to his appearances to Peter and the Twelve.

3.3 The expression *ὀφθῆναί τινι*, “to appear to someone” (aorist intransitive passive of *ὁράω*, “I see”), which is used for all the Easter appearances listed in 1 Corinthians 15:5–8, is important for establishing the nature of Jesus’s appearances.

No extensive report of Jesus’s appearance to Peter is preserved for us until the story, late in the history of transmission, of Jesus’s appearance at the Sea of Tiberias in Galilee in John 21. We are hardly better off with reports about Jesus’s appearances to the Twelve, the five hundred believing brothers, James, and the apostles as a whole; for comparison we have only the late texts Luke 24:36–43 and John 20:19–23, 24–29. About the appearances of Jesus to Paul we are better informed, both by the apostle himself (cf. Gal. 1:12, 16; 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8; 2 Cor. 4:4–6) and by the threefold Lukan presentation in Acts 9:3ff., 22:6ff., and 26:3ff. *In view of this situation with the sources, we can best inform ourselves about the character of the Easter appearances with the help of the verb “to appear to someone” (ὀφθῆναί τινι) and Paul’s testimony about the appearance Christ made to him when he was called to be an apostle*.

3.3.1 Already in the Septuagint the aorist passive of the verb *ὁράω*, namely, *ὤφθην* (third sg. *ὤφθη*, inf. *ὀφθῆναι*), is an established expression for the appearance of God himself or of his angel (as his emissary) to a human being. This involves not only the act of seeing but also the associated verbal revelation. Hence in Exodus 3:2–4, the “angel of the Lord” *appeared* (*ὤφθη*) to Moses in the burning bush (v. 2), then Moses drew near *to see* (*ἰδεῖν*) why the bush was not burned up (v. 4a; cf. *ὄψομαι*, v. 3), and the Lord *called* (*ἐκάλεσεν*) to Moses (v. 4b) to warn him (vv. 5–6) and to speak to him about his plan to deliver the Israelites (vv. 7ff.). We may also compare the common formula, “the Lord appeared (*ὤφθη*) to someone and said to him/her,” applied to Abraham (Gen. 12:7; 17:1), Isaac (Gen. 26:2, 24), Gideon (Judg. 6:12), Samson’s mother (Judg. 13:3), and Solomon (1 Kings 3:5). In this connection the Greek aorist passive *ὤφθη* always corresponds to the nifal of ראה, “to see,” and means God’s (or his angel’s) being seen or letting himself be seen. The choice of *ὀφθῆναί τινι*, “to appear to someone,” in 1 Corinthians 15:5–8 (and in 1 Tim. 3:16), is not coincidental, but signals that the risen Christ has appeared in divine authority and has thereby communicated himself to his witnesses.

3.3.2 The *reports of Paul* about his Christophany and call point to the same phenomenon. In 1 Corinthians 9:1 he emphasizes that he has “seen Jesus our Lord” (*Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἑόρακα*). In Galatians 1:12 he writes that he received the gospel through “a revelation of Jesus Christ”

(ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), and in Galatians 1:16 that "God . . . was pleased to reveal his Son to [in] me (ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί), so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles." This revelation involves the display of God's Son whom God raised from the dead, which makes the gospel known to Paul. Paul describes this experience in 2 Corinthians 4:5–6: God the creator has given "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (φωτισμὸς τῆς γνώσεως τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν προσώπῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). *This therefore was an experience of enlightenment and knowledge that came to Paul from the outside: The crucified Christ appeared to Paul as the bearer of divine glory.* The legendarily formulated conversion stories in Acts speak of an appearance of Christ as a bright light "from heaven" (ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ and οὐρανόθεν) that overcame Paul (Acts 9:3; 22:6; 26:13).

3.3.3 If one applies these insights to the appearances listed in 1 Corinthians 15:3–8, then a resurrection appearance always involves *the crucified Jesus being manifested from heaven in divine glory*, in the same state of being which according to Daniel 12:3 will identify the righteous in eternal life. His appearance in glory (ἐν δόξῃ) identifies the crucified one as the righteous one (cf. Luke 23:4; Acts 22:14) who has been confirmed by God and granted eternal life. This happened not in the presence of just anyone, but only before certain witnesses (Acts 10:41). These included the former disciples of Jesus like Peter and the circle of the Twelve, but also James the Lord's brother, who was critical of Jesus prior to Easter (cf. Mark 3:21; John 7:5); "more than five hundred brothers at one time," including some who had not come into contact with Jesus before Easter; and finally Paul, the man who had persecuted the Christian churches from Jerusalem to Damascus.

In view of this list of witnesses, one should not seek to understand the appearances only as the psychologically explainable results of griefwork done first by Peter and then by other disciples of Jesus (G. Lüdemann). But neither should one strive after questionable apologetic proofs of the reality of Jesus's resurrection in the style of the *Gospel of Peter*. The appearances "to us who were chosen by God as witnesses" (Acts 10:41) or "to [in] me" (Gal. 1:16; 2 Cor. 4:6) presuppose a certain "disposition" in the affected persons which is naturally also open to religio-psychological analysis: the people concerned are not uninvolved, but rather are all people who stood in an intense positive or negative relationship with Jesus or who had to debate with the missionary church's witness to Christ.

The appearances attested in 1 Corinthians 15:5–8 were life-changing experiences which can neither be objectively "proved" nor historically-critically explained away. They take up an intermediate position between historical facts accessible to all and purely subjective visions and

spiritual experiences; here it should be noted that Paul did not classify as Easter appearances the "visions and revelations of the Lord" (ὀπτασίαι καὶ ἀποκαλύψεις κυρίου) given to him during his apostolic ministry (2 Cor. 12:1–5). The Easter appearances involve statements which must be taken seriously from a historical standpoint, which are epistemologically and ontologically of a "third-world" nature (K. Popper).

3.3.4 In this connection we must also briefly explore the question of why 1 Corinthians 15:3–8 *makes no mention of women witnesses of Jesus's Easter appearances*, even though women from Jesus's circle were the main witnesses of his execution and burial and also brought the first report of the empty tomb to the apostles. However, if one reads the Easter texts carefully, it can be seen that 1 Corinthians 15:3b–8 mentions only those individuals who had experienced an appearance of Jesus from heaven in divine glory. Women are not expressly included in that number (and Paul's understanding of the gender composition of the five hundred ἀδελφοί to whom Jesus appeared according to 1 Cor. 15:6 is impossible to determine, although a group of both "brothers and sisters" is assumed by NRSV, NIV11, and CEB). The report of Jesus's appearance to Mary Magdalene in John 20:11–18 indicates in verse 17 that while he had risen from the dead, he had not yet "ascended" to his Father. Mary Magdalene therefore does not belong in the list of witnesses in 1 Corinthians 15:3–8 any more than those women who are mentioned by name in the reports of the discovery of the empty tomb (Mark 16:1–8 par.). The tomb stories are important, but they do not on their own constitute the Christian Easter message. Because in John 20:17 Mary Magdalene only receives the assignment to tell the disciples about Jesus's still future "ascension" or exaltation, her statement ἑώρακα τὸν κύριον, "I have seen the Lord" (comparable to Paul's wording in 1 Cor. 9:1), does not yet refer to the exalted Christ. Therefore, the modern accusation of an intentional suppression of stories of women witnesses of Easter remains unjustified on the basis of 1 Corinthians 15:5–8 (and Paul).

The early Christian confession of the resurrection is a bold interpretation of the appearances of the exalted Christ from heaven in view of his execution on the cross, his burial, and the discovery of his empty tomb on Easter morning.

3.4 Linguistically speaking, this interpretation takes up and extends the early Jewish confession of God as the raiser of the dead (see above). The one God who created the world out of nothing and chose Israel to be his own people was for Jesus not the God of the dead, but of the living (cf.

Mark 12:27 par.). Likewise, for early Christianity he was the God who raises the dead (Rom. 4:17; 2 Cor. 1:9; Heb. 11:19). *The confession of the resurrection by the first Christian witnesses interprets the appearance of the crucified and buried Jesus in heavenly glory as the work of this one God. The Old Testament–Jewish confession of Yahweh as creator and as raiser of the dead is taken up and christologically refined*. This opens up a new dimension in the understanding of God. God is not only the one who will someday raise the dead, but is rather the God who already, three days after his burial, has raised Jesus from the dead, who was crucified for the sake of his messianic mission (cf. Rom. 4:24; 8:11; 10:9; 1 Cor. 6:14; 1 Pet. 1:21; etc.). Who the one God is can be conclusively and finally recognized only from Jesus and his messianic mission, his death on the cross, his exaltation as "Lord and Messiah" (Acts 2:36), and his appearance from heaven. By the same token, Jesus in his existence and his mission becomes understandable only when one sees him as the messianic representative of the one God. Once one acknowledges this mutual hermeneutical relationship of God and Jesus in the resurrection confession, then *the early Christian resurrection confession becomes the all-decisive central datum of the biblical theology of the New Testament*.

4 It remains to consider *the tradition of the discovery of the empty tomb of Jesus*. The main New Testament witnesses give the tomb tradition different weight. Whereas it is of considerable importance in the narrative tradition of the Synoptics and the Gospel of John, it plays no role in Paul's letters, except for the mention of Jesus's burial in 1 Corinthians 15:4 (and the allusion to this in Rom. 6:4). Nevertheless, the appeal to Paul should not be used one-sidedly to do away with the tomb tradition as a theologically tangential, late apologetic legend.

4.1 Whereas Greek thought considered the human body as σῆμα τῆς ψυχῆς, "a tomb for the (immortal) soul" (cf. Plato, *Cratylus* 400c and later references), and left room only for the expectation of a bodiless future existence of souls (cf. A. Dihle, "ψυχή," *TDNT* 9:616–17, §5), *the early Jewish conception of resurrection* was surprisingly multifaceted. It extended from the expectation of resurrection to the judgment in restored earthly bodies, followed by transformation of the righteous in glorious light and condemnation of the unrighteous to eternal shame and suffering (Dan. 12:2–3; *1 En.* 51:1–5; *4 Ezra* 7:26–33; *2 Bar.* 49:1–51:10), through the hope

of a new creation (2 Macc. 7:22–23), all the way to the Hellenistic-sounding expectation that the Jewish martyrs would be “gathered together into the chorus of the fathers, and receive pure and immortal souls from God” (4 Macc. 18:23). Perhaps these various viewpoints were all connected: the Jewish people apparently assumed that the bones of the dead would rest in the earth until the final day, while their spirits—separated into the righteous and the unrighteous—would be “assembled” into “corners” until the day of judgment (*1 En.* 22, esp. v. 3) or would already experience “joy” with God (*Jub*. 23:31; cf. with Rev. 6:9–11). Moreover, the traditions of Enoch and Elijah made available the idea of being taken up directly to be with God (cf. Gen. 5:24; 2 Kings 2:11; Sir. 48:9–11; *1 En.* 70:1–2). But whenever the taking up of individual righteous persons is spoken of, one either does not find their grave (cf. *T. Job* 39:12–13), or the righteous person dies, and only his soul is taken up to be with God; his body without its soul is buried and his bones rest (undecayed) in the grave until the final day, as in the case of Moses, the patriarchs, Job, and the martyred prophets (*b*. *B. Bat.* 17a; *T. Job* 52:1–53:8; further material in J. Jeremias, *Heiligengräber in Jesu Umwelt* [1958], 126ff.). The dominant idea in popular piety and with the Pharisees was that the earthly body would be transformed into a heavenly one, and that the new existence of people raised from the dead and found righteous in the final judgment would correspond to the glory of the heavenly world (see above). Christians took over this expectation (cf. Phil. 3:20–21; 1 Thess. 4:15ff.; 1 Cor. 15:35–57; Rev. 20:11–15).

If one presupposes these early Jewish views and Jesus’s burial, then the following perspectives result: For Jesus’s Jewish followers it must at first have seemed appropriate *to venerate Jesus as a martyr resting in the tomb*. While Jesus’s body and bones were in the tomb waiting for the end-time resurrection of the dead, one could already know his soul to be with God, and one could call upon him as a heavenly intercessor like other Jewish martyrs. The Sadducees would have considered such a custom together with the associated idea of resurrection to be wrong, but nevertheless they would probably have accepted it, as they did the veneration of the “saints” at the tombs of the martyrs and prophets in Jerusalem. For the Pharisees and the Jewish people, such a custom would similarly have been understandable and acceptable. Even completely Hellenized Jews from the Diaspora would have been able to accept this custom as valid. But things turned out totally differently. *The events made a Christian martyr cult of the dead Jesus impossible, and his tomb an offensive object of controversy.*

4.2 The following four points are established for *the tomb tradition of the Gospels*: (1) The burial place provided for Jesus by Joseph of Arimathea was well known in Jerusalem. (2) The tomb was found empty on Easter

morning. (3) A martyr cult at Jesus's tomb therefore never came into question. (4) The Jews polemicized against the empty tomb, and the Christians reacted.

4.2.1 Against the historicity of Jesus's entombment reported in Mark 15:42–47 par., scholars have repeatedly objected that the Romans often left crucified wrongdoers hang on the cross until they rotted, and that Jesus was in any case buried in one of the mass graves for executed lawbreakers spoken of in *m. Sanhedrin* 6:5. In support of the idea of burial by the Jews rather than by the disciples, reference is made to Acts 13:29–30: "When they [the Jews] had carried out everything that was written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead."

The reference to the Roman procedure of sometimes leaving dead bodies on the cross is correct and is confirmed, for example, by Philo (cf. *Against Flaccus* 84 and J. Gnilka, *Jesus of Nazareth* [1997], 314 with n94). This, however, is no reason fundamentally to doubt the precise statements about Jesus's burial in Mark 15:42–47. In Acts 13:29 the term "tomb," *μνημεῖον*, denotes not a mass grave, but an individual one (cf. Luke 23:53 codex D, and Mark 15:46; 16:2). Moreover, the brief formulation of Acts 13:29 can be understood without difficulty in the light of Luke 23:50–54 or Mark 15:42–47: It was Jews who took care of Jesus's burial, and Joseph of Arimathea was a member of the Sanhedrin. *Therefore the report about Jesus's burial in Mark 15:42–47 par. has historical probability on its side.*

4.2.2 Under these circumstances, attention must also be given to the story of the discovery of Jesus's tomb by named women from his home area that forms the end of the oldest text of the Gospel of Mark: *Mark 16:1–8*. This text is not—as even J. Jeremias granted to R. Bultmann (*New Testament Theology*, 304) and as, for example, W. G. Kümmel also thinks (*The Theology of the New Testament* [1973], 100)—a secondary legend, but rather a text narrated in the manner of the miracle stories, which is still free of apologetic generalizations and reflects astonishment at the empty tomb of Jesus.

On the *analysis* of Mark 16:1–8, only the following points need be mentioned: Verse 1 (cf. with Mark 15:40, 47) and verse 7 (cf. with 14:28) connect the report with the pre-Markan passion tradition. The text is constructed very much like a miracle story: verses 1–4 form the so-called exposition, verses 5–7 interpret the miraculous phenomenon of the empty tomb by means of the angel's message, and verse 8 forms the stylistically required conclusion of the whole (cf. 1 Sam. 3:15b; *L.A.B.* 53:12). At the end of the Gospel of Mark, the text offers an indirect demonstration of the resurrection; Matthew also understood Mark in this way (cf. Matt. 28:1–8).

Before one brushes aside Mark 16:1–8 as a late apologetic formation because of the remark in verse 6c, "Look, there is the place where they laid him" (*ἴδε ὁ τόπος ὅπου ἔθηκαν αὐτόν*), one should

observe that *neither verses 1–2 nor the motivation of the text as a whole points to legendary apologetic*: The three women wanted to lay Jesus to rest in an honorable way that was no longer possible on Good Friday immediately before the beginning of the Sabbath (cf. 2 Chron. 16:14). The act of anointing served to prepare the corpse for burial; the "spices" (ἀρώματα) are sweet-smelling ointments that are supposed to neutralize the smell of the corpse. With the cool temperatures prevailing in Jerusalem at Easter time (cf. Mark 14:54 par.; in 1983 there was even snow in Jerusalem on Easter), the act of anointing the body just forty hours after Jesus's burial was by no means futile. According to the Jewish tractate on grief *Semahot*, it was usual for people to go the tomb until the third day in order to prevent apparently dead people from being buried alive, and because of the view that the soul of the dead remained in the grave for three days (cf. Str-B 1:1048).

4.2.3 It must moreover be kept in mind from a historical standpoint that in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus, the tombs of King David and the martyr-prophets Hulda, Isaiah, Zechariah son of Jehoiada, etc., had developed into regular cult sites: People called upon the prophets as intercessors and considered them capable of miracles (see above). This Jewish view would have allowed the disciples in Jerusalem to venerate Jesus as a martyr-prophet while his body and bones rested in the grave (see above). But Mark 16:1–8 stands strangely in the way of this view and custom. The tomb appears as a place that could *not* have held Jesus. *Rather than being a secondary apology, the text frustrates any merely martyrological view of Jesus and forces the witnesses to a proclamation of the resurrection that was completely unusual for Judaism.*

Mark 16:1–8 makes three essential points: (1) As the women came on the morning of the first day of the week to the tomb that had been sealed with a large rolling stone, they found the tomb open; the heavy stone was already rolled to the side and they were too late to anoint Jesus's body. (2) What this was supposed to tell them is interpreted for them by the angel: God has raised Jesus from the dead (ἠγέρθη, "He has been raised," in v. 6 is a divine passive); the tomb was not able to hold Jesus (cf. Luke 24:5–6). (3) The empty tomb is only an indirect proof of the resurrection. The women are supposed to tell Peter and the disciples (hiding in Jerusalem?) that they "will see" Jesus in Galilee. The verb ὄψεσθε ("will see") in verse 7 can readily be combined with Luke 24:23 and 1 Corinthians 15:5: not the empty tomb alone, but only the Easter appearance of Jesus to Peter and the disciples is the foundation of the Easter message (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3b–5). The women are so deeply affected by this event that they initially dare not risk fulfilling the task given them by the angel (cf. on this motif 1 Sam. 3:15; *L.A.B.* 53:12). *Mark 16:1–8 is an ancient text that still allows us to imagine the difficulties that the phenomenon of the empty tomb caused for the early Christian witnesses in Jerusalem and elsewhere.*

4.2.4 If one nevertheless wishes to retain the critical assumption that the narratives of the discovery of the empty tomb on Easter morning can only be a late apologetic formation of the church, one must still answer three questions: (1) How, without any role being played by the empty tomb, was the message about Jesus's bodily resurrection from the dead and his

exaltation to the right hand of God nevertheless formed and accepted in Jerusalem itself and in Palestine? It would have been impossible to speak in this way if a mere walk to the still-unopened tomb of Jesus could have put the lie to this message. (2) How is the origin of the Jewish polemic against the empty tomb in Matthew 27:62–66 to be explained? Surely this polemic is most easily explained on the assumption that the Jews were seeking to contest the amazing phenomenon that the Christians had reported. (3) How is one to interpret the archeological findings in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, which are in conspicuous agreement with the reports of the Gospels, without the tradition of the empty tomb of Jesus? Cf. on this C. Kopp, *Die heiligen Stätten der Evangelien* (1964^2), 422ff.; J. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem as Jesus Knew It* (1982^2), 155ff.

4.3 The empty tomb of Jesus was a phenomenon for Jews and Christians in Jerusalem that needed to be dealt with. Whereas the Christian witnesses learned to see it as an argument for Jesus's bodily resurrection, their opponents showed that it was capable of more than one interpretation. Even the Christian tradition does not deny the possibility of different interpretations of the empty tomb (cf. John 20:15).

5 To summarize: the early Christian confession of the resurrection begins from the burial and the empty tomb of Jesus in Jerusalem and interprets both of them in the light of the appearances of the exalted Christ from heaven: *On the basis of the Old Testament–early Jewish confession of God as creator and raiser of the dead, Jesus was confessed as the "Lord and Messiah" (Acts 2:36) raised by God and exalted to his right hand according to Psalm 110:1, and God was confessed to be the God who raised Jesus from the dead.* These are homological (cf. ὁμολογέω) statements that imply the inner involvement of the confessors with the object of their confession. The risen Christ and the one God who raised Jesus from the dead can be confessed only by recognizing them and granting them the right of disposal over one's own existence. Inasmuch as the resurrection confession invites people to this type of recognition of Jesus as the Christ of God and of the one God as the Father of Jesus Christ, it has a *missionary structure*.

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Further Reading

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CHAPTER 14

The Development of the Confession of Christ

1 If we wish to gain a historically precise view of the development and structures of early Christianity's confession of Jesus Christ, we must first be clear about the methodological difficulties that arise when one seeks to answer these questions in an academically rigorous way. We must also have a good idea of the historical conditions under which the earliest confessions of Christ originated and be able to identify the driving motives behind their formation.

1.1 The main obstacle to a simple answer concerning the earliest Christian confession is the necessity of *drawing conclusions from later evidence*: The apostolic letters, the Gospels, and Acts must be subjected to tradition-critical analysis to identify quotations and older christological motifs. This procedure is not hopeless, as the analysis of 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 + 6–8 has shown (see above, 193–94, §3.1), but it is hypothetical and therefore remains fraught with uncertainties.

1.2 In his penetrating essay "Christology and New Testament Chronology" ("Christologie und neutestamentliche Chronologie"), M. Hengel urges that three rules must be followed when analyzing the oldest christological confessions: The presentation must be chronologically accurate, religion-historically exact, and formulated so as to account for the historical contexts of the first Christian churches.

1.2.1 Because Paul was called to be an apostle only two or three years after Jesus's crucifixion and then immediately came into contact with the Christians in Damascus and Jerusalem, *pre-Pauline Christianity* consists only of those churches that were formed in Judea and Galilee, Samaria, Damascus, and Antioch prior to and independently of Paul's calling. However, we lack sufficient historical evidence to claim that there were many such Christian "circles" in Syria, Galilee, or elsewhere during the pre-Pauline period.

Acts 6:1–7 shows that from early on, the *early Jerusalem church* included not only "Hebrews," that is, converted Jews who spoke Hebrew and Aramaic, but also "Hellenists," predominately Greek-speaking Jews who had relocated from the Diaspora to Jerusalem and been won there for the faith.

The two groups seem to have formed their own church circles and celebrated their worship services in Greek and Aramaic (Hebrew). The Hebrews stood under the leadership of Peter and the newly constituted circle of the Twelve, while the Hellenists were apparently headed by Stephen and the group of seven (deacons) mentioned in Acts 6:5. Stephen's martyrdom and the expulsion of the Hellenists from Jerusalem happened while Paul was still a persecutor of the Christian church. Paul persecuted the church because the Hellenists in particular had drawn critical conclusions about the law and the temple from their confession of Jesus's death and resurrection that were religiously intolerable to this fanatical young Pharisee and his Jewish superiors (cf. Acts 6:13–14). The expansion of the persecution to Damascus signals that the Christians there agreed with the convictions of the Stephen circle.

The Franciscan excavations of the *insula sacra* in Capernaum (cf. S. Loffreda, *Recovering Capharnaum* [1985], 50ff.; J. H. Charlesworth, "Jesus Research and Archaeology: A New Perspective," in idem, ed., *Jesus and Archeology* [2006], 11–63, esp. 49–50) have shown that the house that scholars suspect of belonging to Peter was the meeting place of a Christian house church already prior to AD 70. When this church was founded is not known.

One of the consequences of the expulsion of the Hellenists from Jerusalem was the founding of the *church of Antioch* on the Orontes River by the scattered members of Stephen's circle (cf. Acts 11:19–26). At first this church also had a core constituency of Jewish Christians who maintained close contact with Jerusalem according to Acts 11:22–26, 27–30; 12:25; 15:1ff.; etc. However, Acts 11:20 says that converted Diaspora Jews from Cyprus and Cyrenaica who belonged to the Antioch church also began to take their mission to Greek-speaking Gentiles. Nevertheless, the designation "Hellenistic church" to describe the Christians of Antioch (cf. Acts 11:26) is misleading if one understands by it a church largely of Gentile converts. Gentile Christian churches in this sense did not exist before Paul and developed only with his ministry. Moreover, in Paul's churches and elsewhere, the Gentiles who came over to the Christian faith in Antioch, Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome at first came primarily from the circle of the Godfearers. These were connected to the Diaspora synagogues as uncircumcised religious visitors, and they formed a ready audience for the Christian missionaries. *The separation between a Palestinian church here and a Hellenistic church there with strong Gentile features is therefore misleading for the early period (M. Hengel).*

1.2.2 The first confessions of Jesus as "Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36) originated in Jewish Christian churches which, while never lacking a Hellenistic element, were dominated by the Old Testament and early Jewish tradition and memories of Jesus's person and work. Already in Jerusalem the need arose for a "tradition" (παράδοσις) both in Aramaic and Hebrew for the "Hebrews" and in Greek for the "Hellenists." The confession and historical tradition concerning Jesus Christ were moreover formulated and used in churches that were in close contact with one another. Capernaum and Jerusalem had contact with one another through Peter and the Twelve (cf. Acts 1:1–26 with Matt. 28:16–20; John 21:1–23), while Jerusalem and Antioch kept in contact through Barnabas (cf. Acts 4:36; 9:27; 11:22), Silas/Silvanus (cf. Acts 15:22–40), and itinerant prophets (Acts 11:27–28). The Samaritans converted by Philip (Acts 8:4–8) were introduced to the traditions of the Jerusalem church by Peter and John (Acts 8:14–17). *Under*

these circumstances the formation of disparate, competing Christologies in these churches is historically unimaginable.

1.3 *The empowerment for the christological confession* of the first witnesses lay in the appearances of the exalted crucified one from heaven, in the difficult-to-interpret but christologically stimulating "sign" of the empty tomb, and in the memories of Jesus, whom many of them had followed.

1.3.1 Some of the appearance stories allow this to be made more precise. John 21:1–14 and Luke 24:30–31 (cf. with Acts 10:41) show that some of the early disciples recognized Jesus again during a shared meal and experienced his renewed acceptance despite the abyss of the cross and their own failure on the night when he was betrayed and on Good Friday. The appearances made known the crucified one called the Son of God whom God had raised and confirmed in his messianic mission, while the meals shared during these appearances allowed him to be experienced as the reconciler: The Lord said, "Peace be with you," to those at the meal (John 20:19, 21, 26) and thus freshly accepted them into his table fellowship. Thus the experiences of Christ and of reconciliation were most closely bound together at the meals where Christ appeared to his disciples.

1.3.2 Confessing Jesus out of these experiences meant telling about his *person*—who he was in the past, is in the present, and will be in the future from God's perspective—and his *work*, what he accomplished in God and God in him, what he is doing now, and what he will be given to do in the future. Both types of statements required an appropriate theological vocabulary. The witnesses, many of whom had learned how to interpret the Holy Scriptures in Jesus's way in Jesus's "school," found in the Scriptures the language they needed. *The old christological confessions are formulated in the language of the Old Testament and related early Jewish hymns, psalms, and prayers*. This is more than just a coincidental discovery in the history of language. First-century Jews and Christians considered the Old Testament, in both its Semitic and Greek forms, to be the living, Spirit-filled word of God. This is why both groups spoke in unison of the "*holy* scriptures" (Rom. 1:2). The oldest confessions of Christ use the word of Scripture to speak in a theologically appropriate way of the activity of the one God in and through Jesus and of Jesus's person, work, and destiny in and before the one God. With the help of the Holy Scriptures and the early

Jewish liturgies, the witnesses could comprehend in God's own words God's act of revelation and salvation in and through Jesus the Messiah. *In Jesus's appearance, work, suffering, resurrection, exaltation, and future role we see the fulfillment of the messianic redemption promised to Israel and the Gentiles by the one God (cf. 1 Cor. 15:4–5; Luke 24:26–27, 44–45).*

1.3.3 The old Christ confessions had to meet the liturgical, catechetical, and missionary needs of the early churches. With their help church members had to praise God and confess Christ; teachers in baptismal instruction had to speak about God and Jesus in an understandable and easily learned way; and the apostles had to speak in an enlightening way to unbelievers about God's work in and through the Messiah Jesus. The confessions also had to provide arguments for critical disputes with opponents of the church who denied Jesus's messiahship and resurrection. Under these circumstances the *παραδόσεις* or confessional "traditions" could not be just occasional statements but had to be carefully formulated and memorably styled. Good examples are provided by 1 Corinthians 15:3–5, Romans 1:3–4, and Romans 4:25.

2 A first impression of the content of the oldest pre-Pauline Christ confessions is given by the *prayer cry "Maranatha"* (*μαραναθά*), preserved in its original Aramaic form in 1 Corinthians 16:22 and *Didache* 10:6. This is translated into Greek in Revelation 22:20 as *ἔρχου κύριε* (*Ἰησοῦ*), "Come, Lord (Jesus)!"

As H. P. Rüger has shown (*TRE* 3:607), behind the transliteration *μαραναθά* stands an original Aramaic מָרַן אֲתָא or מָרַן אֱתָא (*māran ătā*ʾ or *māran ĕtā*ʾ). In the Aramaic of Jesus's day the first-person plural suffix ("*our* Lord") was usually ןָ- rather than נָא ַ- (i.e., *māran*, not *māranā*ʾ). This suggests the word division *μαρὰν ἀθά* (מָרַן אֲתָא) rather than the *μαράνα θά* (מָרַנָא תָא) that stands in Nestle-Aland at 1 Corinthians 16:22 (cf. BDAG 616, s.v. *μαράνα θά*). The **אתא** can be read either as the perfect אֲתָא (*ătā*ʾ), "he is here/has come," or as the imperative אֱתָא (ʾ*ĕtā*ʾ), "come." Revelation 22:20 with its *ἔρχου* favors the imperative.

From the above it may be concluded that already in the Aramaic-speaking pre-Pauline church, believers called upon the risen Jesus as *"our Lord"* and prayed for his second coming. Behind this prayer cry stands a threefold context:

2.1 At the time of Jesus, "lord" and "my lord" (Aramaic: מַר and מָרִי, *mar*, *mārî*) were respectful forms of address for people as well as forms of

prayer address to God, as shown conclusively by the Aramaic texts from Qumran (for the address to people, cf. *1QGenesis Apocryphon* [*DSSSE* 28–49] 2:9, 13, 24; 22:18; for the divine address, see 2:4; 20:12–13, 15–16; 21:2; etc., and 11Q10 [11QtgJob] 24:7). Jesus was occasionally addressed respectfully as "lord" in his lifetime; cf. Luke 6:46/Matthew 7:21; Mark 7:28 par.; Luke 9:59/Matthew 8:21; etc. This address continues in the Maranatha, where it expresses Jesus's divine majesty.

2.2 The oldest church presented Jesus as the risen "Lord" in heavenly power because they *understood his resurrection and glorification from Psalm 110:1*:

The LORD says to my lord (נְאֻם יְהוָה לַאדֹנִי),
"Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies your footstool."

At the time of Jesus, the standard *qere*, the word to be spoken out loud in oral reading instead of the written divine name "Yahweh," was אֲדֹנָי (Adonai), so that אֲדֹנָי would be pronounced twice in reciting this verse, once for Yahweh according to the *qere*, and once for the enthroned one as written in the text; in Aramaic this would correspond to a twofold מָרִי (*mārî*). The LXX translates both Yahweh and Adonai by *κύριος*, "lord": *Εἶπεν ὁ κύριος τῷ κυρίῳ μου Κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου, ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου*, "The Lord said to my lord, 'Sit on my right until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet'" (NETS). In the New Testament, Psalm 110:1 is often applied to Jesus's investiture as the "Lord" at God's right hand; Acts 2:34–35 provides one of the oldest examples (cf. also Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3, 13). Two factors paved the way for this application of Psalm 110:1 to Jesus's resurrection and exaltation: Psalm 110:1 is already applied to the installation of the "son of man" as judge of the world in *1 Enoch* 61:8; 62:2, and the same application occurs twice in the sayings of Jesus (cf. Mark 12:36 par. and 14:62 par.). The Easter witnesses therefore follow Jesus's precedent not only in addressing the exalted one as "Lord" but also in their understanding of his exaltation.

The application of Psalm 110:1 to the exalted Jesus also makes clear why other Scripture passages originally spoken of Yahweh alone could also be applied to Jesus as the Κύριος and divine mandate-bearer (cf. Phil. 2:10–11 with Isa. 45:23, and Rom. 10:13 with Joel 3:5 [ET 2:32]).

2.3 In the Maranatha Christians pray for the eschatological "coming" of the "Lord." In early Judaism the language of "coming" characterizes all end-time figures and events (cf. J. Schneider, *TDNT* 2:667, §3). The Gospels too speak of the coming of God's kingdom (Luke 11:2/Matt. 6:10), the coming of John the Baptist and of Jesus himself (Luke 7:33–34/Matt. 11:18–19), the coming of the Messiah according to Psalm 118:25–26 (Mark 11:9–10 par.), and the coming of the Son of Man with the clouds of heaven according to Daniel 7:13 (Luke 21:27/Matt. 24:30; 25:31; Mark 14:62 par.).

The Maranatha concerns the parousia, the end-time coming of the messianic Son of Man that Jesus himself announced in Mark 14:62 par.

The Maranatha shows concretely how the precedent of scriptural language, early Jewish tradition, memories of Jesus's person and teaching, and the church's need to call upon Jesus appropriately in its worship work together to lead to a novel confessional statement.

1 Corinthians 11:26, 16:22, and especially the eucharistic prayer in *Didache* 10:1–6 (dated around AD 120) still clearly reveal that the Maranatha had its "life setting" above all in the early Christian celebrations of the Lord's Supper (*Did*. 10:5–6): "Remember your church, O Lord; save it from all evil, and perfect it in your love. And gather it from the four winds into your kingdom, which you prepared for it. For yours is the power and the glory forever. May grace come and this world pass away. Hosanna to the God of David. If anyone is holy, let him come; if anyone is not, let him repent. Maranatha! Amen" (Ehrman, LCL).

A backward look at Jesus's passion is clearly evident in this liturgical use. At his last Passover supper with his disciples in Jerusalem, Jesus sang the Passover *hallel* (Mark 14:26 par.), concluding with Psalm 118, which was interpreted messianically in early Judaism. Now in the post-Easter reenactment of this last supper, the church asks its risen and exalted Lord for his final coming promised in Psalm 118:26 ("Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD") and therefore for the final establishment of the kingdom of God.

3 Another weighty statement about Jesus with important consequences was made by the pre-Pauline church when it confessed him as *Christ* and *Son of God* in view of his messianic ministry completed on the cross and his resurrection. These two titles finally bind the messianic tradition of the Old Testament and early Judaism firmly to Christology, giving Christology a salvation-historical dimension that can be neglected only at the price of denying the continuity of God's saving activity before and in Christ.

3.1 Regarding the title Χριστός, one must first realize that its application to the risen one was anything but self-evident. Nevertheless, we meet this title already in 1 Corinthians 15:3 and Acts 2:36.

The confession of Jesus as Χριστός, the "Anointed One," had special meaning only in the context of early Judaism and Jewish Christianity; it was meaningless to Greek-speaking Gentiles, who could only (mis)understand Χριστός from χρίω, "to rub in, anoint," in the sense of "the one rubbed (with oil or ointment)." Jewish tradition at Jesus's time had for the most part suppressed the idea of a suffering Messiah, despite Isaiah 52:13–53:12, Psalm 118:22, Zechariah 12:10, and 13:7. This does not again become a theme among Jews until the middle of the second century AD with Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* 36.1, 39.7, 89.2, and 90.1. Therefore contemporary Jewish theology offered

little motivation to confess Jesus after Easter as a suffering Messiah in the style of 1 Corinthians 15:3.

We therefore conclude that the title Χριστός was not applied to Jesus only after Easter by an arbitrary decision of the Christians. Rather, Jesus was confessed as the Christ on the basis of the church's memory of his messianic claim, his confession before the high priest (Mark 14:61–62 par.), and the Roman title on the cross: ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, "The King of the Jews" (Mark 15:26 par.). Acts 2:36 says that by the resurrection, God has vindicated Jesus, who was crucified for the sake of his messianic claim, over against all his earthly oppressors, making him "both Lord and Christ" for Israel and the Gentiles. *In Jesus, the Christ, the messianic promises have been fulfilled and will be completely fulfilled; Israel and the nations are not to expect any other Messiah in time and eternity than the Christ exalted to God's right hand* (cf. 2 Cor. 1:20).

The name Ἰησοῦς Χριστός that appears in Acts 2:38, 3:6, and repeatedly in Paul's letters (e.g., Rom. 1:1, 4; 2:16; 3:22; 1 Cor. 2:2, 16) uses the term Χριστός as a predicate nominative and may go back to an old Jewish Christian confession: "Jesus (and no other) is the Messiah" (M. Hengel).

3.2 Even more frequently than the title Χριστός, the New Testament christological texts give Jesus the title υἱὸς θεοῦ, "*Son of God.*"

3.2.1 Confessing Jesus as "Son of God" after Easter was suggested by recollections of his earthly ministry and by the messianic tradition of the Old Testament and early Judaism. Jesus saw himself as the "Son" who stood in a unique relationship to the Father, as indicated by his praise of the "Father" in Luke 10:21–22/Matthew 11:25–27 and his novel cry "Abba! Father!" (αββα ὁ πατήρ) in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:36). Jesus included his disciples in his special relationship with God in the Lord's Prayer (Luke 11:2–4/Matt. 6:9–13). He, moreover, made it known that he is the "Son of God" as the messianic Son of Man (cf. Mark 12:1–11 par.; 14:61–62 par.). The Easter confession of Jesus as υἱὸς θεοῦ takes up this claim and confirms it before God and humanity.

3.2.2 Whereas earthly rulers were happy to be called the "son of god" in the context of the Greco-Roman imperial cult (cf. W. von Martitz, *TDNT* 8:336–37, §II.1), the Old Testament and early Judaism were very reserved about using this as a *messianic title*. In the Old Testament those designated as "sons of God" or as God's "firstborn" (υἱοὶ θεοῦ = בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים/אֵלִים ; πρωτότοκος = בְּכוֹר, *bəkôr*) include angelic beings (e.g., Gen. 6:2; Pss. 29:1; 89:7 [ET 89:6]), Israel (e.g., Exod. 4:22; Jer. 31:9) and the Israelites (e.g., Isa. 43:6; 45:11; *Pss. Sol.* 17:27), individual righteous persons (Wis. 2:18), and the king from the line of David (cf. 2 Sam. 7:14; Pss. 2:7; 89:27 [ET 89:26]). In early Judaism the passages referring to the Davidic ruler were interpreted messianically; the Davidic Messiah was therefore seen as God's

son. However, his divine sonship was never seen in terms of physical descent from God; it involved being chosen (from ancient times; cf. Mic. 5:1 [ET 5:2]) and installed in the "office" of God's representative and champion. God's promise to David and his "seed" in 2 Samuel 7:11–14 is applied to the Davidic Messiah in, for example, 4Q174 (4QFlor) frag. 1 I, 21, 2, lines 10–11 (*DSSSE* 353), but while this descendant is referred to as God's "son" in 2 Samuel 7:14, the messianic title "son of God" does not appear in *4QFlorilegium*. Only the Aramaic Daniel midrash 4Q246 2:1 speaks explicitly of a "son of god" (ברה די אל) and "son of the Most High" (בר עליון). This could refer to the Son of Man of Daniel 7:13 (see above, 134–35, §§6.1–6.1.1).

The post-Easter confessional texts of the New Testament represent a clear development over against the Old Testament–early Jewish linguistic tradition: *The title Son of God is now applied openly and unambiguously to the crucified and risen Jesus*. The classic example is the Christ formula in Romans 1:3–4, which Paul has woven into the prescript of Romans.

3.2.3 The traditional confessional text runs (Rom. 1:3–4):

> . . . (the gospel) concerning his Son,
>
> who was descended from the seed of David according to the flesh (*κατὰ σάρκα*),
>
> who was installed as Son-of-God-in-power according to the spirit of holiness (*κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης*) by resurrection from the dead (*ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν*).

The presence of Jewish Christian formulaic material in these verses is confirmed by the Semitic parallelism and by the unusual expressions in the text: nowhere else in his letters does Paul speak of Christ's Davidic sonship or of the "spirit of holiness" (רוּחַ הַקּוֹדֶשׁ, ***rûaḥ haqqôdeš***). The contrast of "according to the flesh" (*κατὰ σάρκα*) and "according to the spirit of holiness" (*κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης*) corresponds to the structure of the Christ hymn in 1 Timothy 3:16: earthly lowliness and divine sonship in heavenly power are associated with one another in a climactic parallelism. With Easter the earthly Davidide has been installed into the position of power that is his as the Son of God. With Jesus's appearance the messianic promises have been fulfilled: Jesus descended from the line of David, and by his resurrection he has been installed into the status of the Son that God has reserved for the Messiah (cf. 2 Sam. 7:12–16; Pss. 89:27–28 [ET 89:26–27]; and 110:1). But more has been fulfilled in Jesus's destiny than simply the Davidic promises (cf. Isa. 55:3). In 1 Corinthians 15:20 it is clear that the grammatically singular verb *ἐγήγερται ἐκ νεκρῶν*, "*he has been raised* from the

dead," does not apply to Jesus only as an individual, because he is further identified as "the first fruits of those who are asleep." So also in Romans 1:4, to say that Jesus has been installed into the heavenly status of the Son "by resurrection from the dead" means that in the person of Jesus, God has already realized the end-time resurrection of the dead, *ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν*. This Christ, installed as "Son of God in power," is therefore also the "firstborn of (from) the dead," *πρωτότοκος* (*ἐκ*) *τῶν νεκρῶν* (Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5). The deliverance from death promised to Israel and all nations in Hosea 6:2 and Isaiah 25:8 has already dawned in Jesus's resurrection from the dead. In Romans 1:4 the resurrection of Jesus is seen in the same future-oriented light as in 1 Corinthians 15:4 (see above, 96, §3.2.4).

Scholars have repeatedly sought to find an underlying pattern of *adoptionistic Christology* in the Christ formula in Romans 1:3–4: The man Jesus of Nazareth who came from the family of David is supposed to have been installed as "Son of God in power" only with his resurrection from the dead (according to Ps. 110:1). Thus, for example, E. Schweizer speaks of a Christology in which "in a distinctive way . . . the two titles which were identical in the OT, i.e., 'son of David' and 'Son of God,' now succeed one another as two stages" (*TDNT* 8:367). Not until the Hellenistic church is this adoptionistic Christology thought to have been extended to include the dimension of preexistence on the basis of Israelite wisdom speculation, which likewise was supposedly not applied to Jesus until then (cf. Prov. 8:22–31; Wis. 9:1–2, 9–10).

However, this interpretive scheme for Christology remains inconsistent in three respects: (1) It pays too little attention to the fact that according to Isaiah 11:2–3 and *1 Enoch* 49:1–4 the Messiah is already the bearer of God's wisdom, and that Jesus appeared as the "messianic teacher of wisdom." Wisdom traditions were not only a late, Hellenistic development in Christology. (2) According to Micah 5:1 (ET 5:2), the Messiah's origin "is from of old, from ancient days," while according to *1 Enoch* 48:3, 6 (cf. also 62:7), not only the name Son of Man–Messiah was named before God before the creation of the world; he was in person "concealed in the presence of him (sc. the Lord of the Spirits) prior to the creation of the world." Clearly these texts speak of the *preexistence of the Son of Man–Messiah*. When Jesus claimed to be this God-sent Son of Man, he did not exclude the idea of preexistence (cf. Mark 12:35–37 par. [see above, 143] with Luke 7:28 par. and John 8:58). (3) Early Jewish Christianity confessed Jesus as the *κύριος καὶ χριστός*, the "Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36), whom God had confirmed in his messianic mission; Romans 1:3–4 likewise goes back to this Jewish Christianity. Romans 1:3–4 describes the path God chose for the Son he sent into the world in terms of 2 Samuel 7:12–16 and Psalm 89:27–28 (ET 89:26–27): in accordance with the Davidic promise, Jesus descended from the line of David (and fulfilled his mission in lowliness and suffering); after he completed his earthly journey, God "raised him up" from the dead and "established" him (cf. 2 Sam. 7:12) in the messianic rights and privileges that his earthly opponents had denied him. According to Paul, the formula speaks of the humiliation and exaltation of the preexistent Son of God, and there is no reason to ascribe any other meaning to the old formulaic text. *The supposed two-stage adoptionistic Christology presumed to lie behind Romans 1:3–4 can no more be provided with a plausible setting in the life of early Christianity than the adoptionism suspected behind Mark 1:9–11 par.* (see above, 77, §5).

3.3 Once one pays attention to these tradition-historical connections, it becomes clear why and to what end Psalm 89:21/ET 89:20 ("I have found my servant David; / with my holy oil I have anointed him") and 2 Samuel 7:12 are also applied to Jesus's mission in Acts 13:22–23, and why in Acts 13:32–37 and Hebrews 1:5 Jesus's resurrection can be interpreted from

Psalm 2:6–7, 2 Samuel 7:12, Isaiah 55:3, and Psalm 16:10 as the fulfillment of the promises to the fathers.

3.4 Jewish Christianity before and alongside Paul did not speak of Jesus as the "Son of God" only in view of his exaltation and future messianic work. Rather, Jesus's earthly ministry and origin were also seen from the perspective of his messianic sonship to God. This comes to expression above all in the reports composed after Easter about Jesus's *baptism and transfiguration* (Mark 1:9–11 par.; 9:2–10 par.) as well as in the stories of his *miraculous birth from a virgin* in Luke 1:26–38 and Matthew 1:18–25.

Jesus's baptism by John historically marks his entry into public ministry as the messianic Son of Man (see above, 77, §5). Behind the transfiguration could stand a vision of Jesus in which he is transported before his last decisive journey to Jerusalem into the heavenly "council" or סוֹד (cf. Jer. 23:18), where he is confirmed in his mission by God in the company of the two chief witnesses of the old covenant, Moses and Elijah.

3.4.1 In the stories of the baptism and transfiguration, Jesus is twice called God's "*beloved Son*" by a voice from heaven: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11); "This is my beloved Son; listen to him!" (Mark 9:7). This comprehensive title has been formulated on the basis of Genesis 22:2, Psalm 2:7, Isaiah 42:1, and 44:2. In the context of the early Christian confession of the Messiah, these statements about the "beloved Son" allude to the Holy Scriptures in order to recognize Jesus as the Messiah and Servant chosen by God. Because they agree with Jesus's own messianic self-consciousness as God's Son, these statements express a *christological knowledge that is verified by Easter*, but they do not provide evidence that belief in Jesus as God's Son arose only after Easter and was then projected back onto the earthly Jesus.

3.4.2 The confession of Jesus's *virgin birth* is a peculiar feature of Jewish Christianity, prepared for but not yet attested in the messianic texts of the Old Testament and early Judaism.

Matthew 1:18–25 is concerned with the inclusion of Jesus the Son of God in the Davidic line through the Davidide Joseph. Readers are expressly directed to the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 LXX in the birth of Jesus, while the story indirectly counters the suspicion that Jesus resulted from Mary's infidelity. The annunciation in *Luke 1:26–38* involves Mary alone and is formulated in a completely Old Testament–Jewish way (cf. vv. 32–33 with 4Q246 [*Aramaic Apocalypse*] 2:1, 5). Both texts *document the Jewish Christian church's great interest from the very beginning of the formation of the post-Easter tradition not only in Jesus's death and resurrection, but also in his incarnation*, miraculously brought about by God in keeping with the messianic promises. Luke 1:30–33 presents

an oracle promising a son (cf. Gen. 16:11; Judg. 13:3, 5; Isa. 7:14): Gabriel, the angel (messenger) of God, announces to Mary that through her the Son of David promised to Israel in Isaiah 9:5–6 (ET 9:6–7) will be born. Mary is to give him a Hebrew-based name meaning "Yahweh is salvation," that is, Greek Ἰησοῦς (Matt. 1:21). In the Old Testament Ἰησοῦς translates both the short form יֵשׁוּעַ, *Yēšûaʿ* (e.g., Neh. 7:7), and the original long form, יְהוֹשׁוּעַ/יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, *Yəhôšûaʿ* (i.e., "Joshua"), both related to the verb יָשַׁע, *yāšaʿ*, "to save," as the context makes clear: "for it is he who will save his people from their sins" (cf. *HALOT* and BDB, s.v. יְהוֹשׁוּעַ; BDAG, s.v. Ἰησοῦς). This child will be μέγας, "great" or "powerful," and will be called "the Son of the Most High" (υἱὸς ὑψίστου); he will be given the throne of his father David and will establish the eternal Zion-βασιλεία (cf. Dan. 7:14). This "Son of the Most High" is the messianic saving king, who in his divine being and mission stands far above John the Baptist, whose birth is announced by an angel of God to the old priest Zechariah and his aged wife Elizabeth (Luke 1:13–17). When Mary objects in Luke 1:34 that she has never "known" a man intimately (cf. KJV; modern versions: "since I am a virgin"), the angel explains in verse 35: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you." The verb "overshadow," ἐπισκιάζω, is used of the cloud that settles upon the tent of meeting in Exodus 40:35, signifying God's dwelling on earth in his glory as creator; the cloud that "overshadows" the disciples on the mount of transfiguration has the same meaning (cf. Mark 9:7 par.). Therefore the Son of God enters human existence when Mary is chosen by God as the place of his dwelling on earth in his own creative activity. The birth of the Son of God on Zion announced in Psalm 2:6–7 and 110:3 ("In majestic holiness, from the womb, from the dawn, yours was the dew of youth" [NJPS]) is realized in this event: Mary is the "daughter of Zion" from whom the messianic Savior comes (cf. Isa. 62:11–12). This happens apart from a human husband. Consequently God's Son, Jesus, is also free from family obligations. He obeys his mother and his stepfather Joseph only in holy independence (cf. Luke 2:48–49). While the birth of the child in Isaiah 7:14 is only narratively alluded to in Luke 1:31, 34, in Matthew 1:21–23 Mary is explicitly called the παρθένος (*parthenos*) or עַלְמָה (*ʿalmâ*), chosen by God for this role. Both words mean "young woman" or "girl," and only the context can decide how they are to be translated (see above, 65). By making it clear that παρθένος is to be translated by "virgin," the statements in Luke 1:34 and Matthew 1:18–23 refine and intensify the Isaianic promise in a completely novel way.

Neither Luke 1:26–38 nor Matthew 1:18–25 borrows its language from the Greek notion that heroes and great philosophers are sons of the gods by mortal women (cf. W. von Martitz, *TDNT* 8:338–39). Philo says in *Cherubim* 43–47 that human virtues are sired by God, basing his teaching on his allegorical exegesis of God's creation of Isaac from Sarah (Gen. 21:1), Jacob from Rebekah (Gen. 25:21), and Reuben from Leah (Gen. 29:31); but this allegory similarly lacks any recognizable influence in the New Testament. Rather, Luke and Matthew present us with an independent Jewish Christian confession. It states the christological fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 and bars the way to further scrutiny. Neverthless, from ancient times the claim of the virgin birth had to be defended against the charge that Jesus was the result of Mary's marital unfaithfulness (cf. the material in R. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah* [1979], 534ff.).

Luke 1:26–38 and Matthew 1:18–25 place the birth of Jesus in the light of the messianic promises and use them to interpret the birth in a christologically original way. After the Easter witnesses had learned to see the exalted one as the Χριστός and "Son of God in power," his earthly origin was also illuminated from the prophetic texts, creating a bold new

confession: *Jesus, as the the messianic Son of God, is also the son of the virgin whom God chose for this purpose according to Isaiah 7:14*. Not only since his resurrection or his baptism but ever since the beginning of his earthly existence, Jesus was more than simply a human descendant of David's line. He was and is the "Immanuel" announced in Isaiah 7:14, in whom God himself has sought out his people Israel and established their end-time salvation. The confession of Jesus's birth from the virgin Mary self-consciously transcends the Old Testament–Jewish statements about the Messiah's origin. It clearly separates the child Jesus from John the Baptist and stands decisively against the idea that Jesus is only an eschatological Jewish prophet.

Early Christianity made only limited use of this novel Jewish Christian language of the virgin birth. Paul and the Gospel of John speak emphatically of Jesus's preexistence and true humanity (cf. Phil. 2:6–11; Rom. 8:3; John 1:1–18), but they do not allow us to determine whether Jesus's birth from a virgin was also spoken of in their "schools." Galatians 4:4 need not be understood in this sense, but it can be. The Fourth Gospel merely juxtaposes statements about Jesus's divine preexistence in John 1:1–18 and 8:58 with a statement about his human parentage in John 6:42. The Evangelist presupposes his readers' familiarity with parts of the Gospel tradition of Mark and Luke and leads them in light of this tradition to the confession "And the Word became flesh and dwelt [or *tabernacled*, ἐσκήνωσεν] among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). We may therefore assume that the confessional language of the virgin birth represents an interpretation of Jesus's origin that was generally accepted in early Christianity.

3.5 In the titles of Jesus as "Christ" and "Son of God" one can see how the Easter events led earliest Christianity to its christological knowledge, based on memories of Jesus's earthly work. The Holy Scriptures made it possible to formulate this knowledge in an appropriate way. Now one could express in just a few titles who Jesus was from God's perspective, who he became through God's activity, and how he will finally establish the salvation promised to Israel and the nations. The language of Jesus as the "Christ" and "Son of God" enabled the pre-Pauline churches to speak about Jesus and his mission understandably and effectively in their mission and apologetics with their Jewish contemporaries.

4 In the light of what has been said on the titles Κύριος (מַר/מָרִי), Χριστός, and υἱὸς θεοῦ, it is easy to understand how the Jewish Christians of Jerusalem could come to the conviction that all "salvation" (σωτηρία) is focused and effective in "the *name* of Jesus Christ," τὸ ὄνομα Ἰησοῦς Χριστός (cf. Acts 4:12 with 2:21, 38; 3:6, 16; 4:7, 10; etc.). Just as God's

personal name Yahweh comprehends his uniqueness, self-revelation, and presence with Israel according to Exodus 3:14–15 and Isaiah 42:8, so also in the name of the Christ who was born of Mary, crucified by his opponents, but raised from the dead by God, all God's saving activity for his chosen people is summarized. The confessional name Jesus Christ does not supersede the name of God, but it makes it more precise salvation-historically and soteriologically. According to Acts 11:26, the use of this unusual name earned the church members of Antioch the name "Christians."

5 The address of the crucified and risen Christ as Lord, Messiah, and Son of God together with the language of the virgin birth and his saving name gives an impression of the conceptual and verbal resources of the earliest Christology. It remains now to explain *how the gruesome fact of Jesus's death on the cross was interpreted in the pre-Pauline churches*.

5.1 The Jewish thesis that Jesus was hanged on the "tree" to suffer the cursed death that the "deceiver" deserves (Deut. 21:22–23) was first countered with a *contrasting scheme*, found in Acts 2:36, 5:30, and 10:39–40. These passages counterbalance the Jewish view with the Christian interpretation of Jesus's resurrection based on Psalm 110:1, saying in effect, "You (Jews) hanged Jesus on the cross/tree—*but* God raised him from the dead and exalted him to his right hand." The cross is not yet interpreted in its own right, but is placed in the shadow of God's saving act of raising and exalting Jesus.

5.2 The cross of Jesus was first interpreted and worked through soteriologically when people dared to go beyond the contrasting scheme of death and resurrection and say that God has established salvation and redemption through the cross itself. This can be seen in the formulas "Christ died *for us/you*" (Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν/ὑμῶν) or "*for/because of our sins*" (ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν or διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν) (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3; Rom. 4:25 with Isa. 53:5, 10–12).

The fact that this interpretation of Jesus's death on the cross was formed before Paul has already been demonstrated by our tradition analysis of 1 Corinthians 15:3–5 (see above, 193–94, §3.1). The expression "for our sins" (ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν) in 1 Corinthians 15:3 is the church's answer, made possible by Easter, to Jesus's understanding of his death and to the crucifixion: *Jesus died vicariously "for us" as the Christ*. Romans 4:25 formulates christologically and soteriologically more precisely: ὃς παρεδόθη διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν καὶ ἠγέρθη διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν, "who was delivered up for our trespasses and was raised for our justification." The two divine passives

παρεδόθη ("he was delivered up") and *ἠγέρθη* ("he was raised") state that it was God himself who delivered Jesus to death according to Isaiah 53:5, 10–12, thus willing his vicarious death (cf. Rom. 8:32). By raising Jesus from the dead, God confirmed Jesus's sacrifice as a saving act carried out in his name; by the power of his vicarious surrender of life, the risen Christ effects justification for "the many" by interceding for them before God (cf. Isa. 53:11–12 with Rom. 8:34). The "we" (ἡμεῖς) who speak these formulas and apply them to themselves are the members of the church; they know themselves to be freed from their sins and justified before God through Jesus's atoning death and resurrection. Forgiveness of sins and justification by Jesus's vicarious sacrificial death and resurrection are not theological statements first invented by Paul; they represent pre-Pauline experiences and confessional content.

In the faith formulas of 1 Corinthians 15:3–5 and Romans 4:25 (see above, 194–95, §3.2), *the pre-Pauline church took up Jesus's own understanding of his death, conditioned by Isaiah 43:3–4 and 52:13–53:12, and made the idea of vicarious atonement* (see above, 158–60) *a basic element of Christology.* The theologically pregnant expression "for us/for you" (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν/ὑμῶν) then became fundamental for the Christology of Paul, the Johannine school, and Hebrews (cf. 1 Thess. 5:10; Gal. 1:4; 2:20; 2 Cor. 5:14–15, 21; Rom. 5:8; 8:32; 14:15; 1 John 3:16; John 6:51; 10:11, 15; 15:13; Heb. 2:9; 9:24; 10:12; etc.).

5.3 It was probably the Stephen circle that took the atonement-theological interpretation of Jesus's death a decisive step further (see below). The formulas of 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 and Romans 4:25 already raise the question of how the death of Jesus, willed and confirmed by God, is related to the atoning cult in the Jerusalem temple, which, despite Jesus's temple act (see above, 173–74, §4.3.1), continued uninterrupted until AD 70. A church that has received forgiveness of sins and justification by the power of the atoning death of the Messiah Jesus no longer needs any atoning cult, but uses the temple only as a house of prayer, worship, and teaching.

5.3.1 Let us recall once again (see above, 159–60) *the atonement procedure on the Day of Atonement* according to Leviticus 16 (cf. also below, §5.3.2.1). God allows the people of Israel, burdened by guilt, to identify itself through the high priest with the goat chosen for the sin offering (the identification procedure is described in Lev. 1:4). The animal is then slaughtered and its blood collected in a container. The high priest enters the holy of holies with this blood and a censer for incense. Located there is the ark of the covenant with its crowning "top piece" (Gk. ἐπίθεμα, Exod. 25:17). This is a solid gold slab called the *kappōret* in Hebrew (כַּפֹּרֶת)

or the *hilastērion* in Greek (ἱλαστήριον) and known traditionally as the "mercy seat," although some modern versions of the Old Testament call this object the "atonement cover" (NIV) or simply the ark's "cover" (NRSV margin, REB, NJPS). However, the eminent Jewish scholar J. Milgrom rejects the rendering "cover" and considers the Hebrew term "untranslatable, so far," while also noting that the sacred object represents "the very seat of the godhead" (*Leviticus 1–16* [1991], 1014, 1034).

The mercy seat is flanked by two cherubim, hammered out of the same piece of gold symmetrically at either end, which spread their wings over the mercy seat, thus defining the abode of the living God (cf. Exod. 25:18–19). This is located exactly between the wings of the cherubim, just above the surface of the mercy seat (Exod. 25:22; cf. Lev. 16:2). The mercy seat serves a double function. It is the place before which the high priest performs the atonement ritual on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:13–17), which explains the Septuagint's coinage of the new term ἱλαστήριον, meaning "place of atonement" or "place of expiation" (cf. Heb. 9:5 NIV 1978 text and NRSV margin; REB and NAB text; see also BDAG 474, s.v. ἱλαστήριον 2, "place of propitiation"). But equally significantly, the mercy seat is the place from which God encounters Israel and communicates with Israel's covenant mediator, Moses (cf. Exod. 25:22; Num. 7:89), making it the place of God's presence and revelation. This dual function of the mercy seat was noticed by Jerome, who alternated two different terms in the Vulgate, calling it both the *propitiatorium*, the "place of propitiation" or "forgiveness" (cf. *propitiato*, סְלִיחָה, Ps. 129:4 Vulg./130:4 MT), and the *oraculum*, the place of God's presence and of "oracle" from God to Moses (cf., e.g., Exod. 25:17–22, esp. v. 22; 37:6; Lev. 16:2; Num. 7:89; in connection with atonement, Lev. 16:13, 16).

The Day of Atonement ritual in Leviticus 16 begins with the comment that the Lord appears in a cloud upon the mercy seat (Lev. 16:2). While in the holy of holies, the high priest conceals the mercy seat with the smoke, of the incense, and then uses his finger to sprinkle the blood of the sacrificial goat for the Israelite people once on the mercy seat and seven times on the ground before it (Lev. 16:14–15). In this way the life of Israel, symbolically contained or represented in the blood of the sacrificial animal (cf. Lev. 17:11), is surrendered to Yahweh and simultaneously reconnected with him: by passing through a symbolic death, Israel gains new fellowship with God and a new life unburdened by sin. As a sign of this newness and forgiveness, the people receive God's blessing from the high priest at the end of the cultic procedure; this is the only time during the entire year when the divine name "Yahweh" is spoken out loud. At the naming of the name, the priests and people respond with "blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom for ever and ever" (*m. Yoma* 4:1–3; 6:2).

The atonement ritual sketched above is not to be equated with the scapegoat ritual presented in Leviticus 16:10, 20–22. The scapegoat is an additional elimination ritual that has nothing to do with cultic (blood) atonement. By leaning his hand upon the scapegoat, the high priest loads the sins of Israel onto it; the animal is then led out of the temple into the wilderness to die there. Since in this graphic supplementary ritual sins are put aside without the essence of the sinful people being delivered to death and re-created, the goat has taken the people's place "exclusively," as a substitute; the pattern can be described as "exclusive place-taking" (German: *exkludierende Stellvertretung*). But the blood-atonement ritual represents or incorporates sinners in their very being and has therefore been called "inclusive place-taking" (*inkludierende Stellvertretung*). The difference between inclusive atonement, which incorporates the sinner's being, and the exclusive model that touches this only tangentially is important for a theological understanding of the christological atonement texts. The inclusive model is holistic, closely integrating several ideas and realities. It involves *sacrifice* and *place-taking*, since the life of the sacrificial animal takes the place of the life of Israel;

destruction (killing) of that which is unholy, since the sacrificial goat is killed instead of the people; *surrender of life to God*, since the sprinkled blood of the sacrificial goat represents Israel's life before and at the place of God's presence; *new creation* of life through the *forgiveness of sins*, since the blood covers the place of God's presence and the high priest blesses the people while pronouncing the name of Yahweh (cf. Sir. 50:20). Thus, it is historically and theologically absurd to split up or play off against one another the ideas of atonement, atoning sacrifice, place-taking, the death sentence, new creation, and the forgiveness of sins when discussing the atoning death of Jesus.

5.3.2 Whereas Jesus in his cup saying (Mark 14:24 par.) spoke of the inclusive atoning effect of his death in noncultic terms (see above, 157–58, 161), in Romans 3:25–26 and Hebrews 9:1–15 the cultic atonement ritual on the Day of Atonement is held up as an interpretive model of Jesus's death on the cross.

5.3.2.1 The formulaic text taken up by Paul in *Romans 3:25–26* seems to go back to Antiochene tradition and ultimately to the Stephen circle. The expressions Paul has taken over convey how God has established salvation through Christ Jesus; presumably the original formula lacked only the phrase "through faith," *διὰ πίστεως*, that now appears in Paul's version: *ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον [διὰ πίστεως] ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν τῶν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων ἐν τῇ ἀνοχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ*—Christ is the one "whom God publicly installed as the mercy seat/place of atonement [Gk. *hilastērion* = Heb. *kappōret*] by virtue of his blood as a demonstration of his [God's] righteousness for the remission [or because of the passing over] of the sins committed previously under God's patience."

Romans 3:25 includes several expressions unusual for Paul: only here does he use *προτίθημι* (middle *προτίθεμαι*) in the sense "to set out openly" or "publicly" (cf. BDAG, s.v. *προτίθημι* 2; for a different sense see Rom. 1:13); *ἱλαστήριον*, "place of atonement" or "mercy seat"; *ἔνδειξις*, "demonstration"; *πάρεσις*, "passing over" or "letting go unpunished" (BDAG; cf. *remissio*, Vulgate = "remission," KJV; "forgiveness," NAB); *προγίνομαι*, "to happen previously"; and the plural *ἁμαρτήματα*, "sins," that is, specific acts of sin as distinct from the principle of sin, *ἁμαρτία*. This vocabulary, together with the overloaded style of Romans 3:25–26, is best explained by assuming that the apostle here, as in Romans 1:3–4, takes up and comments on preformulated tradition.

These statements are very bold! Jesus, publicly crucified on the cross on Golgotha, is identified with the *hilastērion*, the *kappōret* or "mercy seat" hidden from human eyes in the temple's holy of holies.

In his exegetical dictionary article entitled "*ἱλαστήριον, ου, τό*, *hilastērion* Sühnendes, Sühnegabe, Sühneort" = "that which expiates, expiatory gift; place of expiation" (*EWNT* 2:455–57/*EDNT* 2:185–

86)—J. Roloff has correctly pointed out that the noun τὸ ἱλαστήριον, which is formally the substantival neuter of the adjective ἱλαστήριος, "zur Begütigung/Sühne gehörig" ("for propitiation/pertaining to expiation"), most commonly refers in Greek literary works and inscriptions to "a gift of consecration or expiation brought to the deity, most frequently in the form of a consecrated stele" (Dio Chrysostom 10.121 [the ἱλαστήριον in Dio is not a stele but the Trojan horse, cf. 10.123—translator]; W. R. Paton and E. L. Hicks, *The Inscriptions of Cos* [1891], no. 81, 347), and that "only in a single reference on an Egyptian papyrus of the second century AD does the word [*sic*] have the meaning 'Sühnopfer,' 'propitiatory sacrifice' (Pap. Fayûm no. 337)."[1] In the LXX Pentateuch and Philo, ἱλαστήριον consistently designates the *kappōret* or "mercy seat" (cf. Exod. 25:17ff.; Lev. 16:2ff.; Num. 7:89; Philo, *Cherubim* 25; *Heir* 166; *Flight* 100–101; *Moses* 2:95, 97). The translation of ἱλαστήριον by "expiation" or "expiatory/atoning sacrifice" found in the major translations of Romans 3:25 (e.g., "an expiation," RSV; "a sacrifice of atonement," NIV; NRSV) and in the secondary literature can only be deduced hypothetically from the already mentioned Egyptian papyrus from the second century and from 4 Maccabees 17:22 (Codex S, but not A).[2] The translation "sacrifice of atonement" encounters the problem that Paul's verb προτίθημι (ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεός) is not a term for presenting a victim (cf. προσφέρω) but can be a technical term for openly presenting the "loaves of presentation" (ἄρτοι τῆς προθέσεως) or showbread before the Lord (cf. Exod. 29:23; 40:23; Lev. 24:8; 2 Macc. 1:8, 15). The translation in terms of "sacrifice" also makes the expression ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι, "in his blood," a redundant truism, whereas both expressions προτίθημι and "blood" are meaningful and significant if ἱλαστήριον is identified with the *kappōret*. It is therefore exegetically advisable to proceed from this identification.

In order to demonstrate his saving and well-being-creating (but not, e.g., his punishing!) righteousness and to effect on his own initiative the remission of the transgressions that Israel had committed prior to the appearance of Jesus (but whose consequences God in his gracious patience had not yet let fall upon Israel), God publicly installed the crucified Jesus as the "place of atonement" (cf. NRSV margin at Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:5), thereby effecting atonement once for all through his blood. In place of the cultic atonement ritual that he himself established and required to be repeated annually before the *kappōret*, God has placed the finished atonement that Jesus accomplished through the vicarious surrender of his life on the cross. Out of this atonement the end-time people of God, the Christian church, was born. Therefore, according to Romans 3:25–26, "Good Friday has become the eschatological great Day of Atonement" (J. Roloff, *EDNT* 2:186).

The identification of Christ on Golgotha with the kappōret *implies a radical criticism of the atoning sacrificial cult in the Jerusalem temple*: The atoning death of Jesus, willed by God, dissolves the atoning cult on Mount Zion. This is also symbolized by the tearing of the temple curtain at the death of Jesus (cf. Mark 15:38 par.).

If one asks about the origin of such temple criticism, Acts 6:13–14 suggests that it may be traced back to Stephen and the circle of the Hellenists. According to Acts 6:13–14, the criticism of the temple was one of the decisive grounds for Stephen's martyrdom and his followers' expulsion from Jerusalem. Through the scattered members of Stephen's circle the tradition made its way to Antioch, where it was taken up by Paul and later by the writer to the Hebrews.

If one identifies Christ with the *kappōret* and not merely with the sacrificial victim or "sin offering" and moreover recalls the *kappōret*'s

double function as the place of atonement and of Israel's encounter with God, the result is a comprehensive christological vision already anticipated in Jesus's self-understanding as the messianic Son of Man: *Just as the Son of Man–Messiah is the representative both of God to humanity and of humanity before God, so also Christ on the cross on Golgotha is simultaneously the God who graciously encounters his people and the Servant who vicariously suffers for sinners, true God and true man in one person and one place*.

5.3.2.2 If the bold Christology found in Romans 3:25 was already alive in the Stephen circle, then the atonement formula that Paul cites in *2 Corinthians 5:21* is likewise to be anchored in the tradition of the pre-Pauline Hellenists. Using a construction common in biblical Greek, the text has God as subject, Christ ("him") as object, and "sin" as the object's complement, in the sense: ὁ θεὸς ἐποίησεν *αὐτὸν ἁμαρτίαν*, "*God* made *him* to be *sin*" (cf. BDF §157). The full text reads: τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ, "He made him who knew no sin to be sin [or: a sin offering, NIV margin] for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him."

2 Corinthians 5:21 is formulated in the technical atonement vocabulary of the Septuagint. The Septuagint translators apparently understood the technical term חַטָּאת (*ḥaṭṭāʾt*), "sin offering" (e.g., Exod. 29:14), to mean τὸ περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας δῶρον, "the *gift* for sin" (cf. Heb. 5:1: δῶρα καὶ θυσίαι ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν, "gifts and sacrifices for sins"). In practice, however, the translators always abbreviated this, either as τὸ περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας (cf. Lev. 5:8; 7:7; 9:7; etc.) or as περὶ ἁμαρτίας (Lev. 5:6, 7, 11, etc.), or even more pregnantly as the single term ἁμαρτία without the περί as in 2 Corinthians 5:21, for example, Leviticus 4:21, ἁμαρτία συναγωγῆς ἐστιν, "it is the sin offering of the congregation" (similarly ἁμαρτία ἐστίν, Lev. 4:24; 5:12; cf. further Exod. 29:14; 29:36; Lev. 4:8, 20, 25, 29, 32; 6:17 [total of eleven occurrences]). Since in sacrificial contexts the verb ποιέω can mean "to make into" or "to offer as" a burnt offering or sin offering (cf. Lev. 5:10; 9:7), the expression ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν in 2 Corinthians 5:21 acquires a clear meaning: God made the innocent Jesus to be the bearer of sin's guilt, a *sin offering*, so that "we" might gain a new existence in righteousness through his surrender to death.

In 2 Corinthians 5:21, as in Romans 4:25, atonement for sinners through Jesus's vicarious surrender of life, initiated by God, is interpreted in the light of Isaiah 53:5, 11–12 as an act of justification that lays the foundation for a new being. Sinners acquire a new being through the Servant's sacrificial act, which allows them to participate in the righteousness of God.

The close affinity of this statement to early Jewish thought is shown by 1QS 11:11–15.

5.4 The "language gain" that early Christianity achieved prior to Paul in Jerusalem and Antioch by means of this atonement-theological interpretation of Jesus's death was also significant for mission.

As M. Hengel has shown (*The Atonement* [1981], 6–18), the language of "dying for" others (ὑπεραποθνήσκω) had a positive ring to it in the Greco-Roman world of New Testament times. Giving up one's life for friends or fatherland or for a just cause was considered exemplary behavior. Sufficient illustration is provided by the death of Socrates for the cause of justice in Plato's *Apology* (32a–c) or by the well-known sentence of Horace, *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*, "'Tis sweet and glorious to die for fatherland" (*Odes* 3.2.13). The early Christian language of Jesus's death ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν/ὑμῶν stamped by Isaiah 53:5, 11–12 was therefore met by a certain level of acceptance among Greeks and Romans. But while this made the Christian witness understandable, it also required interpretation, since Jesus's sacrificial death needed to be differentiated from the noble death of warriors, philosophers, and martyrs.

6 Looking back, we see a clear picture emerging: Carried along by the resurrection experience, the first Christian witnesses began in Jerusalem, Damascus, and Antioch to testify to the crucified one as "Lord," "Messiah," and "Son of God." They also reflected on Jesus's incarnation and developed models for speaking about Jesus's death on the cross in a soteriologically precise and evangelistically understandable way. Recalling Jesus's own understanding of his death and appealing to the word of God in the Holy Scriptures, they understood Jesus's death as a once-for-all inclusive event of atonement initiated by God. The interpretation of the cross from Leviticus 16 in Romans 3:25–26 and the understanding of Jesus's surrender of life and resurrection from Isaiah 53:5, 10–12 in 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5, Romans 4:25, and 2 Corinthians 5:21 mutually limit and supplement one another. Not only the confession of the resurrection but also the beginnings of Christology become fully understandable only in the framework of biblical-theological thinking.

The interpretation of Jesus's death and resurrection as the accomplishment of God's reconciliation with humanity is theologically important especially for two reasons: (1) the continuity in which the interpretation stands to Jesus's understanding of his suffering and death, and (2) the missionary gains of this interpretation. As soon as early Christianity could confess Christ, speak about him precisely, and make clear that the cross is not the final failure of Jesus but a saving event initiated by God, it

was able to carry out its mission to Jews and Gentiles and could oppose critics of this mission with scriptural arguments.

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Further Reading

D. P. Bailey, review of Wolfgang Kraus, *Der Tod Jesu als Heiligtumsweihe* (as above), *JTS* NS 45 (1994): 247–52; "Jesus as the Mercy Seat: The Semantics and Theology of Paul's Use of *Hilastērion* in Romans 3:25," *TynB* 51 (2000): 155–58; **R. Bauckham**, "The Christological Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament," *NTS* 18 (1971–1972): 1–14; *God Crucified: Monotheism and*

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1. Translator's note: The above text of Roloff's EWNT/EDNT article on *ἱλαστήριον* has been expanded to include both German and English definitions, partly to point out problems with the traditional German lexicography on this term. Roloff's mistaken reference to the relevant Fayûm papyrus as "no. 313" has been silently corrected above to no. 337 (313 is the page). More importantly, it is imprecise for Roloff to say that in this papyrus a single "word," *ἱλαστήριος/ἱλαστήριον*, has the meaning "Sühnopfer" (German: one word) or "propitiatory sacrifice," because in Greek, as in English, this requires two words, *ἱλαστήριους θυσίας*, "propitiatory sacrifices" (fem. acc. pl.). The papyrus text appears to speak of people who are counted worthy (*ἀξιωθέντες*) to perform or offer propitiatory sacrifices to the gods: *τοῖς θεοῖς εἱλαστη[ρίο]υς θυσίας ἀξιω[θέ?]ντες ἐπιτελεῖσθαι* (text in B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt, Fayûm Towns and Their Papyri [1900], 313 no. 337). Furthermore, the entire notion of *ἱλαστήριον* as the supposed substantivized neuter use of the adjective *ἱλαστήριος*, thought to mean "das Sühnende, das Versöhnende," or "that which expiates or propitiates" (cf. BAGD, s.v. *ἱλαστήριον*), is a complete fabrication by A. Deissmann, "*ἱλαστήριος* und *ἱλαστήριον*: Eine lexikalische Studie," ZNW 4 (1903): 193–211. The German forms are substantival neuter participles and as such translate back into Greek not as *τὸ ἱλαστήριον*, but as the participle *τὸ ἱλασκόμενον*, which has the force of a transitive verb. True examples of the substantival neuter adjective in the New Testament and Septuagint do not come anywhere near the force of a verb, but are always pure abstractions. Examples include *γινώσκοντες καλὸν καὶ πονηρόν*, "knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5); *Μὴ δῶτε τὸ ἅγιον τοῖς κυσίν*, "do not give what is holy to dogs" (Matt. 7:6); *τὸ γὰρ ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου*, "what was impossible for the law" (Rom. 8:3); *τὸ ἀμετάθετον τῆς βουλῆς αὐτοῦ*, "the unchangeableness of his purpose" (Heb. 6:17); *τὰ ἄνω ζητεῖτε*, "seek the things that are above" (Col. 3:1), and many others. For a fresh approach to lexicography that differentiates between a *ἱλαστήριον* that propitiates (in Greco-Roman usage) and a *ἱλαστήριον* that does not (in biblical and later Byzantine Christian usage), see my essay at the end of this book, "Biblical and Greco-Roman Uses of Hilastērion in Romans 3:25 and 4 Maccabees 17:22 (Codex S)."

2. Translator's note: Out of scholarly etiquette, Professor Stuhlmacher here tries to attribute at least a minimal hypothetical possibility to the common practice of translating *ἱλαστήριον* in Rom. 3:25 by "propitiatory sacrifice" or "atoning sacrifice," which he himself does not support. However, his citations of P. Fay. 337 and of 4 Macc. 17:22 Codex S only further undermine the case for *ἱλαστήριον* as a term that can represent the victim of a sacrifice. To follow the papyrus exactly, Paul would need to have written *ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον θυσίαν*, "whom God presented as a

propitiatory sacrifice," including the term θυσία for the sacrificial victim. See further my essay at the end of this volume, mentioned in the preceding note.

CHAPTER 15

The Formation, Structure, and Mission of the First Churches

This chapter answers three main questions: (1) What circumstances led to the formation of the first Christian churches? (2) What did their worship and community life look like? (3) What motivated their mission and what were its fundamental principles?

1 According to Luke 24:34 and 1 Corinthians 15:5, *Jesus's appearance to Peter* was decisive for the formation of the early church.

1.1 No account of Jesus's first appearance to Peter has been preserved for us. Luke 24:34 suggests only that it took place in Jerusalem. John 20:19–23, Matthew 28:16–20, and John 21 mention further appearances to Peter and others among the Twelve in Jerusalem and Galilee. Jesus's first appearance to Peter had epoch-making effect: Despite his failure on the night in which Jesus was betrayed (cf. Mark 14:53–65 par.), Peter understood himself to be accepted again by the risen Lord and called to lead his disciples to Galilee, where they were to see him (cf. Mark 14:28; 16:7 par.). Peter's house in Capernaum became the meeting place of a Christian house church (see above, 206). However, Peter himself returned to Jerusalem and there regathered the circle of the Twelve. This circle formed the core of the early community (cf. Acts 1:12–26).

1.2 The *early church in Jerusalem* must have been small at first. According to Acts 1:15, it initially included only 120 persons who met as a house church (Acts 2:2, 46). In addition to the early disciples (μαθηταί) and female companions of Jesus, the church included members of Jesus's family, such as James the Lord's brother, to whom the Lord made a special Easter appearance (1 Cor. 15:7); other brothers of Jesus; and Jesus's mother Mary (Acts 1:14). Because Jesus's brothers were skeptical about him during his earthly ministry (Mark 3:21; John 7:5), their membership in the church presupposes a fundamental change of heart that was probably associated with Jesus's appearance to James.

The early community was united by its common confession of Jesus as "Lord and Messiah" (Acts 2:36) and by its closely associated conviction that God would soon complete—in and from the city of Jerusalem—the saving work for Israel and the nations that he had begun with Jesus's mission and atoning death and confirmed by his resurrection. For the sake of the temple and Mount Zion, the Jews considered the Holy City to be the center of all of God's end-time saving activities (cf. Isa. 2:2–4; 66:18–24; Mic. 4:1–4; Mal. 3:1–3; *1 En.* 27). It was therefore also the place where the early Christians had to await the parousia. The term *παρουσία* (*parousia*) refers to the *end-time arrival of the messianic Son of Man* to execute final judgment over the world and to establish the kingdom of God (cf. Matt. 24:3, 27, 37–39; 1 Thess. 4:15–17). The (imminent) expectation of the parousia is an implication both of the pre-Easter Jesus tradition about the Son of Man (cf. only Luke 12:8–9 par. and Luke 12:32) and of the Easter-inspired christological exegesis of the messianic prophecies in Psalms 89:27–28 (ET 89:26–27) and 110:1.

By forming his circle of twelve disciples and sending them out in mission (cf. Mark 6:7–12 par.; Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:29–30), Jesus laid claim to the end-time people of the twelve tribes, Israel, even though "at the time of Jesus . . . there were only two and a half tribes left; Judah, Benjamin, and half Levi"; the gathering and return of the other nine and a half tribes were expected only in the end time (cf. J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* [1971], 235). Jesus was convinced that the end-time "coming" of the Son of Man (Mark 14:62 par.; Matt. 24:27, 37–39) would take place in Jerusalem, and that the end-time events would radiate their effects from an exalted Zion into the world of the nations (cf. his references to Isa. 25:6–8 in Luke 13:29/Matt. 8:11–13; Mark 14:25 par.).

Peter, the rest of the Twelve, and the early community gathered around them in Jerusalem gave life and form to their exalted Lord's claim upon the eschatological people of the twelve tribes. They recalled his life and teaching, and with their "Maranatha" they prayed for his end-time "coming with the clouds of heaven" (cf. Mark 14:62 par. with Dan. 7:13) (see above, 208–9, §§2–2.1, 2.3).

1.3 We can better appreciate the end-time self-understanding of the early community by investigating its *self-designation "church of God"* (*ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ*) found in Acts 5:11; 8:1, 3; 9:31; 1 Corinthians 15:9; Galatians 1:13, 22.

1.3.1 As indicated above (133, §5.5), *Jesus's saying to Peter in Matthew 16:16–19* combines a pre-Easter tradition with its post-Easter continuation.

This saying originally meant that Peter would play a literally "foundational" role in the gathering of the end-time people of the twelve tribes already begun by Jesus. After Jesus's first resurrection appearance to Peter, Peter's role was understood as fulfilled by his founding and leading the early church in Jerusalem. Peter's full-blown confession of Jesus as "Son of the living God" in Matthew 16:16 undoubtedly traces back to this post-Easter reworking of the text. Jesus's prophecy in Matthew 16:18, "on this rock I will build *my church*," was also referred at this time to the founding of the church in Jerusalem, which, together with its daughter churches, was designated as *ἡ ἐκκλησία μου*. Jesus's pictorial sayings about "binding" and "loosing" mean in Jewish idiom the authority to forgive or impute sins once for all (cf. Str-B 1:738ff.). Peter is given the authority to forgive sins in Matthew 18:18–19, "because in this way the authority comes back to the church as a whole that is built on Peter as the 'rock'" (F. Hahn, *Exegetische Beiträge*, 1:196).

According to Matthew 16:16–19, Peter has the role of the main apostle and bedrock of the early church in Jerusalem, who was called by the Easter appearance of Jesus.

1.3.2 Unfortunately, the precise Aramaic or Hebrew equivalent underlying the use of *ἐκκλησία* by Jesus in Matthew 16:18 can no longer be determined with certainty. The two main options are עֵדָה (cf. 4Q171 [4QPsalms Pesher[a]] 3:16 on Ps. 37:23–24, "the congregation of his chosen ones") and קָהָל. In the Septuagint עֵדָה (*ʿēdâ*) is usually translated by *συναγωγή*, and קָהָל (*qāhāl*) by *ἐκκλησία*. In Greek usage *ἐκκλησία* denotes the assembly of the people, and *συναγωγή* (cf. English "synagogue") the meeting of the guilds or associations. In the Old Testament עֵדָה denotes the congregation of Israel as a cultic and legal entity (e.g., Num. 27:17; Josh. 22:16; Ps. 74:2), while קָהָל denotes an assembly or contingent called together for special occasions, such as a group of men called to war (e.g., Judg. 20:2; 1 Sam. 17:47), or the Israelite faith congregation called together by God at Sinai and charged with keeping the law (cf., e.g., Deut. 5:22; 9:10; 10:4; 23:2ff.; etc.). Jesus could have used either עֵדָה (or עֲדָתִי) or קָהָל (or קְהָלִי) for the end-time people of the twelve tribes headed by him and founded upon Peter on earth. But judging from the usage of the LXX, it is more likely that *ἐκκλησία* in Matthew corresponds to קָהָל.

1.3.3 Clarity about the self-understanding of the Jerusalem church is first to be gained by noting that Paul and Luke always refer to the Jerusalem church with its daughter churches as *ἡ ἐκκλησία* (τοῦ) θεοῦ. The Semitic equivalent for *ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ* is accessible in the Qumran texts (1QM 4:10; cf. also 1Q28a 1:25). Here we find the expression קְהַל אֵל, which

understands the congregation of Israel as God's "squadron" in the last battle against his enemies. With its self-designation ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ, the early church connects itself to the Jesus tradition of Matthew 16:18, seeing itself as the saved community within Israel called by God through the Messiah Jesus. From the combination of this idea of the twelve disciples as the future rulers of the people of the twelve tribes (an idea originating with Jesus and continued by Peter) and the choice of Jerusalem as location, it is confirmed that the early Jerusalem church understood itself as the core of the end-time people of the twelve tribes. Unlike the Essenes of Qumran (cf. CD 1:4–5; 2:6; 1QH 6:8; 1QM 13:8), the early church however did not form merely the holy remnant from which God would rebuild Israel (cf. Amos 5:15; Isa. 4:3; 6:13; 10:22; Zeph. 3:12; etc.). Rather, as Jesus's own possession, the church represents at the very place of the parousia *the earthly vanguard of the end-time Israel*, which Jesus together with the Twelve had already begun to assemble and which now was to be fully gathered beginning from Jerusalem.

1.3.4 The plural designation αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τοῦ θεοῦ refers to the churches of God in Judea—meaning all of Palestine (so O. Betz, "Ἰουδαία," *EDNT* 2:192, §4b)—that were oriented toward Jerusalem and are mentioned by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 2:14 and Galatians 1:22. These churches will not have understood themselves any differently from the Jerusalem mother church.

1.4 It is in perfect agreement with the self-understanding of the early church that it believed itself to be filled with the Holy Spirit and therefore legitimated in its mission, first among Jews and proselytes, then later among Samaritans and Gentiles. According to Acts 2, the gift of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the Christian mission were associated with the first *Pentecost* after Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection.

Pentecost was the "Feast of Weeks" celebrated at the end of the wheat harvest, fifty days after the festivals of Passover and Unleavened Bread. It was called ἡ πεντηκοστή, or Pentecost, in Greek (cf. Exod. 23:14–17; 34:22; Tob. 2:1; 2 Macc. 12:32) and was one of the three great Israelite pilgrimage festivals (cf. Deut. 16:16). In early Judaism it was celebrated as the festival of remembrance of God's covenant with Noah and the proclamation of the law at Sinai (cf. *Jub*. 6). Rabbinic traditions associate the giving of the Torah with the idea that God's voice first split into seven and then seventy "tongues" (languages) so that the Torah could be shared with every people in its own language (cf. Str-B 2:604–5). The inspiration of the Holy Spirit that enables God's people to praise him and fully know his will is presented as an end-time saving event in Jeremiah 31:31–34, Ezekiel 36:24–28, and Joel 3:1–5 (ET 2:28–32) (on this expectation see also 1QS 4:20ff.).

With Jesus's resurrection, his appearances from heaven, and the gift of the πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ ("Spirit of Christ"), the early church understood itself to be experiencing the fulfillment of these promises.

In the story of the *Pentecost event* taken over by Luke in Acts 2:1–13, Pentecost is presented against the background of the traditions of the Feast of Weeks and the promise of the Spirit: The assembled early church is granted an end-time event of fulfillment. In the praise of the "mighty acts" or μεγαλεῖα of God by the Christian witnesses in Acts 2:11 (cf. Deut. 11:2; Ps. 71:19), the proclamation of the law at Sinai is "abrogated" in a double sense of the word. The long series of God's μεγαλεῖα is crowned by Jesus's mission and resurrection from the dead. Moreover, the gospel of Christ, proclaimed to Jews from throughout the world in their native languages, takes the place of the Sinai revelation, and the ability of the Christian witnesses to speak in tongues proves to everyone that the ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ is possessed by God's Spirit and enabled to join the heavenly worship.

Luke relates that in response to Peter's Pentecost sermon, "about three thousand souls (ψυχαί)" were baptized in one day (Acts 2:41), and that within a short time the early church numbered "about five thousand men (ἄνδρες)" plus their families (Acts 4:4). Paul reports in 1 Corinthians 15:6 that Jesus appeared to "more than five hundred brothers (ἀδελφοί) at one time." If one were to apply Paul's figure to Pentecost, one would probably come much closer to the reality than with Luke's numbers. But the equating of the Easter appearance of 1 Corinthians 15:6 with the Pentecost event in Jerusalem is uncertain. We are therefore left to depend on a critical comparison of Luke's numbers with modern scholarly estimates of the population of Jerusalem at the time of Jesus. Unfortunately these estimates also fluctuate. According to J. Jeremias, there were only about 25,000–30,000 residents of Jerusalem at this time. In their edition of Josephus's *Jewish War*, O. Bauernfeind and O. Michel figure on 70,000–80,000 residents (*De Bello Judaico*, II/2 [1969], 207–8). W. Reinhardt has once again revised the figure upward and thinks of 120,000 residents ("Population Size of Jerusalem," 263). During the pilgrimage festivals the population also swelled by thousands of pilgrims (cf. Philo, *Spec. Laws* 1.69). With these high resident population numbers supplemented by the pilgrims, Luke's figures are less conspicuous. Nevertheless, it remains questionable whether Jerusalem had enough room (and opportunities for making a living) after Pentecost for as many Christians as Acts 4:4 says.

The *Holy Spirit* is partly described as a power inspiring and filling people (cf., e.g., Acts 1:8; 2:1–21; 11:28), but partly also as a personal force (e.g., Acts 5:32; 8:29; 10:19; 15:28). In either case the Spirit is thought of as a *gift and appearance of the exalted Christ* (cf. Luke 24:49; Acts 5:9; 8:39; 16:7; 1 Cor. 15:6), empowering the church in three areas of activity: (1) in their worship of God and confession of Christ as well as their new understanding of the person and mission of Jesus in the light of the Holy Scriptures (cf. Luke 24:25ff., 44ff.; Acts 2:22–36); (2) in their acting in the name of the resurrected one, for example, by realizing the "office of the keys" in the form of the forgiveness or retention of sins (cf. Matt. 16:19; 18:18 with Acts 5:1–11) and by performing "signs and wonders" (Acts 3:1–10; 5:12); (3) in their missionary witness, in which their new obedience of

faith overcame all fear and self-interest (cf. Luke 21:12–19/Matt. 10:17–22; 24:9–14 with Acts 2:14–36; 3:12–4:31).

2 The early Jerusalem church with its daughter churches was held together by its faith, the teaching of the apostles, its worship, and its communal religious life. We will consider each in turn.

2.1 The *faith* of the early church is illuminated by the following considerations.

2.1.1 The noun πίστις (“faith,” “faithfulness”) and the verb πιστεύειν (“to believe” or “have faith”) and their Semitic equivalents אֱמוּנָה (*ʾĕmûnâ*) and הֶאֱמִין (*heʾĕmîn*, hifil of אמן, e.g., Gen. 15:6) occur relatively infrequently in the Old Testament (אֱמוּנָה, thirty-eight times in the sense of “faith” or “faithfulness”; אמן hifil, forty-nine times in the sense “to believe,” “trust,” or “have faith” [cf. NASB]) and in early Judaism and the Jesus tradition. By contrast, however, this same word group is very frequent in Acts, the Pauline Letters, and the Johannine writings. We are therefore dealing with *favorite Christian words* that were characteristic of the attitude of the early Christian mission churches. The departure to a new, specifically Christian understanding of faith did not begin with Paul or the Johannine school but started already in the pre-Pauline churches. Otherwise it would have been impossible for the members of the Jerusalem church in Acts to be called simply οἱ πιστεύοντες, “the believers,” or οἱ πιστεύσαντες, “those who had come to faith” (cf. Acts 2:44; 4:32; 5:14). Furthermore, the call to faith was an established part of early Christian missionary preaching to both Jews (cf. Acts 2:38–39; 3:16) and Gentiles (cf. Acts 8:12; 10:43; 1 Thess. 1:9–10).

2.1.2 In order to determine what the Christian faith rested on and how it expressed itself, we must recall first the Old Testament–early Jewish use and then the novel Jesuanic use of “faith” (see above, 106–7, §§4.2–4.2.2).

In the Old Testament “faith” or “believing” in passages such as Genesis 15:1–6, Isaiah 7:4–9, 28:16, 30:15, and Habakkuk 2:2–4 means the trusting and obedient grounding of oneself in God alone, who of his own free choice accepted Abraham and the house of David and invited people to depend on him. Early Judaism understood πίστις (faith) and πιστεύειν (to believe) especially as the fear of God that manifests itself in keeping the Torah (cf. Sir. 44:19–21; 1QpHab 7:17–8:3). Over against this we find a novel concept of “faith” in the Jesus tradition. In his sayings about the faith that could move mountains and uproot trees (Mark 11:22–24 par.; Matt. 17:20/Luke 17:6), Jesus spoke of πίστις (θεοῦ) as a gift of God granted to praying people that allows them to experience God in his omnipotence

acting on their behalf. In several healing stories we also begin to see the transition from a theocentric faith *in God*—where *πίστις θεοῦ* is an objective genitive (cf. Mark 11:22: "have faith *in* God")—to a faith *in Jesus* as God's mediator of salvation (cf. Mark 2:5 par.; 5:34 par.; Luke 7:1–10/Matt. 8:5–13).

The faith (in God) that the earthly Jesus demanded and that was already being directed to him as the divine helper in life finds its counterpart in early post-Easter texts about the *πίστις* (*θεοῦ*) directed to God, who raised Jesus from the dead and made him "Lord and Messiah" (Acts 2:36). Acts 3:16 shows that faith in Jesus's name, which makes his work of salvation present and opens up faith as a possibility, is the vehicle of healing, while Acts 10:43 says explicitly that the *πιστεύειν* or *πίστις* directed *εἰς* Ἰ*ησοῦν* Χ*ριστόν* brings end-time forgiveness of sins. If one adds the summary in 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 of the "gospel" that was proclaimed by the Jerusalem witnesses and creates faith, then it becomes fully clear that already in the early church, faith was directed to the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus. *Faith in early Christianity is the trust and obedience toward God that the risen Christ awakens through his Spirit and the apostolic preaching. This faith understands God as the one who has revealed himself in Jesus's mission, suffering, and resurrection as the God who will not eternally disown sinners but who wants to lead them to eternal salvation (σωτηρία) together with the whole creation*. Moreover, the prayer cry *μαραναθά* (see above, 208, §2) shows that faith already in the pre-Pauline period was also directed to the person of the Κ*ύριος* Ἰ*ησοῦς* Χ*ριστός*. As a *πιστεύειν τῷ κυρίῳ* (Acts 5:14) or *ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον* Ἰ*ησοῦν* Χ*ριστόν* (Acts 9:42; 11:17, 21) and *εἰς αὐτόν* (Acts 10:43), this faith involved *a personal relationship of trust and obedience to the risen Christ*.

2.2 The *teaching of the apostles* in Acts 2:42 is a complex phenomenon. It includes the confessional traditions presented above in chapter 14, the basic elements of an early Christian liturgy (see below), the teaching of Jesus applied and adjusted to the post-Easter situation, and the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures with reference to Jesus and the end-time events (cf. Luke 24:25–27, 44–45 with the *κατὰ τὰς γραφάς* of 1 Cor. 15:3–4).

Early Christianity owes the preservation, fixing, and handing on of the *gospel tradition* (*παράδοσις*) to Peter and those apostles who followed Jesus as his "pupils" or *μαθηταί* before Easter. However, they did not only bring Jesus's teaching into the early church. From Jerusalem they also set in motion a process of "well-kept tradition" in which the tradition was prepared for easy memorization and

spread by specially authorized teachers (*διδάσκαλοι*). In the course of the process of handing on the tradition that the Jerusalem apostles began, the teaching of Jesus experienced clearly recognizable updating and further interpretation (as illustrated, for example, by a comparison of Mark 8:27–30 and Matt. 16:13–19 [see above]). But because the process of tradition was controlled by the apostles and because the churches had been warned about the appearance of false prophets (cf. Mark 13:5–6, 21–23 par.), wild proliferation of the tradition was avoided (see above, chap. 2).

The continual "devotion" of the early church to the teaching of the apostles (Acts 2:42) emphasizes "the persistent and submissive *perseverance* and *tenaciousness* of a self-enclosed group collectively oriented toward specific goals" (H. R. Balz, "*προσκαρτερέω*," *EDNT* 3:172). The early church therefore formed a committed learning and living community.

2.3 About the *worship services and meetings* of the churches in the early period, only a few things can be said because of the paucity of reports. Christians did not avoid the temple as a matter of principle, but regularly prayed and participated in worship services there (Acts 2:46; 3:1). However, whether they still took part in the sacrificial cult on the Day of Atonement is questionable because of their confession of the end-time atoning effect of Jesus's death on the cross. In addition to the temple, believers in Jesus Christ also met in the *private houses* of well-to-do church members (cf. Acts 12:12–17). Hence, the Jerusalem church had already formed "house churches," giving the mission churches an important pattern for the communal life of Christians (cf. Acts 1:13–14; 2:1–4, 46; 12:12 with Rom. 16:5).

In terms of their spatial constraints, these house churches were very small. Only about 30–40 persons could assemble in Peter's house in Capernaum. In Jerusalem the houses were sometimes larger than in Capernaum, but still could not accommodate any large numbers. The figure of about 120 persons mentioned in Acts 1:15 is to be understood as the upper limit.

According to Acts 2:42, at the center of the house church meetings stood "the teaching of the apostles" (*ἡ διδαχὴ τῶν ἀποστόλων*), "the fellowship" (*ἡ κοινωνία*), "the breaking of bread" (*ἡ κλάσις τοῦ ἄρτου*), and "the prayers" (*αἱ προσευχαί*).

2.4 The beginnings of the *communal life* of the early church are visible in outline in the book of Acts. Those who formed the first house churches lived spiritually from the *διδαχὴ τῶν ἀποστόλων* or "teaching of the apostles" (see above). We may therefore assume that in these churches the

commands of Jesus were honored, together with the Decalogue. Among Jesus's commands, the double commandment of the love of God and neighbor (cf. Mark 12:28–34 par.) and the extension of the love of neighbors to the enemies of the church (Luke 6:27–36/Matt. 5:38–48) are especially characteristic. If one additionally recalls the sayings in Mark 10:42–44 par. about servanthood as the way to true greatness within the Christian community, then the outlines become visible of a κοινωνία (*koinōnia*, "fellowship," "sharing") characterized internally by the love of neighbors and externally by the love of enemies. This is in clear contrast to the religious life of those who did not share or in fact persecuted faith in Jesus as Lord and Messiah.

2.4.1 This impression is strengthened by the three *summary reports about the communal life of the early church* in Acts 2:42–47, 4:32–35, and 5:12–16. Behind these stand a pre-Lukan tradition that Luke has reworked (cf. J. Roloff, *Die Apostelgeschichte* [1988[2]], 89–91).

These summaries present a picture of a cooperative fellowship of believers that maintains itself by freewill contributions of its wealthy members. Such persons would spontaneously and voluntarily sell their real estate holdings (κτήματα, Acts 2:45) and other possessions (ὑπάρξεις, Acts 2:45) as needed to maintain their fellow believers with the proceeds of the sale; Acts 4:36–37 mentions Barnabas's sale of a piece of land as a primary example. Such a procedure is thoroughly imaginable for the early period of the church, which expected Jesus's parousia in the immediate future.

The *early Christian community of goods* described by Luke finds close parallels in Greek and Hellenistic Jewish literature. Plato's dialogue *Crito* regards such sharing as characteristic of the ideal society of the long-lost past, while Philo and Josephus use the same ideal when presenting their Greek readers with the communal life of the Essenes, whose writings are available in the *Damascus Document* and the Qumran texts. Since the early Christian "love communism" in Acts 2:42ff. and 4:32ff. repeatedly awakens interest among those who study ecclesiology, Philo's report about the Essenes in his *Every Good Man Is Free* may be cited as a possible, though ultimately only partial, parallel:

> Their love of God they show by a multitude of proofs . . . ; their love of men by benevolence and sense of equality (ἰσότης), and their spirit of fellowship (κοινωνία), which defies description, though a few words on it will not be out of place. (85) First of all then no one's house is his own in the sense that it is not shared by all, for besides the fact that they dwell together in communities (κατὰ θιάσους συνοικεῖν), the door is open to visitors from elsewhere who share their convictions. (86) Again they all have a single treasury and common disbursements; their clothes are held in common and also their food through their institution of public meals (συσσίτια). In no other community can we find the custom of sharing roof, life and board more firmly established in actual practice. And that is no more than one would expect. For all the wages which they earn in the day's work they do not keep as their private property, but throw them into the common stock (εἰς μέσον προτίθεσθαι) and allow the benefit (ὠφέλεια) thus accruing to be shared (κοινή) by those who wish to use it. (87) The sick are not neglected because they cannot provide anything, but have the cost of their treatment lying ready in the common stock (τὰ κοινά), so that they can

> meet expenses out of the greater wealth in full security. To the elder men too is given the respect and care which real children give to their parents, and they receive from countless hands and minds a full and generous maintenance for their latter years. (*Good Man* 84–87; LCL 9:59–61)

Philo presents a clearly organized Essene community focused on the long-term needs of its members, and his presentation is confirmed by the Qumran texts (most clearly in 1QS 1:11–12; 5:1–6:23; and CD 13:11–16).

2.4.2 Interestingly enough, Luke's report about the κοινωνία of the Christians in Jerusalem is *not* congruent with Philo's report about the Essenes. In Jerusalem there was only a communal life based on spiritual spontaneity and voluntarism, without the establishment of fixed communal property or the thought that church members would work for the common purse. There also appears to have been no organized welfare system, such as the Essenes and the Jewish synagogue congregations had developed so exemplarily in the New Testament period. Otherwise the daily distribution of food to destitute Christian widows would never have become a matter of controversy between the "Hellenists" and the "Hebrews" (cf. Acts 6:1ff.). The believers met in the individual houses at their disposal (Acts 2:46; 12:12); sales of property by a few rich people supported destitute church members; and the whole focus of church life was on prayer and the end-time coming of the "Lord" that was prayed for in the Maranatha.

Among the prayers of the early church, one is to think of the praying of the Psalms taken over from the synagogues, the Lord's Prayer, and the so-called canticles preserved in Luke 1:46–55, 68–79, and 2:29–32. Adaptable Jewish prayers like the Kaddish also came in alongside these.

Under these circumstances there is no reason to doubt Luke's presentation of the communal life of the early church, especially since he reports in Acts 11:27–30 that after some time the early church and its daughter churches in Judea (i.e., Palestine) fell into financial need through famine and needed the relief of the Christians of Antioch. The subsequent collection of the Gentile Christians for the Jerusalem church that was agreed upon at the so-called apostolic council in Jerusalem in AD 48 was also intended for "the poor among the saints" in Jerusalem according to Galatians 2:10 and Romans 15:26–27. It is therefore recognizable that the early church after Easter made a first attempt, based directly on Jesus's commands (cf. Luke 12:22–32/Matt. 6:25–34), *to form a communal life directed entirely to the coming kingdom of God*.

2.4.3 This first model of Christian κοινωνία was forced to make far-reaching modifications over the course of time in order to survive; the community organization of the Essenes was made for the long term, but the church life of the believers led by Peter and the rest of the Twelve was not yet so organized. When the Jewish king Agrippa I had James the son of Zebedee executed in AD 42 and Peter escaped the same fate only by special providence (cf. Acts 12:1–19), the circle of the Twelve was not once again supplemented. The leadership of the early church was rather transferred to James the Lord's brother, who now presided over the church together with a council of elders (cf. Acts 15:2, 4, 6). *Only this elder-based form of church government was capable to survive in Jerusalem until the martyrdom of the Lord's brother in AD 62* (cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 20.200).

2.5 The κοινωνία of the believers was repeatedly confirmed by shared *meals* in homes. According to Acts 2:42, 46, these meals were full meals in which one praised God with "gladness" (ἀγαλλίασις) and "sincerity of heart" (ἀφελότης καρδίας) while partaking of food (τροφή). "Gladness" or "rejoicing" means from the perspective of Psalm 16:9, Isaiah 25:9, and Luke 1:47 the joyful thanksgiving to God, who has provided salvation and deliverance. The rare expression "sincerity of heart" means the unfeigned and unforced surrender of oneself to the praise of God. The expression "breaking of bread" refers to the commencement ritual and blessing of a Jewish meal, in which bread was the staple food.

If one compares Acts 2:42, 46 with 20:7, 11, and 1 Corinthians 10:16, 11:23–25, one is led from the "breaking of bread" (κλάσις τοῦ ἄρτου) to the meal that Paul called the "Lord's Supper" (κυριακὸν δεῖπνον) in 1 Corinthians 11:20. This was celebrated throughout early Christianity as far as the church of Corinth as a full meal of the church.

Because Jesus was already called upon in Jerusalem as the exalted "Lord" in the μαραναθά, the assumption that the early church in Jerusalem celebrated the "Lord's Supper" cannot be invalidated as an anachronism. *The shared celebration of the Lord's Supper with expressions of joy and praise appears to have stood at the center of meetings of the Jerusalem church from house to house*.

2.5.1 Hans Lietzmann in his monograph *Messe und Herrenmahl* (1955[3]) and in his commentary *An die Korinther I–II* (1949[4]) has proposed

the thesis that "the 'breaking of bread' of the early church is a repetition of the daily table fellowship with Jesus," but that the meal designated by Paul as the "Lord's Supper" is a Christian analogy to ancient pagan memorial meals for the dead that should therefore be understood as "a replica especially of the last meal of Jesus" (*Korinther*, 58). Lietzmann has found followers of this view until today (cf., e.g., B. Kollmann, *Ursprung und Gestalten der frühchristlichen Mahlfeier* [1990]). But the tradition-historical connections and the relevant texts point in a different direction than Lietzmann assumed: *The "breaking of bread" and the (Pauline) "Lord's Supper" both originate from a common root and refer to the same meal, which goes back to Jesus's farewell Passover meal in Jerusalem*.

2.5.2 In chapter 10 we sought to reconstruct what Jesus said and celebrated with the Twelve during his last Passover supper in Jerusalem (see above, 153–56, §4). Standing on the borderline between his impending death and his new life before and with God, Jesus did not only celebrate Passover with the Twelve as representatives of the people of the twelve tribes; he also gave them a share in the atoning effect of his death during the main Passover meal. In this way he made them participants in the new covenant that corresponds eschatologically to the Sinai covenant and gave them access to the eschatological fellowship meal on Mount Zion to which he himself looked forward (cf. Mark 14:25 par. with Isa. 25:6–8). The Lord's Supper tradition that Paul traces back to the "Lord" in 1 Corinthians 11:23–25 shows that Jesus's words and actions on his last night in Jerusalem remained constitutive for the celebrations of the Lord's Supper in the Christian churches. *The early Christian Lord's Supper is not simply about continuing Jesus's table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners, but involves first and foremost the "remembrance" (Luke 22:19) of Jesus's fellowship meal with the Twelve on the night before his death from a post-Easter perspective*.

Seen in this light, the Lord's Supper, which can also be designated as the "breaking of bread," is more than a mere copy of Jesus's last (Passover) supper in Jerusalem. Whereas Passover was and is celebrated only once a year, according to Acts 2:46 the church celebrated the Lord's Supper *καθ' ἡμέραν*, "day by day," or at least every Sunday on the day of the Lord's resurrection (cf. Acts 20:7). The celebration of the meal was no longer characterized by the Passover *hallel*, but by rejoicing with *ἀγαλλίασις* or

“gladness” (see above), and the participants were no longer the Twelve alone but all believers.

2.5.3 The development toward the new early Christian celebration of the Lord’s Supper after Easter took place in two stages. The first and decisive step lay in Jesus’s resurrection appearances at meals. Secondly, consequences were drawn from the disciples’ experiences of reconciliation during these meals.

2.5.3.1 Jesus appeared in new life in the breaking of the bread to the two disciples who had been traveling to Emmaus on Easter Day (Luke 24:13–35). He similarly appeared at mealtime at the lake of Gennesaret to the disciples who had returned to Galilee out of disappointment and fear (John 21). On his own initiative he reestablished the fellowship that had been broken by the disciples’ anxieties, doubts, and flight from the scene on the night of his arrest (see above, 206–7, §§1.3–1.3.1). It is precisely this experience of reacceptance by the risen Christ at mealtime that caused Jesus’s Last Supper on Passover evening in Jerusalem to be seen in a new light.

2.5.3.2 On the evening before the crucifixion the twelve disciples were overcome by shock and misunderstanding at Jesus’s prediction of his death; this was followed by a night of unbelief that overwhelmed them. But ever since the appearance of the risen Christ and the new Easter table fellowship he established, the reaccepted disciples understood the soteriological content of Jesus’s symbolic words and actions at the Last Supper all the better. Through his atoning death the Lord wished to open to them the new covenant’s fellowship with God (according to Jer. 31:31–34) and to make them participants in the messianic table fellowship on Mount Zion. The Lord confirmed this intention by appearing at mealtime in Emmaus and at the lake of Gennesaret. Breaking bread in the presence of the risen one now means being table guests of the crucified and risen Lord and celebrating the meal in memory of his completed passion, in joy over his resurrection, and in expectation of his imminent parousia as Son of Man and Judge of the World. Consequently, this type of Easter-inspired table fellowship was given a new name and value by Peter and the other apostles. They called the supper at the table of the risen Lord the “Lord’s Supper” (1 Cor. 11:20) and surrounded it with Easter joy (cf. Acts 2:46–47 with Isa. 25:9).

The regulations for the sacrificial meal of thanksgiving in Leviticus 7:11–12 and the personal piety of thanksgiving (תּוֹדָה, *tôdâ*) in the postexilic period anchor such poetic forms as the individual laments and the thanksgiving songs (as well as their combination in a single psalm, e.g., Pss. 22; 69; etc.). Such regulations provided Jews with a fixed ritual framework for celebrating a person's deliverance from death by a sacrificial meal. This type of private sacrificial cult continues to be spoken of until the time of the Mishnah (cf., e.g., *m. Pesah.* 1:5; 2:5; *m. Menah.* 3:6; 6:5; 7:1–6; etc.). This suggests that the early Jewish Christians understood the Lord's Supper in their houses to be the *sacrificial thanksgiving meal of the risen one*, celebrated by the exalted Christ himself (H. Gese). At this meal the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς himself was the head of the table, who personally distributed the bread that bound the participants to him and one another and the wine consecrated by his surrender of life, thus anticipating the messianic table fellowship on Zion that he had promised to the Twelve (cf. Luke 22:30 with Rev. 3:20). As the expression "sacrifice of praise" (θυσία αἰνέσεως) in Hebrews 13:15 still clearly shows, the praise of God at the Lord's Supper (cf. Acts 2:46) corresponded to the praise at the sacrificial meal of thanksgiving (cf. Ps. 50:23).

The celebration of the "Lord's Supper" or κυριακὸν δεῖπνον was naturally no longer limited to the annual evening of Passover, but took place especially on Sunday as the day of the Lord's resurrection (cf. Acts 20:7). However, within the framework of an eager expectation of the imminent parousia, nothing stood in the way of a daily celebration of the Lord's Supper.

2.5.3.3 The entire celebration of the Lord's Supper gains salvation-historical contours once one recalls that "remembrance" (ἀνάμνησις) of Jesus's words and actions at the Last Supper was already commanded in the church's tradition of the Lord's Supper that Paul "received from the Lord" (cf. 1 Cor. 11:23–25 with Luke 22:19). The remembrance during the Lord's Supper continues the Jewish Passover remembrance, supplementing it by the remembrance of the promised "redemption" (ἀπολύτρωσις) that God has effected for Israel and the nations by Jesus's atoning death and resurrection. The expression "in remembrance of me" (εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν) in 1 Corinthians 11:24 has nothing to do with pagan remembrances of the dead, but rather transfers the commanded "remembrance" of Passover (cf. זִכָּרוֹן, *zikkārôn*, Exod. 12:14; 13:3–10; Deut. 16:3), together with its detailed instructions in *m. Pesahim* 10:5, to the celebration of the Lord's Supper: the participants should celebrate it as if reclining at table with Jesus "on the night when he was betrayed." By virtue of his word and his vicarious surrender of life, they receive in the bread and wine the forgiveness of their sins, and they are raised up by him to become table guests at the messianic sacrificial meal of thanksgiving on Zion. In the μαραναθά the church

assembled for the κυριακὸν δεῖπνον pleads with its exalted Lord to complete the ongoing work of redemption by the parousia. In this way the celebration of the Lord's Supper *locates the church salvation-historically as the ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ ("church of God")*, becoming a never-ending source of its end-time hope.

2.5.3.4 There is a simple explanation for the fact that the church celebrated the Lord's Supper as a *full meal*: Jesus spoke his bread and cup sayings at the beginning and end of the main Passover meal. However, the general course of the Passover meal was identical with that of any Jewish main meal or festival meal. Both types of meals were commenced when the head of the table took bread (as the staple food), blessed it, broke it, and distributed it to each of the table guests. The main mealtime followed. At its conclusion the head of the house or one of his guests took the so-called "cup of blessing" (τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας, cf. 1 Cor. 10:16) full of wine and pronounced a prayer of thanksgiving over it, known in Jewish usage as the בִּרְכַּת הַמָּזוֹן (for this course of the Jewish meal, see Str-B IV/2:611–39 and O. Hofius, "Herrenmahl und Herrenmahlsparadosis," 211–12). After the members of the Jerusalem church had left behind the unique date of Passover as the time for celebrating the Lord's Supper, in their "breaking of bread" they continued to use Jesus's words of institution from his final supper, which were appropriate for any Jewish meal. They thus began their meals with his bread saying and concluded with his cup saying.

2.5.4 The "Lord's Supper" as presented in Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7, 11; and 1 Corinthians 11:20 is therefore neither simply a Christian version of the Passover meal, nor a straightforward development from Jesus's pre-Easter table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners. It is rather the sacrificial meal of thanksgiving of the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, celebrated under the sign of his resurrection. Nevertheless, the formative model for this meal remained Jesus's Last Supper with the Twelve (cf. 1 Cor. 11:23–26). Already in Jerusalem this meal was the decisive point of crystallization, which placed the believers into renewed κοινωνία with the Lord (cf. Acts 2:42 with 1 Cor. 10:15–16) and bound them together as the ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ.

2.6 Luke repeatedly emphasizes that the apostles performed *signs and wonders* (Acts 2:43; 5:12). He illustrates this by the story of the miraculous

healing of the lame beggar at the temple's "beautiful gate" (Acts 3:1–10).

Three points must be considered when seeking to understand the meaning of these references to miraculous healing: (1) The mission discourses of the Synoptic Gospels show clearly that the ability to perform healing miracles and exorcisms was part of the apostles' "basic equipment" even before Easter (cf. Mark 6:7, 12–13 par.; Luke 10:9/Matt. 10:7–8). (2) Paul too speaks of an apostle's authority to preach the gospel and perform "signs and wonders and mighty works" (2 Cor. 12:12). (3) There can therefore be no doubt that Luke is right to highlight the σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα or "signs and wonders" of the (Jerusalem) apostles. These were a standard part of the early Christian testimony to the gospel by word and healing deed. J. Roloff is certainly correct to assert that it was precisely these Spirit-inspired phenomena that decisively determined the picture of the church for the outside world (*Die Apostelgeschichte* [1988[2]], 67). *The Jerusalem church (and its daughter churches) earned respect not only through its verbal witness, but also through its spiritual authority to perform miracles and the form of its communal life in harmony with its message.*

3 The *missionary activity* of the first Christian churches raises three questions: What motivated both the "Hebrews" and the "Hellenists" in Jerusalem for mission? Who were the missionaries and how far did they reach? And what kind of baptism did they administer?

3.1 The church's *outbreak into mission* becomes understandable when we put ourselves in the situation of the first witnesses of Christ's resurrection appearances. Paul's report in Galatians 1:15–16 about the appearance that Christ granted to him, his comment about the mission of the apostles in Romans 10:14–17, and, further, traditions such as John 20:19–23 and Matthew 28:16–20 (and Mark 16:14–18) all show that *the Easter appearances of the exalted Jesus from heaven and his sending his messengers into mission belong most closely together*.

Jesus's appearance to "more than five hundred brothers at one time" mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:6 may go back to the event of Pentecost in Jerusalem (see above). However, L. Schenke, *Die Urgemeinde* (1990), 23, 78, 219, prefers to locate this appearance with other appearances in Galilee. He also thinks that this large-scale appearance could mark "the post-Easter birth-date of the traveling missionaries" (220) whom he thinks were active in large numbers in Palestine after Easter (cf. 217–38). Nevertheless, the degree to which *wandering charismatic prophets* were active in mission is difficult to determine. The missionary activity of such "wandering radicals" (G. Theissen) is attested only in 2 John 10, 3 John 5–8, and *Didache* 11:3–12, texts that originate from the late first or the second century. The existence of such prophets or missionaries in the earliest period of Christianity

can be inferred only indirectly from the synoptic guidelines for the sending out of missionaries in Luke 10:2–12/Matthew 10:5–16 and Mark 6:6–11, from the existence of the so-called sayings source with its radical sayings about discipleship (cf., e.g., Luke 9:57–62/Matt. 8:18–22), and from those synoptic texts that prescribe for Jesus's *μαθηταί* a wandering life for the *βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ*, including poverty and homelessness (cf., e.g., Matt. 13:44–46; 19:12; Mark 10:23–31 par.). Matthew 7:21–23 and 10:40–42 seem to imply the existence of wandering early Christian prophets, but unfortunately we do not know to what extent their activity overlapped or competed with that of the apostles. One should therefore speak only with the greatest reserve about any *special mission* of the wandering radicals in Palestine. That they numbered "more than five hundred brothers" (1 Cor. 15:6) is unprovable.

For the former disciples of Jesus, especially Peter, the connection between the resurrection appearances of the exalted Jesus and his sending them into mission is easy to explain. Peter and his brother Andrew were already called by the earthly Jesus to be "fishers of men" (cf. Mark 1:17 par.) who would win people for the gospel of Jesus. The band of twelve disciples gathered by Jesus was then sent out as a whole to proclaim—like Jesus himself—the message of the kingdom of God, strengthening it by exorcisms and healing miracles (cf. Mark 3:14–15 par.). The Easter appearances that these disciples later experienced (cf. 1 Cor. 15:5–7) served not merely to document the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus as Lord and Messiah, but also to renew their previous commission as missionaries. The Easter appearances therefore played the role of "apostolic legitimation" for Peter and the Twelve (U. Wilckens, *Resurrection* [1977], 12–16). *Prior to Easter they were Jesus's delegates for a limited time; now they became the ἀπόστολοι of the exalted* Κύριος *until the time of his hoped-for (and imminent) parousia.*

3.2 Even during Jesus's lifetime the circle of his chosen disciples, commissioned and sent out to proclaim the kingdom message, was larger than the Twelve (cf. Luke 10:1–12; Acts 1:21–26). So too after Easter the exalted Christ's commission was not limited to the Twelve but extended to "all the apostles" (*οἱ ἀπόστολοι πάντες*) as recorded in 1 Corinthians 15:7.

As G. Klein has demonstrated (cf. *Die Zwölf Apostel* [1961], 40–43), the group referred to as *οἱ ἀπόστολοι πάντες* was certainly pre-Pauline, because all his life Paul had to fight for inclusion in it as a full-fledged *ἀπόστολος* Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (cf. 1 Cor. 9:1–18; 15:8–10; 2 Cor. 11:5–10).

3.3 The group of "all the apostles" who were called before Paul included converted Diaspora Jews like the Levite Barnabas from Cyprus (cf. Acts 4:36; 9:27; 11:22–30 with 1 Cor. 9:6) and the similarly Hellenistic

Jewish—to judge by their names—apostolic (married?) couple Andronicus and Junia.

The unaccented accusative Ἰουνιαν in Romans 16:7 may be accented either as the accusative masculine form Ἰουνιᾶν, nominative Ἰουνιᾶς, "Junias" (Nestle-Aland[26]; NRSV margin) (following the paradigm of, e.g., σατανᾶς, acc. σατανᾶν, cf. Matt. 12:26), or as the accusative feminine form Ἰουνίαν, nominative Ἰουνία, "Junia" (Nestle-Aland[27–28]; UBS[4] 3rd printing 1998; NRSV text), so that both Andronicus and Junia are said to be ἐπίσημοι ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις, "prominent/outstanding among the apostles" (NRSV/NIV; contrast: "*well known* to the apostles," but not apostles themselves, ESV). The feminine interpretation of Ἰουνιαν is to be preferred because whereas the man's name Junias is unattested in the New Testament period (B. Brooten), the woman's name Junia was common. Moreover, when accents began to be added to the Greek manuscripts (Ἰουνιαν is unaccented in codices א A B* C D* F G P), the scribes or the correctors universally chose the feminine Ἰουνίαν, so B[2] D[2] Ψ[vid] L 33 1739 1881 M (see further B. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [1994[2], repr. 2000], 475–76). Whether Andronicus and Junia were a married couple, as the church fathers thought, we do not know. But we can clearly see from Paul's authentic greeting to Junia that *women, too, belonged to the circle of the apostles*. Without the active missionary participation of women, other women would have been won to faith in Christ only with great difficulty because of ancient social customs.

It is important to keep in mind that both women and men belonged to the circle of the ἀπόστολοι πάντες who had not been disciples of Jesus prior to Easter when we come now to consider the great scope of the mission that the apostles saw themselves called to by the exalted Christ. This question arises not only in view of the missionary activity of Peter, who eventually also won Samaritans and Gentiles for the faith (cf. Acts 8:14–17; 10:1–48), but also in view of the missionary activities of the Stephen circle. Stephen evangelized among the Hellenistic Jews in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 6:5; 6:8–7:60). After Stephen's martyrdom one of his followers, Philip, became an evangelist in Samaria and from Gaza through Azotus all the way to Caesarea (cf. Acts 6:5; 8:4–13, 26–40; 21:8). Finally, converted Diaspora Jews from the circle of the "Hellenists" made the Gentile mission their program in Antioch (cf. Acts 11:19–20). This successive extension of the mission to all nations of the world is best understood from Matthew 28:18–20.

3.3.1 *For the recommissioned disciples of Jesus after Easter, the mission to the Jews originally stood front and center*. Jesus had in fact addressed his call to repentance only to Israel (Matt. 15:24), excluding Samaria (cf. Matt. 10:5), although in concrete individual cases he did not fail to show favor to Samaritans (Luke 17:16; John 4:7–42) and to Gentiles

such as the centurion of Capernaum (Luke 7:1–10/Matt. 8:5–13/John 4:46–54) and the Syrophoenician woman (Mark 7:24–30 par.). Jesus's pre-Easter commission to the disciples in Matthew 10:5–6, 23 was formulated unambiguously: the disciples were to go only to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" and confront them with the *εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας*. The Gentiles lay outside this immediate mission field, because Jesus considered the pilgrimage to Zion by "many" people from the Gentile nations of east and west to be an eschatological event (cf. Matt. 8:11–12 with Mic. 4:1–4; Isa. 2:2–4; *1 En.* 57; 90:33; *Pss. Sol.* 17:32–35; *4 Ezra* 13:13). Nevertheless, as the Son of Man who was about to sacrifice himself for these "many" and then be exalted by God, Jesus wanted to be a gracious judge to the Gentiles who would someday stream to Zion (cf. Matt. 25:31–46). In view of their shared hope for this end-time pilgrimage of the nations and the imminent parousia of the Κύριος, there was no reason for Peter and the Twelve and some of the other early "apostles" to let their mission to the Jews to gather the end-time people of the twelve tribes come to an end after Easter. This mission had already gained a global dimension at Pentecost.

3.3.2 The horizon of mission was soon expanded by the circle of the "Hellenists." In the Jewish legal charge against Stephen (Acts 6:11–14) and in his oral defense before the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:1–53), certain principles appear that support *a mission (also) among Samaritans and Gentiles*: The one God who created the world and chose Israel to be his own people does not live in a temple built by human hands (cf. Acts 7:48–50 with Isa. 66:1–2); the atoning sacrificial cult in the Jerusalem temple no longer has any meaning for Christians (cf. Acts 6:13 with the tradition in Rom. 3:25–26 about Jesus as the new "mercy seat": see above, 218–26, §5.3.2.1); and the Sinai Torah has been dissolved into the "Torah" of the Messiah Jesus Christ (cf. Acts 6:11, 13 with the expression *νόμος τοῦ* Χριστοῦ or *ἔννομος* Χριστοῦ, "law of Christ," that appears in Paul in Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21 and was presumably coined by the Hellenists). Moreover, Christ is the Son of Man–Messiah exalted by God according to Psalm 110:1, at whose feet all God's enemies must fall; as bearer of God's name *κύριος*, he has the legal authority of God over the entire "world" or *κόσμος* (cf. Acts 7:55–56).

Stephen suffered martyrdom for these views, and the members of his circle were driven out of Jerusalem. Nevertheless, they maintained Stephen's new perspective: Soon Philip—perhaps following the example of

Jesus?—engaged in mission among the Samaritans (Acts 8:4–8). He also won over a Godfearing Ethiopian eunuch to faith in Christ and baptized him, even though the eunuch's castration would have prevented him from being admitted as a full member of the Jewish religious assembly according to Deuteronomy 23:2 (ET 23:1; cf. Acts 8:26–39). If we consider the additional missionary journeys of Philip (Acts 8:40) and the other Hellenists who traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch (Acts 11:19), we are confronted with a clear crossing of geographic and ethnic boundaries. These boundary crossings appear to have something to do with the hopeful prophetic statements about eunuchs and residents of distant nations in Isaiah 8:23–9:6 (ET 9:1–7), 56:3–8 (cf. with Mark 11:17 par.), and 66:18–21. *After the Jewish Hellenists who became "survivors" (Isa. 66:19) of the persecution associated with Stephen were driven out of Jerusalem, they went about gathering other members of the people of the twelve tribes who were scattered among the nations, according to the material and geographical yardstick that God had set up in the Holy Scriptures*.

3.3.3 However, even this perspective of Jews gathering other Jews was soon transcended. In Acts 11:19–21 we read:

> [19]Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that took place over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, and they spoke the word to no one except Jews. [20]But among them were some men of Cyprus and Cyrene who, on coming to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists [or "Greeks": see below] also, proclaiming the Lord Jesus. [21]The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number became believers and turned to the Lord.

The statements of verse 19 are consistent with the pattern of Jews gathering Jews. But the *transition to the Gentile mission* in verse 20 was a decisive novelty.

The terminology for these new Gentile converts in Antioch is somewhat confusing within the overall linguistic usage of Acts. In Acts 11:20 the NRSV text has followed the better-attested but internally difficult Greek reading by calling the converts "Hellenists," Ἑλληνιστάς, over the simpler term Ἕλληνας, "Greeks," attested in a few manuscripts (P^{74}, ^{2}א, A, D*, etc.) and followed by the RSV and the NRSV margin. Nevertheless, the clear contrast of the term in verse 20 over against the "Jews" in verse 19 shows that the understanding of the RSV and the NRSV margin must be at least logically correct, even though it is probably secondary in the Greek manuscripts. The difficulty is that in its

two other occurrences in Acts, a “Hellenist” is in fact a Hellenistic *Jew*, either a believer in Jesus like Stephen (cf. Acts 6:5 with 6:1) or a nonbelieving Jew such as the Hellenists who opposed Paul during his first postconversion Jerusalem visit (Acts 9:29). Neither use makes any sense of Acts 11:20. The persecution of verse 19 sent out “Hellenists” from Jerusalem—here Greek-speaking Jewish Christians—some of whom had been born in Cyprus and Cyrene. These Jewish Christian “Hellenists” eventually came to Antioch, where they began to speak to other “Hellenists” (NRSV) who were clearly *not Jews* (cf. v. 20 with v. 19). We must therefore conclude that the rare term Ἑλληνιστής in Acts, which does not appear in Greek literature before this time, does not necessarily denote a *Jewish* Hellenist, but a Hellenist more generally as one who is able to ἑλληνίζειν, that is, *speak Greek*. The Jewish or pagan identity of a “Hellenist” must then be inferred from the context. See further B. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2000[2]), 340–42.

The beginnings of the Gentile mission can also be explained on the basis of the Holy Scriptures and Christology. From the perspective of Psalm 110:1, the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός is the messianic king installed by God as ruler of the world (so also Ps. 89:28 [ET 89:27]); according to Deuteronomy 32:43, Amos 9:11–12, Isaiah 11:10, and Psalms 18:50 (ET 18:49) and 117:1, he is also the hope of the Gentiles (cf. Acts 15:16–17; Rom. 15:9–12). This christological insight apparently motivated the converted Diaspora Jews mentioned in Acts 11:20 to risk a new venture by preaching the gospel of the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς also to Gentiles. *The Jewish Hellenists who came to Antioch began to set in motion the pilgrimage of the Gentile nations to Zion announced in Isaiah 56:3–8; 60; 66:18–21 by leading not only Jews of the Diaspora but also Gentiles to their imminently expected king, Jesus Christ, who would soon reign “from Zion” (Ps. 110:2)*. It is into this new concept of mission in Antioch that Paul was introduced by the Hellenistic Jewish Christian Barnabas (cf. Acts 11:22–26).

Interestingly, *Peter* followed the example of the Hellenists according to Acts 8:14–17 and 10:1–11:18, and he defended the Gentile mission all the way to the apostolic council. Even afterward he straddled the boundaries between the Jewish and Gentile mission (cf. Gal. 2:7–8 with Gal. 2:11–21 and 1 Cor. 1:12; 9:5). But he also had to pay a bitter price for his open attitude: Once his sympathy with the Hellenists and their temple-critical stance became known, he was persecuted by Herod Agrippa I, the protector of the temple, together with James the son of Zebedee, and in AD 42 he was forced to leave Jerusalem (cf. Acts 12:1–17). The leadership of the early church in Jerusalem was then transferred to James the Lord’s brother.

3.3.4 Easter therefore led to the expansion of the Jewish mission and the beginning of the Gentile mission. The tensions between the two concepts of mission were worked out in AD 48 at the *apostolic council* as reported by Paul in Galatians 2:1–10 and by Luke in Acts 15:1–29 (cf. also 11:27–30). At issue was whether one could do without circumcision in the

Gentile mission or whether one rather had to include the Gentiles formally in the Abrahamic covenant by means of circumcision (cf. Gen. 17:9–14). The Jerusalem “pillars” or στῦλοι, James the Lord’s brother, Peter, and John, made a historically trailblazing decision at that time concerning the general principles of mission: They decided that the (worldwide) Jewish mission, in which circumcision was naturally assumed, was to be continued by Peter. Yet at the same time, they acknowledged that the Gentile mission originating from Antioch and carried on especially by Barnabas and Paul without the circumcision of converts was also a legitimate Christian mission (Gal. 2:6–9). The “pillar” apostles therefore opposed the group of Jewish Christians that demanded that the Gentile converts be circumcised and follow certain ritual observances of the law (cf. Acts 15:1–2; Gal. 2:3–5). Although these Judaizers continued to annoy Paul after the apostolic council and worked to counteract his mission, the fundamental decision of the “pillars” for the missionary double strategy remained effective.

If one asks about the *theological justification* of this mission strategy, reference must again be made to Jesus’s saving death for the many, including both Israel and the nations, and to his exaltation as κύριος πάντων, Lord of all. *The lordship of Jesus Christ and the salvation that God has effected through his mission and atoning death affect not only his chosen people Israel but all the nations of the world*. It is therefore theologically appropriate that all the relevant mission texts of the New Testament have followed the apostolic council and affirm the Gentile mission next to the Jewish mission. This is no less true for the Pentecost story of Acts 2:1–13 and Paul’s understanding of mission in Romans 10:14–17 than it is for John’s account of the giving of the Holy Spirit for mission in John 20:19–23 or the famous Great Commission to make disciples of all nations in Matthew 28:16–20.

3.3.5 Matthew has composed his report about Jesus’s appearance in Galilee in *Matthew 28:16–20* as the grand finale of his Gospel. After his investiture with the universal authority of the Son of Man (cf. Matt. 28:18 with Dan. 7:13–14), the Immanuel of Matthew 1:23 continues to be “with” his disciples on earth until the parousia, even as they proclaim the gospel of his lordship in the whole earth and baptize all converts in the name of the triune God (cf. Matt. 28:19–20 with 24:14). This text is not simply a redactional creation, but takes up pre-Matthean Jewish Christian traditions:

(1) Matthew 28:16–20 contains the classical *topoi* of an Old Testament call narrative: A vision of God or his representative (cf. Matt. 28:16–17 with Exod. 3:2–6; Judg. 6:12), the commissioning of the ones being called (cf. Matt. 28:19–20a with Exod. 3:10; Judg. 6:14; Jer. 1:5), the doubts and objections of the ones being called (cf. Matt. 28:17b with Exod. 3:11; 4:10; Judg. 6:15; Jer. 1:6), and the promise of divine presence and reaffirmation of the commission (cf. Matt. 28:19–20 with Exod. 3:12; Judg. 6:16; Jer. 1:8).

(2) Jesus's appearance in Galilee is a symbolic act that highlights the claim of the messianic Son of Man upon the end-time kingdom of David at its greatest extent, including the lost regions of the northern tribes (Matt. 28:16; 26:13 par.; 28:10 par. with Jer. 31:10; Ps. 80:2–3, 18 [ET 80:1–2, 17]; NRSV has removed the crucial reference to the "son of man" in Ps. 80:18 [ET 80:17]). The risen one appears to his disciples on the same mountain on which God had already called to him as his beloved Son (cf. Matt. 17:1–9), thus demonstrating his willingness to establish the kingdom of God as a kingdom for Israel, *βασιλεία τῷ Ἰσραήλ* (cf. Dan. 7:13–14, 27 with Acts 1:6).

(3) As divine ruler of the world, Jesus expands his pre-Easter commission to his disciples, which was limited to Israel (cf. Matt. 10:6). They are to take over Israel's universal role as servant and messenger to the nations (cf. Isa. 49:6; Ps. 96:10) and confront all people with the teaching and message of Christ Jesus. As in Matthew 24:14 and 25:32, the expression *πάντα τὰ ἔθνη* in 28:19 means all nations of the world, including Israel.

(4) In the light of Mark 16:15–16, it is easy to imagine, though not possible to prove, that the original missionary command to the disciples also included the command to baptize converts in the name of the exalted Christ. The assumption of an older command that has been triadically expanded by Matthew in the style of *Didache* 7:1 explains the history of early Christian baptism beginning in Acts 2:38 (see below) better than other reconstructions.

In sum, when seen from the perspective of tradition history, *Matthew 28:16–20 represents the original Jewish Christian version of the apostolic world mission.*

3.3.6 In the light of these overall findings, another observation must be added from the perspective of biblical theology. At the center of early Christian mission history, the Jewish mission stood out as the most elementary way of continuing Jesus's own messianic work. The Gentile mission was not supposed to replace this work of Jesus, but to complete it. There is no theologically weighty reason to deny or obscure the process that God has gone through—and will still go through—in order to save both Jews and Gentiles according to Mark 12:1–12, Acts 2:14–36, and Romans 11:1–32. God first chose Israel from among the nations and promised her end-time salvation out of his free love and mercy (cf. Isa. 43:22–25; 51:1–3; 55:3; etc.). God then sent Jesus first to Israel, and included the Gentiles in his mission only indirectly. Even after Easter, the gospel of Jesus Christ was still directed first to the Jews, but additionally to the Gentiles (cf. Rom. 1:16–17). Therefore Jews and Gentiles were (and are) fellow addressees of the Christian mission. Giving up on this twofold mission would mean

denying the missionary task given to the church of Jesus Christ and thus altering the essence of the church itself. *The Gentile church on its own is not the new people of God, nor is it the sole aim of salvation history. This goal will only be reached after God has shown mercy to all those Gentiles and Jews whom he formerly imprisoned together in disobedience and unbelief so that he could finally be merciful to them together in and through Christ (Rom. 11:32).*

4 We must now finally consider the *origin and meaning of baptism*. The first reference to baptism in the Christian mission is found in Acts 2:38–41. Many Jews who heard Peter's Pentecost sermon heeded his call to repentance; they were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, received forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit, and became members of the early church. According to Acts 8:12, both men and women in Samaria responded to the preaching of Philip by being baptized. The Ethiopian eunuch was baptized by Philip on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza (Acts 8:36–38). In Caesarea Peter baptized the Godfearing centurion Cornelius and his "house," that is, his family (Acts 10:1–48). Paul was baptized in Damascus after the resurrection appearance that Christ granted him (cf. Acts 9:17–18 with 1 Cor. 12:13); for him baptism was a standard part of missionary practice (1 Cor. 12:13). Finally, Matthew 28:19–20 (and Mark 16:14–18) shows that baptism and mission belong most closely together.

4.1 If one asks about the *origins of Christian baptism*, attention immediately focuses on John the Baptist and his baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. This is mentioned not only in the Gospels (Mark 1:4–6 par.; John 1:32–34) but also in Josephus (*Ant*. 18.116–117). John baptized in the Jordan from the perspective of Ezekiel 36:24–28, in conscious typological emulation of the garb and behavior of the prophet Elijah (see above, 73–74, §1).

4.2 Jesus and also some of his disciples (according to John 1:35–40) submitted to the baptism of John. The experience of the Spirit that Jesus had on that occasion marks the beginning of his public ministry as the messianic Son of God and Son of Man (cf. Mark 1:9–11 par.). It is from his baptism that Jesus perhaps derived his task of suffering (cf. Mark 10:38; Luke 12:50) and certainly derived his messianic legitimation (cf. Mark 11:27–33 par.) (see above, 168–69, §2). It is possible to understand Jesus's entire mission as a messianic work that he both grounded and grasped in his

baptism. *Jesus's baptism with water and the Spirit could therefore become the pattern for baptism in the name of Jesus* (cf. Matt. 3:13–17, esp. v. 15).

4.3 Looking back to Jesus's mission which he had completed by his passion and exaltation to the right hand of God and obeying the command to baptize that he had given them as the risen one (cf. Matt. 28:19 [see above]), the newly commissioned disciples began after Easter to baptize in the name of Jesus. They did so as a *post-Easter correspondence to the baptism of John,* which Jesus and some of them had received. *Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ gives people a share in the unsurpassable saving work of God accomplished in the name of the* Κύριος Ἰησοῦς. *It lets them participate in the messianic fulfillment of the promise of Ezekiel 36:24–28 that had already determined the mission of John the Baptist*.

When one takes a historical account of John 3:22, 4:1–2, and Acts 19:1–7, there are indications that "water baptism for the forgiveness of sins was practiced in the circle of his disciples even during Jesus' lifetime" (K. Aland, *Taufe und Kindertaufe* [1971], 10). The disciples' resumption and reconfiguration of the practice of baptism after Easter can be explained better with these references than without them.

The distinguishing mark of Christian baptism was the ὄνομα κυρίου, the name of the Lord, in which the whole saving event was summarized. Baptism was performed ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Acts 2:38) or ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Acts 10:48). It was administered in the light of the work and spiritual presence of the crucified and risen Christ. The baptized called on the name of the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς in prayer and confession (cf. Acts 2:21 with Joel 3:5 [ET 2:32] and Rom. 10:9–10). By means of baptism they were dedicated to the Lord, cleansed of their sins, gifted with the Spirit, and integrated into the new people of God, whose end-time vanguard was the Christian church in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 2:37–41).

After Philip had baptized the Samaritans and the castrated Ethiopian, baptism was also extended to the Gentiles by Peter and the missionaries in Antioch (cf. Acts 10:48; 11:20). Paul, who had been baptized in Damascus, was brought by Barnabas to Antioch and got involved in the work of the Gentile mission. He preached and taught the "gospel" that all the apostles had in common (1 Cor. 15:3–5) and baptized as they did "in the name" of the crucified and risen Christ (1 Cor. 1:13, 15; 6:11). According to the (Antiochene?) baptismal tradition that Paul passes on in 1 Corinthians 6:11, baptism effects the washing away of sins, sanctification, and justification. It frees the baptized from their existence as sinners and allows them to enter into a new relationship with God opened up by Christ's sacrificial death. It gives them a share in the Holy Spirit and incorporates them into the church that Paul calls the "body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12:13).

The apostles called before Paul, Paul himself, and those they baptized all lived in a pioneer missionary situation. For them baptism in the name of Jesus Christ and the experience of baptism were “the central ‘datum’ of the beginning, which determined *all* Christian life and thought” (U. Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, EKKNT VI/2 [1987^2], 23). However, even in the baptism of entire “houses,” that is, extended families (cf. Acts 10:44–48; 16:14–15, 30–34; 18:8; 1 Cor. 1:16), the baptism of children and infants did not yet stand out as a separate issue for the apostles.

4.4 To complete the picture of the beginnings of Christian baptism, we must focus on the following additional facts:

4.4.1 The book of Acts still preserves evidence that *a unified understanding of Christian baptism developed only gradually*:

In the original story of Philip’s baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch, there is not yet any mention of the gift of the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 8:36, 38–39); it is only later manuscripts that have inserted in Acts 8:37, 39 a formal confession of faith by the Ethiopian before his baptism (cf. 8:37 KJV) and the gift of the Spirit afterward (e.g., Codex A at 8:39). At the baptism of Cornelius by Peter, the gift of the Spirit precedes the baptism (cf. Acts 10:44–48). The close connection between baptism and the gift of the Spirit presupposed in Acts 2:37–41 results from concrete experiences of the Spirit at the baptism of converts (cf. Acts 10:44; 11:17). But this became the dominant view of baptism only after the Jewish and Gentile missions had settled down into predictable patterns and the membership of baptized people in a local church had become the norm. Once this is the case (cf. Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 6:11; 12:13; Gal. 3:26–28; 4:6; Eph. 4:4–6; Matt. 28:19–20), water baptism and Spirit baptism can be separated only when one is prepared to reverse the relevant texts and the history behind them.

4.4.2 The *relationship of missionary preaching, faith, and baptism* is presented in all the decisive texts just as it is sketched in Ephesians 1:13–14: Women and men have themselves baptized because they have been captivated by the kerygma of the missionaries. After baptism and incorporation into the church, they grow more fully into the πίστις or faith that was opened to them through the gospel (cf. Acts 2:37–47; 8:12–17, 26–39; 10:1–48; 16:14–15, 30–34; Gal. 3:1–5, 26–28; 1 Cor. 12:3, 13; Rom. 6:3–10, 17–18; Eph. 4:4–6; Matt. 28:19–20; etc.).

4.4.3 The constant use of the passive βαπτίζεσθαι, “to be baptized, to have oneself baptized” (cf. Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12, 16, 36; 9:18; 10:47, 48; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:3, 5; Gal. 3:27; 1 Cor. 1:13, 15; 12:13; Rom. 6:3), the formula “to baptize in the name of Jesus,” the language of the forgiveness of sins to be received through baptism (Acts 2:38; Col. 2:13), and the formula taken over by Paul in 1 Corinthians 6:11 about being “washed,

sanctified, and justified" all document that baptism was seen not as a human act of confession but as a *symbolic ritual for announcing and enacting salvation*, accompanied by the teaching of the gospel and the confession of Jesus Christ by the baptized.

The *baptismal procedure* itself points in this direction. Baptism was carried out according to Acts 8:38 and the obviously old customs summarized in *Didache* 7:1–4 by submerging the candidate in flowing or standing water and only exceptionally by threefold pouring over the head. The latter passage runs: "[1]But with respect to baptism, baptize as follows. Having said all these things in advance, baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, in running water. [2]But if you do not have running water, baptize in some other water. And if you cannot baptize in cold water, use warm. [3]But if you have neither, pour water on the head three times in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit. [4]But both the one baptizing and the one being baptized should fast before the baptism" (Ehrman, LCL).

4.4.4 In a manner that transcends mere verbal proclamation, baptism gave the baptized a share in the saving event that Jesus's mission realized and that his name makes present. Paul presupposes in Romans 6:3–7, 17 that in baptism, the Christians in Rome have gained a share in the gospel that was "delivered" to them by their missionaries (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1–5, esp. v. 3a, παρέδωκα), and to which they were "delivered" in their baptism (παρεδόθητε, Rom. 6:17). Therefore, even in the pre-Pauline baptismal tradition, we can already assume that in baptism *an end-time transfer of lordship takes place and that the baptized are incorporated into the saving event of which the gospel speaks*. Early Christian baptism is therefore rightly appreciated only when one allows it its characteristic uniqueness and ontological privileged position between proclaiming word and receiving faith.

Baptism's literally *fundamental significance* in the early Christian mission can be seen clearly in the *baptismal formula* that appears thrice in the Pauline corpus in Galatians 3:26–28, 1 Corinthians 12:13, and Colossians 3:9–11; presumably the formula originated from the church of Antioch. The structure and meaning of the formula have been worked out by J. Becker, *Der Brief an die Galater* (1990[4]), 44–46, and U. Mell, *Neue Schöpfung* (1989), 303–15. According to the version in Galatians 3:26–28, the formula runs: "[26]For in Christ Jesus you are all children [lit. sons] of God through faith. [27]As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. [28]There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." (The NRSV correctly refuses to make Christ the object of faith in verse 26, as in "faith *in* Christ Jesus" [so KJV, NASB]. Rather, it stresses that it is only *in Christ* that believers of diverse backgrounds are children of God. See also NJB.) The meaning and consequence of this formula are illuminated by the contrast in which it stood in the ancient world: Jewish free men in the synagogues (also in Antioch) thanked God daily in three blessings for the fact that God had not created them as Gentiles, nor as uneducated (cf. slaves), nor as women (cf. *t. Ber.* 7:18). Very

similarly, according to Thales and Plato, “the Hellenistic man had three reasons for gratitude: first that he had been born as a human and not as an animal, second as a man and not as a woman, third as a Greek and not as a barbarian” (S. Heine, *Frauen der frühen Christenheit* [1986], 94). In contrast to this basic attitude among Jews and Greeks, baptism in the name of Jesus Christ announced a new message to the women and men who prior to baptism had lived as “Godfearers” on the periphery of the synagogues or in religious Hellenism. Baptism told them that the apparently irrevocable advantages and disadvantages of Jews and Gentiles, free people and slaves, and men and women based on creation, birth, and social standing had been revoked, and that through Christ one and the same status as children of God was available to them all in the church. For the baptized, the fixed religious rights of election and position were replaced by the equal rights of all believers before God established through Christ. Or, to cite Mell: “Baptism of people in the name of Jesus Christ marked the beginning of the new *soteriological equality* for people in the saved community” (315). With their baptism believers in Jesus Christ saw themselves transferred into a new being and a new fellowship of life (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17; Col. 3:9–11).

4.4.5 The relationship of once-for-all baptism and an ever new established *κοινωνία* with Christ in the Lord’s Supper (see above) meant that in the early Christian period, only the baptized, that is, those who belonged to the *ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ* by virtue of their confession of Christ, could also be guests at the Lord’s table. This is just as clear in Acts 2:41–47 as it is in Acts 20:7–12 (cf. also 1 Cor. 11:18–34; 16:2; and *Didache* 10:6; 14:2).

5 We conclude by looking back and ahead. Pre-Pauline Christianity in its strictest sense is limited to the churches in Judea (i.e., Palestine), Damascus, and Antioch prior to Paul’s arrival there (cf. Acts 11:25–26). Nevertheless, it is in these churches that the ground was laid for the mission of which Paul later became a part. Therefore one must not interpret the apostle Paul and his theology apart from the traditions sketched in the preceding three chapters. Yet early Christianity was not shaped by this one apostle alone. Before, beside, and after Paul other figures such as Peter, James the Lord’s brother, John, their pupils, and the missionaries in Antioch were also at work. They too were determined by the basic theological content we have just examined.

Without a knowledge of the Jesus tradition and the theological foundations laid down before Paul by the Jerusalem apostles, the Stephen circle, and the Antioch missionaries, the (biblical) theology of the New Testament disintegrates into unconnected individual positions. But once these foundations are taken into account, then in the midst of various testimonies to the *πίστις εἰς Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν* (“faith in Jesus Christ”), unifying threads are also seen that help us understand why the ancient

church could risk seeing its whole faith tradition summarized in the one "rule of faith" and in the canon of the biblical writings.

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Further Reading

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PART THREE

The Proclamation of Paul

Next to the presentation of the proclamation and ministry of Jesus, a description of the apostle Paul's mission theology forms a mainstay of every (biblical) theology of the New Testament—including this one. There are three reasons for this:

1. Historically speaking, we have no witness to the faith of early Christianity whom we know better than Paul. For while we know of Jesus only from the multilayered tradition passed on by his followers, from Paul we have authentic letters in which he presents the basic lines of his theological thinking. If we add to this genuine Pauline material the letters that emanated from his school and the reports about the apostle in Acts, then the mission theology of Paul can be traced out much more exactly than that of any other New Testament witness.

2. We have already seen the great extent to which the teaching of Jesus and the confessional and doctrinal traditions of the pre-Pauline churches were marked by theological reflection and the messianic interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. Theology as a reflection upon faith begins not with Paul according to the New Testament, but before him. Nevertheless, Paul still occupies a unique position in early Christianity. As a Pharisee of the Diaspora from Tarsus in Cilicia, Paul already had a Jewish theological education in the academy of Rabbi Gamaliel I behind him before he was called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ (cf. Acts 22:3). Moreover, since being called to the apostolic ministry, he had fundamentally thought through the existing traditions of the Christian faith (which he accepted as given) and had developed an independent and principled mission theology on their basis. Paul begins with the basic experience that the God who raised Jesus from the dead is the same God who by sheer grace and mercy justifies the ungodly through Christ alone and only through faith in him (Rom. 4:5). Paul's theology appears all the more significant the more clearly one sees that in it the essential intentions of the work and teaching of Jesus have been taken up and thought through conceptually from a post-Easter

perspective. This is why Paul is accorded a key position within the framework of a New Testament theology.

3. The apostle’s key position is confirmed by his theological influence as seen within the New Testament itself. Paul set the church upon the course of Gentile mission once for all, though he always saw this only as a supplement to, not as a substitute for, the mission to the Jews. His theological accomplishment was to relate as a matter of theological principle the one God who created the world and chose Israel as his own people, God’s sending of Jesus to Israel and the nations, and the saved community in Christ consisting of both Jews and Gentiles. He thereby gave the church its theological reason for being. Paul’s letters were collected and interpreted already in New Testament times (cf. 2 Pet. 3:15–16). Without them the New Testament would lose one of its theological cornerstones. Paul’s mission theology is therefore of great moment for any biblical theology that takes its subject matter from the New Testament itself. Together with the proclamation of Jesus, it forms the axis along which the theology of the New Testament must orient itself.

The theological significance of Paul is undisputed in scholarship. What is disputed are the individual themes of Pauline theology and the question of their origin and overall direction. This situation has the advantage that one need not prove separately that the apostle’s message about faith needs to be taken into account in the theology of the New Testament. But it also necessitates careful thought about both the approach and the individual themes of the Pauline kerygma.

CHAPTER 16

Sources, Chronology, and Nature of Paul’s Career

Paul’s mission theology cannot be separated from his own life and destiny. His theology is a classical example of the fact that the gospel was formulated by a circle of chosen witnesses whose spirit and life experiences played a decisive part in the formulation of the kerygma. Understanding Pauline theology depends very heavily upon the sources one may take as the basis of the presentation and the historical framework within which the apostle’s life is viewed. Hence, even the choice of sources and the historical reconstruction of Paul’s activities involve fundamental theological decisions.

1 The available *sources* include the thirteen canonical letters of Paul, the Acts of the Apostles, and an (unfortunately only very general) notice about the martyrdom of the apostle in *1 Clement* 5:5–6:1. But none of these documents can be used for a historically reflected reconstruction without further examination. The letters cannot automatically be used because they include letters not only by Paul but also by his students (the so-called deutero-Pauline letters). The book of Acts cannot automatically be used because its theological presentation of history is written from a standpoint which, while sympathetic to Paul, also diverges from him sharply. Finally, the notice about Paul’s martyrdom in *1 Clement* presented below was composed after Paul’s letters had already been collected and leads no further than the Christian church in Rome. The congregation around AD 95–96 knew that the apostles Peter and Paul had died as martyrs for their faith (under Nero in Rome). *1 Clement* 5:2–6:1 reads:

> Because of jealousy and envy [in the Roman church? (P. Stuhlmacher)] the greatest and most upright pillars were persecuted, and they struggled in the contest even to death. We should set before our eyes the good apostles. There is Peter, who because of unjust jealousy bore up under hardships not just once or twice, but many times; and having thus borne his witness he went to the place of glory that he deserved. Because of jealousy and strife Paul pointed the way to the prize for endurance.

> Seven times he bore chains; he was sent into exile and stoned; he served as a herald in both the East and the West; and he received the noble reputation for his faith. He taught righteousness to the whole world, and came to the limits of the West, bearing his witness before the rulers. And so he was set free from this world and transported up to the holy place, having become the greatest example of endurance. (Ehrman, LCL)

2 The *thirteen Pauline letters* preserved for us in the New Testament represent only a selection of Paul's correspondence. This is a necessary conclusion in the light of 1 Corinthians 5:9, 2 Corinthians 2:4, and Colossians 4:16, where letters of Paul are mentioned which have not been handed down to us. (Hypotheses about divided letters or composite letters typically assume that fragments of the lost letters have been integrated into other Pauline letters and thus preserved. But they fail for a lack of historical analogies.) Accordingly, the apostle's preserved letters allow us to observe only an excerpt from his correspondence and thought. *Paul certainly said and taught more than we find in his letters today*. Moreover, among the Pauline letters a distinction must be made between writings composed by the apostle himself and letters which according to ancient custom were composed by Paul's students during the life and after the death of their teacher (compare in this connection the apocryphal correspondence between Seneca and Paul from the third century AD in W. Schneemelcher and R. M. Wilson, eds., *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 2 [1992[2]], 46–53).

The criteria for differentiating between the proto-Pauline and deutero-Pauline letters lie in considerations of (1) chronology and history, (2) philology, and (3) theology. In other words, deutero-Pauline letters are (presumably) present where the situation presupposed in Paul's life cannot (or can no longer) be fitted into his life as it is historically known to us, where the manner of expression departs clearly and thoroughly from the language and style of the older letters of Paul, and where by means of this divergent language content is disseminated which coheres with statements of the proto-Pauline letters tenuously, if at all.

If one applies this threefold test, one sees the following as deutero-Pauline: (1) the Pastoral Letters (1–2 Timothy and Titus), since the language, purpose for writing, and missionary situation depart clearly from those of the older Pauline letters; (2) the Letter to the Ephesians, since it seems to have been a circular letter meant to be read in various church meetings and therefore written in a flowing liturgical style; the special address ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in 1:1 found its way into the letter only later; moreover, in Ephesians the contents of Colossians have been expanded in a manner that far exceeds that of Paul; and (3) perhaps also the Letter to the Colossians: the letter is addressed to a church that the apostle himself never visited, and here, too, Paul's theology has already developed beyond the stage attested in his major letters. Yet W.-H. Ollrog (*Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter* [1979], 236ff.) and E. Schweizer (*The Letter to the Colossians* [1982], 15–24) both attempt independently with

considerable arguments to understand the letter as the product of one or more students of Paul written during the lifetime of the apostle and signed by him in 4:18. Also disputed is (4) the authenticity of 2 Thessalonians. Linguistically it is not fundamentally different from the acknowledged genuine letters of Paul. Whether it is genuinely Pauline or not is decided above all by the interpretation of 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12. The author sharpens here in a highly apocalyptic manner and style the idea of the imminent expectation of the parousia that the apostle developed in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11. He thereby opposes certain enthusiasts who appealed to supposed statements of the apostle in order to claim that the day of the Lord had already come (2 Thess. 2:2). Judging from Romans 11:25–31 (cf. Mark 13:10 par.) and 15:16, such corrections in 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12 could very well be Pauline. But since exegetical opinions about this passage (and the letter as a whole) are extremely divided, I postpone treatment of 2 Thessalonians until the section on the proclamation of the Pauline school (cf. “Eschatology and Apostleship in 2 Thessalonians,” below, 488–93).

What remains as a solid foundation for the presentation of the apostle Paul’s theology is therefore the following letters: 1 Thessalonians, 1–2 Corinthians, Philippians, Philemon, Galatians, and Romans; to these can be added perhaps also Colossians and 2 Thessalonians. All these writings originate from the period of Paul’s ministry after the apostolic council in Jerusalem, which according to the best estimates took place in AD 48. They were written one after another within a period of about six to eight years. *These Pauline letters, written with so little time between them, may easily be related to each other and interpreted in the light of one another*.

This possibility of mutual interpretation between the Pauline letters has continually been disputed. The alternative position claims that there is a *fundamental development in Paul’s thought* which begins with the imminent expectation of the parousia (cf. 1 Thess. 4:13–5:11) but ends with the assumption that this parousia will take place only after Paul’s death (cf. Phil. 1:21–26; 2 Thess. 2:3–12). It is furthermore claimed that Paul originally assumed an open christological doctrine of salvation (cf. 1 Thess. 1:10; 4:14; 5:9–10) and sharpened it into his doctrine of justification only in Galatians, Romans, and Philippians.

In view of this twofold thesis, the question of the *order* of the seven (or nine) Pauline letters must be dealt with explicitly. That the string of Pauline letters begins with 1 Thessalonians around AD 50 and ends either with Romans around AD 56 or with Philippians (which might have been written from Rome) is seldom contested. Galatians and Romans are usually also seen as originating around the same time. Hence W. G. Kümmel (*Introduction to the New Testament*, rev. ed. [1975], 304, 311) dates both letters between 54 and 56, while J. Becker (*Paul* [1993], 31, 272, 340) assumes that they were not written until 56.

This *late dating of Galatians* is only possible if one follows the so-called North Galatian hypothesis (also called the “regional” hypothesis). According to this theory, Paul did not found “the churches of Galatia” (Gal. 1:2), which are supposed to lie in the northern *region of Galatia* (χώρα, Acts 16:6), until his second missionary journey (cf. Acts 15:36–18:20). He then visited them again on his third missionary journey (cf. Acts 18:23) and wrote his letter to the Galatians from Ephesus after receiving news of agitation in the Galatian churches by his Jewish Christian opponents. However, against this very popular current view stand weighty geographical and missiological objections. The geographical region of Galatia is for the most part an unproductive steppe. In Paul’s time it was inhabited by Celtic peoples who spoke Celtic and Phrygian tribal dialects. The ancient roads through this region were bad, and we know next to nothing about Jewish settlements here,

which Paul normally used as the starting point for his missions. Finally, Luke reports no planting of churches either in Acts 16:6 or in 18:23.

Matters are thoroughly different in the areas of the Roman *province of Galatia* through which Paul and Barnabas traveled on their first missionary journey (cf. Acts 13:1–14:27). This province encompassed the regions of "Pisidia, Phrygia, parts of Lycaonia and Pamphylia, Isauria, Paphlagonia, and 'rough Cilicia'" (H. Schlier, *Der Brief an die Galater* [1962[12]], 15). Here there were strong Jewish communities, existing since 200 BC, as well as good roads, while Greek was the common language. Moreover, Acts relates that Barnabas and Paul together planted Christian churches in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:14–52), Iconium (Acts 14:1–6), Lystra (Acts 14:6–20), and Derbe (Acts 14:6, 20–21). Prior to the apostolic council, Jewish Christians in Antioch had insisted to Barnabas and Paul that the Gentiles whom they had converted and baptized on this first journey would still need to be circumcised (cf. Acts 15:1–2; Gal. 2:4). But they were not able to have their way at the apostolic council that was called in Jerusalem to consider this issue (cf. Gal. 2:6–10; Acts 15:19–20, 28–29). It is only after Paul had parted ways with Peter, Barnabas, and the Jewish Christians of Antioch regarding the application of the so-called apostolic decree of Acts 15:28–29 (cf. Gal. 2:11ff.; Acts 15:36ff.) that the "Judaizers" could make a new start. They could much more easily gain a foothold for their claims in the south Galatian churches founded together by Barnabas and Paul than among the Celts in inaccessible and far-off Anatolia. *Under these circumstances, it is historically advisable to follow the "South Galatian" hypothesis (also called the "provincial" hypothesis)*.

If one ascribes the apostle's teaching (about justification) documented in Galatians to his first missionary journey and places Galatians chronologically after 1 (and 2) Thessalonians but before 1–2 Corinthians, an important result emerges. Paul held to the doctrine of justification even before the apostolic council, and as early as 1 Thessalonians 5:9 he expressed his conviction that "God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul defends this proclamation of justification against the Judaizing agitators in Galatians, summarizes it once again four or five years later in Romans, and provides a final look at it a little later in Philippians 3. *The doctrine of justification is therefore the distinguishing mark of the Pauline gospel from early on; it was not simply formulated by Paul during the later period of his ministry*. This claim is not meant to deny or to exclude developments, increasingly precise formulations, or even new insights within Pauline thought; they can be seen clearly for example in the question about the future of Israel (compare 1 Thess. 2:14–16 with 2 Cor. 3:4–18 and Rom. 9–11). But it puts an initial stop to attempts to present the theological thought of the apostle as disjointed and inconsistent (H. Räisänen), and it guards against the notion that the apostle's doctrine of justification is only a particular, late, subsidiary perspective of his missionary preaching, formulated with a view to the Gentiles (K. Stendahl, E. P. Sanders).

3 *Acts* is of the greatest importance for the presentation of Paul's life and work. Luke composed it not least in order to show the enduring importance of Paul for the church. This is seen by the fact that he devotes more than half of the book to the figure of Paul and presents Paul's special missionary commission in the light of Isaiah 42:7, 16, and 49:6 (cf. Acts 13:47; 26:16–18). According to Acts 26:16–18, Paul is the risen Christ's "servant and witness," whom the Lord will rescue from persecution by the Jewish people and the Gentiles and send to the Gentiles "to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those

who are sanctified by faith in me" (Acts 26:18; cf. Jer. 1:8, 19; Isa. 42:7, 16; Gal. 1:15–16). Regarding Paul's origins in the business and cultural metropolis of Tarsus in Cilicia, his rearing and education in Jerusalem, his missionary journeys, and the end of his ministry, Acts offers reports that no historian of early Christianity can do without. Unless appearances are totally deceiving, Luke in Acts has kept the promise made in Luke 1:1–4 for the two-volume work to present the traditions at his disposal precisely and in order (M. Hengel).

To judge by Philemon 24, Colossians 4:14, and 2 Timothy 4:11, *Luke* was considered already in the early church to be a coworker and travel companion of Paul. Yet this outlook is only rarely given historical weight today. The discussion has recently taken a turn in the profound study of C.-J. Thornton, *Der Zeuge des Zeugen: Lukas als Historiker der Paulusreisen* (1991) ("The Witness's Witness: Luke as Historian of Paul's Journeys"); see also L. Alexander, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel* (1993) and M. Hengel's Lukan studies (below in chapter 34 bibliography). Luke was apparently a physician and a Christian teacher in Antioch who met Paul there and accompanied him on his missionary journeys from time to time. The conspicuous "we reports" abruptly inserted into the narrative in Acts 16:10–17, 20:5–15, 21:1–18, and 27:1–28:16 would then find a simple explanation. They represent the reports, not of just any (literarily invented) companion of Paul, but of Luke himself. The tradition that Luke accompanied Paul from Antioch and worked with him for a time as a Christian *διδάσκαλος* or teacher is therefore not simply to be rejected out of hand.

By the same token, Acts must be read critically because Luke reports about Paul not as a Paulinist but rather as an Antiochene teacher and historiographer. He makes no use of Paul's letters in his presentation and even withholds from Paul the title of apostle, for which Paul fought all his life according to Galatians, 1–2 Corinthians, and Romans.

In Luke's understanding, only the Twelve count as the founding apostles and bearers of the church's tradition (cf. Luke 6:13–16; 22:28–30; 24:33–53; Acts 1:2, 13, 21–26), and Paul was not one of their number (see Paul himself in 1 Cor. 15:5–8). When Luke on one occasion calls Barnabas and Paul *ἀπόστολοι* (Acts 14:14; cf. also v. 4), he is thinking not of their equality with the Twelve, which was the issue for Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:1–2 and 15:8–10, but rather of the fact that both of them came to Lystra as missionary "emissaries" (similar to the *ἀπόστολοι ἐκκλησιῶν* or "emissaries of the churches" of whom Paul speaks in 2 Cor. 8:23 [cf. NJB]) from the Christian church in Antioch (Acts 13:2–3).

Luke's presentations of Paul's conversion in Acts 9:1–22, 22:4–16, and 26:9–18 (cf. Gal. 1:15–16; 2 Cor. 4:5–6; Rom. 1:1–7); of important stages in his life (such as the apostolic council: compare the Lukan and the Pauline accounts in Acts 15:1–35 and Gal. 2:1–10); and of his preaching of justification (compare Acts 13:16–41 with Gal. 3:1–4:11; Rom. 1:18–3:31) also diverge sharply from statements in Paul's letters. Luke has presented his own picture of the figure and message of the apostle. By the time he wrote Acts (as a continuation of his Gospel), Jerusalem had already been destroyed by the Romans (cf. Luke 21:20, 24) and Paul had been martyred under Nero some time before. Consequently, *Lukan reports must always be used with caution whenever Pauline original or parallel accounts are available*. Just as it is not justified to exercise a one-sided criticism of all Luke has to say, so also it is necessary to compare critically Luke's portrait of Paul with Paul's own testimony.

4 For these reasons, the *chronology* of the apostle's life and work must be reconstructed by a critical combination of genuine Pauline, deutero-Pauline, and Lukan reports.

The most important autobiographical reports, presented by Paul as a defense of his apostleship, are found in Galatians 1:10–2:21, 2 Corinthians 2:14–6:10, 10:1–12:21, Romans 1:1–7, 15:14–33, and Philippians 3:2–11. To these must be added the reports in Acts about Paul's rearing and education in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3), his persecution of the Christian churches beginning in Jerusalem and his conversion (Acts 8:3; 9:1–29; 22:3–21; 26:9–20), his initial work as a chosen witness of the gospel, his missionary journeys, his arrest during his last visit to Jerusalem, his imprisonment in Caesarea, his appeal to Caesar's judgment and his transfer to Rome (Acts 21:15ff.), and many other details.

In evaluating this source material, the so-called *"relative" and "absolute" chronologies* must be differentiated. The relative chronology only sets the various phases of Paul's activity attested in his letters and by Luke into their proper relationship with each other, whereas the absolute chronology seeks to locate these relative dates exactly within a history of early Christianity with the help of provable dates from general history. The decisive date for the meshing of the relative and absolute chronologies comes from the report of the attack upon Paul that the Jews of Corinth made before the Roman proconsul Lucius Junius Gallio Annaeanus, a younger brother of the Stoic philosopher Seneca (Acts 18:12–17). The proconsulate of Gallio can be dated to the period between AD May 51 and May 52 by means of the Gallio inscription from Delphi first published in 1905. Within this period, then, Paul must have stood in Corinth before Gallio and have been acquitted. If one calculates backward and forward from this point (above all with the help of the time indications in Gal. 1:15–2:1 and 2 Cor. 12:2), then the following chronological framework for Paul's ministry results (cf. J. Becker, *Paul* [1993], 31, and R. Riesner, *Paul's Early Period* [1998], 300–305):

Paul was born in the first decade of the common era in Tarsus, as the child of a religiously strict Jewish family. From his father's side he possessed both Roman and Tarsan citizenship. He seems to have been

brought to Jerusalem already as a child and was educated there in a Jewish school and in the academy of Rabbi Gamaliel I (Acts 22:3).

The *historical value of Acts 22:3:* “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated strictly according to our ancestral law, being zealous for God” (NRSV) is continually challenged by appealing to Galatians 1:22–23. Instead it is assumed that Paul spent his youth and years of education in Tarsus and received a solid Hellenistic education there; only after he had become a Christian did he come into contact with the early church in Jerusalem (cf., e.g., E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles* [1971], 625). But this criticism does not stand up to the facts. The term Ἰουδαία in Galatians 1:22 means all of Palestine (see above, 227, §1.3.4). W. C. van Unnik (see bibliography below) has shown that Acts 22:3 distinguishes three phases of adolescent development according to the classical pattern: first Paul’s “birth” (γέννησις; cf. γεγεννημένος in Acts 22:3) in Tarsus, then his “upbringing” (τροφή; cf. ἀνατεθραμμένος) as a small child, and finally his “education” (παιδεία; cf. πεπαιδευμένος) in Jewish elementary school and later “at the feet of Gamaliel.” Rabbi Gamaliel I taught in the Holy City between AD 25 and 50 and was in his day a highly respected Pharisaic scribe from the school and family of Hillel. The details of Acts 22:3 agree moreover with those in Philippians 3:4–6 and Galatians 1:13–14. Prior to AD 70 young Jews could best be trained as scribes in Jerusalem, and they could also lead their lives there according to the strict purity regulations of the Pharisees. We know nothing of a Hellenistic education of Paul in Tarsus, but we do know of his ready familiarity with the Holy Scriptures (especially in Greek, but also in Hebrew), his mastery of the rabbinic rules of exegesis, his mastery of Aramaic (and Hebrew) and Greek, and his ability to offer instruction as well as to compose rhetorically polished letters which even his opponents had to acknowledge (cf. 2 Cor. 10:10). All this points to a good *Jewish* education. It is therefore advisable to see Paul as a *Diaspora Pharisee educated (predominantly) in Jerusalem.*

In Acts 7:58 Saul is called a νεανίας, that is, a “young man” between the ages of twenty-six and forty. If one places the death of Jesus in AD 30 (perhaps AD 27; see above, 68), then Paul was called to be an apostle only a few years after Jesus’s death, around AD 32, while he was on his way to persecute the Christians in Damascus. He first worked for about two years as a missionary in “Arabia” (i.e., the Nabatean kingdom) and in Damascus (cf. Gal. 1:17; 2 Cor. 11:32–33). After his brief first visit to Jerusalem in 34, he was then active for a total of fourteen years in Tarsus and Syria and Cilicia (Gal. 1:21–2:1; Acts 9:30). Around the end of this time Paul was brought to Antioch by Barnabas and made part of the mission work in this metropolis of the Gentile mission (cf. Acts 11:22–26). When Barnabas and Paul dispensed with circumcising the Gentiles whom they converted on their first missionary journey from Antioch to Cyprus and the Roman province of Galatia (13:1–14:28) and Jewish Christians protested against this laxity, the “apostolic council” was called in Jerusalem in 48. Barnabas and Paul managed to have their law-free, circumcision-free mission to the Gentiles acknowledged by the Jerusalem “pillars” (cf. Gal. 2:6–10). But

when subsequently to the apostolic council James the Lord's brother tried to introduce the regulations of the so-called apostolic decree in Antioch and its environs (cf. Acts 15:20, 29), there was an argument and a temporary fallout between Paul on the one hand and Peter, Barnabas, and the Jewish Christians of Antioch on the other (Gal. 2:11–21; Acts 15:36–40).

Paul took responsibility for the Gentile mission entrusted to him at the apostolic council and pursued it from around 49/50 onward, completing two more great missionary journeys that took him through Asia Minor to Achaia, Athens, and Corinth. On these journeys he made great efforts to gather from Gentile Christians the collection for "the poor among the saints at Jerusalem" (Rom. 15:26) that had been agreed upon at the apostolic council (cf. Gal. 2:10). As he brought the assembled funds to the Jerusalem church around 56 or 57, prior to his planned journey to Rome, he was attacked by Jewish opponents in the temple; yet before they could kill him, he was taken into Roman protective custody. Paul remained in custody for two years in Caesarea, and in 59, on the basis of his own legal appeal, he was brought to Rome. There he suffered a martyr's death around 60 (or perhaps a little later) under Nero (54–68); see *1 Clement* 5:7, 6:1.

5 These data are historically important and also invite a theological evaluation.

5.1 It is precisely from the life of Paul that we may come to understand what K. Barth says about the apostles generally: "It is in them, in their being and their deeds, that the Church can and should recognise itself as the assembly of the elect for all time. It is in them that each individual member of the Church can and should recognise the meaning and purpose of his own election" (*Church Dogmatics* II/2, 449).

The fundamental experience from which Paul as an apostle of Jesus Christ proceeds is the justification of the ungodly (cf. Rom. 4:5; 5:6) which he himself experienced outside Damascus. Against all religious expectation, this wicked person who opposes the will of God through his Christ is not handed over to judgment but is pardoned and chosen for apostolic service in the faith of Christ (1 Cor. 9:16; 15:8–10; 2 Cor. 2:14–17).

The apostle and his fundamental experience will be understood in Barth's sense only when we see his person and message in all their historical peculiarities. As a Diaspora Pharisee educated in Jerusalem and possessing Tarsan and Roman citizenship (see above), Paul belonged to the Jewish upper class. Like many Diaspora Jews, he bore a double name, Σαῦλος or שָׁאוּל after the first Jewish king, and the similar-sounding Roman cognomen *Paulus* ("the small"). In 2 Corinthians 11:22 and Philippians 3:5

he stresses that he is a Jew by birth, the seed of Abraham, a Benjaminite, and circumcised on the eighth day. Moreover, he calls himself a "Hebrew of Hebrews" (Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων), that is, the son of Hebrew- and Aramaic-speaking Jews who could speak these languages as well as Greek. According to Galatians 1:14 and Philippians 3:5, he deliberately joined the ranks of the Pharisees and displayed especially militant zeal in defending Pharisaic norms of the faith. Like many other scribes, Paul had learned a trade, making tents and saddles (cf. Acts 18:3). He was therefore in a position when necessary to care for his own needs (cf. 1 Cor. 9:6; 2 Cor. 11:7; 12:13). In Jerusalem Paul lived through the events of Jesus's final ministry and execution and the formation of the early church without immediately confessing the Christian faith.

5.2 Paul's circumstances become significant as soon as we recognize that the *Torah* and the *gospel of Christ* are the two religious powers that conditioned his life from beginning to end. *Properly determining the relationship of law and gospel is therefore the great background theme of Pauline theology*.

For Paul as a Jew living in Jerusalem, and according to Galatians 5:11 perhaps also teaching in the Greek-speaking synagogues, the Sinai Torah was the essence of life. In the process of defending the law, he persecuted from Jerusalem to Damascus the law-critical sect of the Christians who confessed the crucified Jesus as Lord and Messiah. In the midst of these persecutions Paul was called to faith and to be an ambassador of the gospel of Christ. After his call Paul's whole life was focused on the gospel, and in the service of the gospel he eventually lost both his freedom and his life. Paul understood both the Torah and the gospel as the revelation of the one God who created the world and chose Israel as his own people (cf. Rom. 1:1; 2:20; 7:12, 14; 9:4). Therefore, as an apostle he could not simply remain content with the antithesis of law and gospel that had determined his life prior to his call and continue it under the banner of faith. Instead he had to make an effort to unify theologically the two modes of revelation of the one God.

5.3 The Pauline letters identified above as authentic (i.e., 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1–2 Corinthians, Romans, Philippians, and Philemon) all come from the time of Paul's second and third missionary journeys or his imprisonments in Caesarea or Rome. They are all supported by the global missions concept that Paul sketched in Romans 1:1–7, 11:13–32, and 15:15–24. The theology of Paul attested in these letters is naturally not a systematically closed outline, but a *mission theology with a universal horizon*, sketched (often very quickly) in response to practical needs.

Unfortunately, for the longest phase of Paul's mission, the fourteen or sixteen years between his call and the apostolic council, we have only sparse reports. From 2 Corinthians 11:24–25, 32–33 we learn that ever since his call near Damascus, Paul was persecuted for preaching Christ, being flogged five times in the synagogues as a transgressor of the law. From the moment he began his mission with Barnabas from Antioch, Paul championed the Gentile mission without circumcision and legal conditions as a matter of principle. So also at the apostolic council in Jerusalem, Paul stood up for a Gentile mission free from these conditions. This shows that *Paul's missionary preaching was characterized throughout by the doctrine of the justification of the ungodly through Christ alone* (cf. Rom. 4:5; 5:6). After the council, when Peter and Barnabas and the Jewish Christians of Antioch

vacillated on the question of the law, Paul separated himself from them and together with Silas (Silvanus) and other coworkers adopted his own missions strategy to confront the Gentiles with the gospel (cf. Rom. 11:13–32). Paul worked as "a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles" (Rom. 15:16) to gather the God-ordained "full number of the Gentiles" (Rom. 11:25) to the eschatological saved community, thus helping to speed the day when all Israel would be saved by the Christ-redeemer who appears from Zion (11:26). *Ever since the apostolic council, Paul understood himself as the apostle to the Gentiles for Israel's sake, and he pursued his mission literally in this "ecumenical" horizon*.

The apostle's letters, which come from this high phase of his mission, are all indebted to special mission circumstances. They express only what needed to be said in each current situation and are silent about everything else that was self-evident or indisputable for Paul and his addressees. *To arrive at Paul's overall theology, then, Paul's letters must be read in a way that clarifies both the uniqueness of his thought and his agreement with the early church tradition which both he and the recipients of his letters regarded as their foundation*. Paul takes up this tradition for example in 1 Corinthians 15:3–8, 11:23–26, Romans 3:25–26, and 4:25 and sees in it authoritative content for faith (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1–3; Rom. 6:17). The tradition goes back in part to the beginnings of the Jerusalem church, and in matters such as the law, the Lord's Supper, and the doctrine of the atoning death of Christ, this tradition connects Paul with Jesus's own teaching. From this standpoint it is fair to call Paul *"the messenger of Jesus"* (A. Schlatter).

5.4 All genuine letters of Paul (including Colossians and 2 Thessalonians) document that throughout his apostolic ministry, Paul remained a highly controversial figure whose doctrinal proclamation was by no means generally accepted. Paul was able to testify to the gospel entrusted to him only through great personal suffering and in constant struggle against rejection, slander, and error. Because of this, *Paul's teaching can be received in a theologically fruitful way not simply by accepting it as given, but by taking a critical approach to the problems and questions with which he was confronted*.

The biblical understanding of tradition and truth is not selective but holistic. This means that Pauline interpretation must not only work through the apostle's own testimony but must also sketch the position of his (mostly Jewish Christian) opponents. Insofar as their voice comes to expression for example in the Letter of James (cf. James 2:14–26), in the traditions of the Gospel of Matthew (Matt. 5:18–19?), or in the Letter to the Hebrews, it must be taken seriously and evaluated critically. *Paul's letters must be read in the light of this opposing testimony, and the Letter of James, the Gospel of Matthew, and the Letter to the Hebrews must be confronted with Paul's teaching*. Only when and where this occurs has the reader become practiced in the biblical understanding of truth, having recognized that the Christian testimony to faith can be maintained only by well-founded opposition to contrary viewpoints.

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CHAPTER 17

The Origin and Starting Point of Pauline Theology

The question of the origin and starting point of Paul's theology remains controversial primarily for two reasons. First, Paul's letters are real mission documents, from which Paul's thought must be reconstructed (see above). As such they relate to various (conflict) situations in the mission churches and allude to Christian catechetical traditions; often they can be understood only with great difficulty because of their associative manner of thought and expression (cf. 2 Pet. 3:16). Even from a historical standpoint, then, there are various ways of approaching Paul's thought. Second, from Augustine through the Reformation and on to the present day, Paul has exercised an abiding theological influence upon the doctrine of the churches, especially in the West. Every presentation of Pauline theology is therefore implicitly and explicitly obligated to legitimize or criticize current theological thinking in the churches.

Forming an independent opinion about the starting point and origin of Paul's theology involves three steps. We must first sketch the main types of contemporary Pauline interpretation, then evaluate them, and finally draw out the consequences for our presentation in the following chapters.

1 In German Pauline scholarship two basic types of understanding continue to compete with one another: Rudolf Bultmann's programmatic soteriological-anthropological picture and Ernst Käsemann's apocalyptic-christological picture of Paul, developed over against Bultmann's. But it has already proved possible to transcend the mere opposition of these two ways of thinking. Moreover, German Pauline interpretation especially, with its central focus on the apostle's message of justification, has encountered such massive criticism from the United States and England that a critical response from the German side can no longer be avoided.

1.1 **Rudolf Bultmann** developed his understanding of Paul in the context of his overall systematic-hermeneutical approach. Historically he started with a new discovery of Pauline anthropology. Bultmann recognized that anthropological terms such as "body" (σῶμα), "flesh" (σάρξ), "mind"

(νοῦς), “heart” (καρδία), and “conscience” (συνείδησις) come to the fore more clearly in Paul than in all other New Testament books. In the first instance they designate the whole person as body, flesh, mind, heart, conscience, and so on, whether considered before God or before other people. In and behind this theological anthropology Bultmann identified a theological program specific to Paul. The apostle thought through his message with a self-conscious anthropological twist, because he wanted to work out its implications for the individual person. From this Bultmann concluded that Pauline theology is best treated as theological anthropology:

> Pauline theology is not a speculative system. It deals with God not as He is in Himself but only with God as he is significant for man, for man’s responsibility and man’s salvation. Correspondingly, it does not deal with the world and man as they are in themselves, but constantly sees the world and man in their relation to God. Every assertion about God is simultaneously an assertion about man and vice versa. For this reason and in this sense Paul’s theology is, at the same time, anthropology. . . . The christology of Paul is likewise governed by this point of view. In it, Paul does not speculatively discuss the metaphysical essence of Christ, or his relation to God, or his “natures,” but speaks of him as the one through whom God is working for the salvation of the world and man. Thus, every assertion about Christ is also an assertion about man and vice versa; and Paul’s christology is simultaneously soteriology.
>
> Therefore, Paul’s theology can best be treated as his doctrine of man: first, of man prior to the revelation of faith, and second, of man under faith, for in this way the anthropological and soteriological orientation of Paul’s theology is brought out. (R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 1:190–91)

For Bultmann the idea of the justification of the individual sinner stands at the center of Pauline theology. Justification essentially means that individuals are acquitted of their sins by God’s free grace, which precedes all human works. The expression “God’s righteousness” (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ), which occurs often in Paul’s letters (cf. Rom. 1:17; 3:5, 21–26; 10:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9), means for Bultmann primarily “God-given, God-adjudicated righteousness” for the individual believer (*Theology*, 1:285).

1.2 Over against this comprehensive outline, Bultmann's student **Ernst Käsemann** developed three objections in the course of his exegetical and theological work, which was devoted above all to Paul. These form the framework of his own interpretation of Paul: (1) Pauline anthropology is interested not in human individuals as such, as Bultmann thought, but in people as they find themselves already in relationships and as they are claimed by God and their fellow humans, but also by other powers. (2) The doctrine of justification is indeed the center and apex of Pauline theology. But it does not speak only of the acquittal of the individual sinner before God; it is also and primarily about God's legal right embodied in Christ over his entire human and nonhuman creation. The phrase "the righteousness of God" expresses at once the power and the gift of God. Therefore, in the context of the relevant verses (see above), it can be understood either as God's own right and covenant faithfulness (e.g., Rom. 3:25–26) or as the gift of righteousness to the ungodly sinner (e.g., Phil. 3:9). (3) Bultmann reduced Paul's end-time horizon for history and creation to those aspects that were significant for the eschatological existence of the individual, thereby subjecting Paul's thought to demythologizing criticism. But Käsemann thinks that we must see historically and consider theologically how Paul hoped for the imminent arrival of God's kingdom over the world and the renewal of all creation. The apostle did not use apocalyptic categories only to speak about Christ's mission and work (1 Cor. 15:20–28) and the salvation of all Israel (cf. Rom. 11:1–36). He also located his own mission within these same global, end-time coordinates (cf. Rom. 11:13–32; 15:14–24).

As a consequence of his threefold criticism of Bultmann's presentation of Paul, Käsemann believes that the apostle must be understood not from his theological anthropology but from his Christology and his eschatological hope. Both aim at the renewal of God's kingdom over the whole world. Anthropology and soteriology do not form the center of gravity of Paul's thought for Käsemann; they only provide its "depth dimension."

1.3 The academically fruitful alternative between Bultmann's understanding and Käsemann's understanding of Paul has since been so far extended and relaxed by various contributions that a new stage in the discussion has been reached.

1.3.1 Two other students of Bultmann, Hans Conzelmann and Günther Bornkamm, agreed with their teacher's interpretation of Paul. They objected that Käsemann's emphasis on an apocalyptic expectation, his christocentric interpretation of the doctrine of justification, and his view of anthropology all obscured the specifically soteriological accent of the apostle and neglected the significance of faith for the individual Christian that was so important to Paul. Yet while they criticized Käsemann, both exegetes also modified and developed Bultmann's view of Paul.

1.3.1.1 **Hans Conzelmann** stressed Paul's dependence upon the early Christian confessional tradition that existed before him, pointing out that Paul got his doctrine of faith from (existential) interpretation of these pre-Pauline creedal formulations. He thereby deepened Bultmann's interpretation of Paul *tradition-historically*.

1.3.1.2 **Günther Bornkamm** supplemented Bultmann's systematically oriented presentation of Paul by showing us how to understand Paul once again from the *historical context* of his life and work. Like Käsemann, Bornkamm kept in mind the apostle's epochal concept of mission, which encompassed the whole ancient world. Referring to Romans 15:23–24, Bornkamm speaks of Paul's thinking about mission as "ecumenical" and "virtually moving in hemispheres" (*RGG*[3] 5:172–73). He thereby confirms indirectly that Käsemann's apocalyptic view of Pauline eschatology is fully justified.

1.3.2 Against Conzelmann, **Georg Eichholz** and **Otto Kuss** have shown that for the apostle, the early Christian confessional tradition is not simply traditional material existentially interpreted. *Rather, the tradition Paul cites has normative significance for him*. The tradition which Paul inherited from the churches of Damascus, Jerusalem, and Antioch is never the subject of his criticism, but is rather the basis of his teaching, consciously chosen and theologically affirmed. *Christology is the center of this tradition according to Eichholz and Kuss, and Paul's doctrine of justification must be understood from this Christology*. The individual believer's faith and salvation can then be understood as the concrete soteriological expression of Paul's Christology. His Christology also explains the universal horizon of his mission. The views of Eichholz and Kuss thus come very close to Käsemann's understanding of Paul, while also leading beyond it.

1.3.3 Käsemann's picture of Paul has also been confirmed and modified by **Werner Georg Kümmel** and **Leonhard Goppelt**. Both interpreters stress that in his Christology and doctrine of justification, *Paul continues a tradition whose origins lie in the early Jerusalem church's understanding of Christ*. They have also compared the apostle's preaching with the message of the earthly Jesus, coming to the conclusion that Jesus's message of the kingdom of God finds its appropriate post-Easter theological counterpart in Paul's preaching of Christ.

1.3.4 Kümmel came to his view through independent research into Jesus's preaching, early Christian history, and early Christian understandings of tradition. Goppelt also proceeded independently, working through views that had already been characteristic of *Adolf Schlatter's* interpretation of Jesus and Paul. Correspondences between Goppelt and Käsemann are therefore not accidental, because Schlatter also stands behind Käsemann's creation-centered and Christ-centered understanding of "God's righteousness" in Paul.

In sum, the originally stark alternative between Bultmann's and Käsemann's interpretation of Paul has in the meantime been so greatly relaxed that interpreters no longer have to content themselves simply with coming down on one side or the other. *The goal is now to arrive at a theological understanding of Paul grounded in early Christian history and tradition history that takes account of the controversy within the Bultmann school without satisfying itself with a standstill, but leading beyond it*.

1.4 The first big step in this direction was made by **Jürgen Becker** in his book *Paul: Apostle to the Gentiles* (ET 1993 [1989]).

Drawing upon G. Bornkamm, Becker develops both the main idea and the individual statements of the apostle's theology by working through Paul's life story, the stages of his mission, and the historical sequence of his letters. Paul appears as an early Christian witness who, because of his call to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, "thinks and lives out of his experience of the gospel" (374), specifically in the eschatological situation "immediately before the end of history" (376). "His pressing concern is how he can let the Christ who is near in the gospel determine and value everything" (374). The gospel is the "word of reconciliation" expounded by Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:19–6:2. In Romans, it appears as the message of the justification of the ungodly summarized in Romans 4:5 and 5:6, which describes "God's gracious triumph over sinners" (372). Becker's view deserves to be critically considered and followed.

1.5 Such critical consideration is necessary, especially since in the meantime, interpretations of Paul (especially German ones) that locate the center of Pauline theology in the doctrine of the justification of the ungodly

and are indebted to the faith tradition of the Reformation have encountered massive objections that call for a response.

1.5.1 In his 1976 essay collection *Paul among Jews and Gentiles*, **Krister Stendahl** objected to the interpretation of Paul oriented around the theology of justification, as developed exemplarily by R. Bultmann and E. Käsemann, claiming that it is an exegetical error to understand Paul and his theology from the perspective of Luther and to place justification at the center of Paul's thought.

Stendahl claims that, unlike Luther, Paul had no problem keeping the law (cf. Phil. 3:6). The Reformer's pangs of conscience were foreign to Paul, who displayed a truly robust conscience all his life (cf. 1 Cor. 4:4). Paul's doctrine of justification was by no means fundamentally about humanity's position before God. It only dealt with the question—acute for the missionary Paul—of how the Gentiles may gain access to salvation (*σωτηρία*). God will bring his own chosen people Israel to salvation in their own time and way. Whoever (like Käsemann) regards the justification of the ungodly through faith in Christ alone as soteriologically binding for Gentiles *and* Jews and accuses early Judaism of teaching the justification of the godly provides fuel for "an understanding of Judaism as the eternally condemned and evil way to serve God," thus justifying at least implicitly "pogroms and the Holocaust " (*Paul among Jews and Gentiles*, 131).

1.5.2 **E. P. Sanders**, in his big 1977 work *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, followed Stendahl's view in essential points. Sanders refined his views once again in his 1983 study *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, finally summarizing them in a small book, *Paul*, in the Past Masters series, in which he argues only historically and is self-consciously nontheological. Overall, Sanders advocates a twofold thesis:

(1) Because of his particular historical situation and polemical fronts, Paul transmitted only a caricature of Palestinian Judaism and its understanding of the law. In order to do justice to early Judaism, one must avoid following the apostle's judgment and indiscriminately insinuating that the Jews taught righteousness by works. One must rather see that the normative early Jewish pattern of religion was one of "covenantal nomism":

> The "pattern" or "structure" of covenantal nomism is this: (1) God has chosen Israel and (2) given the law. This law implies both (3) God's promise to maintain the election and (4) the requirement to obey. (5) God rewards obedience and punishes transgression. (6) The law provides for means of atonement, and atonement results in (7) maintenance or re-establishment of the covenantal relationship. (8) All

> those who are maintained in the covenant by obedience, atonement and God's mercy belong to the group which will be saved. An important interpretation of the first and last points is that election and ultimately salvation are considered to be by God's mercy rather than human achievement. (Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 422)

(2) The main error of German Pauline scholarship as embodied by R. Bultmann und E. Käsemann is, according to Sanders, its failure to appreciate early Jewish "covenantal nomism" and its placement of the doctrine of justification at the center of Pauline thought, following Luther. This fails to recognize that *the center of the apostle's theology is not justification but believers being "in Christ."*

The juristically conceived doctrine of justification is presented by Paul principally in Galatians and Romans. According to Sanders, it answers the particular question of how Gentiles who have come to faith may become members of the Christian church and thus participate in eschatological salvation. But this is not the only problem that concerns the apostle, for "the deeper levels of Paul's thought are not found in the judicial categories, but in those which express the participation of the faithful in Christ or in the Spirit, a participation which produces a real change" (*Paul*, Past Masters, 74). Because Paul is concerned already in Galatians (cf. Gal. 3:23–28) and more fully in Romans with the new being of believers in Christ (cf. above all Rom. 6–8), and because Sanders cannot conceptually combine a judicially structured justification with the being of believers in Christ, he considers justification to be a mere partial element of Pauline thought. Being justified by faith means for Sanders only "being transferred from the group which will be destroyed to that which will be saved" (*Paul*, 76). More important to the apostle than this "transfer" from the one group to the other is the transformation of one's being that is bound up with it and truly affects the existence of believers: "This transfer involves a change in the person, so that Christ lives in and through the believer. The deeper meaning of Paul's difficult passive verb, 'be righteoused,' is that one dies with Christ and becomes a new person" (ibid.).

With this analysis Sanders renews in his own way the thesis that *Albert Schweitzer* championed in his day, namely, that for Paul, "the doctrine of righteousness by faith is . . . a subsidiary crater (*Nebenkrater*), which has formed within the rim of the main crater—the mystical doctrine of redemption through the being-in Christ." It is a "subsidiary doctrine" which the apostle can use to debate with the law, starting with the traditional understanding of Christ's atoning death and using scriptural proofs (A. Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* [1930; ET 1931], 225). Schweitzer owes his start toward this critical evaluation of justification to *William Wrede*'s book *Paulus* (1907[2]; ET: *Paul* [1907]). On the basis of historical and history of religions arguments, Wrede came to the view that justification is by no means the apostle's theological "chief doctrine." Instead, from the circumstantial fact that justification only appears in the Pauline Letters "where Paul is dealing with the strife against Judaism," Wrede concludes: "And this fact indicates the real significance of the doctrine. It is the *polemical doctrine* (*Kampfeslehre*) of Paul, it is only made intelligible by the struggle of his life, his controvery with Judaism and Jewish Christianity, and is only intended for this. So far, indeed, it is of high historical importance, and characteristic of the man" (Wrede, *Paul*, 123).

More important than this polemical doctrine for Wrede is the apostle's view of redemption centered on Christology. This brings with it a Spirit-inspired "*change in the nature of humanity*, from

which the ethical change then first arises” (*Paul*, 112 [translation modified]).

The resounding echo which the works of E. P. Sanders have found and continue to find in the United States and Great Britain makes it necessary once again to demonstrate the correctness of a theological interpretation of Paul that proceeds from justification.

1.5.3 **Heikki Räisänen** agreed with Sanders in his minutely detailed and critical investigation entitled *Paul and the Law* (1987[2]). This book was in turn greeted by Sanders as one of the most important Pauline studies of the present day (cf. Sanders, *Paul*, 131). In contrast to the thinking especially of Pauline scholarship inspired by the Reformation, Räisänen considers Paul’s theology of the law to be neither conceptually coherent nor capable of providing theological direction. It is only the apostle’s inconsistent and ultimately futile attempt to bring the problem of the law, which drove him all his life, into agreement with his faith in Christ. Because Paul did not arrive at any conclusive solution to this fundamental problem, Räisänen considers it inadvisable to continue making Paul’s inconsistent law theology the basis of theological outlines.

1.5.4 The criticism of the Reformation-oriented interpretation of Paul brought forth by Stendahl and Sanders led **James D. G. Dunn**, in a lecture from 1982 published in 1983, to see early Judaism without reservation as a religion of “covenantal nomism” and to further develop what he called “the New Perspective on Paul,” according to which Paul is no longer to be read through “Reformation spectacles.” Since Dunn’s scholarship on the topic has evolved over a period of more than twenty years, it is convenient that his essays are now collected as *The New Perspective on Paul* (WUNT 185; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005[1]; rev. ed., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008[2], cited here).

According to Dunn’s original 1983 article “The New Perspective on Paul” (in idem, *The New Perspective on Paul* [2008[2]], 99–120), Galatians 2:16 should be translated: “a man is not justified from works *except* [*ἐὰν μή*] through faith in Jesus Christ” (ibid., 106, italics added). Paul is not interested in fundamentally nullifying the law or law keeping. He rejects the “works of the law” only to the extent that Jewish particularism limited participation in God’s covenant to those who practiced circumcision, the food laws, and the Sabbath. “It is the law understood in terms of *works*, as a Jewish prerogative and national monopoly, to which he takes exception. The law understood in terms of the command ‘love your neighbour as yourself’ is another matter (Gal. 5.14)” (ibid., 117). Similarly with respect to the “works of the law” in Romans 3:20, Dunn did not think that Paul was passing any fundamental theological judgment on the *homo religiosus* who wants to commit himself to God by works, as E. Käsemann thought (e.g., “These [sc. *ἔργα νόμου*] are works that, explicitly demanded by

the Torah, at the same time fulfil it," and "In these works the issue is keeping and fulfilling the whole Torah as a never-ending service," Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* [1980], 88). Instead, the target of Paul's criticism is once again only the problematic Jewish particularism that says that only those who strive to keep the special lifestyle that differentiates Israel from the Gentiles are members of the covenant and recipients of God's saving righteousness (cf. J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1–8* [1988], 153–55). In this respect Dunn agreed with K. Stendahl:

> Paul's doctrine of justification by faith should not be understood primarily as an exposition of the individual's relation to God, but primarily in the context of Paul the Jew wrestling with the question of how Jews and Gentiles stand in relation to each other within the covenant purpose of God now that it has reached its climax in Jesus Christ. . . . It is precisely the degree to which Israel had come to regard the covenant and the law as coterminous with Israel, as Israel's special prerogative, wherein the problem lay. Paul's solution does not require him to deny the covenant, or indeed the law as God's law, but only the covenant and the law as "taken over" by Israel. (Dunn, "New Perspective" [1983], in *New Perspective* [2008], 120)

In his two-volume Romans commentary (*Romans 1–8* and *Romans 9–16* [1988]), Dunn comprehensively developed this "new perspective," making clear at the same time that Paul understood early Judaism much better than Sanders thinks he did. In contrast to Stendahl, Dunn does not generally wish to demote the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith alone, but rather wishes to continue upholding it theologically. Like E. Käsemann, Dunn understands the phrase δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in Romans 1:17 as "God's righteousness which enables and in fact achieves man's righteousness," adding: "For Paul justification is always by faith in the sense that the correlative of God's creative and sustaining power is always the human creature's dependent trust (faith), of which justification (of Jew and Gentile equally) by faith is a specific expression, and which indeed provides the existential context in and through which Paul's understanding of God's righteousness comes to clarity and focus" (Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 42).

Despite this sound assessment, Dunn here still unfortunately underestimated the fact that justification in Romans 3:20 and 3:28 has an eschatological significance. He thereby distorted the apostle's doctrine of justification. These two statements are not merely formulated with a view to the Gentiles but are valid for both Jews and Gentiles. They say that no human being will be justified before God by the works of the law (cf. Ps. 143:2). People can hope for acquittal in the final judgment only if they believe in Jesus Christ and have him as their advocate in the final judgment (cf. Rom. 8:34).

However, it should be noted that Dunn's essay collection included an extensive new introductory chapter, which was not available for the latest German edition of the present work: "The New Perspective: Whence, What and Whither?" (*New Perspective*, 1–97). This essay, with 391 detailed footnotes, now forms the basis for further discussion. For example, Dunn clarifies his interpretation of the phrase "works of the law" (cf. Rom. 3:20, 28; Gal. 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10) and its relation to justification:

> It has been a matter of regret to me that my initial formulation of the case I was making (regarding "works of the law") allowed it to be so readily dismissed. Let me make it quite clear, then: I have no doubt that "works of the law" refer to what the law requires, the conduct prescribed by the Torah; whatever the law requires to be done can be described as "doing" the law, as a work of the law. . . . Paul was clear that justification is by faith alone: to regard any "works of the law" as essential (in addition to faith) undermines "faith alone." The gospel principle is clear: "no one is justified by works of the law, but only (*ean mē*) through faith in Jesus Christ" (Gal. 2.16). (Dunn, *New Perspective*, 23–25; on Dunn's change of his translation of ἐὰν μή in Gal. 2:16 from his 1983 essay, see further 39–40 with 39n153)

The question of how Dunn and other proponents of the new perspective treated eschatological or final justification in the early days of the discussion (cf. above on Rom. 3:20, 28) is also addressed:

> On the whole question of the eschatological dimension of justification highlighted by Stuhlmacher and Gathercole in particular, I again have no hesitation in acknowledging that much of the criticism is justified. (ibid., 71)

> Initially, the subject of final justification (acquittal at the final judgment) was not in focus [sc. among early proponents of the new perspective, including Sanders and Dunn himself]. But neither was it in dispute. It is, however, entirely warranted on exegetical grounds to affirm that *the Pauline doctrine of justification cannot be properly formulated without reference to final judgment.* (72, italics added)

Despite these clarifications on "works of the law" and final justification, readers of the present volume will still find a significantly different presentation from Dunn's in the following chapters (esp. chap. 21 on justification). For example, I still stand by the statement that Dunn preserves verbatim from our personal correspondence (May 2003) but then also criticizes: "Since all men are sinners, they themselves cannot be recognised as doers of the whole law, even if they have done some good. Without Christ and his intercession, they are lost" (91 with n. 379). Dunn proceeds to say that on this understanding the question of judgment according to works simply "ceases to pose a problem. For no one, no Christian, can 'fulfil' the law or keep the commandments" (91). However, my own view is that while Christians do indeed fulfill God's will (Rom. 8:4), they are still weak and tempted by sin and evil powers, so that Christ alone is their Savior. M. A. Seifrid's summary of my view of the *extra nos* of justification, which Dunn quotes in part, is also accurate: "justification remains the 'justification of the ungodly' and *includes within its scope deliverance at the final judgment*. . . . Without in any way diminishing the reality of the righteousness at work in us, we find then the whole of that righteousness outside ourselves in Christ" (Dunn, 91n379, quoting Seifrid, "Paul's Use of Righteousness Language against Its Hellenistic Background," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, ed. D. A. Carson et al., vol. 2 [2004], 39–74, here 73–74). (On the final judgment according to works, see below, 372–73, §2.4.2.4.2.)

Dunn also correctly summarizes my understanding of Romans 8:31–34, concerning God's delivering up of Christ to death on behalf of believers so that no one can bring a charge against his elect: "The key point for Stuhlmacher is that the text [sc. Rom. 8.31–34] demonstrates that final justification is wholly dependent on Christ's saving death; not just initial justification (Rom. 5.1) but final judgment. Since Paul regards no one as a doer of the law (Rom. 3.9–18), the only chance of salvation for Jew and Gentiles alike is by faith in Christ Jesus. Only when Christ speaks on their behalf before the throne of judgment can there be any hope of a verdict of acquittal" (ibid., 90–91).

For Dunn's part, it can be said that while he states that he has no interest in promoting synergism or a Pelagian or semi-Pelagian understanding of Paul (p. 88), he still insists that interpreters need to integrate the final judgment of the actual deeds of individual believers into the overall theology of justification: "According to 2 Cor. 5.10, the judgment on each will be according to what each has done. Even if done by (the indwelling) Christ or in the power of the Spirit, the doer is the individual and judgment will be in accordance with that doing. It is that Pauline understanding of final judgment which has to be integrated with the Pauline understanding of justification by faith" (ibid., 89).

Dunn, as a Reformed theologian (cf. ibid., 19), rightly hints at the ongoing influences of historical theology in this connection, recommending for his part that "Luther needs to be complemented by Calvin" in debates on Pauline soteriology.

1.5.5 In his knowledgeable book *Paul the Convert* (1990), the Jewish historian of religion **Alan F. Segal** takes up the questions of A. Schweitzer, K. Stendahl, E. P. Sanders, and H. Räisänen as well as the proposals of J. D. G. Dunn and engages them critically. At the center of Segal's presentation stands the turning point in Paul's life outside Damascus and its consequences for the apostle's life and thought. Segal assesses the apostle's "conversion" from the perspective of historical sociology of religion and psychology of religion. Much like A. Schweitzer in his own day, Segal sees Paul as an *early Jewish apocalyptic mystic*. He recommends seeing Paul's conversion as a mystical metamorphosis with social consequences, which permanently affected Paul's life of faith and mission theology.

It is interesting to note that Segal, a Jewish scholar, has a much more reflective judgment of Paul's view of justification than does K. Stendahl or E. P. Sanders. Paul borrows the language of justification from contemporary Judaism and the early Christian baptismal tradition. He uses it to describe the transition of Jews and Gentiles to a new life of faith "not based on fleshly observances" (*Paul the Convert*, 182). Paul's own personal experience of conversion is naturally reflected in his typical antithesis about justification not through works of the law but through faith alone. Nevertheless, the result of justification for Paul is not only subjective; it has fundamental significance for all believing Jews and Gentiles: "Having begun with his personal experience, Paul thereafter expands the theory not simply to involve his own salvation, and the salvation of the gentiles, but also the entire history of humanity, from Adam through the rapidly approaching eschaton. Justification becomes the merciful acquittal of all humanity, equally guilty at first, of which he is one example, though he himself claims to have done no sin according to Jewish law" (Segal, *Paul the Convert*, 183).

Taken together, the critical objections of K. Stendahl, E. P. Sanders, H. Räisänen, and J. D. G. Dunn to the Reformation-oriented interpretation of Paul in Germany, combined with Segal's thesis about the apostle as an apocalyptic mystic, all illustrate the *necessity of renewed reflection about Paul*. It must be asked once again how Paul's life and thought, his existence as a Jew called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, his Pharisaic faithfulness to the Torah, and his apostolic obligation to the gospel of God about Jesus Christ are all related, and what theological consequences their relationship has.

2 The results of our discussion in chapter 16, §5 (see above, 260–62) are of the greatest importance for the present investigation. They show that the main background question in Paul's life is the proper relationship of the Torah and the gospel of Christ, and that Paul's theology should be understood as mission theology.

At the start of Galatians, 1–2 Corinthians, Romans, Colossians (and Ephesians), Paul introduces himself to his addressees as an apostle of Jesus Christ called by God. The carefully structured introduction to Romans runs (Rom. 1:1–7):

> [1]Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, [2]which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, [3]the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh [4]and was installed as Son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, [5]through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, [6]including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, [7]To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (NRSV [modified, v. 4])

This text shows in an exemplary way that Paul's apostolic office is based on his call and commission from the risen Christ. Paul is charged with preaching the "gospel of God" in the name of the exalted Christ to all the Gentiles. *Therefore, in order to investigate the origin and starting point of Paul's (missionary) theology, we must turn to the texts in which the apostle speaks about his call*.

2.1 Paul describes his call in the following texts: Galatians 1:11–24, 1 Corinthians 15:8–10, 2 Corinthians 4:3–6 (cf. 2 Cor. 5:16), Romans 1:1–7 (see above), and Philippians 3:4–11.

The three Lukan reports from Acts 9:1–29, 22:3–21, and 26:9–20 both supplement and differentiate themselves from the Pauline reports. As C. Dietzfelbinger has shown in his book *Die Berufung des Paulus als Ursprung seiner Theologie* ("Paul's Call as the Origin of His Theology" [1985], 75ff.), Luke's reports give an impression of how people in the early churches explained the turning point in Paul's life. According to Acts 8:1–3 and 9:1–2, Paul had begun to persecute the Christian church in Jerusalem. Armed with letters of recommendation from the high priest, he had then set out for Damascus in order to find Christians in the synagogues there and to bring them back to Jerusalem in chains for condemnation. On the way he was converted to faith in Jesus Christ by an appearance of Christ from heaven. The event of his conversion is presented three times by Luke in moving scenes that always include a conversation between Paul and the exalted Κύριος. The pattern for this presentation is found in the Hellenistic Jewish legend about Heliodorus in 2 Maccabees 3.

Paul himself knows full well that he was God's enemy, whom God conquered through Christ and led in triumphal procession and pardoned to preach the gospel instead of condemning him to death (cf. 2 Cor. 2:14–16 with 1 Cor. 9:16). Nevertheless, in his letters Paul never speaks of his "conversion," but only of his "call" (κλῆσις) to be an apostle. He presents this call in the greatest detail in *Galatians 1:11–24:*

> [11]For I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin; [12]for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. [13]You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. [14]I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. [15]But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased [16]to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being, [17]nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus. [18]Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days; [19]but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord's brother. [20]In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie! [21]Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, [22]and I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea that are in Christ; [23]they only heard it said, "The one who formerly was persecuting us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy." [24]And they glorified God because of me.

2 Corinthians 4:3–6 offers as it were an insider account of the same events reported in Galatians 1:11–24:

> [3]And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. [4]In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. [5]For we do not proclaim

> ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. [6]For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Paul goes on to add in *2 Corinthians 5:16:* "From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer" (ESV).

In addition to these testimonies. we also have the parallel reports from 1 Corinthians 15:8–10 and Philippians 3:4b–11. In 1 Corinthians 15:8–10 Paul, taking up a term of contempt that his opponents had used against him, presents himself as an "abnormally born child" (ἔκτρωμα) and as the least of the apostles, who is unfit to be called an apostle because he persecuted the church of God. In Philippians 3:4–11, Paul explains his call in terms of justification. All these fascinating and multilayered texts were composed (more than) twenty years after the actual call of Paul. But this does not make them historically unreliable as long as no earlier, better, and contradictory sources are available. Because this is not the case, we can only go by what the apostle has written.

2.2 These conversion stories raise three questions: What caused Paul to persecute the Christian church? What was revealed to him in the appearance of Jesus? How are his apostleship and the "gospel of God" related on the basis of these experiences?

2.2.1 If we ask about the causes that moved Paul the scribe, educated by Rabbi Gamaliel I in Jerusalem, to *persecute the Christian church* from Jerusalem to Damascus, then a historically revealing answer results from combining the Pauline and Lukan reports. Paul was moved to this persecution by the same motive that had led the members of the Greek synagogues of Jerusalem and of the Sanhedrin to act against Stephen (cf. Acts 6:8–7:60). The controversy in each case revolved around the confession of Jesus as the messianic Son of Man (cf. Acts 7:56) who had been raised by God and exalted to his right hand according to Psalm 110:1, and around the criticism that the "Hellenists" (Ἑλληνισταί) brought against the temple and the law by appealing to the teaching of this (false) Messiah (cf. Acts 6:8–15 and above, 220–21, on Stephen's martyrdom).

After Stephen was stoned to death, Paul took action against the whole Stephen circle in Jerusalem. Acts 8:3 and 26:10–11 overgeneralize this persecution, because according to Acts 8:14, 9:26–31, etc., the Christian "Hebrews" (Ἑβραῖοι) were originally exempted from it. At first the persecution was directed only at the "Hellenists" (Ἑλληνισταί).

What the persecution looked like concretely can be discerned from Justin's *First Apology* 31.6 and Acts 26:11 (W. Horbury). Justin explains in his first apology that during the AD 132–135 Jewish

revolt against Rome that Bar Kokhba led, he “ordered only Christians to be led away to fearsome torments, if they would not deny Jesus as the Christ and blaspheme him” (*Justin, Philosopher and Martyr: Apologies*, ed. D. Minns and P. Parvis [2009], 167). This follows an already established pattern of persecution, as shown by Acts 26:11. Luke naturally reports here independently of Justin, but in very similar terms he says that Paul used the threat of punishments and torture to force the Christians he persecuted in the synagogues to “blaspheme” Christ. Among these punishments should probably be included the chastisements that Paul himself endured several times after his own call: flogging and stoning (cf. 2 Cor. 11:24–25). Flogging and temporary exclusion from the Jewish congregation were prescribed for disobedience to the law in minor cases (cf. *m. Makkot* 3:1–9). But severe cases brought a sentence of permanent exclusion from the synagogue (cf. Str-B IV/1:293–333); blasphemy brought stoning (*m. Sanh.* 7:4).

Armed with high priestly letters of recommendation, Paul wanted to go to Damascus as well to punish the apostates (Acts 9:1–2). Because Acts 9:2 says that Paul wanted to bring them bound to Jerusalem, it is worth noting critically that Damascus was at that time a legally independent “Roman free city” (R. Riesner, *Paul’s Early Period*, 87). Paul could hardly have led Jewish religious prisoners out of the city in chains. But he could have caused the heretics to be brought before a synagogue court in Damascus itself. The fact that Paul found followers of Stephen’s teachings converted to faith in Christ among the countless Jews in Damascus as early as AD 32 is interesting for the history of missions.

Paul saw in the Stephen circle in Jerusalem and their fellow party members in Damascus a threat to the Jerusalem temple cult and the comprehensive validity of the Mosaic law as the irrevocable order for the life of Israel. This threat appealed moreover to the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, who shortly before had been crucified outside the gates of Jerusalem as a deceiver teaching a false faith, a blasphemer under God’s curse. Paul shared the Jewish interpretation of Jesus’s crucifixion based on Deut. 21:22–23 (see above, 177–78, §§6–6.2) prior to his call to be an apostle.

2.2.2 At the center of Paul’s own texts about his call (as well as Luke’s three reports of his conversion) stands the *appearance of Christ* “from heaven” (Acts 9:3; 22:6; 26:13) that Paul experienced. This led Paul to the recognition of who Jesus Christ really was and is from God’s perspective (cf. Gal. 1:12, 16; 1 Cor. 15:8; 2 Cor. 4:6; 5:16; Rom. 1:4–5; Phil. 3:7–10).

Like the apostles who were called before him (cf. 1 Cor. 15:5–7), Paul was granted a vision of the crucified and risen Jesus in the glory and power of the Son of God who was exalted to God’s right hand (Rom. 1:4). The particular circumstances under which this happened give this vision a special significance. Paul was on his way to bring the Jewish Christians in Damascus before the synagogue court and cause them to blaspheme their Lord. In the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός confessed by those he persecuted, Paul

had seen only a pseudomessiah, rightly nailed to the cross as a “deceiver” and cursed by God there on the “tree” (Deut. 21:22–23). This same Jesus now appeared to him in the radiance of divine glory. In 2 Corinthians 4:6 Paul himself characterizes this God-given *ἀποκάλυψις* Ἰ*ησοῦ* Χ*ριστοῦ* (“revelation of Jesus Christ,” Gal. 1:12; cf. 1:16) as the enlightenment or rather the enlightened knowledge given to him by the will of the creator God that God’s powerful “glory” (*δόξα*; Heb. כָּבוֹד, *kābôd*) rests on the face of Christ.

In Philippians 3:7–11 Paul confesses that this *γνῶσις* Χ*ριστοῦ* Ἰ*ησοῦ* (“knowledge of Christ Jesus,” v. 8) had literally revolutionary consequences for him. For Paul the persecutor, the Torah meant everything and Jesus Christ was to be blasphemed. But with the appearance of Christ, Paul realized that by the will of God, Christ was everything and he, with his militant zeal for the law of Sinai, had become an apostate from God’s way of salvation. Nevertheless, he was not handed over to an annihilating judgment but pardoned and called to be a witness and servant of the very Christ whom he previously failed to recognize and considered worthy only of blasphemy. *Paul on the outskirts of Damascus had his understanding of Christ reversed*. As persecutor of the church, he had regarded Christ from a fleshly point of view, that is, as a deceiver of Israel cursed by God. Yet now he no longer understood him in this way (cf. 2 Cor. 5:16), understanding him instead as the Κ*ύριος* whom God had confirmed in his messianic mission and installed as “Son of God in power” (Rom. 1:4).

Paul understood his encounter with the Κ*ύριος* Ἰ*ησοῦς* Χ*ριστός* as an act of grace, because instead of judgment he experienced acceptance and reconciliation. By virtue of his call, Paul appeared as the paradigmatic justified person, an ungodly person appointed to Christ’s service (cf. 1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 15:7 with 1 Tim. 1:12–17). *Before Paul ever taught the justification of the ungodly (cf. Rom. 4:5; 5:6), he had experienced it outside Damascus in his own person!*

There is another experiential aspect of Paul’s call. Outside Damascus it became clear to Paul that it was not he but rather the “Hellenists” and other like-minded believers whom he persecuted who had the correct doctrine and confession before God. This insight *reversed the relationship of the Torah and the gospel* for Paul. The righteousness which counts before God’s judgment throne was not to be gained and received through

observance of the law, however faithful and zealous, but only through confession and faith-obedience to the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς. Or again, formulated in the telling Pauline expression from Romans 10:4 (which remains exegetically contested until this day), *from his Damascus experience, Paul learned to see in the crucified and risen Christ the "end of the law" (as a way of salvation)*. The Easter appearance of Jesus granted to Paul did not only cause him to join the Christians he had previously persecuted in confessing the resurrection. Because of his special life situation, it also led him to a revolutionary insight in the history of revelation, namely, that Christ means more to God and before God than the Mosaic law does. God's glory on the face of the exalted Christ surpasses the glory of the Torah (cf. 2 Cor. 3:7–11). *This insight qualified Paul for his mission among the Gentiles*.

2.2.3 The texts about Paul's call reveal very close connections between the appearance of Christ granted to him and his appointment as an apostle (cf. Gal. 1:12, 16; 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8–11; 2 Cor. 4:3–6; Rom. 1:1–7; 15:15–16).

Because of the spectacular nature of his call, Paul saw his "apostleship" (ἀποστολή) as independent and unique. Appealing to the fact that he had seen the Lord (1 Cor. 9:1) and that the risen Christ had appeared to him (1 Cor. 15:8), Paul claimed to be an equal ἀπόστολος to the apostles called before him. If Peter and the Twelve were distinguished by having been chosen by the earthly Jesus and called by the Easter appearance to be messengers of the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός until the day of his parousia (see above, 238), then Paul was distinguished by having received from God through the exalted Christ the clear revelation that God's saving plan in Jesus's death on the cross and resurrection aimed at the end-time salvation of Jews *and* Gentiles through the one Κύριος. It is precisely this knowledge gained through revelation that made Paul equal to and independent of all the other apostles.

It is therefore historically absolutely credible when Paul reports in Galatians 1:16–17 that after his call, he spontaneously and without first seeking support from the Jerusalem apostles joined the mission work of the Damascus church and began preaching Christ as Lord and Messiah (cf. Acts 9:19–22). There could hardly be a better-qualified person than the converted Pharisee and scribe Paul to dispute about "faith in Jesus Christ" (ἡ πίστις εἰς Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν) with the naturally born Jews, proselytes, and Godfearers who assembled in the synagogues. It is also understandable historically both that infuriated Jews soon brought Paul before the synagogue court, which sentenced him to the

“forty lashes minus one” (2 Cor. 11:24), and that these Jews also sought to have him arrested and killed by the “ethnarch of king Aretas” (cf. 2 Cor. 11:32–33; Acts 9:23–25), whom R. Riesner identifies as the Nabatean consul in Damascus (*Paul’s Early Period* [1998], 82–89). By these persecutions the Jews were only trying to silence Paul by the same means he had used against the Ἑλληνισταί.

Through the Damascus epiphany, Paul was called to be the evangelist of faith, who no longer made salvation dependent on Jewish legal observance but only on the confession of the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς who had been crucified “for us” and raised by God (cf. Rom. 10:9).

Paul himself indicates (and Luke confirms) that he grew into his missionary calling only after years of missionary work (cf. Gal. 1:18–24 and Acts 11:25–26). But this growth should not be played off against the fact that the essential components of the gospel of the justification of the ungodly were already given to the apostle by his experience of his calling and the confessional traditions of the Christians in Damascus and Jerusalem (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3b–5; Rom. 3:25–26; 4:25; 2 Cor. 5:21).

2.2.4 *Apostleship and the gospel were inseparable for Paul*. He always saw his gospel of justification as something already given by revelation, which he had to serve for better or worse (cf. 1 Cor. 9:16).

This is evident already in Paul’s formulation in Galatians 1:16: God was pleased “to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles.” It is also clear from the opening formula of the Letter to the Romans, where Paul is “called to be an apostle” and “set apart for the gospel of God” (Rom. 1:1); from Paul’s statement in Romans 15:16 that he is “a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God”; and finally from his famous account of his conduct in the apostolic office in 1 Corinthians 9:15–23. Here Paul asserts in verse 16: “If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel!” The apostle stands and falls with the gospel entrusted to him. But it must be added: the gospel does not stand and fall with him. Judging by the formulations in Galatians 1:12, 16 (cf. 2 Cor. 11:4); 2 Corinthians 4:4–6; and Romans 1:1–7, it is clear that the crucial content of the “gospel of God” entrusted to Paul is the Christ who appeared to him on the road to Damascus. The apostle stands and falls with this Christ, but Christ is infinitely more than he is.

On closer examination, the gospel appears again and again as a *saving power* which preceded Paul and appointed him to service (cf. 1 Cor. 9:16; Rom. 1:16). The gospel is not merely exhausted in Paul’s preaching but is rather the “power of God” (δύναμις θεοῦ) which is constitutive for Paul’s witness.

1 Corinthians 15:1–11 documents that the gospel cannot be equated with the message of Paul alone; the gospel rather supports and constitutes the teaching of the apostles as a whole. In Romans 10:5–17 (cf. Deut. 30:11–14) the εὐαγγέλιον appears as the *authoritative call of the* Κύριος, which is near to faith; corresponds eschatologically to the Torah of Sinai; and calls faith into being by the power of the Holy Spirit. All the apostles (including Paul) have to orient themselves to this call, which enables

their faith which comes from hearing the gospel (i.e., “hearing with faith,” ἀκοὴ πίστεως, Gal. 3:2, 5; cf. Rom. 10:17) to reach its fulfillment.

On the outskirts of Damascus Paul was entrusted with the preaching of the gospel, and ever since then the ministry of the εὐαγγέλιον filled his life. In 2 Corinthians 3:8–9 he refers to this ministry as “the ministry of the Spirit” and “of righteousness” (διακονία τοῦ πνεύματος and τῆς δικαιοσύνης; cf. NRSV: “of justification”). Then in 2 Corinthians 5:18 he calls it a God-given “ministry of reconciliation” (διακονία τῆς καταλλαγῆς). *The apostle experienced reconciliation outside Damascus, and ever since then he served the gospel as the “word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:19) which had God newly instituted over against the Torah.*

3 Paul’s view of *revelation* is also determined by his experience of his call. This revelation consists of the soteriologically unsurpassable “self-disclosure” of God in Jesus’s mission, atoning death, and resurrection from the dead. God revealed this to Paul through the appearance of the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς outside Damascus.

It is necessary to speak of a saving *self-disclosure* of the one God, because following Old Testament and Jewish tradition, Paul confesses that God is one (cf. 1 Cor. 8:6; Rom. 3:30 with Deut. 6:4) and assumes that God reveals himself in his name יהוה (Gk. κύριος). According to Exodus 3:14, the revelation associated with God’s name consists of the ongoing historical self-disclosure of God to Israel. The extent to which this self-disclosure is a *disclosure of salvation* to Israel and the whole creation is classically and movingly illustrated by Hosea 11:1–11, Isaiah 43:16–25, 66:18–20, and Job 42:2–5 (cf. H. Hübner, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, vol. 1 [1990], 103–72).

3.1 Ever since the turning point in his life outside Damascus, Paul confessed together with the Christians before and alongside him that the one God was indeed the God “who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead” (Rom. 4:24; cf. Rom. 8:11; 2 Cor. 4:14; Gal. 1:1; *passim*). He shared with the Philippian Hymn of Philippians 2:6–11 the faith conviction that God had granted Jesus the divine name Κύριος after he had completed his saving mission. Not only was God in Christ when he reconciled the world to himself (2 Cor. 5:19); he also continually appears and discloses himself in the exalted and glorified Κύριος Ἰησοῦς. God revealed this Κύριος to Paul outside Damascus (Gal. 1:16). Ever since then Paul was a δοῦλος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Gal. 1:10; Rom. 1:1) who could say: “It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by

faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

3.2 From the time of his appointment to Christ's service outside Damascus, Paul knew that he was obligated to preach the gospel for better or worse (Rom. 1:1–6; 1 Cor. 9:16; 2 Cor. 2:14–16). In the gospel that he preached, Paul's hearers encountered the word of God. This word brought forth faith in them through the Holy Spirit and thus made them able to confess and understand the revelation about salvation (cf. 1 Thess. 2:13; Gal. 3:2; Rom. 1:16–17). Hence, according to 2 Corinthians 4:3–6, the "light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" would shine on those members of Paul's audience who were not blinded, just as God had caused this same light to shine upon the apostle outside Damascus.

Revelation for Paul is therefore God's ongoing communication of himself in the message of the gospel, based on his initial revelation of himself in Christ. The gospel produces faith through the Holy Spirit and is understood and taken to heart by faith.

As is shown by 1 Thessalonians 4:15 (cf. 1 Kings 13:1; 20:35; 1 Chron. 15:15 LXX [O. Hofius]) and by 1 Corinthians 15:51; 2 Corinthians 12:1, 8–9; and 1 Corinthians 12:7, Paul also knew of words of divine revelation, visions, hearings, and manifestations of the Spirit beyond the Damascus revelation. Nevertheless, he never considered them equal to the event of his call, but accorded them normative status only insofar as they could be verified "according to the analogy of faith" (*κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως*, Rom. 12:6), that is, in accordance with the faith tradition and the witness of the Holy Scriptures (cf. M. Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery* [1990], 226–27).

3.3 The revelation of God in and through Christ is attested (and laid out in detail) in the *Holy Scriptures* (*γραφαὶ ἅγιαι*).

Paul learned to interpret the Scriptures in the school of Rabbi Gamaliel I (cf. Acts 22:3). He used contemporary rabbinic methods of interpretation all his life. As an apostle, he continued to use the Jewish expression *Holy* Scriptures (Rom. 1:2), because following Jewish tradition, he considered the Scriptures to be inspired by the Spirit of God, both in their Hebrew (and Aramaic) and in their Greek form, which he predominantly used (cf. 1 Cor. 2:6–16; 10:11; Rom. 15:4; 2 Tim. 3:16 with Philo, *Moses* 2.37ff., 187ff., 290f.; and *m. Sanh.* 10:1).

3.3.1 Ever since the Damascus road, Paul understood the Spirit that pervades the Scriptures to be "the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead" (Rom. 8:11). *Only in this Spirit can the Holy Scriptures be properly understood*.

This means two things: (1) Paul draws a distinction generally between the “letter” (*γράμμα*) and the “Scripture” (*γραφή*) and more particularly between the “letter” and the “Spirit,” *πνεῦμα* (cf. 2 Cor. 3:16–18; Rom. 7:6). In their role as *γραφή* or Scripture that points to Christ and the gospel, the biblical texts are open only to believers. But for Israel, hardened in their unbelief, as well as for unbelieving Gentiles, these texts have only the form of the *γράμμα* or “letter,” which kills through the requirement of the law. (2) The Scriptures (*γραφαί*) inspired by God’s Spirit can be properly understood and interpreted only by believers who have received the gift of the Holy Spirit, including first and foremost the apostle Paul himself (cf. 1 Cor. 2:6–16). While this spiritual hermeneutic is characteristic of Paul’s theological thought and important to him, it also places him firmly within the broad early Christian context and consensus (Luke 24:25–27, 44; Acts 10:43; John 5:39; 14:26 [cf. John 2:22; 20:9]; 2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 3:7–11; 10:15–18; and 2 Pet. 1:20–21).

3.3.2 *The Scriptures bear witness to the gospel* (D.-A. Koch). The Scriptures demonstrate that the gospel is the previously promised, binding will of God for salvation (cf. Rom. 3:21 with 1 Cor. 15:3–4; Rom. 1:1–2). They also show the way God has taken and will continue to take with his chosen people Israel, so that together with the Gentiles, they might obtain through Christ the *σωτηρία* or “salvation” that they have been promised (cf. Rom. 9–11 with Deut. 32 [R. Bell]).

3.3.3 *The Holy Scriptures speak as the living word of God immediately to the present situation*. Paul expressly emphasizes this present relevance in 1 Corinthians 10:11, Romans 4:23–24, and 15:4. He repeatedly introduces or concludes Scripture quotations with the formulas λέγει κύριος, “. . . says the Lord” (1 Cor. 14:21; Rom. 12:19), or *καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεός*, “just as God said” (2 Cor. 6:16). He also stresses again and again God’s “I” speaking in and with the Scripture (cf. 1 Cor. 14:21; 2 Cor. 6:2, 16, 18; Rom. 9:25, 33; 10:19–21; 11:4; 14:11; *passim*). Paul does not only subordinate the Holy Scriptures to a preformulated confession of Christ. The Scriptures also help him to recognize the ways God has taken and will take to establish his kingdom in and through Christ (1 Cor. 15:23–28).

4 Paul’s call to be an apostle of Jesus Christ caused a complete reversal of his religious experience, changing both his thought and his life. Paul’s mission theology can therefore best be understood by placing the law of God (Rom. 8:7) and the gospel of God (Rom. 1:1) alongside one another as well as over against one another in his thought.

In the following presentation we must therefore first see what the Torah means for Paul, then show how the gospel of God supersedes the law, and finally investigate the consequences of this supersession.

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CHAPTER 18

Paul and the Law

It is not without good reason that Paul's teaching about the law is considered the most difficult part of his theology. Not only are his letters written for particular occasions and therefore unsystematic, Paul also had to work through the many layers of tradition about the law that he inherited from the Old Testament, early Judaism, and Jesus. Therefore, scholarly views of Paul's understanding of the law also diverge extremely widely. For example, H. Conzelmann could formulate categorically following R. Bultmann, "The whole doctrine of the law is . . . simply a theological interpretation. It becomes comprehensible when it is exemplified in the case of the individual man, as a disclosure of where he stands and whence he comes" (*Outline of the Theology of the New Testament* [1969], 228). While G. Klein affirms this view in *TRE* 13:66, Käsemann writes, "the specifically theological viewpoint, which is fundamental for the apostle, sees in the law the Mosaic documentation of the divine saving claim upon his covenant people" ("Der Dienst der Freiheit," in *Der Ruf der Freiheit* [1972⁵], 123). In his monograph *The Law in Paul's Thought* (ET 1984), H. Hübner advances the thesis that after several false starts, Paul finally arrived at a permanent theological solution to the problem of the law only in the Letter to the Romans. H. Räisänen, by contrast, has directed sharp criticism against Paul's treatment of the theme of the law, declaring Paul's entire theology of the law to be disparate and incomplete (*Paul and the Law* [1987²], 199–202).

In view of this divergence of opinion, which could hardly be greater, it is advisable first to summarize how the law was understood in the Old Testament and early Judaism. As a Jewish scribe, Paul knew the Old Testament and early Jewish legal traditions well, and in his own person he paradigmatically represents the encounter between Pharisaism and the crucified and risen Christ. It will also be necessary to recall how Jesus spoke about the Torah. Finally and above all, we must emphasize the apostle's own doctrine of the law and ask where its center of gravity lies.

1 If one wishes to sketch the fundamental lines of the Old Testament and early Jewish understanding of the law, one must first dispose of the negative caricature of the law which has left its impression both ecclesiastically and theologically in a long Gentile Christian tradition, and acknowledge that both the Old Testament and early Judaism repeatedly show themselves to be filled with *deep joy and thankfulness for the gift of the law* (cf., e.g., Pss. 1:1–2; 19:9 [ET 19:8]; 119:14, 24, 77, 92, etc., and for Paul himself, Rom. 2:17–18; 7:22).

This joy in the law results above all from the fact that Israel understood itself to be chosen by God, redeemed from slavery in Egypt, and entrusted with the Torah at Sinai. As the chosen people of God, Israel was thankful to have learned from Yahweh's own mouth the way it should go in order to be preserved in a state of shalom with him. From an Old Testament–Jewish point of view, then, the law is considered primarily as the *revealed order for life*, which God graciously gave his own people to help them live a successful, flourishing life before God and other people. The close connection between Israel's election, liberation, covenant obligations, and walk according to God's commandments is attested for example in Deuteronomy 4:7–18, 32–40. The texts about the law never speak about working for salvation through human legal obedience. But they do say that departure from the way of the law will bring a curse and death (cf. Deut. 30:15–18).

The catchword "covenantal nomism" has recently been introduced into this debate by E. P. Sanders. It expresses the idea that Israel can neither win participation in God's covenant nor earn it eschatologically through keeping the commandments. This view is fundamentally correct, but it was already recognized and described long before Sanders for example by M. Noth ("Die Gesetze im Pentateuch," in *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* [1957], 9–141) and more recently by H. Conzelmann, who writes, "For Judaism, the law is not primarily a sum of precepts, but the sign of the election of Israel, the ratification of the covenant. It is not a burden, but a delight (Paul: Phil. 3:4–6)" (*Outline of the Theology of the New Testament* [1969], 21). Nevertheless, the expression "covenantal nomism" is misleading. E. Kutsch has shown in a series of publications that the usual translation of בְּרִית (*bərît*) and διαθήκη (*diathēkē*) by "covenant" is inadequate for both the Hebrew Old Testament and the Septuagint (see above all his *Neues Testament—Neuer Bund? Eine Fehlübersetzung wird korrigiert* [1978], i.e., "New Testament—New Covenant? Correcting an Erroneous Translation"). Both terms mean primarily "regulation" or "obligation." "Where God's *berit* is spoken of or where God makes a *berit*, it is understood as God's promise or as God's obligation for the people, his commandment or law" (ibid., 85). As examples Kutsch mentions, among others, Exodus 19:5, 24:7–8, and Jeremiah 31:31–34, while W. H. Schmidt (*The Faith of the Old Testament: A History* [1983], 108) adds Deuteronomy 4:13 (!), 2 Kings 23:2–3 (cf. 2 Kings 22:8, 11), Jeremiah 11:3–4, Psalm 78:10, *passim*. This finding holds true even in the post–New Testament rabbinic writings, where for example the *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael* on Exodus 12:6 (ed. J. Z. Lauterbach [1933], 1:27), commenting on the use of the word "covenant" in Deuteronomy 29:11 (ET 29:12), says, "'the covenant' here simply means the Torah." *The term "covenantal nomism" is therefore a tautology; it lacks the differentiation necessary to give precise information about the Old Testament–Jewish understanding of the Torah*.

2 With this general finding in view, we must furthermore recall that the one Torah reached its final form only gradually in the history of Israel.

If one follows H. Gese ("The Law," in *Essays on Biblical Theology* [1981], 60–92) and K. Koch ("Gesetz I. AT," *TRE* 13:40–52), then several stages of development in the understanding of the law may be differentiated:

2.1 The oldest and earliest stage of the Old Testament understanding of the law is accessible in the *Decalogue* (Exod. 20:2–17; Deut. 5:6–21) and its preliminary forms. The "ten words" (Exod. 34:28) were originally ordered in five pairs of commandments which applied to God (first and second commandments), the realm of the holy (third and fourth commandments), the family (fifth and seventh commandments), humanity (sixth and eighth commandments), and one's neighbor (ninth and tenth commandments). In these commandments Israel's life order before God was outlined and placed under God's protection. It is characteristic of the Decalogue that the "you" that is addressed in the commandments ("you shall not," etc.) is Israel before its own God. The religious entity and the political entity "Israel" are still indivisible.

2.2 As this national unity broke apart in the historical turmoil of the ninth and eighth centuries BC, prophets of judgment including Hosea, Amos, Micah, and Isaiah interpreted the historical catastrophes that overcame the Northern and Southern Kingdoms as a divine judgment from which only a believing remnant would emerge purified. The understanding of the law developed accordingly. *In the seventh century the Torah appeared in the form of Deuteronomy*. The ten words of the Decalogue are presented as having been spoken directly by God to Israel. In Deuteronomy 5:1–21 they introduce the Deuteronomic book of the law, which incorporated all the instructions that previously had been passed on as individual units. This book of the law is now the one revealed order for life that enables Israel to recognize "life and prosperity" (Deut. 30:15). It challenges the people to live before Yahweh in accordance with this understanding and thereby to distinguish itself from all the other peoples which are not Israel.

2.3 In the midst of the catastrophe of the sixth century BC, when Judah lost its political independence and the upper and middle classes of the population had to go into exile in Babylon, the understanding of the law in Deuteronomy was once again superseded. The goal of the *law of the Priestly Document* formed at this time is to facilitate the people's encounter with Yahweh's holiness in the *cult*, so that it can lead a life sanctified to God (cf. Lev. 17–26). According to Leviticus 10:17 and 17:11, God has

provided the decisive institution of the atoning cult and atoning sacrifice in order to enable the priests to effect atonement and the forgiveness of sins for the individual Israelite as well as the people as a whole. This opens up a new life of holiness before God. In Ezekiel 20:25–26 the priest and prophet Ezekiel radically criticizes the earlier preexilic cultic law as a revelation which had led only to unholiness and distance from God. In Ezekiel 36:24–28 and 37:21–28 he looks forward to the turning point of the end time, after which the people, empowered by the gift of the Holy Spirit, will finally be in a position to live according to God's commandments, while in Ezekiel 40–48 he develops the Torah for this future holy people of God that will throng around the temple to be newly built in Jerusalem. For the people deported to Babylon, who had to do without the Jerusalem temple cult, the *Sabbath* became in the years of exile the day on which Israel could participate symbolically in the rest of the completed creation, becoming absorbed in the worship of its God (cf. Exod. 20:8–11; 35:1–3; Deut. 5:12–15; *Jub.* 2).

2.4 If one views Deuteronomy and the priestly Torah of holiness together, it appears as not surprising that *in the wisdom tradition of the postexilic period, the Torah was universalized and at the same time understood ontologically*. The historical fate of Israel from the fifth century BC onward forced it to keep the whole ancient world in view, and from the fourth century onward it was confronted with the cosmopolitan problems and cultural developments of Hellenism that began with the conquests of Alexander the Great (336–323 BC). Israel reacted to these challenges convinced that in the Torah it could recognize the creation order of the cosmos and live accordingly. The distinguishing mark of this comprehensive understanding of the law is the identification which comes to the fore for example in Psalm 19, Baruch 3:9–4:4, and Sirach 24 between the preexistent wisdom of creation and the Torah (cf. also Prov. 8:22–31; Wis. 9:1–18). From Sirach 24 one can say that through the Zion cult directed by God's revealed wisdom, the well-being of the whole world is symbolically established and preserved. By learning and keeping the law, Israel may participate in this well-being. (According to Sirach 15:14–15, people certainly have the power of free choice and the ability to keep God's commandments: "It was he who created humankind in the beginning, and he left them in the power of their own free choice. If you choose, you can

keep the commandments, and to act faithfully is a matter of your own choice.")

2.5 Furthermore, within the postexilic sapiential understanding of the law, additional *expectations for a revelation of the law were articulated that go beyond the revelation summarized in the Pentateuch or the contemporary Torah canonized by Ezra*. These are accessible not only in the Ezekiel texts mentioned above, but also in the deutero-Jeremianic tradition of Jeremiah 31:31–34; further in Isaiah 2:2–5, Micah 4:1–5, and, for example, also in Psalm 50. According to K. Koch, "late prophetic literature prophesies an end-time, universal Torah that goes out from Zion, regulating international conflicts and promoting international peace (Isa. 2:2–5; Mic. 4:1–5)" (*TRE* 13:46). With the same passages in view (i.e., Isa. 2:2–5; Mic. 4:1–5; Ps. 50), H. Gese differentiates between "Sinai Torah" and "Zion Torah" ("The Law," 82).

This newly minted expression "Zion Torah" binds together all these expectations from a biblical-theological perspective. It involves four components. First, the notion of Zion Torah includes the idea documented in Ezekiel 36:24–28 as well as in Jeremiah 31:31–34 and in Psalms 50 and 51 that it is only by means of a personal metamorphosis and new creation granted by God's Spirit that Israel can come to true obedience to the law. Corresponding to this, second, is the hope that the people of God will someday live in peace and walk in righteousness according to God's statutes (Ezek. 37:21–28; Jer. 30:18–24). Third, there is the hope that the Sinai revelation of the Torah, whose provisional nature is clearly presented in Ezekiel 20:25–26, will be superseded by a *new revelation of the law*. The Torah will no longer stand over against people only in written form, but will be written freshly on their hearts by God himself. It will permeate them completely, make them independent of external instruction about the will of God, and enable them to have a spontaneous knowledge of God (cf. Jer. 31:31–34). Finally, the fourth component is the expectation that Israel's peaceful existence under the messianic ruler will be centered in Jerusalem and that the new revelation of the Torah will be bound up with Mount Zion in Jerusalem. Already in Psalm 50 God reveals his will no longer from Sinai but from Zion. The revelation of the new covenant (or "new obligation") in Jeremiah 31:31–34 is connected in the context with the rebuilding of Jerusalem (cf. Jer. 30:18; 31:23, 38–40). According to Isaiah 2:2–5 and Micah 4:1–5, in the last days Torah (NRSV "instruction") shall go forth out of Zion as the highest of the mountains, making not only Israel but also all the other nations capable of peace. *According to its contents, then, the "Zion Torah" corresponds to the law of Sinai*. The will of the one God remains the same from Sinai to Zion. But there is a change in the way in which it is revealed, which in turn changes Israel's life situation under the Torah. This twofold change also causes the individual precepts of the Torah to be weighted in new and different ways.

In the second and first centuries BC, both the Qumran *Temple Scroll* (11Q19–20) and the book of *Jubilees* "wish to present a new divine Torah, superseding Deuteronomy, that allows Israel to become a more holy people than it was before and brings it nearer to its God" (K. Koch, *TRE* 13:49). There are therefore sufficient grounds for adopting Gese's theory of the "Zion Torah." However, H. Räisänen rejects this theory because the supporting texts are too heterogeneous to be linked to a single perspective and the underlying concept of Torah is too vague for precise ideas to be attached to it ("Zion Torah and Biblical Theology: Thoughts on a Tübingen Theory," in *Jesus, Paul, and Torah: Collected Essays* [1992], 225–51).

2.6 The development sketched above also makes clear the essential features of the *Pharisaic understanding of the law* in which Paul himself once lived (cf. Phil. 3:6) and with which he had to debate for the rest of his life.

2.6.1 The Torah is the holy will of God revealed at Sinai; possession of the Torah sets Israel apart from all other nations. A famous saying from *m. Abot* 3:14 (Danby 3:15) takes up Deuteronomy 4:8, 32–37; Baruch 4:4 and runs:

> Beloved are Israel for they are called children of God; still greater was the love in that it was made known to them that they were called children of God, as it is written, *Ye are the children of the Lord your God* [Deut. 14:1]. Beloved are Israel, for to them was given the precious instrument; still greater was the love, in that it was made known to them that to them was given the precious instrument by which the world was created, as it is written, *For I give you good doctrine; forsake ye not my Law* [Prov. 4:2]. (trans. Danby, 452)

Paul, too, presupposes that the Torah is the holy will of God revealed at Sinai and that the gift of the Torah remains an inalienable advantage of Israel over the Gentiles: Romans 2:17–20; 3:2; 9:4.

2.6.2 The Torah is considered to be the law (first) revealed through Moses on Mount Sinai as well as the order of the cosmos, created by God before the creation of the world and identical to the preexistent wisdom. The breadth of this *sapiential understanding of the law* makes it possible for Jewish sources to speak of the Torah as something already known to Israel's patriarchs (cf. Sir. 44:19–21; *Jub.* 6:11–14; 21:1–25; *2 Bar.* 57:2) while also taking pride in the fact that the Torah was (first) revealed to Israel at Sinai. Moreover, the one commandment given to Adam in the garden, Genesis 2:15–17, can be equated with the Torah as a whole (cf. *Targum Neofiti 1* and *Tg. Ps.-J.* [= *Tg. Yer. I*] on Gen. 2:15; *Life of Adam and Eve* 32, 37; *4 Ezra* 3:7; 7:11; Josephus, *Ant.* 1.41–47; Philo, *Alleg. Interp.* 1.90–97).

The apostle, too, can see in the Torah both the order of being that is identical with the creative wisdom of God, manifesting itself in the works of creation and the conscience of the Gentiles (cf. 1 Cor. 1:21; Rom. 1:18–20; 2:12–16), and the manifestation of the will of God revealed at Sinai (cf. Gal. 3:17, 19; Rom. 5:13, 20). Paul also considers the one commandment of Genesis 2:15–17 given to Adam in the garden of Eden to be identical to the Decalogue (and the Torah as a whole) (cf. Rom. 7:7–12).

2.6.3 According to the scribal counting, the Torah consists of 613 commandments, including 248 positive commandments and 365 prohibitions. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* (*Yerushalmi I*) on Genesis 1:27 (see J. Bowker, *The Targums and Rabbinic Literature* [1969], 97) and other rabbinic sources present the human being as made of 248 members and 365 sinews (or arteries). One can therefore say that early Judaism saw humanity as created by and for the Torah and speak with M. Hengel about a Jewish "Torah ontology" (*Judentum und Hellenismus* [1973[2]], 210, 311ff. = *Judaism and Hellenism* [1974], 114, 171ff.). The 613 individual commandments were not yet seen as equally weighty prior to AD 70; rather, main and subsidiary commandments were differentiated. The most important part of the Torah was the Decalogue; it counted both in the Jewish motherland and in the Diaspora as the "essence of Jewish religion" (G. Stemberger, "Der Dekalog im frühen Judentum," 99).

For Paul, too, the Decalogue was of great importance (cf. Rom. 2:21–22; 7:7–12; 13:8–10), and elements of a "Torah ontology" are discernible in Romans 2:14–15 and 7:18–25.

2.6.4 The Torah that regulates life even to its finest details is considered to be fundamentally *practicable* (cf. Sir. 15:15; *Pss. Sol.* 9:4–7; *4 Ezra* 8:56–61). The Mishnah tractate *Abot* 3:15 (Danby 3:16) reports the teaching of Rabbi Akiba: "All is foreseen, but freedom of choice is given; and the world is judged by grace, yet all is according to the excess of works." However, this conviction about the practicability of the law does not imply that ancient Judaism knew nothing of temptation, weakness, and sin. Precisely the reverse is true: the law's practicability is asserted in order to guard against sin and in thankful recognition of the fact that God gives people an opportunity to repent and rejoices when they do so.

According to Philippians 3:6–7, Paul, prior to his call to be an apostle, considered himself a blameless Pharisaic righteous person. He therefore assumed that the Torah was practicable. Moreover, in Romans 2:17–20 he presupposes this manner of thinking for all Jewish mission.

2.6.5 *Repentance* was held in high esteem in early Judaism. In the Eighteen Benedictions *(Shemoneh 'Esreh)*, the fourth and fifth benedictions in the older Palestinian recension run: "4. Thou grantest knowledge to mankind and teachest men understanding. Grant us the knowledge, understanding and discernment (which come) from thee. *Blessed art thou, Lord, who grantest knowledge*. 5. Lead us back, our Father, to thy Torah;

and bring us, our King, to thy service, and cause us to return in perfect repentance to thy presence. *Blessed art thou, Lord, who delightest in repentance*" (trans. Schürer, *HJP*[2] 2:456–57).

Jewish assurance of salvation rests upon the repentance that God desires and guarantees, the works of repentance that accompany it, and the God who looks graciously upon repentance. This holds true both for individual Israelites (cf., e.g., Sir. 17:24–26; *Life of Adam and Eve* 4–8, 27–28) and for the people as a whole (cf. *Pss. Sol.* 8:22–34; 9:6–11; *4 Ezra* 8:31–36). Israel's special privilege is that God deals with them patiently and mercifully as his chosen people, so that there is still time for Israel's repentance even when the Gentiles have already had to suffer judgment (cf. Wis. 11:10; 15:1–3). This two-part spiritual movement of repentance can be observed already in the biblical penitential prayers (Neh. 9:1–37; Dan. 9:4–19) and psalms (e.g., Ps. 51). Conscious of its election, Israel openly takes responsibility for its own transgression and emptiness in the light of the revealed will of God and begs God for forgiveness. God is praised for this forgiveness once he has granted it, and Israel aspires again to a new and better obedience (in order to perform the same acts of repentance once again in the case of new transgression). In the post–New Testament period, the early Jewish doctrine of repentance was formulated comprehensively (cf. *b. Pesah.* 54a).

As for Paul, his statement in Romans 2:4, his citation of Psalm 51:6 (ET 51:4; LXX 50:6) in Romans 3:4, and the early Jewish tradition of exhomologation or confession in Romans 7:13–25 all document the fact that the apostle knew the doctrine of repentance well.

2.6.6 The Pharisees lived according to the ideal of remaining faithful to God in daily life, which involved living in priestly purity and holiness. In order to make this possible, the fixed written Torah needed further *oral interpretation*. This Oral Torah was given the same status as the Torah of Sinai and traced back to Moses in an unbroken chain of tradition just like the written Torah. The Mishnah tractate *Abot* ("The Fathers") begins by saying (1:1): "Moses received the Law from Sinai and committed it to Joshua, and Joshua to the elders, and the elders to the Prophets; and the Prophets committed it to the men of the Great Synagogue. They said three things: Be deliberate in judgement, raise up many disciples, and make a fence around the Law" (trans. Danby, 446).

The "Great Synagogue" is an assembly of scholars which has been inferred based on an interpretation of Nehemiah 8–10. To this assembly not only Ezra and Nehemiah but also the prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi are supposed to have belonged. From these figures the chain of tradition continues unbroken through the rabbis Shammai (about 30 BC) and Hillel (about 20 BC) and onward to include each individual rabbi who after his period of studies is confirmed by ordination and invested with teaching authority. By the expression "a fence around the Torah" is meant the extra precautionary measures intended to prevent a transgression of a commandment. For example, *m. Makkot* 3:10 makes it a rule that not forty but only "forty-minus-one" lashes could be administered to one being punished, so as not to run the risk of exceeding the maximal number of forty lashes given in Deuteronomy 25:3.

In Galatians 1:14 Paul refers to the πατρικαὶ παραδόσεις or "traditions of the fathers," that is, the interpretive traditions passed on orally by the fathers, while according to 2 Corinthians 11:24, Paul

himself received from the Jews the "forty lashes minus one" on five occasions.

2.6.7 The Torah is given to Israel so that it can *stay alive before God* and not lose itself in godlessness. This viewpoint is attested from early on (cf. Lev. 18:5; Ezek. 20:11; Neh. 9:29). In Sirach 17:11 the Torah is called the "law of life" (*νόμος ζωῆς*); *Psalms of Solomon* 14:2 speaks of the law "which God has commanded us unto life" (*εἰς ζωὴν ἡμῶν*); in *2 Baruch* 38:2 the law and life are identified; and in *b. Qiddushin* 30b it says, "Even so did the Holy One, blessed be He, speak unto Israel: 'My children! I created the Evil Desire, but I [also] created the Torah, as its antidote; if you occupy yourselves with the Torah, you will not be delivered into his hand.' "

In Galatians 3:21 and Romans 7:10, the apostle Paul also deals with the view that the Torah was given to Israel or to Adam in order to "make alive" (*ζῳοποιῆσαι*, Gal. 3:21 NRSV) or be "unto life" (*εἰς ζωήν*, Rom. 7:10 ASV).

2.6.8 The Torah is the standard by which Israel and the nations will be judged in the *final judgment* (cf. *4 Ezra* 7:37, 70–73; *2 Bar.* 48:27, 38–40, 46–47). What matters in the judgment is God's grace (*m. Abot* 3:15 [Danby 3:16]) and the "works of the commandments" (*2 Bar.* 57:2) done according to the standard of the Torah. After alluding to Exodus 15:17 and the eschatolgical temple of YHWH (line 3), the Qumran text *4QFlorilegium* says: "And he [YHWH] commanded to build for himself a temple of man, to offer him in it, before him, *the works of the law*," מַעֲשֵׂי תוֹרָה, or perhaps "*the works of thanksgiving*," מַעֲשֵׂי תוֹדָה, reading ד instead of ר (4Q174 frag. 1 I, 21, 2, lines 6–7, cf. *DSSSE* 352–53). (For the textual criticism, see תודה, "Dank-Erweise" or "works of thankgiving," J. Maier, *Die Qumran-Essener: Die Texte vom Toten Meer*, vol. 2 [1995], 104 as well as *DSSSE*; for "works of the law," תורה, cf. D. Dimant, "4QFlorilegium and the Idea of the Community as a Temple," in *Hellenica et Judaica: Hommage à Valentin Nikiprowetzky*, ed. A. Caquot et al. [1986], 165–89, here 169.) According to a fragment of a letter from the Teacher of Righteousness, the leader of this community, to the so-called "wicked priest" in Jerusalem, such works are supposed to be reckoned by God to the doer as righteousness or justice: "And it shall be reckoned to you as justice when you do what is upright and good before him, for your good and that of Israel" (*4QHalakhic Letter*[e] 4Q398 [4QMMT[e]] frags. 14–17 II, 7–8, *DSSSE* 803, with Gen. 15:6 and Ps. 106:31). In the Mishnah, Rabbi Akiba taught as follows about the final

judgment: “All is given against a pledge, and the net is cast over all living; the shop stands open and the shopkeeper gives credit and the account-book lies open and the hand writes and every one that wishes to borrow let him come and borrow; but the collectors go their round continually every day and exact payment of men with their consent or without their consent, for they have that on which they can rely; and the judgement is a judgement of truth; and all is made ready for the banquet” (*m. Abot* 3:16 [Danby 3:17]).

Keeping the Torah is therefore relevant in the judgment, and according to the *Targum of Isaiah* 26:2–3, the gates of the eschatological city of God will open only to “the innocent people which kept the law with a perfect heart” (trans. Chilton, *The Isaiah Targum*, ArBib 11 [1987], 50–51).

For Paul, too, the same things hold true: the Torah is the standard in the final judgment according to Galatians 5:19–21, 1 Corinthians 6:9–10, Romans 2:12–13, 14:10–12; he is always talking about the *ἔργα νόμου* or “works of the law” (cf., e.g., Gal. 2:16; Rom. 3:20); and prior to his call to be an apostle he considered himself a blameless righteous person (Phil. 3:6).

These eight basic principles of the early Jewish understanding of the law outlined in 2.6.1–2.6.8 were adhered to in the motherland as well as in the Greek-speaking Diaspora in which the majority of Jews lived. For Diaspora Jews like Aristobulus, direct confrontation with the enlightened spirit of the Hellenistic age allowed the Torah to appear as the foundational order of the true philosophy. The cultic commandments were understood in part allegorically as the key to ethical or philosophical principles. For Philo, Josephus, and the author of *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum* (11:1; 44:6), the Decalogue still remains “the essence of divine instruction” (G. Stemberger, “Der Dekalog,” 95), while the author of 4 Maccabees says that “to transgress the law in matters either small or great is of equal seriousness, for in either case the law is equally despised” (5:20–21).

When one comes from this rich and differentiated Old Testament and early Jewish tradition about the law to Paul, it becomes clear what an enormous spiritual challenge he faced as he had to rethink the teaching about that law that he had inherited in the light of his call to be an apostle of Jesus Christ.

3 Paul had to rethink not only the early Jewish understanding of the law but also the *teaching of Jesus*. Paul had been confronted with the effects of Jesus’s teaching upon the evaluation of the Torah already in the persecution of Stephen and his circle, and after his call Paul became directly acquainted with Jesus’s teaching in Damascus, Jerusalem, and Antioch.

As we saw in chapter 8 (above, 119–22, §§4.2–5) Jesus did not abolish the Mosaic law but understood himself as the messianic fulfiller of the Torah (cf. Matt. 5:17). In the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount, he contrasted God’s teaching through Moses with his own interpretation of the will of God. He summarized the will of God with the help of a novel combination of the commandments to love God and neighbor (Matt. 22:34–40 par.). He performed healings on the Sabbath with symbolic significance; he sharply criticized a formalized practice of the law; and with messianic authority he disregarded the Pharisaic purity laws (cf. Mark 7:15 par.). If one adds to all this the Last Supper tradition with its language of Jesus’s “blood of the covenant” (Mark 14:24 par.),

then from a biblical-theological standpoint one may dare to draw the connection between Jesus's teaching about the will of God and the hope for the completion of the revelation of the Torah anticipated in Jeremiah 31:31–34. Formulated in terms of H. Gese's theory of the "Zion Torah" (see above), *Jesus's messianic teaching about the will of God shows that the Zion Torah has finally made its appearance in history*.

4 If one wants to determine how Paul speaks and thinks about the law, one must first know the *Pauline terminology for the law*.

Whereas Philo (*Unchangeable* 69; *Moses* 2.51; etc.) and Josephus (e.g., *J.W.* 3.356) also use the plural form οἱ νόμοι, "the laws," *Paul speaks only in the singular*, ὁ νόμος. The same holds true for his use of ἡ ἐντολή, "the commandment," except for 1 Corinthians 7:19.

Paul differentiates *four semantic nuances* of ὁ νόμος:

Ὁ νόμος refers in Paul first to the Holy Scriptures, that is, *the entire Old Testament* (1 Cor. 14:21; Rom. 3:19; etc.). This mode of expression is explained by the fact that early Judaism considered the Torah to be the main determinative part of the Bible, to which the Prophets and the Writings were added only as interpretation.

Ὁ νόμος refers in Paul second to the Pentateuch, that is, *the five books of Moses* (1 Cor. 9:8; Rom. 3:21, *passim*). This, too, is an established Jewish manner of expression, since the written Torah reached its fixed canonical form in the five books of Moses.

Ὁ νόμος refers in Paul, third and above all, to the *revealed law* given through Moses the mediator, understood as the essence of the will of God for Jews and Gentiles (Gal. 3:17–18; Rom. 2:12–13; 4:15; 5:13, 20; etc.).

Fourth, in an *extended sense* ὁ νόμος can sometimes be used by Paul for an *instruction*, *rule*, or *regulation*. But this sense is found only in contexts where it provides a material or stylistic complement to the use of νόμος as a technical term for the Mosaic law (cf. Gal. 6:2; Rom. 2:14b; 7:21, 23, 25; 8:2).

Comparing this Pauline mode of expression with early Jewish linguistic usage reveals their far-reaching similarities. (The only new elements in Paul's usage are his expressions about the "law of Christ," ὁ νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, in Galatians 6:2 and ἔννομος Χριστοῦ in 1 Corinthians 9:21, as well as his idea of the law as πνευματικός, "spiritual," in Romans 7:14 [H. Lichtenberger].) The common language coincides with the fact that all eight characteristics of the early Jewish doctrine of the law are also attested in the Pauline Letters (see above, §2).

5 Paul therefore presupposes the multifaceted Pharisaic theology of the law, without by any means accepting it unquestioningly. Since his call to be an apostle of Jesus Christ outside Damascus, Paul was "more than a Pharisee" not least because he reevaluated his inherited Jewish doctrine of the law in the light of the revelation of Christ granted him.

There is therefore no more support in Paul’s letters for H. Hübner’s claim that Paul’s reflections about the Torah involved a gradual process that culminated only in Romans than there is for H. Räisänen’s claim that Paul’s thought simultaneously juxtaposes and opposes various materially unsatisfying attempts at theological reflection. If one follows the South Galatian hypothesis, dates Galatians correspondingly early (see above, 255–56), and compares the statements about the law in this letter with those in Romans, an amazing coherence and consistency of thought are evident (cf., e.g., Gal. 2:16 with Rom. 3:20; Gal. 3:19–22 with Rom. 5:20; Gal. 5:14 with Rom. 13:8–10; etc.). If one moreover grants the apostle his own open and “aspective” Jewish Christian manner of thought and expression, then his reflections about the Torah add up to a fully consistent and theologically enlightening whole.

In this new evaluation of the law, Paul proceeds from his expectation that the parousia of Christ and with it the judgment of the world are near (cf., e.g., 1 Thess. 4:13–5:11; Rom. 8:31–39; 13:11–14). In the judgment every individual Jew and Gentile must stand without a replacement before the judgment seat of God and give an account (cf. 1 Cor. 3:11–15; 2 Cor. 5:6–10; Rom. 14:10–12). Therefore, the question which decides eschatologically between life and death is whether and under what circumstances this rendering of an account before God can succeed (or will fail). *Accordingly, for the apostle the problem of the law is posed on a forensic apocalyptic horizon*.

In his teaching about the law, the apostle holds views which came to him only on the basis of his call by Christ. These views made him an apostate in the eyes of faithful Jews who continued to trust in the Torah, and a false teacher for many Jewish Christians who held fast to the law. Paul evaluated the Torah in the light of the knowledge that God’s glory rested upon the face of the exalted Christ (2 Cor. 4:6). But this Christ is also the Κύριος to whom God has given his own name, to whom all creatures in heaven and on earth and under the earth must soon bend the knee (Phil. 2:9–11). The revelation of God in Christ therefore puts the revelation at Sinai in the shade. *Paul assumes that since Jesus’s cross and resurrection, the Torah of Sinai no longer possesses an unsurpassable status before God*. He works out this insight in four ways:

5.1 Since Adam’s fall, the law encounters people as a *holy power of curse and condemnation*. God’s good and righteous law, originally enacted for the protection of life, encounters sinners as an accusation that brands them as transgressors of the divine will worthy of the death sentence. The Torah makes sin recognizable and prosecutable, but on its own it is too weak to guard effectively against sin.

What became of the law originally given for the protection of life and how it encounters people since Adam's fall can best be seen from Galatians 3:10–22 and Romans 7:7–25. Romans 7:7–25 uses Adam as a type of every person to show how sin in the garden of Eden seduced people into transgressing God's protective *ἐντολή* or "commandment" of Genesis 2:15–17 (which Paul, along with the rest of early Jewish tradition, equates with the Decalogue and the Torah as a whole). The *ἐντολή* takes people captive in their transgression of the law, excludes them from the life in the presence of God that it was originally supposed to guard, and prepares them for a (penal) death. But there is still more. The law turns against the sinner, guaranteeing life in the presence and under the blessing of God only for the righteous person, the one who follows *completely* the requirements of the law (cf. Gal. 3:10–12; Rom. 2:13). If this is lacking, then despite all individual efforts the Torah still accuses people as ungodly. The holy, righteous, and good law of God can only promote good and forbid evil, but it cannot make people righteous and alive. In itself the Torah is too weak to free people who have fallen into sin from the dominion of sin and to open to them life in righteousness and glory before God (Gal. 3:21–22; Rom. 8:3). Already in the garden of Eden sin used God's commandment to make Adam fall, and it still makes use of the Torah after Adam's fall to gain total mastery over people. According to Galatians 3:22 and Romans 7:13–25, Paul sees sin (*ἁμαρτία*) as so powerful that nobody can escape its grasp and free themselves from their sinner identity by their own willpower or ethical exertion.

As a former "zealot for the ancestral traditions (about the law)" (cf. Gal. 1:14) and a blameless Pharisaic righteous man (Phil. 3:6), Paul knows from his own experience how the Torah spurs people on to "works of the law" (*ἔργα νόμου*). Outside Damascus he learned that such zeal had contributed nothing to his being called and shown mercy. Ever since then he considers those things that he thought would yield "gains" in the final judgment to be a "loss" (Phil. 3:7). After Damascus, the confidence in the law and the human ability to fulfill it that had supported Paul up until his conversion appeared as attitudes that took seriously neither sin nor God's holy will. There is a qualitative leap between the young Pharisee's attitude toward the law and that of Paul the apostle of Christ (H. Weder). In Romans 7:13–25 he sketches the vain effort of a (Jewish) religious person to do good by the standard of the law, and in Galatians 2:16 and Romans 3:20 he formulates in an eschatologically binding manner from Psalm 143:2 (LXX 142:2) that by the works of the law no flesh will be justified in God's sight; through the law comes rather the knowledge of sin. One cannot say that Galatians 2:16 and Romans 3:20 were aimed only at Jewish food and purity practices and had no deeper theological meaning for the doctrine of justification, as J. D. G. Dunn held in some of his earlier works on the New perspective on Paul (see above, 273–74, §1.5.4; below, 375; and the two prefaces). The letter of the Teacher of Righteousness to the wicked priest (above, §2.6.8) documents the early Jewish expectation that "works of the law" will be credited to their doers in the final judgment.

5.2 *The law of God that uncovers sin and accuses the sinner does not stand in the way of God's grace in Christ but serves his grace*. The Torah did not slip from God's hand with Adam's fall; rather, it remains the holy revelation of the will of God from Sinai and makes sinners appear as guilty of the sentence of death. Because sinners can escape condemnation in the judgment only by their confession of Christ and his intercession for them, the Torah with its message of guilt drives sinners to Christ, thus serving the holy will of God, who desires to be merciful to sinners in and through Christ.

Paul formulates this view in Galatians and Romans in a deliberately salvation-historical manner. In Galatians 3:23–24 he writes: "[23]Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. [24]Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith." Romans 5:13, 20–21 is no less pointed: "[13]Sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. . . . [20]But law came in, with the result that the trespass multiplied; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, [21]so that, just as sin exercised dominion in death, so grace might also exercise dominion through justification leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

If one takes both these statements together, the following line of reasoning unfolds. The law came in between Adam and Christ. But it was not revealed until Sinai, 430 years after the promise to Abraham (according to Exod. 12:40 LXX and rabbinic calculations), when it was given by God through angels and the mediation of Moses (cf. Gal. 3:17, 19). Through its clear commandments and prohibitions the law makes sin something that can be prosecuted in the judgment, and it also provokes people to transgression. This intensification and multiplication of sin through the Torah is fatal for sinners, but it is God's will and serves the purposes and goals of his grace in Christ.

Galatians 3:19 is repeatedly misunderstood by scholars as a deprecation of the law by Paul. Since the law was "ordained through angels by a mediator (i.e., Moses)," H. Schlier thinks that the law "comes neither from God nor from Christ" (*Der Brief an die Galater* [1962[12]], 155). Or again, according to G. Klein, Paul in Galatians 3:19 supposedly traces the sin-stimulating "perverted form" of the law back to "angelic powers that function as a force opposed to God" (*TRE* 13:67). Or again, H. Räisänen thinks that Paul lets his true (negative) opinion of the law be seen in Galatians 3:19: "Paul appears for the moment to regard angels as the originators of the law, thus denying its immediately divine origin" (H. Räisänen, *Paul and the Law* [1987[2]], 131). All these statements misjudge the apostle's meaning. Not a single one of the Old Testament, early Jewish, or New Testament parallels to Galatians 3:19 sees the gift of the Torah through the angels (and Moses) as something negative (cf. Deut. 33:2 LXX; *Jub*. 1:29; Philo, *Dreams* 1.140–143; Josephus, *Ant*. 15.136; Acts 7:53; Heb. 2:2). Neither does Paul do so. In Galatians 3:20 he does not deprecate the law, but he does subordinate Moses to God's one true mediator, Christ.

5.3 As a Jew, Jesus the Son of God was placed under the law. But unlike Adam, he obediently fulfilled God's will. Moreover, he remained true to his mission even when Pilate and the blind Jewish leaders (ἄρχοντες, 1 Cor. 2:6) condemned him to death by appealing to the law and had him crucified by the Romans. Through the death he suffered on the cross through no guilt of his own, Jesus fulfilled God's saving will. He vicariously *redeemed sinners from the curse of the law and broke the reign of sin*, which had taken advantage of the law ever since the Fall in order to rule sinners and lead them to death.

According to Galatians 4:4 and Romans 8:3–4, the Son of God was sent into the world by God, born as a man (specifically a Jew), and placed under the law. In contrast to Adam, he remained obedient to the will of the Father to the point of death on a cross (Phil. 2:8). Acting this way, he vicariously took the place of sinners as God had assigned it to him and bore for them the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13). When Jesus's death is applied to them in the judgment, they will be protected from the consequences of the death sentence which the Torah speaks against them. Therefore Jesus has also "redeemed"

sinners from the dominion of the law (Gal. 4:5). Sin has lost its power over sinners because it can no longer put them to death by means of the law.

Galatians 5:14, 6:2, 1 Corinthians 9:20–21, and Romans 7:7–8:11 make it necessary to consider further the relationship between Jesus's mission, his saving death, and his "torah."

5.4 The holy will of God revealed in the law is not abolished by Christ but fulfilled, removed from the grasp of sin, and restored with fresh power. *In the "Torah of Christ" (Gal. 6:2) God's holy, just, good, and spiritual commandment (Rom. 7:12, 14) acquires its final revealed form*. By the power of the Holy Spirit this Torah enters the hearts of believers in Jesus and makes them capable of deeds of love.

In Romans 7:12 Paul designates God's commandment (ἐντολή) as "holy and just and good," and in 7:14, appealing to general Christian knowledge, he adds that the law (νόμος) is "spiritual." As H. Lichtenberger notes, this positive statement goes above and beyond early Jewish praise for the Torah: "The expression 'the law is spiritual' is both linguistically and materially unusual. No one has yet succeeded in finding a true analogy that has any more than approximate value, but Jewish statements about the divine and heavenly world offer close parallels for the essence, origin, and duration of the law (Josephus, *Against Apion* 2.277; Bar. 4:1; Josephus, *Ant*. 3.286; 12.37–38)" (H. Lichtenberger, "Paulus und das Gesetz," 364). With a clear reference back to 7:12, Paul says in Romans 8:2–4:

> [2]For the law of the Spirit of life in [through] Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. [3]For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as a sin offering [NRSV margin], he condemned sin in the flesh, [4]so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

According to this text, the lamenting "I" of Romans 7:7–25 has been freed by Jesus's atoning death from "the law of sin and of death," that is, from the dominion of sin which first awakened all forbidden desires in "Adam" by means of the law and then held him in fatal captivity as a transgressor of the law under the law's judgment (Rom. 7:23). In place of this dominion of sin established by the law, there has now entered on behalf of the "I" that "law" that is determined by "the Spirit of life in [through] Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2). The "spirit of life" is according to Ezekiel 37:5–6 and *1 Enoch* 61:7 the life-giving Spirit of God which fills the end-time people of God with the knowledge of God. Paul sees in this Spirit the presence and effects of Christ (Rom. 8:9–10; 2 Cor. 3:17). The entire expression "the law of the Spirit of life in [through] Christ Jesus" takes up the language of the spiritual law, νόμος πνευματικός, from Romans 7:14 and recalls Jeremiah 31:31–34 (cf. also *1 En.* 61:7, 11ff.; *Jub*. 1:15ff., 23ff.; *T. Levi* 18:11–14).

Paul declares in Romans 8:2–4 that the dominion of sin that was based on the Torah has been abolished by a new spiritual life order whose pneumatic power is Christ himself. By the vicarious atoning death of Jesus, Christians who "walk according to the Spirit" are not only freed from the dominion of sin but are simultaneously placed in active fulfillment of the "just requirement of the law" (δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου, 8:4). By the power of the Spirit of Christ that animates them, they "submit to God's law" (Rom. 8:7) and live lives pleasing to God (8:5–9). *Even the law of God, by which sin gained power already in the garden of Eden, has been wrenched from the grasp of sin by the atoning death of Jesus and freed up for that function which it was supposed to have for Adam. As "the law of the Spirit of life in [through] Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2) or as "the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2), it shows*

the good, holy, and just will of God and leads Christians spontaneously to fulfill this will in the power of the Spirit of Christ.

Paul's statements about the law in Romans 7:7–8:11 are complicated and controversial. They force us to find a way of thinking through and combining apparently disparate realities. On the one hand there are the Pauline antitheses of Moses versus Christ (Gal. 3:19–20), of the ministry of death and condemnation according to the law of Sinai chiseled on stone tablets versus the ministry of righteousness in the freedom of the Spirit of Christ (2 Cor. 3:4–18), of justification through works of the law versus justification through faith in Jesus Christ alone (Gal. 2:16; Rom. 3:20–31), and of slavery under the law versus the freedom of faith under the lordship of Christ (Gal. 4:21–5:12). These must somehow be combined conceptually with the equally Pauline statements about believers empowered by Christ's Spirit fulfilling the love commandment as the summation of the law (Gal. 5:14, 22–24; Rom. 13:8–10), about the "Torah of Christ" (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21), and about the law of God being put freshly into force through Christ's mission and sacrificial death (Rom. 8:3–4). However, in the light of Jeremiah 31:31–34, the theory of the "Zion Torah," and Jesus's teaching about the will of God, such a solution is thoroughly possible (see below).

The difference between unbelieving sinners and believing Christians is often seen only in the idea that unbelievers (must) misuse the law under the lordship of sin for their own self-justification and therefore do not and cannot fulfill it, while believers are in a position to fulfill the law by the power of the forgiveness of sins and the measure of the Spirit granted to them. According to this line of thinking, the law of Sinai merely presents itself in different aspects to sinners and to believers, either as the legal authority that brands them as sinners on the one hand, or as the instruction to love on the other hand (cf., e.g., G. Klein, *TRE* 13:71–72). This is the usual theological interpretation, but it is still too imprecise because it takes too little account of *the modification of the reality of the law in Christ* (see below).

6 The four principles sketched above in §§5.1–5.4 clearly show that Paul speaks and thinks differently about the law as an apostle than he did as a Pharisee.

6.1 Paul is almost completely silent in his letters about the *cultic Torah* which was so important to the Pharisees. This part of the Torah presents a problem for the apostle only where ritually observant Jewish Christians are pressing for Gentiles to keep the food laws (cf. Gal. 2:11–21; 1 Cor. 10:23–11:1; Rom. 14:1–15:13). Paul apparently assumed, together with the Hellenists in Jerusalem and Antioch, that the cultic sacrificial regulations have reached their goal and end with Jesus's atoning death (cf. Rom. 3:25–26 and above, 218–21, §5.3.2.1).

6.2 According to 2 Corinthians 3:4–18, Paul sees himself as an antitype to Moses entrusted with the "ministry of righteousness" (NRSV: "ministry of justification," *διακονία τῆς δικαιοσύνης*, 3:9) in service of the "new covenant" (*καινὴ διαθήκη*) which God has established through Christ. According to the Pauline Lord's Supper formula from 1 Corinthians 11:23–26, with each celebration of the supper the congregation is freshly inducted

into the new covenant (or “new obligation”) of Jeremiah 31:31–34. If one takes these statements seriously, then the apostle’s complex manner of speaking about the law of God and the law of Christ in Galatians 6:2, 1 Corinthians 9:21, and Romans 7:7–8:11 also makes sense. Even the most difficult statement in Romans 9:31 that Israel, although pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law because of a blind zeal for God is capable of explanation.

6.2.1 Paul knows the promise of Jeremiah 31:31–34 and Jesus’s teaching about the will of God. He believes that the time and reality of the new covenant or obligation have already dawned for the church of Jesus Christ and that Christians are already placed into the forgiveness of sins and the new revelation of the Torah determined by the Spirit of Christ, as promised by Jeremiah. This is not yet true of Israel, which is hardened in unbelief; Israel has not yet arrived at the new revelation of the law (Rom. 9:31).

6.2.2 The will of God summarized in the “Torah of Christ” is none other than that revealed in the law of Sinai, but it is newly weighted (cf. Matt. 22:34–40 par.) and determines Christians from within. By virtue of Jesus’s atoning death, faith, and baptism, believers are inducted into this divine will and gifted with the Holy Spirit. Like Paul, they are people “under the law of Christ” (*ἔννομοι Χριστοῦ*; cf. 1 Cor. 9:21), and they fulfill the law of God in the power of Christ’s Spirit which indwells them (cf. Rom. 8:9–14 with Gal. 2:20 and 1 Cor. 13). Believers, whose lives are determined by “the law of Christ” (*ὁ νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, Gal. 6:2) or the “order [lit. law] of the Spirit of life in [through] Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:2), are no longer Jews standing under the law, nor are they lawless wicked people, but over against both Gentiles and Jews they form a new third group, the “Christians” or *Χριστιανοί* (cf. 1 Cor. 9:20–21 with Acts 11:26).

6.2.3 As can be seen by his various references to the example of Jesus (cf. Phil. 2:5–11; Rom. 15:2–3, 7) and his allusions to Luke 6:27–28 and Matthew 5:44 in Romans 12:14, Paul also refers to the teaching of Jesus in his expositions of the will of God. His language of the *νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ* or “law of Christ” in Galatians 6:2 and 1 Corinthians 9:21 is therefore consciously chosen and not simply an ad hoc rhetorical construction. Paul appears to have adopted a tradition coined by the Jerusalem Hellenists,

which also appears in *Barnabas* 2:6 (M. Hengel, *Between Jesus and Paul* [1983], 151).

6.3 For Paul God's spiritual will (Rom. 7:14) is revealed in its completed form only in and with Christ. In order to avoid weakening this insight of the apostle, we cannot speak merely of a dialectical manner of viewing the Mosaic law in Paul. Rather, we must speak in a more precise biblical-theological way about different stages of revelation of the one will of God which are dialectically related to each other. This will remains the same from the garden of Eden through Sinai and on to Christ, receiving its binding and valid summary in the "Torah of Christ."

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CHAPTER 19

The World, Humanity, and Sin

Coming from the background of the Old Testament–early Jewish tradition, the Torah and wisdom intersect in Paul's theology of the law, which therefore has in view *the world as a whole*. The view of the creation, humanity, and sin that here emerges helps make the apostle's apparently abstract reflections about the law more concrete and provides the background for Paul's preaching of the gospel. The apostle views the world, humanity, and sin from the perspective of the gospel. He does not draw up a value-neutral cosmology or anthropology, but develops his presentation based on faith's encounter with Christ.

1 A *world* devoid of people is no more part of Paul's thought than are human beings detached from the world. Both belong together for Paul, and they present themselves to him above all as in need of salvation. The apostle's four main expressions for the world (of people) are *ἡ κτίσις*, *ὁ κόσμος*, *τὰ πάντα*, and *ὁ αἰών*—"the creation"; "the world"; "all things," that is, the universe with its people; and "the (present) age."

Κτίσις can refer to the act of creation (Rom. 1:20), humanity as a (new) creation (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15), the world of people (Col. 1:23), and creatures other than human beings (Rom. 1:25; 8:19–22, 39).

Κόσμος in Paul stands for the world surrounding human beings (1 Cor. 3:22; 8:4; Gal. 4:3), the world as something which includes them (Rom. 1:20; 1 Cor. 6:2), and the world consisting of people alone (Rom. 1:8; 3:19; 5:12–13; 1 Cor. 1:21; 2 Cor. 5:19; etc.).

Similarly *τὰ πάντα*, literally "all things" (e.g., Col. 1:16), stands both for the God-created universe as a whole (Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:15–17) and for the world of people alone (Gal. 3:22).

Ὁ *αἰών* in Paul stands for the temporal realm and the time-determined world. With early Judaism Paul speaks of the negatively qualified "present age," *ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος* or *ἐνεστώς* (Gal. 1:4; 1 Cor. 2:6; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 1:21; etc.), whereas its positive counterpart, *ὁ αἰὼν ὁ μέλλων*, "the age to come," occurs only in Ephesians 1:21 (and Heb. 6:5).

2 Following the Old Testament and early Judaism, Paul confesses God as the creator (1 Cor. 8:6) and sees the world as *God's creation* (Rom. 1:20, 25).

2.1 With Adam's fall the world came under the power of sin, death, and decay; it is far from God and under his judgment.

1 Corinthians 1:21 and Romans 1:19–25 offer unmistakable proof of Paul's critical judgment of the world. In each case the apostle shows that people (the Gentiles) have forfeited their original opportunity of knowing God from the works of creation. In both passages Paul works through motifs from early Jewish wisdom theology (see above all, Wis. 13:1–14:31). In contrast to the way Luke presents Paul speaking at the Areopagus in Athens (Acts 17:22–31), in 1 Corinthians 1:21 and Romans 1:19–25 the apostle does not make a positive point for his missionary preaching out of the topic of the well-being of the world guaranteed by God's wisdom as creator. Rather, he uses it critically to prove that people (the Gentiles) had the possibility of knowing God but have squandered it sinfully. Paul by no means denies the creation character of the world, but he does stress unmistakably that the chaotic disorder visible everywhere in the world is a consequence of sin and of the judgment upon human beings who have denied God to his face. The consequences of sin manifest themselves in various ways—in the vices and asocial behaviors that undermine communal life among people (Rom. 1:24–31), in people's inability to know the good that is God's will (1 Cor. 1:20–21; Rom. 1:28), in the futility to which the entire human and nonhuman creation is subjected (cf. Rom. 8:20), and in the dominion of death over the world that will last until the end of the age (1 Cor. 15:26; Rom. 5:14).

2.2 The Jewish topic of the fall and decline of the world because of Adam's sin also comes up in the context of Paul's presentation of this theme.

When Paul writes in Romans 5:12–21 (and in 1 Cor. 15:26) about the destiny of death that has weighed upon the world since Adam's "transgression" (*παράβασις*, Rom. 5:14) and points out in Romans 8:20 that the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of God, he is alluding to Genesis 3:17–19. The apostle's thinking can best be clarified from early Jewish texts. In *4 Ezra* (NRSV 2 Esdras) 3:7 it says, for example: "And you laid upon him [Adam] one commandment of yours; but he transgressed it, and immediately you appointed death for him and for his descendants." This is supplemented by 7:11–12: "when Adam transgressed my statutes, what had been made was judged. And so the entrances of this world were made narrow and sorrowful and toilsome; they are few and evil, full of dangers and involved in great hardships." Finally in 7:66 the wild animals and domesticated cattle are said to have it better than humans, "for they do not look for a judgment, and they do not know of any torment or salvation promised to them after death." In contrast to irrational animals, people live in constant worry and insecurity about being rejected in the final judgment. Unconditional obedience to the Torah is recommended as the saving way of escape in *4 Ezra* 8:46–61, 9:7–13, 13:22–24, because God "will protect those who fall into peril, who have works and faith toward the Almighty" (13:23). Such advice no longer counts for the apostle.

According to Paul, the hope of redemption for both sinners and the creation that has been subjected to futility with Adam's fall (Rom. 8:20) can only be directed toward Christ alone. Through his obedience Christ put an end to sin and established the reign of grace (Rom. 5:19, 21). As "Son of God in power" (Rom. 1:4) and as "firstborn from the dead" (Col. 1:18), he will also bring about redemption from death (cf. 1 Cor. 15:25–26) for which

the whole “creation” (κτίσις), including the church of Jesus Christ, longs (Rom. 8:19–23), making it possible for the creation in bondage to “decay” (φθορά) to participate in “the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Rom. 8:21). Paul is thinking here of the future appearance of the saved community of Jews and Gentiles led by Christ and transformed in the light of heavenly glory (1 Thess. 4:14–18; 1 Cor. 15:50–57; Phil. 3:20–21). This community will praise the creator in the renewed creation (cf. Rom. 8:19–22 and 1 Cor. 15:28 with Rev. 21:1–22:5).

A. Schlatter wanted to refer κτίσις (creation) in Romans 8:19–21 not to the “non-human creation” but at best to the creation including humanity and preferably to humanity alone (*Gottes Gerechtigkeit* [1952[2]], 269–70). *N. Walter* has recently revived this position. For him κτίσις in Romans 8:19–21 means only “the humanity that has not been reached by the Gospel and does not believe in Christ (excluding non-believing Jews and their special problem, which Paul deals with in Romans 9–11)” (“Gottes Zorn und das ‘Harren der Kreatur,’” 220). For support Walter points to the fact that following the rabbinic pattern, κτίσις in 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Galatians 6:15 (and Col. 1:23) applies only to people and that this anthropological interpretation fits better with the thought of participation in the glorious freedom of the children of God. In the light of 1 Corinthians 9:9, the apostle supposedly has no more theological interest in the future destiny of the nonhuman creation than we find in *4 Ezra* 7:65–66 (ibid., 221–22). But this interpretation will hardly stand. It goes against the context, since Paul in Romans never precisely identifies κτίσις with humanity (cf. Rom. 1:20, 25; 8:19–22, 39). In contrast to the Jews, Gentiles who have not been reached by the gospel never play a role in Paul’s letters. Walter also gives far too little consideration to the fact that in Romans 8:20 the apostle refers to Genesis 3:17–19. There it explicitly says that the ground is cursed because of Adam; the consequences of this curse are designated in Romans 8:20 by the key word ματαιότης, “vanity” or “futility” (cf. the same word in Eccles. 1:2 LXX). Walter similarly takes too little account of the fact that Christ’s mediatorial role in the creation (and new creation) includes “all things” or the whole universe, τὰ πάντα (1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16, 20), and that Christians together with Christ according to Romans 8:32 are given “all things” (τὰ πάντα), that is, a share in Christ’s lordship over the universe (cf. 1 Cor. 6:2). Finally, Walter leaves out the horizon of apocalyptic expectation that binds together Romans 8:18–30 (and 1 Cor. 15:23–28) with Revelation 20:1–22:5, Isaiah 11:1–9, and 25:6–8. These parallels are the key to answering the question of how the apostle envisioned the existence of the renewed creation.

3 The critical view of the creation and the world from 1 Corinthians 1:21 and Romans 1:19–25 must not be made the whole of the Pauline doctrine of creation by sleight of hand. For the apostle the present ongoing age is indeed evil (Gal. 1:4), but the world by no means lies completely in the grip of evil. The Gentiles have culpably squandered their natural knowledge of God and are penalized by God with a mind (νοῦς) incapable of knowing the good (Rom. 1:28). Jews can indeed know the good by means of the law, but under the dominion of sin they are too weak to put it into practice (Rom. 2:17–24; 7:18–24). But believers in Christ, the

Christians (Χριστιανοί), are in a different situation from unbelieving Gentiles and Jews. They have received the gift of the Holy Spirit, and by virtue of their reason, which has been converted to obey Christ and thereby renewed, they are freed and enabled to know Christ and God the creator, as well as God's will, which is "good and acceptable [to God] and perfect" (Rom. 12:1–2; cf. 1 Cor. 2:10, 16; 2 Cor. 10:3–6).

3.1 As is shown by 1 Corinthians 1:28–30, 8:6, and the hymn of Colossians 1:15–20, which originated in the Pauline school, the apostle explicitly obligated his churches to confess Christ as mediator of the old and new creation. Therefore they are not only ascetically to flee the world (1 Cor. 7:29–31). Rather, in the midst of the old world (or age) ruled by Satan (2 Cor. 4:4) and destined for a judgment of wrath, they can and should also praise God as creator and Christ as creation-mediator and redeemer. The Pauline churches therefore confess two things in their worship: (1) that the saving will of the creator God, which promotes well-being, determined the world's destiny in and through Christ from the very beginning; and (2) that in Christ, who by his obedient way of sacrifice has broken sin's dominion over the world, whom God has appointed as the "image" (εἰκών) of his true being (2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15; cf. 1 Cor. 11:3) and the "firstborn from the dead" (πρωτότοκος [ἐκ] τῶν νεκρῶν; Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5), God's goal for his creation has become apparent.

3.2 If one adds to this the daring soteriological statement of 2 Corinthians 5:17 (cf. Isa. 43:18–19), then a striking theological perspective emerges: together with apocalyptically minded early Judaism, Paul views the world very critically, but he contrasts this negative view with a christologically anchored confession about creation. *The present form of this world is passing away (1 Cor. 7:31), but based on Christ's original mediatorial role in creation, the world is destined to be freed from death and glorified through the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:25–26, 50–57; Rom. 8:18–25)*. Christians are the ones who may announce this to the world; in their praise of creation, the "coming age" is already present. "For every Jew . . . the 'aeon to come' as the time and realm of God's reign has always existed, but it is not the reality of this world. For Christians, however, it has already become a reality in the ministry of Jesus Christ, even though temporally, of course, they continue to live in 'this world,' at the end of this aeon (1 Cor 10:11 [cf. *T. Levi* 14:1]; Heb 9:26 . . .)" (T. Holtz, *EDNT* 1:46).

4 *Paul's anthropology* is a part of his teaching about creation. According to Paul, God valued the human beings in his creation enough to send and sacrifice his own Son for them. They are destined to be justified and glorified by God for Christ's sake.

4.1 Humanity is divided for Paul into *Jews and Gentiles* (Gal. 2:15; Rom. 2:9–10). He continued to hold this good Old Testament and early Jewish view even as an apostle of Jesus Christ, because it is established by God through his election of Israel as his own people (cf. Gal. 2:15–16; Rom. 3:1–2; 9:3–5; 11:1–2, 28).

This distinction even has eschatological relevance for Paul. Salvation history is determined by God's unbreakable word of promise (Rom. 9:6; 11:28–29; 15:8). It can and will come to an end only when Jesus Christ, in fulfillment of God's promises of salvation for Israel, appears as the end-time redeemer from Zion and the people of God (who until then will have been mostly hardened) see in him the promised messianic redeemer whom Paul already recognized as such outside Damascus (Rom. 11:25–32).

The distinction between Jews and Gentiles grounded in election is equalized inasmuch as *both groups are equally affected by Adam's fall and have fallen under the power of sin*. This happened to Jews because and although they know the law (Rom. 2:17–24) and to the lawless Gentiles because (and although) their conscience provides restraints analogous to those of the law (Rom. 2:14–15). To both groups deliverance comes only through the Son of God, who through his obedient suffering and atoning death made a new beginning for humanity. Therefore Paul, alluding to Genesis 1:26–27, 2:7, and Mark 10:45 par., refers to him as the "last Adam" (1 Cor. 15:45; cf. 15:22) and as "the one [new] man, Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:15; cf. 5:12–21).

4.2 Whereas Paul speaks of the world and creation only in general texts, his expositions about humanity are unusually detailed and soteriologically engaged. With E. Käsemann we may therefore designate *Pauline anthropology as the depth dimension of Pauline theology*.

A classical document of this that has also proved very important in the history of interpretation is Paul's sketch of the hopeless situation of the Adamic "I" under the dominion of sin in *Romans 7:7–25* (based on early Jewish penitential texts such as Ps. 51; Dan. 9:4–19; 1QS 11:9–11; *4 Ezra* 8:20–36). Over against this Paul sets his description in Romans 8 of the situation of justified Christians who hope for final salvation.

Paul's anthropological terminology is worked out in particular detail. With it, Paul can speak of human fallenness to sin and of the new being of Christians more precisely than all other New Testament authors.

It is to the research of *R. Bultmann* that we owe the insight that in a very non-Greek manner (also called holistic or "Hebraic"), Paul's anthropological terms "designate not just one part of man, but the whole man in different aspects" (G. Bornkamm, *Paul* [1971], 130). The correctness of this finding is attested, for example, by the variation of terms in parallel passages, including *τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν* in 1 Corinthians 6:15 ("*your bodies* are members of Christ") as compared with ὑμεῖς in 1 Corinthians 12:27 ("*you* are the body of Christ and individually members of it"), or the wide variation in Romans 6:12–14 between *τὸ σῶμα ὑμῶν*, *τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν*, *ἑαυτοί*, and ὑμεῖς—"your body," "your members," "yourselves," and "you." H. W. Wolff's *Anthropologie des Alten Testaments* (1990[5]) allows us to find the roots of this mode of expression in the Old Testament. *Paul in his anthropology is a biblical thinker*. He shows this also by the fact that he uses the anthropological terms not in a terminologically strict way but flexibly, applying them to various aspects of the person.

4.2.1 *The most important anthropological term in Paul is τὸ σῶμα, "the body"* (ninety-one occurrences in the traditional Pauline corpus). Admittedly, *σῶμα* refers merely to the substance of the body in 1 Corinthians 15:39–49, but on the basis of the overwhelming majority of passages in which the apostle uses *τὸ σῶμα*, we may say with R. Bultmann that "man does not *have* a *soma*; he *is soma*" (*Theology of the New Testament* [1951], 1:194).

Bultmann's definition also applies to the source material concerning the use of *σῶμα* in the Septuagint collected by E. Schweizer, *TDNT* 7:1045, §3 (cf. Lev. 19:28; Num. 8:7; Job 7:5; Dan. 1:15; etc.). In the Septuagint *σῶμα* is used to translate בָּשָׂר (*bāśār*, "flesh"), שְׁאֵר (*šəʾēr*, "body," "flesh," "blood relative"), גְּוִיָּה and גּוּפָה (*gəwiyyâ*; *gûpâ*, "body," "human body"), and other terms. Paul follows this complex linguistic usage.

To a person's *σῶμα* belong its "members," *τὰ μέλη*. Therefore Paul can use *τὰ μέλη* and *τὸ σῶμα* interchangeably in his letters (cf. 1 Cor. 6:15–17; 12:12–27; Rom. 6:12–19; 12:4–5).

The apostle uses *τὸ σῶμα* in contexts that speak of people apart from faith (e.g., Rom. 1:24; 7:24), in statements about the existence of believers (1 Cor. 6:12–16; Rom. 12:1), and in the context of the expectation of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:35–49; Rom. 8:11; Phil. 3:21).

4.2.1.1 Once we ask how the content of *τὸ σῶμα* is best understood, we encounter two different accents. *R. Bultmann's* definition runs: "Man is called *soma* in respect to his being able to make himself the object of his

own action or to experience himself as the subject to whom something happens. He can be called *soma*, that is, as having a relationship to himself" (*Theology*, 1:195–96). *E. Käsemann* does not dispute this idea that the human person in Paul can be described as a self-reflective being, but he thinks that Paul's characteristic view of σῶμα is a different one: "It is generally assumed as a matter of course that 'body' is primarily a term describing the human 'self' as a person. I would urge against this that what is meant is man as a non-isolable existence, i.e., in his need and real capacity for communication as friend or foe—man as a being who finds himself in and is aware of an already existing world, and is conscious of his dependency on certain forces and powers" (*Perspectives on Paul* [1971], 114).

In the meantime, Käsemann's view has established itself as exegetically more plausible, because it does more justice to the polyvalent use of σῶμα in Paul than does Bultmann's definition.

J. Becker has objected to Käsemann's definition of σῶμα for two reasons: first that it has "contemporary roots, namely, in the rise of sociohistorical questions in the theology of recent times," and second that it is still too unspecific, since "Paul's topic is not communication in general, rather, his theme is the status of the individual person before God" (*Paul: Apostle to the Gentiles* [1993], 385). Both objections become superfluous once it is realized that Käsemann's view of σῶμα was formed long before the recent theological developments of which Becker speaks. Ever since his 1933 dissertation "Leib und Leib Christi" ("Body and the Body of Christ"), Käsemann was interested in describing Paul's view of the individual in the world over against God, the powers, and other people in an exegetically more appropriate manner than was or is possible from Bultmann's definition. Käsemann then applied the results of his investigations above all ecclesiologically—not sociocritically (cf. Käsemann's definition of the "body of Christ" in *Perspectives on Paul*, 117).

4.2.1.2 According to Paul, people are placed into the world as σώματα (bodies), and ever since Adam's fall, they are delivered over to sin and its "sting," death (1 Cor. 15:56). Christ frees people from this dominion and enlists them in the service of righteousness, which is God's will (Rom. 6:1–23; cf. also 1 Cor. 6:12–17). They encounter their fellow humans bodily as man and woman (1 Cor. 7:4). They are subject to afflictions and sicknesses (Gal. 6:17; 2 Cor. 4:7–12) and groan for the redemption of their bodies from these maladies (Rom. 8:23). Finally, it is as σώματα that people stand before God and are meant to dedicate their entire bodily existence to his praise and service (1 Cor. 6:18–20; 9:24–27; Rom. 6:12–14; 12:1–2). When Paul speaks of the bodily resurrection of Jesus and the dead (1 Cor. 15:20–22, 35–49; Rom. 6:5–8; Phil. 3:20–21), he believes that a person's creaturely

existence will find its eschatological fulfillment in the worship of God in a transformed creation freed from death.

4.2.2 The term ἡ σάρξ (*sarx*), "the flesh," belongs closely together with σῶμα (body) in Paul. Coincidentally, each term occurs exactly ninety-one times in the Pauline corpus, and like σῶμα, the term σάρξ in Paul also has important Old Testament–Jewish roots (see below). Nevertheless, unlike σῶμα—consistently translated by "body" in the NRSV—the term σάρξ has become an ideal case study for the different degrees of "literalness" or concordance in translation. The major English versions fall into two main groups: some choose "flesh" as the predominant term; others use "flesh" only where necessary, and speak of a person's corrupt "human nature" or "sinful nature" in ethical contexts.

In the first group of translations, the degree of word-for-word concordance between σάρξ and "flesh" varies exactly according to the general reputation each version has for "literalness" (the following statistics exclude the adjective σαρκινός). Hence "flesh" always translates σάρξ in Paul in the ASV (91 times, including "fleshly" [once, Col. 2:18]), followed by progressively lower statistics in the KJV (88 times for "flesh"), NASB (82), NAB (74), ESV (68), RSV (60), NRSV (59), HCSB (59), and NET (45). By contrast, the nonconcordant versions use "flesh" only where necessary: NIV (11 times), REB (11), NJB (11), TEV (5), and CEV (3). Where appropriate, these versions interpret σάρξ as a sign of being "human," independent of the question of human sinfulness. Hence Jesus, according to Romans 1:3, is a descendant of David κατὰ σάρκα (lit. "according to the flesh")—that is, in terms of his "human nature" (NIV, NJB) or "humanity" (TEV), or when regarded "on the human level" (REB; cf. CEV) or "as to his earthly life" (NIV11). For people other than Jesus, σάρξ or human nature becomes an ethical issue in Paul. Literary versions like the REB and NJB vary the style, with σάρξ representing alternatively the "unspiritual nature," "old nature," "mere human nature," "old human nature" (REB; cf. NJB), or "disordered human nature" (NJB). Greater stylistic consistency is achieved with the TEV's "human nature" (19 times) and the NIV's "sinful nature" (22 times); cf. also the CEV's "selfish desires" (10 times).

The Semitic expression for σάρξ is בָּשָׂר (*bāśār*). In the Old Testament it denotes the fleshly substance of humans and animals (Lev. 26:29; Isa. 22:13) as well as humans in their earthly creatureliness and frailty before God and in distinction from God (cf., e.g., Deut. 5:26; Pss. 56:5 [ET 56:4]; 78:38–39; Job 34:14–15; and H. W. Wolff, *Anthropologie des Alten Testaments*, 49ff.).

Paul, too, uses σάρξ for the fleshly substance of humans and animals (1 Cor. 15:39). But he uses it above all to describe *humans as earthly creatures before God*, including both their rebellion against their creator (Gal. 5:13;

Rom. 7:18, 25) and their transitory creatureliness before him (2 Cor. 10:3; 12:7; Phil. 1:22–24).

In typical Old Testament fashion Paul uses the expression *πάσα σάρξ* ("all flesh") in 1 Corinthians 1:29, Galatians 2:16, and Romans 3:20 to refer to all living people. It is a stereotypical expression in the flood narrative of Genesis 6–9 but also occurs often elsewhere. The apostle can use *σάρξ καὶ αἷμα* ("flesh and blood") for the same idea (Gal. 1:16; 1 Cor. 15:50). "Flesh and blood" in Sirach 14:18; 17:31; Philo, *Heir* 57; and the rabbinic writings (בָּשָׂר וָדָם) is a standard expression for transitory (and evil) people. The semantic overlap between *σάρξ* and *σῶμα* in Paul (cf. Rom. 8:9–10) becomes understandable once we recall that both words can stand for בָּשָׂר in the Septuagint (see above).

Under *σάρξ* Paul understands not only human beings themselves as earthly creatures but also *the ways of being and living* that determine human life as a whole. Thus *σάρξ* can represent the essence of human rebellion against God and his work in Christ (cf. Gal. 6:7–8; Rom. 8:7). Therefore, to live and think *κατὰ σάρκα*, "according to the flesh," often has the negative connotation of living against God (cf., e.g., 2 Cor. 10:2; Rom. 8:4–5), though the expression can also refer simply to an earthly origin and way of being (cf. Gal. 4:29; 1 Cor. 1:26; 10:18; Rom. 1:3; 9:5). In order to express where and how a sinner's fallen existence before God plays itself out, Paul in Romans 7:5, 8:8–9, *passim* uses the expression *ἐν σαρκί* instead of *κατὰ σάρκα*. However, in other passages such as 2 Corinthians 4:11, 10:3, and Philippians 1:22, Paul can use the same expression to characterize the earthly life of a person who testifies to the faith, obeys God, and suffers for the gospel.

Paul's anthropological terminology enables him to speak about the human life before God in a pointed yet highly differentiated fashion. This is shown especially clearly by 2 Corinthians 10:2–6. The apostle has to engage with his opponents' accusations and, borrowing language from Proverbs 21:22, he describes himself as a teacher of wisdom in the service of Christ:

> [2]I ask that when I am present I may not be bold with the confidence with which I propose to be courageous against some, who regard us as if we walked according to the flesh (*κατὰ σάρκα*). [3]For though we walk in the flesh (*ἐν σαρκί*), we do not war according to the flesh (*κατὰ σάρκα*), [4]for the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly (*σαρκικά*), but powerful before God (*δυνατὰ τῷ θεῷ*) for the destruction of fortresses. [5]We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, [6]and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete. (2 Cor. 10:2–6, NASB modified)

The apostle never speaks of the "resurrection of the flesh" (*ἀνάστασις τῆς σαρκός*). This expression does not appear explicitly until Justin, *Dialogue* 80.5, *σαρκὸς ἀνάστασις* (which Justin

attributes to Isaiah, presumably 26:19; *ANF* imprecisely translates: “resurrection of the *dead*”), and it reflects a different view of the resurrection from the one that predominates in Paul. Whereas for Paul the resurrection (and transformation) of people’s *bodies* or *σώματα* is above all a *Christian* hope, what we might conceptualize as the resurrection of “all flesh” involves a double resurrection of *all the dead* either to a judgment of destruction or to pardon and glorification (cf. Dan. 12:2; *2 Bar.* 50–51; John 5:28–29; Rev. 20:12–14).

4.2.3 The complementary anthropological term to *σάρξ* is *τὸ πνεῦμα* (*pneuma*), “the spirit” (146 times in the Pauline corpus, more often referring to God’s Spirit than to the human spirit). The word denotes the *life force* which God has granted humanity (cf. 1 Thess. 5:23; 1 Cor. 7:34; 2 Cor. 7:1; Rom. 1:9; 8:15). It is closely related to ψυχή, “soul” (below, §4.2.5.1).

However, *πνεῦμα* can also denote the holy power of God and of his Christ which lays hold of people, the *Holy Spirit* or *Spirit of Christ* (Gal. 4:6; 1 Cor. 2:12; 3:16; 12:4–11; 2 Cor. 1:22; Rom. 8:15–16, *passim*). Where it has this meaning it can appear in opposition to *σάρξ* (cf. Gal. 5:16–25; 6:8; Rom. 8:6–8, *inter alia*). Life “according to the Spirit” or *κατὰ πνεῦμα* is, by contrast to the walk *κατὰ σάρκα* (“according to the flesh”), a life by the power and will of God and his Christ (Rom. 8:4–6). Therefore, instead of *κατὰ πνεῦμα*, the apostle can sometimes also say *κατὰ κύριον*, “after the manner of the Lord” (2 Cor. 11:17).

For Christians (whether individually or as the church of Christ) to have their lives determined by the Spirit of God and of his Christ does not mean that they have already been removed from physical existence on this earth. They must go on leading their lives in earthly creatureliness before God until their physical death or the parousia. For the time being, they can only hope for their (bodily) resurrection or transformation into immortality and for the eternal life in fellowship with the exalted Christ which follows it (cf. 1 Thess. 4:13–18; 1 Cor. 15:50–51; 2 Cor. 5:1–10).

4.2.4 Paul in his letters speaks repeatedly of a person’s “conscience,” *ἡ συνείδησις* (*syneidēsis*). The word does not appear in the Septuagint until the wisdom books (cf. Eccles. 10:20 LXX; Sir. 42:18 var.; Wis. 17:10 [ET 17:11]), while in the Hebrew (and Aramaic) Old Testament a precise terminological equivalent is lacking. However, *συνείδησις* in Greek literature (as well as *conscientia* in Latin) has a linguistic history beginning as early as the fifth century BC. By taking up the word *συνείδησις*, Paul therefore shows himself to be a Hellenistic Jew or Jewish Christian. For him it denotes the critical “court” of the human knowledge of good and

evil, or in more modern terms, it denotes people's critical consciousness of their responsibility (1 Cor. 8:7–12; 10:25–29; Rom. 2:15; 9:1; 13:5).

4.2.5 Other anthropological terms in Paul include the following:

4.2.5.1 Ἡ ψυχή (*psychē*), "the soul," corresponds to the Old Testament נֶפֶשׁ (*nepeš*) and denotes humans in their (God-given) creaturely liveliness and emotional stirrings (cf. 1 Thess. 2:8; 2 Cor. 1:23; 12:15; Rom. 2:9; 13:1; 16:4).

4.2.5.2 Ὁ νοῦς and τὸ νόημα (*nous*, *noēma*), "the mind," both denote the critically evaluative understanding, the reason of a person. This can be blinded (2 Cor. 4:4; Rom. 1:28) or too weak to follow the will of God (Rom. 7:23, 25), but it can also be placed into Christ's service (2 Cor. 10:5), in which case it becomes capable of knowing the good (Rom. 12:2) and living accordingly (1 Cor. 14:14–19).

4.2.5.3 Ἡ καρδία (*kardia*), "the heart," designates for Paul, as for the Old Testament, the personal center of a human being. The καρδία lays a person open before God "who searches the hearts" (1 Thess. 2:4; 1 Cor. 4:5; Rom. 8:27). It is the seat of the will (1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Cor. 8:16) as well as of the emotions (2 Cor. 2:4; 6:11; Phil. 1:7; Rom. 9:2). If people live in unbelief, then their καρδία is darkened and full of lusts (Rom. 1:21, 24), hard and impenitent (Rom. 2:5), but for believers the καρδία is filled with the Holy Spirit and love for God (Gal. 4:6; 2 Cor. 1:22; Rom. 5:5) and is the place of faith (Rom. 6:17; 10:9–10).

With the help of all these anthropological terms, Paul can speak much more precisely than any other New Testament author about humans as the special creations of God, who realize the true purpose for which they were created only by being freed from the power of sin.

5 *Paul's notion of sin is fundamental for understanding his theology*. The apostle's unique reflection on the phenomenon and terms for sin has three roots: (1) Paul had before him the biblical narrative of Adam's fall in Genesis 3:1–24 (and other texts dealing with sin, such as Ps. 51; cf. Rom. 3:4), which had already been thought through intensively in early Judaism. (2) The Torah was the standard of the final judgment for the apostle as well as for early Judaism (Rom. 2:12–13). According to Romans 5:13, 20, it makes sin recognizable for the first time as a transgression of God's will and subject to judgment. (3) But above all, Paul himself had experienced

that even holy zeal for the law, which distinguished both him (Gal. 1:14) and his fellow Jews (Rom. 10:2), can constitute rebellion against God's saving work in Christ. Sin for the apostle is therefore much more than simply transgression of a commandment; he speaks of it no longer only as a Pharisee but as an apostle of Jesus Christ. From his own experience and from the biblical texts, Paul recognized that sin has supra-individual character as a power, and he was bold enough to formulate this in a thesis: *Sin, according to Paul's letters, is the destiny knowingly entered into by Adam and willfully taken over by all people since his transgression (παράβασις) to disregard the will of God and to lead their lives by their own power far away from God; it is guilt and destiny at once, with unmistakable and disastrous consequences which materialize in actions.*

In keeping with an already existing church tradition, the apostle can designate individual sins or transgressions against God's will by various terms. These include αἱ ἁμαρτίαι, "sins" (1 Thess. 2:16; Gal. 1:4; 1 Cor. 15:3); τὰ ἁμαρτήματα, "sins" (Rom. 3:25); τὰ παραπτώματα, "trespasses" (2 Cor. 5:19; Rom. 4:25); and also αἱ παραβάσεις, "transgressions" (Gal. 3:19; Rom. 2:23; 4:15)—all in the plural. However, *Paul's characteristic way of speaking about sin is to use ἡ ἁμαρτία metaphorically in the singular to denote sin's personification as a power* (cf. Gal. 3:22 and throughout Rom. 5:12–8:10).

5.1 In order to establish the facts of the case regarding sin, Paul repeatedly turns back to the biblical story of Adam's fall. This can be referred to by a single term as his παράπτωμα, "trespass" (NRSV) or "transgression" (NASB) (Rom. 5:12–21), or by expressions such as "subjection of the creation to futility" (cf. Rom. 8:20) or by the story of the coming of "sin," ἁμαρτία (Rom. 7:7–25, esp. v. 9). Here Paul has recourse to an etiological story: the ancient "legend" of Adam's fall makes comprehensible and expressible what happens today, namely, that death reigns over all creation and that both Jews and Gentiles are in fact far from the God who reveals himself in Jesus Christ.

5.1.1 Romans 5:12–21 explains with reference to Adam's "trangression" (παράβασις, 5:14) of a specific command in the garden (cf. REB: "by disobeying a direct command"), that sin is not only the conscious deed of the individual but is also a supra-individual disaster of guilt.

Grammatically the first sentence of the paragraph, Romans 5:12, is an anacoluthon, indicated by the dash between 5:12 and 5:13 in the NRSV (below), which is picked up and completed only in 5:18–21: “[5:12]Therefore, just as sin (ἡ ἁμαρτία) came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned (ἥμαρτον)—[13]sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. [14]Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression (παραβάσις) of Adam [sc. of a particular command], who is a type of the one who was to come.”

Following Genesis 3:14–18, Paul speaks here, with early Jewish tradition (e.g., *4 Ezra* 3:7), of the fact that death came into the world as a consequence of sin. It determines all people because all share in Adam’s sin. Either they have consciously transgressed God’s commandment, like Adam, Israel’s patriarchs (who knew the law prior to the Sinai revelation according to *2 Bar*. 57:2), and the Israelites since the revelation of the Torah at Sinai, or they have in fact transgressed against God’s will without having or knowing the law, as for example the flood generation and the Gentiles.

5.1.2 Although his view of sin and death is complex, *Paul does not yet speak of original (or inherited) sin and death in Romans 5:12–21*. This first appears tentatively in the Greek church fathers beginning with Irenaeus and becomes a standard part of the exegesis of Romans 5:12–21 with the Latin fathers from the fourth century onward. In the Latin Bible Paul’s expression ἐφ᾽ ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον (“*because* all have sinned”) was translated by *in quo omnes peccaverunt*, “*in whom* all have sinned.” In his dispute with Pelagius, who was strongly opposed to original sin, Augustine construed these four words as a relative clause referring back to Adam. He therefore concluded that all people had sinned *in* Adam and that they inherited sin by birth (cf. *Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum* 4.4.7). This understanding of Romans 5:12 reigned until scholars in the humanistic period went back to the original Greek text of the New Testament and recognized that Augustine’s interpretation was grammatically untenable. However, in the meantime the doctrine of original sin and death had already achieved the status of church dogma. It is therefore taken up in the Augsburg Confession (article 2, “On Original Sin”) and in the Heidelberg Catechism (questions 7–10), but it was not yet held by Paul. The apostle never speaks of people inheriting sin or death; he only says that the disaster of sin has overcome all people since Adam, making them guilty.

5.1.3 From this viewpoint it is consistent when Paul in Romans 5:21 says metaphorically that sin exercised dominion over all people by means of death and when he describes sin in Galatians 3:22; Romans 6:16, 20; and 7:14 as an enslaving power to which all have been sold. In contrast to important early Jewish sources (cf. Sir. 15:14–15; Wis. 10:1; *Pss. Sol.* 9:4–5; *4 Ezra* 9:7; *2 Bar*. 85:3–4; *m. Abot* 3:14–15), Paul, after the turning point in his life outside Damascus, was no longer of the opinion that people after Adam's fall are still given free will and enough power to escape sin through conversion and obedient fulfilling of the Torah. *From Paul's faith perspective, sin involves people in a vicious circle of deed and destiny from which only Christ can free them, because only he has overcome the dominion of sin (Rom. 5:15–21; 8:3–4).*

In Romans 7:7–25 Paul uses Adam's fall to show that and how sin casts humanity inescapably in its spell by means of the commandment, so that people lose the possibility and the power to recover their lost righteousness before God. Because Paul identifies God's ἐντολή or "commandment" about the tree of knowledge in Genesis 2:15–17 with the Torah as a whole in keeping with other Jewish sources (see above, 288–89, §2.6.2), he can cite as a paradigmatic example the commandment of Exodus 20:17 (par. Deut. 5:21) which Adam transgressed, namely, οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις, "you shall not covet," the beginning of the tenth commandment (Rom. 7:7). This last commandment therefore stands as a summary of the whole Decalogue. Accordingly the sin that manifests itself as ἐπιθυμία or "lust"/"desire" is not sexual lust alone, but striving against God for eternal life (Gen. 3:22) and all the goods named in the tenth commandment.

5.2 The manifestations of fallenness to sin according to Paul are the *futility* and *death* which have come over all creation since Adam's fall (cf. 1 Cor. 15:26, 56; Rom. 5:12–21; 8:20). They are *omens of the judgment of wrath* (Ps. 90:9, 11; Isa. 66:15–17) which the apostle sees coming soon over the whole world (cf. 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 2:16; 14:10 with Dan. 7:26–27; 12:2–3; *1 En.* 91:11–14).

In Romans 1:18–32 the apostle thinks about these omens of judgment from the perspective of the "deed-consequences connection" (*Tat-Folge-Zusammenhang*) that is especially characteristic of Old Testament and early Jewish wisdom theology (cf. Prov. 26:27; Pss. 7:13–17 [ET 7:12–16]; 38:5 [ET 38:4]; 40:13 [ET 40:12]). God has already given up the Gentiles to the consequences of their ungodliness, so that in fulfilling their lusts they mutually defile each other and in living out their vices they socially damage and ruin each another. The threefold παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεός, "God delivered them over" or "gave them up," of Romans 1:24, 26, 28 shows that Paul sees the deed-consequences-connection (*Tun-Ergehen-Zusammenhang*) not simply as an automatically effective law of existence but as the consequences of sin judicially enforced by God himself. Ἁμαρτία appears in Romans 1:18–32 (and also in Gal. 6:7–8; 1 Cor. 11:29–30; Rom. 6:20–23; 7:5) as "the quintessence of human misdeeds, which strike back at people with annihilating force" (G. Röhser, *Metaphorik und Personifikation der Sünde* [1987], 177).

5.3 Sinners stand over against God the judge as “enemies,” ἐχθροί (cf. Rom. 5:10 with Pss. 37:20; 68:22 [ET 68:21]; 74:18; 92:10 [ET 92:9]; *passim*), because the mind-set of the flesh ruled by sin is enmity against God par excellence (Rom. 8:7). Sin not only brings sinners into judgment; it makes them God’s legal opponents. Unless Christ makes null and void the charge brought against sinners in the judgment (Rom. 8:33–34), they will be found guilty of death and will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction (cf. Rev. 20:14–15; 2 Thess. 1:9). This is the terrible “wage” that sin pays its slaves (Rom. 6:23).

Sin takes a sublime subjective form where Gentiles or Jews *boast* about themselves before God with the goal of being acknowledged by God in the judgment on their own merits (1 Cor. 1:29; Rom. 3:27). Such “boasting”—καύχησις (Rom. 3:27) or καύχημα (1 Cor. 5:6; Rom. 4:2)—can, as Paul knows from his own experience, be based on the Torah (Rom. 2:23) and “works of the law” (cf. Phil. 3:5–6 with Rom. 4:2). But it can also be based on superior wisdom (1 Cor. 1:18–19, 27; 2 Cor. 10:4–5) and the standards of the flesh (2 Cor. 11:18). Yet according to Paul, one should boast only in the Lord (1 Cor. 1:30–31; 3:21–23; 2 Cor. 10:17; Phil. 3:3–4) and in that which the Lord Jesus effects in and through believers on earth (2 Cor. 12:5–9; Rom. 5:2, 3, 11; 15:17).

5.4 When Paul speaks of sin and sinners, he has principally the still-unconverted Gentiles and Jews in view (cf. Gal. 2:15; 1 Cor. 6:9–10; Rom. 1:18–3:20). When it comes to himself and other Christians, Paul speaks of a hopeless fallenness to sin only with respect to their prior period of unbelief (cf. 1 Cor. 15:9–10; Phil. 3:4–6; 1 Cor. 6:9–11). The phenomenon and problem of the *sin of Christians* do not yet come as sharply to the fore in Paul’s letters as they do, for example, in 1 John 1:8–9, 3:19–20, 5:16–17, and in the history of the church.

5.4.1 As is shown, for example, by 1 Corinthians 5:1–13, 6:1–8, and 11:27–31, Paul was perfectly familiar with the problem of the sin of Christians. All three texts show that he thought sin in the church was deadly serious for the church. He considered the actions and standpoint of his Jewish Christian opponents completely worthy of judgment and himself expressed an anathema against them (Gal. 1:8; 2 Cor. 11:13–15; Rom. 3:8; Phil. 3:18–19). At the same time, Paul did not yet speak in the style of 1 John about the sins of Christians, and in Romans 7:7–25 and 8:1–17 he did not yet have in view any *“simul”* of sin and righteousness in the lives of Christians which cannot be eradicated until death.

Luther interpreted Romans 7:7–25 (e.g., in his “Preface to the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans” in his German New Testament of September 1522 [*LW* 35:365–80, esp. 376–77]) as Paul’s confession

of his own experience. Luther therefore saw in this text a Pauline proof for his own view of the *simul peccator et iustus* of Christian existence which cannot be abolished on earth. A. F. Segal (*Paul the Convert* [1990], 224ff.) and J. D. G. Dunn (*Romans 1–8* [1988], 387ff.) understand the passage in a similar way (though Dunn has in view only 7:14–25). However, the literary structure of Romans 7 and 8 shows clearly that this view is untenable. In Romans 7:5–6 Paul states the overall theme of Romans 7:7–8:17, and then he explains 7:5 in 7:7–25 and 7:6 in 8:1–17. The ἡμεῖς (we) in 7:5–6 shows moreover that Romans 7:7–25 and 8:1–17 do not contain a special confession about the life of Paul (who, according to Phil. 3:5–6, considered himself a blameless righteous person before God prior to his call), but rather a presentation that applies to *every* Christian, including Paul. Romans 7:7–25 deals with the Adamic "I" which has not yet come to faith, and whose desperate condition is and remains fully known only to the believing Christian. Just as clearly as Romans 7:5 and 7:6 are differentiated from one another through the use of ὅτε and νυνὶ δέ ("*while* we were living in the flesh . . . *but now* we are discharged from the law"), so also are Romans 7:7–25 and 8:1–17 to be contrasted with one another, since the νυνὶ δέ, "but now," of 7:6 is picked up again by νῦν, "now," in 8:1. Accordingly, Romans 7:7–8:17 describes not an ongoing existential dialectic for Christians, but the *sequence* of the prefaith and faith existence of every Christian (cf. further B. W. Longenecker, *Rhetoric at the Boundaries* [2005], 88–93, and H.-J. Klauck with D. P. Bailey, *Ancient Letters and the New Testament* [2006], 225–26).

5.4.2 From Galatians 3:26–28, 4:4–6, 1 Corinthians 6:11, 12:13, 2 Corinthians 5:17, and Romans 8:3–4 it becomes clear that Paul sees Christians who have been placed under the lordship of Christ by faith and baptism to be in a fundamentally different position before God from unbelievers. They still live in the opposition of the flesh and the Spirit and are therefore weak, subjected to temptation, and engaged in a contest. But sin and death no longer have any power over them (Rom. 6:9, 14), and because of Christ's intercession they will stand in the final judgment in a different position from unbelieving sinners or ἁμαρτωλοί (cf. 1 Cor. 3:15; 5:5; Rom. 8:31–39). As powerful and important as sin is for the apostle, he declares it to be decisively overcome through Christ and considers Christians who have become new through Christ to be able to resist the temptation to sin by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9–13; Phil. 2:12–13).

Paul knew Psalm 51 very well (cf. Rom. 3:4), but the question of sin was posed differently for him than for Luther, who during his monastic period was obligated to pray Psalm 51 seven times a day during the set times of prayer (cf. O. Bayer, *Aus Glauben Leben* [1990^{2}], 66). The apostle thought in the horizon of Romans 8:1–17. Looking back upon the situation of mortal danger that has been overcome only through the mission and atoning death of Jesus (Rom. 7:7–24), Paul thanks God through Jesus Christ that there is no longer any condemnation for those who are living in and through Christ, and he speaks of being freed through the law of the Spirit of life in (through) Christ Jesus (7:25–8:2). For Paul, such retrospect at a life situation under the power of sin that has now been overcome lets all Christians acknowledge the danger they were in and the greatness of Christ's act of liberation. But it by no means reduces the Christian task of obedience (cf. Rom. 8:3–17). With regard

to the ability of the Christian to know and do the good, Paul expresses himself in Romans 8:4, 12:1–2, and Philippians 2:12–16 really positively.

The difference between the apostle and Luther is especially clear from the fact that while Paul considered himself to be a sinner worthy of the death sentence because of his activity as a persecutor, who against all expectation was pardoned to preach the gospel (1 Cor. 9:16; 2 Cor. 2:14–16), he was also convinced that since his call to be an apostle, he had remained free from acts of sin by the power of the Holy Spirit (cf. Gal. 2:19–21; 1 Cor. 4:3–4; 9:15–18; 15:10; Rom. 15:17; Phil. 3:12–16; 4:13). Only on the basis of this self-evaluation could he call the Christians in Corinth (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1) and Philippi (Phil. 3:17) to be his *μιμηταί* or "imitators." Nor did the apostle hide from the Christians in these two churches the fact that in this *μίμησις* (imitation) they would have to lead an ascetic battle for a blameless life before God so as not to lose their salvation (cf. 1 Cor. 5:6–8; 6:18–20; 7:8, 29–32; Phil. 2:12–16; 3:12–21).

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CHAPTER 20

Christ, the End of the Law

1 *Christology forms the center of Pauline theology*. If one asks about its decisive accents, two points must be kept in mind: the apostle's own particular experience of Christ outside Damascus, and the fact that with his call Paul gained access to the already developed Christology of the Christian churches of Damascus, Jerusalem, and Antioch. Tradition and interpretation must therefore be differentiated when analyzing Pauline Christology.

1.1 The exalted Christ appeared in all his divine glory to Paul the Pharisee while he was pursuing his activities as a persecutor of the church and a miltant defender of the Mosaic law (Gal. 1:11–17). The same crucified Jesus of Nazareth, whom the Christians confessed to Paul's outrage as the Lord and Messiah raised by God, and whose teaching provided the occasion for the Stephen circle to exercise criticism against the temple and the Torah (cf. Acts 6:11–14), was now revealed to Paul the persecutor of Christians outside Damascus as the "Son of God with power" (Rom. 1:4). Paul was thereby forced to recognize that God's glory on the face of the exalted Christ put in the shade the glory of the Torah (cf. *4 Ezra* 9:37) that Paul had previously served (cf. 2 Cor. 3:7–18; 4:5–6). Under these circumstances the way of the law that Paul defended against the Christians could no longer lead to salvation, but only the faith of the persecuted Christians in their Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός. *Ever since this fundamentally new revelation to Paul, he preached Christ as "the end of the law (τέλος νόμου) . . . for everyone who believes" (Rom. 10:4).*

1.2 How Christ was to be preached specifically as the one who prepared the way for God's grace, as the Lord, and as the τέλος νόμου or "end of the law" was decided for the apostle not only by his vision of Christ outside Damascus (1 Cor. 9:1) but also by the fact that the church he formerly persecuted, whose mission he now supported, already possessed christological confessional material and also held the teaching of Jesus in high regard. Both types of tradition were passed on to Paul, and he reworked them in his preaching and teaching. This explains why the main

statements of Paul's Christology are accented in a law-critical way, while his christological doctrine draws upon the doctrinal traditions which he took over from the Christians in Damascus, Jerusalem, and Antioch.

In view of the christological doctrinal traditions in Paul's letters, we must guard against a *modern error* which continues to hinder a proper historical evaluation of the apostle's Christology even in a recent book such as E. P. Sanders's *Paul* (Past Masters [1991]), The breadth with which Paul takes up christological traditions in particular has led to the assumption that the contents of Christology were mere tradition to him and that his real interest lay only in the soteriological consequences of these contents. But this false assumption is corrected by observing that Paul repeatedly emphasizes the value and status of christological παράδοσις or tradition (1 Cor. 11:23ff.; 15:1ff.; Rom. 6:17; 10:9–10) and that he never formally criticizes the tradition he cites, but always makes it flow seamlessly into his presentation. Like the other Jewish and early Christian teachers of his time, Paul thinks and argues *with* the tradition passed on to him and not against it (G. Eichholz). A tradition-historically sensitive exegesis of Paul must therefore not only highlight the soteriological framework of the tradition texts he cites, but must also show that Paul affirms and why he affirms the contents of these texts and was able to use them to understand Christ as "the end of the law."

2 The christological tradition taken over by the apostle, which he reproduces partly in allusions and individual motifs but also partly in proper citations, is *rich in content and formally diverse*.

Paul's letters contain several features pertinent to the point: multiple *formulaic soteriological texts* that speak of the saving significance of the death and resurrection of Jesus (2 Cor. 5:14, 21; Gal. 1:4; Rom. 3:25–26; 4:25; 5:8–9; 14:15; etc.); christological *confessional formulas* of one or more lines (1 Thess. 4:14; 5:10; 1 Cor. 1:30; 8:6; 12:3; Rom. 10:9–10); *formulas about Christ* designating him as the bearer and fulfiller of the promises (Rom. 1:3–4; cf. with Rom. 15:8 and 2 Cor. 1:20); formulas about God's Son being *sent* into the world (Gal. 4:4–5; Rom. 8:3–4; cf. with John 3:16–17; 1 John 4:9); *hymns* to Christ as the Κύριος who became human, went obediently to his death on the cross, and was exalted (Phil. 2:6–11), and to him as the mediator of the old and new creation (Col. 1:15–20; cf. also Heb. 1:3–4); *didactic traditions* about the end-time arrival of the exalted Christ and his future work (1 Thess. 1:10; 1 Cor. 15:23–28; Rom. 8:34–35; Phil. 3:20–21); *doctrinal summaries* that encapsulate the gospel (1 Cor. 15:3–5); and finally citations of or allusions to the *words of Jesus* (cf., e.g., 1 Cor. 7:10–11; 9:14; 11:23–25; Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:15; 12:14; 14:14; etc.), *Jesus's example* (Phil. 2:5; Rom. 15:3), and *Jesus's passion* (1 Cor. 2:8; 11:23; 2 Cor. 13:4; Gal. 3:1).

All these christological traditions originate from (Greek-speaking) *Jewish Christianity*. Only here could there have arisen within the brief period of pre-Pauline Christianity such christological statements that used the Old Testament to speak of Jesus as the Χριστός, the Suffering Servant, and the Κύριος exalted to God's right hand who would finally establish God's kingdom. Paul in his Christology did not just rely upon the christological traditions of the Jewish Christian churches of Damascus,

Jerusalem, and Antioch; he is also (next to Luke) the most important proponent of their ideas about Christ.

3 Once one has in view the fullness and differentiation of the christological traditions in Paul, one must attempt to order them theologically.

3.1 Paul's vision of the exalted Christ outside Damascus involved first of all his own experience of God's gracious "acceptance" (Rom. 15:7) and his call to apostolic service (cf. 1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 1:5). Before he ever began to name Christ as his Lord and to preach the gospel as the "word of reconciliation" (*λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς*, 2 Cor. 5:19), Paul had experienced in his own person that and how God, in and through Christ, had reconciled the world to himself and justified the ungodly (see above, 277, §2.2.2). This fundamental experience gave Paul the task of publicly preaching and teaching the gospel, but it did not yet show him how to accomplish it. In order to do this, Paul had to combine conceptually his own experience of Christ with the tradition about Christ that became accessible to him in the Christian churches. The apostle's Christology is the result of this effort.

3.2 From the apostle's concept of revelation (see above, 280–82, §3), his teaching about atonement and justification through Christ (cf., above all, 2 Cor. 5:14–21; Rom. 3:21–26), and his discussions of the end-time work of the exalted Christ (e.g., 1 Cor. 15:23–28; Rom. 8:18–39; 11:25–32), we can see that *the salvation event for Paul consists of the work of the one God in and through Christ for Jews, Gentiles, and the creation as a whole*. Pauline Christology follows this fundamental line of thought.

The one God reveals himself to the creation from the beginning through the mediator of creation, Christ (1 Cor. 8:6). In the fullness of time God sends his Son into the world in order to save it through his sacrifice (Gal. 4:4). Reconciliation and justification through the atoning death of Jesus are entirely the work of God: "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor. 5:19; cf. vv. 18–21); God delivered up Christ because of our transgressions and raised him because of our justification (Rom. 4:25); God exalted the crucified one and granted him his own name as Lord (Phil. 2:9–11). God revealed the exalted Christ to Paul outside Damascus and called him to be an apostle through his Son (Gal. 1:15–16; 2 Cor. 2:14–16; 4:5–6). Therefore the message of salvation entrusted to Paul is the "gospel

of God concerning Jesus Christ” (Rom. 1:1–6). Through the exalted Κύριος the *βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ* is fully established. In Christ’s parousia and his establishment of the *βασιλεία*, God’s saving promises to Israel are fulfilled (1 Cor. 15:23–28; Rom. 11:25–32), and in the final judgment Christ intercedes for believers (Rom. 8:33–34) according to the will of God, who justifies the ungodly (Rom. 4:5; 5:6). Once the Son of God has completed his messianic future work, he will lead the saved community consisting of all those on whom God has had mercy in and through Christ (Rom. 11:32) in the praise of God who is “all in all” (1 Cor. 15:28). *Paul’s Christology encompasses the whole saving work of God. It is structured both theocentrically and soteriologically*.

4 On the basis of this fundamental structure, Pauline Christology can be divided into a starting point and an end point, between which a threefold christological movement takes place. The starting point is the preexistence of Jesus and his mediatorial role in creation. From here begins the first movement, God’s sending of his Son into the world. The second movement includes the accomplishment of reconciliation and justification through Jesus’s death on the cross and resurrection. The third movement consists of the exaltation of the Κύριος *Ἰησοῦς* and the work which he has to carry out until the day of the parousia. The goal and end point of Jesus’s mission and work is the worship of God in the completed kingdom of God. Putting this all together, Paul teaches us to see Jesus Christ as the messianic Son of God and reconciler who establishes the righteousness of God that brings salvation and well-being to Israel, the Gentiles, and the entire creation.

4.1 1 Corinthians 8:6, the Christ hymn taken over by the apostle in Philippians 2:6–11, and the hymn of Colossians 1:15–20, first formed in Paul’s “school” (cf. Acts 18:7–11; 19:9–10), all document that Pauline Christology begins with *Jesus’s preexistence and mediatorial role in creation*.

4.1.1 It is no accident that the three texts just referred to have confessional and hymnic form. They do not present an argument but lead to worship, offering a holistic vision of the person and work of the Son of God. The same liturgical language is also spoken by other Christ hymns such as 1 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 1:1–4, John 1:1–18, and Revelation 5:9–10. *With his discourse about the preexistence of the Son of God, Paul is in*

tune with the Spirit-inspired worship of Christ in the Jewish Christian church.

In the light of Easter, the pre-Pauline churches had already affirmed and joined in Jesus's own confession of himself as the Messiah (cf. Luke 10:21–22/Matt. 11:25–27; Mark 14:61–62 par., but also John 8:56–58). Remembering that even on earth Jesus had ministered as the "messianic teacher of wisdom" (M. Hengel), they transferred the predicates and functions of *wisdom* to his person and work. The later layers of the Old Testament and early Judaism speak about God's preexistent creator wisdom. This wisdom is equated with God's creative word (cf. Prov. 8:22–31; Sir. 24:1–22; Wis. 7:22–8:1; 9:1–2), and in Sirach 24:23–34 and Baruch 3:32–4:4 it is identified with the Torah. But according to Isaiah 11:1–5, the Messiah, too, is to be the bearer of wisdom (as well as guarantor of God's righteousness). Daniel 7 shows that already in the second century BC this messianic expectation had been combined with the idea of the prophetic son of man (cf. Ezek. 3:17–19 and 33:7–9 [H. Gese]). In the Enoch tradition from the first century BC/AD, these two ideas combine to form a transcendental and universal pattern of messianic expectation. God's "Chosen One" (cf. *1 En.* 39:6; 45:3–4; 49:2; *passim* with Isa. 41:8, 9; 42:1) is also the "Son of Man" (cf. *1 En.* 46:1–4; 48:2; 62:5–6; 71:14 with Dan. 7:13) and God's "Anointed One" (Messiah) (*1 En.* 48:10; 52:4). He is with God from the beginning (cf. *1 En.* 48:2–6 with Mic. 5:1 [ET 5:2]) and stands in glory before him (cf. *1 En.* 49:2 with Dan. 7:13). God seats him upon his judgment throne (cf. *1 En.* 61:8; 62:2 with Ps. 110:1), the spirit of wisdom and righteousness is poured out upon him (cf. *1 En.* 49:2–5; 62:2; 71:14 with Isa. 11:2–5), and he executes judgment on the world. The righteous who are accepted in the judgment may share eternal table fellowship with the Son of Man before God (*1 En.* 62:13–16). John the Baptist made Jesus familiar with this expectation of the Son of Man, but Jesus applied it to himself in a novel way. On earth Jesus wanted to be only the messianic Son of Man and Servant who would serve the many through his suffering; he looked forward to his exaltation to the right hand of God and to the end-time office of judge only after going through his suffering (see above, 138–40, §7.3.2). The representatives of the Jewish Christian churches who went through Jesus's "school" and experienced Easter have their Christology determined by this horizon of messianic expectation. It also leaves its mark on Paul's Christology.

4.1.2 According to the faith of the pre-Pauline churches, which were especially valued by the apostle himself, there was nothing more original, more fundamental, or more comprehensive than the grace of God in and through Christ that creates salvation and well-being. Therefore *the churches confessed Christ's person and work in the style of wisdom and saw him as the image of God and the Son of God from all eternity* (cf. 2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3 with Prov. 8:22, 30; Wis. 7:25–26, 29; Sir. 24:9–11; etc.). As such he was the *mediator of creation*, who created and sustains the universe of "all things" (τὰ πάντα) in good order (cf. 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:15–17; Heb. 1:3 with Prov. 8:23–29; Wis. 7:27; 9:1–2; Sir. 24:3–6). He claims obedience even from the angelic powers, who according to early Jewish and Christian belief rule and hold together the universe (Col. 1:16).

4.1.3 Paul took up this hymnic way of speaking about Christ and continued it, because it accomplished three things: (1) It helped him

communicate and present the unsurpassable quality of his own vision of Christ outside Damascus, where he had met God himself in Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 8:6 with Gal. 1:1; 2 Cor. 4:4–6). (2) With the help of the sapientially formulated Christology, Paul could present Christ as the saving wisdom of God in person, in distinction from the Sinai revelation and in contrast to the wisdom of the world (cf. 1 Cor. 1:18–31; 2 Cor. 3:4–18; 10:3–6). (3) Finally, the same tradition enabled the apostle to counter the Jewish and pagan superstition about the importance of the angelic powers with the confession of Jesus Christ as the mediator of creation (cf. 1 Cor. 8:5–6 and Col. 1:15–20; 2:6–23).

4.2 Jesus's preexistence and mediatorial role in creation were according to Paul's teaching not an end in themselves but the effective beginning of Jesus's *being sent* by God into the world. This mission is the topic of the christological sending formulas (Gal. 4:4–5; Rom. 8:3–4; 1 John 4:9–10; John 3:17), which likewise rely on the wisdom tradition (cf. Wis. 9:10). According to these formulas, God's sending of Jesus has a comprehensive soteriological significance. Paul speaks about God's sending Jesus in two ways, including both God's accomplishments through his Son and the Son's obedience to the will of his heavenly Father.

4.2.1 The sending and incarnation of Jesus open up a new, soteriologically decisive epoch in salvation history. According to Galatians 4:4–5, God sent his Son *ὅτε δὲ ἦλθεν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου*, "when the fullness of time had come" (cf. Eph. 1:10; Heb. 9:26). *In the midst of human history God establishes and accomplishes his salvation by letting his Son become human; in and with Christ the new age of salvation breaks into the ongoing old age of this world*.

Henceforth believers in Christ live in two times at once: they still live in the (soon ending) old aeon but already live under the sign of the dawn of the *ἡμέρα σωτηρίας* or "day of salvation" (cf. 1 Cor. 7:29–31 with 2 Cor. 6:2; see above, 305, §3.2).

4.2.2 The designation of the Son of God as *γενόμενος ἐκ γυναικός* in Galatians 4:4 corresponds to the early Jewish language of human beings as "born of a woman" (cf. above, 65; 213–15, §3.4.2) and emphasizes the true humanity of Christ. Together with the parallel expression "born under the law" (*γενόμενος ὑπὸ νόμον*), the text says that the Son of God, *υἱὸς θεοῦ*, was born as a true human and a Jew.

If one remembers the messianic connotations of the title Son of God, υἱὸς θεοῦ (see above, 87–88, §5), then Galatians 4:4–5 recalls Romans 9:5 (cf. with Rom. 1:3–4; 15:8). It is therefore possible to understand the sending formula from the perspective of the history of election. In keeping with the messianic promise of 2 Samuel 7:14 and Psalm 89:27–28 (ET 89:26–27), God's Son was born in Israel as a true human from the one who was "blessed among women," *εὐλογημένη ἐν γυναιξίν* (Luke 1:42). J. Becker writes in his commentary on Galatians: "Certainly the expression 'born of a woman' carries no weight in this context. This speaks for its pre-Pauline origin. . . . Paul thereby refers to a doctrine of incarnation in which the concept of a 'virgin birth' contributes no more to the picture of Christ than it does for example in John 1:14 or Phil. 2:7" (*Die Briefe an die Galater, Epheser, Philipper, Kolosser, Thessalonischer und Philemon*, NTD 8 [1990[4]], 49). To be sure, there is no explicit reference in Galatians 4:4–5 (or elsewhere in Paul) to the *parthenogenesis* of Isaiah 7:14. But in view of the messianic connotation of the formula and the great antiquity of the Jewish Christian tradition of the virgin birth (see above, 65), one should not divide Paul's concept of incarnation from the virgin birth too sharply. The two traditions could have been passed down together, for example, in the Jewish Christian church in Antioch, and have been transmitted to Paul there.

4.2.3 According to Galatians 4:4–5, the Son of God was sent into the world and became human in order to redeem sinners from the bondage to guilt in which sin had imprisoned them by means of the law (Gal. 3:22–24). Paul uses the metaphor of redemption in order to emphasize the change of lordship that sinners experience: through Christ's death on the cross they are freed from slavery under the law and receive the Son of God as their new Lord (cf. Gal. 3:13; 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23).

The context of Galatians 4:4–5 (cf. Gal. 4:2 with Exod. 1:11; *Tg. Ps.-J.* on Gen. 31:35; *Mekilta* on Exod. 14:5) and the similarity of the redemption motif to the pre-Pauline and Pauline language of redemption (*ἀπολύτρωσις*) in 1 Corinthians 1:30, Romans 3:24–26, Colossians 1:14, etc., make it probable that the redemption effected through Christ's incarnation and sacrifice—in other words, the *ἀπολύτρωσις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ* (cf. Rom. 3:24)—stands in a typological relationship to the redemption of Israel from slavery in Egypt and to Exodus 19:5, Deuteronomy 7:6, and 14:2 (cf. Titus 2:14 and W. Haubeck, *Loskauf durch Christus* [1985], 295ff.). As Israel was redeemed through the exodus from slavery in Egypt and became God's chosen people and treasured possession, so also the new people of God consisting of Jews and Gentiles is born out of the redemption and salvation that God has manifested in and through Christ. That this in fact is the implication of the sending formula is shown by its continuation in Galatians 4:5.

4.2.4 According to Galatians 4:5 (cf. Rom. 8:15), believers receive *υἱοθεσία* or "adoption as sons" (RSV), which is transferred to them by virtue of their relationship to the Son of God. J. M. Scott, in his published dissertation *Adoption as Sons of God* (1992), has shown that this involves not just "sonship" but legal *acceptance in the place or status of a son*. Those redeemed by Christ gain through their new Lord a share in his legal position and honor as the messianic Son of God. With him they may cry out to God by the power of the Holy Spirit, *αββα ὁ πατήρ*, "Abba! Father!"

(Gal. 4:6); through him they have become “children of God” (Rom. 8:14–16).

The fundamental idea of believers’ participation in the rights and lordship of the Son of God (cf. 1 Cor. 6:2; Rom. 5:17) goes back to the Old Testament and early Jewish interpretation of 2 Samuel 7:14. The sonship to God promised to the Davidic Messiah in 2 Samuel 7:14 (and Ps. 89:27–28 [ET 89:26–27]) is extended from Isaiah 55:3 onward to the whole people of God (cf. *Jub*. 1:23–25). 2 Samuel 7:14 was applied to the messianic mission of Jesus already in pre-Pauline Jewish Christianity (cf. Rom. 1:3–4; see above, 210–12, §3.2). Galatians 4:4–5 and Romans 8:3–4, 14–16 stand in the same tradition. This tradition makes it possible for the apostle to designate *υἱοθεσία* or “adoption into the place of a son” as an aspect of salvation which believers share through the sending and sacrifice of the Son of God.

4.2.5 The sending formula of Galatians 4:4–5 is supplemented by Romans 8:3–4. Both texts offer complementary statements and make it clear that the sending tradition has great christological importance for the apostle, focusing as it does in principle upon God’s saving action in the cross, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Instead of stressing, as in Galatians 4:4–5, that by the sending of the Son of God believers are redeemed from slavery to guilt under the law and experience acceptance in the place of a son, in Romans 8:3–4 this sending is connected to the atonement tradition of the Levitical “sin offering,” and its goal is the fulfillment of the just requirement of the law through believers who walk in the power of Christ’s Spirit (Rom. 8:4).

The understanding and translation of Romans 8:3–4 are debated. On the basis of the foregoing passage in Romans 7:7–8:2, it is best to construe the introduction to 8:3 as an accusative of respect: *Τὸ γὰρ ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου ἐν ᾧ ἠσθένει διὰ τῆς σαρκός, ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν πέμψας*, “*In view of the law’s inability*, because it was weakened through the flesh, God sent his own Son.” As in Galatians 4:4, there then follow two materially related attributive qualifications of *τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱόν*, “his own Son”:

(1) God sent his own Son *ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας*, literally “in the likeness of sinful flesh,” which is also well captured by the NJB: “in the same human nature as any sinner.” This means that the Son indeed came in the flesh (cf. 1 John 4:2; John 1:14; 1 Tim. 3:16) but that he remained upon earth without the guilt of sin (cf. also 2 Cor. 5:21 and Phil. 2:7).

(2) God sent his own Son *ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, “in the likeness of sinful flesh, *even* as a sin offering” or “*that is*, as a sin offering.” The translation of *καί* by “even” or “that is” (instead of “and”) is epexegetic or explanatory (cf. BDAG 495, s.v. *καί* 1c.). R. H. Bell translates similarly: “God sent his own son in the form of sinful flesh (*ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας*), *that is* as a sin-offering (*περὶ ἁμαρτίας*)” (“Sacrifice and Christology in Paul,” 5, italics added). These translations suggest that the Levitical “sin offering” itself is a kind of likeness or stand-in for the “sinful flesh” of humans. An innocent animal slain as a sin offering is a sacrificially legitimate representation of a sinful human being, since both share “flesh” and therefore also “blood” (cf. Lev. 17:11). Because the Septuagint translates the Hebrew word for the “sin offering,” חַטָּאת (*ḥaṭṭāʾt*),

mostly with περὶ ἁμαρτίας (cf. Lev. 5:6, 7, 11, etc., roughly eighty-eight times in the LXX translation books [including some occurrences of περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας]), and partly with ἁμαρτία alone (cf. Lev. 4:21, 24; 5:12; and above, 221, §5.3.2.2), the whole statement makes good sense: When God sent his own Son to die as an unblemished Levitical "sin offering" for the world's guilt, God condemned sin in "the flesh"—first in the flesh of Jesus, and then by extension also in the flesh of Christians who are "united with him in the likeness of his death" (Rom. 6:5 NASB). God's condemnation of sin in the flesh according to Romans 8:3—the flesh both of Jesus and of those crucified with him (cf. Rom. 6:6)—fulfills "the righteous requirement of the law" and explains why Paul can claim that Christians alone are enabled to "walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" in Romans 8:4. This entire process whereby Christ comes "in the flesh" to take up the same place or position before God occupied by sinful human flesh has been freshly explained against the backgound of the Levitical חַטָּאת or περὶ ἁμαρτίας sacrifice with the help of the works of the Tübingen Old Testament scholars H. Gese and B. Janowski (see bibliography). The death of the sin offering itself becomes a representative event that includes the lives of the sinners needing atonement by a process now called "inclusive place-taking" (German: *inkludierende Stellvertretung*), as distinct from the usual notion of substitution or "exclusive place-taking" (*exkludierende Stellvertretung*). The same pattern that related ancient Israelites to the death of the sin offering now relates believers to the death of Jesus according to Romans 8:3–4. Because of the frequency with which חַטָּאת is translated by ἁμαρτία alone, the same background of the Levitical sin offering should perhaps be applied to the use of ἁμαρτία in the traditional formula of 2 Corinthians 5:21: "God made him who knew no sin (i.e., Jesus) to be a *sin offering* for us" (see above, 221).

In Romans 8:4 (cf. vv. 5–8) Paul makes clear that God's sending of his Son does not make the Son a "servant of sin" (διάκονος ἁμαρτίας), as charged by the Jewish Christian opponents of Paul in Galatia and Rome (cf. Gal. 2:17 with Rom. 3:8). Rather, sinners are freed from the dominion of sin through Jesus's sending and sacrifice and are placed in the position of those who are in fullfillment of God's law. By the power of the Spirit of Christ of which they have become partakers, they are doers of the will of God and call to God just as does Jesus himself, αββα ὁ πατήρ (Rom. 8:15).

4.2.6 As is shown by the messianic implications of Galatians 4:4–5 and Romans 8:3–4 and confirmed by Romans 1:1–5; 9:5, 32–33; 15:8–12; and 2 Corinthians 1:20, *Paul sees the sending of the Son of God into the world as the fulfillment of the messianic promises to Israel and the nations.*

4.2.7 Whereas the sending formulas speak of the salvific goal for which God sent his Son, the first half of the Philippian hymn (Phil. 2:6–8) stresses the *exemplary and saving obedience* in which Jesus fulfilled his mission:

> [6]who, though he was in the form of God,
> did not regard equality with God
> as something to be exploited,

[7]but made himself poor,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
[8]he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross. (NRSV modified; cf. O. Hofius, *Der Christushymnus Philipper 2,6–11* [1991[2]], 103)

O. Hofius's analysis of the tradition and style of this hymn has led him to conclude that Isaiah 52:13–53:12 and Isaiah 45:22–24 stand in the background. The phrase θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ ("even death on a cross") in Philippians 2:8c is an original part of the hymn and can be removed only at the price of destroying its overall artistic structure, which is comparable with Hebrews 12:2. This makes superfluous the often-repeated claim made, for example, by E. Lohmeyer (*Der Brief an die Philipper* [1974[14]], 96) and E. Käsemann ("A Critical Analysis of Philippians 2:5–11," in *God and Christ: Existence and Providence*, Journal for Theology and the Church 5, ed. R. W. Funk [1968], 45–88, here 75) that verse 8c was added to the Christ hymn by Paul in order to give it the contours of a theology of the cross.

The song of the Suffering Servant, Isaiah 52:13–53:12, shows how Philippians 2:6–8 is to be understood. Christ freely gave up the heavenly position of power which belonged to him as the Son of God and mediator of creation (cf. 2 Cor. 8:9). He went the way of self-humiliation and continued it obediently until his death on the cross. *The cross is the most extreme contrast to preexistence and at the same time the unmistakable and offensive sign of the sending of Jesus for the salvation of the world*. On the cross the Son of God who had come down into the flesh appeared to the eyes of the world in deepest weakness and lack of power (2 Cor. 13:4); he was executed by the Jewish leaders and Pilate, who failed to recognize his divine being and task (cf. 1 Cor. 2:8 with Acts 3:17; 13:27). But on the cross he effected through his vicarious surrender of life the salvation of the world. As a sign of this, God raised him from the dead through his power as

creator (2 Cor. 13:4) and exalted him to be the Κύριος to whom someday the whole creation shall pay homage (Phil. 2:9–11).

The cross on Golgotha, as the place where Jesus divested himself of his power and took the place of our existence for the salvation of the whole cosmos, determines the being and the life of all those who participate by faith in Jesus's death—in Pauline terms, those who have been crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:19; 6:14; Rom. 6:6). In the sufferings of his apostolic existence, Paul experienced himself to be the first of these "crucified-with-Christ" people, and out of this experience he developed his *theology of the cross* (see below).

4.2.8 By suffering obediently his death on the cross "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας), that is, in human existence but without his own guilt for sins (Rom. 8:3), Jesus broke the dominion of sin that had come over the cosmos through Adam's disobedience (Rom. 5:12–21). Jesus's obedient suffering therefore has first and foremost a saving significance; its exemplary character is stressed by Paul in Philippians 2:5, Romans 15:3, and Galatians 6:2.

4.2.9 In 1 Corinthians 15:44–49 and Romans 5:12–21 Paul emphasizes that through Christ, the truly obedient *new Adam*, believers gain a share in the resurrection of the dead, the heavenly existence, and the reign of grace (cf. 1 Cor. 15:22–23, 48–49; Rom. 5:17, 21).

The parallelism of these statements of Paul's participation theology to Galatians 4:5 and Romans 8:4–17 (see above) is explained when one considers the lines of tradition which come together in the Pauline discourse about Christ as the *last Adam* (1 Cor. 15:45). These include three important elements: (1) The tradition (coming from Jesus himself) about the coming messianic Son of Man who suffers obediently, looks forward to his exaltation to the right hand of God, and comes with the clouds of heaven (Mark 10:45; 14:61–62 par.). For the sake of better understanding on the Hellenistic mission field, Paul calls this Son of Man the "man from heaven," ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ (1 Cor. 15:47; cf. also 1 Tim. 2:5, where the υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, "Son of Man," of Mark 10:45 par. is called simply the ἄνθρωπος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, "the man Jesus Christ" or "Christ Jesus, himself human" [NRSV, NET, HCSB, TNIV; cf. REB, NJB]). (2) The early Jewish speculation about the creation and fall of humanity according to Genesis 1–3. Over against Adam, who was created according to Genesis 2:7 from the earth and who brought death over the world through his fall (1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 5:12), Christ for Paul is "the second man from heaven" (1 Cor. 15:47). Through his obedient suffering and his exaltation as Κύριος, Christ provides believers with a share in the βασιλεία which he establishes and in eternal life (1 Cor. 15:22–24, 49; Rom. 5:17, 21). (3) A further correspondence between the old and the new Adam is merely hinted at by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5:12–21. Just as Adam was the father and destiny-bearer of sinful humanity (cf. *4 Ezra* 7:118; *2 Bar.* 54:15–19), as his body was the source out of which the (old) people of God proceeded (cf. Gen. 2:21–24 with *4 Ezra* 6:54 and *L.A.B.* 32:15), and as death came into the world through him (*4 Ezra* 7:119–126), so also from the surrender of life, resurrection, and exaltation of the Son of Man/Messiah Jesus Christ come the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. 15:21) and the church as the "body of Christ," which is united with its Κύριος as a head and members or as a man and woman according to Genesis 2:21–24 and 3:16 (cf. 1 Cor. 6:13, 16–17; Gal. 3:27–28; Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:21–33).

4.3 In the Jesus tradition (cf. Mark 10:45; 12:6–9 par.) and in John 3:16–17, God's sending his Son and the Son's vicarious surrender of life belong inseparably together. Philippians 2:6–11 and Romans 8:3–4 show that the same holds for Paul. The christological sending formulas are supplemented in Paul's letters by many pieces of tradition and other statements that speak of Jesus's saving death. In this way the sending of the Son of God leads into the *second christological movement, describing the saving work of eschatological atonement and justification which God has accomplished through Jesus's death on the cross*. The apostle works this out with such precision that it must be seen as the *main accent of Pauline Christology*.

It is no accident that Paul places the accent here. As persecutor of the church, he took particular offense at the Christians' confession of Jesus as the crucified Messiah exalted by God (cf. 1 Cor. 1:23). But outside Damascus the crucified one appeared to him as the risen Son of God whom God had glorified, and he called Paul to be an apostle. From this ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ or "revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12) Paul deduced the saving significance of the death and mission of Jesus as a whole. This is why he placed the crucified Christ and what God has accomplished "for us" through him at the center of his teaching (cf. Gal. 3:1, 13; 6:12–16; 1 Cor. 1:23–25; 2:2, 8; 2 Cor. 13:3–4; Phil. 2:6–11, but also 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 3:24–26).

This second christological movement is also of special importance for biblical theology. Paul weaves into his presentation all the soteriological Christ formulas that we have already encountered in the analysis of the Christ confession of the pre-Pauline churches. The main statements of these formulas draw upon the Holy Scriptures and go back in part to Jesus's own teaching (see above, 215–22, §5). Because they return in a prominent position in Paul, it becomes clear that the soteriological kernel sentences of Paul's gospel about Christ stand in a continuity of tradition with the confession of the pre-Pauline churches and the teaching of the earthly Jesus. *Accordingly the apostle's teaching about Jesus's surrender of his life and about atonement, reconciliation, and justification through Christ is biblically-theologically of fundamental importance.*

4.3.1 It is advisable in the presentation of Pauline soteriology to orient oneself to the so-called *surrender formulas*—statements about Christ's "giving" himself or being "handed over" or "delivered up" for sins (cf. δίδωμι, παραδίδωμι). These formulas originate in Isaiah 53:6, 12 LXX and present Christ as the vicariously suffering Servant. As in the language about the sending of Jesus, either God or Jesus can be the subject of the giving or

handing over in these formulas. Romans 4:25 and 8:32 speak of the Son's being delivered up by the Father, while the Son gives himself up for "me" or "us" in Galatians 1:4; 2:20; and Ephesians 5:2, 25. Because this double form of expression already appears in the Jesus tradition, likewise in connection with Isaiah 53 (cf. Mark 9:31 par. on the one hand and Mark 10:45 par. on the other), these surrender formulas expose the *continuity between the Jesus tradition and Paul*.

4.3.1.1 According to Romans 8:32, God "did not *spare* his own Son but *delivered him up* for us all" (NASB)—*ὅς γε τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ οὐκ ἐφείσατο ἀλλὰ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πάντων παρέδωκεν αὐτόν*. Whereas the verb παραδίδωμι, "give over" or "deliver up," alludes to Isaiah 53:6, 12 ("the Lord *gave him over* to our sins"; he was "*delivered* to death" and "*delivered* because of their sins"), the overall statement and especially the use of the verb φείδομαι, "spare," seem to depend on Genesis 22:16 with reference to Abraham and Isaac: *οὐκ ἐφείσω τοῦ υἱοῦ σου τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ*, "You did not *spare* your beloved son." Yet in sacrificing his one and only Son for the world that had fallen away from him, God outdid Abraham, revealing himself as the unsurpassably gracious and merciful one. He has given people in their lostness literally everything that he as the creator and preserver of the universe has to give in time and eternity, and he has defined himself through the giving (and resurrecting) of his Son once for all as "*God for us*."

4.3.1.2 The language of the handing over or the death of the Son of God "for us" (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν) or also "for our sins" (ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν) is formulaic in Paul.

Interestingly, the soteriological use of ὑπέρ with the genitive "on behalf of, for" cannot completely be explained by reference to Isaiah 53 LXX, because it lacks this preposition even though it retains a soteriological sense. Instead of ὑπέρ, Isaiah 53:6 uses a dative of indirect object without a preposition (*κύριος παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ἡμῶν*, "the Lord gave him over *to* our sins), while Isaiah 53:12 uses a different preposition, διά, "because of": *διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν παρεδόθη*, "*because of* their sins he was delivered up" (cf. Rom. 4:25, παρεδόθη *διὰ* τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν, "he was delivered up *because of* our transgressions"). Therefore the ὑπέρ sayings in Paul may go back to the cup saying of Mark 14:24/Luke 22:20, which is based on Isaiah 43:3–4 and 53:12. Coming from this double background, the ὑπέρ was first taken up in the catechetical summary of the gospel Paul cites in 1 Corinthians 15:3–5 and then became current in early Christianity in several variations. "In Christological sayings ὑπέρ is used to show the thrust of the work of salvation. . . . The death and passion of Christ are *for* men and accrue *to their favour*" (H. Riesenfeld, *TDNT* 8:508–9). The ὑπέρ

appears in Paul, for example, in Galatians 1:4, 2:20, 3:13, 1 Corinthians 11:24, 2 Corinthians 5:14–15, Romans 5:6–8, *passim*.

The preposition ὑπέρ is soteriologically important for three reasons: (1) It pregnantly encapsulates the sense and goal of the reconciling work of Jesus that culminate in the passion (cf. Mark 10:45 and 14:24 par.). (2) The christological language of the death of Jesus "for us" makes the offensive riddle of Jesus's death on the cross soteriologically understandable and leads past the so-called contrast scheme of Acts 2:36 and 10:39–40 (see above, 216, §§5.1–2). Finally, (3) the ὑπέρ makes it possible to connect Christology and justification (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 4:25).

4.3.1.3 From Romans 4:24–25, 2 Corinthians 5:20–21, and Romans 3:24–26 one can see that the ὑπέρ and the pre-Pauline formula tradition serve the apostle as the *christological basis of justification*.

In *Romans 4:24–25* Paul praises the God who raised Jesus from the dead for his decisive saving act in which he "handed over (Jesus) to death for our trespasses and raised (him) for our justification."

Romans 4:25 deals, as we have seen (above, 194–95, §3.2), with a Christ formula whose origins go back behind the LXX to the Hebrew text of Isaiah 53:11–12. The death of Jesus is understood in this formula as an אָשָׁם (*ʾāšām*), that is, as a means of compensation or "wiping out guilt" (B. Janowski) for the sins of the "many." Jesus's resurrection then appears as the exaltation that gives the Servant who vicariously bore the sins of the many the right to intercede for them as God's appointed righteous one (cf. Isa. 53:11 and *Tg. Isa.* 53:12).

The formula tradition that Paul took up enabled him to speak of the crucified and exalted Christ as the Son of God who, by the power of his atoning death and intercession, effects justification in time and eternity before God's judgment seat for those who believe in him (cf. Rom. 5:9; 8:34).

In *2 Corinthians 5:19–21* Paul speaks of the ministry of the gospel that God entrusted to him (and all the apostles) as the "word of reconciliation," λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς. Verse 21 explains what reconciliation consists of: God "made him who knew no (guilt of) sin to be (a) sin(-offering) for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in (through) him."

2 Corinthians 5:21 may deal with a Christ formula coined already by the Hellenists in the light of Isaiah 53:6, 11–12. This formula interprets Jesus's death on the cross as a divine work of "inclusive atonement," in which ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν is to be translated "he made him a sin offering." O. Hofius would rather interpret the expression as a "metonymy" in which "the abstract noun 'sin' stands for

the concrete noun ‘sinner’” (*Paulusstudien* [1989], 47). But this understanding does not exclude a sacrificial sense of ἁμαρτία, especially since this word on its own (i.e., not as part of the phrase περὶ ἁμαρτίας) designates the “sin offering” some eleven times in the Old Testament (see above, 221, §5.3.2.2). One can understand the sacrifice of an animal as a sin offering according to Leviticus 5:7 with K. Koch as follows: “by being sacrificed in the effectual presence of Yahweh, the animal becomes sin in the literal sense, i.e., the sphere of the *chatta’t* [= חַטָּאת, ‘sin offering’] becomes concentrated in the animal, as it were becoming flesh in an animal body” (*TDOT* 4:317). Precisely this view is applied to Christ in 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Christ appears as the ground of our justification also in 2 Corinthians 5:21 because his death is understood (as in Rom. 8:3) as a sin offering provided by God against the background of Isaiah 53:6, 11–12. For believers this means that the guiltless one bears vicariously the sins of sinners and dies in their place the death they deserved. Sinners are thus spared from the annihilating judgment, and by participating in the righteousness which Christ puts into effect, they gain a new life before God. “The righteousness of God” in 2 Corinthians 5:21 determines the existence of believers and may be equated with the “new creation” (καινὴ κτίσις) of 2 Corinthians 5:17. The apostle makes the traditional statements of 2 Corinthians 5:21 completely his own. *God’s act of atonement and reconciliation in and through Christ is the decisive legal ground of justification, which provides the basis for new life before God*.

In *Romans 3:24–26* we encounter the same basic facts. This is the central passage in Romans about the doctrine of justification.

It was probably the Stephen circle that formed the paradosis of Romans 3:25–26a (v. 25 in English) while still in Jerusalem. They took the risk of speaking antitypically, over against the highest Jewish ritual of atonement on the Day of Atonement, about the public installation of Jesus as the “mercy seat” (ἱλαστήριον = כַּפֹּרֶת) on Golgotha, which supersedes and makes superfluous all cultic atonement. With Romans 3:25–26a Good Friday becomes the Day of Atonement for the new people of God composed of Jews and Gentiles (see above, 218–21, §5.3.2.1).

Paul takes up the paradosis of the Hellenists in Romans 3:24–26 because for him it describes the central core of the “redemption in Christ Jesus” (ἀπολύτρωσις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) by which God laid the foundation for the justification of sinners. Paul assumes with the tradition that God, by his public installation of Jesus as the ἱλαστήριον or “mercy seat” (cf. Rom. 3:25 NET: “God publicly displayed him at his death [lit. in his blood] as the mercy seat”), provided the eschatological demonstration of his saving righteousness when Jesus passed through the death sentence. Through the

blood of Christ, God himself accomplished once for all an (inclusive) atonement, thereby laying the foundation for the justification of sinners through Christ.

The apostle expands upon the statements of the paradosis of Romans 3:25–26a in three ways. (1) In verse 25 he adds *διὰ τῆς πίστεως*, "through faith," thereby expressing that Christ is accessible as the *ἱλαστήριον* *only through faith* and that the atonement God accomplished by delivering up his Son can be appropriated only by faith (cf. NET: "the mercy seat *accessible* through faith"). Sinners, who according to Romans 3:23 have fallen from their original created glory, have been able to contribute nothing of their own to God's saving act; they can only acknowledge and accept it after the fact. (2) Because God's eschatological act of atonement can be appropriated only *διὰ τῆς πίστεως*, its scope is expanded; it now no longer deals with a saving act in and for Israel alone, but for all believers (Rom. 3:22, 30). (3) The installation of Jesus as the *ἱλαστήριον* is for Paul not only a saving event of the past but has current *ongoing validity*. The apostle expresses this by expanding the formulaic text in verse 26b: God has demonstrated his saving righteousness *ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ*, "in the now time," that is, in the new era of salvation that has broken into history with the sending of Jesus (cf. Rom. 3:21 with Gal. 4:4 and 2 Cor. 6:2). Why God did this may be seen from the final words of verse 26, which Paul has likewise added to the original formula: God wished to show "that he himself *is* righteous and that he *justifies* the one who has faith in Jesus" (*εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν δίκαιον καὶ δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ*). These present-tense statements have the same soteriological meaning as Romans 8:31–39. *By the power of his atoning act in and through Christ, God wills to be the righteous one by justifying all who believe in Jesus*. For the sake of Christ's atoning death, he redeems them from their sin and thereby makes them a new creation.

The Jewish Christian paradosis of Romans 3:25–26a first developed in the Stephen circle with a view to Israel alone is therefore affirmed by Paul and understood universally. For him God is the one who justifies Jews and Gentiles for Christ's sake, and the *Χριστός* crucified on Golgotha and raised by God is not only the Messiah of Israel. He is true God and true man in one person, Lord and reconciler of the world.

With the formulations of Romans 3:26 Paul solved a fundamental problem for the doctrine of justification which arises out of the formulation *ἡ πάρεσις τῶν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων*, “the passing over of the previously committed sins,” in Romans 3:25. The expression can be referred sensibly only to the transgressions which preceded the saving act of God proclaimed in Romans 3:25–26a. By “previously committed sins,” the original Jewish Christian paradosis probably meant the sins committed by Israel and patiently endured by God up until the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus (cf. Rom. 2:4). But it leaves open the question of whether and how God’s atoning act on Golgotha also covers those sins that were committed after Christ’s saving death and his exaltation to the right hand of God. To this soteriologically important question Paul responds clearly in Romans 3:26b (cf. with 4:25 and 8:31–34): by the power of his atoning action in Christ’s cross and resurrection, God *is and remains* the one who justifies those who believe in Jesus. By the same token the Servant Jesus, whom God delivered up to make atonement for the sins of the many and then also exalted, *is and will remain* until the final judgment the Christ who intercedes before God’s judgment seat for believers and their justification.

According to 2 Corinthians 5:20–21, Romans 3:24–26, 4:25, and 8:32–34, justification is the end-time saving activity of God based on the vicarious surrender of the life of Jesus on the cross which God himself initiated, and it has ongoing significance. Therefore, it is out of the question that the apostle’s doctrine of justification seen from this angle is only a subsidiary doctrine (W. Wrede, A. Schweitzer) or is merely a theological theory that also ensures the participation of the Gentiles in God’s covenant (K. Stendahl and E. P. Sanders).

4.3.2 The tradition of Jesus’s atoning death and existential taking of the place of sinners is sharpened by Paul with a law-critical accent in Galatians 3:13, Romans 8:3, and 10:4.

Paul’s call impressed him with the experience that he himself, as a pious Jew who had dedicated himself entirely to the Torah and had led a life in blameless righteousness (Phil. 3:6), could by no means attain righteousness by means of the law before the one God who had raised Jesus from the dead, but remains a godless person who, without Christ’s intercession, is lost in the final judgment. The Torah is indeed for Paul God’s good, holy, and righteous commandment, but it cannot make those who through and since Adam are wicked into righteous people of whom it could be said, with the *Targum of Isaiah* 7:3, 10:21–22, and 26:2, that they have “not sinned” and have “kept the Torah with a perfect heart” (cf. O. Hofius, *Paulusstudien*, 127). Only through Christ is atonement made by God for sinners; only through him are those who receive and accept this activity of God by faith given a new existence in righteousness in which they are capable of free and thankful obedience. The apostle applies this knowledge repeatedly and pointedly.

4.3.2.1 In Galatians 3:13 Paul writes that Christ has innocently and vicariously borne the curse of God, which according to Deuteronomy 21:22–23 rests on a crucified person, for those who are branded by the law as transgressors. The curse of death vicariously borne by Jesus “for us”

represents the decisive counterbalance to the law's deadly guilty verdict over all sinners.

There is considerable boldness in this line of thought. In the light of the *Temple Scroll* of Qumran and the broad dissemination of the interpretation of Jesus's death on the cross based on Deuteronomy 21:22–23 found not only in Paul but also in Acts 5:30, 10:39, and Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho* 89.2, we can say with some certainty that Jesus appeared to his Jewish opponents as a pseudomessianic "deceiver" who was rightly executed on the cross and who was to be seen in the light of Deuteronomy 21:22–23 as one "cursed by God and man" (11Q19 [11QTemple[a]] 64:12) (see above, 170). Paul shared this view. Once he was called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, he turned it to the positive, declaring that Jesus bore the curse of the cross innocently and vicariously "for us." By this act of existential place-taking for others, he ended the deadly dominion that sin had established by means of the law over Jews and Gentiles. No one had dared think this before Paul. He advanced to this interpretation only on the basis of his experience of his call. This interpretation is so important to him that he presents it several times.

4.3.2.2 In Romans 8:3–4 Paul formulates his soteriological knowledge as follows: God put an end to the dominion sin had established by means of the law over all sinners by condemning sin once for all when it assaulted the earthly existence of Jesus, his *σάρξ* or "flesh" (see above, 324–25, §4.2.5).

4.3.2.3 God's dealing in this way leads to a double consequence according to Paul. For everyone who believes in the crucified and exalted Son of God as Savior and Lord, *Christ is the end of the Mosaic law* (Rom. 10:4). This means that after Jesus's atoning death and resurrection, people can no longer establish their own righteousness before God by means of the Torah and thereby work for their own acquittal in the final judgment; the Jewish attempt to do so is as blind as it is useless (cf. Rom. 10:1–4). On the other hand, there can be no thought that the Christ of God gives the freedom to sin to those he has redeemed (cf. Gal. 4:5) by his atoning death from the dominion and power of sin. Precisely the opposite is the case according to Romans 8:3–17. The sending and sacrifice of the Son of God have the goal of making believers into doers of the will of God as revealed in the Torah. *Christ is for Paul both "the end of the law" and the exalted Lord who puts God's holy will newly into force and through the Spirit that proceeds from him also sees to the fulfillment of this will*.

4.3.3 The second christological movement, which is so decisive for Paul, can be summarized with reference to Romans 5:6–10 and 8:31–39. In the sending and sacrifice of Christ, God's love is demonstrated in an unparalleled way. By graciously sending his own Son into the world and

handing him over to death for the ungodly, God puts all forms of heroism (itself well known in the ancient world) in the shade and introduces a time and situation in which believers can no longer be separated from the love of God in Christ their Lord by any opposing power.

4.4 Because Paul places the main accent of his Christology on the second movement, the saving ministry of Christ including his death and resurrection, it is advisable to discuss the *relationship of Paul and Jesus* in this context.

4.4.1 At first glance the preaching and teaching of Jesus and the message of Paul in his letters appear to be two completely different complexes of tradition. At the center of Jesus's preaching stands the kingdom of God. The concept of justification is only hinted at (cf. Luke 18:9–14), and the meaning of Jesus's suffering and death was at first only for private instruction among the disciples. The Jesus tradition is passed on by the disciples in the form of sayings, parables, and historical narratives. With Paul it is the opposite. Paul's message and teaching are transmitted in the form of authentic and secondary letters; his gospel is about the righteousness of God; the cross and resurrection of Jesus stand at the center of his Christology, and he speaks only occasionally about the kingdom of God (cf. 1 Thess. 2:12; Gal. 5:21; 1 Cor. 4:20; 6:9–10; 15:24, 50; Rom. 14:17). The apostle never met Jesus personally, though while in Jerusalem he probably experienced Jesus's condemnation and crucifixion from a distance (cf. Acts 22:3). After Easter he took his stand against the Stephen circle and its daughter communities, and only after his call was he directly confronted with the teaching and preaching of Jesus by the Christians of Damascus, Jerusalem, and Antioch. *There are therefore marked tradition-historical and theological differences between Jesus and Paul*.

4.4.2 Nevertheless, the references to the sayings of Jesus that are woven into Paul's letters (1 Cor. 7:10–11; 9:14; 11:23–25), together with his presentation of Jesus's exemplary suffering obedience (2 Cor. 8:9; Rom. 15:3; Phil. 2:5) and Jesus's passion culminating on the cross (Gal. 3:1; 1 Cor. 1:23–24; 2:2, 8; 11:23; 15:3–4), show that *Paul had a thoroughly developed picture of the teaching, ministry, and suffering of Jesus and that the sayings of the* Κύριος *had great authority for him*.

One should no longer use *2 Corinthians 5:16* to deny that Paul had such a picture of Jesus. This verse by no means proves that according to Paul "it is illegitimate to grasp Christ in his worldly

manifestation" (R. Bultmann, *Der zweite Brief an die Korinther*, ed. E. Dinkler [1988[2]], 158). The verse is also no place to find a subsequent "un-Pauline gloss" added to the text "that rejects the earthly, bodily Jesus in the sense of Gnostic dualism" (W. Schmithals, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien* [1985], 109). Nor does Paul here turn against Christian opponents who have raised Jesus to the status of a "divine man" (θεῖος ἀνήρ) in order to criticize them for propagating a mere "Christ according to the flesh" (H. Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 2, *History and Literature of Early Christianity* [2000[2]], 132–33). Rather, *2 Corinthians 5:16 refers to the reversal in the apostle's own understanding of Christ*. As a persecutor of the Christian church, Paul saw Jesus as the "deceiver" of Israel who had ended his life on the cross under God's curse (Deut. 21:23). But now, on the basis of the new knowledge of Christ that God opened up to him outside Damascus (2 Cor. 4:4–6; Phil. 3:8), Paul confesses him as the messianic Son of God and Lord. 2 Corinthians 5:16 should therefore be translated: "From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a fleshly point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a fleshly point of view, we know him no longer in that way" (NRSV modified; cf. F. Lang, *Die Briefe an die Korinther* [1994[2]], 293f.).

4.4.3 Reflecting further upon the relationship of Paul and Jesus from this perspective, we must keep in mind that the apostle not only preached the gospel publicly but also delivered *church instruction* for years. The reports in Acts about Paul's teaching in Antioch, Corinth, and Ephesus (cf. Acts 11:26; 15:35; 18:7–11; 19:9–10) are confirmed by several references of the apostle himself to his teaching ministry (cf., e.g., 1 Thess. 4:1–2; 1 Cor. 4:17; 11:23; 15:1–2). As an apostle, Paul was also an early Christian teacher.

4.4.3.1 It is precisely this fact that makes possible a plausible answer to the question frequently raised as to why in Paul's letters there are *only a very few explicit references to the sayings of Jesus and why allusions to his sayings are scarcely or not at all designated as such.*

The apostle refers explicitly to *sayings of the* Κύριος only in 1 Corinthians 7:10–11 (cf. with Mark 10:11–12 par.), 1 Corinthians 9:14 (cf. with Luke 10:7/Matt. 10:10), and 1 Corinthians 11:23–25 (cf. with Luke 22:19–20). However, in 1 Thessalonians 4:15 the phrase "this we declare to you *by the word of the Lord* (ἐν λόγῳ κυρίου)" probably does not introduce a saying of the Lord but refers instead (as in the parallel usage in 1 Kings 13:1; 20:35; 1 Chron. 15:15 LXX) to a word of revelation given to Paul by the exalted Κύριος; the key word "mystery" (μυστήριον) in 1 Corinthians 15:51–52 refers to the same thing (O. Hofius). The apostle explains this word of revelation in 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 with the help of apocalyptic Jesus tradition that recalls Matthew 24:30–31.

Allusions to sayings of Jesus are much more common in Paul. Compare, for example, 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 and 5:1–2 with Matthew 24:30–31, 36, 43; Galatians 6:2 with Matthew 5:43–48 and 22:37–40; 1 Corinthians 6:2 with Luke 12:32 and 22:28–30; 1 Corinthians 6:7 with Matthew 5:39–40; 1 Corinthians 10:16–17 with Mark 14:22–24; 1 Corinthians 13:2 with Matthew 17:20; 1 Corinthians 15:51–52 with Matthew 24:30–31 (and 1 Thess. 4:15–17: see above); 2 Corinthians 1:17 with Matthew 5:37; 2 Corinthians 5:14 with Mark 10:45 par.; 2 Corinthians 6:2 with Luke 4:19, 21; 2 Corinthians 13:1 with Matthew 18:16; Galatians 4:6 and Romans 8:15 with Mark 14:36; Romans 12:14 with Luke 6:28/Matthew 5:44; Romans 13:7 with Luke 20:25; Romans 13:8–10 with Matthew 22:37–40; Romans 14:10 with Luke 6:37/Matthew 7:1; Romans 14:14 with Mark 7:15, 20 par.;

Romans 14:20 with Luke 11:41; Romans 15:7 with Luke 15:2; Phil. 2:15 with Luke 9:41/Matthew 17:17; etc. However, since none of these allusions are designated as such, it is debated whether the apostle and his addressees were at all conscious of their points of contact with the Jesus tradition.

L. Goppelt points out that a scarcity of citations and references to the sayings of Jesus is a feature not only of the letters of Paul:

> Luke, e.g., did not point back to the accounts of his Gospel in any of the missionary sermons in the book of Acts; the only saying of Jesus quoted in the book of Acts (20:35) was an *agraphon!* The author of I John was just as reluctant to direct attention back to the Fourth Gospel. Even II Clement, a homily written around the middle of the 2nd century, made hardly any use of the Gospel tradition though its author was undoubtedly familiar with it. Paul too, therefore, could have known the Jesus tradition that was written down later in the synoptic Gospels although he did not quote it. (Goppelt, *Theology of the New Testament* [1982], 2:44)

The finding sketched by Goppelt also applies to the letters of James and 1 Peter. Goppelt explains this by referring to the different hermeneutical situations before and after Easter: "The ministry of the earthly Jesus was tied strictly to its particular eschatological situation. . . . As such it could not be appropriated into the situation of the community that, regardless of interpretive directions, took as its starting point the Easter event" (ibid., 45).

If one seeks to explain the facts to which Goppelt has called attention, then the scarcity of citations of the sayings of Jesus through *2 Clement* rules out W. Schmithals's hypothesis "that for more than 100 years of early church development, the synoptic tradition was essentially an apocryphal tradition" (*Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien* [1985], 125). If this were so, then the explicit references to Gospel traditions in *1 Clement*, 2 Peter 1:16–17, the *Didache*, and Justin would be completely inexplicable; none of these witnesses allows us to conclude that in citing from the Gospels he was taking up apocryphal tradition! Leaving Schmithals's thesis behind as misleading, we must rather draw attention to the fact that *the Gospel tradition on the one hand and the apostolic letters on the other belong to different text types with different functions.* The apostolic letter addresses its recipients in their current situation and provides an occasion to refer to the Gospel tradition only when the situation requires. The Gospel traditions (and other teaching traditions) were preserved above all in the early Christian church's instruction and were passed on by διδάσκαλοι or

teachers (cf. Gal. 6:6; 1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7; Acts 13:1; etc.). Paul, too, was (sometimes) active as a διδάσκαλος. But he deals explicitly with the content of his instruction (and that of the other apostles) only where it had become controversial or been forgotten, or needed additional clarification (cf., e.g., 1 Thess. 4:1–2; 4:13–5:11; 1 Cor. 7:10–11; 9:14; 11:23–25; 15:1–11). Paul is normally content with mere allusions to the content of his teaching, expecting that they will be recognized by the recipients of his letters and deciphered in the light of previous church instruction. He explicitly invites this by formulas concerning what his readers already "know," including οὐκ οἴδατε, "do you not know . . . ?" (1 Cor. 6:2–3), (ἀκριβῶς) οἴδατε, "you know (very well)" (1 Thess. 4:2; 5:2), ἢ ἀγνοεῖτε ὅτι, "or are you ignorant that . . . ?" (Rom. 6:3), and οἴδαμεν γάρ, "for we know" (Rom. 7:14).

These controversial results are best explained with reference to church catechetical instruction. The following examples from Paul's letters confirm this: (1) Paul developed the extensive paraclesis of 1 Thessalonians 4:15–18 by using (pre)synoptic tradition, but in 1 Corinthians 15:51–52 he summarizes the same idea as a revealed "mystery" (μυστήριον) that appears to be independent of such tradition. The Corinthians themselves must put it back into the catechetical context from which it has emerged. (2) In Romans 6:17 Paul refers to the catechetical formula of 1 Corinthians 15:3–5 merely by the key phrase "form of teaching" (τύπος διδαχῆς), expecting that the Christians will know from their baptismal instruction which "form of teaching" he meant. (3) Paul proceeds the same way with his allusions to teaching about wisdom that was likewise a topic of church instruction (cf. 1 Cor. 1:21 and Rom. 1:18–32 with Wis. 13–15). (4) Paul sometimes makes it clear that a certain statement is attested in the Holy Scriptures, but other times he does not (cf. 1 Cor. 7:39 with Rom. 7:1–3 [and Ps. 88:6 (ET 88:5)]; Phil. 2:10 with Rom. 14:11; etc.). In sum, in decoding traditions and allusions in Paul's letters, the fact of early Christian catechetical instruction and the knowledge that the addressees acquired from it should be reflected to a much greater degree than has been customary in previous research.

One can also ask whether the evidence in Paul's letters might not also be explained by his own particular situation. Since the so-called Antioch incident (cf. Gal. 2:11–21; Acts 15:36–41) there were tensions between Paul, Peter, and the Antioch missionaries, and Paul was subjected to constant attacks by Jewish Christian countermissionaries who valued the teaching of the old Jerusalem apostles more highly than Paul's gospel of the justification of the ungodly. Perhaps the reason why Paul so seldom refers to the Jesus tradition is that he wanted to be as independent as he could from the teaching and tradition of the Jerusalem apostles in the light of his conflicts with the countermissionaries. But the absence of direct references to Jesus sayings in the letters of James and 1 Peter makes this hypothesis historically highly unlikely.

4.4.3.2 If one does not detach the teaching and life of Paul artificially from their historical framework but rather lets the apostle really be the early Christian witness and teacher who he was ever since Damascus, and if one moreover takes into account that Paul was in constant contact with Peter

and the other main witnesses of the Jesus tradition in Jerusalem and Antioch, then one cannot possibly speak of a lack of knowledge or especially of a devaluation of the Jesus tradition by Paul. *Rather, in 1 Corinthians 11:23–25 and 15:1–11 he demonstrates that in his teaching of the Lord's Supper and of the gospel, he stands in a continuum of teaching and tradition that reaches back to the Jerusalem apostles called before him and through them to Jesus himself*.

If one adds to this 1 Thessalonians 4:16–5:2 (see above); Galatians 3:1; 6:2; 1 Corinthians 2:8; 7:10–11; 9:14; 10:16–17; 15:22–28, 45–49; 2 Corinthians 8:9; 13:4; and Romans 5:12–21; 15:3, then it becomes clear that the apostle knew not only individual sayings of Jesus and elements of the synoptic Son of Man tradition, but also the basic features of the passion tradition, including the Jerusalem traditions of Jesus's burial underlying 1 Corinthians 15:4 (see above, 196, §3.2.3). He even had access to traditions about Jesus's resurrection appearances and his parousia that go beyond the synoptic (and Johannine) tradition: the reports of the appearances in 1 Corinthians 15:5–7 and the presentation of the parousia in 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 and 2 Thessalonians 2:3–12 are partly without parallel in the Gospel tradition. How Paul actualized sayings of Jesus for the situation of his churches is shown for example in 1 Thessalonians 4:15–17 and 1 Corinthians 7:10–11 and 9:14.

In this context it is also appropriate to refer to the interesting connections that exist between *Paul and the tradition Luke has collected* in his Gospel and Acts (see above, 256–58, §3). First, it is noteworthy that the Pauline report of the Last Supper in 1 Corinthians 11:23–25 has very close points of contact with Luke 22:19–20. Apparently we have to do with an excerpt from the (pre-)Lukan passion story that has been transformed into a "cult etiology." No less striking is the fact that the apostle, in his allusion to Jesus's crucifixion in 1 Corinthians 2:6ff., follows exactly the presentational scheme and manner of expression found in Acts 3:17 and 13:27–28 (cf. additionally Luke 23:13, 35; 24:20). The catechetical tradition of 1 Corinthians 15:3–8 cannot be illustrated by any complex of texts better than Luke 24 and Acts. Romans 1:3–4 (see above, 211–12, §3.2.3) assumes, just as does Acts 13:23ff., 32ff., that Jesus's way from birth to exaltation as "Son of God in power" is to be seen as a fulfillment of 2 Samuel 7:12, 14. The wording of Romans 12:14 is especially closely connected with that of Luke 6:27–28 par. If Paul in Romans 13:1–7 had in mind any of the synoptic versions of Jesus's saying about paying taxes to Caesar, then only Luke 20:20–26 comes into question, because only Luke 20:22 offers a parallel to Paul's term for "tax," φόρος, in Romans 13:7. Romans 14:20 is quite obviously connected with Luke 11:41, etc. From these points of contact we get the impression that *Paul wrote his letters with a knowledge of the Jesus tradition current in Antiochene missionary instruction, as it manifests itself today especially in the Lukan writings*. But the apostle is not only fixed upon the Lukan or pre-Lukan traditions. This is shown by the list above of citations of and allusions to sayings of Jesus that have close points of contact with Markan (or pre-Markan) and Matthean (pre-Matthean) traditions (cf. esp. 1 Thess. 4:16–17; 5:1–2 with the text sequence Matt. 24:30–31, 36, 43–44; see F. Neirynck, "Paul and the Sayings of Jesus," 280).

4.4.3.3 From Galatians 3:1, 1 Corinthians 1:23–24, 2:8, 11:23–25, 15:1–11, and 2 Corinthians 13:4 it is indisputable that in his church instruction as well, the apostle devoted his main christological attention to Jesus's passion, crucifixion, and resurrection. This accent can be explained on the one hand from the fact that the saving significance of the mission of

Jesus was revealed to Paul outside Damascus first and foremost through his encounter with the crucified one whom God had exalted; he therefore saw the main content of the gospel entrusted to him as “Christ crucified” (Χριστὸς ἐσταυρωμένος). But it also arises from the fact that Paul’s law-critical preaching of Christ was sharply criticized from early on by Jews and Jewish Christians, so that up through the letter to the Romans he always had new occasions to return to its main points.

4.5 According to Paul, God’s saving work in and through Christ does not end with the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus. Rather, with the “resurrection of the dead” (ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν; cf. 1 Cor. 15:4, 20; Rom. 1:4), which is first promisingly realized in Jesus, there begins *the third christological movement*. It describes the work of the exalted Christ until his parousia.

4.5.1 The apostle can rely on old church tradition in his sketch of this third movement as well. According to Romans 1:3–4, Jesus is installed by his resurrection as the “Son of God in power,” and according to Romans 4:25, he is raised by God διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν, “for our justification” (see above, 216, §3.2.3). The second half of the Philippian hymn also speaks of the exaltation and future work of Christ, Philippians 2:9–11: “[9]Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, [10]so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, [11]and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (NRSV modified).

The statement of exaltation in Philippians 2:9 is anticipated in Isaiah 52:13–15, 53:11b–12, as well as Romans 4:25. By exalting the Son whom he had previously sent into the depths and delivered up on the cross, God establishes his kingdom. The crucified one is exalted to be the ruler of the world, and Philippians 2:6–11 praises “the revelation of God’s eschatological kingly rule in the exaltation of the crucified Jesus Christ” (O. Hofius, *Der Christushymnus Phil 2,6–11* [1991[2]], 103).

Characteristic of this interpretation of the exaltation of Christ is the granting of the divine name Κύριος to him and the eschatological orientation of its goal according to Isaiah 45:23 (“To me every knee shall bow, / every tongue shall swear”). The expression “the name that is above every name” (Phil. 2:9) refers to the title κύριος, which was the usual rendering of יהוה in Hellenistic Jewish circles (cf. Isa. 42:8 and, e.g., Deut. 28:58; Ps. 99:2–3; Tob. 3:11; 2 Macc. 8:14–15; *Jub*. 36:6–7). As the

bearer of this name, the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός is ruler of the cosmos. The goal of his reign is that the ἐπουράνιοι ("those who are in heaven," i.e., the angels), the ἐπίγειοι ("those on earth," i.e., the people living on earth), and the καταχθόνιοι ("those under the earth," i.e., the dead in the underworld) will be led to worship him. The being and work of the exalted Christ cannot be described any more comprehensively than in this free hymnic form of speech. Philippians 2:6–11 makes it once again clear that the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament have provided the New Testament witnesses with the dimensions of their proclamation of Christ.

4.5.2 When it comes to the details, the "lordship" (κυριότης) of the exalted Christ involves structurally at least five important elements:

4.5.2.1 First and foremost, the crucified and exalted Christ is *Lord of the church*. The church acknowledges and worships him in the Holy Spirit now as the Κύριος (1 Cor. 8:6; 12:3; Phil. 2:6–11). It thereby constitutes that part of the cosmos in which the kingdom of God and the new age of salvation have already dawned. In all times and places, members of the church owe obedience to the Lord who sacrificed his life to redeem them from slavery to guilt under sin and the law (1 Cor. 6:9–20; Rom. 6:12–23), and with him they are approaching the coming ἡμέρα—the day of judgment (1 Thess. 5:4–10; 1 Cor. 7:29–31; Rom. 13:11–14). While the Κύριος is with the church on earth in the Spirit (Rom. 8:4–11), believers pray in their celebration of the Lord's Supper for Jesus's final arrival, the parousia, with the words, "Maranatha!" or "Come, Lord Jesus!" (μαραναθά / ἔρχου κύριε Ἰησοῦ, 1 Cor. 16:22; Rev. 22:20; *Did*. 10:6). At the parousia believers shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ and be transformed into the radiant glory that is already his (2 Cor. 5:10; Phil. 3:20–21). After that they will participate in the eschatological dominion of the Lord (Rom. 5:17, 21) and carry out with him the judgment of the world (1 Cor. 6:2–3).

4.5.2.2 According to 1 Corinthians 15:23–28, the risen Christ is both the Κύριος who has been exalted according to Psalm 110:1 and seated at the right hand of God, and the Son (of Man) to whom God has subjected everything (Ps. 8:5–7 [ET 8:4–6]). His task as Lord is *to make all God's enemies a footstool for his feet*, a task that will be accomplished only when God's ancient enemy, death, is destroyed, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 25:8 (ET 25:7) and Hosea 13:14 (cf. 1 Cor. 15:26, 54–57). When death is swallowed up in Christ's victory, Christ will hand the universe reconciled over to God and subordinate himself to the Father as his Son (1 Cor. 15:28). The Old Testament antecedents of this christological doctrine

are once again visible. *Christ for Paul is God's exalted and designated Lord of the world, whose kingdom is still being unfolded*. Since his resurrection and exaltation, he has been in the process of overthrowing the powers hostile to God and fully establishing the kingdom of God.

In 1 Corinthians 15:23–28 the apostle takes up elements of Jesus's own teaching: Paul connects Psalm 110:1 with Psalm 8:7 (ET 8:6), just as in Mark 12:36–37 par., and Jesus's expectation that he would be exalted and appointed as messianic Son of Man and Judge of the World according to Psalm 110:1 is just as characteristic of his view of the future as is his prediction of his parousia. Especially clear is the parallelism between Jesus's prediction of his parousia and the apostle's description of it in 1 Thessalonians 3:13 and 4:16–17 (see above, 141–43, §7.3.3).

4.5.2.3 By the *parousia* is meant the end-time coming of the exalted Christ. This *παρουσία τοῦ κυρίου* or "coming of the Lord" (cf. 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23; also James 5:8) will happen on the "day of the Lord" that will come "like a thief in the night" (cf. 1 Thess. 5:2 with Matt. 24:42–44). At the parousia the Κύριος will be accompanied by "all his holy ones," the angels (1 Thess. 3:13), while according to 1 Thessalonians 4:15–17 the parousia will coincide with the *ἀπάντησις*, the festive "meeting" by the church of the ruler coming down from heaven. Paul expects the parousia in the near future (cf. 1 Thess. 4:13–5:11; Rom. 13:11–14) and sees it as a *saving event* with far-reaching consequences. For believers who experience it in their lifetime, the parousia will bring with it transformation into radiant glory, while Christians who have already died will experience on the day of the Lord the bodily resurrection from the dead in glory (cf. 1 Thess. 4:14–5:11; 1 Cor. 15:50–57; Phil. 3:20–21). Therefore, *in and with the parousia, believers will experience that Christ truly is "the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (ἀπαρχὴ τῶν κεκοιμημένων, 1 Cor. 15:20) or "the firstborn from the dead" (πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν; cf. Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5), in whose being in the likeness of God they may participate*.

4.5.2.4 In Romans 11:25–32 Paul makes it clear that Christ will also accomplish *the salvation of all Israel* and thereby will *make the messianic saved community of Jews and Gentiles complete*. The apostle relies in his bold presentation upon God's irrevocable saving promises in the Holy Scriptures (cf. Rom. 11:29).

From Deuteronomy 32:20–21, 36, 39, 43 Paul could conclude that after hardening Israel as a judgment, God will bring about the period of the salvation of his people and the shared worship of Jews and Gentiles (R. Bell). The salvation of "all Israel" through the "deliverer" (ὁ ῥυόμενος) and the forgiveness of sins for the people of God are announced in Isaiah 45:17, 25; 59:20; and 27:9 (cf. also

T. Benj. 10:11 and *m. Sanh.* 10:1). But for the apostle this deliverer is identical with the Son or God or Son of Man Jesus Christ, who comes down from heaven (cf. 1 Thess. 1:10). The place of his appearance also corresponds to the promise (of the land) given to Israel. As God, according to Romans 9:33 and 15:12, has fulfilled the promise made to Israel (and the nations) in Isaiah 8:14, 11:10, and 28:16 by sending his Son, so the coming of the Christ deliverer from Zion will fulfill Psalms 50:2 and 110:2, Isaiah 2:2ff., and Micah 4:1ff., as well as the early Jewish expectation that the messianic deliverer "shall stand on the top of Mount Zion" and that "Zion shall come and be made manifest to all people, prepared and built" (*4 Ezra* 13:35–36; cf. Rev. 21:2).

To the *messianic saved community* will belong all those whom God has imprisoned in disobedience so that he may be merciful to them all in and through Christ (Rom. 11:32). First there are the "full number of the Gentiles" (*πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν*) whom God has elected to have faith (Rom. 11:25), then the Jews who have recognized Jesus Christ as the messianic deliverer before his parousia (Rom. 11:1–5), and finally those Israelites from whom the veil of hardening will be taken away only on the day of Christ's appearance from Zion (cf. Rom. 11:25 with 2 Cor. 3:14). Then they will all be able to see and recognize Christ as Lord and Messiah in the same way that Paul did outside Damascus.

4.5.2.5 Because Christ has been appointed by God as Lord and Judge of the World according to Psalms 110:1 and 8:7 (ET 8:6) (1 Cor. 15:25–28), his parousia will be accompanied by the *eschatological judgment of wrath*. The final judgment must be dealt with in the context of Pauline Christology because in Romans 2:16 the apostle explicitly emphasizes that also and especially according to his gospel, God will judge the world on the last day through Christ (on the tradition character of Rom. 2:16, see below, 358–59, §1.2.2.3.4).

The expectation of the judgment permeates the letters of Paul (cf. 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Gal. 6:7–8; 1 Cor. 3:12–15; 4:4–5; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 2:1–16; 14:10–12). In typical biblical fashion this judgment for Paul is not an end in itself nor a mere act of divine vengeance. Rather, what takes place on the "day of the Lord" (cf. 1 Thess. 5:2; 1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:14; Phil. 1:6, 10; 2:16 with Joel 4:14–17 [ET 3:14–17]) is *the final establishment of the righteousness of God that brings salvation and well-being over against all powers of evil*, which contend with God for that dominion over the creation without which he will not be God (cf. 1 Cor. 6:1–2, 9–10; 15:24–28, 54–57; Rom. 8:38–39; *passim*).

Concerning *the time and character of the final judgment*, the apostle's unsystematic terminology and presentation in his letters (which were written for particular occasions) present an almost insuperable

problem of interpretation. Not only does Paul speak simultaneously both of "the judgment seat of Christ" *and* of "the judgment seat of God" (βῆμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ/βῆμα τοῦ θεοῦ, 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10), of Christ the judge seated at the right hand of God *and* of Christ the advocate who intercedes for believers before God (Rom. 8:33–34); he also says that Christians must both undergo judgment *and* together with the angels actively help to administer it. In 1 Corinthians 6:2–3 he reminds the Corinthians that "the saints will judge the world" and the (fallen) "angels" (cf. Jude 6–7; 2 Pet. 2:4 and Gen. 6:1–2), but then in 2 Corinthians 5:10 he emphasizes that "all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil." Matters become extremely complicated when the apostle differentiates various groups or "orders" (τάγματα) that will participate in the resurrection one after another: "Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power" (1 Cor. 15:23–24).

One cannot properly address the problem of understanding that this raises simply by pointing out, however correctly, that Paul does not develop any comprehensive doctrine of the judgment, that he thinks only of aspects of it, or that with early Jewish tradition and the Jesus tradition he assumes that God sets the messianic Son of Man on his judgment seat so that he might carry out the final judgment in his name (cf. *1 En.* 61:8; 62:2; Matt. 25:31–46; Rom. 2:16). Because Paul also spoke of the end-time events in his church instruction—for otherwise he could hardly have appealed to the existing knowledge of his addressees in 1 Thessalonians 5:2 (αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἀκριβῶς οἴδατε, "for you yourselves know very well") and 1 Corinthians 6:2–3 (ἢ οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι, "do you not know that . . . ?")—we must also recall that, according to several early Jewish texts and the book of Revelation, the judgment of the world is preceded by a messianic time of salvation in which at first only specially chosen people may participate, and that the final judgment will take place only after this time has run out (cf. *4 Ezra* 7:26–36; *2 Bar.* 29:1–30:5; Rev. 20:1–15). The apostle's statements in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11, 1 Corinthians 6:2–3, 15:23–24, and Romans 5:17 can be interpreted satisfactorily only if Paul knew and agreed with this notion that the end time occurs in stages. Accordingly, Paul could (as in Rev. 19:19–20:10) have associated with the parousia of Christ at first only the expectation of the resurrection of believers, their examination and transformation, and the beginning of their being with Christ (cf. 1 Thess. 4:17; 1 Cor. 1:9; Phil. 1:23) together with the final constituting of the messianic saved community. Then he would also have assumed (as in Rev. 20:11–15) that the resurrection of all the dead and the judgment of the world will take place only after the messianic time of salvation has been completed. If this is so, then one could even dare to relate texts like 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 3:13, 4:14–5:11, 1 Corinthians 1:8–9, 4:4–5, 5:5, 2 Corinthians 5:10, and Romans 11:26–28 to the parousia and 1 Corinthians 6:2–3, 15:25–28, Romans 2:1–16, 8:31–39, 14:10, etc., only to the events connected with the final judgment. But whether this is correct and really does justice to Paul's overall view cannot be said with certainty in the light of his sporadic statements on the topic.

Paul's repeated mention of Christ as the messianic judge of the world excludes the possibility that he entertained thoughts of a total restoration of the universe (ἀποκατάστασις πάντων [cf. Acts 3:21]) that unites all people and all creation with God at the end of the ages without judgment or condemnation. *According to Paul, nobody and nothing can inherit the kingdom of God independently of Christ or bypassing him*. In the Spirit of Christ, Christians may already call God "Abba" and trust that their petitions will be brought before God by the exalted one (Rom. 8:15–16, 26–27). This

gives them assurance of salvation also in view of the coming final judgment. Here as well, Christians may hope that Christ will intercede for them before God and that no power of the world will any longer be in a position to separate them from the love of God in Christ (Rom. 8:28–39). In the final judgment, only those who believe in the exalted Christ and therefore have him as their advocate can stand before God's judgment seat; unbelievers and enemies of God are threatened with destruction (cf. 1 Cor. 6:9–10; Rom. 2:1–11; etc.).

4.6 The third christological movement hinges upon the fact that once his messianic task of gaining dominion is completed, the exalted Κύριος will hand over the universe reconciled to God the Father and will subordinate himself to him anew. According to Philippians 2:11, Christ will lead all created beings to confess his lordship (cf. *κυριότης*) and thereby serve the glory of his Father, while according to 1 Corinthians 15:28, the eschatological goal of Christ's lordship is that God may be "all in all," (*τὰ*) *πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν*.

In 1 Corinthians 9:22, 10:33, and Colossians 3:11 Paul uses additional formulas related to the "all in all" of 1 Corinthians 15:28; these always express the comprehensive wholeness of an action or state of being. 1 Corinthians 15:28 also recalls other divine titles from Hellenistic Jewish prayers and hymns in which God is praised as the creator and ruler of "all things," *τὰ πάντα*—in other words, as the *παντοκράτωρ*, the "Ruler of All" or the "Almighty" (cf., e.g., 1 Chron. 29:11, 12, 14, 16; LXX 2 Esdras 19:6 [= Neh. 9:6]; *1 En.* 9:5; Greek fragments of *1 Enoch* 9:5–6, cf. M. Black, *Apocalypsis Henochi Graece* [1970]), and it has material points of contact with Romans 11:36 and Colossians 1:19–20. Therefore we may also understand the (*τὰ*) *πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν* of 1 Corinthians 15:28 in a hymnic sense. Grammatically (*τὰ*) *πάντα* could be a predicate nominative, so that God would be identified with the "all," that is, the universe. Such an identification would be a good possibility from a Stoic standpoint, but it would contradict the biblical and Pauline distinction between the creator and creation. (Τὰ) *πάντα* could also be understood adverbially; this would mean that God rules absolutely everywhere over all things. This would make good sense, yet such an adverbial use is rare in the Pauline corpus (otherwise only in Eph. 4:15). Therefore it is best to construe (*τὰ*) *πάντα* as an accusative of respect, as in 1 Corinthians 10:33 ("to please everyone *in* everything"), and to understand it as meaning that "with respect to all things, God is active as Lord in all things—where 'in all things' includes the *πάντα* of Romans 11:36 that contribute to God's completion of his creation and his bringing of salvation" (W. Thüsing, *Gott und Christus in der paulinischen Soteriologie*, vol. 1 [1986[3]], 246).

The mention of the subordination of the Son in 1 Corinthians 15:28 also makes sense when considered in the light of the cosmic completion of the worship of God. Once the future messianic work entrusted to him by God has been completed, the exalted Christ will no longer claim any special

place. Rather, perfecting his obedience praised in Philippians 2:6–11, he will lead the angels in the worship with which the Father will be worshiped as the παντοκράτωρ or "Almighty" in the completed creation (cf. Isa. 6:3 with Rev. 4:8; 11:15–19). *From the perspective of Philippians 2:11 and 1 Corinthians 15:28, the apostle's entire Christology has a doxological stamp. Christ is the Son of God and therefore works not for himself but for the Father who sent him, delivered him up on the cross, exalted him, and entrusted him with lordship over the universe*.

4.7 Once one has in view the Christology of the apostle as a whole and comprehends the way it extends from preexistence through the three movements until the doxological subordination of the Son to the Father, one can attempt to summarize its theological aims. According to Paul, the tasks which have been transferred to the Christ whom he encountered outside Damascus as the "end of the law" (Rom. 10:4) include the work of God's creative *wisdom* (1 Cor. 1:30; 8:6), the work of the *Servant of God* who suffers for Israel and the nations (Phil. 2:6–11; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 4:25), and the work of the messianic *Son of Man* (1 Cor. 15:23–28). In the Old Testament and early Jewish understanding all three—σοφία, the παῖς θεοῦ, and the υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου—are agents to put into effect the righteousness of God that creates salvation and well-being. This perspective is also maintained in the proclamation of Jesus and in pre-Pauline Christology. Paul adopted it and worked it out comprehensively in the light of the revelation of Christ granted to him. *The apostle's Christology is concentrated on the establishment of God's righteousness through the* Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός. Passages such as 1 Corinthians 1:18–30; 15:1–11; 2 Corinthians 5:18–21; Romans 1:1–6; 1:16–17; 3:21–26; 4:5, 17, 24–25; 5:6–11; 8:2–39; 9:30–10:17; and 15:15–21 make it clear that the gospel of God concerning Jesus Christ which was entrusted to Paul is centered precisely here. All the individual themes of Paul's theology are bound together in his Christology, and it covers everything he has to preach and teach. A doctrine of creation, redemption, and eschatology that is independent of and detachable from Christology is completely unknown in Paul.

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CHAPTER 21

The Gospel, Justification, and Faith

The three concepts of the gospel, justification, and faith—εὐαγγέλιον, δικαίωσις, and πίστις—designate the heart of Paul's mission theology. Together these three constitute the salvation that he has to preach.

The relationship between the gospel, justification, and faith was also considered theologically central by the Reformation and has defined the Protestant church and its theology in a special way ever since. In view both of this high regard during the Reformation for the relationship of the word and faith and of the massive criticism that Reformation-oriented Pauline interpretation encounters today (see above, 268–73, §§1.5.1–5), special care is in order (as well as a certain exhaustiveness) in presenting what Paul understands by the gospel, justification, and faith. We must not only observe the status and content of the gospel, the dimensions of justification, and the character and meaning of faith in Jesus Christ according to Paul. We must also show why the triad of the gospel, justification, and faith stands at the center of Pauline theology. Evaluating this triad so highly by no means involves projecting back into the historical realm Reformation views that would better be left behind today. Rather, it is from Paul that the Reformers learned how εὐαγγέλιον, δικαίωσις, and πίστις should be evaluated.

In our presentation we can rely on two results of the preceding chapters. Paul, while persecuting the church, encountered the exalted Christ outside Damascus as the "end of the law" (Rom. 10:4), and he was called by Christ to be an apostle and entrusted with the preaching of the gospel (Rom. 1:5). Since then he stands and falls with the proclamation of the εὐαγγέλιον, the gospel (cf. 1 Cor. 9:16). Based on his call experience, Paul lays the main accent in his gospel preaching upon the soteriological interpretation of Jesus's death on the cross and his resurrection. He thereby takes up and connects repeatedly with the confessional and formulaic material of the pre-Pauline church, but he also gives his entire preaching of Christ a special law-critical accent.

1 In Galatians 1:11–23, 2 Corinthians 4:1–6, and Romans 1:1–5 Paul states that the gospel did not come to him by human mediation but was directly revealed by God through an appearance of Jesus Christ. The apostle may and must serve the gospel revealed to him (Rom. 15:16); it is not a matter of choice. The εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ or "gospel of God" (Rom. 1:1) enters into the human words of the apostle, allowing them to function as the word

of God (1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Cor. 4:4–6; 5:20), but the gospel is not exhausted by Paul's preaching. Should he ever fail to preach the gospel, he would be liable to the same curse of God (cf. 1 Cor. 9:16) under which he already sees the pseudoapostles who preach another gospel and therefore also another Christ from the one God has revealed (cf. Gal. 1:6–9; 2 Cor. 11:2–4, 13–15). Although there were always new *εὐαγγέλια* or "announcements of good news" in the Hellenistic imperial cult (see below), Paul and the apostles called before him know only the one gospel or "good news" of God concerning Jesus Christ that they have been called to preach by the appearance of the exalted Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1–11).

1.1 Paul gives a special salvation-historical depth and contour to God's *establishment of the gospel* and to the call of the apostles to preach it.

1.1.1 According to Paul, the establishment of the gospel is a *salvation-historical act of God's grace that precedes faith and the church's recognition of salvation*. One can see this very clearly from 1 Corinthians 2:6–8 and Romans 1:1–5, 5:6–8, and 16:25–26; from the very beginning it was God's will to save the world in and through Christ (1 Cor. 2:7; Rom. 16:25). He then had his will announced through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures (Rom. 1:2; 16:26). When the time had fully come, he put his saving will into effect by sending his Son, delivering him to death on a cross, and exalting him as "the Son of God in power" (Gal. 4:4–5; Rom. 1:3–4; 15:8; 2 Cor. 1:20). This foundation of the gospel was laid at a time when both Jews and Gentiles, for whom the divine saving work was accomplished, still lived in ignorance of God and sin (1 Cor. 2:8; Rom. 5:6–8). Not until the exalted Christ called the apostles, entrusting them with the preaching of the gospel that brings faith and the knowledge of salvation (Rom. 1:5; 10:14–17), could the "mystery" (*μυστήριον*) of God's saving will be revealed (Rom. 16:26; 1 Cor. 2:9–10).

1.1.2 According to Paul, the establishment of the gospel and the calling of the apostles belong most closely together (cf. 1 Cor. 1:17–25 and above, 273–80, §2). In Romans 10:14–17 he gives salvation-historical depth to the sending of the apostles to preach the message of faith.

Romans 9:30–10:21 deals with Israel's rejection of God's righteousness in Christ. From Romans 10:5 onward Paul compares what Moses writes about the righteousness that comes from the law with what is said by the righteousness of faith that confesses Christ as Lord. Whereas Moses presents the demands of the law, the righteousness that comes from faith sees in Deuteronomy 30:12–14 the saving word of God in Christ. This is now entrusted in the form of the "word of faith" (*ῥῆμα τῆς*

πίστεως), that is, the preaching about faith, to the apostles (Rom. 10:8). This preaching awakens faith and leads the church to confess that Christ is the Lord whom God raised from the dead. This confession leads to the end-time salvation of believers (10:9–13).

After Paul has established in Romans 10:13, with the help of the Greek Bible text from Joel 3:5 (ET 2:32), that "everyone [whether Jew or Greek] who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved"—for Paul this means the name of the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός—he continues with a chain-link construction in 10:14–17 in view of the Jews who have closed their minds to the apostolic preaching of faith:

> [14]But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? [15]And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of *those* [plural!] who bring good news (*τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων τὰ ἀγαθά*) [Isa. 52:7]!" [16]But not all have obeyed the good news (*εὐαγγέλιον*); for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message (*ἀκοή*) [Isa. 53:1]?" [17]So faith comes from what is heard (*ἐξ ἀκοῆς*) [i.e., the "message" of Isa. 53:1], and what is heard (*ἡ ἀκοή*) comes through the word of Christ (*διὰ ῥήματος Χριστοῦ*). (Rom. 10:14–17)

To the careful reader of this chain-link construction, it will be clear that in his citation of Isaiah 52:7 in Romans 10:15 Paul, in contrast to both the Hebrew and the Greek texts of Isaiah 52:7 (NRSV: "the *messenger* who announces peace"), speaks not of a single "messenger" or "evangelist" or "bringer of good news" (LXX: *εὐαγγελιζόμενος*) but of *several* such people, "*those* bringing good news." Conscious method underlies this departure. The explanation begins in Romans 10:13: "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Paul here cites the beginning of Joel 3:5 (ET 2:32), but at the end of this verse, where the Hebrew speaks of the "survivors" in a portion Paul has not quoted, the Greek speaks of the "*evangelists* whom the Lord has called" (*εὐαγγελιζόμενοι οὓς κύριος προσκέκληται*). Because Paul has apparently applied this particular statement from Joel 3:5 to the apostles and because Joel 3:5 and Isaiah 52:7 interpret one another according to his rabbinic exegetical understanding, he also supplies the plural *εὐαγγελιζόμενοι* in his quotation of Isaiah 52:7 in Romans 10:15, thus applying Isaiah 52:7 likewise to the apostles. *For Paul the apostles are therefore the "evangelists" (εὐαγγελιζόμενοι) announced in Joel 3:5 LXX and Isaiah 52:7, and Paul himself is one of them (Rom. 1:5)*. Moreover, according to Paul's citation of Isaiah 53:1 in Romans 10:16, the good news with which the apostles have been entrusted is the "message" (*ἀκοή*) about Christ as the suffering and exalted Servant, whom Israel until now has for the most part rejected. Romans 10:17 then presents an apostolic doctrinal statement. It says that the apostles received this *ἀκοή*—the "message," the content of "what is heard" (NRSV)—as a given, something revealed to them "through the word of Christ" (*διὰ ῥήματος Χριστοῦ*), that is, through the commissioning word of the exalted Christ. The exalted Christ transmitted his *ῥῆμα* to the apostles; this word became part of their preaching or proclamation of faith (*τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως, ὃ κηρύσσομεν*, "the word of faith that we proclaim," Rom. 10:8); and the righteousness that comes from faith understands this proclamation to be the "word that is near" according to Deuteronomy 30:14 (cf. Rom. 10:8 with 10:17).

For Paul the gospel summarizes the definite saving will of God in Christ. God founded the *εὐαγγέλιον* upon the sending, suffering, and exaltation of his Son, while the Son himself entrusted the apostles with its proclamation. Through the commissioning word of the exalted Christ, the

gospel enters into the faith-producing preaching of the apostles and allows everyone to participate in final salvation who confesses Christ as Lord and Savior.

Paul's language in Romans 10:14–17 places his understanding of the gospel and apostleship into a line of tradition that extends back to the time of Jesus. It also shows the decisive difference between the early Christian apostolic use of (τὸ) *εὐαγγέλιον* and the messages of good news in the Greco-Roman imperial cult. In the imperial inscriptions, (τὰ) *εὐαγγέλια* (plural) are the good reports of the birth, rise to power, victories, and good deeds of the emperor, for which one offers thank offerings. The word is used in this sense of Caesar Augustus in the calendar inscription of Priene around 9 BC, "the birthday of the god Augustus was the beginning for the world of the *good tidings* [εὐαγγελίων] that came by reason of him" (text in W. Dittenberger, ed., *Orientis Graecae Inscriptiones Selectae*, vol. 2 [1905], pp. 48–60, no. 458; ET by A. D. Nock in M. E. Boring, K. Berger, and C. Colpe, *Hellenistic Commentary to the New Testament* [1995], 169). But for Paul and the apostles called before him it is completely different! According to Isaiah 52:7 (cf. Nah. 2:1 [ET 1:15]), the "evangelist"—that is, the herald or messenger (מְבַשֵּׂר, *məbaśśēr*) of peace whom God has sent—announces to Israel and the world the imminent dawning of the kingdom of God (cf. Isa. 40:9); according to Isaiah 61:1–3, the bearer of this message can also be the prophet anointed with the Spirit of God. Isaiah 52:7, Nahum 2:1 (ET 1:15), and Isaiah 61:1–3 were sometimes interpreted eschatologically and messianically in early Judaism (cf., e.g., 11Q13 [11QMelch] 2:6, 15ff., *DSSSE* 1206–9 and 4Q521 [*4QMessianic Apocalypse*] frag. 2 II, 12, *DSSSE* 1045). According to Mark 1:14–15, Luke 4:16–21, and 7:18–23 par., Jesus applied Isaiah 52:7 and 61:1–2 to his own person and message about the kingdom of God. Prior to Easter he involved his disciples in preaching this message for a time (Luke 9:1–6 par.). He tried to explain his way of sacrifice to them from Isaiah 43:3–4 and 53:11–12 (cf. Mark 9:31; 10:45; 14:24 par.). With the Easter appearances the same disciples were called by the Christ whom God had exalted to his right hand to be apostles until the parousia, that is, for life. Their message is now no longer only the gospel of the kingdom that Jesus proclaimed (cf. Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 24:14), but the gospel of God's kingdom which he has already promisingly established through the sending, sacrifice, and exaltation of Jesus as Lord and Christ. This gospel was already summarized in Jerusalem in an instructional formula. Paul saw himself included by his Damascus epiphany in the ranks of the apostolic "evangelizers" or εὐαγγελιζόμενοι whom the exalted Christ appointed to preach the gospel (Rom. 10:14–17), and he took over the Jerusalem formula according to 1 Corinthians 15:1–11.

1.1.3 While 1 Corinthians 15:1–11 and Romans 10:14–17 give the establishment of the gospel salvation-historical depth, 2 Corinthians 3:4–18 and 5:18–21 provide it with election-historical contours. *Paul sees the establishment of the gospel as a literally epochal event: by "establishing" (cf.* θέμενος*, 2 Cor. 5:19) the "word of reconciliation," God replaces the old "covenant" or "obligation" of Sinai and brings Jeremiah 31:31–34 to fulfillment. Law and gospel therefore stand over against one another as old and new covenant, as* παλαιὰ διαθήκη *and* καινὴ διαθήκη*.*

O. Hofius, in his essay "'Gott hat unter uns aufgerichtet das Wort von der Versöhnung' (2Kor 5,19)" (*Paulusstudien* [1989], 15–32)—which translates as "God has established among us the word of

reconciliation”—has shown that one cannot, as is often done, interpret the θέμενος of 2 Corinthians 5:19, καὶ *θέμενος* ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς (traditionally: “and *committing/entrusting* to us the message of reconciliation”; cf. KJV, RSV), in the light of the ἔθετο of Psalm 104 LXX (MT 105):27, ἔθετο ἐν αὐτοῖς τοὺς λόγους τῶν σημείων αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν τεράτων ἐν γῇ Χαμ, “He *placed* (or *established*) in them the words of his signs and wonders in the land of Ham” (cf., e.g., H. Windisch, *Der zweite Korintherbrief* [1924], 194). This psalm probably speaks not of God’s establishment of the office of preaching God’s words, but of his realization of the miraculous signs announced through Moses and Aaron that came in the form of the plagues on the Egyptians. Instead, Hofius believes that Paul’s formulation in 2 Corinthians 5:19 is better understood in relation to Psalm 77 LXX (MT 78):3–7. Psalm 77:5 LXX says, “And he (God) raised up a testimony in Jacob and *established* a law in Israel” (καὶ ἀνέστησεν μαρτύριον ἐν Ιακωβ καὶ νόμον ἔθετο ἐν Ισραηλ). Paul speaks precisely parallel to this in 2 Corinthians 5:19 of the “establishment” of the “word of reconciliation.” As Hofius writes,

> When Paul speaks in 2 Corinthians 5 of the “establishment” of the λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς in the church and of its preaching by the apostles, this occurs in conscious antithesis to the “establishment” of the law in Israel and its announcement by Moses and the fathers. Therefore, in the background of 2 Corinthians 5:18–21 there is visible once again that contrast which comes explicitly to expression in the presentation of 2 Corinthians 2:14–4:6: the contrast of παλαιὰ διαθήκη and καινὴ διαθήκη, of Torah and gospel, of Mosaic διακονία [ministry] and apostolic διακονία [cf. 2 Cor. 5:18]. (Hofius, ibid., 27)

However, C. Wolff, *Der zweite Brief des Paulus an die Korinther* (1989), 130–31, considers it hardly possible that Paul spoke in 2 Corinthians 5:19 of the establishment of the gospel by analogy to the known idiom in classical and Hellenistic-Jewish Greek concerning the “establishing” or “giving of a law,” νόμον τιθέναι or τίθεσθαι. Instead, Wolff points, along with M. Wolter (*Rechtfertigung und zukünftiges Heil* [1978], 82–83), to the expression concerning “one person putting words in another person’s mouth,” τιθέναι τοὺς λόγους ἐν τῷ στόματι, in 2 Samuel 14:3, 19, and Ezra 8:17. Wolff writes: “Paul does not mention the mouth but writes ‘in us’ and thereby expresses that the message entrusted to him has taken hold of his entire inward being (cf. similarly Isa. 63:11).” As useful as this observation is, we should not weaken the antithetical correspondence between the giving of the law (on Sinai) and the establishment of the gospel by God pointed out by Hofius.

In 2 Corinthians 3:4–18 Paul differentiates on the basis of Jeremiah 31:31–34, Ezekiel 37:26, and especially Exodus 34:29–35 between the “ministry” or “service” (διακονία) of the old covenant with which Moses was entrusted and the ministry of the new covenant with which Paul himself was entrusted by God. Moses is the mediator of the law; Paul is the apostle who must serve the gospel (cf. also Rom. 15:16). The two ministries are fundamentally different. The “letter” (γράμμα) of the law, which Moses serves, kills because it leads sinners to the κατάκρισις (cf. 2 Cor. 3:9), that is, the end-time judgment of “condemnation.” But the πνεῦμα or Spirit, indwelling the gospel that Paul serves, creates eternal life because Christ is identical with him (2 Cor. 3:17). The Spirit preserves sinners against the

κατάκρισις because he places them in a position of righteousness and peace before God. Both the *διακονία* of Moses and that of the apostle have glory (*δόξα*) before God, but the new and permanent *διακονία* that replaces the old covenant which God himself destined to become obsolete far surpasses the old in glory, putting it properly in the shade (2 Cor. 3:10).

Until the day of the parousia the two ministries run parallel, thereby adding depth to the scheme of Christian existence in two times, as encountered above (322, §4.2.1). Whereas believers, who have already received the reconciliation that the gospel proclaims, stand in freedom and serve the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, in the synagogue the Torah is still read, laying a veil of lack of understanding and hardening upon the minds of those who listen to the “reading” of Moses (*ἀνάγνωσις*, 2 Cor. 3:14). For this reason they cannot yet understand the gospel and stand ignorantly and unwillingly opposed to the message of Paul that radiates the glory of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18; 4:4–6).

1.2 *The content of the gospel* according to Paul is the Christ who was sent by God, delivered to death, and exalted. This is clear from Galatians 1:16, as it is from 1 Corinthians 1:18–25; 2:2; 15:1–5; 2 Corinthians 4:4–6; 5:18–21; Romans 1:1–5, 16–17; 3:21–26; 10:16; and 15:16–19. Paul therefore speaks alternately of “preaching the gospel” (1 Cor. 1:17; 15:1) and of “preaching Christ” (1 Cor. 1:23; 15:12). In giving the content of the gospel, Paul partly makes conscious use of pre-Pauline formulaic traditions, but he also coins his own formulations that express his understanding of the gospel especially clearly.

1.2.1 The apostle in 1 Corinthians 15:1–5 equates the gospel with the Jerusalem teaching tradition of verses 3–5; he describes the content of the gospel of God in Romans 1:3–4 with the help of a Jewish Christian Christ formula; and in Romans 10:16–17 he stresses the *ἀκοή* or “report” of Isaiah 53:1 authorized by the exalted Christ (see above). These are all ways of expressing that he preaches no other gospel than the one preached by all the other apostles. He, too, preaches the one Christ—the Christ who was sent to fulfill the promises of God (Rom. 15:8; 2 Cor. 1:20); who died for our sins as the Servant; who was buried, raised on the third day, and exalted as the Son of God in power; and who appeared from heaven to Cephas and all the other apostles including Paul in order to enlist them in his service and entrust them with the preaching of the gospel.

1.2.2 In other passages Paul formulates more independently. For him the gospel, newly established by God over against the Torah of Sinai, is “the word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:19), “the word of the cross” that

makes foolish the wisdom of this world (1 Cor. 1:18–25), or the power of God in which God's righteousness is revealed for everyone who believes (Rom. 1:16–17). These three definitions of εὐαγγέλιον mutually interpret each other.

1.2.2.1 According to *2 Corinthians 5:19*, the gospel of God is the λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς, the "*word of reconciliation*."

The two verbs καταλλάσσειν, "to reconcile" (1 Cor. 7:11; 2 Cor. 5:18–20; Rom. 5:10), and ἀποκαταλλάσσειν, "to reconcile" (Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20, 22), and the noun καταλλαγή, "reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18–20; Rom. 5:11; 11:15), first appear in the New Testament in a theological sense in the letters of Paul. This new terminology signals a specifically Pauline interest. The apostle and his pupils use it to *designate God's act of reconciliation and the present salvation that arises for believers from this divine act*. In extrabiblical Greek and in Hellenistic Judaism, "reconciliation" is spoken of above all in texts about private or political peace treaties between people or groups that were previously enemies (so also in 1 Cor. 7:11). But Hellenistic Jewish texts also say that God is moved by human intercession to turn aside his wrath and to reconcile himself with individual people or Israel as a whole (cf., e.g., 2 Macc. 7:33; Philo, *Moses* 2.166; Josephus, *Ant*. 3.315; *Jos*. *Asen*. 11:18). However, whereas these texts speak of a reconciliation driven by and effected through human influence upon God, the New Testament texts about reconciliation speak about a reconciliation put into effect by God himself out of free grace. *People do not reconcile themselves to God. Rather, they are reconciled to him because God effects justification and reconciliation for the ungodly through Christ's atoning death (2 Cor. 5:18–19).*

C. Breytenbach, in his monograph *Versöhnung* (1989), has investigated the entire ancient, Hellenistic Jewish, and New Testament usage of the terms διαλλάσσειν, καταλλάσσειν, καταλλαγή, etc. In his view Paul has little in common with the Hellenistic Jewish usage. Rather, in 2 Corinthians 5:18–21 and Romans 5:1–11 Paul takes up the profane political language of reconciliation in order to present his (contested) apostleship and gospel in a new light. One must furthermore note, according to Breytenbach, that "despite the opposing assumption of many studies of New Testament soteriological terminology, ἱλάσκεσθαι ['to make atonement'] and καταλλάσσειν are not semantically related words" (ibid., 99). One must therefore not be misled into simply equating the idea of "atonement" expressed by ἱλάσκεσθαι, ἱλασμός, and ἱλαστήριον, etc., with the idea of "reconciliation" in καταλλαγή. (Translator's note: This temptation of equating concepts of atonement and reconciliation is perhaps greater in German-language research than in English, since the German terms for "atonement" and "reconciliation" *are* etymologically related: *Sühne* and *Versöhnung*, also spelled *Versü[h]nung* in older German sources; in Luther's 1545 Bible at Numbers 35:31, כֹּפֶר, *kōper*, "ransom," is translated by *Versühnung*, where Lutherbibel 1984 has *Sühnegeld*, "atonement money.") Rather, atonement and reconciliation should first be differentiated both semantically and tradition-historically; only then can it be asked critically whether and in what way Paul combines the two concepts in 2 Corinthians 5:18–21 and Romans 5:1–11 (and Col. 1:20).

According to 2 Corinthians 5:18–21, the λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς or word of reconciliation is grounded in God's end-time act of reconciliation: "God was in Christ and reconciled the world to himself" (5:19). He did so by sending his Son into the world and making him who bore no guilt of sin to

be the bearer of it, that is, a “sin offering” for us, so that by this act of atonement we, who are ourselves represented or included in it (this is what is meant by “inclusive atonement”), might share in the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:21 [see above, 221–22, §5.3.2.2]; cf. also Rom. 8:3). *The gospel is the “word of reconciliation” because it savingly announces this divine act of reconciliation*. Paul does not operate with any separation between atonement and reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5:18–21. As an apostolic “ambassador” (πρεσβευτής) of the exalted Christ, he calls his addressees to be reconciled to God, that is, to open themselves to the gospel and receive by faith the reconciliation effected by Jesus’s death apart from their own effort (cf. 2 Cor. 5:18, 20 with Rom. 5:6–11).

C. Breytenbach considers it likely “that the use of the language of reconciliation in Paul is an extension of an originally diplomatic idea to the relationship of God and humanity or God and the apostle” (*Versöhnung*, 80). He endeavors to interpret 2 Corinthians 5:18–6:2 completely from the Hellenistic idea of a peace treaty between warring parties. According to Breytenbach, Paul wishes to present himself to the Corinthians in his apostolic office as a peace ambassador of Christ who seeks to establish reconciliation between God and human beings, who stand over against each other as enemies (cf. Rom. 5:10). In the “word of reconciliation” the apostle extends to his listeners the divine offer of peace, calling them to accept it with the promise that God will make a new creation of everyone who does so (ibid., 65, 179–80). However, this interpretation will not stand, for two reasons:

(1) Breytenbach fails to consider in his interpretation that both Philo (*Moses* 2.166; *QE* 2.49) and Josephus (*Ant*. 3.315) present *Moses* as the “mediator” (μεσίτης) and “reconciler” (καταλλάκτης) between God and the people of Israel. Because Paul in 2 Corinthians 2:14–7:4 presents his gospel ministry in an antitypical relationship to the office of Moses and compares the law and the gospel as παλαιὰ διαθήκη and καινὴ διαθήκη, his self-presentation in 2 Corinthians 5:18–6:2 should also be understood against the same background. Paul sees himself (and the rest of the apostles) as entrusted with a “ministry” (διακονία) that is comparable to that of Moses, yet replaces and supersedes it. Whereas Moses had to ask forgiveness and reconciliation for the people that had fallen away from God according to Exodus 32, Paul and the other apostles serve the exalted Christ by inviting people to receive the reconciliation God has already realized through Christ.

(2) For Paul καταλλαγή is much more than simply a divine offer of reconciliation that becomes legally effective only when people accept it. According to Romans 5:6–11, God effected reconciliation while its recipients still were ungodly sinners. As God’s own deed and work, reconciliation was already realized and effected prior to the faith of its addressees, and it remains eschatologically valid from God’s perspective whether people accept it or not. The only question for people is whether through their faith in the gospel they will participate in this reconciliation here and now, or reject the gospel in unbelief and so remain in a state of nonreconciliation with God.

Paul also speaks about reconciliation in Romans 5:1–11, where καταλλαγή designates the result of the justification of the ungodly through the atoning death of Jesus. Hence the expression “having peace with God” (εἰρήνην ἔχειν πρὸς τὸν θεόν) in 5:1 is equated with “receiving

reconciliation" (καταλλαγὴν λαβεῖν) in 5:11. If one takes 2 Corinthians 5:18–6:2 and Romans 5:1–11 together, then καταλλαγή for Paul is a comprehensive expression that includes both (1) God's saving historical act of sending Christ as a sin offering together with the justification grounded in this sacrifice, and (2) the result of God's act of extending the gospel to believers, namely, that believers experience the end-time renewal of their relationship with God and even now stand (as members of the church of Jesus Christ) before him not as estranged sinners destined for condemnation, but in peace as justified people (cf. δικαιωθέντες, Rom. 5:1). Their reception of this reconciliation fills believers with the hope of being preserved by the living Christ from destruction by God's wrath in the final judgment. Καταλλαγή *therefore has a comprehensive soteriological meaning for Paul. Under this heading Paul summarizes atonement and justification, thereby coining a theological term of great integrative power for biblical theology.* The expressions (ἐξ)ἱλάσκεσθαι and ἱλαστήριον are indeed semantically different from καταλλαγή and καταλλάσσειν, as Breytenbach claims, but the German word for reconciliation, *Versöhnung* or *Versühnung*, with its close relationship to atonement, *Sühne*, nevertheless expresses very precisely what God according to Paul (and Col. 1:15–20) was after in sending Jesus: the eschatological reestablishment of "peace" (εἰρήνη) between the creation and its creator through the atoning death and resurrection of Christ.

1.2.2.2 In *1 Corinthians 1:18–25* Paul calls the gospel entrusted to him the λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ, "the word of the cross." With this expression the apostle has two aspects of the event of the cross in view, which together constitute *the Pauline theology of the cross*. He thinks first of the event of the crucifixion of Jesus through which God has promisingly effected the redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις) of the end-time saved community of Jews and Gentiles (and the creation as a whole). This event is proclaimed in the gospel as the end-time saving act of God par excellence (cf. 1 Cor. 1:13, 30; 2:2, 7–8, 12; etc.). But Paul also has in view the diacritical effect of the cross and the apostolic preaching of the crucified Messiah. As the word of the cross, the gospel divides people into two groups: those who reject the λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ and therefore do not stand in the final judgment, and those who accept it obediently and thus experience end-time salvation (cf. 1 Cor. 1:18, 23–24). Paul works out so precisely the outcome of salvation or

judgment that results from the preaching of the cross that we may speak of a characteristically Pauline theological interest.

1.2.2.2.1 For the opponents of Jesus, the cross was the place and essence of the curse of God (Deut. 21:22–23) that hung upon the "impostor" or "deceiver" (cf. Matt. 27:63). The Christian preaching of a crucified Messiah whom God had nevertheless exalted, Jesus Christ, was for many Jews a stumbling block that hindered their coming to faith. Paul himself shared this experience. For the Hellenistically educated—the Greeks and Romans—the cross and its preaching were an absurd abomination that people shunned. One need only recall Cicero's description of crucifixion as *crudelissimum taeterrimumque supplicium*, the most "cruel and disgusting penalty" that can be meted out (*In Verrem* 2.5.165, in *The Verrine Orations*, LCL 2:650–51), to assess how the catchword *σταυρός* (cross) and the mention of *Χριστὸς ἐσταυρωμένος* or "Christ crucified" affected the Greeks. Hence, the word of the cross appeared to many Jews and Greeks not as a saving message, but as "foolishness" (*μωρία*) unworthy of God's essence and saving will, and as disgusting nonsense.

1.2.2.2.2 According to Paul, the cross is supposed to have this effect! Since the world failed to acknowledge God and honor him as creator by the help of the wisdom given it (cf. 1 Cor. 1:21 with Rom. 1:18–23), it will come to ruin by its own high-minded wisdom when it encounters the apparently absurd preaching of the cross (1 Cor. 1:19, 21). The saving significance of the "foolishness of the message preached" (*μωρία τοῦ κηρύγματος*) will be disclosed only to those who are themselves ready and able to suffer this God-willed ruin by giving up all their preconceived religious and aesthetic standards about God and salvation and letting the message of the cross that they have heard work upon them. In such suffering they may then discover in the offensive event of the cross God's contrasting wisdom to the "wisdom of the world" (*σοφία τοῦ κόσμου*, 1 Cor. 1:20), his saving plan for the redemption of the world which has fallen away from him, and may thus experience for themselves that God grants them a new and eternal life by means of the cross of Jesus. The crucified Christ appears to them as the revelation and essence of God's power and wisdom, helping those who are nothing in the eyes of the world—the suffering, the weak, the lowborn—to achieve insight and righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Cor. 1:23–30).

Although Paul's formulations and views in 1 Corinthians 1:18–30 are independent, their parallelism to Matthew 11:25–30 par. is nevertheless clear. Jesus also teaches a contrasting wisdom "handed over" to him by God (11:27), which stands against the wisdom of the wise and the intelligent, and enlightens only those who take his easy yoke upon themselves, thus joining him in doing God's true will (see above, 93, §2.2).

1.2.2.2.3 Whereas Paul was able to "exhibit publicly" (Gal. 3:1) Christ as crucified to his churches with the help of the passion stories and Christ formulas that were already available to him, he developed the distinctive and suffering-oriented aspects of his theology of the cross essentially from the knowledge revealed to him and from his own life experience. From the beginning of his apostolic career, Paul was persecuted by unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, and he soon began to be attacked and slandered also by (Jewish) Christian opponents, all of which continued for the rest of his life (cf. 2 Cor. 11:23–29). From these experiences and sufferings the apostle developed the so-called *peristasis* catalogues.

Περίστασις, which does not occur in the New Testament (cf. 2 Macc. 4:26), denotes an external circumstance, above all, need, danger, misfortune, or disaster. While such persecutions happen to righteous persons persecuted for their fear of God and faithfulness according to the Old Testament and early Judaism (cf., e.g., Wis. 2:10–20), according to Paul they occur above all to the apostles and Christians as a whole for the sake of the gospel (cf. the autobiographical catalogues of the apostle in 1 Cor. 4:9–13; 2 Cor. 4:7–12; and 6:4–10; and the description applicable to all Christians in Rom. 8:35–39).

In these famous texts Paul makes it clear that the sufferings of persecution imposed upon him and the other apostles do not speak against their apostolic authority and preaching, but rather form a situation in which God's saving activity through the cross of Christ first becomes truly clear. The δύναμις (power) of the Christ who was crucified in weakness but who lives by the power of God (2 Cor. 13:4) comes to full expression precisely in those who must suffer for the sake of Christ and the gospel. The living commentary for the saving power that extends from the gospel as the word of the cross was Paul himself in his existence of suffering, which appeared to the Corinthians as insufficiently authoritative (cf. 2 Cor. 12:9). According to Romans 8:35–39, Paul's experience applies to Christians as a whole.

1.2.2.2.4 Only when one realizes that Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:18–25 has in mind both the message about Jesus's cross and the distinctive consequences of this message for a theology of suffering does one have the whole of Paul's theology of the cross in view. Ever since Paul's own time,

his doctrine of the cross, in its paradox and experiential depth, has appeared either as much too rigorous and one-sided or as the climax and touchstone of all proper theology.

Luther developed his famous *theologia crucis* ("theology of the cross") at the Heidelberg Disputation of 1518 above all from 1 Corinthians 1:18–25, contrasting it with a *theologia gloriae* ("theology of glory"). In theses 19 and 20 which he wrote for this disputation, Luther says: "That person does not deserve to be called a theologian who looks upon the invisible things of God as though they were clearly perceptible in those things which have actually happened. He deserves to be called a theologian, however, who comprehends the visible and manifest things of God seen through suffering and the cross" (WA 1:354 lines 17ff., trans. *LW* 31:40; on Luther's theology of the cross as a whole, see W. von Loewenich, *Luther's Theology of the Cross* [1976], and A. E. McGrath, *Luther's Theology of the Cross: Martin Luther's Theological Breakthrough* [1985]).

1.2.2.3 Already in 1 Corinthians 1:18 and 24 Paul stresses that for those who are being saved, the word of the cross is "the power of God" (δύναμις θεοῦ) and hence a word in which the crucified Christ savingly appears. In *Romans 1:16–17* he repeats this statement. The gospel of God entrusted to the apostle is "the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, 'He who through faith is righteous shall live' [Hab. 2:4]" (cf. RSV, taking ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως as a noun phrase rather than taking ἐκ πίστεως as adverbial with ζήσεται: ". . . will live by faith," as in NRSV). Luther once discovered from this dense formulation the soteriological meaning of the expression "God's righteousness" (cf. WA 54:185 lines 14ff., partly quoted below, 369). In the context of Romans, it summarizes several facts:

1.2.2.3.1 The gospel is the *effective announcement of salvation from God*. Paul can therefore say that with the gospel he preaches God's own word (cf. 1 Thess. 2:2, 13–14; 2 Cor. 5:20).

Because the apostle sees his mission in Galatians 1:15–16 in the light of Isaiah 49:1–6 and Jeremiah 1:5, and also stands in the line of the prophets with his commission to preach according to Romans 1:1–2, we may interpret the effects of the gospel as a δύναμις θεοῦ from Isaiah 55:10–11:

[10]For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

[11]so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

1.2.2.3.2 If one takes together the two definitions of εὐαγγέλιον in Romans 1:1–4 and 1:16–17, then the content of the gospel is the saving realization of the righteousness of God in the sending of Jesus; in it Paul sees the fulfillment of all the messianic promises given to Israel (2 Cor. 1:19–20; Rom. 15:8–12). The gospel is therefore *the message of salvation first for Israel and also for the Gentiles, because they, too, may recognize Jesus Christ as their Savior*.

1.2.2.3.3 The gospel is the divine power for salvation παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι, *for everyone who believes* or *has faith*; in it the righteousness of God is revealed ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν ("from faith to faith," Rom. 1:17), according to the prophetic promise of Habakkuk 2:4. In order to reach its goal of saving its addressees, the gospel must be accepted by faith, while it passes by unbelievers and qualifies them for the judgment. *The gospel is God's announcement of salvation enacted in the word of the apostle, but at the same time hidden in this word*. Its liberating truth (ἀλήθεια) is that God in and through Christ has fully accomplished salvation for Jews and Gentiles (Gal. 2:5, 14; 2 Cor. 4:2). Only believers experience this truth; for them God is and will be the gracious God who is near them in Christ through the gospel. For unbelievers, however, the gospel and hence also the state of "peace with God" (εἰρήνη πρὸς τὸν θεόν, Rom. 5:1) remain closed.

Paul presented the fact of this hidden revelation already in 2 Corinthians 4:1–6. Despite opposing criticism, he recommends himself here first as a preacher who does not falsify the word of God, but openly presents the truth of salvation. He then continues (2 Cor. 4:3–6):

> [3]And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. [4]In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. [5]For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. [6]For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

The gospel opens to believers the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of the crucified and exalted Christ. For Paul it is therefore a power of revelation and salvation without equal, although the

Pauline preaching of this gospel in Galatia, Philippi, Corinth, and Rome was questioned by Jewish Christian critics and totally rejected by unbelievers. Such criticism and rejection strikes back upon its perpetrators according to Paul, so that they remain excluded from the knowledge of revelation.

This understanding of the word and the gospel also has a prophetic analogy. In *4 Ezra* 9:5–6 it says about the prophetic announcement of the coming time of salvation according to the Ethiopic version, found in the textual notes of the NRSV (2 Esdras): "For just as with everything that has occurred in the world, the beginning *is in the word* [Ethiopic; Syriac *is evident*], and the end manifest; so also are the times of the Most High: the beginnings are manifest in wonders and mighty works, and the end *in effects* [Latin, Ethiopic; Syriac *penalties*] and in signs."

The following four factors and their interrelationship are therefore *soteriologically constitutive* for Paul: (1) the foundation of the gospel in the historical saving act of God in Christ, (2) commissioning of the apostles with the preaching of the gospel by the exalted Christ, (3) communication of this saving act through the apostolic message of faith, and (4) faith in this message as the way, means, and condition of the possibility of receiving salvation. Prior to the parousia this process cannot be circumvented by any immediate vision or experience of salvation.

1.2.2.3.4 The apostle's pointed statement in Romans 2:16, "God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all [on the day of judgment]," cannot be excluded from a discussion of what Paul understands by the gospel.

Whereas R. Bultmann (*Exegetica*, ed. E. Dinkler, 282–83) and G. Bornkamm ("Gesetz und Natur. Röm 2,14–16," in *Studien zu Antike und Urchristentum: Gesammelte Aufsätze*, vol. 2 [1959], 93–118, esp. 116–17) consider Romans 2:16 to be a redactor's gloss later added to the text, E. Käsemann (*Commentary on Romans* [1980], 67) defends the verse as genuinely Pauline and adds that what Romans 2 shows "is that, and how far, the proclamation of judgment inseparably belongs to the gospel." Käsemann is right about both the text and its subject matter: the textual tradition does not allow for the assumption of a gloss, and according to the context, Paul turns in Romans 2:16 against the Jewish Christian critics who have accused him all the way to Rome of preaching cheap grace for the Gentiles (cf. Rom. 3:8). Against this criticism the apostle holds, in keeping with his statements in 1 Corinthians 4:4–5 and 2 Corinthians 5:10, that according to his gospel Christ is not only the Savior but also the judge who will execute the final judgment according to the standards set by the Torah.

A gospel of Christ without the teaching that Christ, whom God sent to die an atoning death and exalted to his right hand, is also the judge of the world is impossible and unthinkable for Paul. The gospel proclaims God's Christ to be the κύριος, and he is for believers (and the whole world) both savior and judge in one person.

From this perspective, the sending formula of Romans 8:3–4 (see above, 324–25, §4.2.5) and the contrast of Torah and gospel as the old and

new “covenant” or “obligation” (see above, 349–51, §1.1.3) make an additional point: believers in the time and situation of the new covenant, καινὴ διαθήκη, do not live in unbridled ἀνομία or “lawlessness” (which has nothing to do with righteousness, cf. 2 Cor. 6:14), but rather, like Paul himself, they live as those “under the law of Christ,” ἔννομοι Χριστοῦ (1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2; Rom. 8:1–2), as children of God freed from the power of sin. Through Christ, God’s holy will is revealed to them anew and written on their hearts (cf. Jer. 31:33–34 and above, 297–98, §5.4). *Law and gospel in Paul cannot be contrasted as law (νόμος) and lawlessness (ἀνομία).* Not only the Torah of Sinai, but also the gospel of God, is a revelation of the will of God; the gospel transfers believers into freedom from sin *and* into a new, Spirit-inspired obedience through Christ. Therefore, in his extensive church paraclesis, Paul, as an ambassador of the exalted Christ who stands over against Moses (see above), not only proclaims the gospel but also promotes the will of God (cf., e.g., 1 Thess. 2:9–13; 4:1–2), calling believers to live a life worthy of the gospel (cf. Phil. 1:27; Col. 1:10). He thereby also presents himself as an exemplary witness, who cannot be and has not been disqualified in his preaching of the gospel entrusted to him (cf. 1 Cor. 9:27 with Phil. 3:12–15).

In this context we must make it clear that Romans 2:16 together with the close connection of the preaching of the gospel with paraclesis in all Paul’s letters testifies to an understanding of the gospel with a different soteriological accent from what we find in Luther. For Luther “gospel” in the strict sense is only the coming and ministry of the justifying Christ through the orally proclaimed word, which is received by faith (cf., e.g., his Prefaces to the New Testament, WA DB 6:6–11; *LW* 35:360–62, e.g., “The gospel, then, is nothing but the preaching about Christ, Son of God and of David, true God and man, who by his death and resurrection has overcome for us the sin, death, and hell of all men who believe in him” [360]). But for Paul the gospel also bears traits of the “new obligation” or “new covenant” of Jeremiah 31:31–34. Accordingly, νόμος Χριστοῦ, “the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2), or νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:2), appears as a saving gift of God bound up with the gospel that directs believers into fulfillment of the will of God. According to Paul, the obedience of faith that grows out of the hearing of the gospel is inseparably bound up with sanctification (Rom. 6:15–23).

2 When one combines the programmatic statement of Romans 1:16–17 with its Pauline commentary in 3:21–26, the gospel appears as the savingly effective message of the *justification of the ungodly* (Rom. 4:5; 5:6). This understanding of justification corresponds to the apostle’s experience of his call and is especially characteristic of his mission theology. Justification has its tradition-historical roots in the faith tradition of the pre-Pauline Christian

churches and extends from there back to the preaching of Jesus and the testimony of the Holy Scriptures.

2.1 The end-time conceptual horizon and the terminology of the Pauline doctrine of justification have been built up over centuries from the Old Testament and the early Jewish eschatological expectation.

2.1.1 Corresponding to the experience that both Israel and the individual have become guilty before God and continually acquire fresh guilt because and inasmuch as they depart from his will, there is the Old Testament experience and conception of *the judgment of God* coming over Israel (and the whole world). The great prophets of judgment saw this judgment come upon Israel in this world. Then, after the Babylonian exile, the expectation of the eschatological final judgment over the whole world on the "Day of Yahweh" was developed. In Zephaniah 1:14–18, Joel 4:1–21 (ET 3:1–21), Daniel 7:9–14, *1 Enoch* 61:1–62:12, *4 Ezra* 7:26–44, etc., there are comprehensive presentations of this judgment. God himself, or the Messiah or Son of Man whom he has invested with full judicial authority, will bring to judgment all the powers that have risen up against God and his people as well as all transgressors of God's will. The standard of the final judgment will be the will of God as it has been revealed in the Torah of Sinai (cf. *4 Ezra* 7:72; 8:56–60). In the judgment it is *works* (which are precisely recorded in heaven) that will count, and they will show their doers to have been godless or righteous (cf. Ps. 62:13 [ET 62:12]; Prov. 24:12; Job 34:11; Sir. 16:14; *Jub*. 5:15; *1 En.* 100:7). The New Testament has adopted this expectation, including the fine points of terminology (cf., e.g., Matt. 25:31–46; Rom. 2:1–16; John 5:24–29; Rev. 20:11–15). The *ἔργα νόμου* or "works of the law" which Paul also mentions in Galatians 2:16 and Romans 3:20, 28 refer, according to 4Q398 (4QMMT[e]) frags. 14–17 II, 1–8 and *2 Baruch* 57:2, to the individual fulfillments of the commandments on the basis of which the pious Jew hopes that "it shall be reckoned to you (by God) as righteousness" at the end of time (4Q398 14–17 II, 3, 7, cf. *DSSSE* 803). In Galatians 2:16 and Romans 3:20 the apostle has this end-time accounting of the "works of the law" in view (see above, 291–95, §§2.6.8–5.1).

From Isaiah 25:6–9; 26:20–27:5; Joel 4:15–21 (ET 3:15–21); Daniel 7:14, 26–27; and *1 Enoch* 62:8, 13–15 one can see very clearly that the final judgment is not an end in itself, but rather has a positive goal that points beyond the act of judgment: God's kingdom and justice will be established, Israel will be saved from those who threaten it, death will be destroyed, and the messianic saved

community will be founded. Matthew 25:31–46, 1 Corinthians 15:23–28, Romans 2:1–16, and Revelation 20:11–21:8 show that this goal of the judgment has been taken over by the New Testament witnesses.

According to 2 Corinthians 5:10 and Romans 14:10, Paul sees the final judgment as imminent, and his doctrine of justification is to be seen within this horizon of end-time expectation. Justification has the greatest significance within this framework because it explains how Jews and Gentiles can successfully stand before God's judgment seat in the final judgment and gain a share in the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ after passing through the judgment.

2.2 Not only the end-time framework of the Pauline doctrine of justification but also its terminology comes from the Old Testament and early Judaism.

2.2.1 "Righteousness" in the Old Testament is above all a term that describes a proper and ordered relationship between persons and also between God and his people (or the creation as a whole). Its Semitic equivalents are צֶדֶק (*ṣedeq*) and צְדָקָה (*ṣədāqâ*).

If one follows K. Koch ("צדק," *THAT* 2:507–30 = *TLOT* 3:1256–60), then these two Hebrew nouns denote the *faithfulness in relationships* in which people stand in relation to one another, or in which God stands in relation to his creatures. H. H. Schmid (*Gerechtigkeit als Weltordnung* [1968], 182–86) supplements Koch's definition by understanding the righteousness words as *terms for order*, expressing what is right and in order.

When applied to God and his rule, "righteousness" is always an expression of salvation. Hence justice and righteousness in all creation are bound up with God's kingdom (cf., e.g., Pss. 97:2; 99:4; Isa. 9:6 [ET 9:7]; 45:7–8); God takes Israel as his wife in righteousness and in justice (Hos. 2:21–22 [ET 2:19–20]) and effects deliverance and salvation for Israel (Isa. 45:8; 46:12–13; 51:8); God is in the right over against all who lay charges against him (Jer. 12:1; Isa. 41:26; Ps. 50:6), and he judges so that those without rights get justice (Pss. 35:23–24, 28; 82:1–4; according to Ps. 72, the king who brings salvation is also responsible for maintaining צֶדֶק in the world in God's name). Justice and well-being proceed from God (Pss. 48:11–12; 65:2–5; Mal. 3:20 [ET 4:2]; and 1Q27 [1QMyst] 1:6–8). The demonstrations of God's righteousness in the history of Israel, the so-called צִדְקֹת יהוה, are divine saving acts through which Israel has experienced deliverance, which the people of God remember thankfully (cf. Judg. 5:11; 1 Sam. 12:7; Mic. 6:5; Ps. 103:6; Dan. 9:16). On the basis of such passages, G. von Rad defines God's righteousness as follows in his *Old Testament Theology*: "From the earliest times onwards Israel celebrated Jahweh as the one who bestowed on his people the all-embracing gift of his righteousness. And this צדקה bestowed on Israel is always a saving gift. It is inconceivable that it should ever menace Israel. No references to the concept of a punitive צדקה can be adduced—that would be a *contradiction in adiecto*" (377).

God's righteousness appears extremely rarely in the Old Testament as a behavior that unleashes judgment (cf. Isa. 1:27–28; 5:16; 10:22). Moreover, in each of these passages, the judgment is meant to guarantee or reestablish the reliable order of the world. These few passages should therefore not be

used as an opportunity to interpret God’s righteousness abstractly in the sense of an impartial penal justice.

Such a misinterpretation would make it incomprehensible why the penitent ones in the Old Testament and early Jewish penitential prayers appeal precisely to God’s righteousness as the essence of his grace and mercy (cf. Neh. 9:8, 17, 33; Dan. 9:7, 16). The penitential texts from Qumran and *4 Ezra* come especially close to Paul in both terminology and content. In 1QS 11:11–15 it says for example:

> By his knowledge everything shall come into being, and all that does exist he establishes with his calculations and nothing is done outside of him. As for me, if I stumble, the mercies of God shall be my salvation always; and if I fall in the sin of the flesh, in the righteousness of God (בצדקת אל), which endures eternally, shall my judgment (משפטי) be; if my distress commences, he will free my soul from the pit and make my steps steady on the path; he will draw me near in his mercies, and by kindness set in motion my judgment (משפטי); he will judge me in the righteousness of his truth (בצדקת אמתו), and in his plentiful goodness always atone for all my sins; in his righteousness (בצדקתו) he will cleanse me from the uncleanness of the human being and from the sin of the sons of man, so that I can give God thanks for his righteousness (צדקו) and The Highest for his majesty. (*DSSSE* 99 modified)

Parallel to this, it says in *4 Ezra* (NRSV 2 Esdras) 8:34–36, once again in a penitential prayer: “[34]But what are mortals, that you are angry with them; or what is a corruptible race, that you are so bitter against it? [35]For in truth there is no one among those who have been born who has not acted wickedly; among those who have existed there is no one who has not done wrong. [36]For in this, O Lord, your righteousness and goodness (*iustitia tua et bonitas tua*) will be declared, when you are merciful to those who have no store of good works.”

In these texts the expression “the righteousness of God” designates God’s reliable power to create salvation and well-being for people even as they pass through his judgment. The close relationship of 1QS 11:11–15 and 4 Ezra 8:34–36 to Pauline texts suggests interpreting δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in Paul from the Old Testament–Jewish background sketched above rather than from the Greek concept of righteousness, according to which δικαιοσύνη is the queen of the virtues (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 5.3, p. 1129b) and δικαιοσύνη δικαστική is the readiness and ability of the judge to give each his or her due without bribery (*Ethics* 5.7, p. 1132a).

2.2.2 Over against the righteousness of God in the Old Testament and early Judaism stands the *wrath of God*. Its Hebrew equivalent is very often אַף יהוה, though the Qumran texts have אַף אֵל (cf. 1QS 2:15; 4:12; etc.).

The wrath of God can be both the occasion for judgment (cf., e.g., Hos. 8:5; Deut. 7:4; 9:7–8; Ps. 7:7 [ET 7:6]; 1QS 2:15; *1 En.* 99:16) and the essence of the judgment that will take place on the “day of wrath” (cf., e.g., Zeph. 1:14–18; Isa. 2:6–21; 66:15–16; Ezek. 22:31; 1QS 4:11–14; *Jub.* 24:30; *1 En.* 91:7).

The *difference* between God's wrath and his righteousness or justice can be grasped once we realize that in the Old Testament, "Yahweh's justice is never explicitly (*ausdrücklich*) linked with his wrath" (J. Fichtner, "ὀργή," *TWNT* 5:409 = *TDNT* 5:408 [translation modified]). Moreover, the wrath of God always subsides after a brief time, whereas his grace and righteousness endure forever (cf. Exod. 20:5–6; Isa. 26:20; 54:7–10; Pss. 30:6 [ET 30:5]; 103:8–17).

Paul and the New Testament adopted this usage. In Romans 1:16–17 and 1:18 Paul sets God's righteousness and God's wrath over against one another; the ἡμέρα ὀργῆς is for him the day of the judgment of wrath (Rom. 2:5; cf. Rev. 6:17), while the ὀργή or wrath of God is the coming judgment itself (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rom. 2:8; 5:9; Rev. 11:18).

2.2.3 The verb צדק in the qal (*ṣādāq*) means to be faithful in society, in the right, righteous, or just. In the hifil (הִצְדִּיק, *hiṣdîq*), which is usually used in legal contexts, it means to vindicate somebody or grant somebody saving justice, or make somebody righteous.

This forensic meaning is also present where God is the subject of הִצְדִּיק. In 1 Kings 8:32 and 2 Chronicles 6:23 God is asked in particular legal cases to "condemn the guilty one by bringing his conduct upon his own head, and vindicate [or acquit] the righteous by rewarding him according to his righteousness" (RSV modified). In the third Servant Song, Isaiah 50:4–9, the persecuted Servant throws down the gauntlet to his tormentors before God, certain that God will vindicate him (Isa. 50:7–9):

[7]The Lord GOD helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;
[8]he who vindicates me [מַצְדִּיקִי; NJB: "He who grants me saving justice"] is near.
Who will contend with me?
Let us stand up together.
Who are my adversaries?
Let them confront me.
[9]It is the Lord GOD who helps me;
who will declare me guilty?

The scene points forward to Romans 8:31–39. The hifil can also be used when the Servant justifies or vindicates “the many” before God according to God’s will. He does this by taking the sin and guilt of the many vicariously upon himself and interceding for them (Isa. 53:11–12):

> [11]The righteous one (צַדִּיק), my servant, shall make many righteous (יַצְדִּיק),
> and he shall bear their iniquities.
> [12]Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great,
> and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;
> because he poured out himself to death,
> and was numbered with the transgressors;
> yet he bore the sin of many,
> and made intercession for the transgressors.

The hifil הִצְדִּיק in these four passages, 1 Kings 8:32, 2 Chronicles 6:23, Isaiah 50:8, and 53:11, is translated by the active *δικαιοῦν* in each instance. However, when and where God’s vindicating help is excluded, the guilty come under judgment. The LXX emphasizes and strengthens this. Hence, where the Hebrew text of Psalm 143:2 has a qal active verb form for the state of “being righteous,” וְאַל־תָּבוֹא בְמִשְׁפָּט אֶת־עַבְדֶּךָ כִּי לֹא־יִצְדַּק לְפָנֶיךָ כָל־חָי, “And do not enter into judgment with your servant, for no one living *is righteous* before you,” the LXX translates with a passive verb, “Do not enter into judgment with your servant, for no one living *shall be justified* before you,” *ὅτι οὐ δικαιωθήσεται ἐνώπιόν σου πᾶς ζῶν*. The LXX also strengthens the Hebrew text forensically in Psalm 51:6 (ET 51:4 [LXX 50:6]). Where the Hebrew reads, “Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that *you are justified* (תִּצְדַּק) in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment,” the LXX translates the qal תִּצְדַּק by the passive *δικαιωθῇς*, “So that *you may be justified* in your words.” Paul cites this LXX version of the text in Romans 3:4.

Paul uses the active *δικαιοῦν* of God’s act of justifying people (cf. Rom. 3:26, 30; 4:5; 8:33; etc.) and the passive *δικαιοῦσθαι* of the reception of this justifying act by people (cf. Gal. 2:16; Rom. 3:20, 24, 28; etc.). Therefore, in his linguistic usage of “to justify” (*δικαιοῦν* and *διακοῦσθαι*), the apostle also adopts the preexisting Old Testament and Jewish usage.

Old Testament and Jewish roots are evident also in Paul’s use of the language and idea of *a person’s faith being reckoned as righteousness* from Genesis 15:6 in Galatians 3:6 and Romans 4:3, 9, 11, 22–24 (cf. also James 2:23). The expression probably goes back to the declaratory judgment of the priests who had to judge whether the purity status and the behavior of participants in the cult were צַדִּיק, that is, sanctified and qualified to approach the holy (cf. Lev. 13; Ezek. 18:5–9; and the so-called gate liturgies of Pss. 15 and 24). Yet, as G. von Rad notes, in Genesis 15:6 “Abraham’s righteousness [or justification, *Gerechtsprechung*] is not communicated within the realm of the cult by a cult official.” Rather, justification here “is transferred to the realm of God’s free and personal relationship to Abraham. But above all, his righteousness is not the result of any accomplishments, whether of sacrifice or acts of obedience. Rather, it is stated programmatically that belief alone has brought Abraham into a proper relationship to God. God has indicated his plan for history, namely, to make of Abraham a great people; Abraham ‘has firmly assented’ to that, i.e., he took it seriously and

adjusted to it. In so doing he adopted, according to God's judgment, the only correct relationship to God" (G. von Rad, *Genesis* [1972[2]], 185).

Genesis 26:2–5 and Sirach 44:20 nevertheless show that Abraham's faith was understood even in the late Old Testament period on the basis of Genesis 17:10–14 and 22:1–19 as a meritorious act of obedience before God (cf. also 1 Macc. 2:52; *Jub*. 14:6; Philo, *Abr*. 262; James 2:21–23; Heb. 11:8–12, 17–19; etc.). Moreover, according to Psalm 106:31, the zealous deed of Phinehas in Numbers 25:7–8 was reckoned to him as righteousness. The *Halakhic Letter* 4Q398 (4QMMT[e]) frags. 14–17 II, 7 ("it shall be reckoned to you as righteousness/justice"; cf. *DSSSE* 803) and rabbinic passages such as *b*. *Qiddushin* 30b show clearly that this "reckoning as righteousness" in early Judaism refers to the evaluation of meritorious behavior in the final judgment. Paul doubtless knew this forensic usage, but he radically opposed it by understanding God's reckoning of Abraham's faith as righteousness as done not *κατὰ ὀφείλημα*, "as an obligation," but rather as an act of God *κατὰ χάριν*, "as a gift" of grace (Rom. 4:3–5 NIV).

2.2.4 In order to evaluate the meaning of Paul's language about the God who *justifies the ungodly* (Rom. 4:5; 5:6), one must consider one final dialectical fact of the tradition. *This statement about God in Romans 4:5 has a semantically negative ring to it according to the Old Testament, yet it still corresponds to the scriptural understanding of God!*

2.2.4.1 In Exodus 23:7, Isaiah 5:23, Proverbs 17:15, and CD 1:19, justifying or acquitting a guilty or ungodly person—הִצְדִּיק רָשָׁע or *δικαιοῦν τὸν ἀσεβῆ*—is branded as a judicial crime before God. Paul's formulation about God in Romans 4:5 as the one "who justifies the ungodly," *ὁ δικαιῶν τὸν ἀσεβῆ*, therefore has a considerably negative semantic connotation. Here *ὁ ἀσεβής*, "the ungodly," does not mean an atheist in the modern sense of the word, but a sinner who is guilty in the judgment. To declare such a person to be in the right or to justify him and thereby also to rob the truly righteous person of his rights is an occasion for the judgment of God's wrath according to Isaiah 5:23.

Nevertheless, the Old Testament knows and attests the justification of the ungodly very well. It is an act of God which he brings himself to do out of free love and mercy toward his guilt-laden chosen people Israel. In Hosea 11:8–9 (cf. with 14:2–9 [ET 14:1–8]) this divine act is given impressive theological attestation:

[8]How can I give you up, Ephraim?
How can I hand you over, O Israel?
How can I make you like Admah?

How can I treat you like Zeboiim?
My heart recoils within me;
my compassion grows warm and tender.
[9]I will not execute my fierce anger;
I will not again destroy Ephraim;
for I am God and no mortal,
the Holy One in your midst,
and I will not come in wrath. (Hos. 11:8–9)

Jörg Jeremias comments that according to Hosea, “the actual distance between God and humanity consists in God’s self-mastery, in his victory over his wrath, in his care for his apostate people, in his will to spare his guilty people, which otherwise would be handed over to destruction” (*Die Reue Gottes* [1975], 53). Also, according to Jeremiah 31:20 and Isaiah 43:1–5, 22–25; 52:13–53:12, God brings himself to save his chosen people, even though they have burdened him with their sins and cannot find their way back to him in their own strength. According to Hosea, Jeremiah, and Deutero-Isaiah, God’s grace reaches its fulfillment when in love he has mercy on his guilty people; here the justification of the ungodly out of God’s free grace and mercy is clearly attested.

This idea has entered only fragmentarily into late Israelite penitential prayers. On the one hand, the people praying these prayers see themselves entirely cast upon God’s gracious mercy (cf., e.g., Ps. 51:3–7 [ET 51:1–5]; Neh. 9:33–35; Dan. 9:5–9; 1QS 11:9–12; *4 Ezra* 8:31–36; etc.). But on the other hand, after receiving the forgiveness of their sins, they exert themselves once again with ascetic strictness to live a righteous life, and they see themselves fully in a position to walk before God in a holy and perfect way in accordance with the Torah. This is especially clear in the Qumran texts, where confession of guilt and a new obligation to live a perfect life go hand in hand (e.g., 1QS 3:6–12; 5:1–10), as well as in *4 Ezra*, where the penitential complaint of 8:31–36 is answered by God (!) with the announcement that only those will stand in the final judgment who by virtue of their faithful keeping of the Torah “have works and faith toward the Almighty” (13:23; cf. with 8:55–60; 9:7–8; and James 2:22–24).

The anthropological basis of this position becomes clear in Sirach 15:11–17 and *Psalms of Solomon* 9:4–5. Hence in Sirach 15:11–15 it says:

> [11]Do not say, "It was the Lord's doing that I fell away";
> for he does not do what he hates.
> [12]Do not say, "It was he who led me astray";
> for he has no need of the sinful.
> [13]The Lord hates all abominations;
> such things are not loved by those who fear him.
> [14]It was he who created humankind in the beginning,
> and he left them in the power of their own free choice.
> [15]If you choose, you can keep the commandments,
> and to act faithfully is a matter of your own choice.

Much the same idea is found in the early Pharisaic *Psalms of Solomon*; in 9:4–5 it says: "Our works (are) in the choosing and power of our souls, to do right and wrong in the works of our hands, and in your righteousness you oversee human beings. The one who does what is right saves up life for himself with the Lord, and the one who does what is wrong causes his own life to be destroyed; for the Lord's righteous judgments are according to the individual and the household" (*OTP* 1:660).

On this anthropological basis, early Judaism did not come to any real assurance of salvation.

2.3 In the *Jesus tradition* the verb δικαιοῦσθαι (passive) appears, to be sure, only once in the sense of "receiving the forgiveness of sins, being newly accepted by God," namely, in Luke 18:14: "this man went down to his home *justified* rather than the other." However, Jesus attested and lived out the idea that God has mercy upon the ungodly or wicked through him and accepts them again into his fellowship (Luke 15:2; cf. with Rom. 15:7). One can see this both in Jesus's table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners (cf. Mark 2:15–17 par.; Luke 19:2–10; and above, 86) and in his parables of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11–32), the laborers in the vineyard (Matt. 20:1–16), and the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9–14). But above all, it can be deduced from his readiness to go to his death as the

Suffering Servant on behalf of the many and so to justify them (cf. Mark 10:45; 14:24 par. with Isa. 53:11–12). *In view of Jesus's proclamation, his sacrifice on the cross, and his exaltation, one can say that God's will to justify the ungodly without any grounds other than his mercy has become a historical reality in Jesus*.

2.4 On the basis of their reencounter or fresh encounter with the crucified and exalted Jesus in the Easter appearances—in other words, out of their own experience, despite all their past failures, of being newly accepted by the *Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός*—the apostles proceeded already prior to Paul to testify to the fulfillment of Isaiah 52:13–53:12 in and through Jesus.

The apostles provided such testimony for example in the confessional language of the death of Jesus "for our sins" in 1 Corinthians 15:3; in the pre-Pauline formulas of 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Romans 4:25; in the principle of Galatians 2:16 and Romans 3:28 (cf. 10:3) that all who seek to establish their own righteousness before God by referring to works of the law they have performed will come to ruin in the final judgment; in the language of the crucified Christ as the *ἱλαστήριον* or "mercy seat" (Rom. 3:25–26); and in the Lord's Supper tradition (Mark 14:22–25 par.).

In the midst of his activities as a persecutor, Paul was granted a vision of the exalted Christ and was pardoned by God to be an apostle of Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 15:8–10; 2 Cor. 2:14–16). As he himself explains in Philippians 3:7–11, he learned from the all-surpassing knowledge of Christ revealed to him on the outskirts of Damascus to give up his own righteousness based on fulfilling the law and to live before God on the basis of the "righteousness from God" available to him on the basis of faith. *His call presented itself to Paul as the exemplary justification of the ungodly person*. Coming from the perspective of this revealed knowledge, the apostle took up the confessional traditions just mentioned and made them the determinative content of his preaching. *In this way the justification of the ungodly became the characteristic feature of Paul's mission theology*.

2.4.1 Paul develops his understanding of justification above all in Galatians, Romans, and Philippians. By contrast, there is no mention of justification in 1 Thessalonians and Philemon and only occasional mention in 1–2 Corinthians.

From these facts scholars have continued until now to draw the conclusion that Paul first came to preach the justification of the ungodly because of the controversies in Galatia. G. Strecker, U. Schnelle, H. Hübner, J. Becker, and other proponents of this view nevertheless accord the theme of justification in Paul the highest theological value, while K. Stendahl and E. P. Sanders, considering

the same facts, think it right to demote the Pauline doctrine of justification to a subsidiary doctrine developed only in arguments with Jews or Judaizers (see above, 268–69, §§1.5.1–2). *But against all of them, it must be objected that Paul's idea of justification cannot have developed only later in his ministry*. The following reasons speak against it: (1) The language and conceptual world of justification already existed in early Christianity before Paul was called to his office; hence, he took it over from predecessors. (2) According to 2 Corinthians 11:24–28, Paul was persecuted for his law-critical preaching of Christ from the beginning of his career, and according to 1 Thessalonians 2:16, he was hindered (by Jews) in preaching the gospel. (3) If one follows the South Galatian hypothesis, then the letter to the Galatians reflects the arguments that grew out of the justification-oriented and law-critical preaching of Christ that Paul had exercised already on his so-called First Missionary Journey (see above, 255–56). The prominence of the theme of justification in Galatians, Romans, and Philippians is then no longer proof that Paul came to the knowledge of the justification of the ungodly only later. Rather, it documents that this determined the apostle's thinking and message from the very beginning of his mission, starting from Damascus and later from Antioch. (4) To the degree that the texts taken up by Paul from church tradition about the vicarious atoning death of Jesus on the basis of Isaiah 53:11–12 belong together with justification (see above), related statements concerning the atonement and reconciliation in Paul's letters such as 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 5:9–10, 1 Cor. 1:30, 10:16–17, 11:23–26, 15:3–5, 2 Cor. 3:9, 5:14–21, etc., should also be connected with justification. The close connection of the doctrine of justification with the language of the vicarious atoning death of Jesus (partly missed by the authors named above) invalidates not only the thesis that Paul came to the knowledge of justification only at the end of his ministry, but also the idea that it deals only with a subsidiary doctrine of the apostle with a soteriologically limited range. *The doctrine of justification designates from early on the whole of Pauline theology!*

2.4.2 Paul pursues two fundamental soteriological ideas in his doctrine of justification:

(1) In the mission, sacrifice, exaltation, and future work of Christ, God's will to bring salvation and well-being, his righteousness, is comprehensively manifested. God makes atonement for the world and reconciles it to himself through Christ, and he guarantees end-time justification to all believers on the basis of the atoning death and intercession of Jesus.

(2) The saving work of the justification (δικαίωσις) of the ungodly for Christ's sake through faith alone supersedes and brings an end to justification by the works of the law.

Guided by these two ideas, Paul carries out the Gentile mission entrusted to him, hoping that he can thereby also promote the end-time salvation of Israel through the Christ-Deliverer who appears from Zion (cf. Rom. 11:13–32). Because this overall picture is already familiar to us from chapter 20, we must deal here only with the particular aspects touching upon the theology of justification.

2.4.2.1 A comparison of the three predications of God as “the one who justifies the ungodly” (ὁ δικαιῶν τὸν ἀσεβῆ, Rom. 4:5), “the one who gives life to the dead” (ὁ ζωοποιῶν τοὺς νεκρούς, Rom. 4:17), and “the one who calls into existence the things that do not exist” (ὁ καλῶν τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα, Rom. 4:17) documents that *justification is a judicial act effected by God as creator*. As a result, the justified emerge as a καινὴ κτίσις or “new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17) and gain a share in the glory that belongs to the exalted Christ (Rom. 8:29–30; cf. Dan. 12:3). Typologically, justification aims at the restoration of the original righteousness and glory of God’s creatures that sinners lost through Adam’s fall (cf. Rom. 3:23–26 with *Apoc*. *Mos*. 20–21). The place and framework of justification are the final judgment.

The saving work of final justification has its decisive *legal ground* in the vicarious surrender of life decreed by God and obediently accomplished by Jesus on the cross on Golgotha. In order to make clear what this involves, Paul, in reliance on previous Christian tradition, combines (1) the idea in Isaiah 53:10–12 of the justification of the many through the vicarious “compensation” or “wiping out of guilt” (Heb. אָשָׁם, *ʾāšām*, v. 10) accomplished through the Servant’s surrender of life (cf. Rom. 4:25) with (2) the idea of inclusive atonement for the forfeited lives of the ungodly through the blood of Jesus (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 3:25; 5:9; 8:3). Vicariously taking the place of others and atonement through Jesus’s death on the cross cannot be separated in Paul, but form together the historical legal basis laid by God himself for the justification that he speaks to believers. In the final judgment the exalted Christ can apply his vicarious atoning death to sinners who believe in him, thus interceding for them as their advocate before God, who justifies them (Rom. 8:34; cf. with Isa. 53:12). By virtue of the justification effectively spoken by God on the basis of this intercession, believers gain a share in the righteousness and glorious existence of Christ (2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 8:28–30). Because Paul sees justification as a divine act of new creation, he makes no distinction between a merely imputed and an effective justification; through the “justification that brings life” (δικαίωσις ζωῆς, Rom. 5:18 NIV), the being of the ungodly person is nullified before God and established anew (1 Cor. 1:26–29; 2 Cor. 5:17 with Rom. 4:5, 17).

2.4.2.2 In the context of justification, Paul speaks repeatedly and pointedly of the “righteousness of God,” δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 10:3), and in Philippians 3:9 he writes (in dependence on Isa. 54:17) of the δικαιοσύνη ἐκ θεοῦ or “righteousness from God” that became his on the basis of faith. The apostle’s terminology has been prepared by the pre-Pauline traditional texts in 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Romans 3:25–26. The expression δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ also occurs in Matthew 6:33 and James 1:20 and corresponds to Hebrew צִדְקַת אֵל (*ṣidqat ʾēl*), according to 1QS 10:25 and 11:12.

Since Luther’s Reformation discovery that *iustitia dei* or δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in Romans 1:16–17 denotes not the impartial justice of God as judge but the righteousness “by which the righteous lives as a gift of God, namely by faith . . . , the passive righteousness with which merciful God justifies us by faith” (“Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther’s Latin Writings,” WA 54:186 lines 5–7; *LW* 34:336), the interpretation of this expression has been highly contested. Whereas R. Bultmann understands the genitive τοῦ θεοῦ from the perspective of Philippians 3:9 as a genitive of the author or source (“*from* God”) and wishes to see God’s righteousness in Romans 1:17; 3:21–22, 26; and 10:4 as “God-given, God-adjudicated righteousness” (*Theology of the New Testament*, vol. 1 [1951], 285), E. Käsemann, following A. Schlatter, interpreted διακιοσύνη θεοῦ from the Old Testament and early Jewish apocalyptic as the essence of “God’s sovereignty over the world revealing itself eschatologically in Jesus.” It is “the rightful power with which God makes his cause to triumph in the world which has fallen away from him and which yet, as creation, is his inviolable possession” (“ ‘The Righteousness of God’ in Paul,” in *New Testament Questions of Today* [1967], 180). Both interpretations continue to find representatives today. But the Pauline passages (see above) show that it is above all Käsemann who is right.

Δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in Paul denotes God’s activity of creating salvation and well-being for people, such that with one and the same expression both God’s own activity and the result of that activity can be designated. Other Pauline terms for salvation, including “reconciliation” (καταλλαγή), “wisdom” (σοφία), “grace” (χάρις), or “spirit” (πνεῦμα), also have this “synthetic” semantic range (K. H. Fahlgren), which is characteristic of the Old Testament and early Jewish terminology of salvation.

The polyvalent sense of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is well illustrated in Romans 3:21–26. Paul explains in these verses his brief definition of the gospel from Romans 1:16–17. After summarizing in Romans 3:20 (cf. with Ps. 143:2) that through the works of the law no flesh can be justified in God’s sight but that through the law comes only the knowledge of sin, the apostle makes a new beginning in 3:21, in order to show how God provides justification for sinners on his own initiative:

> [21]But now, without the law, the righteousness of God has been revealed, testified to by the law and the prophets, [22]that is, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. There is, namely, no difference: [23]They have all sinned, and all are missing the glory of God; [24](but) they are justified freely by virtue of his grace through the redemption which (takes place) in Christ, [25]whom God publicly appointed to be the place of atonement, (which is accessible and effective) through faith by virtue of his blood, as a demonstration of his righteousness because of the forgoing of sins which previously took place [26]under the forbearance of God—for a demonstration of his righteousness at the present time so that he (himself) might be just and declare the one to be just who (lives) from faith in Jesus. (P. Stuhlmacher, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans*, trans. S. J. Hafemann, 57. The phrase “place of atonement” is a good translation of Paul’s ἱλαστήριον here [cf. NRSV margin], even though the German uses a rare term *Sühnmal*, “marker/sign of atonement,” more reflective of Greco-Roman usage; see below, 865, A. Weiss, “Christus Jesus als Weihegeschenk oder Sühnemal?”)

This unusually densely formulated text becomes understandable only when one considers two factors: (1) Paul in verse 23 adopts the early Jewish idea that the fall into sin in Genesis 3 caused

humanity to lose the manner of being in righteousness and glory that the first human pair had before God in the garden of Eden (cf. *Apoc*. *Mos*. 20–21). By justification in and through Christ, this loss of glorious being is made up for according to Paul. (2) In verses 25–26 the apostle takes up the atonement tradition from the Stephen circle with which we are already familiar and develops it in his own sense (see above, 218–21, §5.3.2.1; 330–32). According to 3:21, the righteousness of God is shown by the "law and the prophets" or the Scriptures as a whole (cf. 4 Macc. 18:10) to involve both God's being and his activity (cf. Exod. 34:5–7; Isa. 45:23–25; 51:6, 8; etc.). Paul thereby consciously places his language of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in continuity with the Old Testament. In 3:22 he designates with this expression the gift of righteousness received through faith, and in 3:25–26 he uses it for God's own saving activity. *Romans 3:26c best represents the complex sense of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ. It means God's own righteousness, which is effectively at work in the justification of everyone who believes in Jesus*.

Exegetically, each particular context must decide which aspect of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is meant. According to Romans 1:17 and 3:22, God's righteousness is obtained through faith in Jesus Christ. In each case this involves primarily the God-given gift of the righteousness of faith; the expression has the same sense in 2 Corinthians 5:21. In Romans 3:5, by contrast, God's righteousness involves his dependable faithfulness that distinguishes itself from the unfaithfulness of unbelieving Jews. In 3:21 (and 3:26c) the complex, overall meaning is emphasized, while 3:25–26a has in view God's own faithfulness in his relationship with sinners, for whom he effects salvation by means of the atoning death of Jesus. Romans 10:3 sets over against one another δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ as the essence of God's saving activity through Jesus's atoning death and resurrection for Israel and the nations, and the righteousness that the unbelieving Jews themselves sought to establish before God by means of the law (cf. Phil. 3:9). Finally, in 1 Corinthians 1:30 Paul equates the crucified and exalted Christ (in dependence on Jer. 23:5–6) with the righteousness opened to us by God. In and through Christ, God has effected our justification, sanctification, and redemption and guarantees them through the final judgment.

In order to clarify the relationship between δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ and δικαιοσύνη ἐκ θεοῦ in *Philippians 3:9* —"righteousness *of* God" and "righteousness *from* God"—a look at *Targum of Isaiah* 54:17 is useful. The צְדָקָה or "righteousness" which comes from God to Israel according to the Masoretic Text is explained in the targum by referring to a demonstration (or several demonstrations) of the righteousness that is מִן קֳדָמַי (*min qŏdāmay*), "from before me" (cf. "their *innocence before me*"; B. D. Chilton, *The Isaiah Targum*, ArBib 11). God demonstrates his righteousness in such a way that it proceeds *from* God and is effective *before* him. *Therefore the δικαιοσύνη ἐκ θεοῦ should be interpreted as a saving demonstration of God's righteousness that proceeds from God*.

The famous expression “God’s righteousness” in Paul cannot therefore be interpreted either purely theocentrically or purely soteriologically; it comprehends both aspects of the saving activity of the creator God. God as the creator and judge of all creation frees those who believe in Christ from the dominion of sin by the atoning death of his Son and accepts them again into his fellowship. By faith alone apart from the works of the law, Jews and Gentiles gain access to the one God who for Christ’s sake allows them and the whole creation to live before him in time and eternity. From here it becomes understandable that and why the one expression *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* can encompass the whole of Pauline theology.

2.4.2.3 In this context we must return briefly to the key word “reconciliation” (*καταλλαγή*) in 2 Corinthians 5:18–20, Romans 5:11, and Colossians 1:20 (see above, 351–54, §1.2.2.1). Paul designates by *καταλλαγή* both the act of reconciliation by which God through Christ reconciled to himself the world that had fallen away from him (2 Cor. 5:19; Col. 1:20) and the saving benefit that grows out of this act of divine grace even now for believers (Rom. 5:11). The definitions of Paul’s apostolate as a “ministry of reconciliation” (*διακονία τῆς καταλλαγῆς*) in 2 Corinthians 5:18 and of the gospel as the “word of reconciliation” (*λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς*) in 2 Corinthians 5:19 show the special soteriological interest that Paul took in the key word “reconciliation.”

In view of 2 Corinthians 5:18–21 and Romans 5:1–11, R. Bultmann has aptly commented:

> One might almost say that in using the term “reconciliation” Paul’s intention to show man’s radical dependence upon the grace of God is still more clearly expressed than when he uses the term “righteousness of God,” for while the latter means that *without* our doing anything we arrive at “peace” with God (Rom. 5:1), the former means that *before* any effort of man God made an end of enmity (Rom. 5:10). But in substance, of course, there is no difference: both “without us” and “before us” intend to declare the absolute priority of God. (*Theology of the New Testament*, 1:287).

In their concept of reconciliation, neither 2 Corinthians 5:18–21 nor Romans 5:1–11 and Colossians 1:15–20 (and Eph. 2:16) show any special affinity to the Greco-Roman ideal of the death for a good cause (see above, 222, §5.4) and its reception in early Jewish martyrology (1 Macc. 2:50; 2 Macc. 7:1–41; 8:21; 3 Macc. 1:23; 4 Macc. 7:24–14:10; etc.). Paul sees God’s demonstration of love for the ungodly as outdoing all ancient heroism (Rom. 5:6–8) and connects *καταλλαγή* with the two ideas of inclusive atonement and justification through Jesus’s death on the cross. This is not to be explained from the martyr tradition but from Isaiah 53 and the atonement-theological interpretation of the death of Jesus that began with his eucharistic words already before Easter.

For Paul the term “reconciliation” summarizes in a soteriologically pregnant way what was and is involved from God’s perspective for humanity and the creation in the sending, atoning death, and exaltation of Jesus. By his own initiative God made the world that was at enmity with him to be once again at peace with its creator, and believers may already live out of this peace. The apostle, with his soteriological use of *καταλλαγή* and (*ἀπο-*)*καταλλάσσειν*, achieved an advance in theological language that lends these expressions biblical-theological weight above and beyond their few occurrences in his letters.

2.4.2.4 The statement about God as “the one who justifies the ungodly” (*ὁ δικαιῶν τὸν ἀσεβῆ*; see above) has a forensic ring to it and *implies a highly particular view of the final judgment,* which is sketched by Paul in Romans 8:31–39 and 11:32.

2.4.2.4.1 According to Romans 5:1, those who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are already at peace with God. For them the day of salvation has already dawned (2 Cor. 6:2), and as reconciled people they can also look forward to the coming day of final judgment with confidence because the exalted Christ is their advocate before God and will protect them from annihilation in the judgment (Rom. 5:8–10; 8:34). Christ is the guarantor of their “hope which consists of righteousness” (Gal. 5:5), that is, their final justification.

2.4.2.4.2 The *final judgment according to works* on the basis of the will of God which has been revealed (in the Torah) will be carried out by Christ according to Romans 2:16. Christians are not spared from it. As the apostle explains in 1 Corinthians 3:10–15, all Christians up to and including the apostles must appear before the *Κύριος* on the “Day of the Lord” (1 Thess. 5:2; 1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:14; Phil. 1:6, 10; 2:16), and then the judgment of fire (cf. Isa. 66:15–16; Mal. 3:19 [ET 4:1]; 2 Thess. 2:8) will show whether their life’s “work” is acceptable before God or not (cf. also 2 Cor. 5:10); *τὸ ἔργον* in the singular means the sum of all works in this context. *Every individual believer will therefore have to be himself or herself without a substitute in the judgment*. If these believers’ works stand the test of fire, they may expect a reward, but if they do not stand the test, they must reckon with punishment; they will still be saved, “but only as through fire” (1 Cor. 3:15; cf. Amos 4:11; Zech. 3:2). *According to Paul, the person of the individual human being counts more before God than that individual’s*

acceptable or unacceptable work, and the justification of the ungodly by faith alone for Christ's sake occurs not on the basis of, but in view of, works.

How seriously the apostle takes this statement is shown by two further examples from 1 Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians 5:1–5 he insists with all the authority at his disposal that a man who is living in married union with his (step)mother should be banished from the church. The goal of this measure is "to hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord" (1 Cor. 5:5). By πνεῦμα is meant not the spirit of the church (1 Cor. 3:16), but that of the evildoer himself (cf. 1 Cor. 3:15 with 2 Cor. 7:13). He should be excluded from the church and handed over to judgment already during his lifetime, in order to avoid eternal destruction in the final judgment. Paul thereby expresses "a clear *No to sin* just as clearly as God's *Yes to the sinner* on the basis of the vicarious atoning death of Jesus Christ" (F. Lang, *Die Briefe an die Korinther* [1994[2]], 72).

The apostle issues a similar judgment in 1 Corinthians 11:30–32. In Paul's opinion, the Corinthians' lax practice of the Lord's Supper is the reason why many church members in Corinth have already become ill, and some have died. Paul is undoubtedly thinking here in terms of the Old Testament deed-consequences connection, seeing sickness and death as the consequences of the Corinthians' bad behavior (see above, 313–14, §5.2). Yet the apostle sees these consequences not as constituting the judgment of destruction, but with Proverbs 3:12 and Hebrews 12:5–10, as the παιδεία of the Κύριος, that is, as the discipline through which those so treated will be spared from being "condemned along with the (unbelieving) world" in the final judgment.

Although the argumentation in 1 Corinthians 5:1–5 and 11:30–32 might appear questionable, it nevertheless clearly shows how seriously the apostle takes the sin of Christians. Yet even in view of such sin, God's grace in Christ has priority over his wrath according to Paul.

2.4.2.5 According to 1 Corinthians 3:15, 5:5, and Romans 8:31–39, believers can be certain of their future salvation. This *assurance of salvation* can be comprehended when one considers that Paul repeatedly speaks of *election to justification* through Christ in contexts which are about assuring his addressees. According to Romans 8:28–30, all those who love God by the gift of the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom. 5:5) may be certain of their election to glorification in the midst of all their sufferings. Moreover, in Romans 11:25–32 the apostle gains his confidence that after the completion of the Gentile mission, "all Israel" will be saved through the Christ-Deliverer from his conviction that God's electing word to Abraham holds irrevocably and will be fulfilled even with respect to the still-unbelieving part of Israel (cf. Gen. 12:1–3 with Rom. 9:6; 11:28–29). These verses correspond to Romans 1:16–17, but in 11:28–32 Paul's gaze extends even beyond the period of the preaching of the gospel in the world of the nations (cf. Mark 13:10). In 11:32 he offers the boldest and most comprehensive formulation of his view of justification: "God has imprisoned all [i.e.,

Gentiles and Jews] in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.” *This universal statement takes up Romans 3:22, 30. It makes it exegetically completely impossible to relate Paul’s doctrine of justification only to the Gentiles or to see it only as a subsidiary theological doctrine. On the contrary, it encompasses all people and the whole of history.* (On the problem of the universal restoration of creation, see above, 342.)

Paul sees himself situated by his apostolate in the global horizons of God’s will of justification. According to Romans 11:13–15 and 15:15–24, he is the apostle of the Gentiles for Israel’s sake, and he hopes that by fulfilling his task he can contribute to the end-time salvation of his own people in three ways. Through his missionary preaching Paul can (1) lead some Jews to faith before the parousia; (2) he can use the angry jealousy which God himself has provoked in those Jews who reject Paul’s gospel to imprison them in the disobedience of unbelief from which there is no escape except for God’s mercy in Christ (cf. Rom. 11:14 with 10:19 and 11:32); (3) the apostle can make an effort through the Gentile mission that was quickly spreading to Spain—the end of the then-known (Mediterranean) world—to speed the ingathering of the “fullness of the Gentiles” (πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν) into the saved community and so also to bring nearer the day of the appearance of the Christ-Deliverer.

Paul’s apocalyptic expectation and mode of ministry are the characteristic expression of his faith. He believes that God, as the one who justifies the ungodly, is the one God of Jews and Gentiles who will lead his creation to salvation through the sending of Jesus.

2.4.2.6 Paul’s doctrine of justification and his eschatology agree with one another in both perspective and content. According to his doctrine of justification, Gentiles and Jews shall obtain in and through Christ the mercy of God and a share in his glorious righteousness (Rom. 8:28–30), while according to his eschatology, God’s dominion over the universe will once again be completely established only when Christ has also taken away the power of death (1 Cor. 15:23–28, 53–57) and the whole creation is freed from the “bondage to decay” (δουλεία τῆς φθορᾶς) which has lain upon it since Adam’s fall (Rom. 8:21). In his expectation of the glorious freedom of the children of God whom Christ will lead into the praise of God in the midst of the renewed creation (1 Cor. 15:28; Rom. 8:21), Paul’s doctrines of justification and eschatology come together. They resist any attempt at spiritualizing; they have the same cosmic breadth as the Old Testament hymns of Yahweh as king (e.g., Ps. 96); and they encourage us to expect from God in Christ no less than the rising of the “sun of righteousness” (Mal. 3:20 [ET 4:2]) over the whole world (cf. 1Q27 [1QMyst] 1:6–8, *DSSSE* 67).

2.4.2.7 That Paul's doctrine of justification is conceived in a consistently forensic manner is confirmed by the fact that it has a *thoroughly serious flip side*: The person who does not live before God by faith in Christ and therefore cannot hope for Christ's intercession in the final judgment will not be able to stand before the judgment seat of God. Paul expresses this unambiguously.

2.4.2.7.1 In spite of Jewish and Jewish Christian criticism, in regard to the coming final judgment according to works, Paul proceeds in Galatians 2:16 and Romans 3:28 from the principle that "by the works of the law no flesh will be justified in [God's] sight" (NASB). According to early Jewish usage, "works of the law" are the fulfillments of the commandments of the Torah (4Q398 [4QMMT[e]] frags. 14–17 II, 3; *2 Bar*. 57:2) which are reckoned to their doers as righteousness in the final judgment. Paul considers precisely this to be an illusion. According to his experience, even the most zealous observance of the Torah before God does not lead to justification, because the law cannot implant in sinners the ability to withstand sin and to serve God in righteousness. The Torah cannot make of sinners righteous people who have "not sinned" or have "turned from sin" and "keep the law with their whole hearts" (*Tg. Isa*. 7:3; 10:21–22; 26:2). Therefore the apostle considers it a dangerous denial of humanity's fall into guilt when Jews and Jewish Christians think that with the help of the law they can establish their own righteousness before God, obligating him to justify them "as something due," *κατὰ ὀφείλημα* (cf. Rom. 4:4).

According to Philippians 3:9 (cf. with Rom. 10:3), Paul held a different opinion as a persecutor of Christians. From 4Q398 (4QMMT[e]) frags. 14–17 II, 7 and *4 Ezra* 9:7 it appears that in early Judaism there actually was a hope that trusting in God's mercy and in one's own works (of the law) would lead to acceptance of the pious person in the final judgment. From James 2:20–26 and Hebrews 11 we see that there were also (Jewish) Christians who held this view.

The formulation of Galatians 2:16 and Romans 3:20 relies on Psalm 143:2 (LXX 142:2). Paul's expression "no flesh" (*οὐ . . . πᾶσα σάρξ*) as opposed to "no one living" (*οὐ . . . πᾶς ζῶν*) in the psalm text might additionally allude to Genesis 6–9 (N. Walter). The reliance on the language of the Holy Scriptures implies that Paul *does not formulate a mere judgment according to experience, but rather a rule of judgment spoken in accordance with the biblical word of God*: In the final judgment everyone

will come to ruin who seeks to obtain or to preserve their own righteousness before God by pointing to the works of the law that they have done.

C. Burchard and M. Theobald trace Paul’s idea of the impossibility of justification by the works of the law in Galatians 2:16 and Romans 3:20, 28 with good reason back to the Stephen circle and the church in Antioch (cf. C. Burchard, “Nicht aus Werken des Gesetzes gerecht, sondern aus Glauben an Jesus Christus—seit wann?,” in *Geschichte—Tradition—Reflexion*, FS M. Hengel, ed. H. Lichtenberger, vol. 3 [1996], 405–15, and M. Theobald, “Der Kanon von der Rechtfertigung (Gal 2,16; Röm 3,28)—Eigentum des Paulus oder Gemeingut der Kirche?,” in *Worum geht es in der Rechtfertigungslehre?*, ed. T. Söding [1999], 131–92). Under these circumstances we cannot possibly limit the application of these passages only to Jewish “boundary markers” such as circumcision, Sabbath, and purity and food laws, as was proposed in part by J. D. G. Dunn in his early studies of 1983 and 1988 and by other representatives of the “New Perspective” (see above, 270–73, §1.5.4). We are rather dealing with a fundamental early Christian principle that includes every imaginable practice of the law and remains valid until the final judgment.

By the same token, A. Schlatter was vigorously opposed, with equally good reason, to the practice of certain interpreters of Paul who “bent” the statement of Galatians 2:16 and Romans 3:20 into the idea that the works of the law are themselves sin. In his commentary on Romans he writes: “Those who claimed that the works of the law were sin, joined with those who argued that the law is sin (7:7). To this Paul responded, ‘By no means!’ Paul did in fact argue that the works of the law were the works of a sinner, but he did not say that they were sin” (*Romans: The Righteousness of God* [1995], 88).

The “bending” criticized by Schlatter seems to be present with G. Klein when he writes in *TRE* 13:67 that in Paul, “compliance with the requirement of the law counts as a variant of the dreadful human state of affairs,” and shortly thereafter comments on Galatians 2:16 and Romans 3:20 as follows: “By getting involved with the law, people are overcome by sin, and the law which was to result in life yields the opposite result (Rom. 7:10)” (*TRE* 13:71). When one equates the opposition of justification by the works of the law versus justification by faith alone with the effort to fulfill the law versus the avoidance of such an effort, one completely obscures the understanding of Romans 8:4–14 and obstructs the approach to Pauline ethics.

2.4.2.7.2 Where the gospel is arbitrarily changed by the preachers of a “different gospel,” Paul sees the ground for salvation fading. The one who does not confess Christ as the Lord and Savior he has been revealed to be is handed over to judgment (cf. Gal. 1:6–9; 2 Cor. 11:1–4, 12–15). Moreover, the Corinthians, who are in danger of falling back into their old pagan way of life, are reminded by Paul that “the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 6:9 KJV), and he goes on to explain this with the help of a striking vice catalogue (vv. 9–11).

3 Paul speaks of “faith” (πίστις) and “believing” (πιστεύειν) more emphatically and exhaustively than any other New Testament witness before him. *Faith in Jesus Christ is for the apostle the great alternative to a life under the Torah or in pagan godlessness*.

In his statements about faith, Paul connects with the Christian usage that already existed before him; moreover, in his discussions of faith he repeatedly goes back to the Old Testament. When the apostle presents "believing" (πιστεύειν) and "working" (ἐργάζεσθαι) as antitheses and speaks of Abraham's faith in the one God who justifies the ungodly (Rom. 4:5), the fundamental contrast of his concept of faith to that of early Judaism is evident. *For Paul faith is no meritorious accomplishment of human "faithfulness." It has come freshly into the world with the sending of Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:23–25); it is opened to Jews and Gentiles through the gospel (Gal. 3:2; Rom. 10:17); and it is the essence of the new life with God that Christians may lead (O. Hofius).*

3.1 From his Damascus experience and knowledge of revelation, Paul had a new understanding of πίστις and πιστεύειν that he repeatedly had to defend against the Jews and Jewish Christians who attacked his gospel of justification.

In his presentation of faith, the apostle refers in Galatians 3 and Romans 4 to Abraham (cf. Gen. 15:6), and in Romans 1:17 and 9:33 he refers to Habakkuk 2:4 and Isaiah 28:16. To understand this recourse to the Old Testament and its polemical thrust, one must recall that faith in the Old Testament tradition only gradually became the expression for Israel's relationship to God. At first Isaiah's manner of expression was decisive. He made the hifil of אמן, namely, הֶאֱמִין ("to stand firm, trust, believe"), the essence of reliance upon God's protective promise toward the Davidic dynasty that was opened to Judah(-Israel) and its king but refused by them (Isa. 7:9; 28:16; [30:15]). To this Isaianic usage corresponded in the same period (eighth century BC) the statement of the Elohist (or another carrier of the tradition) that Abraham "believed" or "put his faith" or "trust" (הֶאֱמִין, hifil; cf. NRSV, NJB, NJPS) in the Lord in the light of his promise and founded his existence and that of his seed upon it (Gen. 15:6). This language of the Godfearing reliance upon God's word and promise was then taken up in a few psalms (e.g., 78:22, 32; 106:12, 24) and at the end of the seventh century also by Habakkuk (2:4). But it was only in the postexilic period that faith became the general designation of the pious person's trust in or faithfulness to God. Holding fast to the Torah was considered the essence of this Godfearing obedience. Hence, for example, in Sirach 32:24–33:3 (NJB) we read: "Anyone who trusts in the Law (ὁ πιστεύων νόμῳ) obeys its precepts, no one who has confidence in the Lord (ὁ πεποιθὼς κυρίῳ) will come to harm. No evil will befall one who fears the Lord (τῷ φοβουμένῳ κύριον), such a one will be rescued even in the ordeal. No one who hates the Law is wise, one who is hypocritical about it is like a storm-tossed ship. An intelligent person will put faith in the Law (ἐπιστεύσει νόμῳ), for such a one the Law is as dependable (πιστός) as a prophecy."

Abraham was considered the prototype of this kind of fear of God. In agreement with Genesis 26:2–5, the "Hymn in Honor of Our Ancestors" in Sirach 44:1–49:16 says of Abraham (44:19–21):

[19]Abraham was the great father of a multitude of nations,
and no one has been found like him in glory.

[20]He kept the law of the Most High (συνετήρησεν νόμον ὑψίστου),
and entered into a covenant with him;
he certified the covenant in his flesh,
and when he was tested he proved faithful (ἐν πειρασμῷ εὑρέθη πιστός).

[21]Therefore the Lord assured him with an oath
that the nations would be blessed through his offspring;
that he would make him as numerous as the dust of the earth,
and exalt his offspring like the stars,
and give them an inheritance from sea to sea
and from the Euphrates to the ends of the earth.

Here and in 1 Maccabees 2:52 and *Jubilees* 14:6, Abraham's faith appears as meritorious faithful behavior which finds recognition before God. Philo sees Abraham's faith as the "queen of the virtues" (βασιλὶς τῶν ἀρετῶν), which enabled the patriarch to live a praiseworthy and perfect life (*Abr.* 270–271). Parallel to this, Habakkuk 2:4 is applied in the *Pesher to Habakkuk* (1QpHab) 8:1–3 to "all observing the Law in the House of Judah, whom God will free from the house of judgment on account of their toil and of their loyalty to the Teacher of Righteousness" (*DSSSE* 17). According to *4 Ezra* 9:7 and 13:23, in the final judgment only those who have proved themselves on earth through works and faith toward God will be acquitted, and according to the Syriac *2 Baruch* from the beginning of the second century AD, faithfulness to the law will be rewarded by life in the final judgment (*2 Bar*. 54:16, 21), whereas "those who do not love your Law are justly perishing. And the torment of judgment will fall upon those who have not subjected themselves to your power" (54:14).

3.2 Paul presupposed this development of πίστις and πιστεύειν into expressions for the fear of God that is faithful to the law and lived by it himself as a Pharisee. But as a called apostle of Jesus Christ, he reevaluated it, and with the help of Jesus's and the early church's language of faith (see above, 106–8, §§4–4.3; 229–30, §2.1), Paul advanced to a *new concept of faith*.

That Paul knew Jesus's saying about the faith to move mountains (but rejected its application apart from love) is shown by 1 Corinthians 13:2 (cf. with Mark 11:23 par.). The early Christian designation with the Greek present participle of Christians as "believers," οἱ πιστεύοντες, and of the individual Christian as "one who believes," ὁ πιστεύων, is also very frequent in Paul's letters (cf. Acts 2:44; 4:32 with 1 Thess. 1:7; 2:13; Gal. 3:22; 1 Cor. 1:21; 14:22; Rom. 1:16; 3:22; etc., a total of twenty times in the Pauline corpus). In 1 Corinthians 15:1–11 the apostle explains that he summons people to faith with the same gospel as the apostles called before him, and in Galatians 1:23, ἡ πίστις or "*the* faith" ("preaching the faith") appears as a summary term for the content of the gospel preached by Paul and the other apostles.

3.3 Πίστις for the apostle is a faith that "comes" (Gal. 3:23, 25; Vulg. *venit fides*, "faith has come," v. 25) and that grows "from hearing" (*ex auditu*) the apostolic message of faith (Rom. 10:17). As *fides veniens* and *fides ex auditu*, it is *the gift of God* that frees people from the dominion of sin established by means of the law for a new life under the dominion of Christ. By the sending of his Son, God has also revealed faith in him; with the "coming" of faith he has opened up to Jews and Gentiles justification on the basis of faith (alone) and participation in Jesus's messianic sonship to God (Gal. 3:23–28). Πίστις is revealed to people through the preaching of the gospel which Christ himself has established (Rom. 10:17); it is the Spirit-inspired answer to the gospel's call to conversion (Gal. 3:2). In the power of the Spirit, believers confess Christ as the Lord raised and exalted by God (1 Cor. 12:3), experiencing on the basis of this confession end-time salvation (Rom. 10:9). *Faith for Paul is therefore the designation of the new life in the Spirit graciously opened by God in Christ through the gospel, which together with hope and love remains eternally (1 Cor. 13:13).*

Galatians 2:16 offers grammatically irrefutable proof that the expression πίστις [Ιησοῦ] Χριστοῦ in Galatians 2:16; 3:22; Romans 3:22, 26; and Philippians 3:9 does not mean Jesus's own πίστις or "faith," as M. D. Hooker, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ," *NTS* 35 (1989): 321–42 and others believe, but rather faith *in* Jesus Christ. *Jesus's relationship to God is never designated by the term "faith" in Paul!* Galatians 2:20 allows us to add that this faith in Jesus Christ not only gratefully acknowledges the saving act of God in and through Jesus Christ (see below), but also implies a personal relationship of the believer to the Christ "who loved me and gave himself for me."

3.4 In the faith opened up by the gospel, the πιστεύοντες or "believers" acknowledge the saving act of God in Christ that has been accomplished for them and experience thereby justification by faith alone apart from works of the law.

3.4.1 This acknowledgment of the saving work of God occurs according to Romans 10:9 through the confession (ὁμολογία, ὁμολογέω) by which each individual believer submits to God and his Christ. This confession implies an admission that believers find themselves in the position of wicked people before God who can gain salvation not by their own ability but only through God's grace and the aid of the Κύριος (cf. Gal. 2:16; 1 Cor. 1:26–30).

In a bold interpretation of Genesis 15:6, Paul in Galatians 3 and Romans 4 takes *Abraham* "our forefather" as a model of this type of repentant faith. *Abraham is for the apostle the first ungodly*

person whom God elected to faith and justified. In Romans 4:3–5 it says: "[3]For what does the scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness' [Gen. 15:6]. [4]Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. [5]But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness."

Paul sees Abraham's faith as an act of trust in God's word: Abraham believed *παρ' ἐλπίδα ἐπ' ἐλπίδι*, "hoping against (all) hope" (Rom. 4:18); in spite of his own great age and Sarah's barrenness because of her age, he did not grow weak in faith but held fast to God's word of promise (Rom. 4:20–22): "[20]No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, [21]being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. [22]Therefore his faith 'was reckoned to him as righteousness.'"

The *πίστις* of Abraham is for Paul not a meritorious human achievement but an act of holding fast to the divine "promise" (*ἐπαγγελία*) carried forth by the power of the word of God. God did not fail to show his approval of this act.

Whereas the Old Testament and early Judaism since Genesis 26:2–5 measured Abraham's faith above all by his obedience in the matters of circumcision (Gen. 17:9–14) and the sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. 22:2, 9), Paul saw in Abraham's faith primarily his trust in God's word. Circumcision is for him only the seal of the righteousness by faith which Abraham had when he was still uncircumcised (Rom. 4:9–12), and Paul never explicitly speaks of the binding of Isaac for sacrifice which is referred to in James 2:21 and Hebrews 11:17. The apostle's picture of Abraham is determined by Genesis 12:1–9 and 15:1–6. Accordingly, he can see in the patriarch's experiences also the prototypical election and acceptance of the ungodly that is granted to all those who believe in the God who raised Jesus from the dead (Rom. 4:24).

3.4.2 According to Paul, Jews and Gentiles receive justification by faith alone and not by the works of the law (Rom. 3:28). God opens faith to them through the gospel, granting them forgiveness of sins and new life through Christ. They are therefore justified not by their own merits, but by grace alone for Christ's sake.

Luther in his New Testament of September 1522 translated the instrumental dative *πίστει*, "by faith," in Romans 3:28 with "by faith *alone*." "For we hold that a person is justified by faith *alone* apart from works of the law." This translation of the text brought him massive Catholic criticism at the time of the Reformation. But today it is acknowledged as materially correct even by Catholic exegetes: "The expression 'by faith' (*πίστει*) is very clearly stressed, and its emphasis through the German translation 'by faith *alone*' catches Paul's meaning exactly . . . , assuming that one does not lose sight of the position Paul is rejecting—'by the works of the Mosaic law alone'—and that one also does not secretly filter out what will still be said for example in Romans 6–8 and 12–15" (O. Kuss, *Der Römerbrief*, vol. 1 [1957], 177).

3.5 *Πίστις* and *πιστεύειν* encompass for Paul not only the onetime obedient answer to the "message of faith" (*ἀκοὴ πίστεως*) but also a life in patience, hope, and love.

3.5.1 When Paul describes faith, *πίστις*, as obedience, *ὑπακοή* (Rom. 1:5; 6:17; 10:16; 15:18), he means first of all a person's reaction to the *ἀκοὴ πίστεως*. In the gospel Christ is proclaimed as the Savior and Lord, and believers obey this call by founding their life on the person and work of the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός. This happens not just once, but again and again, so that faith becomes the expression for a particular way of life and behavior before God.

3.5.2 Over against all enthusiasm, Paul emphasizes that until the (imminent) day of the parousia, Christians do not yet live in immediate fellowship with the Κύριος in full view of his glory, but only in a fellowship with him mediated by faith: "we walk by faith, not by sight" (*διὰ πίστεως περιπατοῦμεν, οὐ διὰ εἴδους*, 2 Cor. 5:7). The believers (*οἱ πιστεύοντες*) still find themselves in a situation of suffering requiring patience and hope. Paul explains this above all in Romans 5:1–5 (cf. also Rom. 8:23–25), after having emphasized in Romans 4:18 that Abraham, hoping against all hope, had held fast to God's promise (see above).

3.5.2.1 Because Christ in the Spirit is already with (and in) believers (Gal. 2:20) and helps them call God Father (Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:14–17), in the midst of the testing required of them they can *remain certain of the grace of God in Christ*. Because and inasmuch as they have been redeemed through Christ from slavery to guilt under the law (Gal. 4:5), they are set free and reflect even now in their shared lives, united prayer, and mutual love the freedom of the children of God, which will be the hallmark of redemption (cf. Gal. 3:25–28; 4:6; 5:1, 13; Rom. 8:21).

3.5.2.2 When believers confess Christ as their Lord and lead their new life in freedom, they must be prepared for hostility and persecution. *Faith for Paul is always a threatened faith*.

As the apostle illustrates in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 and Philippians 3:12–16 using himself as an example, the way that believers must go involves a strenuous, thoroughly ascetic wrestling to gain *σωτηρία* in the midst of many hostilities. Therefore Paul calls the members of the church to work out their salvation with fear and trembling by God's power (Phil. 2:12–13). It is no accident that the apostle's own example also lends its shape to the "*peristasis* catalogues" (see above, 355–56, §1.2.2.2.3). By his sufferings the churches can and should measure the experience of all Christians in

their earthly witness. Like the pious in the Psalms, they are the "suffering righteous" or rather the "suffering justified ones" (K. T. Kleinknecht), who must bear pain and shame just like their Lord, who was nailed to the cross (Rom. 5:3; 8:23–25, 35–37).

What preserves them in this life-threatening situation is the experience that Christ's power is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor. 12:9) and the certainty that no power in the world can separate them from the love of God in Christ Jesus their Lord (Rom. 8:39). They live in this world as no longer of it (Gal. 4:26; 1 Cor. 7:29–31; Phil. 3:20), but until the day of the Lord they remain obligated to the world as the field for witnessing to the gospel and experiencing God.

3.5.2.3 *Hope is a structural element of faith*. It is directed toward the resurrected Christ and his work (Col. 1:5, 23, 27), including final salvation, end-time justification, participation of believers in Christ's rule, entrance into the βασιλεία, freeing of the creation from the curse of futility, and the salvation of all Israel (cf. Gal. 5:5; 1 Cor. 6:3, 10; Rom. 8:22–25; 11:25–32; Phil. 3:20–21).

Faith in Jesus's saving death and resurrection for Paul implies that believers will participate in the glory of the Κύριος (cf. Phil. 3:20–21). For the Christians in Thessalonica who were worried about the participation in resurrection glory of their fellow believers who had died before the parousia, the apostle recalls the faith formula in 1 Thessalonians 4:14: "Since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him [from the dead] those who have died." As Paul assures them shortly thereafter, "God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:9). He argues the same way in Romans 6:8: "If we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him."

3.5.3 Πίστις *is lived out according to Paul in love toward God and humanity; its life dimension is the Holy Spirit and its fruit the "work of faith" (ἔργον πίστεως) produced by the power of the Spirit (1 Thess. 1:3).* Love of God and love of neighbor are for the apostle gifts of the Spirit (cf. Gal. 5:22; 1 Cor. 13:4–13; Rom. 5:5), and as such are hallmarks of faith. Paul can therefore offer the fundamental formulation of Galatians 5:6: "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything; the only thing that counts is *faith working through love*" (πίστις δι᾽ ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη). Love for God finds its expression in praise, prayer, and thanksgiving (1 Cor. 14:13–18; Rom. 8:15; 14:5–6; 15:6) and in surrendering the whole of bodily life to true "spiritual worship" (λογικὴ

λατρεία) in accordance with the Christ-Logos (Rom. 12:1). Love for neighbor becomes effective through the "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22), which helps the neighbor (cf. Gal. 6:2; Rom. 15:2).

Because Galatians 5:6 and 1 Corinthians 7:19 are parallel formulations and reflect the baptismal tradition that Paul took up in Antioch (see above, 246–47, §4.4.4), there arises the possibility of a theological comparison between the "fruit of the Spirit" (καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος) of Galatians 5:22 and the "works of the law" (ἔργα νόμου), which do not lead to justification. Whereas the works of the law are done in view of the final judgment in order to establish one's "own righteousness" (ἡ ἰδία δικαιοσύνη) before God (cf. Gal. 2:16; Rom. 3:20 with Phil. 3:9 and Rom. 10:3), the fruit of the Spirit is produced by believers whom God through Christ has already reconciled with himself and who look forward with the hopeful certainty of faith to their final justification through Christ's intercession. According to Galatians 5:23, 6:2, and 1 Corinthians 7:19, the fruit of the Spirit also involves deeds that fulfill the law (of Christ). Yet believers do not do these deeds to aid final justification—as if God were obligated to justify them or reckon them righteous as their "dues" (cf. κατὰ ὀφείλημα, Rom. 4:4)—but rather to give God the thanks he deserves for his saving act in Christ, and to be obedient to the Κύριος. When Paul teaches Christians in his letters to hope for "praise" and "reward" in the final judgment (1 Cor. 3:14; 4:5), he does not have in mind God's final act of justification on the basis of believers' (good) works but rather God's recognition of faithful service, which he will not withhold from believers who have proved responsible in the "service of righteousness," δουλεία τῆς δικαιοσύνης (cf. Rom. 6:18).

With the help of 1 Corinthians 10:31 and Colossians 3:17, we can clearly describe the breadth of "faith working though love." *Faith fills the whole life of those who confess Christ as their Lord. It is essentially thanksgiving to the one God who "handed over [his Son] to death for our trespasses and . . . raised [him] for our justification" (Rom. 4:25).*

Faith for Paul is also, as Luther classically formulated in his preface to Romans of 1522, "a divine work in us which changes us and makes us to be born anew of God, John 1[:12–13]. It kills the old Adam and makes us altogether different men, in heart and spirit and mind and powers; and it brings with it the Holy Spirit. O it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. It is impossible for it not to be doing good works incessantly. It does not ask whether good works are to be done, but before the question is asked, it has already done them, and is constantly doing them" (WA DB 7:10; *LW* 35:370).

In citing these words, one must remember that the spiritual concept of πίστις here affirmed was first brought into the early Christian tradition by Paul and was by no means generally accepted in early Christianity. Paul's Jewish Christian opponents, who "slandered" (Rom. 3:8) him all the way to Rome for his gospel because it was supposedly accommodated to the wishes of the morally lax Gentile Christians, did not approve of the apostle's concept of faith any more than did the Letter of James or the Letter to the Hebrews (cf. James 2:18–26; Heb. 11:1–40).

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CHAPTER 22

The Sacraments, the Spirit, and the Church

Because Paul was a missionary apostle, he had to think about the ecclesiastical consequences of his preaching. We therefore find in his letters discussions of the form of the church of Jesus Christ and the proper understanding of baptism and the Lord's Supper, as well as references to the reality of the Holy Spirit.

According to Galatians 2:7–10, Romans 1:5, 11:13–14, and 15:15–24, Paul and Barnabas had the worldwide task of carrying out the Gentile mission. Since parting ways with Barnabas after the so-called Antioch incident (Gal. 2:11–21; Acts 15:36–41), Paul pursued this task independently in order to bring nearer the time of the salvation of all Israel through Christ (see above, 373–74, §2.4.2.5).

Paul's *mission strategy* was also an expression of this conception. In keeping with the agreements at the apostolic council (cf. Gal. 2:7–10), Paul began his mission among the Gentiles from Jerusalem (Rom. 15:19), though he himself pursued it only in the provincial capitals (Ephesus, Thessalonica, Corinth, etc.). When he was not prematurely run out of town (as he was, for example, in Thessalonica), he spent a good deal of time in these cities in missionary preaching, instruction, and building up the church. However, he left the missionary work in the hinterland and the ongoing guidance of these churches to his coworkers, both female (Phil. 4:2–3) and male (1 Thess. 3:2–3; 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10–11; 2 Cor. 7:6–7, 13–15; 8:23). Because the apostle made the churches his constant concern (2 Cor. 11:28–29), we can see from his letters how he wanted to see the gospel of justification applied ecclesiastically. This is especially clear in 1 Corinthians and Romans.

1 From the missionary congregations in Damascus, Jerusalem, and Antioch that were already active independently of Paul and before him, Paul took up *baptism and baptismal tradition*.

1.1 In these churches baptism was inextricably bound up with the baptismal proclamation that awakened faith; it was performed "in the name of Jesus Christ." Baptism granted people forgiveness of sins, made them members of the church, and gave the baptized a share in the Spirit that animates the church (see above, 243–47, §4). We find all these traditional elements in Paul. For Paul baptism is preceded by the preaching of the gospel that awakens faith (1 Thess. 1:9–10; Gal. 3:2; Rom. 10:17; Eph. 1:13–14); he knows of and practices baptismal instruction (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1–5

with Rom. 6:17) and baptizes in the name of Christ (1 Cor. 1:13–15; 6:11); he also thinks that baptism purifies from sin and is most closely bound up with the giving of the Spirit (1 Cor. 6:11; 12:13); and he similarly does not write about the baptism of children and infants in today's sense, but rather proceeds from the assumption that for members of the church, the baptism of an adult is *the decisive event of turning away from the old pagan or Jewish life and turning to the new existence in faith and in the circle of fellow believers who confess Christ as Lord*. For all Christians to whom Paul writes, baptism marks the decisive turning point with which their lives as Christians began, and therefore he can also identify them by the date of this turning point (cf., e.g., Gal. 3:26–28; 1 Cor. 6:11).

Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 1:17, "Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel," is aimed at a special overestimate of baptism in Corinth and can be understood from Paul's mission strategy as sketched above: Paul was a pioneer missionary and as such was responsible above all for the proclamation of the gospel. After a brief time, he could delegate the work of building up the church, including baptisms and baptismal instruction, to his coworkers.

1.2 In Paul's time baptism was so incontestably in force that he never needed to develop a formal doctrine of it in his letters. How the apostle thought about baptism must be discovered from the occasional statements that he devoted to it (Gal. 3:26–28; 1 Cor. 6:11; 12:13; and Rom. 6:1–23).

1.2.1 Not even in *Romans 6* does Paul present a doctrine of baptism. Rather, he debates with Christian critics who accused him all the way to Rome of preaching a gospel of "cheap grace" (D. Bonhoeffer) accommodated to the wishes of the Gentiles (cf. Rom. 6:1, 15 with 3:8). In the context of this controversy, he reminds the Roman Christians of their baptism (which Paul himself did not perform), thereby revealing his considerably high understanding of it. As Paul writes in Romans 6:1–10:

> [1]What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? [2]By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? [3]Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? [4]Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. [5]For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. [6]We

> know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. [7]For whoever has died is freed from sin. [8]But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. [9]We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. [10]The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

These statements show that according to Paul the baptized are snatched from the power of sin in baptism and placed under the dominion or lordship of grace (cf. Rom. 6:14). Paul speaks again of this *change of lordship* in Romans 6:15–18:

> [15]What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! [16]Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? [17]But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted [or: *handed over*], [18]and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

The words of Romans 6:17, you "have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted" (ὑπηκούσατε δὲ ἐκ καρδίας εἰς ὅν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδαχῆς), have been judged by R. Bultmann (*Exegetica*, ed. E. Dinkler [1967], 283) to be a "stupid intermediate gloss" of a later scribe that noticeably disrupts the connection of verse 17a and verse 18. But the textual tradition offers no occasion for such a harsh judgment; it rather requires us to understand the sentence in the context of Romans 6, which is thoroughly possible. Paul reminds the Roman Christians in verse 17 of the teaching about faith which was given at their baptism and to which they have been entrusted in the obedience of faith. Romans 6:17 presupposes a shorter or longer period of *baptismal instruction* in which the Christians of Rome learned the τύπος διδαχῆς ("form of teaching") praised by Paul, in order then to affirm it in their own baptismal confession. The reception of this teaching, the obedience "from the heart," ἐκ καρδίας (cf. also confession/belief with lips/heart, Rom. 10:9–10), and the event of baptism belong most closely together according to Romans 6:2–8 and 6:17–18. By paying close attention to the wording of the reminders of their baptism in 6:2–7 introduced by the clause ἢ ἀγνοεῖτε ὅτι, "do you not know?"—namely, that Christians have been "baptized into *Christ's death*," "*buried* with him by baptism into death," and "*crucified* with Christ," so that they now "might walk in newness of life just as *Christ was raised* from the dead"—we can say quite precisely which "form of teaching" (τύπος διδαχῆς) Paul had in mind in verse 17. It is the gospel of 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5, common to all the apostles, which Paul also learned and passed on (see above, 193–94, §3.1). The peculiar passive construction of Romans 6:17, "you *were entrusted* (παρεδόθητε) to a form of teaching," can be explained if we view Romans 6:1–14 and 6:15–23 together and equate the performance of baptism with the "handing over" or "entrusting" of the baptized to the teaching contained in their baptismal confession.

According to Paul, a *change of the lordship* occurs in and with baptism. The baptized are snatched from the power of sin and placed under the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός in such a way that *they are taught the gospel of 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5, confess it, and are grafted into it through the act of baptism.* They are crucified with Christ, die to sin, are buried with him into death, gain a share in his resurrection (cf. Rom. 6:4 with Col. 2:12; 3:1), and are subordinated to him as a living Lord, in order henceforth to serve no longer sin but the righteousness which is God's will. Baptismal instruction, the baptismal confession, the baptismal act, and being handed over to the Lord place the baptized into the history of salvation which God brought about for them in and through Christ "while they still were sinners" (Rom. 5:8).

1.2.2 Paul therefore is far from underestimating baptism. On the contrary, he sees it as a *symbolical-real consummation of the gospel of Christ on the baptized*, and he knows that he agrees in this understanding even with the Christians in Rome, who have not been baptized by him. Βάπτισμα is for the apostle—as Johannes Brenz in the first part of his catechism of 1535 has nicely formulated it—*"a sacrament and a divine word-sign"* (C. Weismann, *Eine kleine Biblia* [1985], 118).

According to Weismann (ibid., 148n87), Brenz deliberately took up the old German term "word-sign" (*Wort-Zeichen*), which was already dying out in the sixteenth century, because "the connection of word and sign appeared to him to be especially fitting to the essence of the sacrament as a sign which confirms and strengthens God's word and promise."

1.2.3 The understanding of baptism in Romans 6, which Paul himself held and presupposed among the Christians in Rome, has nothing to do with the Hellenistic mystery religions. Nothing is known of baptismal rites in the ancient mystery associations, and Paul had no reason to go to school with the various mystery teachers for his doctrine of baptism. There is much more at stake for him in Romans 6 and the other baptismal texts which he takes up than simply the idea that the baptized "participate in the death and resurrection of the divinity [= Jesus]"! According to Paul's understanding of baptism, believers gain a share in the death and life of Christ, whom God vicariously delivered to death and raised for them, so that their bodies which served sin might be destroyed and that they might no longer serve sin but the righteousness which is God's will. *The baptized are brought into justification by baptism (cf. Rom. 6:6–14).* This view can be explained by

the christological tradition of a vicarious atonement that includes sinners, as expressed in the “gospel” of 1 Corinthians 15:3–5. This tradition has nothing to do with the ancient Greco-Roman mystery cults.

1.2.4 The view just sketched probably stands also behind the Jewish Christian baptismal tradition which Paul takes up in *1 Corinthians 6:11*. Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit leads to the washing away of sins, sanctification, and justification (cf. 1 Cor. 1:30). At the same time, the baptized are separated from their old existence as sinners and appointed to the service of the Κύριος.

1.3 Judging from 1 Corinthians 6:11 and Romans 6, *baptism for Paul has great significance for the church*. Jews and Gentiles who stood under the dominion of sin become new creatures who confess Christ as Lord and follow the will of God which Christ taught. The ecclesiastical significance of baptism is seen above all in the Antiochene baptismal texts which Paul recalls in Galatians 3:26–29 and 1 Corinthians 12:12–13 (and Col. 3:9–11).

1.3.1 *Galatians 3:26–28* contains a baptismal tradition that the apostle presumably took up in Antioch (see above, 246, §4.4.4). Because Paul repeated and varied his statements of the tradition in Galatians 6:15, 1 Corinthians 7:19, 12:12–13 (and in Col. 3:9–11), there can be no doubt that he thought that baptism expressed and reinforced the *principle of soteriological equality* in the church of Jesus Christ. Here there were no longer any first- or second-class believers; rather they were all “one in Jesus Christ” (Gal. 3:28), having become people who had “stripped off the old self with its practices and had clothed [themselves] with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator” (Col. 3:9–10).

Since Zeus also allowed access to his house to “men and women, free and slave,” according to the temple law of Philadelphia in Asia Minor from the late second or early first century BC (text: F. Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées de l’Asie Mineure* [1955], 53–58, §20; trans. M. E. Boring, K. Berger, and C. Colpe, *Hellenistic Commentary to the New Testament* [1995], 468–69, §771), and since the mystery cults of Asia Minor were accessible to the same people, the Christian churches were able to compete in the mission field with those religious groups because of their principle of egalitarianism founded on baptism.

1.3.2. In *1 Corinthians 12:12–13* Paul relates the Antiochene baptismal tradition directly to the church, which he calls the “body of Christ” (σῶμα Χριστοῦ). “[12]For just as the body is *one* and has many members, and all the

members of the body, though many, are *one* body, so it is with Christ. [13]For in the *one* Spirit we were all baptized into *one* body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of *one* Spirit."

The language of being made to drink of the Spirit can be metaphorically related to the event of baptism based on the picture of the pouring out of the Spirit in Joel 3:1 (ET 2:28); Acts 2:17, 18, 33; and 10:45. We may also think of the Lord's Supper (cf. 1 Cor. 10:4; 11:25).

Through baptism the baptized are made members of the body of Christ and are placed into a community in which "the structures and values of the old world no longer have any saving significance" (F. Lang, *Die Briefe an die Korinther* [1994[2]], 172). The event of baptism is understood in 1 Corinthians 12:13, much the same as in 1 Corinthians 6:11, *as the work and effect of the Holy Spirit*. The baptized have experienced the Spirit's working not only through the gospel but also through baptism, and since then they have been filled with the Spirit.

If one understands baptism as a "divine word-sign" (see above), then the granting of the Spirit by "hearing with faith" (*ἀκοὴ πίστεως*, Gal. 3:2) and by the event of baptism cannot be played off against one another. In each case God is authoritatively at work in and through Christ. By the power of the Spirit the gospel awakens the faith that acknowledges Christ as Lord (1 Cor. 12:3; Rom. 10:9). In the onetime event of baptism, the baptized are handed over to the Κύριος Χριστός, grafted into the gospel, and gifted with the Holy Spirit as the personal "seal" (*σφραγίς*) of the Lord (cf. 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13 with Rev. 7:3 and Ezek. 9:4, 6). The apostle knows nothing of a faith detached from the church, nor does he approve of a baptism that exists apart from believers being delivered over to the gospel (Rom. 6:17) or apart from the communal confession of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 10:1–13). Therefore, the Spirit's work of producing faith through the gospel and the Spirit's sealing of believers in baptism cannot be presented as antitheses or used to offset each other.

1.3.3 However, one difficulty in this connection is the tolerance with which Paul responds in 1 Corinthians 15:29 to the custom of vicarious baptism or baptism for the dead in Corinth. Paul points here (as in 1 Cor. 1:11–16) to an understanding of baptism as a type of mystery initiation. Already Plato reports in his *Politics* (II 364bce and 365a) that a few mystery cults offered the possibility of performing purity rituals upon living people vicariously for uninitiated dead people, and inscriptions from the second century AD confirm this (cf. A. Oepke, "βάπτω," *TDNT* 1:542). Apparently people understood baptism in much the same way in Corinth. In the context of the discussion of the resurrection of the dead, the apostle comes tangentially to address this understanding, without expressly rejecting or accepting it. Vicarious baptism in Corinth has nothing to do

with the genuine Pauline understanding of baptism; it only documents how extremely sacramentally one could interpret baptism within Paul's sphere of influence. Paul himself expressly warns in 1 Corinthians 10:1–13 against the sacramental overestimate of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and this warning holds theologically also for vicarious baptism.

2 Together with early Christianity before him, Paul sees the life of the individual Christian and of the church of Jesus Christ as being totally determined by the *Holy Spirit* (πνεῦμα ἅγιον), who is active through the gospel and in baptism. But the apostle understands the (Holy) Spirit in a more decidedly christological sense than did the tradition before him. In the Spirit Paul sees *the presence of the crucified and resurrected Lord with his church and in every individual believer*. This emerges most clearly in the exegesis of Exodus 34:34 in 2 Corinthians 3:17–18, and also in 1 Corinthians 15:45 and Romans 8:9–10.

Terminologically, the absolute expressions πνεῦμα, κύριος, and θεός ("Spirit," "Lord," "God," 1 Cor. 12:4–6) as well as πνεῦμα ("Spirit," Gal. 3:2; 5:25; Rom. 8:26), πνεῦμα θεοῦ ("Spirit of God," 1 Cor. 2:11, 14; 3:16; Rom. 8:9), πνεῦμα ἅγιον ("Holy Spirit," 1 Cor. 12:3; Rom. 5:5), and πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ ("Spirit of Christ," Rom. 8:9; Phil. 1:19) can be used interchangeably in Paul's letters (cf. Rom. 8:4–14). Moreover, πνεῦμα can be used "synthetically" (K. H. Fahlgren) for God's saving activity and the gift that proceeds from it (cf. 1 Cor. 12:4, 6, 7, 11). But in each instance the Spirit of God is to be distinguished from πνεῦμα as an anthropological term for a person's physical life before God (cf., e.g., 1 Cor. 7:34; 2 Cor. 7:1).

Paul's understanding of the Spirit can be summed up in four key statements:

2.1 *The Spirit is the power of Christ that is received in obedient hearing of the gospel and in baptism* (Gal. 3:2–3; 1 Cor. 6:11; 12:13). Paul equates the πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ given to believers with the spirit of υἱοθεσία, of acceptance or "adoption" as a child of God (see above, 323–24, §4.2.4), in which believers cry out to God as did Jesus himself, "Abba! Father!" (Rom. 8:15–16; cf. Gal. 4:5–6).

2.2 *The Holy Spirit carries and determines the spiritual life of Christians*. He is the power and ability for faith (cf. Gal. 2:19–20), for confessing Christ (1 Cor. 12:3; Rom. 10:9), for knowing God and understanding the Holy Scriptures (1 Cor. 2:6–16; 2 Cor. 3:12–18), and for prayer (Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:15) and worship, which determines the whole life of believers (Col. 3:16–17).

2.3 The Holy Spirit is also the *power and norm of the new life* in which Christians have been placed by their Lord and for which they should strive by devoting themselves to God's service in their daily life in the world (Gal. 5:15–26; Rom. 8:2, 4–14; 12:1–2). Paul can therefore exhort the Christians in Galatia, "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25), and speak in Romans 8:4–5 of walking *κατὰ πνεῦμα*, "according to the Spirit." The standard of this new life is the "law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2) or love (cf. Eph. 5:2, "walk in love").

2.4 The Holy Spirit *animates the church.* The apostle is the first in the New Testament to speak of the various "gifts of the Spirit" or "gifts of grace" (*πνευματικά* and *χαρίσματα*) that are at work in the church as the power and individuation of the grace of God. They constitute the church's life of community and witness and give each member in the "body of Christ" his or her irreplaceable place. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 12:4–11:

> [4]Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; [5]and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; [6]and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. [7]To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. [8]To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, [9]to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, [10]to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. [11]All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

1 Corinthians 12:28–31 and Romans 12:6–8 add still other gifts to those mentioned above: abilities to teach, serve, organize, lead, care for the poor, and counsel.

The ecclesiastical significance of the Pauline teaching about the gifts of the Spirit or gifts of grace is great. It allows the life of the local or house churches to be structured by the gospel. In the body of Christ, every particular charism is used in its proper place, but they are all indebted to the one grace of God in and through Christ. No charism can be made absolute,

because otherwise the common life of the church would be threatened or damaged. *The most important gift of grace, which sets the standard for all others, is according to 1 Corinthians 13 ἀγάπη, "love" (cf. also Gal. 5:22).* To the degree to which the individual charismata participate in love, the church is "built up" (1 Cor. 14:4–5, 12, 26) and its "fellowship" (*κοινωνία*) with Christ and among its members is guaranteed (1 Cor. 1:5–9; 10:16–17).

3 In keeping with his theology of justification, Paul understands the church of Jesus Christ as a "church from the gospel" (W. Klaiber). It is characteristic of the apostle's understanding of the church that while the concrete local congregations stand at the center of his interest, they are always seen as manifestations of the universal church. The distinction between the visible and invisible church, of such immense importance in the later history of theology, is only vaguely hinted at in Paul (cf. Gal. 4:25–26; Phil. 3:20–21).

3.1 The various *terms* that Paul uses for the local and universal church show that he preserved the continuity with the understanding of the church in the early church in Jerusalem, but that he also knew how to place his own christological and organizational accents.

3.1.1 Like the early church, Paul designates the church as the "church of God," *ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ* (1 Cor. 1:2; 11:16; 12:28; Gal. 1:13; etc.); but he can also call it the "people of God" (*λαὸς θεοῦ*; cf. 2 Cor. 6:16; Rom. 9:25–26), the "temple of God" (*ναὸς θεοῦ*; cf. 1 Cor. 3:16–17; 2 Cor. 6:16), and the "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16). With these designations Paul by no means wants to put the church in the place of the chosen people of God, but he does want to express that the *ἐκκλησία* of God has been chosen to be the *missionary vanguard of the end-time saved community,* in which someday all believing Jews and Gentiles will be assembled on Zion by the *Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός* (Rom. 11:13–32).

This salvation-historical perspective had decisive consequences for Paul. Throughout his entire apostolic ministry he strove to hold together the church of Jews and Gentiles. After his so-called first missionary journey, Paul strove together with Barnabas at the apostolic council in Jerusalem to win the approval of the Jerusalem "pillar apostles" for his law-free mission to the Gentiles. There he also accepted the task of organizing a financial collection from the Gentile churches (Gal. 2:10) to give materially visible expression to their solidarity with the mother church in Jerusalem. As 1 Corinthians 16:1; 2 Corinthians 8:1–4; 9:2, 12; and above all Romans 15:25–28 show, Paul considered this collection so important that he wanted to hand it over personally in Jerusalem, despite all the dangers threatening him there from the unbelieving Jews. Because of this symbolic service to

the Jerusalem mother church of Christianity, Paul lost first his freedom in Jerusalem and then also his life in Rome (cf. Acts 21:27–28:31; *1 Clem.* 5:7). Without his confession in Romans 3:30 that God is the *one* God who justifies Jews on the ground of faith and Gentiles through that same faith, and his conviction expressed in Romans 15:7–12 that Christ was sent for the salvation of Israel *and* of the Gentiles, Paul's behavior in the matter of the collection would be incomprehensible.

Paul's ecclesiological terminology and mission perspective, which begin from Jerusalem (Rom. 15:19) and are directed toward Zion as the place of the assembly of the saved community (Rom. 11:26–27), show the *close connection between his concept of the church and his salvation-historically structured doctrine of justification*.

3.1.2 Only in Paul's letters is the church called τὸ σῶμα [τοῦ] Χριστοῦ, "the body of Christ" (cf. 1 Cor. 12:12–31; Rom. 12:4–8; Col. 1:18, 24; 2:16–19; 3:15; Eph. 1:23; 4:4–16; 5:23). This sets a new ecclesiological accent in the history of early Christianity. We can properly evaluate this novel designation for the Christian church only by clarifying its origin and recalling the apostle's idea of the body.

3.1.2.1 As F. Lang has shown in his excursus "Paul's Understanding of the Church and Spiritual Gifts" (*Die Briefe an die Korinther* [1994^2], 175–81), the question of the origin of the idea of the body of Christ in Paul has not yet been fully answered. Nevertheless, it seems to have three roots: the Lord's Supper tradition, the so-called Adam-Christ typology, and the view which Paul took over of Jesus as the Son of Man–Messiah whom God delivered to death and raised for us.

3.1.2.1.1 According to biblical and early Jewish tradition, the heavenly son of man of Daniel 7 represents "the people of the holy ones of the Most High," that is, Israel of the end time (cf. Dan. 7:13–14, 22, 27). Because the Semitic expression "son of man" can mean simply a "man" or "human being," the language of the son of man was associated with the tradition of Adam, the human being par excellence, before Paul and then also in Paul (cf. 1 Cor. 15:20–22, 44–49; Rom. 5:12–21; see above, 327, §4.2.9). By means of such bridges, early Jewish Adam speculations found their way into Christology. According to *4 Ezra* (NRSV 2 Esdras) 6:54 and *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum* 32:15 (read: "the assembly of the Lord [*concio Domini*] that burns incense," *OTP* 2:347 notes *o* and *p*), God's people Israel sprang from the body of Adam through the miraculous creation of Eve from Adam's rib according to Genesis 2:21–22. Eve, thus created, is the

symbolic figure for Israel or “God’s assembly” (*concio Domini* = קְהַל אֵל, cf. 1QM 4:10). In other early Jewish texts there is speculation about the origin of all humanity from Adam (*T. Ab.* Recension B 8:13, cf. with Recension A 11:9). In their Christian adaption, these traditions lead to the idea of a worldwide body of Christ and to a christological-ecclesial interpretation of Genesis 2:21–24: Christ and the church belong together as bridegroom and bride (Rev. 21:2, 9), man and wife (*2 Clem.* 14:2). Both conceptions are also found already in Paul and his school: the apostle betrothed the church in Corinth to Christ (2 Cor. 11:2–3; similarly Eph. 5:21–28). At the same time, the body of Christ is a reality into which one is baptized (1 Cor. 12:13), and Christ is as closely united with the church that forms his body as are a man and wife, who become one flesh in marriage (cf. Gal. 3:27–28; 1 Cor. 6:13, 16–17; Col. 1:18; 2:19; Eph. 5:29–33).

3.1.2.1.2 Seen from this perspective, the identification of the church with the “body of Christ” in 1 Corinthians 12:12–31 and Romans 12:4–8 (despite the paraclesis which Paul presents in each passage) is by no means simply a comparison in which Paul relies on the widespread image in Greco-Roman antiquity of a community as one body whose members must live in harmony for the good of the whole (cf., e.g., the fable in Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 2.32.8ff., with which Menenius Agrippa is supposed to have subdued the plebeian revolt in Rome at the beginning of the fourth century BC). The body of Christ is rather a *pneumatic reality* which is there before believers are and into which they are placed by baptism (1 Cor. 12:12–13).

3.1.2.1.3 As important as the ideas sketched above are for understanding the notion of the “body of Christ,” the expression *σῶμα Χριστοῦ* cannot be derived from them alone. If one seeks its origin, the Lord’s Supper tradition also comes into consideration. According to 1 Corinthians 10:16–17 and 11:24, with each celebration of the Lord’s Supper, the congregation gathered at the Lord’s table receives a new share in the body of Christ, which was delivered to death for them. In this way, with each celebration they are reunited as the “body of Christ,” and the apostle severely reprimands them when the way and manner of their celebration oppose the Spirit and the commandment of the Lord (see below). Next to the tradition based on Genesis 2:22–24, the realm that provides the essential metaphor for equating the church with the “body of Christ” is the *Lord’s Supper tradition*.

3.1.2.2 In analyzing the body of Christ concept theologically, we not only must consider its threefold origin but must also recall the communicative aspect of the term σῶμα (body) from Paul's anthropology (see above, 306–8, §4.2.1). Taking this into account, the church appears as *the embodiment of Christ in the world*.

No one has investigated this more carefully or formulated it more pregnantly than *E. Käsemann.* He writes:

> To put it somewhat too epigrammatically, the apostle is not interested in the church per se as a religious group. He is only interested in it in so far as it is the means whereby Christ reveals himself on earth and becomes incarnate in the world through his Spirit. The human body is the necessity and the reality of existential communication; in the same way, the church appears as the possibility and reality of communication between the risen Christ and his world, and hence it is called his body. It is the sphere in which and through which Christ proves himself *Kyrios* on earth after his exaltation. It is the body of Christ as his present sphere of sovereignty, in which he deals with the world through the Word, sacrament and the sending forth of Christians, and in which he finds obedience even before his parousia. ("The Theological Problem Presented by the Motif of the Body of Christ," in *Perspectives on Paul* [1971], 117)

The church as the body of Christ is therefore a pneumatic reality. It has been there ever since Jesus's death and resurrection, before and independent of individual believers. By baptism they are taken up into the body of Christ, and in every celebration of the Lord's Supper their membership in it is reaffirmed (1 Cor. 10:14–17).

3.1.2.3 The church lives in the world on the basis of the Christ who was delivered to death and raised for them. It is filled with his Spirit and is obedient to him in two respects. Internally, the church forms a free body of people living together in love, who as bearers of the Spirit together seek what is best for the one body with their very different spiritual gifts and abilities (see above, and 1 Cor. 12:12–31; Rom. 8:3–11; Col. 3:5–11). Externally, following Jesus's example and commandment, the church blesses those who persecute them and, so far as it depends on them, lives peaceably with all (Rom. 12:14, 18; cf. with Luke 6:27–36 par.).

The local churches had a missionary effect upon the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles by their testimony to the faith, which was understandable even to the uninitiated, and by their way of life, which appeared as clearly reasonable to non-Christians. This testimony to the faith was given, according to 1 Corinthians 14, not by speaking in tongues, which was highly valued in Corinth but understandable only to the initiated, but above all by prophecy, which was understandable to all. As F. Lang has well said, prophecy "makes the secrets of the eschatological saving act of God fruitful for the church in understandable words" (*Die Briefe an die Korinther*, 204). This understandable and reasonable way of life must however be pursued together by all members of the church. Paul takes

pains to ensure that the reputation of the church will not be damaged by the bad behavior of individual members (cf. 1 Cor. 5:1–8; 6:1–8; 10:32; 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1).

By virtue of justification and the forgiveness of sins which they have experienced from the Lord, church members live, as the apostle writes in Philippians 2:15–16, as "children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation [Deut. 32:5], in which you shine like stars in the world. It is by your holding fast to the word of life that I can boast on the day of Christ that I did not run in vain or labor in vain."

Therefore, according to Paul, the life of the "church from the gospel" differentiates itself fundamentally from that of unbelieving Jews and Gentiles. This life is at work precisely as the "light of the world" (Matt. 5:14) that has fallen into the darkness of separation from God.

3.1.2.4 The special accent that Paul places upon the church with his designation "body of Christ" is also evident when we ask about the *church order* that was characteristic of the Pauline churches.

After being founded by Peter, the Jerusalem church was led for more than ten years by Peter and the *circle of the Twelve* which was newly assembled and extended after Easter at Peter's initiative (cf. 1 Cor. 15:5; Acts 1:15–26). After the martyrdom of James son of Zebedee in AD 42 (?) and the simultaneous flight of Peter from Jerusalem (Acts 12:1–17), this circle was not once again brought up to its full number, but rather the leadership of the early church was transferred to the Lord's brother James, at whose side stood the *church presbytery* (cf. Acts 11:30; 15:2–6, 22; 16:4; 21:18). In the church of Antioch, in which Paul was active for years, there seems to have been no such established leadership circle, but rather, according to Acts 13:1–2, *charismatic prophets and teachers* set the tone. The book of Acts admittedly proceeds from the assumption in Acts 14:23 that Barnabas and Paul appointed presbyters in every new church already on their first missionary journey, and according to Acts 20:17–38, Paul supposedly assembled in Miletus the elders of the Ephesian church, charging them with taking fully seriously their office as "overseers" (ἐπίσκοποι). However, this picture corresponds only to the post-Pauline period. The apostle himself adopted the freer church structure of Antioch as his model, and a presbyterian church order was introduced in the Pauline churches only under the influence of his pupils.

In the undisputed letters of Paul we do not yet hear anything of a presbyterian or elder-led church order. The apostle speaks in 1 Thessalonians 5:12 and Romans 12:8 only of church "leaders" (προϊστάμενοι), in 1 Corinthians 12:28 of "forms of leadership" (κυβερνήσεις), and in Philippians 1:1 of "overseers and deacons" (ἐπίσκοποι καὶ διάκονοι) who were active among the Christians of Philippi. We should probably see the overseers as members of the individual house churches who "presided over the celebration of the Eucharist, while the deacons took

care of the necessary services at the tables" (J. Roloff, *Exegetische Verantwortung in der Kirche* [1990], 217f.).

Under these circumstances one could see it as a mere accident that Paul in his undisputed letters never expressly mentions a presbyterian church order following the Jerusalem model, because the apostle had no reason to address in his occasional letters all the things that were already indisputably in place in the church. Yet the existence of another, more charismatic model in Antioch (see above) speaks against the formal presbyterian order being left unmentioned simply by accident. If Paul's silence about a presbyterian church order is not accidental but intentionally reflects the situation of his churches, there is also a historical explanation. The small house churches of Colossae, Philippi, Corinth, and Rome that the apostle had in mind naturally had men and women in leadership functions (cf. Philem. 1–2; Rom. 16:1–2, 3–5, 14–15), but the selection of presbyters and of a "bishop" (ἐπίσκοπος) who stood over all the house churches was not necessary because at that time the individual churches were not yet joined together into a large local church.

Paul apparently had no intention of organizing all the individual churches in his mission field according to a single, universally valid principle of church constitution. He did not yet know of any leadership hierarchy in the "body of Christ," but rather only listed a series of "ministries" or "services" (διακονίαι) that a "church under the gospel" cannot get along without. The list in 1 Corinthians 12:28 begins with "apostles," "prophets," and "teachers" and concludes with various spiritual gifts: "deeds of power" (δυνάμεις), "gifts of healing" (χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων), "forms of assistance" (ἀντιλήμψεις), "forms of leadership" (κυβερνήσεις), and "various kinds of tongues" (γένη γλωσσῶν). Romans 12:6–8 offers a comparable but less ordered picture.

Three things are worth noticing in both lists of gifts: (1) When Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:28 (cf. with Eph. 4:11–12) states that "God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers," he is not yet thinking of the succeeding generations of Christians, because the apostolic office in early Christianity was not designed for a succession of subsequent apostles. (2) The usual Greek terms for established offices are τιμή and λειτουργία. Neither of these occurs in 1 Corinthians 12 or Romans 12 (or Eph. 4). Paul speaks of λειτουργοί in the plural only in Romans 13:6, where the term refers to Roman tax collectors as "servants of God" (λειτουργοὶ θεοῦ). Otherwise Paul uses the term only of himself, as a "minister of Christ Jesus" (λειτουργὸς Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, Rom. 15:16) entrusted with the "office" of proclaiming the gospel, and of Epaphroditus as an ad hoc "minister" sent by the Philippians for Paul's needs (Phil. 2:25). For church ministries Paul uses the word διακονία (1 Cor. 12:5), which he also applied frequently to his own apostolic mission (2 Cor. 3:8–9; 4:1; 5:18; 6:3; Rom. 11:13). Διακονία and its cognate verb διακονεῖν were used in mainstream Greek for servants who waited on tables (so also in Acts 6:1–2). But in early Christianity both terms were given additional force "by the serving self-sacrifice of Jesus. Because Jesus was willing to forgo his power and rights for the sake of the lives of others (Mark 10:45; Luke 22:27), he sets the norm for the community of his disciples. Human interaction in this community occurs not in the structure of ruling and being ruled, but in that of mutual service" (J. Roloff, *Exegetische Verantwortung*, 342).

Accordingly, in the body of Christ there are no fixed offices with changing officeholders, but a series of specific ministries which are to be fulfilled according to the example of Jesus. (3) Among these the ministries of apostle, prophet, and teacher appear at the head of the list, because they were entrusted with the establishment and interpretation of the gospel in an immediate way.

The apostle Paul expressly recognized the Jerusalem church as the mother church of all ἐκκλησίαι, but he saw the local and house churches that he founded and guided as *charismatic bodies*, which had to organize their life together by themselves. Or put another way: *Paul already taught the priesthood of all believers (cf. 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6) and trusted his churches to find the appropriate form of community from place to place from the perspective of the gospel*.

As important as this statement is, it nevertheless requires three comments:

(1) *Paul did not (yet) exclude women from the ministries (διακονίαι) of teaching and leadership.* Women were coworkers in Paul's mission (Phil. 4:2–3); he acknowledged Phoebe as the "patroness" or "benefactor" (προστάτις) of the church of Cenchreae (Rom. 16:2), just as he acknowledged Prisca and Aquila for their leadership of the house churches in Corinth and Rome (cf. 1 Cor. 16:19; Rom. 16:3–5). According to Romans 16:7, Paul paid great respect to the Jewish Christians Andronicus and Junia, who were numbered among the apostles even before his own conversion (see above, 238–39, §3.3). But above all, the apostle in 1 Corinthians 11:5 and 13 raised no objection when women appeared in church meetings in Corinth as prayer leaders and prophetesses. He only insisted that they exercise their ministries of proclamation in appropriate attitude and attire, according to the ancient standard. Head covering was supposed to protect them from the accusation of shamelessness and prevent a dubious reputation from arising from the gatherings of the Corinthian church.

(2) In 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 (and 1 Tim. 2:12) women were forbidden to speak publicly in the churches, that is, to teach. Although verses 34–35 are not lacking in any important manuscript, they appear in several witnesses only at the end of the chapter, after 14:40, showing that their place in this context was not fully assured. If one asks about the reason, it is striking that the manner of expression of verses 34–35 belongs less closely with the rest of 1 Corinthians 14 than with 1 Timothy 2:11–12 (compare the expressions in common between vv. 34–35 and 1 Tim. 2:11–12: ἐπιτρέπειν, "permit"; μανθάνειν, "learn"; ὑποτάσσεσθαι/ὑποταγή, "submit," "submissiveness"). One should therefore probably judge both verses to be "an interpolation of a scribe from the situation of the Pastoral Letters" (F. Lang, *Korinther*, 200), which was intended to prevent gnostics (male and female) from infiltrating the Pauline churches (see below).

(3) The apostle's charismatic church model and the prospect of freedom that it implies are fascinating. However, it must also be clearly acknowledged that the Pauline churches fell into a severe crisis from the moment that gnostics at the end of the first century began to infiltrate the church (1 Tim. 6:20), establishing themselves with their heretical doctrines wherever open church structures favored the formation of esoteric circles (2 Tim. 2:16–18; 3:6; Titus 1:11). The Pastoral Letters were only able to stem the flow of gnostic infiltration by propagating a presbyterian church order in the churches of the Pauline mission field and insisting that church leaders be ordained (1 Tim. 5:22; 6:11–16; 2 Tim. 1:6). Women were completely excluded from public teaching in the churches (1 Tim. 2:11–12), because they had showed themselves to be especially open to the gnostic doctrines (cf. 2 Tim. 3:6 with Rev. 2:20). When the Pauline letters were formed into a collection, a supplement was added at 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 in order to prevent gnostic prophetesses from

appealing to the genuine Paul against the new regulations. The theological status of these ecclesiological instructions in the Pastoral Letters is highly contested. As far as the permanent exclusion of women from teaching and church leadership is concerned, the baptismal tradition of Galatians 3:26–28, which Paul presents in various forms, and its implications for the life and teaching of the church, is of greater and more fundamental importance than is the commandment of silence in 1 Timothy 2:11–12 (and 1 Cor. 14:34–35), which was spoken in the acute need to set up a front against gnosticism.

3.2 In the Pauline Letters the formulas “in Christ (Jesus),” *ἐν Χριστῷ (Ἰησοῦ)*, and “in the Lord (Jesus Christ),” *ἐν κυρίῳ (Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ)*, are used in many variations (for *ἐν Χριστῷ* see 1 Thess. 2:14; 5:18; Gal. 1:22; 2:17; 3:26; 5:6; 1 Cor. 1:4; 15:22; 2 Cor. 3:14; 5:17; Rom. 6:11, 23; 12:5; etc.; for *ἐν κυρίῳ* see 1 Thess. 5:12; Gal. 5:10; 1 Cor. 7:22, 39; 11:11; 15:58; 2 Cor. 2:12; Rom. 14:14; 16:11; etc.). Because Christ as the mediator of salvation is also the Lord of the church, and the church is his “body” (see above), these formulas have both christological and ecclesiological significance. “The *ἐν* [in the *ἐν Χριστῷ* formula] expresses the fact that salvation is operative in the field of force of Christ” (W. Grundmann, “*χρίω κτλ.*,” *TDNT* 9:550). As those who live “in Christ” or “in the Lord,” believers are determined through and through by the saving act of God in and through Christ.

The apostle uses these formulas so frequently that one can only with some care distinguish four different senses: (1) the causal use to express Christ’s saving activity (e.g., in Gal. 2:17; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 3:24); (2) the modal use in the sense of “determined by (the saving act of) Christ” (e.g., 1 Cor. 1:4–5; Rom. 6:11; 14:14; Phil. 2:5); (3) the local use whereby “in Christ” or “in the Lord” essentially means “in the body of Christ” (e.g., Gal. 3:28; 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 8:1; 16:11–13); and (4) the rhetorical or clichéd use to describe what is “Christian” (e.g., 2 Cor. 2:17; 12:19; Phil. 2:1; 4:2).

4 *The Lord’s Supper and its celebration* have great soteriological and ecclesiological significance for Paul. Whereas the onetime occurrence of baptism marks the date and event of new birth from the Spirit, through the repeated celebration of the Lord’s Supper, believers are preserved in the state of grace and freshly united to the *one* body of Christ.

One can see this very clearly in 1 Corinthians 10:16–17. In these verses Paul reminds the Corinthians what they gain by partaking of the bread and wine in their celebrations of the Lord’s Supper, stressing above all the *κοινωνία*, the “sharing” (NRSV) or “participation” (RSV) of the celebrants with the Lord and each other: “[16]The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing (*κοινωνία*) in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ (*κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ*)? [17]Because there is *one* bread, we who are many are *one* body, for we all partake of the *one* bread.”

4.1 When Paul founded the church in Corinth, he taught the Christians there to celebrate the "Lord's Supper" (κυριακὸν δεῖπνον, 1 Cor. 11:20) in the same way as Jesus did on the night in which he was "betrayed" (by Judas) and "delivered" (by God) to his enemies and death. He impressed upon the Christians of Corinth a particular text which was supposed to set the standard for their celebrations, a liturgy in narrative form or, as we might also say, a *cult etiology*. The apostle cites this paradosis in 1 Corinthians 11:23–26:

> [23]For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was delivered/betrayed (παρεδίδετο) took a loaf of bread, [24]and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." [25]In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." [26]For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (NRSV modified)

This paradosis agrees almost word for word with Luke 22:19–20. The reason is certainly not that Luke took the Pauline Lord's Supper text and put it into his Gospel. It is rather that in church instruction in Antioch, a preliminary form of the special passion tradition found today in Luke's Gospel was already in use. The cult etiology of 1 Corinthians 11:23–25 presents a liturgically reworked excerpt from this passion tradition. Paul traces the text back to the crucified and risen Lord, and in fact it can be traced from Antioch to the Stephen circle in Jerusalem, from them to the apostles, and through them all the way back to Jesus.

4.2 1 Corinthians 10:16–17 (see above) supplements the old paradosis. The form and expression of these sentences suggest that here as well, the apostle is reworking teaching tradition. The key expressions "the bread that we break" (τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλῶμεν) and the "sharing" (κοινωνία) in the elements recall Acts 2:42 and 46 (see above, 236–37, §2.5.4), while the expressions εὐλογεῖν, αἷμα Χριστοῦ, and οἱ πολλοί ("to bless," "blood of Christ," and "the many"), which are lacking in 1 Corinthians 11:23–25 and Luke 22:19–20, lead to Mark 14:22–24 or Matthew 26:26–28. Hence Paul develops his doctrine of the Lord's Supper by appealing to the textual traditions from Mark 14:22–24 (Matt. 26:26–28) *and* Luke 22:15–20; he assumes that the Corinthians know both traditions from the mission instruction given by him and his coworkers (cf. Acts 18:7–11).

4.3 From 1 Corinthians 10:14–22 and 11:17–34 it appears that after Paul left Corinth, there arose a view of the Lord's Supper and irregularities in its practice of which Paul could not approve. In his critical response he sets two accents that clearly show his own understanding of it. The Lord's Supper (κυριακὸν δεῖπνον) is intended as a *fellowship* meal of the table guests with Christ and each other. At its center must stand until the parousia the *proclamation of Jesus's death*.

4.4 The two *words of institution* that Paul cites in 1 Corinthians 11:24–25 and interprets in 10:16–17 involve more than simply the identification of the bread and wine with the body and blood of Jesus. By virtue of his words and actions at the table, *Jesus's person and sacrifice determine the whole lives of those who partake of this meal*. Through this "spiritual food" (πνευματικὸν βρῶμα) and "spiritual drink" (πνευματικὸν πόμα) Jesus's table guests are just as wonderfully fed and given to drink as Israel during its wilderness wanderings was fed with manna and given to drink from the rock (cf. 1 Cor. 10:3–4 with Exod. 16:4, 35; 17:6). Through the communal drinking from the "cup of the Lord" (1 Cor. 10:21; 11:27) and the communal eating of the one bread at the "table of the Lord" (1 Cor. 10:21), "the many" who form Jesus's table fellowship, and for whom he went to his death as the vicariously suffering Servant (cf. Isa. 53:10–12), are united together into *one* body. They all receive a share in Jesus's σῶμα, that is, in his person and in his action of existentially taking the place of others, and a share in his blood, that is, in the atoning effect of his death, which opens to them the fellowship with God characteristic of the new covenant (cf. Jer. 31:31–34). As the expressions "spiritual food" and "spiritual drink" show, the Lord shares himself in the words of institution and in the elements of the Lord's Supper, and he fills his table guests with his power and presence in the form of the πνεῦμα. Paul saw the Lord Jesus Christ as *really present* in the Lord's Supper (E. Käsemann). For this very reason the apostle considers it impossible that the Christians of Corinth should participate both in the Lord's Supper and in the suppers associated with sacrifices to idols; if they do so, they make themselves guilty of a transgression which will bring God's judgment (cf. 1 Cor. 10:21–22 with Deut. 32:21).

4.5 At the Lord's table, where he himself provides the food and drink and shares himself with his guests, the many become one body (1 Cor. 10:17; 12:12–13). When the Κύριος promotes the fellowship of the many

with himself and each other at his table, the celebration must reflect it. For this reason the apostle placed great value on the *congruity between the Lord's Supper and its manner of celebration*. A celebration of a meal that undermines the κοινωνία or "fellowship" of the believers has no value according to Paul. He made the Corinthians fully aware of this in 1 Corinthians 11:17–34.

4.5.1 In order to grasp the point of the Pauline paraclesis, one must have in view as precisely as possible what the celebration that Paul introduced in Corinth looked like, and what the Corinthians made of it after his departure.

4.5.1.1 Paul, in founding the church of Corinth, probably followed the example of Antioch and Jerusalem, thus teaching the Corinthians to celebrate the Lord's Supper as did the Christians before and contemporaneous with them (see above, 234, §2.5.2). The church members came together as a worshiping "congregation" (ἐκκλησία) at least on Sundays (1 Cor. 16:2), but probably more often (1 Cor. 11:18). For the meal everyone brought whatever food and drink they could, and it was taken for granted that the church members without financial means could eat their fill of the food others had brought exactly as could the Christians of more substantial means. As in Antioch and Jerusalem, the meal was held as a full common meal at which people would eat their fill. A shorter or longer address may have preceded the meal. Possibly Paul intended 1 Corinthians as an apostolic paraclesis meant to be read at the beginning of the celebration of the Lord's Supper; the letter closing in 1 Corinthians 16:20–24 (cf. with *Did*. 10:6) still reflects the transition to the Lord's Supper very clearly (G. Bornkamm).

The *celebration of the meal* itself looked something like this: The participants greeted one another with the greeting of peace and the holy kiss; people who did not love the Lord (the unbaptized?) were not allowed to participate in the meal (cf. 1 Cor. 16:21–22 with *Did*. 9:5; 10:6). Then the eulogy or eucharistic prayer of thanksgiving was spoken over the (one) loaf of bread (1 Cor. 10:16), and with the breaking and distribution of the bread, the full meal began. At its conclusion the cup of wine was taken; the eulogy or prayer of thanksgiving was spoken over it as well, and the wine was distributed to all present.

(This requires further comment, since the question of whether the speaking of the eucharistic prayers over the bread and wine at the beginning and end of the celebration of the Lord's Supper possessed any special consecrating power and function cannot be answered from the Pauline texts themselves. Nevertheless, one can speculate about an answer by consulting C. Burchard, "The Importance of Joseph and Aseneth for the Study of the New Testament: A General Survey and a Fresh Look at the Lord's Supper," *NTS* 33 [1987]: 102–34, esp. 110ff., who draws in *Joseph and*

Asenath 8:5 and 15:5 for comparison. Because according to the Hellenistic, early Jewish custom the thanksgivings which were to be spoken by pious Jews over the bread and the cup at every meal lent the bread and the content of the cup a special pneumatic quality [cf. "blessed bread of life" and "a blessed cup of immortality," *Jos*. *Asen*. 8:5; 15:5], this could also have held true for the eulogies at the Lord's Supper. In any case, the consecrating character of the eucharistic prayers is not clearly attested until the second century AD with Justin, *1 Apology* 65.5; 66.2.)

The meal ended with the prayer for the final coming of the Lord which the early church preserved in Aramaic and which Paul cites in 1 Corinthians 16:22: *μαραναθά*, "Our Lord, come!" (cf. *Did*. 10:6; Rev. 22:20; and above, 208–9, §2). The leadership of the supper lay with Paul himself (see Acts 20:7ff.) or with one of the "bishops" or "overseers" (*ἐπίσκοποι*) whom we may assume were active in Corinth, as in Philippi (cf. Phil. 1:1). Table service was provided by the deacons (see above, 401, cf. J. Roloff). *Therefore, for Paul the Lord's Supper was by no means a church meal open to all guests, but a celebration only for those who confessed Jesus as Lord.*

4.5.1.2 The celebration of the Lord's Supper that Paul introduced in Corinth followed the text of institution exactly. It was therefore marked by the "remembrance" (*ἀνάμνησις*) of Jesus and the proclamation of his saving death "until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26).

4.5.1.2.1 The formula *εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν*, "in *remembrance* of me," that occurs in 1 Corinthians 11:24–25 and Luke 22:19 represents the Christian counterpart to the customary "remembrance" (זִכָּרוֹן, *zikkārôn*) in the Jewish Passover celebration of Yahweh's saving dealings with Israel in the exodus and in the acts of deliverance that followed (cf. Exod. 12:14; 13:3–10; Deut. 16:3; *Jub*. 49:15; etc.; see above, 236, §2.5.3.3). As W. Schottroff points out, the Passover remembrance rests for its part on the "actualizing remembrance of Yahweh's saving acts" designated in the Psalter by the root זכר, "to remember" (cf. Pss. 77:6–7, 12–13 [ET 77:5–6, 11–12]; 105:5; 119:52; 143:5). "Such remembrance . . . is a reminiscent and laudatory reprise of the past in authentic recognition of the temporal interval, but for the sake of its present significance" (Schottroff, "זכר," *TLOT* 1:387). Also, where זִכָּרוֹן is applied to festivals such as Passover (Exod. 12:14), it involves "reminiscent involvement in the matrix of events by representing past phenomena through proclamation or symbol" (ibid., 388). Because the Lord's Supper measured itself by the farewell meal of Jesus "on the night when he was delivered" and was celebrated as the *κυριακὸν δεῖπνον*, in which the exalted Christ was himself head of the table, the remembrance during the Lord's Supper is one that allows the assembled church to reenact and comprehend Jesus's farewell meal, but also far transcends the usual Passover remembrance of Israel's redemption from

slavery in Egypt. This remembrance recalls Jesus's passion as that crisis of death into which God himself led his Son for "the many," and from which he saved him through the resurrection, in order to effect salvation for the new people of God composed of Jews and Gentiles. As the guarantor of redemption, the risen Κύριος is present at the meal and himself distributes the bread and wine to his guests. This remembrance thus has a wide salvation-historical scope. It stretches from the exodus through the experiences of "our fathers" (1 Cor. 10:1) during their wilderness wanderings (cf. 1 Cor. 10:1–13) to the cross and resurrection of Jesus, and from there still further to the parousia, that is, from the original ἀπολύτρωσις of Israel to the final redemption on Golgotha (cf. Rom. 3:24–26) and its hoped-for completion in the parousia of Christ (cf. Rom. 8:23).

4.5.1.2.2 The *proclamation of the death of Jesus "until he comes"* to which Paul refers in 1 Corinthians 11:26 was an essential part of the remembrance. In Psalms 71:15–18, 105:1–5, and 145:4–7, expressions such as "remember," "proclaim," and "declare the wondrous deeds of Yahweh" occur in parallel, indicating that remembrance as such also involves proclamation. This notion of remembrance and proclamation forbids us from limiting the proclamation in verse 26 only to the "proclamation" that might be thought to occur in the mere act of eating or drinking the elements of the Lord's Supper. Yet how the proclamation or καταγγέλλειν of the death of Jesus actually might have looked and sounded cannot be said with certainty. There are two possibilities: Either the death of Jesus on the cross was the subject of extended prayers over the bread and wine (O. Hofius), or the story of Jesus's passion was recalled for the congregation in addition to the short eulogies over the bread and wine customary at the time (cf. *Did*. 9:2–3). If we take the pre-Lukan passion tradition that Paul knew as the model for the καταγγέλλειν, then we see that the proclamation of Jesus's saving death "until he comes" (ἄχρι οὗ ἔλθῃ) awakens the hope for the "fulfillment" of the farewell supper in the kingdom of God as announced by Jesus in Luke 22:16. The request for the exalted Lord finally to come and so to complete the redemptive work God gave him in and with his parousia is simply a logical consequence of remembering Jesus's saving death before God. *The eucharistic remembrance, the proclamation of the death of Jesus, and the cry "Maranatha" therefore mutually condition and limit one another*.

4.5.2 From 1 Corinthians 11:17–34 it becomes clear that the practice of the Lord’s Supper in Corinth did not stay conformed to the sketch presented above. The fellowship of Jesus’s table guests was disrupted by two factors. As Paul complains already in 1 Corinthians 1:10–17, there were “divisions” (σχίσματα) in the church between rival theological groups. Also, according to 1 Corinthians 1:26–29, a considerable number of the Christians in Corinth had been recruited from the lower levels of society. In the celebration of the Lord’s Supper the church fell once again into two groups, the rich and the poor. While the one group feasted, the other had almost nothing to eat and were shamed by the rich. Paul complained sharply against this procedure in 1 Corinthians 11:19.

Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:19 (δεῖ γὰρ καὶ αἱρέσεις ἐν ὑμῖν εἶναι, “there have to be *factions* among you”) takes up an announcement of judgment that appears also in Justin, *Dialogue* 35.3, and that J. Jeremias traces back to Jesus himself (*Unbekannte Jesusworte* [1980], 74–75): Before the parousia “there will be divisions and factions” (ἔσονται σχίσματα καὶ αἱρέσεις) between the true believers and those who only appear to be so. According to Paul, this stage had already been reached in the church in Corinth, and it manifested itself even in the Lord’s Supper.

4.5.2.1 For a precise reconstruction of what happened in Corinth, an understanding of the two verbs προλαμβάνειν (NRSV: “each of you *goes ahead* with your own supper”) and ἐκδέχεσθαι (“*wait* for one another”) in 1 Corinthians 11:21 and 33 is decisive. If one understands προλαμβάνειν in the sense “to anticipate” or “to take (a meal) before the usual time” (cf. BDAG 872, s.v. προλαμβάνω 1c, 1a) and ἐκδέχεσθαι in the meaning which it has in Paul and elsewhere in the New Testament and the apostolic fathers of “to wait for something/someone” (cf. 1 Cor. 16:11), and if one furthermore combines these assumptions with Paul’s criticism in 11:22 and 34, then one arrives at the following often-repeated thesis: Whereas Paul originally had in mind a full meal shared by all church members, framed by the celebration of the Lord’s Supper (see above), the people in Corinth had pushed the partaking of the bread and wine to the end of the church supper and had overestimated it sacramentally. At the same time, a bad practice had developed. The rich and free Corinthians who arrived first at the church supper “anticipated” their meals and thus proceeded directly to enjoy them, so that for the unfree and poor church members who arrived only later, there was hardly anything left to eat and drink. These members could still celebrate the Lord’s Supper that came at the end, but they themselves were

still hungry and had to accept the fact that their rich fellow Christians were not only full but occasionally also drunk by the time of the celebration. The rich for their part were not conscious of any special guilt, because what was most important in their view was for people to partake of the bread and wine as spiritual food and thus to participate in the power of the πνεῦμα that indwells these elements.

4.5.2.2 O. Hofius has called this reconstruction into question in his essay “Herrenmahl und Herrenmahlsparadosis” (*Paulusstudien* [1989], 203–40). He proposes to translate προλαμβάνειν not by “to anticipate” or “take beforehand” (i.e., before the Lord’s Supper at the meal’s end) but rather by “to undertake one’s own meal” or “to take it by oneself” (references for this use of the verb may be found in Hofius, 218–19, and in BDAG 872, s.v. προλαμβάνω 1b). For ἐκδέχεσθαι he proposes “to receive somebody (as a guest)” or “to accept somebody” (Hofius documents this use in ibid., 220–21, with references to John 4:45 Codex D; Josephus, *Ant*. 15.343; 16.6, 131, 140; and other passages). If one understands the two verbs in this way, then one can get by without assuming that, against Paul’s original instructions, the Lord’s Supper in Corinth was moved to the end of the church supper and sacramentally overestimated. Paul’s criticism would be directed rather against a practice in which “during the congregation for worship (ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ) rich and poor are together in *one* space but are nevertheless eating in separate social groups what each person was able to bring along. Inasmuch as the well-off were feasting in the presence and sight of the hungry poor people, they ‘humiliated’ those who have nothing, οἱ μὴ ἔχοντες (11:22)” (Hofius, ibid., 219–20).

This reconstruction is historically simpler and deserves to be preferred to the degree that one is prepared to accept a semantically plausible sense for the verb ἐκδέχεσθαι, although it is rare elsewhere in the New Testament (outside John 4:45 Codex D) and the apostolic fathers.

4.5.3 Paul criticizes what the Corinthians did or failed to do with all sharpness. In the Lord’s Supper the church forms the fellowship of the one body of Christ. In this κοινωνία people eat with one another, accept one other, and divide the food that has been brought along in a fraternal way. At the Lord’s table Jesus’s table guests are counted worthy of the fellowship with the crucified and risen Christ that they could not give to themselves. But when they themselves fail to promote and preserve fellowship around

this gift, they are not worthy of table fellowship with the Lord. In 1 Corinthians 11:27–29 Paul writes: “Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord. Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For all who eat and drink without discerning the [Lord’s] body, eat and drink judgment against themselves.”

In the context and also in the light of 10:17, this means that Jesus’s table guests must differentiate this spiritual bread distributed to them by the Lord from profane food, recognizing that by partaking of this bread they are united to a living community in which love and respect must be paid to the Lord and one’s fellow Christians. When and where this is not the case, Jesus appears on the scene as the judge. This has already happened in Corinth according to Paul. Therefore he continues: because men and women have been careless with this spiritual food and drink (cf. 1 Cor. 10:3–4), “many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves, we would not be judged” (1 Cor. 11:30–31). Where Jesus is as near as he is in the celebration of his Supper, a person in his presence can receive not only new life and spiritual fellowship with him, but also death if one disregards his gift and instructions. Nevertheless, there remains also in this case a “plus” of God’s grace over his judgment. For as Paul adds in 11:32, “But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.” Therefore the apostle understands the cases of sickness and death which have arisen in Corinth as remedial or pedagogical punishments intended to protect those affected from annihilation in the final judgment (cf. 1 Cor. 5:5).

4.6 On the whole, the Lord’s Supper in Paul appears as a form of worship in which the central content of the gospel is made present with no less intensity than it is in baptism. Like baptism, *the Lord’s Supper for the apostle is also “a sacrament and divine word-sign”* (J. Brenz; see above, 388, §1.2.2). But it is also different. By baptism believers are established in the gospel at the beginning of their Christian life, but the Lord’s Supper always freshly actualizes the gospel, being celebrated as God’s provision for the church until the parousia.

For Paul the *καινὴ διαθήκη* of Jeremiah 31:31–34 has been established by God in Christ without the works of believers and opened to them through the gospel (cf. 2 Cor. 3:4–18). In baptism every believer is placed into this “new covenant” or “new obligation” (cf. Rom. 6:2–4, 17–18 with Rom. 8:2, 14–16). In the Lord’s Supper this covenant is and will be freshly realized for the church until one day believers, in the midst of the saved congregation of Jews and Gentiles assembled on Zion, shall be able to participate in the messianic meal of thanksgiving served by God himself (cf. Isa. 25:6–8).

5 Interestingly, the same apostle who did not criticize the custom of vicarious baptism in Corinth (1 Cor. 15:29) and who considered the unworthy enjoyment of spiritual eucharistic food to be a mortal danger (1 Cor. 11:27–32) did not acknowledge any *sacramental magic* that would work as a charm against death and judgment. In 1 Corinthians 10:1–13 he confronts the Corinthians with the example of the old people of God who had fled from Egypt, wandered through the wilderness, been symbolically baptized, and received spiritual food and drink, in order to point out that in spite of their symbolic-typological reception of baptism and the Lord's Supper, Israel fell away from the Lord and was handed over to judgment (cf. Exod. 32). For the apostle the sacraments are by no means a *φάρμακον ἀθανασίας, ἀντίδοτος τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν, ἀλλὰ ζῆν ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ διὰ παντός*, "a medicine of immortality, an antidote against death, and everlasting life in Jesus Christ," as Ignatius says (*Eph*. 20.2). They are symbolical-real condensations of the gospel of Christ, but they are not procedures by which one could materially ensure oneself of grace and the Lord's Spirit. In baptism and the Lord's Supper the crucified and risen Christ gives himself entirely to Jews and Gentiles who give themselves entirely over to him in faith. But those who subsequently fall away from him he calls to account as Lord and judge.

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CHAPTER 23

Life and Obedience by Grace: The Pauline Paraclesis

Paul's Christology and doctrine of justification relate to a great process of becoming which stretches from the sending of Jesus until the parousia: the Christ who was sent by God, delivered to death, exalted, and granted the divine name Κύριος is in the process of becoming the Lord of history. The church named after him is drawn into this process of Christ's becoming Lord. From Golgotha and Easter the church is under way to meet the coming Christ. On the way it must testify by the power of the Holy Spirit that Christ alone is the Savior and Lord of the world.

1 It is virtually self-evident that Christians along the way need rules of behavior to give order and direction to the lives of individual church members as well as the church as a whole. The only question is how these instructions fit together with Paul's gospel and what principles he uses to formulate them.

1.1 Paul's letters carry plenty of exhortations for the church. Sometimes they are presented as a relatively self-contained unit at the end of the letters, after fundamental theological problems have already been addressed (cf. Gal. 1–4 with 5–6 or Rom. 1–11 with 12–15). But at other times the exhortations are developed in dialogical argumentation from chapter to chapter (cf. 1 Corinthians and Philippians). Whereas the former mode of presentation seems to have been derived from a certain type of mission or church sermon (cf. 1 Thess. 1:9–10; Heb. 6:1–2; 9:14), the latter presents the apostle as an adviser or "father" of his churches (1 Cor. 4:15; 2 Cor. 11:28).

1.2 1 Thessalonians 4:1–3 (and 1 Cor. 4:17) furthermore show that, from the beginning, Paul presented a type of *ethical catechism* in the churches he founded. Unfortunately, we can no longer reconstruct its structure and content exactly, because the apostle provides only examples of his advice in his letters. Nevertheless, Paul's mention of his "ways" (ὁδοί) which he teaches in all the churches (1 Cor. 4:17) and the amazing material and terminological similarities between, for example, Romans 12:1 and 1

Peter 2:5 or Romans 13:1–7 and 1 Peter 2:13–17 indicate that there was not only a common gospel tradition for all the apostles at Paul's time (1 Cor. 15:1–11), but also a common stock of ethical instruction which they all taught. *Therefore, Paul was active as a teacher of ethics in his churches not only incidentally or under duress, but self-consciously and willingly. He spoke simultaneously of the gospel and of the behavior that corresponds to it*.

1.3 Paul's exhortations are sometimes addressed to specific persons (or groups) in specific situations (cf., e.g., Philemon; 1 Cor. 7:1–40; Rom. 14:1–15:13), but they are also sometimes formulated so as to transcend their original addressees right from the start (cf., e.g., 1 Cor. 13; Rom. 12:1–2; or 13:1–7). M. Dibelius has therefore proposed a distinction between the "current" and the "usual" meaning of Paul's exhortations for the church. The rules and regulations Paul communicated have been formulated "not only for specific congregations and concrete cases" but also "for the general needs of ancient Christianity" (*Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* [1959[3]], 239). Paul's letters therefore document, on the one hand, that he passed on the apostolic instructions he had received and, on the other hand, that he expounded new "ways," thus contributing a substantial portion of the New Testament teaching about God-pleasing Christian behavior.

1.4 Paul's exhortation of the church does not only rest on Jesus's commandment and example (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Rom. 12:14, 17; 15:3); it also refers to Old Testament commandments (Gal. 5:14; 1 Cor. 7:19; Rom. 13:8–10) and repeatedly appeals to standards of right and wrong, good and evil, that were generally accepted in Hellenistic antiquity.

Hence, for example, Paul uses a very Stoic-sounding catalogue of virtues in Philippians 4:8. His mention of "things that should not be done" (*τὰ μὴ καθήκοντα*) in Romans 1:28 and of what is "good" (*τὸ ἀγαθόν*), "acceptable" (*τὸ εὐάρεστον*), and "perfect" (*τὸ τέλειον*) in Romans 12:2 is also reminiscent of the popular philosophical tradition.

However, before one uses these similarities to draw the widespread but erroneous conclusion that Paul hardly taught anything specifically Christian in his exhortation of the church, but mainly what was already considered proper among Jews and Gentiles at that time (1 Cor. 10:32), one must make two observations: (1) the apostle by no means took over early Jewish or general ancient values and content unexamined; (2) he only wanted to teach ways that were acceptable "in Christ Jesus" (1 Cor. 4:17)

1.4.1 Thus, for example, the virtue of “humility” (ταπεινοφροσύνη) that Paul praised in Philippians 2:3 with reference to Jesus’s way to the cross was judged negatively in the ancient world as slavish subordination, while the freedom for a new obedience which the apostle taught (Rom. 6:16–18) contradicts the ideal of Aristotle, who defines freedom or independence as follows: “we call a man independent (ἐλεύθερος) who exists for himself and not for another” (*Metaphysics* 1.2.11, 982b, LCL 1:15; cf. W. Schrage, *The Ethics of the New Testament* [1988], 201 [with reference to ταπεινοφροσύνη in Josephus, *J.W.* 4.494], 214).

1.4.2 The material points of contact between Paul and Jewish or even popular philosophical ethics are misunderstood when one fails to consider Paul’s background. As an apostle, Paul deliberately and selectively aligned himself with the exemplary interpretation of God’s will revealed to Israel in the Torah, as worked out in Greek-speaking Judaism for Hellenistically educated Jews and “Godfearers” attached to the synagogues. The classical models for this are found in Pseudo-Phocylides; Philo, *Hypothetica*; Josephus, *Against Apion* 2.190–219; *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*; Wisdom; *Psalms of Solomon*; etc. (cf. on this material K.-W. Niebuhr, *Gesetz und Paränese* [1987]). Paul followed the content and example of early Jewish legal interpretation in the sense that he, too, was concerned to put the will of God, newly revealed in and through Christ, into effect in the daily life of his churches. But he only took over those elements of the Hellenistic Jewish interpretation of the law that appeared to him as not outdated and as still valid and meaningful in Christ (cf., e.g., 1 Thess. 4:3–8 and Phil. 2:15).

2 Paul’s letters show that his exhortation of the church is an essential part of his teaching. *The Pauline gospel reveals both the encouragement and the demand of the* Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός.

2.1 One can discern this even in the apostle’s *manner of expression*. Paul uses one and the same word group consisting of the verb παρακαλεῖν (“comfort,” “console,” “encourage,” “exhort,” “appeal,” “urge”) and its cognate noun παράκλησις (*paraclesis*, “comfort,” “consolation,” “encouragement,” “exhortation,” “appeal”) for both his preaching of Christ and his ethical instruction (cf. 2 Cor. 5:20 with Rom. 12:1 or 1 Thess. 2:3–4 with 1 Thess. 2:12 and 4:1).

Paul's exhortation of the church is therefore only inadequately characterized by the Greek technical term that has established itself in the specialist literature—even though it is not found in the New Testament—namely, "paraenesis" (παραίνεσις, from παραινέω, "command," "request"). Paul's exhortation is essentially *paraclesis*. It articulates the claims on the church of the Christ who gave himself for it and freed it from the power of sin (Gal. 1:4).

What we have observed for the verb παρακαλεῖν can also be observed in Paul's discourse about the gospel. Whereas he designates the gospel in Romans 1:16–17 as a revelatory, saving power of God, he stresses in Romans 2:16 that according to his gospel, Christ is also the end-time judge of all that people wish to keep hidden from God. In Philippians 1:5, 7, and 12 the apostle refers to the saving content of the gospel that unites him with the Philippians, and in 1:27–30 he challenges them to lead the life worthy of this gospel. *The apostle's paraclesis is an essential part of the gospel; it reveals Christ's saving act and his claims of lordship*.

2.2 With this first observation is connected a second: *Paul's paraclesis is based on baptism and justification*. It is therefore exhortation for those whom Christ has sanctified by his sacrificial death and who have found in him their Lord and Savior (cf. 1 Cor. 1:30; 6:9–11; Rom. 6:4, 10–11, 15–23).

Other similar formulations of the apostle stand out. In Galatians 5:25 he writes, "Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step (στοιχῶμεν) with the Spirit" (NIV; cf. ESV). In Romans 12:1–2 he begins his paraclesis by appealing to God's mercies in Christ. After the Christ hymn of Philippians 2:6–11, he makes his transition to the exhortation of the church with the amazing sentence, "Therefore, my beloved, . . . lay hold of your salvation with fear and trembling; for God is the one who works in you both the willing and the accomplishing, far beyond your own good will" (Phil. 2:12–13, trans. P. Stuhlmacher). G. Bornkamm captures the apostle's meaning exactly: "Because God works *everything*, you are to do *everything*" ("Der Lohngedanke im Neuen Testament," in *Studien zu Antike und Urchristentum* [1963], 91).

2.2.1 Following R. Bultmann, we can grasp the anchoring of Paul's exhortation of the church in justification and baptism in a pregnant formula: *In Paul the indicative of justification provides the grounds for the imperative of the περιπατεῖν κατὰ πνεῦμα, "walking in the Spirit"* (cf. R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, vol. 1 [1951], 332–33).

E. Käsemann gets even closer to the heart of the apostle's thinking when he writes: "The point is that the lordship of the exalted one be declared in the following of the crucified one. . . . Paul's ethics cannot be independent of either dogmatics or the cultus. It is part of his eschatology. . . . More exactly, it is the anthropological reverse side of his christology" (*Commentary on Romans* [1980], 176). This formulation corresponds exactly to the obligation that arises for the baptized out of the change of lordship which they have experienced in their baptism. They are taken from the power of

sin and subordinated to the Lord Jesus Christ in order henceforth to take their stand for the righteousness, which is his will (cf. Rom. 6:17–18).

2.2.2 E. Käsemann has also fittingly shown in the same context that for Paul “justification and sanctification belong together to the extent that being confirmed to Christ is valid in both” (*Commentary on Romans*, 176).

According to 1 Corinthians 1:30 and 6:11, justification (or righteousness), sanctification, and redemption belong inseparably together. Christ sanctifies sinners through his atoning death and places them freshly into fellowship with the God who commanded Israel in Leviticus 19:2, “You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy” (cf. 1 Pet. 1:16). Sanctification is imparted to believers in and with baptism (1 Cor. 6:11). Therefore, Paul can repeatedly call Christians “saints,” οἱ ἅγιοι (cf., e.g., 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:2; 2 Cor. 1:1; Rom. 1:7; etc.). He can lay claim to them as those sanctified through Christ, baptized in his name, and gifted with the Holy Spirit for a life in holiness, all the way from 1 Thessalonians (cf. 4:3–8), through 1 and 2 Corinthians (cf. 1 Cor. 6:1–11; 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1), and on to Romans (cf. 6:19–23). The life of sanctification is a gift and fruit of the Holy Spirit (cf. Gal. 5:16–26), and the goal of sanctification is the grace gift of eternal life (Rom. 6:23) as well as the participation of the saints in the administration of the end-time kingdom of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 6:2; Rom. 5:17 with Luke 12:32 and Dan. 7:22).

Sanctification for Paul does not mean anything additional to justification, but describes its inward dimension from the perspective of atonement theology; this dimension places believers into the new obedience.

3 As an essential part of Paul’s gospel of justification, his paraclesis is grounded in the reconciliation that God has established through Christ and reminds baptized Christians of the claims that the Lord Jesus Christ places upon them. From here we can understand all the main perspectives from which Paul exhorts his churches.

3.1 Paul’s paraclesis is directed toward the church that Christ redeemed through his sacrificial death from the dominion of sin and death. Paul practices church instruction with all decisiveness.

As explained in more detail above (392, §3.1.1), Paul sees the church as the vanguard of the new people of God composed of Jews and Gentiles. They must live in holiness before God in the midst of this old world and must testify to Christ as Lord (cf. Gal. 6:14–16; 1 Cor. 6:19–20; 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1; Phil. 2:12–16; 3:3). For the apostle the church is the “body of Christ” (σῶμα Χριστοῦ) into which believers are incorporated in baptism (1 Cor. 12:12–13), in which the members of the body of Christ mutually support one another, and through which Christ communicates with the world (E. Käsemann).

If one considers the clear distance that Paul places between the church and unbelievers (e.g., in 1 Cor. 5:1–6:11; 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1; Rom. 12:1–2),

then one can and must say that not only Jesus's circle of disciples (cf. Mark 10:41–45 par.) and the early church in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 4:32–5:11) but also the Pauline churches formed end-time "contrast communities" (G. Lohfink) over against the old people of God and unbelievers in general. It is for these churches that the Pauline paracleses were composed. The communicability and transparency of church instruction for the person on the street (Rom. 13:1) were only of very marginal interest to the apostle (cf., e.g., Phil. 4:5, 8–9; Rom. 2:14–15). His main concern was that the saints pursue the task of witnessing in the world given them by Christ, in order to erect a sign of light by which their unbelieving neighbors can reorient themselves (cf. Phil. 2:15 with Matt. 5:14; Dan. 12:2, 3; *T. Levi* 14:3–4).

3.2 In this context Paul urges the members of the church to serve God with *complete bodily devotion.*

3.2.1 Romans 12:1–2 forms a programmatic sentence of Pauline paraclesis: "[1]I appeal (παρακαλῶ) to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship (λογικὴ λατρεία). [2]Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."

The λογικὴ λατρεία of verse 1 denotes a worship service that corresponds to the λόγος. Worship services in the Greek-speaking synagogues (and in the Hellenistic world generally) consisted of spiritual prayers and repentance, which were offered to God instead of the bloody sacrifices that Jews were to offer only at the Jerusalem temple and that educated Greeks found offensive (cf. Ps. 50:14, 23; *T. Levi* 3:6; Philo, *Spec. Laws* 1.272, 277; and *Corpus hermeticum* 13.18, 21). In Romans 12:1 (and 1 Pet. 2:5) this spiritualized concept of sacrifice is taken up. Paul applies it to the whole lives of Christians: True, spiritual, God-pleasing sacrifice and worship corresponding to the Christ-Logos involves the surrender of one's whole bodily being to God's will in the midst of the world that surrounds the church.

In the paraclesis of Romans 12:1–2 we have the Pauline version of the idea of the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet. 2:5, 9) and at the same time the anthropological concretization of the body of Christ concept: In every believing Christian, God regains a part of the creation estranged from him, and the creatures won back through Christ should praise their creator wherever they live.

According to Philippians 2:15–16, 4:5, and 1 Corinthians 10:23–11:1, Paul hoped that through the exemplary life of the church oriented to the word of God, light would be brought into the dark world.

Good works were for him, as for Jesus (Matt. 5:13–16) and 1 Peter 2:12, an effective sign in missions work. Paul also hoped that the good deeds of his churches would make a winning impression on other churches. A good example of this is found in 2 Corinthians 9:11–15. The collection of the Gentile church for Jerusalem which was supplied out of great generosity was intended not only to meet the acute needs of "the poor among the saints" in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26), but also to move the Jerusalem church to prayers of thanksgiving and to awaken in it the desire for fellowship with Gentile Christians.

3.2.2 Paul also sets an ethically most important accent in Romans 12:2 by calling the Christians of Rome not to conform themselves to this world (or age) which is quickly coming to an end, but rather to reorient themselves in their thought and action.

According to Galatians 1:4, Christ gave himself for sinners in order to deliver them from this present evil age. Therefore Christians cannot and must not any longer accommodate themselves to its standards. Rather they should live by the "renewing of the mind" (ἀνακαίνωσις τοῦ νοός) that differentiates them from unbelievers. As he vividly puts it in 2 Corinthians 10:5 (on the basis of Prov. 21:22), Paul wished in his proclamation to "take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ." In Romans 12:2 he insists that believers be in agreement with this effect of the gospel and help to bring it about. The members of the church can and should direct their thoughts toward Christ and his teaching about God's will, and they are also given the spiritual power to be actively in keeping with this will (cf. Rom. 8:4–11). The apostle in Romans therefore makes a most important *statement of contrasts.* According to Romans 1:28–31, God gave up the Gentiles who fail to acknowledge his power as creator to a "debased mind" (ἀδόκιμος νοῦς, 1:28), so that they can no longer recognize what God's true and good will is. The Jews can indeed know his will from the Torah revealed to them (Rom. 2:18) and can even happily agree with it (7:22), but without Christ they are lacking the power to put the good which they have recognized into action. But with members of the church filled with the Holy Spirit, it is different! *According to Paul, Christians can know better and more clearly than can unbelieving Gentiles what is good, acceptable, and perfect in God's eyes, while in contrast to the Jews who do not confess Christ as Lord, the Christians can put the good into action.*

Romans 12:1–2 shows that the apostle's doctrine of justification did not simply involve a one-sided, pessimistic view of humanity. On the contrary, in view of the centuries-long experience of the church, one must rather ask whether he did not overestimate the new being and capabilities of the Christians to recognize and practice the good!

3.3 From Galatians 5:16–26 and Romans 8:4–11 it is clear that Christians lead their lives as members of the body of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is imparted to them by the hearing of the gospel, through baptism, and (repeatedly) through the Lord's Supper (cf. Gal. 3:2; 1 Cor. 6:11; 10:3–4; 12:13). From this perspective we can designate Paul's paraclesis as *exhortation in the Holy Spirit*, and the paradoxical-sounding instruction of Galatians 5:25 becomes understandable (see above). Because the apostle understood the Holy Spirit christologically (see above, 390–91, §2), he saw himself and other church members not simply as ruled by a

superhuman power, but as involved in their hearts and minds in the activity of the Spirit (cf. 1 Cor. 7:40; 1 Thess. 5:16–22; Gal. 5:16–6:10; Phil. 2:13).

About this K. Stalder writes, in his fine book *Das Werk des Geistes in der Heiligung bei Paulus* (1962), 493:

> That our sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit does not mean . . . that we are only the organs or instruments through which the Holy Spirit displays its power and activity. We are not only the scene where the Holy Spirit's work is played out. The miracle . . . is rather this: that the Holy Spirit, by putting into effect in us the reality of the justification and sanctification that happened in Christ, tears us away from our fleshly existence and our imprisonment to guilt under the curse and sin in *such* a way that *we*, by faith in Jesus Christ, understand the gracious invitation of the divine claim and may perform with our own powers a God-pleasing work, the work of our sanctification.

3.4 Moving on from here, we note that the key word "freedom" (ἐλευθερία) is prominent in Paul's paracleses (cf. Gal. 5:1, 13; Rom. 6:20–22; 8:1–2). Paul taught *freedom*, the freedom from sin and from the law, which as such is the freedom to love. With S. Vollenweider one can designate the Christian freedom about which Paul speaks (cf. Rom. 8:21) as "a gift of God that flows from the future into the present" (*Freiheit als neue Schöpfung* [1989], 405). Christ delivered believers from this present evil age (Gal. 1:4); he freed them from the dominion of sin and placed them under his spiritual commandment, in which they realize the promise of Jeremiah 31:31–34. In the Spirit Christ is with and in believers, helping them by their fulfillment of the law to realize the freedom given to them (cf. Rom. 8:4–11).

If one considers the character of justification as sanctification and a change of lordship, then the apostle's *dialectic understanding of freedom* also becomes understandable. Galatians 5:13–15, 6:2, and Romans 6:18 show that the freedom that Paul has in mind is not the great unburdening from all demands that hinder people in their self-development. Nor may it be equated with the end of all external conditioning and the beginning of human autonomy starting from the time of baptism. *Paul has in mind a freedom which grows out of a connection with God through Christ, that is, the freedom to love as the quintessence of Christ's instruction*. Luther's programmatic sentence oriented around 1 Corinthians 9:19–23 from his tractate *The Freedom of a Christian* captures the matter exactly: "A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all" (WA 7:21; *LW* 31:344).

3.5 The concept of freedom leads to a further characteristic of the Pauline paraclesis: Paul teaches not only the *obedience of faith* to the gospel (see above, 379–81, §§3.5–3.5.2.3) but also the *obedience of deeds* to the Lord Jesus Christ and his instruction. The key words "obedience" (ὑπακοή),

“to obey” (ὑπακούειν), “service” (δουλεία), and “to serve” (δουλεύειν) must not be dismissed or excluded from the apostle’s exhortation of the church, much less the content designated by them (cf. Gal. 5:13–14; 1 Cor. 3:21–23; and Rom. 6:15–23).

The apostle’s discourse about the new obedience of Christians, indeed of their being slaves to the righteousness that God requires (Rom. 6:18–23), contradicted the need for autonomy of the Hellenistically educated of his day, but it was unavoidable for the apostle. He understood Christians to be placed into an obedience of faith to the gospel (Rom. 6:17; 10:16–17), and he combined this with the idea that Christians were newly subordinated to the will of God through Christ, as expressed in the essentially “spiritual” Torah (Rom. 7:14; 8:2–7). In this understanding Paul follows the Old Testament, which looks forward in Ezekiel 11:19–20, 36:26–27, and Jeremiah 31:31–34 to the complete obedience for which God will enable his own people in the end time. *In the believers’ obedience of faith and deeds, the apostle sees an event of fulfillment established by God in Christ and carried forward by the Holy Spirit*.

3.6 As to its content, the Pauline paraclesis revolves around the *love commandment* or, as we might also say in Pauline terms, the “law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21). The continuity of this view with the whole biblical tradition, the proclamation of Jesus, and the early church in Jerusalem is just as clear as is the apostle’s theological independence.

The expression “the law of Christ” (ὁ νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ) can be adequately evaluated only when we remember that Paul’s concept of the law was by no means merely negative (see above, 297–98, §5.4). We should also recall the conclusion of A. Schlatter:

> Paul used the term “Law” without reservation also for Christ’s relationship with the believer, just as he always employs the term “service” for his communion with Christ. To fulfill “the Law of Christ” [Gal. 6:2] is the calling of the commmunity, and it obtains its freedom through “the Law of the Spirit” [Rom. 8:2]. Its connection with Jesus through faith is based on “the Law of faith” (Gal. 6:2; Rom. 8:2; 3:27). Because Christ carries out the divine will, the community’s freedom is predicated upon the unchangeable and absolute authority of fixed norms. In this Paul saw no tension or antinomy, because he considered freedom to be not an achievement of the human will but a gift of divine grace. Through God man receives a will of his own, a work of his own, a life of his own. (A. Schlatter, *The Theology of the Apostles* [1922²; ET 1998], 243)

The continuity to the Old Testament lies not only in this use of the concept of the law, but also in the fact that Paul in Galatians 5:14 speaks of the love command with reference to Leviticus 19:18 and understands it in (Gal. 5:14 and) Romans 13:8–10 as the sum of the second tablet of the Decalogue. From his Pharisaic education, the apostle reckoned the love command as the sum or the central law of the Torah (cf. *b. Shabb*. 31a).

Nevertheless, Paul’s understanding of the love command becomes fully comprehensible only from the *teaching of Jesus*. This can be seen already from the expression “the law of Christ,” and further from the fact that Paul gives love the full dimension of Jesus’s double commandment in Mark 12:28–34 par. (cf. 1 Cor. 13 and Rom. 5:5; 8:15–16, 26–30, 39; 13:8–10). Alluding to Jesus’s commandment to love one’s enemies, Paul extends love for neighbor to the persecutors of the church (cf. Rom. 12:14–21 with Luke 6:27–36 par.). Moreover, it is striking that in Romans 15:1–3 and 7

(and Phil. 2:5) he refers the church to the example of the serving Christ. The church should be the fellowship in which one bears another's burdens and the members accept one another just as Christ has accepted them (Rom. 15:7).

Love is the highest gift of grace, valid for all eternity (1 Cor. 13), and therefore the spiritual frame within which Spirit-inspired faith is active (Gal. 5:6). It is especially characteristic of Paul that he did not content himself with sharpening the love commandment (as in John 13:34–35; 15:12, 17; 1 John 3:11, 23; 4:7–10), but took the risk of translating it, with all necessary nuances, into the practice of everyday church life (see below).

3.7 From Paul's letters there can be no doubt that the Pauline paraclesis is *eschatologically motivated*. It is based on justification and reconciliation and calls for testimony to Christ until the day of Christ (1 Thess. 5:2; 1 Cor. 1:8; 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:14; Phil. 2:16). On that day Christ will appear, hold judgment, and establish the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. The church should prepare itself completely for the imminent appearance of the Κύριος (cf. 1 Thess. 5:1–11; Rom. 13:11–14).

3.7.1 The ethical consequences of this christological view of the future show themselves in the apostle's call to *distance and detachment from the present world*.

As W. Schrage has shown, this call appears especially clearly in *1 Corinthians 7:29–31* (cf. with *4 Ezra* 16:42–45): "The *kairos*, the 'appointed time,' remaining until the Parousia, has grown very short; indeed the very nature of this world is already passing away. Paul draws the appropriate conclusions: those who have wives should live as though they had none; those who mourn or rejoice should live as though they no longer mourned or rejoiced; those who buy should act as though they did not own what they bought; and those who deal with the world should do so as though they had no dealings with it" (Schrage, *The Ethics of the New Testament* [1982], 182).

Such a call to distancing oneself from the world has nothing to do with spiritual enthusiasm according to Paul! Instead the apostle always rebuked enthusiasts, who by appealing to their possession of the Spirit and the immediately coming parousia of the Lord imagined that they were free from all earthly duties (cf. 1 Thess. 4:10–12; 2 Thess. 3:10; 1 Cor. 6:12; Rom. 12:3).

3.7.2 For Paul the imminent expectation of the parousia did not weaken but heightened Christian responsibility. In view of the approaching final judgment according to works (cf. 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 2:1–16), this responsibility takes on the greatest seriousness. Christians must exert

themselves with all their strength to gain salvation (Phil. 2:12–13), and it is only when they are in the very throes of death that believers, including even the apostles, can comfort themselves with the thought that God will save them even if all their efforts have been in vain (1 Cor. 3:14–15); *there is grace for them only in the judgment*.

Whereas unsuccessful works still do not decide the final destiny of a Christian according to Paul, because the person of a human being for whom Christ has died counts more before God than the person's works (see above, 372–73, §2.4.2.4.2), the apostle fully believed that Christians can bear the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22–25) which remain unforgotten before God. These fruits will not (and need not) bring salvation to their doers, because this *σωτηρία* has been won for them through Christ, but they do lead to praise and reward before God (1 Cor. 3:14; 4:5). Paul himself hoped to receive such a reward for his successful missionary efforts (1 Cor. 3:10–15; Phil. 2:16).

3.7.3 In his eschatologically motivated paraclesis the apostle kept a precise theological balance between an anthropological optimism (cf. Sir. 15:11–15; *Pss. Sol.* 9:4–5; James 1:13–14) that would contradict the doctrine of the justification of the ungodly (Rom. 4:5; 5:6) and an anthropological pessimism that would equally oppose this doctrine by denying the work of the creator and seeing people cast entirely on their own resources in the world (cf. 1 Cor. 15:32–33). For Paul *ethics were not the criterion of faith, but the sign of faith, before both God and humanity (Gal. 5:6; 1 Cor. 7:19).*

This bold balance and novel view brought Paul the criticism already in early Christianity that he had opened the door to libertinism and broken the decisive point off the responsibility of people before God in the final judgment (cf. Gal. 1:10; Rom. 3:8). Nevertheless, the apostle believed that he could stand up to such criticism by appealing to the gospel (Gal. 1:8–9; 2 Cor. 4:3–4; Rom. 2:16).

3.8 Lastly we must point to the doxological perspective of the Pauline paraclesis. For Paul the life that Christians may lead in the power of the Spirit is a life from God's grace, before God, to honor God (cf. 1 Cor. 6:20; 10:31; Col. 3:17). The apostle's exhortation of the church therefore fits into the doxological trait of the sending of Jesus (cf. 1 Cor. 15:28; Phil. 2:11): *The church, which is the body of Christ on earth, may and must follow the same goal in life that applies to the sending of its Lord*.

4 The *contents of the Pauline paraclesis* can be dealt with here only through selected examples. They range from concrete instructions about the worship of God, through detailed advice for the lives of Christians in the church, to the commandment and practice of love for enemies.

4.1 Already before his call to be an apostle, Paul wanted to serve God with "zeal," ζῆλος (Gal. 1:14); after his call he saw his apostolic commission also as a God-ordained ministry of the gospel (Rom. 15:16). His call for Christians to live to the glory of God (1 Cor. 6:20; 10:31; Rom. 12:1–2; 15:6) fits into this view. Paul wants the church to confess God and his Christ, celebrate worship services worthy of the gospel, pray without ceasing, and dedicate its entire life to the service of God. That such living to the glory of God is possible only by the power of the Holy Spirit is emphasized by the apostle again and again.

4.1.1 According to 1 Corinthians 12:3, no one can utter a "confession" (cf. ὁμολογία, 2 Cor. 9:13) of Christ as Lord except by the Holy Spirit. This ὁμολογία is the answer to God's saving activity in and through Christ. It takes into view both the person and saving act of the one God and the mission and standing of the Son of God (1 Cor. 8:6; Rom. 10:9–10). In their confession both individual believers and the church as a whole subordinate themselves in a binding relationship to the one God and the one Κύριος. With the predication Κύριος Ἰησοῦς, "Jesus is Lord!" (1 Cor. 12:3; Rom. 10:9; Phil. 2:11), the claims to lordship of other religious "lords" (of which there were many in the Hellenistic world; cf. 1 Cor. 8:5) are rejected through the acknowledgment that Jesus Christ possesses incomparable honor in this world. He alone bears the divine name, and by him the fate of the cosmos will be decided. The Christ hymns of Philippians 2:6–11 and Colossians 1:15–20 are hymnic confessions by which the church praises its creator and redeemer, thereby also finding and defining its own new existence before God in Christ.

4.2 The unceasing *prayer* (of thanksgiving) to which Paul calls Christians (1 Thess. 5:17–18) also takes place by the power of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:15; Col. 3:16). Prayer for Paul is never the means of obtaining salvation, but rather an expression of the faith one has already been given. It is directed to God through Christ's mediation.

Following R. Gebauer (*Das Gebet bei Paulus* [1989], 204ff.), we can differentiate three types of prayer in Paul's letters: (1) The *praise* or *blessing* of God (εὐλογία), including doxologies and formulaic expressions of praise (e.g., ᾧ/αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ἀμήν, "to him/whom be the glory forever. Amen," etc.). Here Paul draws upon the prayer tradition of early Judaism (cf. Gal. 1:5; 2 Cor. 1:3; Rom. 11:36; Phil. 4:20). (2) The prayer of *thanksgiving* (εὐχαριστία), which is likewise Jewish, offered for God's work of salvation for the church and individual Christians (1 Cor. 15:57; Rom. 6:17; 7:25; Col. 1:12–14), but also for food and drink (Rom. 14:6). (3) The *petition* or *request*,

including personal requests (2 Cor. 12:8) as well as the apostle's petitions for the churches (2 Cor. 13:7, 9; Rom. 15:5–6; Phil. 1:9–11) and their petitions for the person and work of the apostle (Rom. 15:30–32). The prayer in the form of a *psalm* (ψαλμός), recommended in 1 Corinthians 14:26 (NRSV: "hymn") and Colossians 3:16 and Ephesians 5:19, embraces all three mentioned types of prayer and supplements them.

The question of *assurance in prayer* that is a constant topic of theological discussion must be answered from Galatians 4:6 and Romans 8:15. In both passages the prayer-cry αββα ὁ πατήρ ("Abba! Father!") is understood as an expression of spiritual υἱοθεσία, the adoption into the status of a son, into which Christ has placed believers. Outside Paul's letters this cry of prayer appears only in Mark 14:36. Taken together with Luke 22:42, this points back to the Lord's Prayer, which originally began with αββα (cf. Luke 11:2). The expression αββα ὁ πατήρ, therefore, comes from Jesus's own language of prayer; hence, according to Galatians 4:6 and Romans 8:15, the church calls to God in *his* words and *his* Spirit. When Paul writes in Romans 8:26, "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought [before God], but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words," this is not a sign of the lack of certainty in prayer, but is to be understood from the early Jewish idea that the language spoken in heaven cannot be spoken by earthly beings (cf. 2 Cor. 12:4) but is allowed only to the "angels who see his face"; only this language corresponds to God's holiness (cf. Rev. 8:3–4). Because according to Romans 8:34 the "Spirit" that intercedes for the church in heaven is Christ himself, the church on earth can be certain from Romans 8:26–27 that he mediates their requests with "sighs" or "groans" (στεναγμοί), and that these requests get through to God because of Christ. The address αββα ὁ πατήρ, which Jesus spoke before the church did, is a perfect spiritual example of the type of prayer that God hears. The apostle therefore sees the Christians' authorization to use this prayer as a confirmation of their newly granted status as children of God (Rom. 8:15–16).

4.3 Because Paul's understanding of baptism and the Lord's Supper has already been discussed (see above, 385–90, §1; 398–405, §4), it remains to consider only his instructions for the *celebration of the worship service* in 1 Corinthians 14. This chapter is permeated by the call not to give priority in the worship assembly of the church to subjective spiritual ecstasy and speaking in tongues, but rather to prophecy, which is understandable to all believers and also to those who are still unbelievers. Prophecy teaches, exhorts, and builds up the church, and the apostle emphatically recommends it. In the light of his pointed statement in 14:19, "in church I would rather speak five words with my mind, in order to instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue," one can call 1 Corinthians 14 (by analogy to 1 Cor. 13, sometimes called "Love's Song of Songs") the *Song of Songs of prophetic preaching and of the νοῦς dedicated to the service of Christ* (E. Käsemann).

The *glossolalia* so highly valued by the Corinthian pneumatics involves a "babbling utterance of sounds and words that do not result in any understandable statement" (F. Lang, *Die Briefe an die Korinther* [1994^2], 193). As the early Jewish *Testament of Job* 48:2–3 shows, speaking in tongues was considered a gift of the Spirit and a way of participating in the language of angels. For Paul, too,

it is a gift of the Spirit, which builds up the speakers and brings them nearer to God (1 Cor. 14:4, 28); Paul himself practiced it often (14:18). However, without translation, glossolalia remains incomprehensible to the assembled church, while for the non-Christians who participated in church gatherings, according to 1 Corinthians 14:16, it even has an alienating and repellent effect (14:23). Paul therefore would like to see speaking in tongues limited to two or three speakers, who should each take their turn, while one person makes sure that there is an interpretation (14:27).

4.4 According to Romans 12:1–2, the church's "spiritual worship" (λογικὴ λατρεία) cannot and must not limit itself to confession, worship, and prayer, but must *include the surrender of one's body and life to the praise of God* (see above). Jesus's commandment of love applies to all members of the church (Gal. 5:14; 6:2; Rom. 13:8–10), and the "good" (τὸ ἀγαθὸν) that is in keeping with this love should be done to all people, especially to those who belong to the "family of faith" (Gal. 6:10).

In his paraclesis the apostle had to develop the love commandment for house churches in which everybody knew everybody else, but in which great social, ethnic, and material tensions also had to be worked through. One can see this very clearly in the example of the *church in Corinth*. According to 1 Corinthians 1:26–29, the Christians had been recruited mostly from among the "little people." But there were also people from the middle and upper classes: Aquila and Prisca (Priscilla), with whom Paul first found work and lodging in Corinth (Acts 18:18–19; 1 Cor. 16:19), were Jewish Christian businesspeople; Gaius, Paul's host during his last stay in the city, hosted not only the apostle but also a whole house church according to Romans 16:23. The Erastus mentioned in the same verse was ὁ οἰκονόμος τῆς πόλεως, the "city treasurer" of Corinth. According to Romans 16:2, Phoebe was a "patroness" or "benefactor" (διάκονος) of the church at Cenchreae, which was the eastern seaport of Corinth on the Saronic Gulf. Sosthenes and Crispus, whom Paul mentions in 1 Corinthians 1:1 and 14, were originally synagogue "officials" or "rulers" (ἀρχισυνάγωγοι) in Corinth according to Acts 18:8 and 17, and as such they belonged to the wealthy class who were financially in a position to contribute to the maintenance of the synagogue buildings out of their own means. 1 Corinthians 7:17–24 furthermore attests that there were both slaves and free people among the Christians in Corinth. In order for Paul's paraclesis to be effective in such a diverse church, it had to be formulated concretely. Already in his dissertation *Die konkreten Einzelgebote in der paulinischen Paränese* ("The Concrete Commandments in the Pauline Paraenesis" [1961]), W. Schrage demonstrated that "Paul showed his churches not only the one particular way of love, but also particular concrete 'ways' (1 Cor. 4:17), even though these in the end all proceed from that 'still more excellent way' in 1 Corinthians 12:31 and return there again, and none of them lead *to* salvation, but rather all come *from* salvation" (ibid., 271). It is easy to show that this is correct.

4.4.1 In 1 Corinthians 8 and Romans 14:1–15:13 the apostle differentiated between the *strong* and the *weak* in the church. These two groups include various people in Corinth and Rome with different convictions.

One group in Corinth claimed to have all "knowledge" (γνῶσις) concerning the faith (1 Cor. 8:1–2), and in view of the defeat and disempowerment of all gods and idols by Christ, they had no problem participating in meals (in pagan temples) where food sacrificed to idols was served. This conduct

wounded and defiled the consciences of other church members. In Rome the “strong” considered all food taboos and regulations for holy days to be obsolete, while the “weak” still considered them binding. In both cases Paul is theologically on the side of the strong, but calls them to be more considerate of the conscience and shaky faith of the weak.

In both churches Paul insists that the unity of the church be preserved and its “upbuilding” or “edification” (οἰκοδομή) ensured. The “strong” have the Christian duty of bearing with the scruples and inhibitions of the “weak.” They are not to live to please themselves but, following Christ’s example, must rather make sure that the weak can live with them without being injured in their life of faith. Only when this happens can the law of Christ be fulfilled (Gal. 6:2) and the church glorify God with one voice (cf. Rom. 14:19; 15:6).

In both of these cases the apostolic paraclesis offers a classic example of what it means for Paul to make decisions no longer under the law but *in the freedom of faith according to the love commandment.* The apostle had resisted with all his energy the attempt in Antioch to regulate the table fellowship and common life of Jewish and Gentile Christians by appeal to the Torah (cf. Gal. 2:11–21). In the apostolic decree of Acts 15:20 and 29, one can discover what the fundamental issue was for the delegation that James sent from Jerusalem to Antioch, of which Peter, Barnabas, and most of the other Jewish Christians in Antioch let themselves be convinced. The Gentile Christians should be encouraged to abstain “only” from eating meat sacrificed to idols, blood, and “what has been strangled,” τὸ πνικτόν (i.e., the meat of animals that have not been slaughtered and drained of blood in proper Jewish manner, but were “choked” in their own blood) as well as from “fornication” or “sexual immorality” (πορνεία); the motive was to dispel the fears of Jewish Christians about becoming ritually impure from table fellowship with Gentile Christians. These requirements of the apostolic decree correspond to the so-called Noachide commandments (cf. *Jub*. 7:20 and, e.g., *b. Sanh*. 56b) and also to the minimal commandments imposed upon “aliens” living in Israel according to Leviticus 17–18 (cf. Str-B 2:721f., 729ff.). This appeal to the Torah caused Paul to oppose the proposed apostolic decree. He did not adopt it for his churches, but rather tried to answer the questions it raises about πορνεία, meat sacrificed to idols, and other “forbidden” foods on the basis of the freedom of faith and the mutual obligation to love “those of the family of faith” (Gal. 6:10).

4.4.2 Paul’s requirement that church members interact with one another according to the teaching of Jesus could also take the form of calling them to *refrain from lawsuits*.

In 1 Corinthians 6:1–11 the apostle comes to speak about the fact that Christians in Corinth were taking their lawsuits (presumably about money) before Gentile judges. This conduct harms the public reputation of the church in Paul’s estimation and is unworthy of Christians who are sanctified by Jesus’s sacrificial death and destined to participate in the final judgment. The most Paul can allow is that lawsuits among Christians might be conducted before a knowledgeable and experienced church member who is a “wise man” (σοφός, v. 5). (The model Paul has in mind with this advice is that of the legally independent Diaspora synagogues; cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 14.235 and Str-B 3:362f.) But in the church of Jesus Christ it would be better still if the opponents would follow Jesus’s rule of Matthew 5:39 about turning the other cheek and thus suffer wrong and injustice (1 Cor. 6:7), being eager to

pursue love. *Instead of their insisting on their rights, the apostle suggests that refraining from lawsuits in the church is the conduct truly befitting the "saints."* It is on the basis of 1 Corinthians 6:1–11 that the ancient church came to formulate its own canon law (cf. L. Vischer, *Die Auslegungsgeschichte von 1Kor 6,1–11. Rechtsverzicht und Schlichtung* [1955]).

4.4.3 The still more excellent way of love that Paul praises in 1 Corinthians 12:31–13:13 is not just something he recommends for inner-church affairs; it should also mark the outward lives of Christians who in their ancient environment were not always tolerated gladly.

In Romans 12:14–21 Paul, appealing to Jesus's commandment to love one's enemies (Luke 6:28/Matt. 5:44), exhorts the Christians in Rome to meet their persecutors with blessing rather than cursing and not to repay anyone evil for evil. It is the business of Christians as far as possible to live peaceably with all (Rom. 12:18; cf. Matt. 5:9).

Therefore not only Jesus (see above, 114–16, §2) *but also Paul was convinced that the love of neighbor and of one's enemy is the fundamental rule of Christian conduct inside and outside the church.*

From Jesus and Paul the principle of church life according to the love of neighbor and of enemy became the specifically Christian way of conduct in a non-Christian environment. As K. Beyschlag writes:

> For the ancient church these two demands of Jesus represented neither conventional civil impossibilities nor merely two sides of the same coin. . . . Rather, the application of these demands always involved a very specific life situation that had already been personally marked, virtually branded, by the word of the Kyrios. The response to Jesus' demands in these situations finally determined whether or not a person was a Christian. On the one hand there was the conduct of the Christian toward the non- and anti-Christian environment—here we have the commandment to love enemies. On the other hand there was the conduct of the same Christian toward Christian brothers and sisters—here we have the commandment to love the family of believers according to the standard of the Sermon on the Mount. This involves refraining from judging one another and the demand of mutual forgiveness, up to seventy-seven times (Matt. 18:22). (K. Beyschlag, *Evangelium als Schicksal* [1979], 88)

4.4.4 How the apostle understood the *sanctification of daily life* within the framework of the imminent expectation of the parousia can be illustrated by his positions on slavery, marriage, singleness, and loyalty to the powers of the state.

4.4.4.1 A socially explosive question, which also caused non-Christians to view the church with suspicion, concerned how *slaves and their masters* in the Christian community would relate to one another in communal life and corporate worship. Paul deals with this problem theologically in 1 Corinthians 7:17–24 and practically in Philemon.

In *1 Corinthians 7:17–24* (and in Philemon) the apostle takes the social difference between slavery and freedom for granted. Nevertheless, by taking up and applying baptismal traditions such as Galatians 3:26–28 or 1 Corinthians 12:12–13, he impresses upon the church that slaves and free people are equally accepted by Christ and set apart for "obeying the commandments of God" (*τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ*, 1 Cor. 7:19). Therefore one can be a Christian either as a slave or as a free person (1 Cor. 7:22–24): "[22]For whoever was called in the Lord as a slave is a freed person belonging to the Lord, just as whoever was free when called is a slave of Christ. [23]You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of human masters. [24]In whatever condition [lit. "calling," *κλῆσις*] you were called, brothers and sisters, there remain with God."

In spite of this position, Paul was by no means blind, in the light of the Old Testament and his Jewish education, to the fact that a life in freedom is preferable to slavery (cf. Exod. 21:2 and especially Lev. 25:39–43). Therefore in 1 Corinthians 7:21 he expressly makes those Christian slaves who had the (rare) opportunity to become free an exception to the rule: "Were you a slave when called? Do not be concerned about it. But if you can gain your freedom, *avail yourself of the opportunity*" (NRSV margin, for the Gk. *μᾶλλον χρῆσαι*; German: "wenn du jedoch sogar (auch) frei werden kannst, so mache davon um so lieber Gebrauch"—so F. Lang, *Die Briefe an die Korinther* [1986], 95; the NRSV text recommends retaining one's position as a slave: "Even if you can gain your freedom, *make use of your present condition now more than ever*"). In the Letter to Philemon, Paul follows an ancient pattern (cf. P. Lampe, "Keine 'Sklavenflucht' des Onesimus," *ZNW* 76 [1985]: 135–37) by interceding with Philemon, whom he had won to the faith sometime earlier, on behalf of Philemon's slave Onesimus. Onesimus had become guilty of some crime, perhaps financial, and therefore had fled to Paul, asking him to mediate. The apostle did not refuse his request. He converted Onesimus as well and sent him back to Philemon bearing the Letter to Philemon, which contained two requests and an offer: Philemon is asked to welcome into his house church the former slave and new Christian brother Onesimus just as warmly as he would welcome Paul himself (v. 17); if necessary, Paul offers to repay any debts Onesimus has incurred or damages he has caused (vv. 18–19); and finally Paul says he would like to have kept Onesimus with him as a servant (cf. *διακονέω*, v. 13) but did not want to interfere with Philemon's legal rights without receiving his consent (vv. 13–14). Because Onesimus appears together with Tychicus in Colossians 4:7–9 (cf. Acts 20:4; Eph. 6:21; 2 Tim. 4:12) as a "faithful and beloved brother" and helper of the apostle, we may conclude that Philemon fulfilled Paul's requests and freed his slave to be of service to Paul in his mission.

These two examples show that while Paul did not seek to effect social revolutions with his proclamation, he did effect them indirectly. The freedom of faith given to Christians (cf. 1 Cor. 7:23) had consequences for the common life of slaves and free (masters) in the house churches.

4.4.4.2 Paul presents nuanced positions on *sexuality and marriage* in 1 Thessalonians 4:3–5, 1 Corinthians 5:1–13, 6:12–20, and 7:1–40.

Paul understood himself to be gifted with the *χάρισμα of singleness* (1 Cor. 7:7), like Jesus (cf. Matt. 19:10–12), and in view of the "impending crisis" (1 Cor. 7:26) of the end time and the parousia of the Κύριος, he would like to see all Christians, at least the unmarried or widowed among them, follow his example (cf. 1 Cor. 7:7–8, 26, 32, 35, 37, 40). But the apostle does not make his wish an ascetic regulation! Instead, appealing to Jesus's prohibition of divorce, Paul opposes the tendency of some Corinthian Christians to spiritual sexual asceticism (cf. 1 Cor. 7:10 with Mark 10:9), calling the already married (in both Thessalonica and Corinth) to continue their marriages "in sanctification and

honor" (1 Thess. 4:4) without (permanent) abstinence (1 Cor. 7:2–5, 27). Where a separation has already taken place, the partners must either be reconciled to one another or remain separated and single (1 Cor. 7:11). *Divorce* for Paul is justified only when, in a mixed marriage between a Christian and a non-Christian, the non-Christian partner no longer wants to continue the marriage with the Christian. God made marriage to be the place not of religious discord but of concord (1 Cor. 7:15–16). To the unmarried who lack his gift Paul recommends marriage "in the Lord" (1 Cor. 7:9, 28, 36, 38–39), though not without warning them that they could experience distress in the impending eschatological crisis (cf. 1 Cor. 7:28 with Mark 13:12, 17–20 par.).

About "fornication" or "sexual immorality" (*πορνεία*), that is, extramarital sex with prostitutes or *hetairai* (courtesans), Paul warns sternly in 1 Thessalonians 4:4–5 and 7 and 1 Corinthians 5:1–13, 6:12–20, and 7:2. He does not content himself with simply branding fornication in Hellenistic Jewish fashion as a godless vice typical of the Gentiles (so, e.g., Wis. 14:22–27), but rather argues against it christologically and ecclesiologically: By faith and baptism the "saints" have become the property of the Κύριος, who redeemed them at the price of his life from the dominion of sin. He lives in them by the power of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 8:9–10), and he is as closely bound to the church as his body (and to every individual member of it) as are a man and his wife, who become one flesh (Gen. 2:24; cf. 1 Cor. 6:16–17 with 2 Cor. 11:2–3; Eph. 5:29–32; on the background of this, see above, 393, §3.1.2.1.1). Fornication, which unites a man with a prostitute, therefore not only affects his mortal, earthly stomach and his *σάρξ* (flesh), as the Corinthians thought, but also offends against the Lord's property rights to the Spirit-filled body of every church member and of the church as a whole. Instead of tolerating fornication or conceding to it as a sign of Christian freedom, Paul says, "You were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. 6:20). He goes a step further in 1 Corinthians 5:1–13 (on this text, see also above, 372–73): when a church member takes the unheard-of freedom of living in sexual union with his stepmother, which was a capital offense according to Leviticus 18:8 and 20:11 and offended even pagan laws and customs, this harms the cohesion and reputation of the church as the *σῶμα* Χριστοῦ ("body of Christ") so severely that such a person must be excluded from the church.

If one considers 1 Thessalonians 4:4–5, 7; 1 Corinthians 5:1–13; 6:16–17, 20; and 7:10–11, 13–15 in the context of the whole Bible, there can be no doubt that Paul saw marriage as much more than simply a "remedy for lust" (*remedium concupiscentiae*) belonging to this present, passing age. *He saw it as a creation order sanctified by God in and through Christ that portrays on earth the exclusive relationship of Christ to his saved community of Gentiles and Jews*. For the sake of this theological depth dimension, marriage must be kept pure and holy by Christians according to Paul.

Old Testament and early Jewish antecedents to the Pauline understanding of marriage are found in Malachi 2:16, CD 4:21, 11Q19 (11QTemple[a]) 57:15–19, and *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum* 32:15. In Malachi 2:16 God's hatred of divorce is expressed (despite its allowance in Deut. 24:1) because the marriage covenant which a man enters with the "wife of his youth" (cf. vv. 14–15) is analogous to the Sinai covenant in which God bound himself to Israel (cf. Mal. 2:16 with 2:10–11 and Hos. 2:16–17 [ET 2:14–15]; Jer. 2:2). In the royal and priestly law of the Qumran Essenes, the ideal of only one marriage is declared inviolable on the basis of Genesis 1:27 (cf. 11Q19 57:15–19 and CD 4:20–5:2). Finally, in *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum* 32:15 the miraculous creation of Eve from Adam's body is

praised against the background of Genesis 2:21–23, and Eve is seen as a symbolic figure for the saved community of Israel. Jesus taught his disciples to see marriage as an original creation order that no one can separate (cf. Luke 16:18 par.; Mark 10:2–12 par.; and above, 119–20 on Matt. 5:21–32). The Antiochene baptismal tradition taken over by Paul in Galatians 3:26–28, 1 Corinthians 12:12–13, and Colossians 3:10–11 (see above, 246–47, §4.4.4) takes up Genesis 2:24 and speaks of the *one* new humanity in Christ into which the baptized are transformed and to which they are bound. Paul finally drew from the total context of the tradition the theological consequence that marriage presents a creation order in which the end-time mystery of the exclusive union of Christ with the church is portrayed (cf. 1 Cor. 6:16–17 with 2 Cor. 11:2–3; Eph. 5:22–23). For this very reason marriage needs to be especially sanctified by the members of the body of Christ.

4.4.4.3 Concerning the *institutions of the state*, Paul called his churches simultaneously to *distance and tolerance*. This reflects both his theological conviction and his personal experience.

Paul during his apostolic ministry had both positive and negative experiences with government authorities. Already from his parents' home he was both a citizen of Tarsus and a possessor of the coveted Roman citizenship (cf. Acts 21:39; 22:3, 24–29). The rights and privileges these gave Paul could be used in his missionary journeys, in the gathering and transporting of the collection for Jerusalem, and finally also to protect his own life (Acts 25:9–12). Admittedly, on three occasions the apostle also had to endure the Roman punishment of being beaten with rods for instigating public unrest (2 Cor. 11:25), and from his meeting with Aquila and Prisca he knew of the expulsion of the Jews and Jewish Christians from Rome by the Roman emperor Claudius (cf. Acts 18:1–3). His paraclesis corresponds to this twofold experience.

The *distance* that Paul places in 1 Corinthians 6:1–11 between the church of Jesus Christ and the pagan courts and the inner-church arbitration process that he advocates in the case of (financial) disputes among Christians both correspond to the synagogue legal traditions in the Diaspora (see above). It lay close at hand for the apostle to use these traditions for the sake of the unique position of the church over against the world still hardened in unbelief (cf. 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1).

In Romans 13:1–7 Paul challenges the Christians in Rome to fulfill the hard Roman tax requirements and to be loyal to the government authorities that as God's servants are supposed to suppress evil and promote good. This call corresponds to Old Testament and Jewish tradition (cf. Jer. 29:7; Sir. 10:23–24; Philo, *Embassy* 140; Josephus, *Ant*. 6.80; 9.153). For the special case of paying taxes, he also has the teaching of Jesus behind him (cf. Rom. 13:7 with Luke 20:22 par.). 1 Peter 2:13–17 (and 1 Tim. 2:1–2) shows that the apostle did not stand alone in early Christianity with such paraclesis.

Two historical circumstances may have influenced the apostle's argumentation in Romans 13:1–7. Since the edict of Claudius, the Roman house churches no longer stood under the special legal privileges of the synagogues, but had to exist as free religious associations. As such they had to avoid

any suspicion of political agitation or conspiracy, because this would have led to their immediate disbanding by the authorities. From Tacitus (*Annals* 13.50–51) it can moreover be seen that the taxes and duties levied in the whole Roman Empire at the time of the composition of the Letter to the Romans had reached an almost unbearable level. In this special situation, and in view of the quickly approaching day of judgment (cf. Rom. 12:19–21; 13:11–14), Paul advised the Christians of Rome, who still lived at that time without any political influence, to meet the government requirements as far as possible; any other approach would have risked their existence and therefore all possibilities for missionary witness. If one recognizes these special circumstances, then it is not advisable to develop a New Testament doctrine of the state only or principally from Romans 13:1–7; to this text must be added others like Acts 5:29 and Revelation 13.

From 1 Corinthians 6:1–11 and Romans 13:1–7 it can be seen that the apostle advised Christians to preserve the independence of the church over against the world and to demonstrate loyalty to the government authorities where necessary for the existence and witness of the church. Paul never approved of anarchistic tendencies.

The "liturgy" of Paul's apostolic ministry (Rom. 15:16), the life of Christians dedicated to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17), and the working of the *Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός* "to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:11) all correspond to one another. Paul and the churches he founded saw themselves called *to lead a life of thanksgiving before God entirely determined by the grace of God in Christ and oriented toward its ultimate fulfillment in the parousia*. The apostle's ethics and concrete paraclesis are firmly embedded in the christological and eschatological horizons of his theology of justification.

* * *

Looking back upon our presentation of Paul's theology by way of conclusion, we see the following perspectives emerge:

1. With Paul the Gentile mission that started in Antioch achieved theological independence, without cutting off its roots reaching back to Jerusalem and from there to Jesus himself. On the contrary, if Jesus may be understood as the messianic Son of Man and reconciler, if his person and teaching form the basis of the christological traditions of pre-Pauline Christianity, and if these in turn are the foundation of Paul's theology of justification of the ungodly for Christ's sake by faith alone, then *Paul may be understood as the apostle who theologically penetrated the work of Jesus in a unique way, making it the basis of his mission theology*.

2. Paul's teaching revolves materially around the righteousness of God realized in the sending, crucifixion, resurrection, exaltation, and future work of the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός. In keeping with the Old Testament, creation-oriented sense of God's righteousness, Paul understands justification as a process that affects the whole cosmos in which the *βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ* will be established by Christ. Christ therefore appears in Pauline Christology as the one Son of God and Lord to whom the whole cosmos owes both its old and its new existence.

3. This universal horizon of the Pauline doctrine of justification does not exclude but rather includes the idea that the salvation effected by God in and through Christ for the whole cosmos is applied to every individual person who is irreplaceable before God, especially to the sinner enslaved to sin and hopelessly entangled in the consequences of past transgressions. Participation in salvation is opened to the individual sinner through faith awakened by the promise of the gospel. Paul worked out the meaning of "faith" (*πίστις*) for the salvation and life of each individual believer more exactly than all other early Christian witnesses before him. Faith according to the teaching of the apostle is the essence of life before God (O. Hofius).

4. In their faith in Christ, Gentiles and Jews, women and men, and slaves and masters are united through baptism as the one saved community of Jesus Christ, which Paul calls the "body of Christ." Through this body Christ communicates with the world, and as its members, Christians are obligated to serve God by surrendering their body and life and praising and confessing him and the Κύριος before the whole world. With this life of thanksgiving, Christians participate in the glorification of God, which according to Paul is the deepest and ultimate purpose of the being and sending of Jesus Christ.

5. In view of the history of missions, Paul's work remained fragmentary. The ecumenical, end-time perspectives of his apostolic mission point far beyond his personal existence. Therefore, the apostle's teaching and work were meant not only to be carefully preserved, but also to be continued. Paul's school, founded already during his lifetime for missionary instruction, took up this twofold task.

6. Paul's mission was dogged by two sources of error to which he and his pupils had to respond. One segment of the Gentile Christians whom Paul won to faith in Christ tended to a spiritual enthusiasm that rid itself of

all earthly ties, developed an uninhibited exercise of freedom, and pursued esoteric ways of knowledge accessible only to the initiated few. On the other hand, the person, proclamation, and theology of the apostle were attacked all his life by Jewish Christians, who found his law-critical teaching of the justification of the ungodly by faith alone for Christ's sake to be too radical and set over against it a teaching which combined Jesus tradition, the gospel, and the Torah more seamlessly than did Paul himself.

In view of this double front, Paul's teaching appeared (and appears) to need greater precision and partly also supplementation. We should therefore be dissuaded from attempting to isolate or absolutize Pauline mission theology in the biblical canon. Only by hearing Paul within the whole of the biblical tradition can one measure the special theological significance of his teaching in the history of revelation.

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Desire: Paul's Sexual Ethics in 1 Thessalonians 4, 1 Corinthians 7, and Romans 1 (2007); **T. Engberg-Pedersen**, "The Logic of Action in Paul: How Does He Differ from the Moral Philosophers on Spiritual and Moral Progression and Regression?," in *Passions and Moral Progress in Greco-Roman Thought*, ed. J. T. Fitzgerald (2008), 238–66; **E. D. Freed**, *The Morality of Paul's Converts* (2005); **V. Furnish**, *The Moral Teaching of Paul* (2009[3]); **D. Garlington**, *The Obedience of Faith* (1990); *Faith, Obedience, and Perseverance* (1994); **M. Gorman**, *Cruciformity: Paul's Narrative Spirituality of the Cross* (2001); **N. Gupta**, "The Theo-Logic of Paul's Ethics in Recent Research: Crosscurrents and Future Directions in Scholarship in the Last Forty Years," *CurBR* 7 (2009): 336–61; **R. B. Hays**, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament* (1996), 16–72; "The Role of Scripture in Paul's Ethics," in *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scripture* (2005), 143–62; **D. Horrell**, "Idol-Food, Idolatry and Ethics in Paul," in *Idolatry: False Worship in the Bible, Early Judaism, and Christianity*, ed. S. C. Barton (2007), 120–40; **R. A. López**, "Does the Vice List in 1 Corinthians 6:9–10 Describe Believers or Unbelievers?," *BSac* 164 (2007): 59–73; **E. H. Lovering Jr.** and **J. L. Sumney**, eds., *Theology and Ethics in Paul and His Interpreters: Essays in Honor of Victor Paul Furnish* (1996); **D. W. Pao**, *Thanksgiving: An Investigation of a Pauline Theme* (2002); **B. S. Rosner**, *Greed as Idolatry: The Origin and Meaning of a Pauline Metaphor* (2007); **idem**, ed., *Understanding Paul's Ethics* (1995); **K. O. Sandnes**, *Belly and the Body in the Pauline Epistles* (2002); **U. Schnelle**, *Theology of the New Testament* (ET 2009), 319–28; **B. Wannenwetsch**, "The Fourfold Pattern of Christian Moral Reasoning according to the New Testament," in *Scripture's Doctrine and Theology's Bible: How the New Testament Shapes Christian Dogmatics*, ed. M. Bockmuehl and A. J. Torrance (2008), 177–90; **F. Watson**, *Agape, Eros, Gender: Towards a Pauline Sexual Ethic* (2004).

PART FOUR

The Proclamation in the Period after Paul

Because we will devote special attention to the Synoptic Gospels, Acts, and the Johannine writings in book 1, parts 5 and 6 of our presentation, the following chapters in part 4 focus only on the proclamation of Christ in the post-Pauline epistolary literature of the New Testament. This literature includes letters from the later period of Paul's life and from the years after AD 62, when James the Lord's brother had been stoned in Jerusalem as a supposed lawbreaker and both Peter and Paul had suffered martyrdom (perhaps under Nero?). The later Pauline and deutero-Pauline letters and the Catholic Letters reflect the problems and perspectives of the second and third generations of early Christianity. One must understand these factors in order to do justice to these writings.

1 It is important both tradition-historically and theologically to note that *Paul's work resulted in a school of his pupils* like no other apostle at or after his time except for John. In the spirit and commission of Paul, a whole generation of his pupils or coworkers engaged in writing. It is to them that we owe the letters to the Colossians and Ephesians as well as the Pastoral Letters, 1–2 Timothy and Titus. Ephesians and the Pastorals make conscious use of Romans and other Pauline letters, in order to preserve continuity with the teaching of the apostle. (On 2 Thessalonians, see the excursus at the end of chapter 26, "Eschatology and Apostleship in 2 Thessalonians," 488–93.)

2 Just as clearly during this period, we find in the letters of James and Jude and in Hebrews, but also in 1–2 Peter, evidence of a *Jewish Christianity* that has taken up and developed the theological tradition of the early Jerusalem church, the Stephen circle, and the missionary church in Antioch. Christianity reached Rome without Paul's help, and the two letters of Peter as well as *1 Clement* and the *Shepherd of Hermas* document that the church of Rome was given a lasting Jewish Christian stamp by its unknown missionaries. Furthermore, Syria, Asia Minor, and Greece were the mission field not only of Paul but also of Jewish Christianity as

represented by Peter, Barnabas, Apollos, and other (to us anonymous) missionaries and teachers. Next to the Pauline corpus, the New Testament preserves the traditions of the rest of that sector of Jewish Christianity that was open to the Gentile mission. In addition to the above-mentioned letters, the Gospel of Matthew and the Johannine writings also originate from this branch of Jewish Christianity. One may not assign these Jewish Christian writings an inferior theological meaning simply because they pursue other perspectives than Paul and do not reach the depth or discernment of his teachings.

3 The two main problems that confronted both Paul's pupils and the Jewish Christian writers of Hebrews, James, Jude, and 1–2 Peter are historically undeniable. As time passed, the small Christian minority communities needed not only to develop lasting church structures and firm criteria for the Christian life, but also to protect themselves against the undermining of their faith by false teachers in their own midst.

3.1 In the fight against rising heresy, the Pauline school and the missionary witnesses of Jewish Christianity developed a normative *doctrinal tradition* that allowed people to measure what Christians believed and what they did not.

3.1.1 This situation helps us understand the phenomenon of *pseudonymity* or *anonymity* that marks the letters of the Pauline school as well as the two letters of Peter and the letter to the Hebrews. In keeping with Greek and Jewish customs, the students of the apostles wrote in the name of their teachers or without any name at all, because their own individuality was of little or no significance in view of the apostolic teaching that needed to be preserved and further developed.

3.1.2 One can illustrate this by the example of the *Pauline school*. Paul himself did not work only as a preacher of the gospel, but also as an early Christian teacher, giving instruction over many years in cities such as Antioch, Corinth, and Ephesus (cf. Acts 11:26; 18:7–11; 19:8–10). The founding of Paul's school therefore goes back to the apostle himself. In order to carry out his global mission program, from early on Paul gathered around himself men and women who preached and taught with him, but also instead of him. Outstanding figures include Timothy (cf. Acts 16:1–3; 1 Thess. 3:2; 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10–11; Phil. 2:19–23), Titus (cf. Gal. 2:1–5; 2 Cor. 2:13; 7:6–7, 13–15; 8:6, 16–24), and Silas/Silvanus (cf. Acts 15:22, 27,

32, 40; 16:25; 17:14; 18:5; 2 Cor. 1:19; 1 Pet. 5:12), although Paul also received help from Prisca and Aquila (cf. Acts 18:2; Rom. 16:3) and Euodia and Syntyche (cf. Phil. 4:3). Paul's coworkers went on journeys on his behalf, maintained contact between him and his churches (cf. 1 Thess. 3:2; Phil. 2:19–20), taught in his name (cf. 1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Cor. 1:19), helped organize the collection (cf. 2 Cor. 8), and are named as coauthors of several of his letters (cf. 1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1).

The taking over of teaching and preaching assignments by Paul's coworkers was especially important when Paul himself could not make any church visits or mission trips. This was especially true during his long imprisonments in Caesarea (cf. Acts 23:31–26:32) and Rome (cf. Acts 28:16–31). Thus, for example, the *Letter to the Colossians* was probably written by Timothy at Paul's request while in prison, and only "countersigned" by Paul himself (cf. Col. 4:18 and E. Schweizer, *The Letter to the Colossians* [1982], 21–24; W. H. Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter* [1979], 236ff.; J. D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* [1996], 35ff.). The *Letter to the Ephesians* also presupposes an imprisonment of Paul (cf. Eph. 4:1; 6:20). I believe that this letter is best traced back to a Pauline circular letter given to coworkers such as Tychicus (cf. Eph. 6:21), and intended to be read in churches throughout the entire region of Asia Minor. It is the exemplar from the church archive in Ephesus that has been preserved for us. (This would explain both the presence of the reading ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in Ephesians 1:1 and its absence from some important early manuscripts.) This circular letter was thoroughly revised after the apostle's death (cf. Eph. 2:20; 3:5), and is presented as a kind of "theological legacy of the Pauline school" (M. Gese, *Das Vermächtnis des Apostels* [1997], 275). Finally, the three *Pastoral Letters* seem to go back to letters that Paul wrote to Timothy and Titus during his imprisonments. In their present form they represent doctrinal letters that were arranged sometime after the apostle's martyrdom into testamentary decrees and rules of church order, in order to build a dam against the rising tide of Gnosticism in the Pauline churches (cf. 1 Tim. 6:20).

3.2 Along with the need to define and secure the church's teachings came the task of determining the nature, structure, and ministry of the Christian churches so that they could hold their ground over the long haul in the midst of a still-disbelieving world. Teachings about the *church and its*

organization as well as efforts to develop and form a Christian *church ethic* therefore take up a large part of the later epistolary literature that we must now consider.

The need to accomplish these church-related tasks also left its mark on other early Christian writings that originated partly during the period of the later writings of the New Testament but were not included in the canon—above all, *1 Clement*, the *Didache*, and the letters of Ignatius of Antioch. We will occasionally refer to these without examining them in detail.

4 One final note is in order in view of the term "early Catholicism" that is sometimes used—often negatively—to describe the period and literature we are about to consider. In his article "Early Catholicism in the New Testament" ("Frühkatholizismus im Neuen Testament," *Catholica: Vierteljahresschrift für ökumenische Theologie* 51 [1997]: 163–68), Heinz Schürmann cautioned against using this ambiguous term which, as he says, originated out of the search for "degenerative features in the early development of the 'Catholic Church.'" As Schürmann rightly notes, "From the standpoint of the Old and New Testament Scriptures as well as the ancient church creeds, the 'catholicity' [*sic*] of the *q*^{e}*hal Yahweh*, the *ekklēsia theou* (*ecclesia catholica*), would have to be evaluated as a fundamentally positive feature" (163). We will follow Schürmann's advice by avoiding the misleading term "early Catholicism" in our interpretations of Ephesians, the Pastoral Letters, and 2 Peter. Neither the early church nor the ancient church after the New Testament period could have survived without the traditions and positions formed in the letters of the second and third Christian generations. Even today these letters by the pupils of the apostles form a bridge by which we may return to the traditions of the beginning of Christianity and evaluate them afresh.

All in all, exegetical research into the deutero-Pauline and Catholic Letters must still wrestle with many open questions. Therefore, to a certain extent we can only hypothetically feel our way back to the original meaning of these letters and must accept that a scholarly consensus about the results of such research has not yet been reached.

CHAPTER 24

The Proclamation of Christ in the Pauline School

Whoever wishes to form an understanding of the *view of Christ* among Paul's pupils must remember that while their letters all rest on the christological tradition that was esteemed in the school of the apostle, they also all have different occasions. Thus the Letter to the Colossians opposes the "philosophy" (φιλοσοφία) that caused concern to the Christians in Colossae and Laodicea (Col. 2:8). Ephesians presents Christ as the divine Lord and mediator of salvation by whom and for whom the church lives. The Pastorals highlight the christological traditions belonging to the "deposit" (παραθήκη) of apostolic teaching entrusted to the next generation, which had to be preserved intact. This stands in stark contrast to "the profane chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge (γνῶσις)" (1 Tim. 6:20). If one orders these letters chronologically, one must deal first with Colossians, then with Ephesians, and finally with the Pastorals.

1 The Christology of Colossians results from the *Christ hymn of Colossians 1:15–20* and the other christological passages throughout the letter.

1.1 The *Christ hymn of Colossians 1:15–20* belongs with Philippians 2:6–11 and 1 Timothy 3:16 as one of the main witnesses of the Christ hymns used in early Christian worship (cf. Col. 3:16).

Under the influence of the interpretation of Philippians 2:6–11 and Colossians 1:15–20 by E. Käsemann, the Christ hymns in the Pauline Letters were evaluated until recently as products of a speculative early Christian enthusiasm that Paul and his pupils adapted and fitted into their theology of the cross. This approach was guided by a literary criticism that required interpreters to distinguish between the original tradition of the hymn and the interpretive additions of the letter writer. However, these additions were not meant only to explain the implications of the original text more fully. They were primarily meant to correct the speculative Christology of the hymns by a theology of the cross. As already noted above (325–26, §4.2.7), O. Hofius has shown in his monograph on the Philippian hymn (*Der Christushymnus Philipper 2,6–11*) that this interpretive scheme fits neither the style nor the content of Philippians 2:6–11. Moreover, M. Hengel, in his essay "Hymns and Christology," has pointed out that the early Christian hymns must be understood in the setting of the worship service, where they were "a living medium for the progressive development of christological thinking" (95). The liturgical enthusiasm that marks the Christ hymns is therefore a legitimate expression of early

Christian faith. Approaching Colossians 1:15–20 from this perspective yields considerably different results from previous interpretations.

1.2 The text of Colossians 1:15–20 runs as follows (NRSV modified; cf. H. Gese, "Weisheit," 240–41):

[15]He [Christ] is the image (εἰκών) of the invisible God,
the firstborn (πρωτότοκος) of all creation;
[16]for in him *all things* (τὰ πάντα) were created
in heaven and on earth,
things visible and invisible,
whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers
—*all things* have been created through him and for him.
[17]He himself is before *all things*,
and in him *all things* hold together.
[18]He is the head (κεφαλή, ראֹשׁ) of the body, the church;
he is the beginning (ἀρχή, רֵאשִׁית), the firstborn (πρωτότοκος, רִאשׁוֹן) from the dead,
in order that he might come to be first (πρωτεύων) in everything.
[19]For in him all the fullness was pleased to dwell,
[20]and through him (δι᾽ αὐτοῦ) to reconcile (ἀποκαταλλάξαι) to himself *all things*
by making peace through the blood of his cross,
through him (δι᾽ αὐτοῦ) whether things on earth or things in heaven.

1.2.1 E. Käsemann gave new impetus to research on Colossians 1:15–20 with his 1949 essay "Eine urchristliche Taufliturgie," in which he divided the hymn into two strophes that begin with the relative pronouns in verse 15 (ὅς ἐστιν κτλ.) and verse 18b (ὅς ἐστιν κτλ.). He considers the text to be a *pre-Christian* hymn to the gnostic redeemer, which acquires "a new eschatological sense" only in its "Christian redaction and framing" (39–40).

The Christian redaction expresses itself in only eight Greek words according to Käsemann, namely, in the phrases τῆς ἐκκλησίας in verse 18 and διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ in verse 20. These words are supposed to express that the church is identical with the universe of "all things" (= the body) created by the redeemer, and that the cosmic peace to be brought about by the redeemer—for which the whole ancient world was hoping—has been established by Jesus's surrender of life on the cross.

E. Schweizer has subjected Käsemann's analysis to various criticisms, which are summarized in his commentary (*The Letter to the Colossians* [1982], 55ff.). According to Schweizer, the predicate or title of Christ as "firstborn from the dead," πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, in verse 18 (cf. with Rev. 1:5), would be unthinkable in Gnosticism. The hymn must therefore be of Christian origin. Its background is to be found not in the gnostic redeemer myth, which is not attested until after the New Testament period, but rather in the early Jewish wisdom tradition. The text praises Christ in words elsewhere applied to wisdom as the primeval and eschatological mediator of creation. Schweizer too accepts two strophes beginning in verse 15 and verse 18b. However, he also isolates more additions than Käsemann did, and gives them the following interpretations: The words "whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers" (εἴτε θρόνοι εἴτε κυριότητες εἴτε ἀρχαὶ εἴτε ἐξουσίαι) in verse 16 take a critical stance toward the false teaching arising in Colossae (cf. 2:10, 15). The genitive τῆς ἐκκλησίας in verse 18a interprets what the body of Christ is. The purpose clause "in order that he might come to have first place in everything" (ἵνα γένηται ἐν πᾶσιν αὐτὸς πρωτεύων) in verse 18c points to the supremacy of Christ. Finally, the words "through the blood of his cross" (διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ) in verse 20 apply the originally cosmologically oriented hymn to the establishment of peace through Jesus's cross and blood.

N. T. Wright has reacted against this kind of analysis in his article "Poetry and Theology in Colossians 1.15–20" (*NTS* 36 [1990]: 444–68). He objects that nothing makes less sense liturgically than to cause a worshiping church to become disconcerted by adding or subtracting elements from a well-known hymn. Wright therefore wants to read Colossians 1:15–20 without literary-critical interference. He arranges the text into two main strophes (vv. 15–16 + 18b–20) with an intermediate strophe (vv. 17–18a). According to Wright, the song is testimony to a typical Jewish Christian "christological monotheism" which, following the monotheism of Deutero-Isaiah, speaks of the one God's creative and redemptive work in Christ. The song praises the Messiah Jesus Christ from the perspective of Genesis 1:26–27 as the visible image of the invisible God, in whom God's wisdom dwells and in whom the one transcendent God becomes immanent. The language of the divine fullness "dwelling" in Jesus (v. 19; cf. also 2:9) is to be understood as a modification of the temple and *Shekinah* theology of LXX Psalm 67:17 (MT 68:17 [ET 68:16]).

The Old Testament scholar H. Gese has also entered into this debate over Colossians 1:15–20 with his 1979 essay "Die Weisheit, der Menschensohn und die Ursprünge der Christologie als konsequente Entfaltung der biblischen Theologie" ("Wisdom, the Son of Man, and the Origins of Christology as the Consistent Development of Biblical Theology," repr. *Alttestamentliche Studien* [1991], 218–48). According to Gese, the background of the hymn is to be found in wisdom theology and the (cultic) atonement tradition of the Old Testament, as these are already found combined in Sirach 24. Gese adds that "a Hebrew formulation may possibly underlie the cultic song" of Colossians (241n15). In any case, the song is to be divided into two halves, verses 15–17 and 18–20—rather than verses 18b–20 (as with Käsemann and Schweizer)—according to the laws of Semitic poetry. On the whole Gese summarizes: "The wisdom Christology of the Colossian hymn arose

organically from the Old Testament. There is no need to assume any foreign, supposedly gnostic influences, nor any of the hypotheses that typically arise alongside these concerning special Christian corrections and adjustments of the text. The hymn as a whole is rather a convincing example of the development of Christology grounded in the Old Testament and especially in wisdom" (243).

C. Stettler has extended Gese's analysis (*Der Kolosserhymnus* [2000]). He points out that Gese's division of the strophes beginning at verse 15 and verse 18a is to be preferred to the division that begins in verse 15 and verse 18b, because this corresponds better to the structure of the text, and because apart from a very different example in LXX Psalm 134:8–12, there is no analogy in Hellenistic Jewish or early Christian literature for a song strophe beginning with a relative clause, as in verse 18b. Stettler explains the repetition of δι' αὐτοῦ in the last line of verse 20, which is omitted in part of the textual tradition (and bracketed as doubtful in $NA^{26–28}$), as an *anadiplosis*—a repetition of a phrase from a preceding line at the start of the next—of the type frequently found in psalms and Jewish hymns (cf. the examples in O. Hofius, *Christushymnus*, 10–12).

If one follows the direction set by Gese and Stettler, then a stimulating exercise in biblical theology results. Presupposing the integrity of the Colossian hymn, we should arrange it in two strophes (vv. 15–17 and 18–20) and investigate its interweaving of statements from both creation theology and atonement theology.

1.2.2 The *religio-historical and tradition-historical background* of the Colossian hymn is formed by the priestly theology of wisdom and atonement, as this was at home in the Jerusalem temple. This is the source of the language of God's "dwelling" (on Zion) in Colossians 1:19 and also 2:9 (cf. Exod. 29:43–46; Pss. 68:17 [ET v. 16]; 74:2; and B. Janowski, "Ich will in eurer Mitte wohnen"), as well as the source of the idea of atonement and reconciliation in verse 20. However, according to the priestly view, God's creation and preservation of the world also included his creation of and sovereignty over the angelic powers (cf. *Jub*. 2:2 and 4Q403 frag. 1 I 35; cf. *DSSSE* 818–19 and C. Stettler, *Der Kolosserhymnus*, 192, 195). These powers preside over the heavenly cult that represents the pattern for all earthly worship (cf. *Jub.* 2:18, 21, 30; the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* 4Q400–407, ed. C. Newsom [cf. *DSSSE* 806–37]; *T. Levi* 3:8; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 4:1–5:14). Yet these powers also maintain the order of the cosmos (cf. *Jub*. 2:2; *1 En.* 60:11–22; Rev. 12:7–9) and restrain the demons who plunge all earthly life into unsalutary disorder (cf. *1 En.* 9:1–10:22; 20:1–7; *T. Sol.* 18; Rev. 12:12). In the light of this background and the hymn's Semitic style, it must be judged to be a Jewish Christian composition. The ecclesial language of the "body" of Christ in verse 18a, which first appears in Paul (cf. 1 Cor. 12:12ff.; Rom. 12:4ff.), suggests that the hymn was formulated in the Pauline school. In Christ's person and sacrifice there is a fulfillment

of that which was accomplished only symbolically in the Jerusalem cult: the creation and renewal of God’s saved community, which is the central act of the creation and preservation of the world through the atoning cult.

1.2.3 The beginning of the text by the relative clause ὅς ἐστιν (“who is”) in Colossians 1:15 presupposes a previous liturgical mention of Christ: “Praise be to Jesus Christ, who is . . .” (or something similar). The *division of the hymn into two strophes* is best explained by Semitic poetry and the Old Testament principle that creation and redemption correspond to one another. Just as in Deutero-Isaiah the language of God’s power as creator substantiates and reinforces the message of redemption (cf. Isa. 42:5–9; 45:7–8, 11–13; 51:9–11), so also according to Colossians 1:15–20 God’s primeval deed of creation in Christ corresponds to his redemptive work in and through Jesus’s sacrificial surrender of life and his dominion over “all things” (τὰ πάντα). The christological praise therefore reaches back to the tradition of the creation, in order to illuminate the meaning of the reconciliation of all things in and through Christ.

1.2.3.1 The language in the hymn’s *first strophe* (vv. 15–17) originates from the Old Testament–Jewish wisdom and creation theology as expressed in Proverbs 8, Sirach 24, Wisdom 7, and *Jubilees* 2. Here wisdom is described as the “beginning” (ἀρχή) of God’s works and ways (Prov. 8:22–23), as the “image” (εἰκών) of God’s goodness (Wis. 7:26), and as the mediator of creation, which was already at work in the formation of the universe and is still at work to renew and order it (Wis. 1:6–7; 7:27; Sir. 24:1ff.). As W. Pöhlmann has shown, the “all things” (τὰ πάντα) statements in our text are stylistically and materially related to the creation hymns of Old Testament and Jewish hymnody (cf., e.g., Isa. 44:24 LXX; *Sib. Or.* 3:20–23). Our text is a paradigmatic example of the early Christian effort to understand the being and work of the preexistent and exalted Christ by analogy to the reign of wisdom (cf. similarly 1 Cor. 1:30; 8:6; and John 1:1–18).

Ancient Judaism identified the Torah with wisdom and ascribed cosmic validity to it (cf. above, 287, §2.4). Christians saw Jesus’s mission, passion, and resurrection as the supersession of the Sinai revelation, and they therefore dared to ascribe to Jesus Christ the characteristics and works of wisdom and to reevaluate the νόμος accordingly (cf. Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:15; John 1:17–18).

According to Colossians 1:15–17, Christ is the *εἰκών* of the one God, his image and the effective representation of his being over against the cosmos (cf. Gen. 1:26–27). By his mediation the universe, including the angelic powers, was created (see above), and it is preserved and has its being only in him. The cosmos has no other Lord than the “firstborn of creation” (cf. Rev. 3:14), and the universe is kept in order by being subordinated to him (cf. also 1 Cor. 8:6).

1.2.3.2 Corresponding to the event of creation are the event and effects of redemption praised in the *second strophe* of the Colossian hymn (vv. 18–20). Redemption or *ἀπολύτρωσις* (cf. Col. 1:14) is necessary because the order of the cosmos was profoundly disturbed by sin.

In the book of Revelation Christ is called the Alpha and the Omega (Rev. 1:8), the first and the last (1:17), the “firstborn of the dead” (*ὁ πρωτότοκος τῶν νεκρῶν*) who frees us from our sins by his blood (1:5), and the *ἀρχή* or “beginning” of God’s creation (3:14). Very similarly in Colossians 1:18–20, Christ is called the *κεφαλή* (Heb. ראשׁ, *rōʾš*), the *ἀρχή* (Heb. רֵאשִׁית, *rēʾšît*), the *πρωτότοκος* (Heb. בְּכוֹר, *bəkôr*) *ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν* (“the firstborn from the dead”), and the *πρωτεύων* or “first one” (Heb. רִאשׁוֹן, *riʾšôn*). Together with the expression *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως*, “the firstborn of all creation,” in Colossians 1:15, these predicates or identifications have a messianic ring. For ראשׁ this can be seen in Psalm 18:44 (“head of the nations” [ET 18:43]) and Hosea 2:2 (“they shall appoint for themselves one head” [ET 1:11]). The terms רֵאשִׁית and בְּכוֹר are designations for the firstborn in the Old Testament (cf. Gen. 49:3) and are likewise to be understood messianically (cf. Ps. 89:28 [ET 89:27], and *Pesiqta Rabbati* 34 [159b]; cf. Str-B 3:677). The term רִאשׁוֹן, “first one,” is an alternative to בְּכוֹר (cf. Gen 25:25, 31–32) and is repeatedly attested in Jewish sources as a name for the Messiah (cf. Str-B 1:65c).

According to Colossians 1:18a, Christ is the reigning “head” (*κεφαλή*) of the “body” (*σῶμα*). This statement is equally important for both Christology and ecclesiology.

E. Schweizer thinks that in the original setting of the Colossian hymn, *σῶμα* meant “the world body” (*The Letter to the Colossians*, 72; cf. Schweizer’s references for *σῶμα* in *TDNT* 7:1037 lines 7–20; 1039 lines 20–23; 1054 lines 29–30). The addition of the appositional *τῆς ἐκκλησίας* by the author of Colossians is supposed to have reinterpreted this cosmological statement, giving it a completely different theological sense. As Schweizer writes (p. 83): “The function of Christology is no longer to express the fact that God’s activity in creation can be recognized alone in Christ. . . . Its function now is above all to recognize the fact that Christ as lord over all powers is acknowledged as head only where the church turns in faith toward him, and by this very act becomes ‘his body,’ filled by him with life (2:19).”

However, as C. Stettler has correctly shown, this bold statement becomes questionable when one follows Gese’s division of the hymn by beginning the second strophe in verse 18a (see above, 435–

37). The phrase ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῦ σώματος is then an original predicate of Christ, and σῶμα—in good Pauline fashion—means the church (cf. above, 392–98, §3.1.2).

The placement of Colossians 1:18a at the beginning of the second strophe says that the church, governed by Christ as its head, represents the basic model of the universe, which God has finally restored to peace and re-created through Jesus's atoning death. With Jesus's resurrection from the dead, the universe, represented by the church, has found its end-time Lord (cf. Rev. 5:11–13).

Through Christ the one God has accomplished once for all the work of atonement and reconciliation for the universe. He has done so especially by causing his divine "fullness" or πλήρωμα—in rabbinic terms the *Shekinah* —to take up bodily residence in Christ (cf. Col. 1:19; 2:9 with Isa. 6:3; Wis. 1:7; Jer. 23:24). With this statement Christ takes the place of the temple on Zion (cf. Exod. 29:43–46; Pss. 68:17 [ET 68:16]; 74:2 with *Jub*. 4:26 and John 1:14; 2:21). Through Christ's vicarious surrender of life on the cross, God has effected the reconciliation that makes peace between heaven and earth (cf. 2 Cor. 5:19). Jesus's blood shed on the cross on Golgotha is the end-time means of atonement that restores the universe in the end time to the shalom order from which it has fallen. All people and all angelic powers who confess Christ as Lord of the world are sanctified and subdued by him and are thereby set at peace with God (Col. 2:15). An exemplary expression of this peace is the praise of God sung by the church (cf. Col. 3:16).

An important pointer for the understanding of the cosmic atonement and reconciliation of Colossians 1:20 was provided by E. Lohmeyer in 1930 in his commentary *Die Briefe an die Kolosser und an Philemon* (rev. W. Schmauch [1953], 43ff.). Lohmeyer thought it necessary to consider the close connection that the text exhibits to the Jewish liturgy and theology of the Day of Atonement. Yom Kippur, *the* day of peacemaking between Yahweh and his people par excellence, involves several closely related ideas. These include a sacrificial victim provided by God himself, the effecting of atonement and the new creation of the congregation through the forgiveness of sins, and the establishment of a new cosmic peace. Jesus's sacrifice in Colossians 1:18–20 can therefore be seen in analogy to the Israelite celebration of atonement and reconciliation. However, under the influence of E. Käsemann's analysis of Colossians 1:15–20, this interpretation was no longer pursued. Not until the work of H. Gese in 1979 were verses 19–20 again interpreted with the help of the atonement tradition. Gese writes: "Because of the fact that in Jesus the whole fullness of deity dwells (שׁכן), the sacred ritual of reconnection [sc. with the divine], namely reconciliation, could be carried out. Through the blood of his cross, that peace could be effected which transfers the created world into the new aeon of the holiness of God" (Gese, "Weisheit," 242–43).

C. Stettler has confirmed Gese's view completely: Atonement has a cosmic meaning already in early Judaism (cf. *Jub*. 6:2), and the atoning cult in the temple is oriented to the preservation and renewal of the cosmos (cf. *Jub*. 1:29; 4:26). God effects this renewal through Christ's sacrifice and

resurrection, and it finds its eschatological fulfillment in the release of all creatures and the whole creation from the curse of futility (cf. Rom. 8:18–21; Col. 3:3–4). All the angelic powers who learn to pray to the exalted Christ as the *κοσμοκράτωρ* have a share in reconciliation (cf. Rev. 5:6–13), while Satan and his angels remain estranged and go to meet their final judgment of destruction (cf. Rev. 12:7–9; 20:1–3, 7–15 with 1 Cor. 6:3; 15:23–27; Col. 2:15; Eph. 6:12).

1.2.4 It is scarcely possible to interpret the Christ event more comprehensively and boldly than against the background of the Jerusalem atonement and temple tradition. As the originally cultic atonement tradition is applied to God's act in Christ on Golgotha, Jesus's sacrificial death and resurrection appear as divine saving acts of cosmic significance. There are no pre-Christian or non-Christian elements in Colossians 1:15–20 that might require added Christian correction or clarification, as some earlier interpreters assumed. The hymn reflects the same Jewish Christian thought world as Romans 3:25–26, and it presents in the bold language of worshipful praise the amazing breadth of the Christology of the Pauline school. The fact that the hymn is not attested until the Letter to the Colossians should not tempt us to regard its Christology as post-Pauline; this Christology belongs to the very tradition that Paul himself regarded highly.

It is no accident that in Colossians 1:14 the author has presented the hymn under the heading of *ἀπολύτρωσις*, "redemption" (cf. Rom. 3:24). This suggests that the reconciliation of the universe effected by God in and through Christ is the end-time counterpart to the redemption of Israel from slavery to guilt in Egypt (cf. Exod. 15:13; Ps. 74:2; and B. Janowski, "Tempel und Schöpfung," 62ff.). According to verse 14, this *ἀπολύτρωσις* becomes effective in the "forgiveness of sins" (*ἄφεσις τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν*) that the church of Jesus Christ is already receiving.

2 The author reminds his addressees of the Christ hymn because by it the church can reject all religious claims that have nothing to do with the church's affiliation to Christ, "the firstborn of the dead." Instead of correcting the hymn theologically, the author embeds it in the call to thanksgiving (Col. 1:11–14), which reminds the church of the redemption it received in baptism (cf. Col. 2:12–15; 3:10–11). After this he also tries to address the problematic situation of the Christians of Colossae (and Laodicea; cf. Col. 2:1; 4:15–16) from the perspective of the hymn's resounding confession of Christ.

2.1 Our letter places special emphasis on the fact that God “has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son” (Col. 1:13); by virtue of the atoning work of Christ the addressees are already reconciled (1:22). Colossians 2:11–15 reminds the readers of their baptism and interprets baptism as the reception of “the circumcision of Christ” and as dying and rising with Christ in faith. Through the death and resurrection of Christ, God has effected forgiveness for the members of the church by “erasing the record (*χειρόγραφον*) that stood against us with its legal demands,” namely, the Torah, which convicts people of sin by its demands (cf. Rom. 3:19–20). Through Christ God has also disempowered the angelic powers who threaten his creation (cf. Rom. 8:38–39; Eph. 1:21; 2:2; 6:12), so that they are led as captives in his triumphal procession (cf. Col. 2:15 with Eph. 4:8).

The line of attack in this argument becomes clear from Colossians 2:8–23: The Christians in Colossae and Laodicea are to be protected against those who would entice them to untruth “through philosophy (*φιλοσοφία*) and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe (*τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου*), and not according to Christ” (Col. 2:8). No one who delights in the groveling “worship of angels” (*θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων*) and is puffed up with visions of seeing or entering heaven should be allowed to pass judgment on the members of the church “in matters of food and drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or sabbaths” (Col. 2:16), thus cheating them of their prize (cf. Col. 2:18 with Phil. 3:14).

2.1.1 The precise interpretation of the opposition faced by the Colossian Christians is heavily disputed (cf. C. E. Arnold, *The Colossian Syncretism* [1995]). Following G. Bornkamm’s 1948 essay “Die Häresie des Kolosserbriefes” (repr. in *Das Ende des Gesetzes: Paulusstudien*, BEvT 16 [1952], 139–56), a whole series of interpreters have assumed that the Colossians were threatened by a *syncretistic Christian heresy*. Thus, for example, E. Schweizer considers the “Colossian philosophy” to be a type of Pythagoreanism (*Colossians*, 125–34). In addition to baptism and the confession of Christ, the adherents of this philosophy maintained a mystery rite and recommended special precautions over against the heavenly powers, in order to ensure the ascent of the soul to the upper world. Such people identified the heavenly powers with the “elements of the world” (*τὰ*

στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου) such as water, fire, air, and earth, of which humanity and the world are made, according to ancient thinking (cf. G. Delling, s.v. *στοιχεῖον* A.3.a–c, *TDNT* 7:672–75). The powers also included the countless demons that fill the atmosphere. In order to escape their power, "one must pay honor to the gods and, in the afternoon at least, to the heroes (angels) as well. One must undertake purificatory baths and forego certain foods and kinds of meat, as well as sexual intercourse" (Schweizer, *Colossians*, 132). According to this interpretation, the Letter to the Colossians seeks in its teaching about Christ to build a dam against the syncretistic superstition that claimed that for the sake of their eternal salvation, even Christians had to respect the heavenly powers, right down to their basic daily routines of eating and drinking, work and rest, and sexuality.

2.1.2 Historically, Schweizer's interpretation suffers from vagueness in the reconstruction of the Colossian philosophy; in particular the criticism of Christians regarding "festivals, new moons, or sabbaths" (Col. 2:16) goes completely uninterpreted. A second interpretation therefore deserves consideration that does not suffer from the same deficiencies. According to N. T. Wright ("Poetry and Theology," 463–64, and idem, *Colossians and Philemon* [1991], 23ff.), the author of our letter intended to warn his addressees not about a Christian heresy but about people who wanted to make the (Gentile) Christians in Colossae into full members of the synagogue. A similar opinion is shared by J. D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* (1996) 33–35. In fact, this view fits the wording of Colossians 2 better than the first model that assumed an internal Christian heresy. Diaspora Judaism exerted a great influence in Asia Minor until the third century AD (cf. the early third century inscription from Aphrodisias, about 50 km/30 miles west of Colossae, in J. Reynolds and R. Tannenbaum, *Jews and Godfearers at Aphrodisias: Greek Inscriptions with Commentary* [1987]; cf. also L. H. Feldman, "Proselytes and 'Sympathizers' in the Light of the New Inscriptions from Aphrodisias," *REJ* 148 [1989]: 265–305). Jewish writers such as the author of 4 Maccabees (cf. 5:22; 7:9–10), Aristeas, Philo, and Josephus show that Hellenistic Judaism occasionally called its own teachings a (true) *φιλοσοφία* (cf. O. Michel, s.v. *φιλοσοφία* B, *TDNT* 9:179–84). It should also be remembered that the term *στοιχεῖα* can denote the "basic elements" of doctrine (cf. Heb. 5:12) and that Judaism too can refer to the four elements

of the world as *τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου* (cf. e.g. Wis. 7:17; 19:18; 4 Macc. 12:13; and G. Delling, s.v. *στοιχεῖον* A.3.d, *TDNT* 7:675–76). These world elements were not understood as religious beings, but their power was nevertheless uncontested (cf. Wis. 19:18). Occasionally also constellations of stars and signs of the zodiac could be designated as *στοιχεῖα* in Jewish sources (cf. *T. Sol.* 15:5; 18:1–42); the *Treatise of Shem* (*OTP* 1:473–86) attests the threatening power that people attributed to them in parts of early Judaism, despite *Jubilees* 12:16–18.

If one relates Colossians 2:8 and 16–23 to the teachings of Judaism in Asia Minor, then all the characteristics of the Colossian "philosophy" fall into place. This holds even for the expression *θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων* or "worship of the angels" in Colossians 2:18. This finds a close parallel in the expression תשבחות כול אלוהים, "the praises of all the gods," in the seventh *Song of the Sabbath Sacrifice* from Qumran (cf. 4Q403 frag. 1 I, 30–II, 16, esp. I, 31–33, in *DSSSE* 818–21). The Qumran expression probably means not simply the praise that these "gods" or "angels" offer to God, but rather "the angels' [own], worthiness of veneration and praise, which then comes to them from the earthly congregation" (A. M. Schwemer, "Gott als König und seine Königsherrschaft in den Sabbatliedern aus Qumran," in *Königsherrschaft Gottes und himmlischer Kult*, ed. M. Hengel and A. M. Schwemer [1991], 45–118, esp. 100). The difficult expression ἃ ἑόρακεν ἐμβατεύων, "entering into what he has seen," in Colossians 2:18 also makes good sense from the perspective of Psalm 103:19–22 and the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*. These texts not only open a window to the angels' worship in the heavenly sanctuary, but also allow the earthly congregation to participate in it: "In the Sabbath Song cycle the congregation joins the angels in celebrating the heavenly worship service with praise, thereby 'raising' themselves into the heavenly temple" (ibid., 76).

Wright's approach opens our eyes to small Christian house churches in Colossae and Laodicea whose members were fascinated by the teachings and liturgy of the Diaspora synagogues and also unsettled in their own faith. In Colossians 1:15–20 the author reminds them of Christ as the head of the church and the entire cosmos. By holding fast to him, they can survive in competition with the synagogue.

2.2 According to Colossians 1:27 and 2:2, "God's mystery" (*τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ*) is embodied in Christ. This means two things:

2.2.1 First and foremost, God's mystery concerns the wonderful fact that God's salvific plan of bringing redemption to the world from sin and death, hidden from eternity past, has now been "revealed" through Paul's gospel of Christ.

One can call this form of presentation a "revelation pattern" with N. A. Dahl ("Form-Critical Observations on Early Christian Preaching," in idem, *Jesus in the Memory of the Early Church* [1976], 30–36, esp. 32). Similarly, in German one can speak of a *Revelationsschema* (so D. Lührmann, *Das Offenbarungsverständnis bei Paulus und in paulinischen Gemeinden* [1965], 124ff.).

However, in using such terms one must realize that they refer not to a fixed type of text or a particular *Gattung*, but only to a *figure of argumentation* that appears in various places in the New Testament (e.g., Rom. 16:25–26; Eph. 3:4–5, 9–10; 2 Tim. 1:9–10; 1 Pet. 1:12). This argument contrasts the salvation-historical “now” of the Christ revelation with the earlier times when this revelation was still hidden. For more on the problem, including Jewish analogies to this “preaching scheme,” see M. N. A. Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery* (1990), 208ff.

2.2.2 At the same time, the formulation about God’s mystery signals an eschatological reserve: As long as Christ, the Lord and head of the church and of the whole world, is only proclaimed and accepted by faith in the persecuted church but is not yet seen, the final fulfillment is still to come. Until then, the glory to which the universe is destined is revealed “only through the Church . . . in the concealment of θλίψεις, Col. 1:24f.; Eph. 3:13” (G. Bornkamm, *TDNT* 4:822). The mystery which is Christ experiences only its hidden epiphany in the preaching of the apostle. It is therefore not without good reason that Christ is called “the hope of glory” (ἡ ἐλπὶς τῆς δόξης) in Colossians 1:27 (cf. also 1:23). Only by remaining unshaken in their faith and holding fast to the hope the gospel has given them until the day when Christ is revealed to the world will the Christians be able to live together with him in end-time glory (cf. Col. 3:4 with Rom. 8:19, 21).

2.3 In conclusion, according to all the above, *the proclamation of Christ in Colossians stands in complete continuity with the Pauline teaching tradition*. It is not to be judged a departure from the apostle’s genuine thinking, but rather shows how thematically rich and comprehensive was the Christology that he and his pupils advocated.

3 In the *Letter to the Ephesians*, “the cosmic Christology of Colossians has been developed into an unpolemical doctrine of the church,” according to the telling formulation of E. Lohse (*Die Entstehung des Neuen Testaments* [1991[5]], 59). The letter’s hovering, associative style clearly differentiates it from the main Pauline letters. Nevertheless, this is “not the style of a counterfeiter, but of a theological interpreter of the Pauline Letters” (M. Gese, *Vermächtnis*, 101). Because Ephesians was originally a circular letter to churches Paul had founded in Asia Minor that was then expanded into a summation of the Pauline school tradition (see above), it is as easy to explain its similarity to Colossians as it is to explain its new emphasis on the idea of the church, which was only hinted at in Colossians 1:18 and 2:19.

3.1 The ecclesial tendency of Ephesians becomes apparent already in its opening eulogy (1:3–14). The famous philologist E. Norden has referred to this as “the most monstrous conglomerate sentence I have ever encountered in the Greek language” (*Agnostos Theos* [1956[4]], 253n1). Following the eulogy is an extensive petition (1:15–23). Both texts praise the mystery of God’s “economy” or “plan” of salvation (*οἰκονομία*, 1:10; cf. 3:2, 9). The plan is that the cosmos should find its salvation and order in Christ, an event that has already occurred for the letter’s addressees. The preexistent Son of God (cf. 1:4) has established this salvific order by measuring the universe from its deepest earthly depths in his “descent” to its highest heights in his “ascent” and by filling it now with his authority (cf. 4:7–10). This authority is announced to the Gentile nations through the gospel (cf. 3:6–12) and is testified to by the church before the earthly and heavenly world (see below).

In Ephesians 1:20–22 Christ’s dominion over the angelic powers that fill the cosmos is seen as a fulfillment of Psalms 110:1 and 8:7 (ET 8:6). This recalls 1 Corinthians 15:25–27 and corresponds to Hebrews 1:13 and 2:5–7. By contrast, the application of Psalm 68:19 (ET 68:18; LXX 67:19) to Christ’s ascent to heaven and descent to earth in Ephesians 4:8, which implicitly lays the foundation for the preaching of the gospel by the apostles and evangelists (see below), is unique in the New Testament.

3.2 The center of the saving event that provides the foundation for the church is also, according to Ephesians, *Jesus’s atoning death and resurrection* (cf. 1:7; 2:4–7, 14–18; 5:2). This occurred when the addressees of the letter were still sinners (cf. 2:1–3, 11–13 with Rom. 5:6). But when Christ came and laid the foundation for the preaching of salvation through his act of atonement, the readers received “redemption,” *ἀπολύτρωσις*. This involves the forgiveness of sins (cf. Eph. 1:7 with Col. 1:14) and entitlement to a heavenly inheritance (cf. Eph. 1:14, 18; 4:30). Ephesians 2:1–22 spells this out in more detail.

3.2.1 In Ephesians 2:1–10 the idea of *justification* is taken up (although the precise language of *δικαιοσύνη* is not used) in the same way as it had been handed down before Paul and by Paul in the context of baptism (cf. 1 Cor. 6:11; Rom. 6:15–23). The addressees, who were formerly “dead” before God in their sins and evil desires, have found salvation through faith by God’s grace and love alone, apart from their own works or anything about which they might boast. In baptism (cf. 4:5) they have been made

alive together with Christ (2:5) and have in him a share in eternal life and his heavenly rule. Thus re-created, they now exist before God and humanity to do precisely those “good works, which God prepared beforehand” for them to do (2:10; cf. *4 Ezra* 8:52). The author forgoes any further explanation because he presupposes that “his readers are familiar with Pauline thought and perhaps even know some Pauline letters” (U. Luz, *Der Brief an die Epheser* [1998], 133).

3.2.2 The christological expositions in Ephesians 2:11–22 are also characteristic of the letter both christologically and ecclesiologically.

At first glance this passage, permeated with Old Testament allusions, seems opaque. And it does not become any more transparent when scholars claim to find a hymn about a redeemer and peacemaker cited by the author of Ephesians and commented upon by him in 2:14–18. Such scholars typically assume the familiar scheme according to which the author supposedly took up gnostic speculation about the redeemer who reconciles heaven and earth and angels, humanity, and God and then applied this to Christ’s redemptive act, thus setting it within proper theological constraints (cf., e.g., J. Gnilka, *Der Epheserbrief* [1971], 147ff., and K. Wengst, *Christologische Formeln und Lieder des Urchristentums* [1972], 181ff.; similarly P. Pokorný, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Epheser* [1992], 117ff., and H. Hübner, *An die Epheser* [1997], 180–81). This exegesis has rightly been abandoned by R. Schnackenburg (*Ephesians* [1991], 103ff.) and U. Luz (*Epheser*, 135ff.). Ephesians 2:11–22 is actually a prose piece that takes up the reconciliation tradition of Colossians 1:18–20 and the expression “peace of Christ” from Colossians 3:15 and presents a *messianic midrash on Isaiah 57:19*. The divine work of reconciliation accomplished in Jesus’s sacrifice is the end-time event of fulfillment in which the promises of the advent of the messianic “Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:5–6 [ET 9:6–7]) and “bringer of good news” who announces peace and salvation (Isa. 52:7) have been fulfilled. According to Micah 5:4 (ET 5:5), the Messiah’s name is “peace” (*εἰρήνη*, שָׁלוֹם [*šālôm*]), and “peace” is also the name of the Messiah in some later Jewish texts (cf. Str-B 1:64); compare Ephesians 2:14, “For he is our peace.” Christ’s appearance thus fulfills the word of the Lord in Isaiah 57:19, “Peace, peace, to the far and the near,” clearly echoed in Ephesians 2:17, “So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.” Peace consists of the fact that Gentiles and Jews together form the “one new man/humanity” (RSV/NRSV) or the body of Christ (2:15–16).

If one follows the argument of Ephesians 2:11–22 in detail, the following picture results. The addressees were once Gentiles (τὰ ἔθνη) and therefore those “far” from God, according to the early Jewish interpretation of Isaiah 57:19. As the uncircumcised, they were separated from God’s people Israel and their promises and were considered to be “without God” (ἄθεοι, Eph. 2:12) and without hope of salvation (cf. 1 Thess. 4:5 and, e.g., Philo, *Creation* 170; *Flight* 114). But now they have been brought near to God by the atonement effected through Jesus’s blood (Eph. 2:13). Jesus Christ is the Messiah of Isaiah 9:5–6 (ET 9:6–7) for whom Israel had long hoped (cf. Eph. 1:12). His name is “our peace” (cf. 2:14 with Mic. 5:4 [ET

5:5]). He has established the peace God promised in Isaiah 57:19 through his atoning death, thereby accomplishing three things. First, Christ abolished the law (Eph. 2:14–15). The law by its commandments and ordinances did not only form a “fence” (*φραγμός*) and a “dividing wall” (*μεσότοιχον*) between Gentiles and Jews (for this expression, see *Let. Aris.* 139, 142, and *m. Abot* 1:1); by enflaming sinful passions it also formed the basis of the “enmity” (*ἔχθρα*) of sinners against God (cf. Rom. 7:5). Second, Christ has set aside this enmity between God and sinners (cf. Rom. 5:10; 8:7). Third, in and through his own self Christ has created one new humanity out of Gentile and Jew to serve God in freedom (Eph. 2:15; cf. Col. 3:10; Gal. 3:28) and has founded the church as his body (Eph. 2:16). Jesus’s coming into the world can therefore be understood as the appearance of the evangelist of peace announced in Isaiah 52:7 and as the fulfillment of the divine promise of peace in Isaiah 57:19 for those near and far, Jews and Gentiles. Both now have “access” (*προσαγωγή*) to God the Father through Christ (cf. Rom. 5:2), and the Gentile believers are now fellow members of God’s household together with the *ἅγιοι*, the “holy ones” or “saints.”

The *ἅγιοι* of Ephesians 2:19 can be understood either as the angelic “holy ones” from the perspective of 1QS 11:7–8, 1QH 3:22, and Colossians 1:12, or as Christian believers or “saints” in keeping with the usage elsewhere in Ephesians (cf. 1:18; 3:8, 18; 4:12; 5:3; 6:18). If the latter is the case, then the “saints” are probably to be understood as the Jewish Christians who belonged to the church before the current stream of Gentiles joining the church.

Jewish and Gentile Christians now belong together to the church founded by Christ. According to Ephesians 2:20–22, the church is the temple whose foundation is formed by the apostles and (Christian) prophets. Its “cornerstone” (*ἀκρογωνιαῖος*) is laid by God himself through the sending of Jesus Christ (cf. Isa. 28:16).

From Isaiah 28:16 (and 1 Cor. 3:11) it can be seen that the *ἀκρογωνιαῖος* of Ephesians 2:20 and 1 Peter 2:6 is not to be identified with the capstone, that is, “the ‘final stone’ in a building, probably set over the gate,” as J. Jeremias thought (*TDNT* 1:792). It is rather the “cornerstone” that completes the foundation and gives the entire building stability and measure (cf. J. Roloff, *Die Kirche im Neuen Testament* [1993], 238n40).

3.2.3 The Gentiles and Jews who believe together in Jesus Christ have experienced the outbreak of the messianic peace for which the whole world yearns.

In the church of Gentiles and Jews, the two groups of people that previously lived in strict separation and threatening enmity now form a living fellowship. There are many ancient examples of hatred between Gentiles and Jews, for example, 3 Maccabees 3:4, the letter of the emperor Claudius to the citizens of Alexandria from AD 41 (*P. Lond.* 1912; cf. A. S. Hunt and C. C. Edgar, *Select Papyri*, LCL, vol. 2 [1934], no. 212, pp. 78–89), and additional Jewish material (cf. Str-B 4:353–414). Ephesians 2:11–22 clearly rejects all Gentile Christian efforts at separation from Israel (cf. Rom. 11:13ff.). Ephesians 2:19 and 3:6 expressly emphasize that the Gentiles who were once despised by the Jews now in and through Christ have a full share in the salvific privileges of Israel and are fellow heirs of the promise. These statements show that Ephesians, like Colossians, speaks to a situation in which the Christians in the province of Asia were still a small minority community that stood over against the established synagogues. Because the Christians for the most part were recruited from the circle of the Gentile "Godfearers," the converts needed to be made sure that by their conversion to Christianity they did not lose the Jewish salvific privileges that they admired, but rather became participants in them. Our text indicates that the author was a *Jewish Christian* well acquainted with the Old Testament who knew how to take up and interpret the Christology of Colossians 1:15–20 to make it speak to the situation of all the Pauline churches throughout Asia Minor.

3.3 As in Colossians 1:18, Christ is called the "head" (κεφαλή) of the church also in Ephesians 1:22, 4:15, and 5:23. This designation of Christ will be investigated further in chapter 25 (cf. below, 461, §2). It expresses two things. First and foremost, it designates the position of cosmic dominion that God wills for the exalted Christ, who fills the universe with his power. At the same time, it expresses the essential relationship of Christ to the church. The church is his body and is defined by him.

3.4 The author prevents the enthusiastic absolutizing of his comprehensive christological (and ecclesiological) statements by the following points. God has indeed exalted Christ as head of the church and ruler of the universe in accordance with Psalm 8:7 (ET 8:6) (cf. Eph. 1:20–22; 4:10). But the God-willed summation or ἀνακεφαλαίωσις of the universe in Christ (1:10) is presently acknowledged only in the realm of the church and still needs to be carried out cosmically. The church must therefore not only testify to the faith on earth, but must also make the heavenly powers aware of the wisdom with which God has reordered the universe (3:10–11). Just as the head is in the battle, so also the body is still in the battle against the principalities and powers that are in rebellion against the lordship of Christ (6:12). In Colossians and Ephesians there is a recognizable "modification of an originally eschatological-temporal thought into a spherical thought" (G. Bornkamm, "Die Hoffnung im Kolosserbrief," in idem, *Geschichte und Glaube*, Zweiter Teil, *Gesammelte Aufsätze* 4, BEvT 53 [1971], 206–13, esp. 212). Nevertheless, the overall eschatology of Ephesians remains Pauline, inasmuch as it differentiates the present

lordship of Christ and the present saved condition of the church from the completion still to come (cf. 4:30, and above, 339–41, §4.5.2).

3.5 Even if it takes some effort to understand the christological train of thought of Ephesians, its creation-theological breadth and its ecclesial orientation remain impressive. There can be no doubt that in Ephesians the traditional *Christology of reconciliation* handed down from Paul, and with it the idea of justification, are highly regarded. In Ephesians this Christology is more decisively related to the one universal church composed of Gentiles and Jews who form Christ's body than it is in the main Pauline letters. Christology and ecclesiology form a unity without obscuring the proper order: the head defines the body and not vice versa. The entire presentation is embedded within a worldview that allows neither a christological nor an ecclesial triumphalism to arise. *The Christology of Ephesians therefore does not deserve to be criticized but deserves to be valued as a legitimate development of Pauline teaching*.

4 The three *Pastoral Letters* present a linguistic and material unity but differ in style and expression fundamentally from all other Pauline letters. They are based not only on the Pauline letters, but also on the synoptic and Johannine tradition. However their preliminary form is to be characterized, in their present version they present doctrinal writings of the apostle for the generation of pupils who would be active after him. 1 Timothy and Titus teach about the nature, order, and maintenance of the church, whereas 2 Timothy is intended to be a doctrinally rich testament of the apostle lying in prison. The three letters defend the person of the apostle against (Christian) attacks (cf. 2 Tim. 4:3–18) and work out the meaning of his teaching for the building up and maintenance of the church. They do this at a time when the church has to establish itself in the world for the long term and stand its ground against it, while also countering the internal threat through heretics who have fallen away from the received faith (cf. 1 Tim. 1:6–7, 20; 5:13; 2 Tim. 1:15; 2:18; 3:1–9) by following the doctrinal views of "what is falsely called knowledge (γνῶσις)" (cf. 1 Tim. 6:20).

The historical and theological intentions of the three letters can therefore be all the better understood the closer one relates them to the Christian Gnosticism that is first attested in original texts from the second century onward and is opposed by the church fathers. This means that their arrangement into doctrinal letters cannot have begun before the last decade of the first century.

4.1 The Christology of the three letters rests upon the gospel of Paul and takes up the great motifs of the sending, redemption, justification, dominion, and parousia of Jesus Christ. It is characteristic of this Christology that it combines Pauline tradition with pre-Pauline and post-Pauline doctrinal material and raises this to the level of a normative doctrinal "deposit" (*παραθήκη*) which is to be esteemed by the church, preserved intact, and handed down (cf. 1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:12, 14).

A. Lindemann (*Paulus im ältesten Christentum* [1979], 142–43) has tellingly demonstrated that the author of the Pastoral Letters had the goal of "bringing the 'legacy' of Paul near to his ecclesial present." From this goal it follows that "the 'dogmatizing' of the theological thinking in the pastoral epistles" is not necessarily a falling away from the Pauline teaching but is "at least also a consequence of the *Sitz im Leben* or simply of the literary form of the Pastoral Letters." Beginning with this insight, it is possible and necessary to take a critical stance against the negative evaluation of the Christology of our letters which has become usual since the article by H. Windisch ("Zur Christologie der Pastoralbriefe," *ZNW* 34 [1935]: 213–38, esp. 236–37) and has been taken to the extreme by N. Brox in his commentary (*Die Pastoralbriefe* [1969], 165–66):

> What remains surprising about the Pastoral Letters is that in the post-Pauline period they offer a pre-Pauline Christology that never breaks through to the statements of Paul. An exclusively "archaic" christological tradition is used [which] . . . is not yet enriched by Pauline thought. A church (or an author) with such explicit Pauline pretensions is only minimally influenced by Paul in the formulated material of Christology from liturgy, preaching, and catechesis that the letters fall back on. The letters therefore attest a Christology that was already superseded by other statements at the time of the writing. The conservative, doctrinaire character of this ecclesial thought could hardly show itself more eloquently. Here that which was once formulated and acknowledged is retained, passed on, taken up, but not interpreted and expanded.

This misjudgment is countered by H. Stettler. She rightly points out that what mattered to the author was not original statements but the doctrinal tradition entrusted to the church as a whole. According to her analysis of all the christological texts in the three letters, the author self-consciously fell back on doctrinal formulations which he himself helped to coin and which he used in his missionary instruction: "What we encounter in these letters is so to speak the summary of the lesson in teaching formulas that stand at the end of the lesson, whose content the students must hold fast unconditionally. . . . The author thereby accomplishes a double feat: the Pauline theology is preserved in its entirety and is taken over into the post-Pauline period, and this theology is set within the framework of the early Christian tradition which surrounds it" (H. Stettler, *Die Christologie der Pastoralbriefe*, 301).

The author's work has contributed decisively to preserving the Pauline inheritance for the church; in the framework established by the three letters, the Pauline tradition could outlast times of criticism and misunderstanding.

4.2 The following examples best illustrate the catechetical quality and content of the christological formulas in the Pastoral Letters.

4.2.1 In *1 Timothy 2:5–6*, as in 1 Corinthians 8:6, the Shema (cf. Deut. 6:4) is christologically expanded into a two-part formula and supplemented

by the statement that when Jesus gave himself as a sacrifice, he also provided for the "testimony" to it. The christological expansion involves the reformulation of Jesus's ransom saying from Mark 10:45 (Matt. 20:28). The text runs:

> [5]For there is one God;
>
> there is also one mediator between God and humankind,
>
> Christ Jesus, himself human,
>
> [6]who gave himself a ransom for all
>
> —(thereby establishing) the testimony at the right time. (NRSV modified)

The formula says that the one God has revealed himself to the world in a single mediator and is also accessible through him alone. This mediator is the Christ bearing the name Jesus. He became a human being and gave his life as a ransom for all sinners that will be effective in the final judgment. Through his sacrifice he has also established the apostolic "testimony" that makes God's saving deed in and through Jesus Christ known to the entire world, so that all people can "be saved and . . . come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4).

1 Timothy 2:5–6, which speaks of Christ Jesus as the *ἄνθρωπος . . . ὁ δοὺς ἑαυτὸν ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων*, incorporates Mark 10:45 (par. Matt. 20:28) into a Christian confession. As already noted (see above, 139–40, §7.3.2.2), the Semitic wording of the original Jesus saying is reformulated here in such a way that the central statement remains intact but can also be understood by those Greek-speaking Christians who still lack any exact knowledge of the Old Testament–inspired language of Jesus and the Gospels. Hence the Markan expression "the Son of Man" (*ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*) becomes the semantically correct (cf. Rom. 5:15, 19) "man" or "human being" (*ἄνθρωπος*); Mark's translation Greek "to give his life/soul" (*δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ*) becomes "who gave himself" (*ὁ δοὺς ἑαυτόν*); the simplex term for a "ransom," *λύτρον* in *λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν*, used by Mark in a way that presupposes Isaiah 43:3 (cf. MT כֹּפֶר, LXX *ἄλλαγμα*), is replaced by the rarer but Hellenistically more pleasing compound term *ἀντίλυτρον*; and instead of Mark's exclusively understood expression "the many" (*οἱ πολλοί*), which goes back to Isaiah 53:11–12, we have once again, semantically correct (cf. Rom. 5:15, 18, 19), the term "all" (*πάντες*).

The teaching formula in 1 Timothy 2:5–6 goes back to the Pauline school. It combines two essential features of church instruction that were part of the teaching already at the time of Paul: the instruction of Gentiles into a monotheistic confession (cf. 1 Thess. 1:9) and the teaching about

Jesus's self-surrender for all sinners (cf. Gal. 1:4; 2:20; 2 Cor. 5:14; Eph. 5:2, 25). The direct adoption of a Jesus saying into instruction and confession is already quite conceivable in the case of Paul himself (cf. 1 Cor. 11:23–25), and at the end of the first century, when the Synoptic Gospels and the Fourth Gospel were already available in fixed form, it is not surprising at all. Titus 2:14 also seems to go back to Mark 10:45 and to interpret the work of Christ from Psalm 130:8 (LXX 129:8). The fact that the Gospel tradition was known to the Pastoral Letters is shown by the mention of the "sound words of Jesus Christ" in 1 Timothy 6:3, the citation of the Gospel tradition as Scripture (cf. 1 Tim. 5:18b, "The laborer deserves to be paid," with Luke 10:7 [par. Matt. 10:10]), and the reference to "Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession" in 1 Timothy 6:13 (cf. John 18:36–37). 1 Timothy 2:5–6 encourages readers to regard highly the saving truth of the one God's exclusive revelation and saving act in and through the one Christ, and to respect the fact that the apostolic testimony to Christ goes back to Jesus's own foundation.

4.2.2 *1 Timothy 3:16b* offers, next to Philippians 2:6–11 (see above, 325–26, §4.2.7; 338–39, §4.5.1) and Colossians 1:15–20 (see above), a third example of a christological hymn in the New Testament. It sings of the truth of faith opened up through the gospel, *τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον*, "the mystery of godliness" (NRSV: "of our religion"; cf. Col. 1:26–27; Eph. 3:4–5), upon which the church is founded:

> Without any doubt (lit. "confessedly," ὁμολογουμένως), the mystery of our religion is great:
>
> He was revealed in flesh,
> vindicated in spirit,
> seen by angels,
> proclaimed among the nations,
> believed in throughout the world,
> taken up in glory.

Because the replacement of the introductory relative pronoun ὅς (who) by θεός in the Majority Text is certainly secondary, the text needs no correction. It is carefully formulated in six lines, each of which begins with an aorist passive verb. The three passives, *ἐφανερώθη* ("he was revealed"), *ἐδικαιώθη* ("he

was vindicated” or “justified”), and ἀνελήμφθη (“he was taken up”), in the first, second, and sixth lines, are to be interpreted as divine passives; other agents such as the apostles and the angels are implied (or stated) in the remaining lines. The sense lines are arranged in three pairs according to a chiastic scheme: earth-heaven / heaven-earth / earth-heaven. The first and the last line form an *inclusio* (cf. 1 Pet. 3:18b), and the whole piece seeks to express a totality: Christ’s lordship and position of honor have been revealed in both heaven and earth. The text’s closed form suggests that it is not just a fragment but a complete hymn. J. Jeremias saw it as a three-member “throne accession hymn” (*Die Briefe an Timotheus und Titus* [1981[2]], 27–29), thereby founding a school of thought. Jeremias proceeded from the assumption of a reconstructed ancient Egyptian throne accession ritual by E. Norden (*Die Geburt des Kindes* [1924], 116–28), which was supposed to have had three steps: the exaltation of the king to the position of God, his presentation before the gods, and his enthronement, that is, his investiture with the rights of a ruler. 1 Timothy 3:16 appeared to be a Christian analogy to this. Unfortunately, however, Norden’s proposal is a *fata morgana* without sufficient basis in the Egyptian texts (see the communications of H. Brunner to G. Friedrich in *ZTK* 80 [1983]: 150). Because 1 Timothy 3:16 also has no connection worth mentioning to the kingship of Yahweh hymns (Pss. 47; 93; 96; 97; 99), the designation “throne accession hymn” is problematic. While this Christ hymn does have a background in Psalm 110:1, Daniel 7:13–14, and Isaiah 53:11, it sings not only of the event of Christ’s epiphany in the heavenly world, but also of his appearance and proclamation on the earth. Although the expression “he was revealed in flesh” (ὃς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί) in the first line can be interpreted in terms of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, from the perspective of Matthew 28:17; Mark 16:12, 14; John 21:1, 14; Acts 10:40; and Ignatius, *Smyrnaeans* 3:3, it is more plausible to think of the bodily appearances of the risen one (H. Stettler, *Christologie*, 93, following C. Spicq, *Les Épîtres pastorales*, vol. 1 [1969[4]], 472). In the Septuagint version of Isaiah 53:11, which departs from the Masoretic Text, the expression “to justify the just one who serves many well” (δικαιῶσαι δίκαιον εὖ δουλεύοντα πολλοῖς) refers to God’s installation of the Servant into his heavenly rights. Accordingly, the allusion to this in the hymn’s second line, “he was justified/vindicated in spirit” (ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι), should also be interpreted in terms of the installation of Christ into his heavenly rights as ruler (so also John 16:10). The third expression, “seen by angels” (ὤφθη ἀγγέλοις), refers to the appearance of the exalted Christ to the angels in the heavenly world (cf. Dan. 7:13–14; Rev. 5:6–13). The expression “proclaimed among the nations” (ἐκηρύχθη ἐν ἔθνεσιν) can be referred to the apostolic mission to the nations in the light of Matthew 24:14, 28:19, and Colossians 1:23b. The fifth line, “believed in throughout the world” (ἐπιστεύθη ἐν κόσμῳ), means that the exalted Christ has found faith and recognition (cf. 1 Thess. 1:8; 2 Thess. 1:10; Rom. 1:8; Acts 20:21) in the world of the nations (cf. Matt. 28:19; Gal. 1:16; 2:8; Rom. 15:16). Finally, “taken up in glory” (ἀνελήμφθη ἐν δόξῃ) should be interpreted with reference to the ascension in the light of Acts 1:2, 11 and John 17:5.

If one understands 1 Timothy 3:16b as a Hellenistic Jewish Christian *Easter hymn*, then the result is a self-contained christological statement that is comparable with Colossians 1:15–20, 26–27: Christ was raised from the dead and has appeared in divine authority and new bodily existence before witnesses. In the realm of the spirit, that is, in the heavens, he is installed into those rights of rulership that he had renounced on earth. He was presented to the angels as ruler, and the apostolic preaching has made him known as such among the nations. He has been taken up into heavenly

glory and will return from there for his second epiphany according to 1 Timothy 6:14 and Titus 2:13. The manner of expression should be understood as liturgical, as was the case with Colossians 1:15–20 (see above). It describes the divine saving act upon and through Christ in the form of praise, and with the expressions “proclaimed among the nations” and “believed in throughout the world,” it takes up matters that are already a reality in the realm of the worshiping church, but must still be realized worldwide through the extension and completion of the mission to the nations. On the whole, one can understand 1 Timothy 3:16 as “carrying out the confession required in Romans 10:9 (cf. ὁμολογεῖν—ὁμολογουμένως)” (H. Stettler, *Christologie*, 107). In this way, the designation of the hymn as “the mystery of godliness” in 3:16a can also be explained without problem.

4.2.3 A few additional passages must be mentioned. Some consist only of a single line. In 2 Timothy 2:8 (cf. with Rom. 1:3–4) and Titus 2:14 (cf. with Gal. 1:4; 2:20) individual christological statements from the Pauline tradition are taken up, and in 1 Timothy 6:13 Christ is presented as the faithful witness (cf. Rev. 1:5) who “before Pontius Pilate made the good confession” (cf. John 18:37). However, the more extended statements in 2 Timothy 1:8–11 and Titus 3:1–7 once again involve central statements of the Pauline gospel and must therefore be considered here.

4.2.3.1 *2 Timothy 1:8–11* is consciously dependent upon Romans 1:16–17 and 3:21–28 and describes the content of the gospel entrusted to Paul by analogy to Ephesians 2:4–9. The saving of sinners was and is the gracious act of God alone. It was already settled “before the ages began” (2 Tim. 1:9) and has now been historically manifested “through the [first] appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus” (1:10). Through his gracious act God has abolished the death sentence and has brought eternal life and immortality (cf. 1 Cor. 15:42, 53). The prototype of the sinners who are shown mercy in these letters is the apostle himself (cf. 1 Tim. 1:16 with 1 Cor. 15:9). What is new in this text is the language of the first “epiphany” (ἐπιφανεία) of Christ, to which there is a corresponding second epiphany at the end of days, through which Christ as the end-time judge will completely establish the kingdom of God (cf. 2 Tim. 4:1, 8; 1 Tim. 6:14; Titus 2:13). The first epiphany is Jesus’s saving messianic appearance in the world (cf. Luke 1:79), which climaxes in his atoning death and his resurrection, while the second

epiphany is the parousia, which is called an ἐπιφανεία already in 2 Thessalonians 2:8.

In Hellenistic Greek the term ἐπιφανεία designates the helpful intervention of a deity on behalf of his worshipers. In Hellenistic Judaism the word is used together with the verb ἐπιφαίνεσθαι for the saving presence and activity of God on behalf of Israel and the Jews. This runs from the dividing of the Sea of Reeds and the presence of God in the pillar of cloud (cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 2.339; 3.310) to the demonstration of divine mercy in the forgiveness of sins (cf. 3 Macc. 2:19) and finally to special acts of deliverance for threatened Israelites (cf. 3 Macc. 5:51; 6:9). In the Pastoral Letters this Hellenistic Jewish usage is taken up and made christologically more precise: God acts on behalf of his end-time elect people (cf. Titus 2:14) in the person of Jesus. Through his first appearance salvation is established, and through his second it is completed. Between the two lies the time of testimony to the gospel. Christians persecuted on earth, headed by the apostles, look forward eagerly to Christ's second appearance (cf. 2 Tim. 4:1, 8). Unlike Matthew (cf. Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39), the genuine Pauline letters (cf. 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1, 8; 1 Cor. 15:23), and the letters of James and John (cf. James 5:7; 1 John 2:28), the Pastoral Letters avoid the expression παρουσία. The reason for this cannot be clearly determined.

4.2.3.2 *Titus 3:3–7* reminds readers in the style of a confession of sin of end-time salvation and its appropriation in baptism. At one time the Christians were totally mastered by sin and its effects (v. 3). But when God's goodness and loving-kindness appeared in the sending of Jesus (v. 4), they received salvation, not because of their own righteous works but according to God's mercy. God imparted salvation to Christians in baptism, which is effective by the power of the Holy Spirit as "the washing of rebirth and renewal" (v. 5). Through Jesus Christ God has richly poured out this Spirit upon the baptized (v. 6), so that as people who have been justified by God by his grace alone, they might become heirs of the promised eternal life (v. 7).

The text is not a fixed traditional piece but rather is closely integrated with the exhortation to already converted Christians beginning in Titus 3:1. It follows closely 1 Corinthians 6:1–11 in its content, without copying these verses. As a true saying to be preserved (v. 8), it recalls the event of justification, which is essential for the faith of the addressees. Its elements are presented in a manner typical of the Pastoral Letters, which no longer orient themselves to the Pauline Letters alone, but also to the language typical of Hellenistic Judaism and to the overall views of early Christianity. Verse 3 recalls the description of Gentile vices in Romans 1:18–32. But instead of speaking (as in v. 7) in a Pauline manner about "grace," verse 4 speaks of God's "goodness and loving kindness" (cf. Ps. 31:20 [ET 31:19]; Wis. 1:6; Josephus, *Ant*. 8.214; Philo, *Abr*. 203). Verse 5 proceeds from Deuteronomy 9:5, according to which Israel is not to attribute its inheritance (cf. v. 7) to its own righteousness. This verse also refers to baptism as "the washing of rebirth and renewal," effected through the Holy Spirit. This definition has close points of contact with Romans 6:4, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 2:12–13, 3:10, John 3:5, and Justin Martyr's view of baptism (cf. *1 Apology* 61.3, 10; 66.1; *Dialogue with Trypho* 138.2). The pouring out of the Spirit through Jesus Christ (v. 6) corresponds to John 16:7, Luke 24:49, and Acts 2:33. The language about being justified by God's

grace alone in verse 7 (δικαιωθέντες τῇ ἐκείνου χάριτι) agrees almost word for word with Romans 3:24 (δικαιούμενοι δωρεὰν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι), whereas the hope for an inheritance of eternal life is already spoken of in early Jewish texts (cf. *Pss. Sol*. 14:10; *1 En.* 40:9). On the whole, the Pauline tradition is carefully preserved, but it is also reformulated and enriched so that it can count as the general deposit of the faith for the church.

4.3 The individual christological traditions in the Pastoral Letters are held together within a large overarching construction. It begins before the ages existed with God's eternal plan of salvation that is to be enacted in and through Christ (cf. 2 Tim. 1:9–10; Titus 1:2) and leads on to the coming of Christ Jesus into the world (cf. 1 Tim. 1:15) or to his first "epiphany" (ἐπιφάνεια) on earth (cf. 1 Tim. 3:16; 2 Tim. 1:10). This stage begins with the birth of the savior from the seed of David (cf. 2 Tim. 2:8) and climaxes in Jesus's "good confession" before Pilate (cf. 1 Tim. 6:13) and his voluntary, atoning death "for us" (cf. 1 Tim. 2:6; Titus 2:14). From there the construction arches further to the resurrection (cf. 2 Tim. 2:8), exaltation, and glorification of Christ (cf. 1 Tim. 3:16); the pouring out of the Spirit through him (cf. Titus 3:6); and Christ's present work with believers (cf., e.g., 2 Tim. 2:11–13; Titus 2:14). The endpoint of the christological movement is the second epiphany of Christ, when he will hold judgment (cf. 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8, 14) and establish his "heavenly kingdom" (cf. 2 Tim. 4:18) on earth as well (cf. 2 Tim. 4:1).

The statement in 2 Timothy 4:1 about the dawning βασιλεία or "kingdom" that begins with the second epiphany of Jesus Christ can be understood from 1 Corinthians 15:23–28, in which case the initial rule of Christ precedes the eternal kingdom of God. Compare: "Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father" (1 Cor. 15:24). However, the expression "the kingdom of Christ and of God" in Ephesians 5:5 and the connection made to the ascension tradition in 1 Timothy 3:16b—compare ἀνελήμφθη ἐν δόξῃ, "taken up in glory," with Acts 1:2, 11 (ἀνελήμφθη, ὁ ἀναλημφθείς)—also yield the possibility of thinking of the βασιλεία promised to the people of God, which will be exercised jointly by God and by Christ (cf. Rev. 11:15).

4.4 In the Pastoral Letters God and Christ move considerably close together. One can see this in the christological expansion of the Shema in 1 Timothy 2:5–6 (see above) and in the christological titles. In Titus 2:13 Christ is called ὁ μέγας θεὸς καὶ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν, "our great God and Savior." The predicate σωτήρ, "savior," is applied to both God and Christ: According to 1 Timothy 1:1, 2:3, 4:10, Titus 1:3, 2:10, and 3:4, God is savior, while Christ is savior according to 2 Timothy 1:10, Titus 1:4, and 2:13. *Jesus Christ is therefore "God by nature," as also in John 1:1, 18, and 20:28*. But

this does not abolish the distinction between God and the Christ whom he has sent. Admittedly the Pastorals avoid the language of the “Son of God” (υἱὸς θεοῦ) and do not present God the Father and the Son of God over against one other. But they do make it clear that it is only Christ who became human (cf. 1 Tim. 2:5), made the good confession before Pilate (cf. 1 Tim. 6:13), and was taken up (again) into heavenly glory (cf. 1 Tim. 3:16). Over against Christ, God is “the King of the ages” and “the only God” (ὁ μόνος θεός, 1 Tim. 1:17), “the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords” (cf. 1 Tim. 6:15), and his will and decision determine the first and the second ἐπιφάνεια of Christ (cf. 2 Tim. 1:9–10; 1 Tim. 3:16b and 6:15). In their teaching about Christ, the Pastoral Letters go beyond Paul in terminology and content, *but they never trail in christological content behind the major Pauline letters*.

Paul himself often makes decisive christological and soteriological statements in the process of taking up and interpreting already existing pieces of tradition (cf., e.g., 1 Cor. 15:1–8 + 15:20–28; 2 Cor. 5:20–21; Rom. 3:24–26; etc.). This type of teaching is similarly visible in Colossians and Ephesians (cf. Col. 1:14–23 + 2:6–23 and Eph. 2:1–10 + 2:11–18). The Pastoral Letters stand in the same tradition. They extend the tradition and offer it as elements of the teaching entrusted to the church by Paul. They are not interested in novel, unique statements, but in the foundations of the faith, which they have preserved for posterity in their resistance against heretical Gnosticism.

5 If we ask now at the conclusion of this chapter about the meaning of *faith* in Colossians, Ephesians, and the three Pastoral Letters, we see agreement with the previous Pauline letters as well as accents that are new by comparison.

5.1 Among the *agreements* in these five letters with the earlier letters is the fact that the proclamation of the gospel remains foundational (cf. Col. 1:5, 23; Eph. 1:13; 3:6; 6:19; 2 Tim. 1:8–10; 4:2): Faith is indebted to the proclaimed word (cf. Col. 1:25–28; Eph. 1:13; 1 Tim. 4:6), which in turn goes back to God’s revelation and his appointing of the proclaimers (cf. Col. 1:23; Eph. 3:1–7; 1 Tim. 2:6; 2 Tim. 1:10–11); salvation is received through faith in Jesus Christ alone and not through works (cf. Col. 1:4; Eph. 1:15; 1 Tim. 3:13; 2 Tim. 3:15). For the Pauline school, the acute struggle over “justification” or δικαίωσις has been settled in favor of Paul, so that

justification has become a fixed part of the baptismal tradition (cf. Titus 3:3–7 with Eph. 2:4–10). In good Pauline fashion, “faith” or *πίστις* is understood as the gift of God in Ephesians 2:8, 3:16–17, and 1 Timothy 1:14. The Pauline triad of faith, love, and hope also appears in Colossians 1:4–5, and in complete agreement with the “faith working through love” of Galatians 5:6 (cf. also 1 Thess. 3:6; Philem. 5), faith is combined with love as its effective dimension in these letters (cf. Eph. 1:15; 3:17; 1 Tim. 1:14; 2:15; 4:12; 6:11; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:22; 3:10; Titus 2:2). Therefore in their language about faith, the letters of Paul’s pupils stand clearly in the Pauline tradition.

5.2 *New accents* emerge when the “one faith” (*μία πίστις*) or “the unity of the faith” (*ἡ ἑνότης τῆς πίστεως*) is elevated as the distinguishing mark of the church in Ephesians 4:5 and 13. This seems to refer to the faith that upholds one and the same (baptismal) confession in each of the individual Christian congregations. The close connection of faith and teaching comes clearly to the fore here and in Colossians 2:7 (cf. with 1:28), 2 Thessalonians 2:12–13, and Titus 1:1. In view of the aim of the Pastoral Letters, it is not surprising that they use *πίστις* more often than Paul himself as a designation for the content of faith (cf. 1 Tim. 3:9; 4:1, 6; 5:8). Whereas in the genuine Pauline letters *πίστις* is only seldom used to refer to divine or human “faithfulness” (cf. Rom. 3:3; Gal. 5:22), the Pastoral Letters use the word regularly to denote the faithfulness that comes from faith. Hence *πίστις* is not only mentioned together with love (see above), but also with a good conscience (1 Tim. 1:19; 3:9), truth (1 Tim. 2:7), and other Christian virtues (cf. 1 Tim. 2:15; 4:12; 6:11; 2 Tim. 3:10; Titus 2:2).

The use of the noun *πίστις* in the Pastoral Letters in the sense of “faithfulness” goes together with the consistent use of the adjective *πιστός* in the sense of “faithful,” “trustworthy,” or “reliable” (cf., e.g., 1 Tim. 1:12, 15; 3:11; etc., and M. Wolter, *Die Pastoralbriefe als Paulustradition* [1988], 39ff.). It is a sign of the Pastorals’ characteristic reformulation of the Pauline tradition into more accessible language for Hellenistic readers. The new formulation is also evident when the Pastorals use ten times the Hellenistic expression for “piety” or “godliness,” *εὐσέβεια* (cf. 1 Tim. 2:2; 3:16; 4:7, 8; 6:3, 5, 6, 11; 2 Tim. 3:5; Titus 1:1); once the related verb *εὐσεβεῖν*, “to practice piety” or “do one’s religious duty” (cf. 1 Tim. 5:4); and twice the related adverb *εὐσεβῶς*, “in a godly way” (cf. 2 Tim. 3:12; Titus 2:12). In Hellenistic Judaism *εὐσέβεια* designates above all the fear of the Lord (cf. LXX manuscripts A, S, R with the MT at Isa. 11:2; 33:6, esp. 11:2, Heb. רוּחַ דַּעַת וְיִרְאַת יְהוָה, “the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord,” Gk. *πνεῦμα γνώσεως καὶ εὐσεβείας*, “the spirit of knowledge and godliness”; see also 2 Macc. 3:1; 3 Macc. 2:32; 4 Macc. 5:18, 31; *T. Issachar* 7:5 [ed. M. de Jonge, 1970^{2}; *OTP* 7:6]; *Let. Aris.* 42; etc.). Our letters tie into this usage by using *εὐσέβεια* to designate the

faith-based status and behavior of Christians. They thereby emphasize in their own way the essential connection between confession and practical application that was already valued by Paul (cf. only Rom. 6:1–14 with 6:15–23). Hence "the εὐσεβ- word group was ideally suited to communication with (former) Gentiles" (H. Stettler, *Christologie*, 235). Outside the Pastoral Letters, where it occurs a total of thirteen times, this word group is not especially common in the New Testament, appearing only in Acts 3:12; 10:2, 7; 17:23; and in 2 Peter 1:3, 6; 2:9; 3:11.

6 When we look back on the Christology (and concept of faith) in the Pauline school, it becomes clear that the school tradition that the apostle founded is never intentionally left behind, but is rather taken up, extended, and used in a form that allowed it to become a permanent part of the Christian tradition. However, an overall evaluation of the letters of Paul's pupils will be possible only after their view of the church and ethics has been presented.

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CHAPTER 25

The Understanding of the Church in the Pauline School

With the doctrine of the church in the deutero-Pauline letters, we encounter similar findings as with Christology and the concept of faith. In their view of the church, Paul's pupils follow the precedent of their teacher, but they shape it in such a way that the church remains capable of sustaining its life even under the difficult conditions of the postapostolic period. It is impressive to see that in this further development Paul's pupils do not simply proceed pragmatically, but hold to the twofold principle *that the church can and should exist in the world only by Christ, and that it stands and falls with the apostolic gospel*.

1 For the Letter to the Colossians, which was probably written during the apostle's lifetime, the church is the "body of Christ" (σῶμα Χριστοῦ). It lives from the Christ event, and in the midst of a world not yet fully at peace, it presents a model of the universe which has been brought to a state of peace and re-created through Christ's sacrifice. This view arises from the Christ hymn in Colossians 1:15–20 (see above, 434–40, §1) and its context.

1.1 According to Colossians 1:13–14 and 22, the recipients of the letter have already been rescued from the dominion of the powers and transferred to the kingdom (βασιλεία) of Jesus Christ. They have received the forgiveness of their sins and are reconciled to God through the surrender of Jesus's fleshly body to death. Although our letter makes no direct reference to the κοινωνία or participation of believers in the Lord's Supper (cf. 1 Cor. 10:16–17), it refers to *baptism* all the more clearly. In Colossians 2:12–13 the letter assures the readers that they have been buried, raised, and made alive together with Christ, in order that they might henceforth live for him alone (cf. Rom. 6:3–4). Colossians 3:9–11 cites the baptismal tradition that was already taken up in Galatians 3:26–28 and 1 Corinthians 12:13 (cf. above, 246–47, §4.4.4; 389–90, §1.3.2). According to this tradition, the addressees have stripped off their old pre-Christian existence and have clothed themselves with "the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator" (τὸν νέον [sc. ἄνθρωπον]

τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν). The letter continues: "In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!" The "image" or *εἰκών* of the creator is Christ himself according to Colossians 1:15. *For Colossians the church of Jesus Christ presents itself as the fellowship of the baptized. They are people who have been made new in and through Christ, are devoted to him alone, and are growing into his likeness.*

The present participle in Colossians 3:10, *τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον*, which qualifies the "new humanity" (*νέος ἄνθρωπος*) or "new self" (NRSV) as still in the process of "*being* renewed," shows that despite the potentially more definitive aorist verbs in Colossians 2:11–13, "you were circumcised" (*περιετμήθητε*), "you were buried" with Christ (*συνταφέντες*), and "you were raised" with Christ (*συνηγέρθητε*), the Colossian letter does not represent any baptismal overenthusiasm. Rather, in true Pauline fashion, the new creation of humanity in baptism is understood as an event that begins with the appropriation of salvation and spiritual reorientation, but which will reach its goal only when the new life of believers, which is still "hidden with Christ in God" according to Colossians 3:3–4, is finally revealed.

1.2 The *Letter to the Ephesians* sees matters similarly. In Ephesians 2:5–6 the addressees are assured that they have already been raised with Christ and seated in the heavenlies as corulers with him. Nevertheless, they are still called upon in 4:20–24 to clothe themselves with "the new self (*ἄνθρωπος*), created according to the likeness of God" (v. 24), and to arm themselves against the attacks of the devil (6:10–17). Ephesians 5:14 cites a "call to awaken" (R. Deichgräber) that presumably belonged to the celebration of Christian baptism:

> "Sleeper, awake!
> Rise from the dead,
> and Christ will shine on you."

This saying has an early Jewish background: In the Qumran hymns a devout person who has been forgiven his sins praises the one God in the midst of the congregation: "I thank you, Lord, because you saved my life from the pit, and from the Sheol of Abaddon have lifted me up to an everlasting height. . . . The depraved spirit you have purified from great offence so that he can take a place with the host of the holy ones, and can enter in communion with the congregation of the sons of heaven . . . so that

he praises your name in the community of his jubilation, and tells of your wonders before all your creatures" (1QH[a] 11:19, 21–23; cf. 1QS 11:4–17 and *Pss. Sol.* 16:1–5).

Very similarly, in Ephesians 5:14 conversion is described as an event of resurrection and as an enlightenment (cf. 2 Cor. 4:1–6) of the baptized person who was formerly "dead" in his or her sins (cf. Eph. 2:5). The church as a whole is called to be continually "addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father" (Eph. 5:19–20 RSV). Yet these statements do not nullify the fact that for Ephesians (as for Colossians), the life of a Christian will not be consummated until the Christian receives the promised heavenly inheritance (cf. 1:18; 4:4).

2 In Colossians 1:18 and 2:19 Christ is called "the head of the body, the church" (*ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῦ σώματος τῆς ἐκκλησίας*), and this is taken up in Ephesians 1:22, 4:15, and 5:23. With their language of the "head," Colossians and Ephesians add an ecclesiological accent that is still lacking in the undisputedly authentic Pauline letters. Its function is clear: The *ἐκκλησία* has in Christ its one and only Lord, receives its power to live from him (cf. Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:15), and owes thanks and obedience to him alone. In Christ the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily (Col. 2:9), and from him this fullness fills the church (Eph. 1:23). Where Christ is called the *κεφαλή* or head of the church, the entire doctrine of the church receives a christological stamp: Christ is the Lord whom God has set over the universe, as well as the new Adam, to whom the church is so closely bound and attached that he and the church form one body.

While these perspectives are widely acknowledged for Colossians, E. Käsemann, for example, claims that in Ephesians, "Christology is interpreted almost exclusively from the perspective of ecclesiology" ("Interpretationsproblem," 255). Yet as clear as the ecclesial accent is in Ephesians, passages such as Ephesians 1:22–23; 2:20–22; 4:8–10, 15–16; and 5:32 speak just as clearly against Käsemann's view. The tradition that led to the designation of Christ as the "head" also speaks against it. This metaphor takes up the popular ancient notion that the head is the topmost and leading part of the human body (cf., e.g., Cornutus, *Theologiae Graecae compendium* 20; Philo, *Creation* 119; *T. Zeb.* 9:4). But it also has Jewish roots: In the Old Testament שׂאר or *κεφαλή* is a designation for the ruler (cf. Judg. 11:8; Isa. 7:8–9) and the (messianic) king (cf. Hos. 2:2 [ET 1:11]; Ps. 18:44 [ET 18:43]). Moreover, according to the early Jewish interpretation of Genesis 1:27–28 and 3:16, Adam is called to rule over the creation and over the woman, because Eve was created from Adam's rib and is therefore bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, and because man and woman form *one* flesh in marriage (cf. Gen. 2:22–24. When applied to Christ, this means that as the messianic (Son of) Man

and the new Adam, he is appointed as ruler over the universe (cf. 1 Cor. 15:27; Eph. 1:22 with Ps. 8:5–9 [ET 8:4–8]); this lordship manifests itself in a prototypical way in the church.

2.1 With the language of the σῶμα or "body of Christ" (cf. Col. 1:18) given by the hymnic tradition, Colossians and Ephesians take up a Pauline tradition and develop it further: In the midst of the cosmos, which could be presented as a body in the ancient world (cf. E. Schweizer, *TDNT* 7:1029–30), the church is the model of the new creation (cf. Col. 1:18, 27; Eph. 1:12, 14; 3:10; 4:13). The church with all its members grows from its head (cf. Col. 2:19; Eph. 1:21; 4:15–16). What this means concretely is that Gentiles and Jews together form the body of Christ and the *one* people of God called to peace with him (Col. 2:16–19; 3:11, 15; Eph. 2:11–22; 4:3–6).

Scholars commonly assume that the Pauline idea of the church has been substantially altered in Colossians and Ephesians. But this view is possible only when one overlooks the fact that the Pauline conception of the σῶμα Χριστοῦ or body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 10:16–17, 12:12–27, and Romans 12:4–5 is already bound up with early Jewish Adam speculation (cf. above, 393, §3.1.2.1.1). The usual exegetical assumption, namely, that an originally cosmically conceived idea of the σῶμα has been subsequently applied to the church by the addition of τῆς ἐκκλησίας in Colossians 1:18 (see above), only strengthens theories about substantial changes. J. Roloff therefore thinks that in Colossians 1:17–18, "the metaphor of the 'body of Christ' appears in a completely different frame of reference from 1 Corinthians 12:12–26, namely that of *the cosmic conception of the body*" (*Die Kirche im Neuen Testament*, 228). Roloff also holds that in Ephesians 5:32 the picture of the church as the bride of the Messiah, which was widespread in early Christianity (cf. Mark 2:19–20; 2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 19:7; 21:2, 9), acquires "a completely new emphasis. It is no longer an eschatological prospect of the end time, but a *description of present reality.* The church is the real partner of Christ; his dealings are with it, and not for example with the individual believer" (ibid., 236). Therefore in Ephesians, according to Roloff, the church steps in as a special domain of salvation "*between Christ and believers*," so that "*ecclesiology becomes the prerequisite of soteriology*" (ibid., 237).

Unfortunately, all these judgments overdraw the difference between Paul and his school's concept of the church. In 1 Corinthans 12:13 the σῶμα Χριστοῦ is already presented as a domain which fills the world and *into* which the baptized are baptized. The connection of Christ with the church and its member to form one body is already conceived from the perspective of Genesis 2:21–24 in Galatians 3:28 and in 1 Corinthians 6:13, 16–17; 2 Corinthians 11:2. Moreover, what Paul presents in 2 Corinthians 11:2 is not just an eschatological prospect of the church as the body of Christ; he rather writes of an event that he himself has already set in motion: "I promised you in marriage to one husband, to present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." Moreover, the ritual of presenting the bride to her husband in Ephesians 5:25–27 that M. Gese has helpfully investigated (*Vermächtnis*, 208–9) is only incrementally different from that in 2 Corinthians 11:2. It is oriented to Genesis 2:21–23 as well as to early Jewish customs (cf. Str-B 1:500–517) and has three movements: First, Christ created or founded the church by surrendering himself to death for it (cf. Eph. 5:25 with Gen. 2:21); second, he prepared the church through baptism, which is interpreted as a bridal bathing (cf. Eph. 5:26 with Gen. 2:22); and finally, he presented the church to himself in splendor, holy and unblemished (cf. Eph. 5:27 with Gen. 2:23). This presentation does not make the church the prerequisite for the salvation of

believers, but rather the *medium for testifying to Christ on earth*. This too is already a Pauline idea (cf. 1 Cor. 6:1–11; 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1).

2.2 Whereas Colossians is directed to the individual churches in Colossae and Laodicea, *Ephesians* addresses the church of Jesus Christ as a whole. For Ephesians the church is the archetype of the cosmos and the end-time people of God at once; the idea of the church's unity is also stressed more strongly than usual in the Pauline Letters.

2.2.1 According to Ephesians 3:10 (cf. with 1:20–23), "the [manifold] wisdom of God" will be made known through the church "to the rulers (ἀρχαί) and authorities (ἐξουσίαι) in the heavenly places." Wisdom consists of the fact that God has installed Christ as ruler over creation in accordance with his own "purpose" (πρόθεσις, 3:11), in order to reestablish the order of the cosmos that he desires. Through the church this new order is made known to the powers "in the heavenly places." This happens above all through the worship service that the church celebrates (cf. Eph. 5:17–20; Col. 3:16).

The statements of Ephesians 3:10 are understandably disputed. The expression "through the church" (διὰ τῆς ἐκκλησίας) is best referred with H. Schlier (*Der Brief an die Epheser* [1958[2]], 157) to "the entire existence and life of the church." The church "as such lets the powers and authorities experience the wisdom of God to it and in it and through it." R. Schnackenburg (*Ephesians* [1981]) interprets the making known of this wisdom to the powers in Ephesians 3:10 from the perspective of Ephesians 3:8–9: Through the Pauline gospel the Gentiles, who once lived in idolatry and lewd passions (cf. Eph. 2:12; 4:17–18; 5:5), are "now" called (cf. v. 10) to faith in Jesus Christ and thus rescued from "the ruler who exerts his might in the sphere of the air" (2:2, trans. Schnackenburg, 86). By this the "rulers and authorities" (3:10) can and must recognize that Christ is the true ruler of the universe, at least in part because "their power over that very part of humanity over whom they thought to rule unrestrainedly, namely the Gentile world, has now been taken from them" (ibid., 140). U. Luz comes even closer to the heart of the matter (*Der Brief an die Epheser* [1998], 146). He proceeds from the assumption that for Ephesians the church is a "cosmic entity, whose head, Christ, stands above 'all rule and authority' (1:21), so that the church can also preach to the powers that inhabit the air. This corresponds for example to 1 Timothy 3:16 (Christ appeared to the angels) or 1 Peter 1:12 (even angels long to look into the gospel)." That the preaching of the gospel is important even for the powers arises directly from Ignatius, *Smyrnaeans* 6:1. According to Ignatius, "Judgment is prepared even for the heavenly beings, for the glory of the angels, and for the rulers both visible and invisible, if they do not believe in the blood of Christ" (LCL 1:301).

In Ephesians the presentation of Christ's rule on earth through the church corresponds to the letter's testimony to God's wisdom in relation to the cosmic powers for the well-being and order of the world. The detailed

paraclesis in Ephesians 4:1–6:20 makes clear what this means for the members of the church (see chap. 26).

2.2.2 In Ephesians the equating of the church and *the people of God* is evident above all in 2:11–22 (cf. above, 445–46, §3.2.2), even though the expression “people of God” (λαὸς θεοῦ) is not used. The history of salvation and promise climaxes in the emergence of the ἐκκλησία composed of Jewish and Gentile Christians. This view predates our letter, for it is already rooted in the baptismal tradition: According to Galatians 3:28, the baptized members of the church are no longer Jews or Greeks, but a new humanity in Christ (cf. also 1 Cor. 12:13 and Col. 3:11). In keeping with this, Ephesians 2 also emphasizes that both Jews and Gentiles now have equal “access” to the Father (cf. 2:18 with Rom. 5:1, προσαγωγή). Moreover, the Gentiles who previously were far from God and without hope have now become full citizens of the heavenly “commonwealth” (πολιτεία, Eph. 2:12; cf. πολίτευμα, Phil. 3:20) in the form of the church (cf. also συμπολῖται, “fellow citizens,” Eph. 2:19). But unlike in Romans 11 (cf. above, 340–41, §4.5.2.4), there is no longer any mention of the progression of salvation history beyond the church. The saving work of God that was begun with the election of Israel and the giving of the “covenants of promise” (Eph. 2:12) now reaches its goal in the mission of Christ and the erecting of a new “dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (κατοικητήριον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν πνεύματι, 2:22). The references to the still-future fulfillment of all Christian hope (cf. Eph. 1:18; 4:4) and the ultimate perfection of the church (cf. 4:13) do not lead beyond this perspective.

2.2.3 Ephesians emphatically advocates the *unity* (ἑνότης, 4:3, 13) of the church. The classic proof text for this is Ephesians 4:1–6: “I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.”

The unity of the universal church consisting of many individual churches evoked in this text has in view the church composed of Jews and Gentiles (cf. Eph. 2:11–22). In Judaism after AD 70, the following

conviction was associated with the Shema of Deuteronomy 6:4: “For we [Jews] are all a people of the Name; we, who received one law from the One” (*2 Bar.* 48:23–24; similarly 85:14). If one compares Ephesians 4:4–6, it functions like a Christian counterpart to this Jewish view in *2 Baruch*: The church lives as the one body of Christ, which is filled with the one Spirit of Christ and with the one great hope of being allowed to participate in the heavenly inheritance in the coming age (cf. Eph. 1:18, 21). The church confesses the one Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός (cf. 1 Cor. 12:13). Its members are bound together by one “faith in Jesus Christ” (*πίστις εἰς Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν*), one baptism which has been performed on all of them in the name of Christ, and their confession of the one creator God, from whom everything comes and to whom the entire universe is subordinated (cf. 1 Cor. 8:6). Teaching, living, and creation-theological, salvation-historical, and christological thinking have all bound themselves together in Ephesians 4:1–6 to produce an ecclesiological vision of enormous influence. Ephesians therefore takes a decisive step toward the *consolidation of the church in the world*.

One can progress without further ado from Ephesians 4:4–6 to the confession of the “holy church” (*ἅγια ἐκκλησία*) in the Old Roman Creed or of the “holy catholic church” (*sancta ecclesia catholica*) in the Apostles’ Creed. However, in taking this step it must be remembered that according to Ephesians 2:21–22 and 4:13, 16, and 30, the unity in which the church believes is something into which it first must grow. There is no ecclesiastical triumphalism in Ephesians. Rather, being addressed to the (small) Christian minority congregations in Asia Minor, the letter seeks to sharpen their view of the spiritual reality that unites them and to encourage them to persevere in their confession.

3 The *Pastoral Letters* progress further down the path of Ephesians toward the consolidation of the church. The church is defined as the “household of God” (*οἶκος θεοῦ*, 1 Tim. 3:15), and it is urged to preserve intact the teaching about the church that has come down from Paul.

3.1 The author of the Pastorals must redefine the standing of the church in the world because new problems have arisen for Christians at the end of the first century. They must learn to live an unobjectionable life before the many people who do not yet believe in Jesus Christ, and must also be in a position to withstand the heresies arising in their own ranks.

According to 1 Timothy 6:20, this false teaching claims to offer a certain “knowledge” (*γνῶσις*). The “contradictions (lit. antitheses) of what is falsely called knowledge” (*ἀντιθέσεις τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως*) do not yet have anything to do with the later *Antitheses* of Marcion (cf. A. von Harnack,

Marcion: Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott [1924[2], repr. 1960[3]], appendix V, 256*–313*; ET, *Marcion: The Gospel of the Alien God* [1990], lacks this appendix, but cf. pp. 53–63). But 1 Timothy does make clear that the supposed γνῶσις that the heresy claims contradicts the faith taught by Paul (cf. also 2 Tim. 4:15). According to Titus 1:10, the heretics are partly of Jewish ancestry. They have fallen away from the true faith (cf. 1 Tim. 4:1), their fear of God is only simulated (cf. 2 Tim. 3:5), they occupy themselves with Jewish myths and the commandments of those who reject the truth and with endless genealogies (cf. 1 Tim. 1:4; Titus 1:14; 3:9). On top of all this, they want to be teachers of the law (cf. 1 Tim. 1:7). Because the false teachers make their way into the house churches, whole "households" or "families" are upset by them (cf. Titus 1:11); they find an especially receptive audience among women (cf. 2 Tim. 3:6). They forbid marriage and demand asceticism in matters of diet (cf. 1 Tim. 4:3). Some of them even claim that the resurrection has already occurred (cf. 2 Tim. 2:18). If one takes all these features together, then what is manifested here is an early gnosis that has grown up out of Jewish and Christian roots. This gained enough strength in the second century to become a Christian gnosticism that produced its own school (cf. M. Hengel, "The Earliest Roots of Gnosticism and Early Christianity," in *Earliest Christian History*, FS M. Hengel, ed. M. F. Bird and J. Maston [2012], 477–521).

3.2 Over against the early gnostic heresy, our letters stress that there is only one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the (Son of) Man Jesus Christ. God sent him to bring all people salvation and the knowledge of saving truth (cf. 1 Tim. 2:4–6). This ἀλήθεια was revealed to Paul, and the church must preserve it faithfully. In 1 Timothy 3:15 the church is given three different designations in a row: "household of God" (οἶκος θεοῦ), "church of the living God" (ἐκκλησία θεοῦ ζῶντος), and "pillar and foundation of the truth" (στῦλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας). The language of the ἐκκλησία (τοῦ) θεοῦ goes back to the early Jerusalem church and is also a good Pauline expression (cf. above, 226–27, §§1.3–1.3.4), but the two other designations are new.

3.2.1 The expression "house of God" also appears in 1 Peter 4:17 and has a fundamental significance for the Pastoral Letters. It goes back to the Old Testament designation of the temple as God's house (cf. 2 Sam. 7:13 and Mark 11:17 par. with Jer. 7:11), and therefore has close points of contact with the widespread New Testament view that the church of Jesus Christ is the temple of God (cf. 1 Cor. 3:16–17; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:20–22; 1 Pet. 2:5; etc.). Our author takes this literally. As J. Roloff explains:

> The designation of the church as "the household of God" (1 Tim. 3:15) is to be taken completely literally: God is the "owner" or "master" of the house (δεσπότης, 2 Tim. 2:21). He has appointed a "steward" (οἰκονόμος, Titus 1:7), the local church leader [i.e., the ἐπίσκοπος, "bishop"/"overseer"/"presiding elder," NRSV/ESV/NJB, Titus 1:7]. . . .

> This church leader must know “how one ought to behave in the household of God” (1 Tim. 3:15). He must know what rules apply to the various groups in the church and enforce them by his authority as master of the house. (J. Roloff, *Die Kirche im Neuen Testament*, 255–56)

However, the simile of the “*large* house” (*μεγάλη οἰκία*) in 2 Timothy 2:20–21 already hints at the fact that the church on earth is a *corpus permixtum* or “mixed body,” in which there are both pure and impure vessels, that is, holy and unholy housemates. The call for purification in verse 21 shows that the church gives its unholy members room for repentance (cf. 2:25–26). Only when they remain unrepentant after a first and second warning from the church leader do they count definitively as “factious people” (*αἱρετικαὶ ἄνθρωποι*) who are self-condemned; such people are to be avoided in the future (cf. Titus 3:10–11 with 1 Cor. 5:5 and Matt. 18:15–18). With these statements the Pauline school acknowledges what Martin Luther later formulated in his famous maxim about the Christian being *simul iustus et peccator* (“simultaneously a righteous person and a sinner”); this insight also becomes the impetus for holding church members to a life of faithfulness and righteousness (cf. Titus 2:11–13).

3.2.2 The designation in 1 Timothy 3:15 of the church as *στῦλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας*, the “pillar and foundation (or bulwark, support) of the truth,” shows that the church lives from the truth revealed by God in Christ and exists in the world to testify to it.

However, this designation is semantically ambiguous. There are two possibilities: (1) The phrase *στῦλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας* could be a double expression in which the two headwords are both qualified by the one genitive modifier *ἀληθείας*: “pillar and foundation of the truth.” This view corresponds to early Jewish tradition. According to Mishnah tractate *Abot* 1:2, the world rests on three pillars or supports (cf. 1 Sam. 2:8): the Torah, the temple service, and deeds of loving-kindness, while according to 1QS 5:5, the congregation of the Qumran Essenes forms “a foundation of truth for Israel” (מוֹסַד אֱמֶת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל). If one understands 1 Timothy 3:15 from this background, the church is the *pillar and foundation of the truth*; it is grounded by the salvation-producing truth of the gospel and gives the world stability through its testimony to the truth. (2) Alternatively one can separate the expression into two parts, *στῦλος* and *ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας*, which would convey two separate images. This allows us to interpret the “pillar” as a lofty symbol of God’s presence after the pattern of the pillar of cloud in Exodus 13:21–22, and also to see the church as the “firm and sure foundation because it is determined by the truth” (J. Roloff, *Die Kirche im Neuen Testament*, 253). However, because the equation of the church with the pillar of cloud would be singular in the New Testament, and because 1 Timothy 3:15–16 intends to show what the church lives from and what it must bear witness to, the first interpretation is to be preferred.

3.3 Testimony to the truth takes the form of *Christian teaching*. This receives special attention in the Pastoral Letters.

3.3.1 The two most important expressions for Christian teaching in the Pastorals are *παραθήκη*, a “deposit” or “thing given in trust,” and *ἡ*

ὑγιαίνουσα διδασκαλία, “sound doctrine” or “teaching.” Παραθήκη (cf. 1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:12, 14) is a legal term and designates the teaching as traditional material that has been entrusted to the church and is to be preserved and handed down unabbreviated. The expression ὑγιαίνουσα διδασκαλία (exact expression in 1 Tim. 1:10; 2 Tim. 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1; cf. ὑγιαίνοντες λόγοι, “sound words,” in 1 Tim. 6:3; 2 Tim. 1:13) means the wholesome, life-giving teaching. According to 1 Timothy 1:11, 6:20, and 2 Timothy 1:12–14 and 2:2, the παραθήκη or deposit is identical with the *Pauline gospel*.

Another important part of the life-giving teaching according to our letters is the ὑγιαίνοντες λόγοι or “*sound words* of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Tim. 6:3). This can refer to the words of Jesus in the Gospels.

1 Timothy 5:18 introduces by means of the formula λέγει ἡ γραφή (“the scripture says”) a double citation: βοῦν ἀλοῶντα οὐ φιμώσεις, “You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain” (Deut. 25:4), and ἄξιος ὁ ἐργάτης τοῦ μισθοῦ αὐτοῦ, “The laborer is worthy of his wages” (Luke 10:7). This proves that the words of the Lord have already become “Scripture” (γραφή) in our letters. It is a clear indication of a fixed written Gospel tradition (in this case, of the Gospel of Luke).

In addition to the Pauline gospel and the words of Jesus, the sound teaching comes from the *Holy Scriptures* (i.e., in Christian terms, the so-called Old Testament). They impart “the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” and serve as instruction for the church (2 Tim. 3:15–16; cf. with Rom. 15:4). In 2 Timothy 3:15–16, Timothy is admonished: “From childhood you have known the sacred writings (τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα) which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture inspired by God (πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος) is also profitable for teaching (διδασκαλία), for reproof (ἔλεγμος), for correction (ἐπανόρθωσις), for training (παιδεία) in righteousness” (NASB modified in direction of ASV).

The understanding of πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος in verse 16 is disputed. Although πᾶσα γραφή in and of itself can mean “any (or every) random Scripture,” as a continuation from τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα in verse 15, what is meant is probably not various Scriptures or Scripture passages, but rather “the whole of scripture” (C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* [1963], 65) or “all (scripture) as such” (M. Zerwick and M. Grosvenor, *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament* [1981], 644). As H. Merkel (*Die Pastoralbriefe* [1991], 76) has rightly emphasized, the disputed adjective θεόπνευστος (“inspired by God”) is to be construed *not* as a predicate adjective (i.e., following a supplied verb “is”) but as an attributive adjective. The point must be carefully noted

because it differs from the usual practice in English Bible translation. The predicate adjective that Merkel rejects is found in the KJV ("All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God") and in almost all recent English translations: "All scripture *is* inspired by God" (RSV/NRSV, NASB, HCSB, JB/NJB, NAB); "All Scripture *is* God-breathed" (NIV); "All Scripture *is* breathed out by God" (ESV, HCSB margin) (italics added). The attributive adjective that Merkel favors (he translates: "Jede von Gott eingegebene Schrift") first entered the English Bible with the RV of 1881 and ASV of 1901, "Every scripture inspired of God," but is represented today mainly by the NEB and its revision, the REB: "Every [REB: All] inspired scripture has its use for teaching," etc. This type of translation need not be read as a denial of the doctrine of the divine inspiration of the whole of Scripture—as if to say that every *inspired* Scripture can be used for teaching, but the "uninspired" ones cannot. In the context of 2 Timothy, our author neither needs nor wants to establish the inspiration of Scripture. He rather presupposes it and then emphasizes the benefit of *using* the Holy Scriptures in the church: They make people wise in the faith and should therefore be used in the church for "teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness." The four elements of this series show how differentiated and sophisticated Christian Scripture interpretation had become by the time of our letters.

3.3.2 The three Pastoral Letters emphasize that the teaching that supports the church was revealed to the apostle Paul by the exalted Christ. He delivered it to Timothy (and Titus), who were to pass it on to the leaders of the churches. In this presentation the letters are building on Ephesians 3:5–7, 8–12, and 4:11–15.

From the perspective of these three letters, the apostle has been appointed by Christ to be a preacher and a teacher of the gospel (cf. 1 Tim. 1:12; 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11; Titus 1:3). In the presence of witnesses, Paul then passed on to Timothy this divine "gift" or χάρισμα, namely, the authorization to teach. This happened by the laying on of hands, not only by the apostle himself but also by the council of elders (cf. 1 Tim. 4:14 with 2 Tim. 1:6; 2:2). Now Timothy is told not to undertake this kind of laying on of hands hastily (cf. 1 Tim. 5:22), but to entrust the task of teaching only to proven and qualified men (cf. 2 Tim. 2:2). This means above all the leaders—bishops (or overseers) and elders—of the churches (cf. Titus 1:9 with 1 Tim. 3:1–2; 5:17). In order to guarantee continuity and integrity of the teaching, the Pastoral Letters promote the *ordination* of elders (bishops) who are qualified to teach. The "laying on of hands" (ἐπίθεσις τῶν χειρῶν) mentioned in 1 Timothy 4:14, 5:22, and 2 Timothy 1:6 represents an institutional ecclesial act by which the ordinands receive the χάρισμα, the "gift of the Holy Spirit that enables one to exercise the office of church leadership" (J. Roloff, *Die Kirche im Neuen Testament*, 265).

The equation of the laying on of hands with ordination is historically independent of the literary-critical question whether 1 Timothy 6:11–16 should be seen as a traditional formulation dealing with the "responsibilities of ordination," as E. Käsemann thought ("Formular," 107), or whether the author

first formulated it himself, as Hanna Stettler thinks, in order to provide “an exhortation to the office bearers, of which there are many in the Pastoral Letters” (*Die Christologie der Pastoralbriefe*, 117). Stettler has the literary evidence on her side. The archetype of the act of ordination attested by our letters is in all probability the rite of the “laying on of hands” or ***səmîkâ*** (סְמִיכָה, a rabbinic Hebrew term; cf. סָמַךְ) as practiced in early Judaism at the end of the first century AD, according to the pattern of the ordination of Joshua by Moses (cf. Num. 27:15–23; Deut. 34:9). At the conclusion of their education, selected rabbinic students were ordained through the laying on of hands by their teacher, along with two assistants. They thereby entered into the long line of those qualified to pass on the teaching tradition filled with divine wisdom that was founded by Moses on Sinai.

3.3.3 According to Titus 1:5–9, Titus is expected to appoint elders and bishops in the individual cities of Crete following his mandate from Paul, so that they will preside over the churches and teach sound doctrine. This procedure has its model in Paul’s own practice as Luke presents it in Acts 14:23 (cf. 20:27–28). The instruction to Titus therefore corresponds to the practice of the teacher. If one combines this observation with our findings about ordination, one discovers that, just like Ephesians 4:11–12 and *1 Clement* 42:1–4, the Pastoral Letters hold to the ancient church idea of the divine founding of the ecclesial offices of leadership and teaching, as well as that of apostolic succession.

4 The above conclusion leads us to the understanding of the *church offices* in the letters of the Pauline school. Here a clear difference from the early letters of the apostle can be detected. 1 Thessalonians 5:12–13; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11, 27–31; Romans 12:3–8; and Philippians 1:1 document that there were specific ministries (διακονίαι) in the Pauline churches from the very beginning, among which those of the preaching and teaching offices had special significance (cf. Gal. 6:6; 1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:6–7). But Paul did not yet push for a unified church constitution, but rather gave the churches freedom to live as charismatic fellowships. The only thing to be concluded from his mention of bishops (NJB: presiding elders) and deacons in Philippians 1:1 is that there were presiding elders (ἐπίσκοποι) and deacons (διάκονοι) in the individual house churches who were responsible for the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. In Ephesians the offices of leadership that are constitutive for the life of the church are placed into the apostolic succession. The Pastoral Letters go a step further. They lay on the heart of Timothy and Titus to provide for a definite *church order*.

4.1 Ephesians 4:7–16 takes up the apostle's teaching about spiritual gifts (cf. above, 391, §2.4; 395–98, §3.1.2.4). As a continuation of 1 Corinthians 12:28, the offices of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher are presented as being founded by Christ himself.

Why exactly these five offices are named becomes clear from the citation from Psalm 68:19 (LXX 67:19; ET 68:18) in Ephesians 4:8. As mentioned above (444, §3.1), the author refers the psalm passage to Jesus's descent to earth and ascent to heaven. By this he acquired "gifts" (δόματα) for people and distributed them to them. However, instead of saying with the Septuagint ἔλαβες δόματα ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ, "thou hast *received* gifts *for* man" (Brenton) or "you *received* gifts *by* a person" (NETS), our author writes, "he *gave* gifts *to* people" (ἔδωκεν δόματα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις), thus reversing the original sense of the text. This reversal does not just happen at random; it also occurs in the ancient rabbinic literature and in the Targum to the Psalms. Here Psalm 68:19 (ET 68:18) is referred to Moses's ascent to God, and the gifts which he gave to the people are the words of the Torah (cf. F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians* [1984], 342; Str-B 3:596–97). The author of Ephesians thinks similarly but interprets Psalm 68:19 in terms of Christ and understands the distribution of the gifts from Psalm 68:12 (LXX 67:12; ET 68:11), where it says, "The Lord will give a word to those who evangelize (bring good news) to a large host" (κύριος δώσει ῥῆμα τοῖς εὐαγγελιζομένοις δυνάμει πολλῇ). For our author, then, the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 are all those "evangelizers" (εὐαγγελιζόμενοι) whom the exalted Christ has given a saving word (ῥῆμα) to proclaim. This view corresponds to Romans 10:14–17 (cf. above, 347–49, 1.1.2) and identifies the author as a pupil of Paul. He has extended the Pauline understanding of the apostolic office to all officeholders who have walked in the steps of the "holy apostles" (Eph. 3:5) who have since died.

Whereas the *apostles* (cf. Eph. 4:11) are to be understood from the perspective of 1 Corinthians 15:7–8, Romans 10:14–17, and Ephesians 3:5 as the proclaimers of the report about Christ (ἀκοὴ Χριστοῦ) who were called by Christ himself, the task of the *prophets* was the Spirit-inspired παράκλησις, the exhortation, consolation, and edification of the church (cf. Eph. 3:5 with 1 Thess. 5:20–21 and 1 Cor. 14:4, 29–31). For the author, the "holy apostles and prophets" (Eph. 3:5) probably already belong to the past. The *pastors*, who are not yet mentioned in the authentic Pauline letters, should probably be understood as the leaders of the house churches. According to Acts 20:28, this office of leadership also included "the preservation of the church in correct doctrine" (U. Luz, *Der Brief an die Epheser*, 157). The ministry of the *evangelists*, who are also not mentioned in the authentic letters of the apostle, lay in the spreading of the gospel (cf. Acts 21:8; 2 Tim. 4:5), whereas the *teachers* (cf. 1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7; Acts 13:1; Heb. 5:12) were entrusted with church instruction. A comparison of Ephesians 4:11–12 with 1 Timothy 6:3 and Luke 1:4 suggests that this

instruction involved memorizing and handing down the words of the Lord in the form of the Gospel traditions.

H. Merklein has pointed out that in Ephesians, “the point is reached for the first time in the Pauline writings and probably in the New Testament as a whole, where the *phenomenon of the ‘church office’ is reflected on theologically in a clear and unmistakable way*” (*Das kirchliche Amt nach dem Epheserbrief*, 224). In fact, Ephesians takes a decisive step toward the *long-term institutionalizing of the church (and the doctrine of the church) in the world*.

4.2 The Pastoral Letters show that the Pauline school went still further down the trail marked out by Ephesians. These letters are interested in a church order that is valid for all. This involves several different concerns. The churches are to be led by elders. As J. Roloff explains, from among the council of elders there should always be one who rises up and “takes over responsibility for preaching and church leadership in a special degree, and so qualifies himself as a bishop (1 Tim. 5:17). The unspoken assumption is that in every church at large [i.e., covering a given city or area] (German: *Gesamtgemeinde*), there should be *only one bishop as the responsible leader*” (*Die Kirche im Neuen Testament*, 262; cf. also R. Gehring, *House Church and Mission*, 268–81, esp. 278, summarizing Roloff: “the author of the Pastorals intended to extend the office of overseer, which until that time had only applied to the house church, as a church leadership office to the whole citywide church”). The only ones who come into consideration for the offices of elder and bishop are men who have already proved themselves as heads of households (Titus 1:6; 1 Tim. 3:2–6), because on this basis people can also trust them to be good “stewards” (οἰκονόμοι) in the “household of God” (cf. Titus 1:7 with 1 Tim. 3:15). When they apply for the office of bishop and are chosen and prove themselves, they should be paid out of the resources of the church (see 1 Tim. 3:1 with 5:17–18). The elders and bishops should have at their side men and women as deacons, as well as older widows, who likewise have family experience and a good civic reputation (cf. 1 Tim. 3:8–13; 5:9–10). The church order in the Pastoral Letters is oriented to οἰκονομία, that is, the ancient teaching about the management of households (see chap. 26), and reflects many years of experience with the formation and leadership of early Christian house churches (cf. 1 Cor. 16:19; Philem. 2; Rom. 16:5; 2 Tim. 4:19). At the end of the first century, these rules of church order were already tending in the direction of the monarchial episcopacy, as later attested in the letters of Ignatius around AD 120 (cf., e.g., Ignatius, *Eph*. 5:3; 6:1; *Magn*. 2:1; 3:1–2;

Trall. 2:1–2). As long as the bishop who presides over the individual house churches remains committed to the ministry of the gospel as it is envisaged in 2 Timothy 1:12–14, 2:1–13, and Titus 1:9, his office does not contravene the Pauline tradition, but helps to preserve the entrusted "deposit" (παραθήκη) intact.

The development toward the presbyterial (i.e., elder-based) church order in the churches founded by Paul is something that we can only surmise. The undisputedly authentic Pauline letters do not yet mention elders, but only bishops and deacons (cf. Phil. 1:1); they presided over the house churches and provided service to the tables (διακονία) at the celebrations of the Lord's Supper (cf. 1 Thess. 5:12; Rom. 12:7–8; and J. Roloff, *Die Kirche im Neuen Testament*, 142–43). Luke proceeds from the assumption that on their mission trips, Paul and Barnabas "appointed elders" in every church (Acts 14:23). In Acts 20:28 the elders (cf. 20:17) are equated with the ἐπίσκοποι (NRSV here "overseers"; elsewhere "bishops") and the pastors or "shepherds" (Acts 20:28, ποιμαίνειν; cf. ποιμήν). These details are confirmed by 1 Peter 5:1–4 (cf. πρεσβύτερος, ποιμαίνειν, ἐπισκοπεῖν, ποίμνιον, ἀρχιποίμην). The designations πρεσβύτερος and ἐπίσκοπος initially appear to have been interchangeable and are still used as alternatives to each other in Titus 1:5–9. (A comparison of *1 Clement* 42:4 with 44:5 yields a similar result.) Because there were certainly elders in the leadership of the early church in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 11:30; 15:2–6, 22–23; 16:4; 21:18), it is perfectly conceivable that the elder-based church order advanced from the mother church in Jerusalem into the missionary field and the Pauline churches. When the Pastoral Letters were written, this church order was just as much at home in Corinth as it was in Rome (cf. *1 Clem.* 1:3; 44:5; Hermas, *Vision* 2.4.8.2–3; 3.1.9.8).

Whether and to what degree the presbyterial or elder-led church order corresponds to a Jewish synagogue pattern is not easy to say. R. A. Campbell's research on the status and function of elders in the synagogues has shown that the synagogues had neither an elder constitution nor a formal elder office, but only the honorary title "elder." Moreover, H. Lichtenberger has pointed out that the synagogues in the western Diaspora were organized not along the pattern of family and house (οἶκος) but rather as legally independent societies or associations (*collegia*). Both observations necessitate the conclusion that the presbyterial order of the Christian churches was not simply formed "according to the manner and pattern of the Diaspora synagogue" (G. Bornkamm, *TDNT* 6:664, lines 14–15). Rather, to a much greater degree than previously realized, this church order seems to be a *Christian innovation*: The Christian church dared to follow Jesus's instructions (cf. Mark 3:33–35) by living in the world as the *familia dei* and organizing themselves accordingly.

4.3 The institutional concept of the church, the presbyterial church order, and the office of the bishop enabled a church threatened by heretical disruption to preserve its identity and to find a crisis-proof form for survival. But this development also extracted a high price. This can be seen in three factors: Paul's theologically foundational catchword "freedom" (ἐλευθερία) is no longer taken up in the letters of his pupils; the term χάρισμα, which was likewise decisive for Paul (cf. above, 391, §4.3), is reduced to the gracious "gift" of an office (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6); and at the same time, women are forbidden in 1 Timothy 2:11–12 (cf. with 1 Cor. 14:34–35) to teach publicly in the church. This regulation is conspicuous

because it contradicts not only 1 Corinthians 11:5 and 13 (and the original text of 1 Cor. 14 [cf. above, 397–98) but also all early Christian mission experience. Only in the light of the missionary work of women could Clement of Alexandria say εἰς τὴν γυναικωνῖτιν ἀδιαβλήτως παρεισεδύετο ἡ τοῦ κυρίου διδασκαλία, "the Lord's teaching penetrated into the women's quarters without scandal" (*Stromata* 3.6.53.3). However, in this case part of Clement's point is that scandal was avoided by the fact that apostles like Peter "took their wives around as Christian sisters rather than spouses [cf. 1 Cor. 9:5 in *Stromata* 3.6.53.2], to be their fellow ministers in relation to housewives" in particular (3.6.53.3), which is consistent with women's roles in the Pastorals, for example, Titus 2:3–5 (cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis: Books One to Three*, trans. J. Ferguson, FC 85 [1991], 289; text: *Clemens Alexandrinus*, vol. 2, *Stromata Buch I–VI*, GCS, ed. O. Stählin, rev. L. Früchtel [1960[3]], 220; further M. Y. MacDonald, *Early Christian Women and Pagan Opinion* [1996], 217–18). In its own setting, 1 Timothy 2:11–15 is apparently reacting to a concrete situation influenced by gnosis, but it has also unleashed highly problematic effects throughout history (cf. below, 485–86, §3.2.3.1).

5 Looking back on the doctrine of the church in the letters of the Pauline school, we can see an intensive effort toward the consolidation of the churches according to the standard of the Pauline gospel. Clear advances beyond Paul have been achieved. They lie above all in the formulation of a clear concept of tradition, the clarification of the idea of the body of Christ, and the creation of permanent offices of preaching and teaching. However, in order not to give heresy a foothold, Paul's pupils also restricted the free development of spiritual life in the church and developed a view of the church offices that excluded women from teaching. One can understand these decisions historically without thereby embracing them. In order to keep open the possibility of correcting obviously mistaken developments, the statements of the deutero-Pauline letters about the church must be measured against the entire Pauline corpus.

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CHAPTER 26

Paraclesis and Eschatology in the Pauline School

The understanding of paraclesis and eschatology in the deutero-Pauline letters is basically determined by Paul: The Christ event determines the status of the church, and the paraclesis deals with the lives of individual Christians as well as of the church as a whole in view of the present and coming Christ. Yet eschatology does take on new forms. Whereas in Colossians and Ephesians eschatology is still coupled with Christology in good Pauline fashion, in the Pastoral Letters it only provides the framework for a largely independent paraclesis.

1 In *Colossians* the connection between Christology, eschatology, and paraclesis is immediately recognizable: Exalted to the right hand of God, the crucified Christ is the epitome and guarantor of the church's hope. The church is his body and must therefore lead a life of testimony worthy of him until his end-time appearance.

1.1 In Colossians 1:5 Paul immediately reminds his addressees of "the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel" (NASB). According to 1:27, this hope is embodied in Christ. He is the "hope of glory" (cf. Ps 71:5), because he guarantees believers end-time glorification and eternal life. Parallel to this, Christ is "our life" (cf. 3:4 with Ps. 36:10 [ET 36:9]), because Christians can confidently hope that "when Christ who is our life is revealed (φανερωθῇ), then you also will be revealed (φανερωθήσεσθε) with him in glory." Our letter does not say when Christ will appear or when the judgment of God's wrath mentioned in Colossians 3:6 will begin. It only advises people that they should be "redeeming" or "making the most of" (ἐξαγοραζόμενοι) the available time until then (4:5; so also Eph. 5:16).

More important for the author than the date of the parousia and final judgment is his reference to the present deliverance of believers: God has already "delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom (βασιλεία) of his beloved Son" (Col. 1:13 NASB). He did so by effecting "reconciliation" (cf. ἀποκαταλλάξαι, 1:20) through the blood of

Christ and by seating Christ on a heavenly throne at his right hand (cf. 3:1 with Ps. 110:1 [LXX 109:1]); the members of the church have already been buried and raised with Christ in baptism (cf. 2:12–13; 3:1). These pointed, present statements of salvation have parallels in the apostle's undisputedly authentic letters (cf., e.g., Gal. 3:26–28; 1 Cor. 6:11; Rom. 8:29–30), but they still stand out here. Because Colossians 3:3–4 also speaks of the hiddenness of eternal life in Christ and his still-future final appearance, one cannot simply regard these statements as an expression of religious exuberance. The ground of their possibility lies deeper, namely, in the fact that *the eschatology of Paul and his pupils has not only temporal but also spatial dimensions*.

These spatial dimensions emerge in the Pauline Letters wherever there is mention of any of the following themes: the already accomplished resurrection of Jesus (cf., e.g., 1 Thess. 4:14; 1 Cor. 15:20), his exaltation (cf. Phil. 2:9) and enthronement at the right hand of God (cf. Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20), his present activity in heaven (cf. 1 Cor. 15:25; 2 Cor. 12:9), or the *heavenly world* as such that is superimposed over this still-ongoing age (cf. Gal. 4:26; 2 Cor. 12:2; Phil. 3:20–21). This world is already spoken of in Isaiah 6:1–8, the Psalms (cf. Pss. 33:14; 89:15 [ET v. 14]; 97:2), Ezekiel (cf. Ezek. 1:3–28), Job (cf. Job 1:6–12), Zechariah (cf. Zech. 3:1–9), and Daniel (cf. Dan. 7:9–14). Early Judaism had developed very detailed ideas of the dimensions of the heavenly world (cf. only *1 En.* 6–36). Jesus shared these ideas (cf. Luke 10:18; 12:8–9; 22:29–30), and the heavenly world was present in every worship service that Jews or Christians celebrated in biblical times (cf. only Ps. 22:4 [ET v. 3]; the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* 4Q400–407; and the depiction of the worship of God and the lamb in Rev. 4:2–11; 5:8–14; 11:15–19; 12:10–12; etc.). As we have already seen (above, 437, §1.2.3; 441–42, §2.1.1), the unseen world filled with angels, spirits, and powers was especially important for Colossians and Ephesians (cf. only Col. 1:16; 2:10, 15; Eph. 1:20–21; 3:10; 6:12).

Because they saw a reality in the heavenly world and sang psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to the glory of God and his Christ in their worship services (cf. Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19), Paul and his pupils knew that they were already placed in the presence of God and the exalted Christ. The fact that the visible world was overlaid by the invisible world made it necessary to think about the events of the end time not only in the temporal scheme of present and future, but also spatially. Thinking in space-time categories made the expectation of salvation among Paul's pupils relatively independent of calculations of the date of the end of the world. The *delay of the parousia* therefore did not seriously call their faith into question. Only Revelation 6:10 and, above all, 2 Peter 3:4 point to crises in this regard. The main witnesses of the New Testament held to the truth that God had already completed the decisive act in the mission, atoning death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the salvation of the whole world, and they therefore left the

date of the parousia to God. Paul gave classic expression to this certainty in 1 Thessalonians 4:14 and Romans 8:38–39, alongside which we may place, for example, the call to thanksgiving in Colossians 1:11–20.

1.2 The paraclesis of Colossians is directed to baptized Christians. The issue for them is to do justice to the gift of their salvation in the course of their early life. The comments in Colossians 3:1–4 about the new life of Christians that is still hidden in the heavens show that the author was familiar with the well-known dialectic of "already" and "not yet" from Paul's main letters. For the members of the church, the new existence that they have gained by dying and rising with Christ is both gift and task at once: Because they have died and been raised with Christ in baptism, they can and should put on the "new person" or "self" (νεὸς ἄνθρωπος), for which they have been re-created in baptism (cf. Col. 3:9–11 with Gal. 3:26–28). They are to stand by one another in love and mercy as members of the one body of Christ and lead a life that can stand up under the scrutiny of those living outside the church (cf. Col. 4:5–6).

1.2.1 The paraclesis of Colossians gains a new accent through the so-called *household code* in 3:18–4:1. This type of text has made history not only in the New Testament (cf. Eph. 5:21–6:9; 1 Tim. 2:8–15; 6:1–2; Titus 2:1–10; 1 Pet. 2:13–3:7), but also in the writings of the apostolic fathers (cf. *Did*. 4:9–11; *1 Clem.* 21:6–9; *Barn*. 19:5–7) and throughout church history, including Luther's household code (*Haustafel*) consisting of quotations from the New Testament in the appendix to his Small Catechism (*BSLK*, p. 523, §1–p. 527, §15; cf. R. Kolb and T. J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord* [2000], 365–67). Colossians 3:18–4:1 runs:

> [3:18]Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. [19]Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly. [20]Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is your acceptable duty in the Lord. [21]Fathers, do not provoke your children, or they may lose heart. [22]Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything, not only while being watched and in order to please them, but wholeheartedly, fearing the Lord. [23]Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, [24]since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ. [25]For the wrongdoer will be paid back for whatever wrong has been done, and

there is no partiality. [4:1]Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, for you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

1.2.1.1 The household code tradition is still evaluated in many different ways in scholarship. For L. Goppelt it has great significance: “The household code tradition regulates the human relationships that were designated as the worldly ‘estates’ or stations in life (*Stände*) in the ethics of the Reformation, and today are designated as orders of creation and preservation or also as social institutions. These include the relationship between marriage partners, between parents and children, masters and slaves, and in 1 Peter also the relationship to the governing authorities. . . . The household code has in view the Christian household in Colossians and in Ephesians 5:22–6:9, and Christians among non-Christians in 1 Peter 2:13–3:7” (“Die Herrschaft Christi und die Welt,” 127).

S. Schulz, on the contrary, considers the tradition to be a symptom of a dangerous accommodation of early Christianity to the existing social structures: “Instead of allowing the eschatological message of God’s kingdom and God’s righteousness to have a critical effect among people in the contemporary forms of governance, in the New Testament, early Catholicism [in which Schulz includes Colossians, Ephesians, 1 Peter, and the Pastoral Letters, P.St.] disastrously drew precisely the opposite conclusion by religiously paraphrasing the ruling order as a divinely-willed creation order and elevating it to the status of Christian teaching” (“Evangelium und Welt,” 501; similarly idem, *Neutestamentliche Ethik*, 567).

Over against this, P. Pokorný correctly emphasizes that the household codes in the deutero-Pauline letters should be judged from Paul’s admonitions about Christian behavior toward outsiders in 1 Thessalonians 4:12 and Philippians 4:5, adding that “without commonalities in the model of social behavior there is no communication with the world around” the early Christian communities (*Colossians: A Commentary*, 177).

1.2.1.2 The judgment of Pokorný can be confirmed by a look at the roots of the household code tradition. K. Weidinger, drawing upon the works of his teacher M. Dibelius, wanted to see the household codes as reflections of the prevailing ideas in Greco-Roman society about the duties of the various professions and social classes, as attested by Onosander (*De imperatoris officio* 1.18–21), Soranus of Ephesus (*Sorani Gynaeciorum liber*), or Lucian (*De saltatione* 81). The Diaspora synagogues also took up elements of this doctrine in their ethical instruction. This is documented, for example, by the teaching poem of Pseudo-Phocylides, which was used first in Jewish and later in Christian school instruction. In it are found exhortations concerning marital faithfulness, child rearing, and the treatment of slaves that are similar to the instructions of the household codes (cf. Ps.-Phoc. 195–197, 200–209, 223–226 [*OTP* 2:581–82]).

Nevertheless, these correspondences with ideas in Greco-Roman culture about the duties of various classes of people do not yet explain the arrangement of the instructions in pairs in Colossians 3:18–4:1 and Ephesians 5:22–6:9 (i.e., wives and husbands; children and fathers/parents; slaves and masters). Nor do they explain their apodictic tone. But one draws close to an explanation by considering the early Jewish understanding of the commandment to honor one’s parents (Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16). According to Sirach 3:1–16, Philo (*Decalogue* 165–167), and Josephus (*Ag. Ap.* 2.206), this commandment generally regulates the relationship of children and parents, young and

old, low and high. The reminder to children in Ephesians 6:2 that honoring one's father and mother "is the first *commandment* with a promise," combined with the Jewish tradition just mentioned, suggests that the Pauline school had this commandment in view both for children and for the other positions in life mentioned in the paraclesis of the household code. The patriarchal worldview results from Ephesians 3:14–15, where the heavenly Father is said to give his name to every earthly family.

There is yet another root of the household code tradition to be taken into account, to which D. Lührmann, U. Wagener, and R. Gehring have called attention. The household codes focus on life in the ancient household and therefore have close points of contact with ancient οἰκονομία, the teaching about the management of households, as unfolded in the first book of Aristotle's *Politics*, in Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*, and by various Stoics. The pairings of exhortations to women and men, children and parents, etc., which are also attested in the New Testament, have their place in such treatments of οἰκονομία, where we also find instructions concerning subordination, love, and fear. However, the relationship of the New Testament household code tradition to life in the household is not only a literary one: From the time of Jesus and the beginning of the Jerusalem church onward, the house was the most important place of social life. From the very beginning, then, Christians needed instructions about how to relate to each other as members of a Christian extended family (= οἶκος). The household codes therefore reflect the elementary experience of early Christian life and mission.

1.2.1.3 If one takes these contexts into account, then one can no longer say that in forming its household code tradition early Christianity only took over the ethics of its "environment." Rather this tradition represents an *independent Christian formation*, which is just as indebted to the complex early Jewish interpretation of the commandment to honor one's parents and to the Christ event understood as an act of love as it is to the social reality of ancient households. As a Christian formation, this teaching tradition set a precedent that is expanded in 1 Peter and the Pastoral Letters into a type of church order (cf. above, 470–71, §4.2).

1.2.2 Colossians 3:18–4:1 gives the impression of being a traditional but versatile topos (H. von Lips) which prior to the writing of Colossians had already left its mark on the instruction of (baptized) Christians who lived together in houses and house churches. The topos then found a reception in the paraclesis of our letter, because, as Christ's body, the church had to live according to the will of Christ its head. Nowhere is this expressed more clearly than in the flourishing common life of wives and husbands, children and parents, slaves and masters in the extended Christian families and house churches. The arrangement of the instructions in pairs for the persons of the household in Colossians 3:18–4:1 corresponds to the patriarchal order of the οἶκος and the tenor of the commandment to honor one's parents in Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16: wives should submit to their husbands, while children should obey

their parents and slaves their masters. But because even the husbands, fathers (parents), and earthly masters are subordinate to the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, they are to deal with all their subordinates as is "right in the Lord": they should love their wives, not provoke their children to anger, and give their slaves what is just and fair. The extensive admonition to the slaves in Colossians 3:22–25 shows that the relationship of slaves and masters in Christian households needed special attention; from 1 Corinthians 7:21–23 and the Letter to Philemon this is very understandable (cf. above, 422–23, §4.4.4.1). The household code paraclesis shows that Christ rules not only the hearts but also the bodies of Christians: his church does not only adore him in its worship services, but also lives according to his instruction in its social existence.

2 The findings concerning eschatology and paraclesis in *Ephesians* have points of contact with those in Colossians, but also bear their own stamp and have acquired great importance in the church.

2.1 In Ephesians (as in Colossians), ecclesiology cannot be separated from Christology. As a sign for the coming ages, the "children of wrath" who were previously dominated by fleshly lusts and the evil impulse have now been saved by God's sending Jesus to his death, and also raised up with Christ and seated with him in the heavenly places as rulers. Consequently, the addressees of Ephesians live their Christian lives from their pneumatic fellowship with the risen Christ who has been exalted to the right hand of God. Nevertheless, the "day of redemption" (4:30) is still in the future for them. They still have to stand firm in the battle against the evil heavenly spirits (6:12) and the adversities of the "evil day," which has already begun (6:13; cf. with 1QM 1:10–12). Only when they have stood the test will the kingdom of God and of his Christ dawn, in which no "idolater" will participate (5:5). Therefore, as in Colossians, there can be no talk of overenthusiasm about salvation in Ephesians.

The view of the end time in Ephesians becomes problematic at only one point: Although the advent of the "kingdom of Christ and God" (βασιλεία τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ, 5:5) still lies in the future, and the church is supposed to provide an example of the acknowledgment of Christ's lordship over the universe to the invisible powers (3:10), in Ephesians there is no longer any mention of the fate of Israel (unlike Rom. 11:25–32). This is remarkable. The author knows about the debate between Jews and Gentiles marked by hatred and manslaughter (cf. Eph. 2:11); he speaks repeatedly about the fulfillment of the messianic promises in and through Christ (cf. 1:4, 13–14; 2:13–18), and he assures the Gentile Christians in 2:12 that although they were formerly "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel (ἡ πολιτεία τοῦ Ἰσραήλ), and strangers to the covenants of promise," they now have become

“citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God” (2:19) by virtue of the reconciling act of Christ. As the new people of God from among Jews and Gentiles, the church takes the place of Israel in Ephesians. Therefore, at the end of the path chosen here stands ultimately the questionable assumption that the chosen people of God is not Israel, but the church composed of a majority of converted Gentiles.

2.2 In keeping with good Pauline tradition, the paraclesis of our letter holds that the saving event precedes the ethical obligation of the church and constitutes its basis (cf. Eph. 2:4–9; 4:1). However, the letter adds just as unmistakably that Christians were already chosen “before the foundation of the world” to live a holy life before God (1:4) and that they have been saved through Christ “for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (2:10 RSV). The formulation has points of contact with *4 Ezra* 8:52 and emphasizes that the will of God was intended also for the new people of God in the form of the church from eternity past, so that his will might be put into action through the church. The traditional formulation about the “imitation” of God (cf. Luke 6:36/Matt. 5:48) is taken up in Ephesians 5:1–2 and extended christologically. What the life of the church should look like is detailed in Ephesians 4:1–6:20. Three points from this detailed paraclesis are especially worth mentioning.

2.2.1 In Ephesians the *household code tradition* does not consist only of nine verses, as in Colossians 3:18–4:1, but has grown to twenty-two verses (Eph. 5:21–6:9) and begins to determine the life of the entire church (rather than simply the household). In the church *all* members should be subject to one another in holy fear before Christ as the head and judge of the church (cf. 5:21 with 6:8–9 and Col. 3:24; 4:1).

The exhortation to all church members to practice mutual submission in Ephesians 5:21 gives a new tone to the immediately following *instructions to wives* to be subject to their husbands in Ephesians 5:22–24. This instruction is indeed based on the early Jewish understanding of Genesis 1:26–27, 2:22–24, and 3:16, according to which God first created the man Adam and appointed him to rule over the woman and the entire creation. From this Paul develops a formal hierarchy in 1 Corinthians 11:3 and 7: God is the head (κεφαλή) of Christ, Christ is the head of the man (NRSV: husband), and the man is the head of the woman (NRSV: his wife), while the woman reflects the divine image of the man only as a creature created after Adam. Ephesians 5:22–24 takes up this view but interprets it now from the perspective of Christ. The subordination of the wives under their husbands is measured by the obedience that all believers owe the Lord, and the rule of the husbands over their wives is measured by the Lord’s love and surrender of his life for the church (cf. 5:25, 28–29). The patriarchal demand for the submission of the wives alone therefore becomes an exhortation to a mutual submission of wives *and* husbands (as well as all church members) out of reverence for Christ. The early Jewish-Pauline interpretation of Genesis 1:26–27 in terms of Adam as the male and husband is not supported by the original text of Genesis, and therefore the theological conclusions that have been and are being drawn from this text are questionable (cf. below, 486, §3.2.3.2). But the

christological understanding of marriage and the mutual relationship of *all* members of the household of God is theologically pathbreaking because it transforms ancient patriarchalism into a love patriarchy and moreover makes clear that the church of Jesus Christ is held together by love (ἀγάπη) as the perfect bond of unity (cf. Col. 3:14 with Eph. 4:15–16).

2.2.2 In Ephesians 5:29–32 the *new understanding of marriage* that Paul and his pupils developed emerges definitively (cf. above, 423–25, §4.4.4.2): Marriage is no longer only a divine creation ordinance established from eternity, but is also the earthly reflection of the relationship of Christ to the church as his bride (cf. above, 462 [M. Gese]). As the center of the Christian household, marriage thereby acquires a very special status.

It has been suspected on various occasions that behind Ephesians 5:29–32 lies the ancient idea of the "holy wedding" or ἱερὸς γάμος (cf. the authors mentioned by M. Theobald, "Heilige Hochzeit," 221ff., 244ff.). But this view is highly problematic. The relationship of husband and wife was already a picture of the relationship of Yahweh and Israel in the Old Testament (cf. Hos. 2:4 [ET 2:2]; Jer. 2:2; Ezek. 16; Isa. 62:4–5). Moreover, H.-W. Park (*Die Kirche als Leib Christi bei Paulus* [1992], 163ff.) has shown that this view was taken up in early Judaism and extended: In *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum* 32.15, *4 Ezra* 6:54ff., and 7:116ff. the creation of Eve from Adam's rib is equated with the creation of Israel or of Israel's saved community from Adam. Paul had already applied this tradition to the relationship of Christ and the church (cf. above, 393, §3.1.2.1.1), and Ephesians carried this out completely. Ephesians 5:29–32 confronts us with the christological and ecclesiological continuation of the early Jewish interpretation of Genesis 2:22–24 in terms of the creation of Israel. The reference to Genesis 2:22–24 explains why Paul frequently says that the church (together with Christ) forms *one* body (cf. Gal. 3:28; 1 Cor. 12:12–13; 2 Cor. 11:2; Rom. 12:4–5; Col. 3:15). Against the background of the early Jewish interpretive tradition, the church appears in Ephesians 5:29–32 in the role of the people of God, which was already created and related to Christ before the fall of the world. *At the same time, the marriage of man and woman is enormously enhanced from a Christian perspective: It reflects the ecclesial mystery of the relationship of Christ and the church* according to the will of God the creator as recorded in the Holy Scriptures.

2.2.3 The paraclesis of our letter concludes in Ephesians 6:10–17 with the topos of the Christian's *armament with spiritual weaponry* and the call to intercede for all fellow Christians and for the imprisoned apostle (cf. Eph. 6:18–20). 1 Thessalonians 5:8 and 2 Corinthians 10:3–5 show that the topos belongs to the Pauline school tradition. Behind it stand Isaiah 59:17 and Wisdom 5:17–18. In Ephesians 6 it is extended and enriched by the Scripture-knowledgeable author by allusions to Isaiah 11:5 and Isaiah 52:7. The text shows that Ephesians sees the situation of Christians in the world very similarly to Paul himself: Christ is already installed as divine ruler of the world (cf. 1:20–21), and in the Spirit the members of his church already have a share in redemption (cf. 1:14; 2:19). But the kingly rule of God and

of his Christ (5:5) still has to prevail against the opposition of the satanic powers (cf. 6:12 with 1 Cor. 15:24–25). Therefore, in the world, Christians still have to withstand the last evil days (cf. Eph. 5:16; 6:13), for which they must arm themselves against the attacks of the supra-earthly evil spirits with the weapons that God puts at their disposal: the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the boots that make people ready to proclaim the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit in the form of the word of God. As M. Gese notes, "without exception the enumerated weapons represent the effective power of God" (M. Gese, *Das Vermächtnis des Apostels*, 227). Christians can stand firm in the spiritual battle in which they are involved only by the power that God gives them. It is certainly no accident that the sword of the Spirit is also the weapon with which Christ himself battles against the rulers of darkness (cf. 6:17 with Isa. 11:4 and 2 Thess. 2:8; Rev. 19:15). The battle of faith and testimony by the members of the body of Christ on earth therefore corresponds to the heavenly battle of their Lord against God's adversaries. Only when these adversaries are overcome will the peace established by Jesus's death and resurrection fill the entire universe (cf. Eph. 2:14–16).

3 In the *Pastoral Letters* the traditional eschatological view of the world that came down from Paul is handed on further, but the paraclesis shows that other life questions have made their way into the foreground.

3.1 What remains in the Pastorals of Paul's own acute imminent expectation of the end as expressed in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, Romans 13:11, etc., is only the fundamental instruction to wait for the end-time appearance of Christ (cf. Titus 2:13). The church stands between the first and the second "epiphany" (ἐπιφάνεια) of Christ (cf. above, 452–53, §4.2.3.1). With the first epiphany of Jesus on earth, salvation effectively appeared; the second epiphany, which God will bring about at the time he has predetermined (see 1 Tim. 6:15), will complete this salvation. In the time between the two epiphanies the church can always assure itself of the truth and reality of its faith in the worship of the exalted one (according to 1 Tim. 3:16). The bishops must uphold the gospel entrusted to them in season and out (cf. 1 Tim. 6:14–15; 2 Tim. 4:1–5), and the believers have to testify credibly before the eyes of all people to the saving grace of God given to them by living a holy life (cf. Titus 2:11–13).

3.2 Titus 3:3–8 documents that the Pastorals see the relationship between Christ's surrender of his life for sinners and his claims on the church and between the lordship of Christ and Christian obedience in the familiar Pauline way. The paraclesis of the Pastorals comes from baptism and refers back to it.

3.2.1 In terms of content, the exhortations to the church in the three Pastoral Letters are grounded in the household code tradition, but are now reexpressed as a formal order in the "household of God." *The beginning of Christianity in the "house"* (cf. above, 465–66, §3.2.1; 470–72, §4.2) *thereby exerts a fundamental influence on the church*: The members of the "household of God" (cf. 1 Tim. 3:15) are obligated to pursue a way of life that corresponds to this status. General and situation-specific instructions overlap each other. The general instructions teach how elders and bishops, old and young, men and women, and also masters and slaves are to conduct themselves in the church and in the wider public, whereas the situation-specific instructions refer to the controversy with the (gnostic) heretics. Examples of the first type may be seen in the virtue and vice lists in 1 Timothy 1:9–10, 2 Timothy 3:2–5, and Titus 3:1–3, together with Titus 2:1–15, while the exhortations in 1 Timothy 2:11–15, 4:1–5, 6:20–21, and 2 Timothy 3:1–17 illustrate the second type.

The members of the churches are not only placed over and under each other, as was usual in ancient households. The qualities for office bearers such as elders and bishops, deacons and widows are defined so that the church appears inwardly and outwardly as the archetypal family (of God). Three examples may be given from 1 Timothy. First, 1 Timothy 3:2–7 gives the qualifications for a *bishop*:

> Now a bishop must be above reproach, married only once, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way—for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how can he take care of God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace and the snare of the devil. (1 Tim. 3:2–7)

The qualifications for *deacons* in 1 Timothy 3:8 are very similar: "Deacons likewise must be serious, not double-tongued, not indulging in much wine, not greedy for money," while 3:12 adds: "Let deacons be married only once, and let them manage their children and their households well." Finally, according to 1 Timothy 5:9–10, a true *widow*—here not every woman whose husband has died, but only one without children and grandchildren to support her (cf. 5:3–5)—needs to meet the following

qualifications before she can be put on the church list of widows and receive financial support: “Let a widow be put on the list if she is not less than sixty years old and has been married only once; she must be well attested for her good works, as one who has brought up children, shown hospitality, washed the saints’ feet, helped the afflicted, and devoted herself to doing good in every way” (1 Tim. 5:9–10).

3.2.2 On the whole, the Pastoral Letters want Christians to “lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity” (1 Tim. 2:2). In order to ensure this the Christians are encouraged to offer “supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions” (1 Tim. 2:1–2), while in Titus 3:1–2 they are advised “to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show every courtesy to everyone” (cf. Rom. 12:18; 13:1–7). Because the house churches and the Christian community at large at the end of the first century were still small minorities in the Mediterranean world, the Christians in our letters are admonished to live a life that made a positive impression on Jews and Gentiles. The Pastoral Letters do not advise Christians to flee the world by forming conventicles, but rather to live an exemplary life according to ancient standards in families and house churches that do not avoid the public.

In his famous commentary on the Pastoral Letters, M. Dibelius included the excursus “das IDEAL CHRISTLICHER BÜRGERLICHKEIT” or “The Ideal of Christian Citizenship . . . to which the Pastorals refer again and again” (M. Dibelius, *Die Pastoralbriefe* [1931^2], 24–25, at 24; rev. ed. H. Conzelmann [1955^3], 32–33 [identical here with 1931^2]; ET: M. Dibelius and H. Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, trans. P. Buttolph and A. Yarbro, Hermeneia [1972], 39–41). As Dibelius explains, this ideal for life “does not simply appear as a reproduction of popular ethics, but has been given new motivation by Christian ideas. Further, the fulfillment of these demands is urged for the church’s sake. In no small degree the significance of the Pastoral Epistles rests on the fact that they are the only documents in the canon which enjoin *such a structuring of life under the ideal of good Christian citizenship* (*einer solchen christlich-bürgerlichen Lebensgestaltung*)” (Dibelius [1955^3], 33; ET, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 40, italics added).

Here Dibelius’s translators, P. Buttolph and A. Yarbro, have determined that Dibelius’s use of *christlich-bürgerlich* or *christliche Bürgerlichkeit* is not intentionally pejorative, and therefore they have added the term “good” in “good Christian citizenship,” which is found nowhere in Dibelius’s excursus (cf. also the added excursus title, “The Ideal of Good Christian Citizenship,” 39). This is helpful to dispel an overly unsympathetic view of the Pastorals, but it also introduces an innovation, because the standard translation of *bürgerlich* when talking about both economic and moral matters is “middle class” or even “bourgeois.” The latter term is frequently used in translations of other German biblical scholars who make value judgments about the Pastorals. Thus, for example, W. Schrage’s text, referring in part to the idea of the church as the “household of God” in 1 Timothy

3:15 and of the bishop as "God's steward" in Titus 1:7, is rendered in the following way in the English translation: "Church and household are closely related. . . . The author [of the Pastorals] sees an intimate connection between the institutional church and bourgeois morality" (*The Ethics of the New Testament*, 263). Similarly, in the Pastorals "everything is much more prosaic, pedestrian, bourgeois, moralistic" than in Ephesians and Colossians (ibid., 257).

Nevertheless, regardless of the terminology used, one can entertain criticisms of the Pastoral Letters on ethics and economics only as long as one remains clear about the fact that the socioeconomic reality of life in the household and extended family was something already given to Christians. This includes concretely the overt governing role of the master of the house as the *paterfamilias*, the responsibility of his wife for small children and running the domestic economy, and fixed social roles for parents, children, and servants that could not be altered arbitrarily. Christians ventured to take hold of this preexisting model of the οἶκος and to make it the place where they could best prove their faith in practice. The life which they led in this way not only meets the standards set by the ancient οἰκονομία, but also bears comparison with the presentation of the virtuous, pious life by Philo in the *Decalogue* and by Josephus in his *Against Apion* (2.190–219). The Christian "good citizen" or "middle-class" household model of the Pastoral Letters was trendsetting in church life in the east and west for centuries and has remained significant until the present day. As Dibelius concludes, "For an historical understanding it is not enough to confront this ethical ideal with the ethics of Jesus or Paul. It is necessary to consider the changed situation of the church and to interpret the Pastorals . . . in the context of a changing conceptual structure—change had to follow the orientation toward a longer duration of life in the world" (41).

3.2.3 At the same time, our letters do not merit a naive but only a reflective theological approval. This is not only because the standards of the ancient οἰκονομία and the fixed social roles in the household have become questionable in modern society. It is especially because the Pastoral Letters only hint at their awareness of the limited possibilities for coexistence between the Christian church and the unbelieving world (cf. 2 Tim. 2:10–13) that were always fully in view in the Johannine circle, and because our letters' call to maintain the Christian household had considerable limitations from the start because of the rights of *all* church members to freedom and equality grounded in their baptism (cf. Gal. 3:26–28).

3.2.3.1 What has just been said can be illustrated by the example of 1 Timothy 2:8–15. The overall text forms a threefold instruction for the conduct of church members in the worship service: 1 Timothy 2:8 admonishes the men to pray in a holy posture and attitude (cf. Mal. 1:11). Verses 9–10 urge the women (similarly to 1 Pet. 3:3–4) not to excel in conspicuous hairstyles, jewelry, and expensive clothes, but rather to cultivate pious modesty and good works. Verses 11–15 finally oblige the "woman" (singular) to learn in silence and forbid her to teach publicly and so to exercise authority (over a man). The generic singular γυνή shows that this involves a fundamental regulation. In verses 13–14 this regulation is

given two grounds: Adam is the first created human being, appointed to exercise authority, and not Eve, who was only created after him. And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman who let herself be deceived and transgressed God's commandment. The first argument continues the Pauline interpretation of Genesis 1:27 in 1 Corinthians 11:8–9 and Ephesians 5:23, while the second continues the understanding of Genesis 3:4–6 in Sirach 25:24 (cf. also Philo, *QG* 1.43; 4.15; Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 2.201). In verse 15 there follows an addendum that seems to have nothing at all to do with the theme of worship: Women will be "saved through childbearing, provided they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty." This odd addendum makes clear the direction of the entire instruction: The "falsely so-called gnosis" (1 Tim. 6:20) apparently found special resonance for its teachings among wealthy and educated women (cf. 1 Tim. 5:13; 2 Tim. 3:6). These teachings also account for the orders to abstain from marriage and to practice asceticism in matters of food (cf. 1 Tim. 4:3). According to Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.24.2, the gnostics taught "that marriage and generation [i.e., procreation] are from Satan. Many of those, too, who belong to this school abstain from animal food and draw away multitudes by a feigned temperance of this kind" (*ANF* 1:349). 1 Timothy 2:11–15 apparently wants to prevent the public spreading of such views through women by forbidding them to teach in the worship services and by promising them salvation once they prove themselves as mothers of the house.

3.2.3.2 The antignostic accent of 1 Timothy 2:15 is striking, and its aim of hindering the spread of gnostic false teaching is easy to understand historically. Nevertheless, the general prohibition of teaching by women in 1 Timothy 2:12 is very unfortunate. This does not only contradict the apostle's remarks in 1 Corinthians 11:5 and 13; the two supporting arguments for forbidding women to teach in 1 Timothy 2:13–14 also fail the exegetical test: Genesis 1:27 does not speak of Adam as "husband" but rather of the male and female together as created human beings (LXX correctly translates the Hebrew אָדָם [*ʾādām*] by ἄνθρωπος). Moreover, what the statement about "leaving and cleaving" in Genesis 2:24 promotes is precisely not the rule of the husband over his wife, but the married partnership of both. The interpretation in 1 Timothy 2:14 of the eating of the forbidden fruit in Genesis 3:4–6 stands in fundamental contradiction to

the Pauline concept of sin (cf. Rom. 5:12–21; 7:7–13) and is also contrary to the baptismal tradition of Galatians 3:26–28 as well as 1 Corinthians 7:23. These observations greatly relativize the significance of 1 Timothy 2:11–15 for biblical theology. These verses have the same tenor as the probably deutero-Pauline addition in 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 (cf. above, 397, item [2]), but this does not justify the statements either here or there. In terms of their historical influence, the two texts have robbed the church of the active participation of women in the teaching office and have obscured the significance of women in the mission of Paul and the ancient church.

4 Colossians and Ephesians as well as the Pastoral Letters document that the Pauline school ventured to tie together the Pauline tradition, to interpret it further, and to risk a new church order that would enable the churches to survive in the world over the long term without losing their Christian identity. The acute discussion about justification, the validity and scope of the law, and the meaning of faith fade into the background in these letters, but in exchange fundamental questions of Christology, church structure, the preservation of the church against corruption by Christian false teaching, and the credible life of Christians are thrust into the foreground. In the history of the Christian mission, this was all necessary. Therefore, one will value the efforts of the Pauline school concerning the church as the "household of God" just as highly as the summary and further interpretation of the Pauline gospel attested in our letters. Yet the teaching of the original Pauline letters must be prevented from falling from view because of this further interpretation. The deutero-Pauline letters will then appear not as a substitute for Paul, but only as a rounding out of his unique proclamation and teaching.

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EXCURSUS

Eschatology and Apostleship in 2 Thessalonians

Judgments about the authenticity of 2 Thessalonians vary extremely widely. Accordingly, it is contested whether the views presented in this letter are characteristic of Paul himself or only of his school.

1 The letter seeks to inform its readers about the sequence of the end-time events. It calls its addressees to prepare soberly for the end, which has drawn near but not yet arrived. It is therefore closely connected thematically with 1 Thessalonians. Yet the picture of Paul's apostleship which the letter presents, as well as its apocalyptic scenario and associated paraclesis, does not fit well with what is said in the other disputed letters, including Colossians, Ephesians, and the Pastoral Epistles, about Paul's significance, imprisonment, suffering, and readiness for death, and about the end times and the problems of the church. A few words and expressions do appear in 2 Thessalonians that do not occur elsewhere in Paul, but on the whole 2 Thessalonians has a Pauline linguistic character. The special formulations may be explained by the special eschatological traditions that the letter takes up (see below). Overall, the Pauline manner of expression differentiates 2 Thessalonians clearly from the redundant style of Ephesians and the special terminology of the Pastoral Epistles. It is therefore truly questionable whether the writing really belongs to the deutero–Pauline letters. Linguistically it can by all means be a letter dictated by Paul himself (cf. 2 Thess. 3:17), which belongs temporally and materially with 1 Thessalonians.

2 A decision about the character of 2 Thessalonians depends less upon the introduction in 1:3–12 than upon the interpretation of 2:1–12. The references in the introduction to the imminent judgment and the end of the persecution and oppression which the addressees were suffering can be explained if the letter takes up the concerns of 1 Thessalonians (see especially 1 Thess. 2:12; 3:13; 4:15) and seeks to ensure the Christians in Thessalonica once again of their eschatological participation in God's kingdom, which Christ will establish through his parousia.

It is more difficult to explain *2 Thessalonians 2:1–12*. Here the purported letter writer criticizes precisely that expectation of the parousia and the final judgment which he himself had propagated in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11. One can view 2 Thessalonians as an authentic Pauline document only if such criticism can be thought plausible within the framework of genuine Pauline teaching. In other words, the sequence of the end-time events sketched in 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12 must fit better with the apostle's expectation of the end and his apocalyptic understanding of his mission in his undisputed letters (cf. Gal. 1:15–16; 2:7–9; Rom. 1:1–5; 11:13–14; 15:15–21) than it does with the picture given in the disputed letters of an imprisoned "holy" apostle (cf. Eph. 3:5) who has suffered for his churches (cf. Col. 1:24; Eph. 3:2, 13; 2 Tim. 2:10) and has fought the good fight, enabling him to face his imminent end full of hope (cf. 2 Tim. 4:6–8). The text of 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12 runs in the NRSV:

> [1]As to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we beg you, brothers and sisters, [2]not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as though from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is already here. [3]Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the lawless one is revealed, the one destined for destruction [lit. "*the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction*" (NRSV margin)]. [4]He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, declaring himself to be God. [5]Do you not remember that I told you these things when I was still with you? [6]And you know what is now restraining him, so that he may be revealed when his time comes. [7]For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work, but only until the one who now restrains it is removed [or *disappears from the scene,* NEB; see below]. [8]And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will destroy with the breath of his mouth, annihilating him by the manifestation of his coming. [9]The coming of the lawless one is apparent in the working of Satan, who uses all power, signs, lying wonders, [10]and every kind of wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. [11]For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion, leading them to

believe what is false, [12]so that all who have not believed the truth but took pleasure in unrighteousness will be condemned.

2.1 As the commentaries show, over the course of the history of interpretation, this passage has inspired entire systems of interpretation dealing with eschatology and the theology of history. At their center stood and stand two questions: Who is the eschatological opponent of God announced by Paul? And what or whom should we understand by "that which restrains" (*τὸ κατέχον*) or "the one who restrains" (*ὁ κατέχων*) this opponent in 2:6–7? Christian tradition since 2 John 7; 1 John 2:18, 22; and 4:3 has identified the opponent of all that is godly with the "antichrist" (*ἀντίχριστος*). Regarding the identification of the restrainer, interpreters have often been led to the presentation of the "beast" (*θηρίον*) that rises up against God's Christ in Revelation 13. We can enter into these interesting questions of interpretation only to the extent that they contribute to the clarification of the text.

2.2 In 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3, the author reacts to views that were being circulated in the Thessalonian church, based upon words given by the Holy Spirit to the church prophets and upon supposed written statements from Paul. According to 2:2, they culminate in the claim that "the day of the Lord is already here" (*ἐνέστηκεν ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου*). The advocates of this opinion were "living in idleness" (3:6, 11) and acting like "mere busybodies, not doing any work" (3:11). They were thus becoming a burden to their fellow church members. The writer counters the enthusiasts' claims and their unstable behavior even more decisively in 2 Thessalonians than in 1 Thessalonians 5:14. The addressees should not let themselves be unsettled in their thinking by the claim that the day of the Lord is already here (2:3). Rather, the enthusiasts should be required to earn their living with their own hands, according to the pattern set by the apostle (3:6–13). If they persist in their opinion, which contradicts the faith tradition taught by Paul (cf. 2:15), and refuse to settle down even after receiving 2 Thessalonians, one should take note of them and temporarily break off dealings with them (cf. 2 Thess. 3:6, 14).

In asking how such enthusiasm could arise in a congregation founded by Paul, we do well to recall 1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11 and particularly Paul's exhortation not to quench the Spirit and not to despise prophecy (1 Thess. 5:19–20). By appealing to these apostolic statements (see especially 1 Thess. 4:17; 5:5), the church prophets could arrive with some justification at the (seemingly

Johannine) statement ἐνέστηκεν ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου (cf. 2 Thess. 2:2 with John 5:24–25). To support their views they also appealed to additional statements from other letters supposedly written by Paul. Since in the church that Paul founded in Corinth the belief spread that Christians were already resurrected by faith, with no further bodily resurrection (cf. 1 Cor. 15:12, 35), the Thessalonian enthusiasm is not an isolated case. The fact that the enthusiasts appeared on the scene as Paulinists explains the writer's sharp reaction. It finds its counterpart in 1 Corinthians 15:12–19 and anticipates the condemnation of Hymenaeus and Philetus in 2 Timothy 2:17–18 (cf. 1 Tim. 1:19–20). These two men, by claiming, perhaps on the basis of Colossians 2:12, 3:1, and Ephesians 2:6, that "the resurrection has already taken place" (ἀνάστασις ἤδη γέγονεν, 2 Tim. 2:18), were departing from the truth of the faith that Paul taught.

2.3 In 2 Thessalonians 2:3–12 the true Pauline position is set over against the erroneous opinion of the enthusiasts. These verses should be understood as a supplementary commentary to the apocalyptic teachings in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11.

2.3.1 In 1 Thessalonians 4:15–5:11 Paul explains the word of the Lord which he had received, "that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have fallen asleep" (4:15). As we have already seen (cf. above, 254–55, 336, 342), his explanation depends heavily upon the synoptic apocalypse, which Paul appears to have been familiar with by means of a preliminary form of Matthew 24 (D. Wenham). If one pursues this line of reasoning, the procedure that lies behind 1 Thessalonians 4:15–5:11 may also account for 2 Thessalonians 2:3–12. Paul here continues the written scriptural lesson about the end-time events which he began in 1 Thessalonians, referring once again to statements like those found in Matthew 24:4–6 and 10–28. Christ's parousia is at hand but has not yet arrived (cf. Matt. 24:6). Prior to the end comes a special time of tribulation in which lying prophets arrive on the scene, seduction toward unbelief and "lawlessness" (ἀνομία) becomes rampant (cf. Matt. 24:12), and the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by the prophet Daniel (τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως; cf. Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11) takes God's place in the temple. Nevertheless, the end and the parousia will not come until the gospel of the kingdom has been "preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations" (cf. Matt. 24:14 with Mark 13:10). Paul betrays a detailed knowledge of apocalyptic traditions as early as 1 Thessalonians 2:14–16, 4:16–17, and 5:3 (see additionally 1 Cor. 15:23–28), and in Romans 11:13–15, 25–31; 15:16, he interprets his apostolic mission from the perspective of Matthew 24:14 (Mark 13:10). Accordingly, his instructions in 2 Thessalonians 2:1–2 and 3–12 are hardly

a foreign element in his teaching. These are not topics that first arose with the deutero–Pauline letters; the verses show that the apostle himself had a very exact picture about the sequence of the end-time events, and that he passed this on to others.

2.3.2 We are now closer to answering the question of who or what is meant by “the restrainer” (τὸ κατέχον or ὁ κατέχων) in 2 Thessalonians 2:6–7. But before we interpret the restrainer from Revelation 13 in terms of Rome, with Nero *redivivus* as the antichrist, as is commonly done, we should remember that the apostle has in mind the divine plan for the parousia to take place only after the gospel of Christ has been “preached to all nations as a testimony,” thus qualifying those nations for the worldwide judgment (Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10). Those who have accepted the gospel will be saved, while those who have rejected it will be rejected (cf. Matt. 24:29–31; Mark 13:24–27). In 2 Thessalonians 1:5–10 and 2:10–12, this same understanding of judgment is developed, and the language about “our *gathering together* (ἐπισυναγωγή) to Christ,” which occurs in the Pauline corpus only in 2 Thessalonians 2:1, shows that the writer in fact had his eye on the tradition about the “gathering” of the elect preserved in Matthew 24:31 and Mark 13:27 (ἐπισυνάγω). The language about “the restrainer” in 2 Thessalonians 2:6–7, which is both neuter and personal (τὸ κατέχον and ὁ κατέχων), brings out the divine plan of salvation as well as its accomplishment through one person.

The phrase in 2 Thessalonians 2:7, μόνον ὁ κατέχων ἄρτι ἕως ἐκ μέσου γένηται, “but only until the one who now restrains it [sc. the mystery of lawlessness] is removed” (NRSV), is commonly interpreted on the basis of 1 Corinthians 5:2 (cf. also Col. 2:14) as the *violent* removal of the restrainer. But semantically the expression ἐκ μέσου γένηται can also denote simply “to leave the scene” (cf. H. W. Fulford, “Ἕως ἐκ μέσου γένηται [II Thess II,7],” *ExpTim* 23 [1911–1912]: 40–41; BDAG 198, s.v. γίνομαι 6b). This second meaning better fits the eschatological task with which Paul saw himself entrusted (assuming that Paul himself is the restrainer; see below). Hence the NEB translates, “until the Restrainer *disappears from the scene*.”

2.3.3 Because he knew himself to be called by the risen Christ to be the apostle to the Gentiles and was confirmed in his special task at the apostolic council (cf. Gal. 1:15–16; Rom. 1:1–5; 15:16–21 with Gal. 2:7–9), *Paul seems to have viewed himself as the “restrainer” who held back the end-time events*. He still had to complete the mission work among the Gentiles entrusted to him. Only after the gospel has been proclaimed to all the

nations can the end-time events take their full course. Even in the Letter to the Romans, the apostle believed that he would still live to see the completion of his work (cf. Rom. 15:23–24). This highly apocalyptic understanding of his role, which apparently had Isaiah 66:18–21 in the background (cf. Rom. 15:15–21), fits much better in the period of Paul's active ministry than in the later period in which his pupils were anticipating the apostle's imprisonment, suffering, and finally also his death.

The expectation of the *antichrist* first appears *expressis verbis* in the New Testament in 1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; and 2 John 7 (cf. also Rev. 12:18–13:10, 11–18; 17:8–10). But the "son of destruction" (ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας) of 2 Thessalonians 2:3–4 and the "abomination of desolation" (τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως) of Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14 apparently denote the same figure. This expectation of an opposing satanic power who rises up against God and his Christ goes back to Daniel's mysterious presentation of the Syrian King Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 BC). In 167 BC Antiochus desecrated the Jerusalem temple by setting up a sacrificial altar to Zeus Olympios, and he allowed himself to be designated "god manifest" (θεὸς ἐπιφανής) on coins (cf. Dan. 7:24–26; 8:9–12, 23–25; 11:21–39). From here the expectation of a godless tyrant runs from the Qumran texts (cf. 4Q174 [4QFlor], 23–24), through the early Jewish apocalypses (*2 Bar.* 39:7; 40:1–3; *T. Mos.* 8:1–5), and on to the New Testament period. It was kept alive by the plan of the Roman Caesar Caligula to set up his own image in the Jerusalem temple and to have people worship it (cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 18.261ff.). As 2 Thessalonians 2:3 and 8–9 show, Paul, too, expected the appearance of "the man of lawlessness" (ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας) or "the lawless one" (ὁ ἄνομος), seeing him in true Jewish or Jewish Christian fashion as Beliar (Belial) or a creature of Beliar (cf. 2 Cor. 6:15). The expectation of the antichrist is also found in later Christian reworkings of Jewish apocalyptic writings, such as the *Apocalypse of Elijah* 3:1–13 and the *Ascension of Isaiah* 4:1–18.

2.4 Paul's purpose in 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12 is not to nullify but to *clarify* the imminent apocalyptic expectation in which he himself lived. This expectation is entirely controlled by his apostolic mission, and requires of the church the obedience of faith, readiness to suffer, sobriety, and trust in the hope which God has established in and through Christ (cf. 1 Thess. 5:9; 2 Thess. 2:13–16). If one interprets 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12 as we have done above, then one can see *2 Thessalonians as a genuinely Pauline document*. We may then discard the highly uncertain assumption that an unknown pupil of Paul used 2 Thessalonians to combat errors that arose from misreadings of 1 Thessalonians and were spread on the basis of spurious letters of Paul (cf. 2 Thess. 2:2).

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CHAPTER 27

The Letter of James

Whoever wants to understand the Letter of James historically and in the context of the canon must have a clear understanding of its original situation and intention and attempt to relate it to Paul and his proclamation.

1 There are two possibilities for identifying the Letter of James historically. Either the letter was written during the lifetime of James the Lord's brother, or it is seen as a pseudepigraphical writing from a time long after the destruction of Jerusalem.

James the Lord's brother suffered martyrdom in AD 62 (see below). If he himself wrote the Letter of James, then it must have originated at the end of the 50s (at the latest), during Paul's several years of imprisonment first in Caesarea and then in Rome (cf. Acts 23:23–26:32; 28:16–31). Philippians 1:15–18 shows how Paul reacted at that time to the missionary activities of his friends (of whom James will have been one: see below, §7.1) as well as of his opponents. If, on the other hand, one dates James only after AD 70, it becomes almost impossible to identify the author and his addressees. The end-time orientation to Zion as the place of the parousia indeed remained intact in the increasingly Gentile Christian church that quickly became independent after the destruction of Jerusalem, where James had ministered and was martyred. Nevertheless, the decisive teaching authorities in the Gentile-influenced majority church were Peter and Paul. It is therefore no accident that our letter first established itself canonically around AD 200. Under these circumstances the name of James the Lord's brother is precisely one that would *not* commend itself after the destruction of Jerusalem as an appropriate pseudonym for a "sapiential letter of admonition and instruction" addressed to all of Christianity (*contra* U. Schnelle, *The History and Theology of the New Testament Writings* [1998], 392). For historical reasons, therefore, the early date of the letter supported for example by G. Kittel, M. Hengel, and F. Mussner (*Der Jakobusbrief* [1981[4]], 7–8) is greatly to be preferred over the conventional late date of much critical scholarship (cf., e.g., W. Popkes, *Der Brief des* Jakobus, THKNT 14 [2001], 59–69; D. C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of James* [2013], 3–32, esp. 13, "a second-century pseudepigraphon composed in the diaspora"). Authorship by James is also supported as the most probable alternative by a number of recent English-speaking commentators, including P. H. Davids (*The Epistle of James* [1982], 21–22), L. T. Johnson (*The Letter of James* [1995], 118–21), R. Bauckham (*James* [1999], 11–25), D. J. Moo (*The Letter of James* [2000], 9–22), P. J. Hartin (*James* [2003], 24–25), W. F. Brosend (*James and Jude* [2004], 2–5), C. L. Blomberg and M. J. Kamell (*James* [2008], 27–35), D. G. McCartney (*James* [2009], 8–32), and S. McKnight (*The Letter of James* [2011], 37–38).

2 If James was written by the Lord's brother himself, then this implies that the letter takes a position on the proclamation of Paul. M. Hengel even sees a conscious *anti-Pauline polemic* at work in this letter (cf. his "Der

Jakobusbrief als antipaulinische Polemik” [1987], in bibliography), which, in keeping with ancient practice, is expressed indirectly rather than directly.

The well-known passage about faith and works in James 2:14–26 (see below, §5) is not the only passage with a polemical accent. The criticism of those who are constantly on the move for financial gain in James 4:13–16 can very easily be applied to some of Paul’s supporters such as Prisca and Aquila, who traveled as tentmakers from Rome to Corinth, from there to Ephesus, and then again back to Rome (cf. Acts 18:1–3, 18–19, 24–26; Rom. 16:3–5; and P. Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries* [2003], 187–95). The admonition in James 1:19–20, “Let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger, for the anger of man (ἀνήρ) does not work the righteousness of God (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ)” (RSV) and does not bring about acquittal in the final judgment (cf. also Sir. 1:22) can be referred without difficulty to the apostle’s injuriously sharp polemic against his Jewish Christian opponents (cf. Gal. 5:12; 6:12–13; 2 Cor. 11:1–6; Rom. 16:17–18; Phil. 3:2), and James’s allusion here to the Pauline catchword δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, God’s (saving) righteousness (James 1:20; cf. v. 21 about the implanted word that can save souls), is also certainly no accident. The warning in James 3:1–2 that not many people should push their way into the teaching office and that they should keep their tongues in check could be aimed at the elders that Paul (and Barnabas) appointed in every church (cf. Acts 14:23). Because Paul regularly weaves oath formulas into his arguments (cf., e.g., Gal. 1:20; 2 Cor. 1:23; Rom. 1:9), the sharpened prohibition of oaths in James 5:12 also makes good sense polemically. Finally, in James 5:13–16 the recommendation for sick people to call for prayer and anointing by the elders of the church need not be simply general advice, but could also be a concrete admonition to the constantly ailing apostle (cf. 2 Cor. 12:7).

3 The Letter of James is a circular letter in the tradition of early Jewish wisdom that seeks to instruct “the twelve tribes in the Dispersion” in a Christianity of deeds and patient endurance. It is written in rhetorically polished Greek, as was customary for letters sent out from Jerusalem into the οἰκουμένη (for an analogy, see, e.g., 2 Macc. 1:1–2:18). The mention of the “twelve tribes” may refer to the end-time people of the twelve tribes in the form of all Christianity (cf. Rev. 7:4–8), whose mother church was in Jerusalem.

The letter’s contents consist above all of exhortation in wisdom. In some places this exhortation breathes the spirit of the piety of the Christian poor from Jewish and Jesuanic tradition (cf. James 1:9–10; 2:1–13; and especially 4:13–5:6 with Luke 6:20–21, 24–25; 16:19–31). Elsewhere too the letter has conspicuously frequent points of contact with the synoptic Jesus tradition (cf., e.g., Matt. 22:39–40 with James 2:8; Matt. 7:7 with James 4:3; Matt. 5:34–37 with James 5:12; Mark 4:26–29 with James 5:7–8; etc.). Admittedly, the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός is mentioned only in James 1:1 and 2:1, and the letter also lacks any direct reference to the saving work of God accomplished in Jesus’s death and resurrection. Nevertheless, baptism and spiritual rebirth are the presupposition of all the admonitions James delivers (cf. 1:17, 18, 21). At the center of the argumentation, which recent analyses have shown to be rhetorically perfectly coherent, stands a debate with an ἄνθρωπος κενός or “foolish person” (2:20) who is convinced of being justified (in the final judgment) by faith alone without works (2:14–26). Judging from the wording and subject matter, the “fool” who is attacked here can only be a representative of Paul’s doctrinal position or Paul himself.

4 In order to follow the criticism leveled in James 2:14–26 against the Pauline concept of justification, one must first consider how James and Paul stood in relation to each other.

4.1 Paul's former fellow Pharisees viewed him as an apostate ever since he defected to the Christians (cf. Gal. 5:11 with 2 Cor. 11:24). He also remained suspect to all Jewish Christians who adhered to Jewish customs and the law (cf. Acts 15:1–2). After Paul had fought in vain in Antioch against the introduction of Jewish ritual requirements for Gentile Christians demanded by those sent from James and had distanced himself from the majority of the Jewish Christians there as well as from Peter and Barnabas (cf. Gal. 2:11–21), he was exposed to constant criticism and eventually even to a type of "counterpropaganda" from the apostles of the Jewish Christian church, who came partly from Jerusalem, but also partly from Antioch. They arrived in (South) Galatia to oppose Paul and even demanded postconversion circumcision and observance of the law from the Gentile Christians whom Paul and Barnabas had converted (cf. Gal. 6:12–13). In 1–2 Corinthians and Romans a less radical Jewish Christian opposition is evident that required no circumcision of the Gentiles, but insisted on more strict keeping of the commandments than Paul and his coworkers required. For all his Jewish Christian adversaries, the apostle Paul was only the late-called preacher of a gospel accommodated to the wishes of the Gentiles (cf. Gal. 1:10; 2 Cor. 11:5–11; Rom. 3:8; 6:1, 15; etc.), which had to be opposed by the teaching of the true apostolic authorities, especially Peter and James.

4.2 James the Lord's brother owes his conversion to a special resurrection appearance of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 15:7). After Peter's flight from Jerusalem (cf. Acts 12:17), James rose to become leader of the Jerusalem church. In this position he steered a middle course: He forbade those whom Paul called "false brothers" to influence the Gentile mission (cf. Gal. 2:4 with Acts 15:1, 5, 24), but he also forbade the converted Gentiles to abolish the law.

In order to understand James's position, one must consider that the *mission concept* of the Jerusalem pillar apostles (cf. Gal. 2:9) was based on the Great Commission to evangelize "all nations" in Matthew 28:16–20. This required no circumcision or law observance of Gentiles, but only baptism in the name of Jesus and keeping the commands of Jesus (cf. below, 608–12, §7).

James was a Jew who believed in the Messiah Jesus and embodied a Judaism transformed by the Christ event. Nevertheless. in AD 62, during

the high priesthood of Ananus II, he was condemned by the Sanhedrin as a lawbreaker and stoned to death (cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 20.200, and Hegesippus in Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 2.23.4–18). While Pharisaic circles saw James as a righteous man or צַדִּיק (*ṣaddîq*; cf. Hegesippus), the Sadducean majority in the Sanhedrin did not acknowledge his position as truly Jewish.

Paul first met James in Jerusalem two years after his call (cf. Gal. 1:19; Acts 9:27). The Lord's brother was then Paul's decisive conversation partner both at the apostolic council in AD 48 and in the delivery of the collection in Jerusalem in 56–57. Together with Peter, he opposed the radical critics of Paul in his own ranks, but also made no secret of the fact that Jewish Christians in Jerusalem still had to live within the framework of Judaism. Moreover, James emphasized that even in the Diaspora, where there might be more pressure to assimilate, Jewish Christians should not be compelled to live like Gentiles (cf. Gal. 2:3, 6, 9–10 with Acts 15:13–21 and Acts 21:18–25, esp. v. 21). Hence, immediately after the apostolic council, James sent emissaries to Antioch who called upon Peter and the Jewish Christians there to have no church and table fellowship with Gentile Christians unless they were prepared to follow the minimal "Noachian" commandments given to Gentiles in Genesis 9:1–17 (cf. also Lev. 17–18)—that is, abstention from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals, and from sexual immorality (cf. Gal. 2:12–13 with Acts 15:20, 29). By the same token, James asked Paul during his collection visit in Jerusalem to expend a certain sum of money from the funds collected "for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem" (cf. Rom. 15:26) to help four poor Jewish Christian Nazirites to purify themselves, have their heads shaved, and have sacrifices offered for them in order to complete their Nazirite vows (cf. Acts 21:23–25). According to Luke's presentation, Paul complied with this request (cf. Acts 21:26).

4.3 Considering all these circumstances, there is no difficulty in seeing the Letter of James as a circular letter to the Christians in the Diaspora that was really authorized by the Lord's brother. The letter presupposes that its addressees have been baptized in the name of the Lord, as suggested especially by the reference to "the excellent name that was invoked over you" in James 2:7 (cf. also 1:18, 21). It also admonishes them to live by "the perfect law of liberty" in order to be blessed in what they do (cf. 1:25). The letter thereby gives moral support to the more moderate opponents of Paul, who required of Gentiles only baptism and the keeping of the Torah of Jesus as conditioned by the love commandment (see above).

5 Because of the theological importance of the debate over justification, James 2:14–26 must be cited in full:

> [14]What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? [15]If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, [16]and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs,

> what is the good of that? [17]So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. [18]But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith. [19]You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder. [20]Do you want to be shown, you senseless person, that faith apart from works is barren? [21]Was not our ancestor Abraham justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar [cf. Gen. 22:2, 9]? [22]You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was brought to completion by the works. [23]Thus the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness” [Gen. 15:6], and he was called the friend of God [cf. Isa. 41:8]. [24]You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. [25]Likewise, was not Rahab the prostitute also justified by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them out by another road [cf. Josh. 2:1–21]? [26]For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.

5.1 It cannot be determined whether James had Pauline letters such as Galatians or Romans at his disposal. Possibly he knew Paul’s teaching only from his rare meetings with the apostle and from the polemical statements of his opponents. But this does not change the fact that in James 2:14–26, Paul’s teaching about faith and justification is severely criticized in the form of an imaginary dialogue.

In James 2:17–18 Paul’s views are under debate insofar as it is only he who set faith and works (of the law) in antithesis (cf. above, 374–75, §2.4.2.7.1). Verses 21–24 are likewise directed against the apostle. For in James the key text about Abraham’s justification by faith in Genesis 15:6 is interpreted from the perspective of Abraham’s good “work” of offering up Isaac in Genesis 22:9–18. By contrast, Paul himself in Galatians 3:6–9 and Romans 4:1–25 interprets Genesis 15:6 from God’s covenant with Abraham to “bless all the (Gentile) nations” through him (Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:8) and to make him the “father of many nations” (Gen. 17:5; Rom. 4:17), that is, the “father of all who believe” (Rom. 4:11). Moreover, verse 24 forms a clear counterthesis to a view held only by Paul, namely, that faith alone justifies (cf. Rom. 3:28).

5.2 One can immediately see that the first example about neglecting care for the needy in James 2:14–16 does not apply to Paul. From 1 Thessalonians 4:1–12, 5:12–15 onward (cf. with 2 Thess. 3:6–13), the apostle was at pains in the churches he founded to correct a faith attitude that made the saving promise of the gospel into a license for immorality and

indifference toward the needs of one’s neighbor, and derived from the imminent expectation of the parousia a license for idleness. In 1 Thessalonians 4:9, Galatians 5:14, 6:2, and Romans 13:8–10, the apostle emphasized love as the lifelong obligation that Christians owe everyone. In 1 Corinthians 13:2 he declared that even the faith that is measured by Jesus’s own saying about faith moving mountains is useless if it lacks love. According to Paul, only the faith that works through acts of love toward one’s neighbor can confidently await the hope of righteousness, that is, final justification (cf. Gal. 5:5–6). Therefore, James 2:14–16 is only a type of prelude to the actual controversy.

5.3 The actual point of controversy is reached in James 2:17. Whereas James declares faith without works to be dead, Paul sets *πίστις* in antithesis to the *ἔργα νόμου* or “works of the law.” Furthermore, Paul does not know of any dead faith, but only of the obedience of faith that is active through love.

There is no mention in Paul of any special works that might prove the otherwise dead faith of Christians to be alive, because he contrasts the faith that is opened up to believers by the Holy Spirit through the gospel with the Jewish attitude about faith, which seeks to produce “works of the law” (cf. Gal. 2:16 with Rom. 3:20). According to the apostle’s teaching, it is faith alone that saves people before God’s judgment throne, and not their appeal to meritorious works of the law (cf. Rom. 3:28). According to Galatians 5:6, the faith that confesses Jesus Christ as Lord (cf. Rom. 10:9) is by nature active in the love of neighbor. Therefore in Galatians 5:22–23 the apostle also speaks of the manifold fruit of the Spirit borne by those who stand no longer under the law but under the grace of God. (As Ephesians 2:10 and Titus 2:14 show, the Pauline school freed itself from the old antithesis of faith versus works of the law and did not shrink from speaking once again of the good works that God gives the members of the church to do.)

5.4 James 2:18–26 clearly shows that James does not accept the contrast of faith and works and sees the Pauline slogan “by faith alone” (cf. Rom. 3:28) as a statement that needs to be emphatically contradicted.

James 2:18 is difficult to interpret. One possibility is the following: “You have faith and I have works” *could* be an ironic formulation of the consensus that would need to be reached after the apostolic council in all churches in which Pauline-minded Christians lived together with those who were more on the side of James and Peter. This would apply, for example, in Antioch, but also in Ephesus, Corinth, or Rome. James considers this formula untenable. He therefore attacks the speaker and equates the position of the one who says, “I have faith,” with the mere conviction of the existence of a single God (2:19). A philosophical monotheism was widespread in the ancient world (cf. the references collected by H. Kleinknecht, *TDNT* 3:73–79, from Platonism, Stoicism, and popular philosophy; more recently, P. Athanassiadi and M. Frede, eds., *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity* [1999]). The saying “God is one” (εἷς ἐστιν ὁ θεός) naturally reminded Jewish Christians of the Shema in Deuteronomy 6:4. When James 2:19 says that the confession of the one God has an

intimidating effect on the demons, this is conveniently proved by the fact that the name of the one God was actually used in Jewish and Christian exorcisms (cf. Acts 19:13–17 and the magical papyrus *PGM* IV. 3007–3086 in H. D. Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation* [1992^{2}], 96–97). In view of the examples that our author has endeavored to produce, he is naturally correct: The demon-averting formula of the one God is insufficient to attain justification in the final judgment. But it is simply grotesque to want to pin this position on a follower of Paul or even on the apostle himself.

5.5 In James 2:18–26 two important facts are passed over: The author fails to note that for Paul and his school, the saying εἷς ἐστιν ὁ θεός has in view the one God who communicated himself to the world in Christ as the mediator of creation and sent him to save Jews and Gentiles from eternal damnation (cf. 1 Cor. 8:6; 1 Tim. 2:5–6). Moreover, the author simply equates πίστις with faithfulness, leaving Paul's particular concept of faith unexamined.

For Paul "faith in Jesus Christ" (πίστις εἰς Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν) is the new way of salvation opened up by God (cf. Gal. 3:2, 23, 25), the quintessential gift of grace mediated by the gospel (Gal. 3:2; Rom. 10:17), which involves both confessing and obeying the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός (cf. above, 377–79, §§3.2–3.4.2). The Letter of James does not consider or respect this novel Christian version of the concept of faith promoted by Paul, and in good Jewish fashion it equates πίστις as well as πιστεύειν merely with human faithfulness in response to God's revelation and instruction (cf. the early Jewish references in R. Bultmann, *TDNT* 6:199–202). For ancient Judaism, Abraham was the paradigmatic example of such faithfulness. So too for the Letter of James. Therefore, in 2:21–23 the letter calls upon the conventional early Jewish interpretation of Genesis 15:6 in terms of Genesis 22:9–18 in order to prove that Abraham's faith was only tested and completed through his works, that is, through his offering of Isaac. A comparison of James 2:21–23 with Hebrews 11:17–19 and of James 2:25 with Hebrews 11:31 shows that our text reproduces common Jewish Christian views.

The Jewish Christian explication of justification in James 2:18–26 works with a concept of faith that is totally dependent on the Old Testament and early Jewish thought. Even Abraham is seen only as the exemplary faithful person, not, with Paul, as the person justified by faith (in Jesus Christ) (cf. Gal. 3:6–9; Rom. 4:1–25). From this standpoint the following conclusion, which contradicts Romans 3:28, is perfectly consistent: "You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone" (James 2:24). This completely misses the teaching and intention of Paul.

6 According to our analysis of James 2:14–26, the difference between James and Paul in the question of justification can be traced back to the fact that the Lord's brother did not take into consideration Paul's novel concept of faith or his criticism of the saving significance of the Torah and the works of the law. The Letter of James indeed upholds the confession of Christ as Lord (cf. 1:1; 2:1), but it proceeds from different linguistic and

material presuppositions than Paul does and must therefore misunderstand the apostle's doctrine of justification.

This example documents an impasse in the relationship between Jewish Christianity and the Pauline school (which also had its roots in Jewish Christianity) that goes to the very fundamentals. The Letter of James formulates its view of (final) justification on the basis of a type of thinking about faith that Paul had left behind with his call to be an apostle of Jesus Christ. The letter also does not make full use of the Jesus tradition. Already with Jesus and then again with Paul, the doctrines of the law, faith, and justification were reconceived over against the Old Testament–early Jewish tradition, and this break with tradition was one of the basic reasons why Jesus and Paul had to suffer persecution. James too suffered persecution and death at the hands of the Sanhedrin, but his statements about justification, the law, and faith were soteriologically insufficient. The wisdom language of the Letter of James does not allow Paul's experience of justification outside Damascus to be adequately grasped. According to this experience, even the blameless righteous person by the standards of the law is a lost sinner before God if he or she does not believe in Jesus Christ and have the Son of God as an advocate in the final judgment (cf. Phil. 3:4–11; Rom. 8:31–39). One cannot help the language of the Letter of James by quoting Augustine: *ille dicit de operibus quae fidem praecedunt, iste de his quae fidem sequuntur*, "One [Paul] is talking about works which precede faith, the other [James] about those which follow faith" (*De diversis quaestionibus LXXXIII* [*Eighty-Three Different Questions*], 76.2, CCSL 44A, p. 221, lines 83–84; similarly Philip Melanchthon in his *Apology* to the Augsburg Confession, *BSLK*, p. 207, §244–p. 210, §253 = R. Kolb and T. J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord*, 157–59). For both James and Paul speak of justification in the final judgment, but they answer the question about what faith and works contribute in this judgment completely differently. The Letter of James believes that a trust in God that is proved and tested by works will not be denied approval before the judgment throne of the gracious God, and therefore urges its addressees to do such works (cf. 2:13). Paul, by contrast, places everything on the faith that confesses Jesus as Lord and Savior and encourages such faith (cf. Rom. 4:5). According to his teaching, sinners are accepted by God in the final judgment only for Christ's sake; their works only determine the measure of reward or punishment they will receive in eternity (cf. above, 376–82, §3; 416–17, §3.7.2).

7 In view of the criticism in James 2:14–26 of the Pauline understanding of faith and justification, Luther promised his doctoral cap to anyone who succeeded in finding a common denominator for Paul and James. In one of Luther's *Table Talks* we read:

> Multi valde sudant, ut concordent Iacobum cum Paulo, velut etiam Philippus in Apologia, sed non serio. Pugnantia sunt: Fides iustificat, fides non iustificat. Wer die zusamen reymen kan, dem will ich mein pirreth aufsetzen und wil mich yhn einen narren lassen schelten. (WA TR 3:253 lines 25–29 no. 3292a [1533])

> Many sweat intensely to reconcile James with Paul, as for example does Philip [Melanchthon], in the *Apology* [see above], but he cannot be serious. They are contradictory claims: Faith justifies; Faith does not

justify. Whoever can put these together, I will put my cap on him and let him call me a fool.

Luther's prize has still not been awarded, because the contradiction between the Letter of James and the teaching of Paul cannot be contested. Nevertheless, the following facts should still be considered in view of this undeniable difference:

7.1 At no time did James and Paul break with each other theologically. They considered their common confession of Jesus Christ to be more important than the undeniable differences in their appraisal of the law and final justification. The apostle admittedly answered criticisms of his gospel with a curse formula (cf. Gal. 1:8–9), and he countered the emissaries whom James sent to Antioch and the Jewish Christians who followed them, including Barnabas and Peter, with a severe judgment (cf. Gal. 2:11–21). Yet, in spite of this, Paul still personally delivered the collection to James (cf. Rom. 15:25–28 with Acts 21:18–26), even though he thereby brought on himself imprisonment and condemnation (cf. Acts 21:27–28:31). In Roman custody the apostle even brought himself to the conclusion that despite the profound differences between him and his Jewish Christian opponents, he could still be joyful whenever Christ was preached, whether through him or them (cf. Phil. 1:18).

In 1951 E. Käsemann delivered a lecture entitled "Does the New Testament Canon Provide a Foundation for the Unity of the Church?" (German: "Begründet der neutestamentliche Kanon die Einheit der Kirche?"), although the corresponding English title is expressed without the question mark: "The Canon of the New Testament and the Unity of the Church" (Käsemann, *Essays on New Testament Themes* [1964], 95–107). Käsemann answered this question in the negative and presented this provocative thesis: "The New Testament canon does not, as such, constitute the foundation of the unity of the church. On the contrary, as such (that is, in its accessibility to the historian) it provides the basis for the multiplicity of the confessions" (103).

Käsemann's reference to different types of faith can no more be denied from James 2:14–26 than the fact that over the course of church history these differences have developed into different confessions or denominations. People were already bitterly contending for the truth of the faith in New Testament times and will continue to do so. But precisely for this reason it is also important to recognize what bound together the different faith directions—in this case, those of James and Paul—such that, despite the controversy, people like Peter, James, and Paul could maintain church fellowship. The answer lies in the fact that they considered their common confession of Christ and the difference this creed sets up between believing Christians and unbelieving Jews and Gentiles to be more important than individual questions of soteriology. The controversy between the different denominations about the meaning and truth of the gospel is bearable to the extent that the early Christian focus on the creed is maintained and the notion of unity in the confession of Christ is properly kept in mind (cf. Eph. 4:2–6; John 17:20–23).

7.2 The Letter of James must be judged by its own intended purpose. If one makes this effort, then it must be admitted that the imaginary dialogue in James 2:14–26 has uncovered an undeniable weakness of Paulinism. Paul's churches only seldom managed to stay the course of practicing his demanding teaching, and his insistence on faith's freedom was repeatedly used as a cloak for (severe) ethical failures (cf. Gal. 5:13).

Paul himself had to criticize misinterpretations of his teaching in his churches on various occasions and warn that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God (cf., e.g., 1 Cor. 5:11; 6:9–10; 10:21–22; Gal. 5:19–21). His pupils renewed this criticism (cf. Eph. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:8–11) and did not shy away from reminding readers that baptized Christians are in the world to praise God and do good works (cf. Eph. 2:10; Titus 2:14). The Reformation revived the apostle's teaching in the sixteenth century, but even Luther could not prevent the message of justification from being distorted by religious enthusiasts and used by many as a "cover-up for evil" (cf. 1 Pet. 2:16 [NIV]).

8 The strength of our letter lies in its immediately accessible wisdom paraenesis. This can be conveniently illustrated from James 2:1–13. The paragraph warns against showing favoritism toward the rich in the church and calls its readers to keep the whole law of God, not just half of it.

8.1 The case in James 2:1–9 about the rich man's entrance into a church meeting that forces a poor man to give up his seat takes place in a building that strongly resembles a synagogue according to verse 3. James apparently did not yet assume any definitive distinction between a Christian church and a synagogue. When the congregation addressed here behaves this way toward the rich and the poor, it contravenes God's choice of the poor to be heirs of his kingdom as emphasized by Jesus (cf. James 2:5 with Luke 6:20–21; 7:22; 16:19–31). The polemic against the rich who according to James 2:6 drag Christians into court has a concrete contemporary setting in the exploitation of the poor Palestinian rural population by foreigners who owned large parcels of land in the period before AD 70 (cf. Mark 12:1–11 par.). That such rich people blaspheme the "excellent name" (of Christ) that was invoked over Christians at their baptism (cf. James 2:7) can be understood from Luke 6:22 (Matt. 5:11). The Letter of James obviously illustrates its paraenesis from concrete experiences of the Jewish Christian church in Palestine.

In Paul's letters the addressees are not warned about the rich with the same rage as in James 2:6–7 and 5:1–6. The rich are rather drawn in to support the Pauline mission and are sometimes even praised as patrons of the church (cf., e.g., the praise of the patron Phoebe in Rom. 16:1–2 and of the Corinthian *aedile* or *quaestor* Erastus in Rom. 16:23). In 1 Timothy 6:17–19 the rich are also

commanded not to become haughty but to be rich in good works, in order to store up for themselves a θεμέλιον καλόν or “good foundation” for the future (cf. Tob. 4:9 and Luke 12:33).

8.2 In James 2:8–11 the commandment to love one’s neighbor as oneself from Leviticus 19:18 is understood as the greatest commandment (exactly as in Matt. 22:39–40) in the sense that the other commandments of the Decalogue are measured by it but not replaced by it. James wants to ensure that the “royal law” (νόμος βασιλικός) of God and his Christ is kept by Christians not eclectically, but entirely (2:10). He sees Christians established in perfect obedience to the law by their baptism (cf. 2:7) and views the love commandment with Jesus as the decisive summation of God’s will.

Next to Matthew, the Letter of James offers the most forceful statement in the New Testament of the Jewish Christian conviction that the law is not abrogated but rather reinstated through Christ (cf. Matt. 5:17–20). The letter therefore calls its readers to fulfill the Torah already perfected by Christ, that is, “the perfect law, the law of liberty” (ὁ νόμος τέλειος ὁ τῆς ἐλευθερίας), and promises the doers that they will be blessed in what they do (James 1:25; cf. also 2:12). No fundamental antithesis between Moses and Christ can be detected here. Therefore, in this letter Paul’s reflected language about Christ as the “end” of the law (as a way of salvation) (Rom. 10:4) and especially the statements of his pupils about the “canceling” or “abolishing” of the law through the cross (cf. Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:15) are regarded with suspicion as signs of Christian antinomianism (cf. Matt. 7:21–23). The letter’s chosen manner of expression is completely Jewish: The “royal law” (νόμος βασιλικός) of James 2:8 is mentioned in 1 Esdras 8:24 LXX (NETS, “royal law,” though here referring to “the law of the kingdom” [NRSV], of Artaxerxes I of Persia) and the “perfect Torah” in *3 Enoch* 11:1. Our letter applies both expressions to the law of God (cf. 2:8 with 1:25), the king of kings (cf. 2 Macc. 13:4; 1 Tim. 6:15), as completed by Jesus. This law teaches God’s eternally valid will, gives heavenly wisdom, and frees people to do what is truly good (cf. Sir. 6:35–37; 24:19–29 with James 3:17).

9. The problem with the Letter of James is not that it presents Jewish Christian teaching and contradicts Paul. Jewish Christian teaching is also represented by other New Testament witnesses, and the wisdom exhortation of our letter makes sense over long stretches. Moreover, contradiction of Paul always has its place where he is really wrong. But the Pauline doctrine of justification that the Letter of James misunderstands and criticizes comes considerably closer to the truth of the gospel embodied in Jesus Christ than the letter writer thinks (or can grasp with his language). We can and should therefore allow the letter to warn us of a flattened and one-sided Paulinism, which is tangible everywhere in the church today, and to lead us back to the apostle himself and the original Pauline teaching, which at its core agrees with the message of Jesus. Because this agreement exists, it is *impossible* to

place the Letter of James on equal footing in the canon next to the Pauline doctrinal letters; the letter can at best supplement this and comment on it in its own way.

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CHAPTER 28

The Theology and Proclamation of First Peter

If one comes from the Letter of James to 1 Peter, one can detect similarities and differences that are equally interesting for both early Christian history and theology. 1 Peter is also a circular letter, directed in this case to the elect "exiles [or aliens] of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" (1 Pet. 1:1), and it likewise offers church exhortation. The difference from James consists in the fact that the letter was sent out not from Jerusalem but (probably) from Rome, and that it reaches a completely different theological level than the circular letter of the Lord's brother. Whereas the Letter of James makes only a few indirect statements about Christ and massively contradicts the Pauline doctrine of justification, 1 Peter is continually talking about Christ; the salvation effected through his sacrifice is presented in all clarity; and there is no hint of any anti-Pauline polemic. The letter's Christology and paraclesis do not contradict the Pauline teaching, but correspond to it right down to the exact wording. The closeness of 1 Peter to the Pauline gospel is so great that Luther in the preface to his New Testament of September 1522 classed it among "the true and noblest books of the New Testament," those which contain the "true kernel and marrow of all the books." Therefore he encouraged all Christians in their daily reading to make this book "as much their own as their daily bread" (WA DB 6:10, lines 7–15; *LW* 35:361–62).

1 The circumstances behind the writing of 1 Peter are historically difficult to determine. If one takes together 1 Peter 1:1 and 5:12, then the letter is a circular letter by Peter written with the help of the scribe Silvanus (= Silas, Σιλᾶς) to the Christians in the Roman provinces of Asia Minor. According to 1 Peter 5:13, the "chosen one in Babylon" (*ἡ ἐν Βαβυλῶνι συνεκλεκτή*) greets the brothers in Asia Minor. Because "Babylon" had established itself as a polemical apocalyptic alias for Rome in Judaism and early Christianity after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD 70 (cf. *4 Ezra* 3:1, 28, 31; *2 Bar.* 11:1; 67:7; Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; etc.), the "chosen one" most likely refers to the church of Rome. Already in the year 44 Peter had to depart from Jerusalem for "another place" (Rome?) (cf.

Acts 12:17 with the ἕτερος τόπος of Ezek. 12:3 LXX), and Paul wanted to continue his mission in the western part of the Mediterranean world from Rome (cf. Rom. 15:24). After the martyrdom of the two apostles, probably under the government of Nero (emperor AD 54–68), the Roman church laid claim to the legacy of both apostles (cf. *1 Clem.* 5:4–7). Sending a circular letter from Rome to Asia Minor authorized by Peter suggested itself for two reasons. The first and more important lies in the authority of Peter himself, whose church office as a shepherd was acknowledged even in the Johannine circle (based in Ephesus?) (cf. John 21:15–17). After his martyrdom, his title as a "witness of the sufferings of Christ" (cf. 1 Pet. 5:1), which originally referred to his apostolic witness, was easily seen as the fulfillment of the death prophecy of John 21:18–19 and interpreted in terms of martyrdom (cf. *1 Clem.* 5:4). The second reason for the letter's origin in Rome was that after the execution of James (AD 62) and the subsequent exodus of the Jerusalem church to Pella, and especially after the destruction of Jerusalem (70), the Christians in Asia Minor could no longer orient themselves toward the mother church in Jerusalem. Silvanus, who was on hand when the author composed the letter, was a coworker of Paul according to 1 Thessalonians 1:1, 2 Thessalonians 1:1, 2 Corinthians 1:19, Acts 15:40, and 16:25. But Silvanus also had the confidence of the Jewish Christians of Jerusalem who were open to the Gentile mission (cf. Acts 15:22, 27). When he appears as Peter's scribe in 5:12, this illustrates how "the exchange of early Christian working arrangements" took place (O. Michel, *BHH* 3:1793).

Whether 1 Peter was sent out to the Christians in Asia Minor in its present form during Peter's lifetime is not certain. The persecution of Christians only for the sake of the name Χριστιανοί mentioned in 1 Peter 4:16 and the imminent expectation of the parousia in 1:5–7, 4:7, and 5:10, combined with the alias "Babylon" (see above), have provided scholars with reasons for dating 1 Peter in the time of Domitian (AD 81–96) or Trajan (98–117), because under these emperors general persecutions of Christians in Asia Minor took place. The Revelation of John, dated to the same time, is also filled with a fervent imminent expectation of the end. However, new investigations into the persecutions of Christians in the Roman Empire have called into question the identification of Domitian as a persecutor of Christians. There are therefore only two firm dates for such persecutions. The first is "the procedure of Nero against the Christians in Rome in connection with the fire in the capital city of AD 64, which we know of through the tendentious report of Tacitus (*Annals* 15.44.2–5) and the brief notice of Suetonius (*Nero* 16.2), but also through the allusion in 1 Clement 6:1–2" (R. Freudenberger, *TRE* 8:26). The second possible date is the period between 111 and 113, when we find a discussion about the legal treatment of Christians in a letter exchange between Pliny the Younger (at that time proconsul of Bithynia) and the emperor Trajan. Otherwise there are only indirect clues concerning local persecutions of Christians in Asia Minor (cf., e.g., Rev. 2:3). Historically, then, the period between Nero and Trajan comes into consideration for the origin of 1

Peter. Because the letter “gives no hint of any bloody persecution,” B. Reicke suggests that it can “therefore be dated before the Neronic catastrophe, even if the letter was not personally written by Peter” (*The New Testament Era* [1968], 248; similarly C. P. Tiede, *Das grosse Bibellexikon* 3:1171). Peter’s authorship is therefore not improbable, but can only be adhered to in the sense that 1 Peter points back through Silvanus to Peter and the Roman church that preserved his legacy.

2 In favor of a Petrine-Roman origin is also the use of *traditional material* in 1 Peter. Until recently some scholars interpreted the closeness of 1 Peter to Paul as a sign of dependence and even declared it a deutero-Pauline letter that was attributed to Peter only by the scribal error of a copyist (cf. H.-M. Schenke and K. M. Fischer, *Einleitung in die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, vol. 1 [1978], 203). But more recently scholars have once again correctly paid more attention to the differences from Paul, emphasizing that “1 Peter must be perceived as an independent witness among the early Christian traditions next to Paul and his school” (J. Herzer, *Petrus oder Paulus?*, 261). This way of looking at things opens up the interesting possibility of theologically probing the undeniable closeness but also the competition between Peter and Paul in the Gentile mission field (cf. only 1 Cor. 15:3b–5, 11; Gal. 1:18; 2:6–10, 11–21 with Acts 15:6–12; 1 Cor. 1:12; 3:22; 9:5–6).

2.1 1 Peter has several points of contact with the Pauline Letters, and not only because it uses the Pauline letter formula. It also speaks with similar clarity to Paul about the grace of God (e.g., 1:10, 13; 3:7; 4:10; 5:12); uses the catchwords *χάρισμα*, “spiritual gift” (4:10), and ἐλευθερία, “freedom” (2:16), and the formula ἐν Χριστῷ, “in Christ” (e.g., 3:16; 5:10, 14); and points out the significance of proclaiming the gospel (1:12, 25). Exactly like Paul and his school, our letter proceeds from the assumption that Christians have been reborn through faith and baptism (cf. 1:3; 2:1–2 with 2 Cor. 5:17; Titus 3:5). The paraclesis of 1 Peter is grounded in the gracious activity of God that precedes all human action (cf. only 1:3–12 with 1:13–17 and 1:18–25 with 2:1–10). Individual themes of Paul and 1 Peter also overlap conspicuously (cf., e.g., Rom. 12:1–2 with 1 Pet. 2:5 and Rom. 13:1–7 with 1 Pet. 2:13–17). Similarly to Ephesians and the Pastoral Letters, the household code tradition is expanded into a duty catalogue for slaves, women, and men in the entire church (cf. 2:11–3:7). The suffering often involved in Christian witness is even more intensely highlighted in 1 Peter than in the letters of Paul (cf. Phil. 1:27–30 with 1 Pet. 1:6–7; 2:19–21; 3:17; 4:19). The citing and understanding the Holy Scriptures are akin

to those of Paul (cf., e.g., 2:6 with Rom. 9:33 and 1:10 with Rom. 15:4). Also concerning Jesus Christ, 1 Peter makes statements that run parallel to those of Paul: God planned to send Jesus for the redemption of sinners before the foundation of the world (cf. 1:20 with Eph. 1:4); the sacrificial death of Jesus is consciously interpreted from Isaiah 53 (cf. 2:21–25; 3:18 with 1 Cor. 15:3b–5; Rom. 4:25); and the motif of the redemption or purchase of people through the blood of Christ reminiscent of 1 Corinthians 6:20 is especially elaborated (cf. 1:18–19 with Rev. 5:9). For 1 Peter, as for Paul, the church of Christ is the new people of God that has been shown mercy (cf. 2:10 with Rom. 9:25), and it is the temple of God built on Christ as the cornerstone (cf. 2:4–7 with 1 Cor. 3:11; 2 Cor. 6:16; also Eph. 2:20).

2.2 The above-mentioned points of contact between 1 Peter and the Pauline Letters should however not obscure the fact that our letter nowhere makes direct use of Pauline traditions and places a thoroughly different accent from Paul where Paul’s manner of expression does come up (J. Herzer). The author speaks in 1:18 very similarly to Paul in Romans 5:1–2 and sees Jesus Christ as the Suffering Servant exactly as the apostle does (cf. 2:21–25; 3:18 with Rom. 4:25). But he avoids the Pauline terminology of justification and also does not see himself as needing to make fundamental statements about the validity or otherwise of the Torah for the Christian church. The addressees of 1 Peter are above all converted Gentiles (cf. 1:14; 4:3) who are exposed to mistrust and abuse by their former fellow Gentiles (cf. 2:12; 4:4); there is no longer any discussion in our letter of Jews or Jewish Christians. There also occurs preformed christological tradition that is not yet attested in Paul (cf. 1:18–21; 2:21–25; 3:18–19). Baptism is not just referred generally to the exodus event, as in 1 Corinthians 10:2, but rather in 1 Peter 3:20–21 it is interpreted in a theologically precise way from the flood story in Genesis 7. The author points more clearly than Paul to the example of the suffering Christ (cf. 1 Pet. 2:21–25; 3:17–18 with Rom. 15:1–3). He also defines the life of baptized Christians in the world more fundamentally than the apostle as an end-time pilgrimage of men and women who have been alienated from their earthly origin by their baptism, are still living for a short time as resident aliens in the world, and are making their way to their final destination of end-time glorification (cf. 1:1, 17; 2:11). On the way to obtaining their heavenly inheritance, they are exposed to persecutions and must prove themselves before the eyes of the unbelieving world through exemplary

deeds (cf. 2:18–20; 3:2, 9, 14, 16–17; 4:15). The paraclesis of our letter gives overall the impression of coming from the late Pauline or post-Pauline period. Theologically the paraclesis is so self-contained that it does not need to depend on or be supported by Paul.

In 1 Peter the synoptic *Jesus tradition* is used just as indirectly as it is elsewhere in the New Testament letters: The application of the rejected cornerstone saying of Psalm 118:22 to Christ in 1 Peter 2:4 and 7 seems to go back to Mark 12:10 par. The commandment to love one's enemies and to bless rather than curse is referred to in 1 Peter 3:9 as in Romans 12:17 (cf. both with Luke 6:28). The exhortation to "gird up your loins" in 1:13 (cf. KJV) has points of contact with Luke 12:35; the blessing of those reviled for the sake of Christ's name in 4:14 appears to take up Luke 6:22–23 par.; and the talk about being "good stewards of the manifold grace of God" in 4:10 could be related to the prudent manager in Luke 12:42. The typological interpretation of baptism in 3:20–21 ties in with Luke 17:26–27/Matthew 24:37–39. The verb *πάσχειν* (to suffer) used for Jesus's suffering in 2:21, 23; 3:18 occurs in the synoptic passion summaries (cf. Mark 8:31 par.) as well as in Luke 22:15; 24:26, 46. The interpretation of Jesus's sacrifice from Isaiah 53 recalls Mark 10:45 (Matt. 20:28), but also Luke 22:19–20. Yet despite all these points of contact, words of the Lord or Gospel traditions are never directly quoted. The overall finding shows that the apostolic letter was not generally the medium for teaching the churches about the sayings of Jesus. This occurred above all in early Christian instruction (cf. above, 335–36, §4.4.3.1). However, 1 Peter 5:13 opens up the possibility of seeing Peter also as a teacher of the Gospel tradition. If in this verse greetings are sent to the addressees not only from the church living in Rome, that is, "Babylon" (see above), but also from "my son Mark," then this must refer to a man who was sufficiently well known to the Christians in Asia Minor and closely associated with Peter. This is in all probability *John Mark*, whom Peter knew from Jerusalem (cf. Acts 12:12–17). According to Papias (cf. Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.39.15), Mark was the "interpreter" (*ἑρμηνευτής*) of Peter, that is, his language assistant and copyist (Acts 13:5), and he was guided in his composition of the Gospel of Mark by his recollection of Peter's teaching.

3 After the prescript (1:1–2), our letter begins with a *eulogy*. Encompassing 1 Peter 1:3–9, it is especially artfully composed and beautifully sets out the theological basis of 1 Peter:

> [3]Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, [4]and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, [5]who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. [6]In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, [7]so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. [8]Although you have not seen

> him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, [9]for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. (1 Pet. 1:3–9)

This text includes all the great themes of faith that we have encountered up until now in the tradition of the early church and the Pauline school: the gracious act of God climaxing in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the new birth opened up to believers by this act and given to them in baptism, the hope of sharing a heavenly inheritance opened up by Christ and depending on him, the standing of believers now by faith but not yet by sight, the perseverance expected of them despite suffering, and the certainty of future salvation at the final revelation of their beloved Christ. The church is entirely indebted to the gracious dealings of God proclaimed by his chosen witnesses, and it approaches the future consummation of its salvation in believing obedience.

The continuation of this text in 1 Peter 1:10–12 departs stylistically from verses 3–9 and comments on what the "salvation of souls" (*σωτηρία ψυχῶν*) in verse 9 involves: The salvation established by God through the suffering and glorification of Christ is the *end-time fulfillment event par excellence* that was announced by the Old Testament prophets. In this event all salvation-historical predictions about the future (cf., e.g., Hab. 2:1–4; Dan. 12:5–13) reach their goal. According to 1 Peter, the task of the prophets was (only) to help the church find faith in Jesus Christ (cf. similarly Rom. 15:4; John 12:41). Therefore the *εὐαγγελιζόμενοι*, the "evangelists" or "bringers of good news" whom the prophets predicted (cf. Isa. 52:7; Nah. 2:1 [ET 1:15]; Ps 68:12 [ET 68:11])—that is, those who have "now" already proclaimed (*οἱ εὐαγγελισάμενοι*) the good news of God's gospel to the addressees according to 1 Peter 1:12 (cf. 1 Pet. 4:17 with Rom. 1:1–4)—are here, as in Romans 10:15, Ephesians 4:11 (cf. with Eph. 4:8), and Acts 10:41, the apostles who have been gifted with the Holy Spirit. Even the angels long to catch a glimpse of the *Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός* who is proclaimed by the apostles, because in the worship of God and of his Christ the cosmos regains the order from which it has fallen (cf. 1 Pet. 1:12 with 3:22; 1 Tim. 3:16; Rev. 5:11–13).

The actual aim of the letter lies in the exhortation of the Christians in Asia Minor. Keeping this in mind allows us to investigate the statements of the letter beginning with 1 Peter 1:3–9 and 10–12 first with reference to Christology, then ecclesiology, and finally ethics and eschatology. In the process it must naturally not be overlooked that this letter comprising only five chapters can merely give an impression of the Petrine-Roman teaching, not the whole of it.

4 Our letter's *proclamation of Christ* is completely interwoven with its paraclesis. It presents Christ as savior of the world, as comforting example

for all who suffer, and as Lord and coming Judge. The individual formulations depend on previous texts about Christ that bear a hymnic and confessional stamp and develop their statements with a paraenetic interest.

4.1 According to 1 Peter 1:18–19, *redemption* or *ransom* (cf. λυτρόω) has been effected through the atoning death of Jesus. More precisely, Christians have received redemption through "the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish."

The usual interpretation of 1 Peter 1:18–19 refers the "lamb" to the Passover lamb (cf. Exod. 12:5; 1 Cor. 5:7) and Isaiah 53 (cf. Isa. 53:7; John 1:29). The reference to Isaiah 53 is completely justified (see below), but the comparison with Passover is doubtful. In the Judaism of the New Testament period, the Passover lamb was not seen as an atoning sacrifice, and even though there was an annual mass slaughter of Passover lambs by Jewish fathers in the Jerusalem temple, this also was not the offering of an atoning sacrifice. However, if one understands the language about the "spotless lamb" or ἀμνὸς ἄμωμος from the perspective of Numbers 28:3 and Ezekiel 46:13, then the facts change: The offering of the "regular" or "perpetual" (תָּמִיד, *tāmîd*) sacrificial lambs every morning and evening was the most important atoning sacrificial ritual that Israel knew next to the annual Day of Atonement (cf. Lev. 16). This daily ritual served to release Israel from the guilt of sin (cf. Exod. 29:38–42; Num. 28:3–8; Ezek. 46:13–15; *Jub*. 6:14; 50:11). Not only 1 Peter 1:19 but also the language in Revelation about redemption through the blood of Christ the lamb (cf. Rev. 5:8–9; 14:3–4) can be more easily interpreted from the tradition of the *tamîd* sacrifice than from Passover (cf. below, 668–69, §3.2). If one, moreover, considers the fact that in his temple act (cf. above, 97, §4.5 and 173–74, §4.3.1) Jesus consecrated himself for Israel as the end-time *tāmîd* sacrifice (J. Ådna), then 1 Peter 1:18–19 is best interpreted from this Jesuanic–early Jewish background (which Peter certainly knew). Nevertheless, a secondary association with the (Christian) Passover tradition in the sense of John 1:29 and 19:36 is also not impossible in this late letter.

1 Peter 1:20–21 adds that the Christ who was chosen before the foundation of the world for the work of redemption appeared at the end of times for the sake of humanity. Through him people have been led to believe in the God who raised Jesus from the dead and glorified him. By this saving act he gave faith the hope of eternal life, in which believers may share with unspeakable joy in their eternal praise of God (cf. 1:8–9). The saving significance of Jesus's mission is presented unmistakably in 1 Peter.

4.2 In 1 Peter 2:21–24 Christ is portrayed more clearly than anywhere else in the New Testament as the Suffering Servant. He is the "righteous one" (cf. 3:18) who through his vicariously atoning suffering frees those who believe in him from the burden of their sins and places them into the service of the righteousness that is God's will (cf. 2:24 with Rom. 6:18). The interpretation of the death of Jesus on the basis of Isaiah 53 that goes back to Jesus himself and was shaped by the early church (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3b–5 and 193–96, §§3.1–2) is taken up in our letter and applied paraenetically:

Jesus is the παῖς θεοῦ or "servant of God" of Isaiah 53 in person (cf. Acts 3:13, 26). Similarly to the Lukan passion narrative (cf. below, 630, §5.4), Jesus's path of suffering in 1 Peter has not only soteriological but also exemplary significance: In the discipleship of suffering that is required of them, the Χριστιανοί (cf. 4:16) who have been baptized in his name should walk in the steps of their Lord.

4.3 In 1 Peter 3:18 (cf. with Gal. 1:4) the saving significance of Jesus's death is once again presented in words based on Isaiah 53. Immediately after the statement about the "righteous one" suffering for the sins of the unrighteous, the letter adds in a hymnic manner that Christ was put to death in his fleshly body (by men), but made alive in a spiritual body (by God) (cf. 1 Cor. 15:44–45; 1 Tim. 3:16). 1 Peter 3:19 underscores the universal significance of Christ's being made alive by dealing with *Christ's descent into hell* in more detail than anywhere else in the New Testament. Before he ascended to the throne, Christ descended in a spiritual-bodily form to the spirits that were being kept imprisoned in the world of the dead until the final judgment (cf. *Jub.* 5:10; *1 En.* 9:10; Luke 16:23–24). He brought them the message of his dominion, thereby extending his βασιλεία to the realm of the dead. If one combines this with the statement about the gospel being proclaimed to dead people in 1 Peter 4:6, then one can say that by taking the gospel to the prisoners in the world of the dead, the living Christ set the dead on an equal footing with the living who hear the gospel through the apostles. Jesus himself related his mission to the statement about proclaiming freedom to captives in Isaiah 61:1 (cf. above, 79, §6.4 and 180–81, §§1–2.1). This statement is taken up in 1 Peter 3:19 and 4:6 and extended cosmically: Jesus's mission and the gospel that proceeds from him have universal validity. The gospel is the eternal word of God (1:25).

Paul mentions Christ's descent to hell in Romans 10:7 only in passing, but in Romans 14:9 he says that "Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living." Ephesians 4:9–10 admittedly emphasizes that Christ descended "into the lower parts of the earth" (*εἰς τὰ κατώτερα μέρη τῆς γῆς*) before ascending "far above all the heavens" so that he might fill the universe with his power. But this only refers to Christ's coming down to the earth and not to any descent into regions under the earth (cf. NIV, "the lower, earthly regions"). By contrast, the topos of Christ's descent into hell is clearly set out in 1 Peter and made more precise: Christ descended into Hades to proclaim the gospel to the spirits held captive there who had not yet heard anything about him. There is therefore neither a spatial realm in the depths of the earth or in the heavens, nor any dimension of time past, present, or future that would be excluded from Christ's dominion and message.

It is debated who is meant by the πνεύματα (spirits) in 1 Peter 3:19. Two possibilities come into consideration. Either they are the angelic beings who were banished to the underworld until the final judgment, who according to Genesis 6:1–4 had sexual relations with the daughters of humans, revealed all sins to them, and spawned the “Giants” or Nephilim (cf. *1 En.* 7:1–6; 9:8–10), or they are the spirits of dead people. According to *1 Enoch* 16:1–4, the fallen angels cannot expect any peace, nor can the devil, who is still on the prowl for Christians according to 1 Peter 5:8–9. Therefore the ancient church interpretation with reference to the spirits of human souls lies closer to hand. According to *1 Enoch* 22:1–14, these departed human spirits are also in the realms of the underworld awaiting the final judgment. Concern for the destiny of such spirits is also shown in rabbinic tradition, according to which the flood generation, first mentioned in our letter in 3:20, has “no share in the world to come” (*m. Sanh.* 10:3). The Thessalonians too were worried about Christians who had died before the parousia (cf. 1 Thess. 4:13–14). Because 1 Peter 4:6 speaks about the gospel being proclaimed to the “dead” (νεκροί), whereas 3:22 only says that “angels and authorities and powers” (ἄγγελοι, ἐξουσίαι, δυνάμεις) are subject to Christ (without mentioning their hearing the gospel), the interpretation of the πνεύματα of 3:19 as the spirits of dead people lies very much closer to hand than the interpretation with reference to fallen angels. These spirits include the dead of the flood generation as well as all other dead people, because Christ rules over not only part of the dead, but all of them. 1 Peter 3:19 and 4:6 provide an insight into the apocalyptic thought world of Jewish Christianity, but they also gave the topos of Christ’s descent into hell the theological weight it needed to be promoted into the Apostles’ Creed.

According to 1 Peter 4:6, the preaching of the gospel to the dead by the living Christ qualifies them for the final judgment. Their situation is the same as for people still alive (cf. 4:5): The gospel is preached to the dead “in order that, although in the body they were condemned to die as everyone dies, yet in the spirit they might live as God lives” (4:6, REB). This statement agrees with Matthew 24:14 (Mark 13:10) and 1 Corinthians 1:18 to the extent that the gospel proclaimed by the apostles opens up salvation for those who believe in Jesus and confess him as Lord (cf. 1 Pet. 1:21) but brings damnation on all those who reject him (cf. “those who do not obey the gospel of God,” 4:17). According to 4:6, the physical death that the dead have already died appears to be part of the judgment toward which they are headed, but this no more excludes a final judgment according to works in 1 Peter than it does in Paul (cf. 1 Pet. 1:17).

4.4 The way in which *Christ participates in the final judgment* is only hinted at in 1 Peter. According to 3:22, the living Christ who is at the right hand of God rules as Lord over all angels, authorities, and powers (cf. Ps. 110:1–2). His end-time revelation in glory (1 Peter does not use the term παρουσία) lies near at hand (cf. 1:13; 4:7, 13; 5:4). During his time of suffering on earth, Jesus entrusted judgment to the God who judges righteously (cf. 2:23 with 1:17). That Jesus himself will exercise the divine office of Judge at the parousia is something that the texts only allude to:

The language about “the one who stands ready to judge (τῷ ἑτοίμως ἔχοντι κρῖναι)” in 1 Peter 4:5 (cf. with 2 Cor. 10:6), which can hardly be applied to God the Father, together with the mention of the “chief shepherd” in 5:4, suggests that it is with the appearance of the chief shepherd, that is, Christ, that the elders who have proved faithful will receive from him “the unfading crown of glory” (cf. 2 Tim. 4:8; James 1:12; Rev. 2:10).

5 Our letter’s *view of the church* extends the basic approaches that are known from Acts and characteristic of Jewish Christianity.

5.1 The church is the spiritual house of God (cf. 1 Pet. 2:5; 4:17 with 1 Tim. 3:15) that is built on the cornerstone that God himself has laid down, namely, Christ (cf. 1 Pet. 2:4, 6 with Ps. 118:22; Isa. 28:16). At the same time, the church is the chosen people of God sanctified by Jesus’s atoning death (cf. 1 Pet. 2:9 with Isa. 43:21). This twofold understanding of the church lay particularly close at hand for Jewish Christians. It is rooted in Jesus’s aim of gathering the end-time people of the twelve tribes with the help of the twelve disciples (cf. Mark 6:7–12 par.), and it ties in with the early Jerusalem church’s claim of being the earthly vanguard of the end-time people of the twelve tribes headed up by Christ (cf. Acts 15:15–18 and above, 225–27, §§1.2–3). It resonates with the letters of Paul (cf. Rom. 9:24–26; 2 Cor. 6:16; Titus 2:14), occurs in Hebrews (cf. Heb. 4:9; 10:30; 13:12), and is also attested in Revelation (cf. Rev. 5:9–10; 7:4–8). From this point of view, Jesus’s sacrificial death is the end-time act of consecration that imparts to the church the holiness that God requires of his people (cf. 1 Pet. 1:15–16 with Lev. 11:44–45; 19:2). Because they have been sanctified through Jesus’s atoning death and freed from their sins through baptism (cf. 1 Pet. 3:21), according to 2:9 the members of the church are a “royal priesthood” (cf. Rev. 1:5–6). Their priestly service consists in offering “spiritual sacrifices,” that is, Spirit-filled prayers (cf. 2:5); proclaiming God’s mighty saving acts (cf. 2:9 with Isa. 43:21); and leading an exemplary life in the midst of the unbelieving world (see below). For our letter the new people of God are recruited above all from former Gentiles (cf. 1:18; 4:3). These are also the people in view in 2:10 when it says that the addressees, who were once a “nonpeople” without mercy, have now received mercy and become “the people of God” (cf. Rom. 9:24–26). Nevertheless, because the sayings from Hosea 1:6, 9; 2:25 (ET 2:23) cited in 1 Peter 2:10 were originally applied to Israel, the possibility cannot be

excluded that converted Jews also belonged to the Christian churches in Asia Minor to which our letter is addressed.

5.2 1 Peter only alludes to issues of *church order*. The church is entirely determined by the grace of God, about which our letter often speaks (cf. 1:2, 10, 13; 2:19, 20; 3:7; 4:10; 5:5, 10, 12). God's χάρις works in the lives of the individual church members in such a way that every member has received a special gift of grace (χάρισμα). The variously gifted Christians should use their gifts to serve one another as "good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (4:10). This manner of expression not only takes up the term χάρισμα on which Paul had set his theological stamp (cf. above, 391, §2.4), but also differentiates speaking (λαλεῖν) and serving (διακονεῖν), proclamation and social ministry, in a manner similar to Acts 6:1–4. Compare the explanation of 1 Peter 4:10 in verse 11: "Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ" (cf. further, J. Herzer, *Petrus oder Paulus?*, 164–65).

The author has no problem with an approach that combines the theme of God's grace and its general applicability to each individual Christian with specific exhortations to particular office bearers in the churches. In 1 Peter 5:1 the author identifies himself as a "fellow elder" (συμπρεσβύτερος) and calls the other elders to be exemplary shepherds of the church. The peculiar expression συμπρεσβύτερος shows that the author himself holds (or held) a church leadership office (in Rome?) and that he is (or was) a "witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as one who shares in the glory to be revealed." From the statements in 1 Peter 1:11–12 and 4:13 about the evangelists proclaiming and the Christians sharing Christ's sufferings, we may conclude that our author bears witness to the sufferings of Christ, but also shares in them existentially, consoling himself in this suffering witness with the promise of participation in future glory (cf. Phil. 3:10–11). The use of terms like μάρτυς ("witness"; cf. "martyr") and μαρτυρεῖν ("to testify" or "bear witness") in Luke 24:48, Acts 1:8, 10:39–43, and 1 Corinthians 15:15 suggests an interpretation of 1 Peter 5:1 in terms of Peter's apostolic witness (and after AD 64 also his martyrdom; see above). In 1 Peter 5:2–4 the author exhorts the πρεσβύτεροι or elders not to carry out their shepherd

office under compulsion but voluntarily, according to God's will, not for sordid gain but eagerly. They should not lord it over (κατακυριεύω) the churches entrusted to them but should rather be examples to the flock. This is totally in keeping with Jesus's instructions to his disciples (cf. Mark 10:42–44 par.). The paraclesis extant in the letter moreover shows that the churches of Asia Minor to which it is addressed were led by elders, as presupposed in Acts 14:23 and 20:28; they should mature into good overseers or bishops (cf. ἐπισκοποῦντες, 5:2). "Therefore 1 Peter too finds itself on the way to a clearly defined office of church leadership. Nevertheless, unlike the Deuteropauline Letters it does not yet advocate the principle of *leading by teaching*" (J. Roloff, *Die Kirche im Neuen Testament* [1993], 277).

When the "young men" (νεώτεροι) are called to "be subject to" (RSV) or "accept the authority of" (NRSV) the elders in 1 Peter 5:5, one could see them from Luke 22:26 and Acts 5:10 as a special group of church members chosen for the exercise of ministries in the church. But the following exhortation, "Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another," rather points to the fact that "the νεώτεροι are surely named here as representing all Church members in relation to the elders" (L. Goppelt, *A Commentary on I Peter* [1993], 351). If one takes 1 Peter 5:1–5 together with 2:9 and 4:10, what is demonstrated is that Martin Luther was exegetically completely correct when he protested in his tract *To the Christian Nobility* of 1520 against the division of the church into ordained clerics (priests), who alone could mediate salvation, and laypeople, who were dependent on this mediation. By appealing to the one gospel and the one baptism through which "we are all consecrated priests" (WA 6:407, lines 13ff.; *LW* 44:127), Luther championed the priesthood of all believers.

6 1 Peter especially wants to offer *exhortation to the church*. The paraclesis calls the church members "newborn infants" (2:2), thereby addressing them in terms of the new being that they have acquired through baptism. Therefore in this letter as well, the event of baptism provides the foundation for the demand that the Χριστιανοί lead a God-pleasing life. According to 1 Peter 1:8, the Christians do not yet have the status of seeing, but first of believing, and therefore they are in a situation of hope and the proving of their faith.

In 1 Peter 3:20–22 water baptism is interpreted as the "antitype" (ἀντίτυπος) of the salvation prefigured by the flood. However, according to 3:21 baptism is not a mere act of purification through which dirt is removed from the flesh, but rather a συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς θεόν. If one translates this by "an *appeal* to God *for* a good conscience" (e.g., NRSV, NASB; cf. also G. Barth, *Die Taufe in frühchristlicher Zeit* [1981], 111, "Bitte an Gott um ein gutes Gewissen"), one must mention the reservation that "from their side people can only appeal to God" to give them a good conscience through the forgiveness of sins, while also stressing that the baptized can be assured by

faith that God hears this request (ibid., 115). The problem with this understanding is that the act of baptism cannot be interpreted as an appeal, and that there are no philologically certain references for the meaning of ἐπερώτημα as "appeal" or "request" (though cf. "appeal" in BDAG, s.v. 2, and "request" in Hermas, *Mandates* 11:2 [43:2], LCL Lake/Ehrman; differently "question," M. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers in English* [2006[3]], 237, in agreement with BDAG, s.v. 1). This understanding also fits poorly into the paraenetic context.

It must therefore be asked whether ἐπερώτημα should be interpreted in terms of the *baptismal vow* or *pledge* that the candidate makes before God and human witnesses. The overall semantic field of ἐπερώτημα would then include the occasion for a "question" or "inquiry" (cf. LSJ, s.v. A.1; BDAG, s.v. 1; Justin, *Dialogue* 45.1, trans. Falls and Halton [2003]), while the use in 1 Peter would be the response and therefore akin to an "answer" (cf. LSJ, s.v. A.2; ἐπερώτημα in Theodotion Daniel 4:17 is translated "answer" by LEH and T. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* [2009], 362, or "Entscheidung" = "decision" in *Septuaginta Deutsch* [2009], against "demand" by Brenton and NETS). As the response to such an inquiry, the use of ἐπερώτημα in 1 Peter would be equivalent to the Latin legal term *stipulatio* and could be translated "pledge" (cf. LSJ, s.v. A.3 on 1 Pet. 3:21; BDAG, s.v. 2). 1 Peter 3:21 would then allude to both senses, "the procedure of *questioning* the baptismal candidate and his *answer*" (N. Brox, *Der erste Petrusbrief* [1993[4]], 178, italics added), and would include the confessional duty into which the baptized person enters through baptism, henceforth to serve Christ and the righteousness which is God's will.

In view of Romans 6:17, this interpretation of ἐπερώτημα is thoroughly possible. For Paul speaks here about the baptized Christians in Rome having been entrusted to the teaching of the gospel, about their obedient acceptance of this teaching in the form of their confession of Christ, and about their entrance into the service of righteousness (cf. above, 246, §3.4.4.4 and 336). In the construction of ἐπερώτημα with συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς in 1 Peter 3:21, the genitive phrase συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ("of a good conscience") would then not be an objective genitive governed by ἐπερώτημα in the sense "to appeal for/request a good conscience" (cf. ἐπερωτάω in Matt. 16:1), but would rather qualify the ἐπερώτημα as the vow or pledge given by the baptismal candidates themselves in the consciousness of already being right with God through Christ and standing in the fulfillment of God's will. These options are evident in the translations of 1 Peter 3:21. Hence, instead of "an appeal to God *for* a good conscience" as in the NRSV text, which takes συνειδήσεως as an objective genitive, the margin presents the interpretation suggested above, "a pledge to God *from* a good conscience," a genitive of source. The NIV is theologically similar with "the pledge *of* a good conscience toward God," where the genitive has been understood as either objective or epexegetic (i.e., "I pledge a good conscience"; "my pledge consists of a good conscience"). (On the grammar, see further M. Dubis, *1 Peter: A Handbook on the Greek Text* [2010], 126–27.) 1 Peter 2:19, 24; 3:16 show that this type of understanding fits excellently with the macrocontext and the other expressions of the letter.

The church exhortation in 1 Peter runs from 2:11 to 5:11. It first treats the general and public duties of the entire church (2:11–12, 13–17), then addresses one after another the particular duties and tasks of the slaves (2:18–25), women (3:1–6), and men (3:7), before returning in 3:8–12 to the behavior of Christians as a whole. The letter then addresses the Christian readiness for suffering (3:13–4:19), calls the elders to exemplary service as shepherds and the younger church members to be subject to their authority (5:1–5), and concludes with a call to vigilance in times of difficulty (5:6–

11). This overview shows that in 1 Peter as well as in the deutero-Pauline letters, the household code tradition (cf. above, 477–79, §§1.2.1–2) provides the background for the exhortation of the Christians. What is at issue, however, is no longer only their mutual behavior toward one another in "the household of God" (cf. 2:5; 4:17), but also and above all their behavior in the public everyday life of the world, where they are exposed to ongoing hostility and suspicion by their non-Christian contemporaries.

6.1 A comparison of Romans 13:1–7 (cf. above, 425–26, §4.4.4.3) with 1 Peter 2:13–17 shows that the themes and tenor of the apostolic exhortations to the churches were partly interchangeable. All the more interesting therefore is the observation that the paraclesis of 1 Peter—which perhaps grew out of direct encounter with government authorities in Rome—goes beyond that of Romans 13:1–7 in some particulars: Whereas according to Romans 13:1 the political authorities are "instituted" or "ordained" by God, in 1 Peter 2:13–14 the emperor and his governors are only said to be human creatures, and the power of the state which they possess is a "human institution," literally a "human *creation*" (*ἀνθρωπίνη κτίσις*). The Luther translation of *κτίσις* by "order" (Ger. *Ordnung*) equates 1 Peter 2:13 with Paul and is furthermore problematic because *κτίσις* "nowhere else means 'order,' neither in profane Greek nor in the Septuagint" (W. Schrage, *Die Christen und der Staat nach dem Neuen Testament*, 66n145). A theology of order to safeguard the existing authorities is not the intention of the text. "The emperor is presented as a human institution, and is thus subordinated to the *κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός* (the Lord Jesus Christ)" (U. Schnelle, *The History and Theology of the New Testament Writings* [1998], 405n92). Whereas Romans 13:3–4 and 1 Peter 2:14 make parallel statements, 1 Peter 2:15–16 offers a justification typical of the letter: The loyalty to the government required of Christians is part of the good behavior that will silence the ignorance of the critics of their faith. At the same time, it is a sign of their Christian freedom, which enables them to serve God rather than evil. Christians obey the pagan government because their Lord calls them not to anarchy and flight from the world, but to a life that serves good order and "righteousness" (cf. 2:24). 1 Peter 2:17 adds precision to the one-sided statements in Romans 13:7: All people (including the emperor) deserve honor, the family of believers deserves brotherly love, and God alone should be approached in reverential fear.

6.2 The detailed *paraclesis to slaves* in 1 Peter 2:18–25 oddly enough has no counterpart in the exhortation to masters (as in Col. 4:1; Eph. 6:9). It is comparable with 1 Timothy 6:1–2 and Titus 2:9–10 and measures good Christian behavior by the example of the suffering Christ. The text speaks to a particular situation in the church. While some Christians in Asia Minor were the household slaves of Christian masters, others served unbelieving masters. As Christians, they were exposed to especially flagrant slander, and in local persecutions of Christians were attacked first. Hence Pliny the Younger reports in his above-mentioned letter to the Roman emperor Trajan (*Ep.* 10.96–97) that he tortured two female slaves who were called "deaconesses" (cf. 1 Tim. 3:11) in order to fill out his picture of the Christian superstition. But even investigation by torture brought nothing else to light but "depraved, excessive superstition" (*Ep*. 10.96.8). The text about slaves in 1 Peter speaks to a similar situation. While it has its validity in this and comparable situations, today we cannot avoid the question about the types of dependent relationships among Christians (and people in general) that are legitimate and illegitimate. 1 Peter advises Christian slaves to take *Christ himself* and his suffering obedience as their role model in their difficult situation.

6.3 1 Peter has made a decisive contribution to the formation of a Christian *theology of the cross* by making a special theme of the suffering of Christians. The verb for suffering, *πάσχειν*, is used unusually often in this letter (cf. 2:19, 20; 3:14, 17; 4:1, 15, 19; 5:10), and the suffering of Christians is related to the suffering of Christ not only in 2:18–25 (see above) but also in 4:1. Christ "suffered in the flesh" (4:1) to the extent that he "was put to death in the flesh" (3:18). The recipients of the letter should arm themselves with the dual realization that something similar could be expected of them but that they would be "finished with sin" once they had suffered in the flesh (4:1; cf. Rom. 6:7, "freed from sin"). The passage has a serious ring to it, like Matthew 10:21–22, John 16:2, and Revelation 2:10. Very similarly to Philippians 1:28–30, where Christians are said to have been "graciously granted the privilege" (cf. *ἐχαρίσθη*) of suffering for Christ, 1 Peter counts it a special gift when Christians are reviled and persecuted for the name of Christ. They should patiently endure these sufferings, conscious of the fact that those reviled for the name of Christ are considered blessed because the spirit of glory, the Spirit of God, is resting on them (cf. 4:14 with Luke 6:22/Matt. 5:11; Mark 13:11 par.; Acts 5:41).

They are now being tested for a little while by the trials that have come their way according to God’s will (cf. Mark 13:19–20 par.), but their present dishonor also makes them look forward to their eternal joy at the parousia (cf. 1 Pet. 1:6–7; 4:12–14).

6.4 A look at the *eschatological statements* in 1 Peter reveals that the author wants to confirm his readers in their end-time expectation. Right from the beginning he emphasizes that while Christians are now standing only in faith, they may hope that at the imminent “revelation of Jesus Christ” (ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) they will share the imperishable inheritance kept in heaven for them (cf. 1:4–9). Christ is already Lord over all angels, authorities, and powers (3:22), and will soon appear as Judge and Savior (4:5–7, 13). The suffering that Christians must still endure on earth is to be understood as an event of judgment that has already begun with the household of God (cf. 4:17). Church members are now required to prove themselves obedient in the service of righteousness in which they stand through the gospel (cf. 2:24; 4:18) and to withstand by faith the attacks of the devil, who wants to make them fall (cf. 5:8–9). Yet they may be confident that God’s power will protect them from falling (cf. 1:5) and that their faith founded on Christ will never be put to shame (cf. 2:6 with Isa. 28:16). Instead, their faith, once it has been tested for genuineness in the fire of earthly trials, will result in eternal praise, glory, and honor as soon as the Lord appears for the final judgment (cf. 1:6–7; 4:12; 5:4). According to 1 Peter, end-time salvation is bestowed on those people who have proved themselves true in their faith in Jesus Christ and have displayed corresponding behavior (cf. 4:18 with Phil. 2:12–16).

7 The teaching of 1 Peter has repeated points of contact with that of Paul, but is independent of Paul’s teaching and in places much more closely meshed with the Gospel tradition than with the kerygma of the apostle. If this teaching goes directly or indirectly back to Peter, it becomes understandable why Peter was acknowledged not only for his special place among the Twelve but also for his teaching, from Jerusalem to Asia Minor and finally to Rome. Soteriologically this teaching is grounded in the belief that God’s word and his grace manifested in Christ can be relied on from now until the final judgment. Nevertheless, Peter’s teaching is not as unambiguously pointed as the Pauline doctrine of the justification of the ungodly by faith alone for Christ’s sake (cf. Rom. 4:5; 5:6). There is no mention in 1 Peter of the exalted Christ’s advocacy on behalf of those who

stand accused in the final judgment (cf. Rom. 8:34; 1 John 2:1), and the letter also lacks statements such as those in 1 Corinthians 3:15 and 5:5 about the final salvation, admittedly "as through fire," of Christians who were disobedient on earth or contributed little to the building of the kingdom. It is therefore no historical accident that the Letter of James criticizes Paulinism and not Peter. What Cephas said and wrote was less foreign than was Paul's teaching to the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem and the Diaspora who were open to the Gentile mission. Therefore within the New Testament canon, the message of 1 Peter forms a kind of golden mean between Paulinism and the Jewish Christian faith tradition that deserves the highest theological respect.

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CHAPTER 29

The Theology and Proclamation of Hebrews

Next to the Gospel of Matthew, the Letter to the Hebrews is theologically the most important Jewish Christian writing in the New Testament. The letter was admittedly considered a letter of Paul for centuries, but more recent exegesis correctly assumes that it was not written by the apostle. According to 13:22, the letter is intended as a λόγος παρακλήσεως, a "word of exhortation" in written form. Hebrews is the only New Testament book written in a self-consciously refined style of Greek on the Attic model, and it cites the Holy Scriptures more often than any other New Testament letter. Hebrews develops a characteristically unique high Christology: the preexistent Son of God whom the church confesses is God's "sent one" (ἀπόστολος) and the divine high priest (ἀρχιερεύς) par excellence (cf. 3:1); but he is also the "pioneer and perfecter of faith" who did not shy away from the shame of the cross and set an example by his behavior (cf. 12:1–2). Without this letter we would never have had the ancient church teaching about the high-priestly office of Christ. It was fundamental in determining the ancient church understanding of the Old Testament, but its concept of faith and paraclesis has also had a lasting influence on church teaching. There is no doubt that Hebrews is one of the *main writings* of the New Testament.

By the same token, several statements integral to the letter have also caused offense: Because the possibility of a "second repentance" after falling from the faith is denied in 6:4–8, 10:26–31, and 12:15–17, Hebrews was disputed in the Western Church. Today the letter's high Christology, which the ancient church and the Reformers marveled at, has encountered strong opposition because it supposedly lacks the character of an immediately comforting address from God (cf. H. Braun, "Gewißheit"). But against this judgment, H. Hegermann has shown that the Christology of Hebrews as a whole should be interpreted "as the articulation of God's speaking in his Son" and therefore precisely as God's address to save people (*Der Brief an die Hebräer* [1988], 22).

However, the letter also holds a unique fascination because the historical questions about its author and addressees and its traditional milieu and dating have appeared insoluble ever since the time of the ancient church. Already with Origen we find the opinion: “I should say that the thoughts are the apostle’s [i.e., Paul’s], but that the style and composition belong to one who called to mind the apostle’s teachings and, as it were, made shorts notes of what his master said. . . . But who wrote the epistle, in truth God knows. Yet the account which has reached us [is twofold], some saying that Clement, who was bishop of the Romans, wrote the epistle, others, that it was Luke, he who wrote the Gospel and the Acts” (Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 6.25.13–14).

This historical uncertainty does not reduce the canonical importance of Hebrews, but it does call for exegetical modesty.

1 Despite the uncertainties, discussion of the *introductory problems* of Hebrews cannot be bypassed, because only by engaging these can the historical profile and theological independence and uniqueness of Hebrews be fully exposed.

1.1 Hebrews, like 1 John, is a letter without a prescript. The eschatocol, or concluding material, which is presented in a Pauline style in Hebrews 13:22–25, calls the letter a λόγος τῆς παρακλήσεως, a speech of exhortation and edification (cf. Paul’s λόγος παρακλήσεως in Acts 13:15). The concluding material also promises that the author will soon visit the addressees together with the brother Timothy, who has recently been “set free” (presumably from prison). The author greets “all your *leaders* (ἡγούμενοι) and all the *saints* (ἅγιοι)” and is therefore writing to Christians who are led by multiple leaders (cf. Luke 22:26, ἡγούμενος) and call themselves saints. Hebrews 13:24 sends greetings from “those from Italy” (οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς ’Ιταλίας). Because the name Timothy in all probability refers to the coworker who was converted and highly esteemed by Paul (cf. 1 Thess. 3:2; 1 Cor. 4:17; Phil. 2:19–23; Acts 16:1–3), the apostle is no unknown figure for our letter. The greeting of “those from Italy” becomes understandable if it refers to a group of Jewish Christians who originated in Italy and have formed a congregation of compatriots analogous to Diaspora synagogues with membership based on common regional provenance (cf. Acts 2:9–11; 6:9), who now greet their fellow Italians (in Rome?). But whether the letter is really addressed to Rome (and not elsewhere) must be

decided by the interpretation of Hebrews 10:32–36 and the issue of dating as a whole.

1.2 Because Hebrews is cited in *1 Clement*, which was written in AD 96–97 (cf. *1 Clem.* 17:1 with Heb. 11:37 and *1 Clem.* 36:2–5 with Heb. 1:3–12), a *terminus ad quem* for its origin is already given. A *terminus a quo* results if we are able to locate historically the abuse, persecutions, and confiscation of property that the addressees suffered according to 10:32–36. The formulation in 12:4 about the addressees not yet having resisted to the point of shedding blood prohibits us from referring these sufferings to Nero's persecution in AD 64, since countless Christians were martyred at that time. There is still no mention of such martyrs in Hebrews. But if one goes further back, then the formulations of 10:32–34 fit excellently with the expulsion of Jews and Jewish Christians from Rome by the emperor Claudius in AD 49 (cf. Acts 18:2 and Suetonius, *Claudius* 25). Gentile Christians were only indirectly affected by this expulsion, but naturally the sanctions of the imperial authorities also had an effect on them. In 2:3 the author hints at the fact that he himself had not been an eyewitness or earwitness of Jesus but had received his teaching from those who heard him. But whether the author must therefore be assigned to the second early Christian generation is questionable, because men like Barnabas, John Mark, and Apollos also joined the church of Jesus Christ only after Easter. In any case, the situation of the *addressees* points to problems that first came about sometime after the founding of the church. According to 6:1, the members of this church are predominately Gentiles who have converted from their "dead works" to faith in God and have learned to put their hope in Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Thess. 1:9–10).

As Romans and *1 Clement* show, the Gentile origin of a church's members does not exclude a Jewish Christian stamp on the church to which they belong. The recipients of the letter have been washed clean of their sins in baptism (cf. 6:2 with 10:22) and have taken on themselves the hostilities resulting from their conversion (cf. 10:32 with 1 Thess. 1:6; 2:14); in earlier days they also stood by their persecuted (Jewish Christian) brothers and sisters as partners with commitments of their material possessions (cf. 10:33). Now, however, they have become "hard of hearing" (cf. 5:11; 6:12), and some have fallen into the habit of not regularly attending the church meetings (cf. 10:25), thus running the risk of throwing away the confidence of their faith, which was God's gift to them (cf. 6:6;

10:35). The author therefore calls the church back to its “first love” (cf. Heb. 6:10 with Rev. 2:4) and encourages members to remain true to their original confession (cf. 10:23). The call to remember deceased church leaders in 13:7 also points to later times. However, once one considers the fact that the details of 9:6–7 and 10:1–3 would be more readily understood while the priestly services were still being performed in the Jerusalem temple, the picture changes. The author never speaks of the destruction of Jerusalem. But he still knows that Jesus was executed “outside the city gate” (cf. 13:12). This remark is not simply “spun” from the instruction in Leviticus 16:27 to burn the bodies of the sin offerings “outside the camp,” but refers to a situation that obtained only prior to AD 41, when Herod Agrippa II began to build the so-called third wall of Jerusalem and thus enclose the area in which Golgotha lay within the city (cf. Josephus, *J.W.* 5.147ff.). This calls for a critical reserve regarding the conventional late dating of Hebrews to the period between AD 80 and 90. The letter can by all means have been written *before* Nero’s persecution and therefore at the *beginning of the 60s*, and there is next to nothing against seeing it as a word of exhortation for the Christians in Rome. (Whether Timothy’s planned visit to the church in Hebrews 13:23 has anything to do with the request that Timothy should visit Rome in 2 Tim. 4:9 can unfortunately not be determined.)

1.3 The *author* should be thought of as an early Christian teacher who can be credited with the style and content of the letter, as well as with an acquaintance with Timothy (cf. 13:23). He must also have been so well known to the addressees as to be identifiable even without his name. These criteria apply to the Levite *Barnabas* from Cyprus, who was deeply involved in the Gentile mission (cf. Acts 4:36–37; 9:27) and whose authorship of Hebrews Tertullian had heard of (cf. *Modesty* 20.2 [*ANF* 4:97]), but also to *Apollos* (cf. Acts 18:24; 19:1), to whom the letter was already attributed by Luther (cf. WA 10/1:143; *LW* 75:256). Barnabas and Apollos had made a name for themselves as teachers and missionaries. Paul knew and respected them both (cf. 1 Cor. 9:6; Gal. 2:1, 9; 1 Cor. 3:4–5). They also both worked with Paul for a time without letting themselves be taken in to his school (cf. Gal. 2:13; Acts 15:36–39; 1 Cor. 16:12). Titus 3:13 shows that Titus had the task of helping Apollos on his way in his travels.

While the above considerations are relevant for a dating of Hebrews prior to Nero’s persecution, illustrative material for the *late dating* of the letter between AD 80 and 90 can be drawn only from Revelation 2:9, 19; 3:11; and the letter of Pliny the Younger in AD 111, in which he reports that some of the Christians whom he examined claimed to have abandoned their faith as many as twenty years previously (cf. *Ep.* 10.96.6). The references in Hebrews to the Old Testament and the Jewish cult regulations would then have to be understood as no more than a literarily motivated reception and interpretation of the relevant Old Testament texts, since Herod’s temple will have been destroyed. Because the letter’s conclusion has a fictional effect assuming the late date, one cannot say anything at all about the author or his relationship to Timothy.

Whether Hebrews stands closer to the Hellenistically trained and Scripture-literate Alexandrian Apollos or the Cypriot Levite Joseph with the Aramaic surname Barnabas (cf. Acts 4:36) must be decided on the basis of the letter’s place in tradition history and the history of religion.

1.4 First, there can be no doubt but that the author falls back on *Christian traditions*. Among them, the baptismal confession or ὁμολογία plays a special role (cf. 3:1; 4:14; 10:23 with Rom. 10:9–10). But Gospel traditions and hymnic christological material are also taken up (cf. Heb. 1:5 with Mark 1:11 par. [?]; 5:7–8 with Mark 14:32–42 par.; 7:13 with Matt. 2:6 and Luke 2:4 [?]; 12:2 and 13:12–13 with Mark 15:20–27 par.; for hymnic material, see Heb. 1:3–4). The author also takes the existing christological interpretation of Psalms 2 and 110 a step further: the concept of the intercession of the exalted Christ known from Romans 8:34 and 1 John 2:1–2 is expanded in Hebrews into a comprehensive picture of the high priestly ministry of Christ. If one also takes into account that the letter is written in very good Greek and structured in the style of a Hellenistic Jewish speech of exhortation (λόγος παρακλήσεως), as was customary in the Diaspora synagogues (cf. Acts 13:15) but also in Christian church meetings, then the author proves himself to be an *educated Christian teacher*.

1.5 Hebrews gains a special profile from the fact that the author pulls out all the stops of Jewish Christian exegesis of the Holy Scriptures. He contrasts the obsolete Old Testament cultic order with the new order, in which Christ ministers in heaven as a “high priest according to the order of Melchizedek” (cf. Ps. 110:4 with Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:11, 17). In its paraclesis Hebrews harks back to the Jewish tradition of a long line of witnesses to the faith from the time of the old covenant (διαθήκη). For our author the church is the wandering people of God, and Christian existence is the patient pilgrimage toward the goal of end-time rest promised to God’s people.

Modern scholars seek to explain these special characteristics in one of three ways: by pointing to the gnostic background of the letter's thought world (E. Käsemann, E. Grässer, et al.), by consulting above all Jewish apocalyptic (O. Michel, O. Hofius, et al.), or by presenting the author in continuity with Philo and Alexandrian Jewish theology (A. Strobel, H. Hegermann, et al.). H.-F. Weiss has rightly pointed out that the differences between these three interpretive models are substantially mitigated by the fluid transitions between the individual fields of tradition (*Der Brief an die Hebräer* [1991], 96–114). But even Weiss strangely fails to emphasize that already in the pre-Christian period there was a priestly school tradition at home in the Jerusalem temple (which eventually migrated to Qumran) which bore both a sapiential and an apocalyptic stamp (cf. A. Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination* [1995], 301ff.).

The decisive weakness of the *gnostic model* lies in the fact that there was no full-blown pre-Christian gnosis in the first century AD, but rather only the beginnings of an anticreation dualistic thinking that developed after AD 70 on a Jewish and Platonic basis and also included Christian circles (cf. 1 Tim. 6:20). Under these circumstances the gnostic texts (from the second or third century AD) do not offer a proper foundation, but at best only comparative material for the understanding of Hebrews.

The *apocalyptic model* comes closer to the heart of the matter because it can draw upon available texts and has found confirmation in Qumran. The *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* from Qumran confirm O. Hofius's assumption that the idea of a *curtain* or *veil* (*καταπέτασμα*) that separates the temple area from the holy of holies in the heavenly sanctuary (cf. Heb. 6:19–20; 10:19–20) goes back to early Jewish ideas: 4Q405 frag. 15 II, 2–5 speaks of the gloriously fashioned "veil of the *inner shrine* [דביר, ***dəbîr*** = holy of holies] of the king [= God]" (*DSSSE* 2:831). The *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* moreover document the precise notions of the heavenly sanctuary that were cultivated in early Jewish priestly circles. Hebrews 6:19–20 and 10:19–20 can be satisfactorily interpreted against this background: both passages speak of the heavenly sanctuary and its holy of holies, to which access has been opened by Jesus's blood and surrender of life (cf. Col. 1:22; Eph. 2:14). The most striking parallels to the letter's idea of the heavenly *rest* into which Christians as the new people of God are to enter (cf. Heb. 3:11, 18; 4:1, 3, 5–6) are offered in the apocalyptic of *4 Ezra* (cf. *4 Ezra* 7:36, 121–124; 8:52). If one also considers that a fragment has been found in Qumran of an eschatological midrash, 11Q13 (= 11QMelch), in which Melchizedek (cf. Gen. 14:18) appears from the perspective of Psalm 82:1 and Isaiah 52:7 as a divine being (אֱלֹהִים) and heavenly redeemer figure who establishes end-time liberation and atonement for the saved community and convenes the final judgment, then it is clear that the early Jewish–apocalyptic texts merit intensive study in the interpretation of Hebrews.

Finally, it must also be taken into account that postexilic priestly theology already thought in the scheme of heavenly archetype and earthly copy that comes freshly to the fore in Hebrews 8:5, 9:23, and 10:1. According to Exodus 25:9, the wilderness tabernacle of which Hebrews frequently speaks is only the "pattern" (*παράδειγμα*, תַּבְנִית [*tabnît*]) of the heavenly archetype shown to Moses by Yahweh. Only in this sense can the tabernacle be the pattern of the temple on Zion according to Wisdom 9:8, where the temple is said to be "a copy [*μίμημα*] of the holy tent that you prepared from the beginning." According to Zechariah 3:1–7 and Sirach 45:15–17, the earthly high priest is the

anointed office bearer who may represent Israel in the heavenly throne room of God; according to Sirach 50:1–21, his mediating office between God's people and the heavenly world climaxes in his authority to make cultic atonement for Israel. In view of these traditions, it is unnecessary to trace the basic conception of Hebrews back to non-Jewish dualistic roots. For this conception lives from the eschatological and cosmological correspondence of the provisional and the final covenant, of the earthly and the heavenly high priesthood, and of the old merely symbolic atonement and the once-for-all effective atonement through Christ. In this concept, the above-mentioned *priestly school tradition* finds its Christian continuation and counterpart. These factors fit even better with the authorship of the Levite Barnabas than with that of Apollos.

1.6 The author of Hebrews is a master of the Hellenistic Jewish *exegesis of the Holy Scriptures*. He has the Scriptures before him above all in the form of the Septuagint and interprets them according to all the interpretive rules that early Christianity had learned from Judaism (F. Schröger). The exegetical comments of Hebrews presuppose addressees who have grown far beyond the elementary knowledge of baptismal instruction (cf. 5:14–6:1).

The most important methods of Scripture interpretation in Hebrews are the following: (1) exegesis according to the literal sense (e.g., of LXX Ps. 103:4 in Heb. 1:7 or of Exod. 24:8 in Heb. 9:20); (2) interpretation in the scheme of prophecy and fulfillment (e.g., of Ps. 2:7 and 2 Sam. 7:14 in Heb. 1:5 or of Jer. 31:31–34 [LXX: 38:31–34] in Heb. 8:8–12); (3) interpretation according to the scheme of typology, that is, the exemplary foreshadowing of eschatological content in earlier Scripture texts (e.g., according to Heb. 7:3, the king and priest Melchizedek of Gen. 14:17–20 is the type who "resembles" [cf. ἀφωμοιόω] the Son of God in that he remains a priest forever). (4) Occasionally we also find allegory: by starting from a new spiritual vantage point, one discovers sayings in an old Scripture passage enciphered there in order to be deciphered in the future (e.g., in Heb. 3:6, after Christ is designated as Son and trustee over God's house according to Num. 12:7, where this house was originally entrusted to Moses, the author continues, "and we"—i.e., the church—"are God's house"). (5) The argument *a minori ad maius* ("from lesser to greater"), which was constantly employed by the rabbis, also surfaces in Hebrews (cf., e.g., 9:13–14). (6) The analogical argument from two or three Scripture passages that are linked for mutual interpretation by key words or content, the so-called *gezera shawa* (שָׁוָה גְּזֵירָה), also shows up in our letter (cf., e.g., 4:3–5). Such exegetical skills were by no means beyond the Levite Barnabas, particularly since Acts 11:24 calls him an ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς καὶ πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου καὶ πίστεως, "a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith," and Apollos certainly possessed them, because he is described as δυνατὸς ὢν ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς, "being well-versed in the scriptures" (Acts 18:24).

Just as for Paul (cf. 1 Cor. 10:11; Rom. 15:4) and his school (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16), for the author of Hebrews the inspired Holy Scriptures point to the present time of the Christian church (cf. 3:7; 10:15), and faith in Jesus Christ is the key that makes the Scriptures understandable as God's speech in and through Christ (cf., e.g., 2:10–13; 10:5–7, 15–17). The author concentrates much more strongly than Paul on cultic texts and points out even more decisively the provisional nature and weakness of the Old

Testament cultic order (cf., e.g., 7:18–19; 8:13; 10:1–4). However, the famous introduction of the letter (1:1–2) and the cloud of Old Testament witnesses to faith in chapter 11 also document that for our author, the Holy Scriptures do not attest a now obsolete Jewish cultic order, but constitute a prophetic witness that the Christian church must obediently hear and keep in mind. The author's exegetical artistry is also not an end in itself but serves the aim of his paraclesis, by which he wishes to strengthen the church and encourage it to persevere.

1.7 Concerning the letter's *structure and content*, exegesis has reached a surprising level of agreement. Inspired by W. Nauck's essay "Zum Aufbau des Hebräerbriefes" ("On the Structure of Hebrews"), recent exegesis has differentiated three main parts of the letter in addition to its conclusion:

I. Chap. 1:1–4:13: The call to hear God's saving word in his Son

II. Chap. 4:14–10:31: The divine word of grace in Jesus, the heavenly high priest

III. Chap. 10:32–12:29: The call to persevere in the faith at the dawn of the end of the world

Epistolary Conclusion: 13:1–25

Hebrews is therefore a *λόγος παρακλήσεως* or "word of exhortation" designed with great care (cf. 13:22). This genre classification explains the constant alternation of instructional and hortatory passages as well as the fact that the christological statements are all closely interwoven with exhortation to the church.

1.8 Because our author wants to edify an existing church and encourage patient endurance, he reminds the members of their (baptismal) confession, presents them with Christ and the new saving order established through him, and calls them to obedient discipleship until the day of redemption. The flow of this paraclesis is best understood by considering in order the Christology of the letter, its antithesis of old and new, the associated concept of faith, and the church exhortation, which is closely bound up with eschatology. The current research situation requires us to make these theological investigations relatively independent of the still-open introductory issues.

2 Characteristic of our letter's *Christology* is the language of Christ as the "Son (of God)" through whom God speaks to the church and whom he has installed as the heavenly high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

2.1 The confession of Jesus as *Son of God* is so familiar to the author that he can call Christ not only υἱὸς θεοῦ (cf. 4:14; 6:6; 7:3; 10:29) but also simply ὁ υἱός in a manner that anticipates the Johannine Christology (cf. 1:2, 8; 3:6; 5:8; 7:28). Both christological titles go back to the preaching about conversion (cf. 6:1 with 1 Thess. 1:10) and to Jewish Christian confessional formulas like Romans 1:3–4, but they also have connections with wisdom material in the Jesus tradition (cf. Matt. 11:27/Luke 10:22). In Hebrews these titles refer to the preexistent Christ (cf. 1:3), who took on flesh and blood (cf. 2:14), obediently bore the suffering laid on him (cf. 5:8 with John 12:23 and Mark 14:32–42 par.), effected "purification for sins" through his atoning death, and finally sat down on a heavenly throne at the right hand of God (cf. 1:3). The overall christological movement is the same as in Philippians 2:6–11, and it was certainly long since known to the author and his church.

2.2 The close association of Christ with the *word of God* in Hebrews also resembles John's Gospel. Although it does not yet reach the stage where Christ is simply called the Logos (cf. John 1:1), it does have points of contact with Revelation 19:13, 1 John 1:1, and the apostolic preaching that explains the gospel in the form of the Jesus story (cf. Acts 10:36 and above, 61–62, §6).

2.2.1 In Hebrews the christological understanding of the word of God has taken on the special stamp of the promise-fulfillment scheme. This is documented above all in *Hebrews 1:1–4*, the letter's famous introduction. With virtuoso style and beautiful rhythm, the author begins with a single sentence (trans. D. P. Bailey; cf. NRSV and H.-F. Weiss, *Der Brief an die Hebräer* [1991], 133):

> [1]In many and various ways of old God spoke to our fathers in the prophets, [2]but now at the end of these days he has spoken to us in the Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the ages (or worlds);

[3]who being the reflection (ἀπαύγασμα) of God's glory and the exact imprint (χαρακτήρ) of God's very being,

and sustaining all things by his powerful word,

made purification for sins

and sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (ἐν ὑψηλοῖς),

[4]having become as much superior to angels

as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

A most interesting feature of this text is the fact that the salvation-historical perspective of God's final speech in and through his Son in verses 1–2 is immediately coupled in verse 3 with statements that can be arranged into a six-line Christ hymn (see the Nestle-Aland text). The hymnic passage stands out from the rest of Hebrews by its New Testament *hapax legomena* (ἀπαύγασμα, χαρακτήρ, ἐν ὑψηλοῖς) and its description of Christ as the reflection of God's glory, the exact imprint of his being, and the creator and sustainer of the world. But the passage also gives the catchword for the atonement Christology of the whole letter: After making atonement as high priest, Christ "sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high," which is then taken up almost verbatim in 8:1. We are therefore dealing with important hymnic formulations.

The hymnic statements in Hebrews 1:3 provide further evidence that Christ was praised in early Christian worship services as creator of the worlds and reconciler (cf. Col. 1:15–20). Although the author did not draft this hymnic confession himself, he tunes his addressees in to his paraclesis by reminding them of a church song they have known since their baptism. The present-tense statements in verses 3a–b—*being* the reflection of God's glory, *sustaining* all things—make clear that Christ as the word of God is, was, and will remain the creator, reconciler, and sustainer of the universe. Because wisdom is called "a reflection (ἀπαύγασμα) of eternal light [i.e., God]" in Wisdom 7:26 and is referred to as the creative word of God through which the universe including humankind was created in Wisdom 9:1–2, the connection to the wisdom tradition is just as clear in Hebrews 1:3 as in Colossians 1:15–20. According to Wisdom 9:4 and 10, wisdom sits beside God's throne just like the exalted Christ in Hebrews 1:3d. Christ is additionally presented in 1:3c as the mediator and medium of end-time atonement. The indicative statement in 1:3d, ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τῆς μεγαλωσύνης ἐν ὑψηλοῖς, "he *sat down* at the right hand of the Majesty on high," is based on Psalm 110 (LXX 109):1, but not directly on the Septuagint, which has the imperative κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου, "*Sit* at my right hand." The formulation, which recurs almost verbatim in 8:1, appears to point back to an old Jewish Christian confessional tradition, as indicated by the fact that the name of God is avoided and replaced by the abstract noun ἡ μεγαλωσύνη, "the Majesty" (cf. Mark 14:62 par.).

In Hebrews 1:4 the superiority of the Son over the angelic powers is presented. Only the messianic firstborn has been addressed by God as θεός and *κύριος* (cf. 1:8, 10 with John 1:1, 18 and Phil. 2:9). In his position of honor, the Son has been appointed as ruler over the universe, and the angels must worship him (cf. Heb. 1:6; 2:5–8). The author no more loses himself in metaphysical speculation with this statement than does Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:25 and Colossians 2:15. He rather takes up a theme that was existentially determinative for Jewish Christians. The confession of the Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός made them independent from the angel worship of the synagogue (cf. Col. 2:18) as well as from the claims of the many unseen powers worshiped by the Gentiles (cf. 1 Cor. 8:5). It placed them under the mediatorship and into the obedience of Christ, thus grounding their special existence over against Jews and Gentiles. For Hebrews this existence is marked by *παρρησία*, "confidence" (cf. 3:6; 4:16; 10:19, 35), with which Christians may boldly approach God and assure themselves of their participation in future salvation.

The density of the statements in Hebrews 1:1–4 can hardly be surpassed. The Son of God represents everything that the one God intended for the world in his grace as creator. Only through the Son is there access to him, and when the church listens to the Son, it is totally united with God.

2.2.2 The christological word of God theology of Hebrews does not only speak of the creative and salvific word of God that is operative in Christ, but also of God's word of judgment. The first part of the letter concludes in *Hebrews 4:12–13* with praise of the λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ, which pierces and divides everything. In the background of these verses stand Isaiah 49:2 and Wisdom 7:22–24 and 18:15–17: "[12]Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. [13]And before him no creature is hidden, but all are naked and laid bare to the eyes of the one to whom we must render an account."

In the context, Hebrews 4:12–13 takes up the divine speech in 4:3 and 7 and heightens the urgency of the exhortation in 4:11 to make every effort to enter the rest promised to God's people. But the position and special manner of expression of these verses show that they intend to communicate more than just a warning. From 1:1–4 there can be no doubt that the divine

word of judgment is also spoken by the Son and represented by him, as in Revelation 1:16 and 19:11–16. Confessing Christ and remaining faithful to him bring salvation (cf. Heb. 10:38). But abandoning the confession and denying Christ as mediator of salvation leave unbelievers defenseless in the judgment and expose them to the judicial pronouncement of God, who pierces through all outward appearances and lays bare all untruth (cf. 10:29–31). According to Hebrews, there is grace in and through Christ for the church living at the end time (cf. 1:2) only in view of the imminent final judgment (cf. 10:37), and it is salvifically necessary to belong to the church.

2.3 The large second main part of our letter begins in Hebrews 4:14. It extends to 10:31 and deepens the christological foundation of the first part. After the preliminary statements of Christ's priesthood in 2:17 and 3:1, Christ is now presented in all clarity as the *heavenly high priest*. The atonement and reconciliation he effected is shown to be the fulfillment and completion of the cult instituted in the Old Testament. For all Christians who knew of the supreme importance of the temple cult on Zion from the Holy Scriptures or even from personal experience (as Jews or Godfearers), this argumentative deepening of Christology must have been fascinating. They could now understand how the church that confesses Jesus Christ could come through the Son of God into direct and indissoluble fellowship with God and could participate through Christ's mediation in the praise of God offered by the angels (cf. 12:22 with 13:15). They could understand this because for them too, the heavenly world presented itself not only as the garden of Eden but as the place of the end-time temple not made by human hands (cf. 9:11, 24 with Exod. 15:17; Mark 14:58 and Rev. 4:2–8), in which there was a fixed order of worship.

The figure of the Old Testament priestly king Melchizedek (cf. Gen. 14:17–20) serves our author as a type of the heavenly priest Christ, who is superior to Abraham and all his descendants, including the Levites. Psalm 110:4 is the controlling passage for this typology:

> The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind,
> "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." (cf. Heb. 5:6; 7:17; etc.)

The priestly office of Christ founded by this divine oath supersedes the Aaronic priesthood in the view of the author (cf. 7:20–25). Nevertheless, he

presents the priestly work of Christ against the background of the Aaronic priesthood on the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16. According to Leviticus 16, the high priest had the authority and instructions to make atonement once a year for the people of God by entering the holy of holies, where he was to perform the atonement ritual with the blood of the goat of the sin offering. In exact correspondence to this procedure, Hebrews presents Christ as the heavenly high priest who entered with his own blood into the heavenly holy of holies and made atonement there once for all for the people of God headed by him. This procedure, valid for all time, has made the annual repetition of the atonement ritual in the Jerusalem temple obsolete.

The author of Hebrews introduces his readers to the understanding of Christ as the divine ἀρχιερεύς or "high priest" in three steps: first he speaks of the Son of God who became human and was subjected to suffering; then he speaks of his sacrifice; and finally he presents his heavenly ministry as high priest.

2.3.1 The "pioneer of our salvation" who has been made perfect through sufferings is already mentioned in Hebrews 2:10. The second part of the letter begins in 4:14 and includes the same idea in the next verse: "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin" (4:15). The picture of the suffering Christ is filled out in 5:7–10 with a reference to Jesus's prayer in Gethsemane.

The translation of εὐλάβεια in Hebrews 5:7 is disputed. One can translate it as Jesus's "reverence" or "fear of God," but also as his "dread" or "anguish." Εἰσακουσθεὶς ἀπὸ τῆς εὐλαβείας can then mean either "he was heard out of his *anguish*" (A. Strobel, *Der Brief an die Hebräer* [1991[4]], 56) or "he was heard because of his *fear of God*" (H. Hegermann, *Der Brief an die Hebräer* [1988], 117; H.-F. Weiss, *Der Brief an die Hebräer* [1991], 301). Because εὐλάβεια is used in 12:28 in the sense of "reverence" or "fear of God," the second translation commends itself (see below). This is also the practice of the English versions: "he was heard for his *godly fear*" (RSV); "he was heard because of his *reverent submission*" (NRSV). A. von Harnack's conjectural emendation of the text to *οὐκ* εἰσακουσθείς, "he was *not* heard," as recorded in the Nestle-Aland[27] apparatus is unnecessary (and no longer present in NA[28]).

Hebrews 5:7–10 says that during his days on earth Christ pleaded with God with loud cries and tears and was heard "because of his fear of God." Although he was the (preexistent) Son, he learned obedience through his suffering, and having been made perfect, he became "the source of eternal

salvation for all who obey him." God addresses him as his Son and as "a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" in 5:5–6. Hebrews introduces its readers to priestly Christology by directing them to the sinless but tested and tempted man Jesus and giving them the opportunity to identify with this Jesus. As in 1 Peter 2:21–25, the suffering Christ is the church's role model also in Hebrews, only here it is not the Suffering Servant (which the author alludes to only in 9:28) but Jesus's prayer struggle in Gethsemane that is held up as an example—a presentation which has had a lasting influence on Christian iconography.

2.3.2 In Hebrews 9:11–14 Jesus's surrender of life on the cross (cf. 12:2) is presented as the completed atonement ceremony which has taken place in the holy of holies of the heavenly sanctuary: by sprinkling his own blood, Christ has effected purification of sins, sanctification, and eternal redemption once for all for the eschatological people of God. Christ's blood is the means of atonement par excellence, and the self-surrender of his Son decreed by God is the sacrifice that makes all further sacrifices superfluous. Our letter applies the term "sacrifice" (*θυσία*) to Jesus's atoning death in 9:26. Hebrews understands this in the same twofold way attested in the letters of Paul and his school. This involves both the obedient self-offering of the Son, who *ἑαυτόν προσήνεγκεν* in 9:14 (cf. Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2), and his having been offered, *προσενεχθείς*, by the Father in 9:28 (divine passive). The author thereby spells out precisely how the atoning death of Jesus was conceived in early Christianity, not only in Ephesians 5:2 and in Hebrews, but from the beginning of the formation of the tradition throughout all of Jewish Christianity. Just as Leviticus 10:17 (cf. 17:11) interprets the blood of the sin offering sprinkled in the Jerusalem temple as a gift of God to his people, so God's gracious gift to his people climaxes in the blood of Christ, making further atoning sacrifices in the temple unnecessary (cf. Heb. 9:24–26).

The bold idea, probably originating in the Stephen circle, that God installed Jesus on Golgotha as the new "mercy seat" (*ἱλαστήριον*) and that Good Friday is the Day of Atonement for the Christian church (cf. Rom. 3:25 and above, 218–21, §5.3.2.1) is given a full christological exposition in Hebrews 9. The beginnings of the Christology of Hebrews therefore seem to go back, like Romans 3:25, to the tradition preserved in Antioch by the so-called Hellenists.

2.3.3 The contrast of the old covenant and the new covenant—of the "blood of the covenant" sprinkled by Moses during the sealing of the Sinai

covenant (cf. Exod. 24:8) and the sacrificial blood of Jesus—was something already given to our author from the early versions of the Lukan-Pauline Lord's Supper tradition (cf. Luke 22:14–20; 1 Cor. 11:23–26; and above, 151–64, §§3–5, esp. 162–63). Taking up these motifs in such passages as Hebrews 8:7–13, 10:15–18, and 12:18–24, our author presents the abolition of the old covenant (παλαιὰ διαθήκη) by the new covenant (καινὴ διαθήκη) of Jeremiah 31:31–34 (LXX Jer. 38:31–34) through the sacrifice on Golgotha more clearly than any other New Testament author. For Hebrews the church lives under the sign of the new covenant. Its members have received forgiveness of sins and complete fellowship with God, and they stand under the claim of God's commandments written on their hearts.

It is therefore all the more conspicuous that the author who gives Jesus's sacrificial death such priority speaks only in passing of the *Lord's Supper*. He refers to baptism in relatively clear terms (cf. 6:4–5; 10:22), but of the Lord's Supper he says only tersely and cryptically: "We have an altar from which those who officiate in the tent have no right to eat" (13:10). The significance of this must be seen against the Old Testament background. Although the priests were allowed to eat the meat of the usual sin offerings, eating of the sin offerings sacrificed for the priests and people of Israel on the Day of Atonement was forbidden even to the priests (cf. Lev. 16:27 with Heb. 13:11). Over against this, Christians now have the right to eat of the sacrifice (or from the altar) that is Christ himself. But even this important reference is not pursued further in its own right, but is included in the call to follow Christ "outside the camp" and "bear the abuse he endured" (cf. 13:12–14). Hebrews apparently holds the Lord's Supper in high regard, but its addressees in Rome were not sacramentalists who needed the same detailed correction as the Christians in Corinth. Like Paul, our author was concerned not to let a false assurance of salvation arise in the church based on appeals to baptism and the Lord's Supper, but to exhort its members to continue on their way in a manner worthy of the atonement made for them (cf. 4:2–3 with 1 Cor. 10:1–22).

2.3.4 The crowning glory of Jesus's sacrifice in Hebrews is his *installation as the heavenly high priest* who ministers before God until the last day. In Psalm 110, early Christianity's classic psalm of exaltation and resurrection, it says in verse 4:

> The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind,

> "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

Our author applies this verse and its divine oath to Jesus's exaltation in Hebrews 5:6; 7:17, 21. Furthermore, Hebrews 7:23–25 explains how Jesus differs from earthly priests: "The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office; but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them [with God]."

This statement shows that Hebrews too knows of an ongoing heavenly ministry of Jesus for his own (similar to Rom. 8:31–34 and 1 John 2:1–2). The author speaks of this also in Hebrews 9:24. As the mediator of salvation and the heavenly intercessor who has "entered heaven itself to appear before God on our behalf," Christ is and remains the decisive guarantor of salvation. The earthly congregation can remind itself of his sacrifice and assure itself of his constant intercession in heaven. Through him the church experiences the continual forgiveness of sins, and because of his mediation it can serve God with its "sacrifice of praise" in the certainty of standing close to him even on earth (cf. 13:15).

3 Hebrews wants to be a "word of encouragement" (*λόγος παρακλήσεως*) and therefore places its entire Christology in the service of *church exhortation*. Its paraclesis aims at encouraging the flagging church to hold fast to the received (baptismal) confession and to persevere in the way of discipleship until the imminent end.

3.1 Like the paraclesis of the Pauline Letters or 1 Peter, the church exhortation in Hebrews also rests on the saving event and therefore speaks of the obligation of baptized Christians who have gained a share in salvation by God's free grace. The relationship of the indicative and the imperative is nicely illustrated in 4:14: "Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, *let us hold fast* to our confession" (*κρατῶμεν*, hortatory subjunctive; cf. similarly 10:19–25). This plea gains its urgency from the fact that the church lives in the end time (cf. 1:2) and is approaching the imminent final judgment (cf.

8:13; 10:37). Only those who have lived their whole lives by faith will be able to stand in this judgment (cf. 10:38).

3.2 At times our letter displays a *criticism of the law* that is reminiscent of Paul. The fundamental idea is that with Jesus's appearance and installment as heavenly high priest, the previous life order and cultic system has been abolished and the new life order of Jeremiah 31:31–34 put in its place (see above). The letter's cultically accented Christology means that in its criticism of the law, the abolition of the old cultic order by the new takes center stage. For our Jewish Christian author is fully aware that the cultic order is a central part of the divine law given on Sinai (cf. 7:11–12; 8:6). Already in 2:1–4 he contrasts the old law given through angels (cf. Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19) with the new order of salvation. Then in 7:11–19 he proclaims the Levitical priesthood to be abolished by the priesthood of Jesus, using formulations very similar to Paul's: the earlier commandment was abrogated because it was weak and ineffectual; since the law did not lead to perfection, a better hope is established through which believers may approach God (cf. 7:18–19 with Gal. 3:21; Rom. 8:3 and Ezek. 20:25). In 8:7–13 and 10:11–18, 19–25 the author makes it unmistakably clear that the church now lives under the sign of God's "new covenant" established by Jesus's mission. Through him the old cultic order, including the useless food laws, has been abrogated (cf. 13:9). Nevertheless, the commandment to fear God which Jesus himself exemplarily fulfilled (cf. 5:7; 12:28–29) and the instruction about brotherly love (cf. 6:10; 13:1–2) remain just as valid as the divine directives summarized in the second table of the Decalogue (cf. 12:15; 13:3–5). *According to Hebrews, the Torah is not just dismissed in and through Christ, but is rather put into force in the sense of Jeremiah 31:33–34.*

3.3 Hebrews draws conclusions from the above realities which are consistent from a Jewish Christian perspective, but which require alert theological reflection from modern readers. The theological consequences appear most clearly in the church paraclesis of 10:19–13:25 and in the interspersed references to the impossibility of winning back to Christ and the church those Christians who have fallen away from their confession (cf. 6:4–8; 10:26–31; 12:15–17).

3.3.1 The situation of the addressees (see above) explains why the paraclesis about faith focuses entirely on the theme of preserving and

holding on to the hope of God’s promise. In Hebrews 11 the author first defines faith in verse 1 and then points in verse 2 to the faith of the ancestors or “ancients” (πρεσβύτεροι), whom the church can and should take as their example. The ancients all come from the time of the old “covenant” (διαθήκη). The “cloud” of witnesses to the faith in Hebrews 11 (cf. 12:1) begins with Abel and concludes with the Maccabean martyrs and the prophets who suffered martyrdom. The long list of witnesses is a Christian counterpart to similar lists in the early Jewish tradition (cf. especially the so-called “Praise of the Fathers” in Sir. 44–50 and the *Lives of the Prophets* [*OTP* 2:379–99]). It proves that Jewish Christianity as represented by the author of Hebrews was familiar not only with the Holy Scriptures in the narrow sense, but also with Jewish legends about the fate of the martyrs (cf. 2 Macc. 7; 4 Macc. 7:24–16:6) and the prophets (on the prophets being clothed in “sheepskins and goatskins” in Heb. 11:37, compare their wearing of “sackcloth” in *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 2:9–10 [*OTP* 2:158]; on Isaiah’s being sawn in two, cf. *Liv. Pro.* 1:1 and *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 5:1–14; etc.).

The definition of πίστις or “faith” in Hebrews 11:1 also requires more detailed attention, beginning with the translation of the two Greek terms, ὑπόστασις and ἔλεγχος, used to qualify it. These have presented a problem of translation since Luther, and there are partially parallel developments in English.

Our translation of Hebrews 11:1 reads: “Now faith is a *standing firm* (ὑπόστασις) in the things hoped for, a *conviction* (ἔλεγχος) about things not (yet) seen” (Peter Stuhlmacher’s German: “Es ist aber der Glaube ein *Feststehen* bei dem, was man erhofft, ein *Überführtsein* von den Dingen, die man [noch] nicht sieht”). The standard English versions agree with this translation of the second term but disagree on the first: “Now faith is the *assurance* of things hoped for, the *conviction* of things not seen” ([cf. ASV against KJV], RSV, NASB, NRSV, ESV [cf. also NIV11, “confidence” and “assurance”]). Moreover, Luther’s 1522 translation, which remains essentially unchanged in the 1975 and 1984 revisions, can be criticized on both counts for its renderings *Zuversicht*, “confidence,” for ὑπόστασις and *Nichtzweifeln*, “not doubting,” for ἔλεγχος. This is philologically uncertain because ὑπόστασις does not mean “assurance” or “confidence,” nor does ἔλεγχος denote merely subjective “certainty” or “not doubting.” The only meanings that come into consideration for ὑπόστασις are “standpoint,” “standing fast” (cf. LSJ 1895, s.v. B II 4, “*confidence, courage, resolution, steadiness*, of soldiers, Plb. [Polybius, *Hist.*] 4.50.10, 6.55.2”) or “essence,” “reality” (see below), while for the *hapax legomenon* ἔλεγχος the possibilities include “reproof,” “conviction,” or “proof.”

Josephus uses ὑπόστασις in *Antiquities* 18.24 for the Zealots’ unshakeable conviction or resolution about their cause that prepared them for martyrdom. The expression is τὸ ἀμετάλλακτον αὐτῶν τῆς . . . ὑποστάσεως, translated in the Loeb edition as “the steadfastness of their *resolution*,”

where "conviction" would also work as a synonym. This meaning of ὑπόστασις fits the context of Hebrews 11 just as well as the juristic meaning of ἔλεγχος in the sense of "conviction": From Mark 13:10, Matthew 24:14, John 16:8–11, and 2 Corinthians 2:15–16 we see that the apostles understood their proclamation of the gospel as part of an end-time legal proceeding. The message of Jesus Christ's kingly rule which must be proclaimed to all nations before the parousia has legally decisive force: One part of the ἔθνη is "convicted" (ἐλέγχειν) by the gospel and becomes convinced of Christ's kingly rule and the necessity of confessing him for salvation, but for the other part of the ἔθνη that rejects it, the gospel becomes a witness by which they could be "convicted" or held accountable in the final judgment and condemned for their unbelief. The author uses ἔλεγχος to allude to the proclamation that convinced the letter's addressees that they could and should confess Christ as Lord. This proclamation gave them παρρησία, the confidence of faith (cf. 3:6; 4:16; 10:19, 35), as well as the hope of participating in the still-future heavenly redemption that Christ had put into effect for them (cf. 9:12, 15). (Further on Hebrews 11:1–2, including the history of interpretation, see M. R. Cosby, *The Rhetorical Composition and Function of Hebrews 11* [1988], 28–40.)

On the basis of such considerations, C. Rose provides a useful expanded definition of faith in Hebrews 11:1:

> Now faith is a (resolute) standing firm (as required by God) in the things which one hopes for (based on the promise given in God's word and guaranteed by Christ's high priestly self-sacrifice, things to be revealed on the last day when salvation is completed), an (objective and faith-assured) conviction of the reality of things which one does not see (with the eyes of sense perception, but which already exist in the transcendental realm and have been prepared for believers in order to become visible and immediately accessible to them in the eschaton). (C. Rose, *Die Wolke der Zeugen*, 146)

The interpretation presented above fits much better into the context of the paraclesis about faith in Hebrews than that which takes the meaning of ὑπόστασις to be "essence, reality" (cf. "nature"/"very being" in RSV/NRSV at 1:3; "substance" in KJV at 11:1) and sees Hebrews 11:1 as an ontological definition of faith. The sense of ὑπόστασις as "reality" is useful in Hebrews 11:1 only if the following caution by H. Koester is followed: "Primarily, then, ἔλεγχος and ὑπόστασις do not describe faith but define the character of the transcendent future things. . . . In a formulation of incomparable boldness Hb. 11:1 identifies πίστις with this transcendent reality: Faith is the reality of what is hoped for in exactly the sense in which Jesus is called the χαρακτήρ of the reality of the transcendent God in 1:3" (*TDNT* 8:587).

As a defense against premature philosophical answers to the question about the origins of the perceptible world, in Hebrews 11:3 (par. 2 Macc. 7:28) the author defines "the *belief in God as creator* that unites the Christians and the πρεσβύτεροι," the ancient heroes of faith of 11:2 (Rose, *Wolke der Zeugen*, 151). He credits God with the power to create the worlds from nothing by his word (cf. 2 Macc. 7:28); God will also see to it that the ancients share in the promised fulfillment together with the present believers (cf. Heb. 11:39–40). The list of witnesses that begins in 11:4 introduces the πρεσβύτεροι individually, and in good Old Testament–Jewish fashion the constant repetition of the dative πίστει, "by faith," refers to their hopeful and active fear of God as demonstrated by their deeds. For without faith it is impossible to please him (11:6). Yet the faith of the ancients as presented by Hebrews is *not* a πίστις εἰς Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν in the Pauline sense, but rather faithfulness in view of the future realities of salvation.

How far away the author of Hebrews is from Paul can be seen in his exegesis of Habakkuk 2:3–4 in 10:36–39 and his references to Abraham in 11:8–10, 11–12, and 17–19. The important Jewish background includes 1QpHab 8:1–3, where the Qumran writer gives the crucial term אֱמוּנָה (*ʾemûnâ*) in Habakkuk 2:4 the sense of "loyalty" rather than the NRSV's "faith" (cf. NJPS "fidelity"; NJB "faithfulness") and interprets the verse to mean that "all observing the Law in the House of Judah [are ones] whom God will free from the house of judgment on account of their toil and of their *loyalty* to the Teacher of Righteousness" (*DSSSE* 1:27, italics added). Similarly, the author of Hebrews interprets Habakkuk 2:3–4 in terms of the fidelity, loyalty, or faithfulness (German: *Glaubenstreue*) of the righteous person who will receive the full benefits of salvation and gain life in God's presence when the Messiah comes. Yet whoever does not summon up this faithfulness but shrinks back is heading for ruin (Heb. 10:39).

All the πρεσβύτεροι the author lists in 11:4ff. have proved to be examples of such faithfulness. *Abraham* is among them. He proved his πίστις several times: At God's command he set out to move to the promised land (vv. 8–10); in spite of their advanced age, he and Sarah held fast to God's promise of descendants so that an innumerable multitude descended from him (vv. 11–12); he actually did offer up Isaac—cf. the perfect προσενήνοχεν (from προσφέρω) in verse 17—and figuratively speaking he received this child, on whom the promise depended, back through the resurrection of the dead (v. 19). For the author of Hebrews, Habakkuk 2:4 is therefore not a Scripture proof for justification by faith in Christ alone, as it is for Paul in Galatians 3:11 and Romans 1:17, and Abraham is not an ungodly person justified by faith, as for the apostle (cf. Rom. 4:3–5 with Gal. 3:6). Rather, in both respects Hebrews follows the common early Jewish interpretive tradition but gives it a new perspective by its orientation to the heavenly benefits of salvation promised in Christ.

The faithfulness of this "cloud of witnesses" is given a christological orientation in Hebrews 12:1–4: Jesus himself lived this way as a perfect example of faith or faithfulness. Hence, in 12:2 he is the "pioneer and perfecter of faith" (ὁ τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸς καὶ τελειωτής). With this classic

formulation Hebrews takes up early Christian liturgical language (cf. Acts 3:15; 5:31; *2 Clem.* 20:5). In extrabiblical Greek ἀρχηγός can mean "founder, originator, initiator" but also "head, leader, ruler, prince, chief." In Hellenistic Judaism the word is especially used in the second sense (cf. Judg. 5:15 [codex B]; Isa. 3:6–7; 1 Chron. 12:21). In the Qumran texts the Hebrew equivalents נָשִׂיא and ראשׁ (*nāśîʾ*, *rōʾš*) denote the Davidic Messiah (cf. 1Q28b 5:20; 1QM 5:1) and the (messianic) high priest (cf. 1QM 2:1 with 15:4; 16:13; etc.). Because terminologically relevant passages from gnostic texts are lacking, we can say, despite the contrary views of E. Grässer (*An die Hebräer*, vol. 1 [1990], 130–33) and H.-F. Weiss (*Der Brief an die Hebräer* [1991], 211–12), that in the case of ἀρχηγός there is a "continuity of the OT and Jewish theme of Yahweh's leading in the course of salvation history with Christian use of the title" (P.-G. Müller, *EDNT* 1:163). The Christ who was sent by God and who passed through his exemplary suffering to rise to the position of heavenly high priest is not only the messianic originator of salvation, but also the chief example of faith. Therefore, in contrast to the other New Testament authors, Hebrews does indeed use πίστις to describe Jesus's special relationship to God. Our author calls the church not only to confess Christ as the messianic mediator of salvation, but also to emulate his readiness for suffering. The church is to "go to him outside the camp and bear the abuse he endured" (Heb. 13:13), keeping alive by this discipleship of the cross the hope of entering the rest promised to God's people. Hebrews here represents a very similar *theologia crucis* to the Synoptics (cf. Mark 8:34–35 par.).

4 In Hebrews 2:1–4, 6:4–8, 10:26–31, and 12:15–17 the author warns the believers with great urgency against throwing away their "confidence" or παρρησία, which is grounded in their baptism and confession. On an early dating of the letter, these four texts can be understood as preventive measures, whereas on a later dating it should be assumed that some Christians have already turned their back on the church and that the author wants to prevent further such cases. Why the author considers falling away from one's confession to be unforgivable is best illustrated by Hebrews 10:26–31:

> For if we willfully persist in sin after having received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but [only] a fearful

> prospect of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries [of God]. Anyone who has violated the law of Moses dies without mercy "on the testimony of two or three witnesses." How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by those who have spurned the Son of God, profaned the blood of the covenant by which they were sanctified, and outraged the Spirit of grace? For we know the one who said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge his people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

This viewpoint is the result of the same typological interpretation of the Holy Scriptures that has determined the author's view of the heavenly high priesthood of Jesus. According to Leviticus 4, cultic sin offerings atone only for inadvertent or unintentional sins. In the language of the LXX, the sin offerings are effective only when an individual or the congregation sins *ἀκουσίως*, "unintentionally" or "involuntarily" (cf. Lev. 4:2, 13, 22, 27). This limitation also holds for the atonement on the Day of Atonement and was still in force in the Mishnah tractate *Yoma* (the last line invites comparison with Matt. 5:23–24): "If a man said, 'I will sin and repent, and sin again and repent,' he will be given no chance to repent. [If he said,] 'I will sin and the Day of Atonement will effect atonement,' then the Day of Atonement effects no atonement. For transgressions that are between man and God the Day of Atonement effects atonement, but for transgressions that are between a man and his fellow the Day of Atonement effects atonement only if he has appeased his fellow" (*m. Yoma* 8:9).

The author of Hebrews sees matters exactly the same way. In 10:26 he emphasizes the corresponding negative truth to Leviticus 4:2 and 13, namely, that sin offerings are ineffective and forgiveness unavailable for those who "*willfully* persist in sin" (*ἑκουσίως ἁμαρτάνειν*). According to Hebrews 6:6, the persistent sin in question is that of falling away from one's confession. Whoever falls away in this manner crucifies the Son of God again and holds him up to contempt. Our author carries over the Old Testament–Jewish view that sin offerings atone only for unintentional sins and applies this to the eschatological sacrifice of Jesus Christ. He therefore comes to the conclusion that voluntary rejection of the Christian confession after baptism is unforgivable. This conclusion is compelling within the author's chosen framework of thought. For the statement "it is *impossible*

(*ἀδύνατον*) to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened . . . and then have fallen away" in 6:4–6 is not just a summary of human experience for our author, but refers to a "divine 'impossible'" that is already given to him by the Holy Scripture (cf. H. Hegermann, "Christologie").

In order to clarify this position, it is necessary but not sufficient to point out that the falling away from faith of which Hebrews warns is a problem that has dogged the church ever since Christians realized that they would have to prepare for a longer journey through history. We must also recognize that the synoptic sayings about the unforgivable blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (cf. Mark 3:28–29 par.) point in the same direction as Hebrews. According to the synoptic tradition, it is unforgivable when someone rejects Christ, who ministers in the power of the Spirit to his or her face. In the same way, Hebrews considers it unpardonable when anyone rejects the forgiveness of sins effected for him or her once for all by Christ. Inasmuch as this refers to final salvation, people do indeed lose their salvation by falling away from their baptismal confession.

The warnings of Hebrews are questionable in only two respects. First, it must be questioned whether its definition of the scope of Jesus's sacrificial death is sufficient, and second, it must be examined whether the conclusion that Hebrews draws from its understanding of Jesus's sacrifice corresponds to the grace of God in Christ. To the first question it can be responded that Jesus died his sacrificial death on the cross for friends *and* foes alike (cf. Mark 10:45 par.) and that Paul interprets this sacrificial death not only from Leviticus 16 but also from Isaiah 53. By so doing Paul was able to apply the atoning sacrifice of Christ to all sorts of sins (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 3:23–26; 8:4). The term *ἱλασμός* or "atoning sacrifice" in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10 has the same broad scope. There are therefore New Testament definitions of Jesus's sacrifice that are more comprehensive than those of Hebrews.

On the second question, it must be noted that after millennia of church experience it is highly problematic to claim (from the Scripture) that it is *impossible* to win back to the faith Christians who have once fallen away. In this view Hebrews is untrue to its own premise in 7:24–25 that the exalted Christ "holds his priesthood permanently (*ἀπαράβατον*) because he continues forever (*εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*)" and that he "is able for all time (*εἰς τὸ παντελές*) to save those who approach God through him, since he always

(πάντοτε) lives to make intercession for them." Although there clearly can be no reducing of the reality and seriousness of the final judgment, just as clearly one must say that with its "impossible" based on Leviticus 4, the Letter to the Hebrews has restricted the reach of God's grace and the efficacy of Christ's intercession to a problematic extent.

The Western Church made the theologically correct decision in the middle of the third century by readmitting the so-called *lapsi* into the churches who had denied the faith or relapsed into paganism out of fear of persecution and martyrdom. The church did so over the objections of the Montanists and Novatians, who appealed to Hebrews for their position. Luther complained about this very point in Hebrews in his 1522 preface: "Again, there is a hard knot in the fact that in chapters 6[:4–6] and 10[:26–27] it flatly denies and forbids to sinners any repentance after baptism; and in chapter 12[:17] it says that Esau sought repentance and did not find it. This [seems, as it stands, to be] contrary to all the gospels and to St. Paul's epistles" (*LW* 35:394–95; WA DB 7:344.13–16).

In fact, this knot can be untied or cut only by measuring the statements of Hebrews against what other New Testament authors say about God's grace and the efficacy of Jesus's atoning death.

5 Hebrews interweaves eschatology and paraclesis. The letter addresses itself to readers who must wrestle with the typical problems of the second Christian generation, including dwindling of initial faithfulness and readiness for sacrifice, distancing from the church, falling away from the faith, and false teaching (cf. 6:6, 11–12; 10:25; 13:9). Nevertheless, the delay of the parousia is not yet a dominant theme and eschatology is not the doctrine of the faraway last things. On the contrary, the author makes clear to his church that it lives in the end time (cf. 1:2; 9:26) and that the Christ who has been installed in heaven as Lord must still become the undisputed ruler of the universe (cf. 2:8; 10:13). The addressees are therefore called upon not to lose sight of the imminent final judgment (cf. 10:25, 37–39) and the hope of entering the heavenly rest (cf. 3:7–4:11). As and because they are on their way to this hope, Christians have "no lasting city" (πόλις, 13:14) on this earth but seek the future city in heaven, the new Jerusalem, to which God in Christ has given them access (cf. 11:16; 12:22).

The paraclesis of Hebrews calls Christians to preserve their hope and persevere in confession. It emphasizes that it was God alone who sent Christ out of free grace (cf. 1:1–2) and prepared the heavenly city for believers (cf. 11:16 with 12:28). But the author also does not hesitate to warn his readers about God's μισθαποδοσία, which can involve either reward (cf. μισθός) or punishment (cf. 2:2 with 10:35; 11:26).

If one combines this language of μισθαποδοσία, which stands out in Hebrews more clearly than anywhere else in the New Testament, with the letter's narrow ideas of Christ's sacrifice and believers' faith (see above) and also includes the call to obedient suffering in 12:4–11, then it becomes clear that Hebews has a very similar theology of justification to James (cf. James 2:20–26). To be sure, our author argues on a completely different level from the wisdom-saturated Letter of James. Nevertheless, coming from his traditional Jewish Christian approach and his special standpoint, the author has neither the theological interest nor the linguistic means to shield his paraclesis about faith against the dangers of a Christian piety of accomplishments. *Hebrews sees the extent of God's grace in Christ more narrowly and values the end-time significance of human faithfulness more highly than do Paul and his school*.

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CHAPTER 30

Apostolic Faith and Scripture Interpretation in the Church:
The Struggle against Heresy in Jude and Second Peter

In the writings of the second generation of early Christians we find a situation that was most threatening to the emerging church at the end of the first and beginning of the second century: From their own communities there arose a countermovement that pursued its own missionary activity not just among unbelievers, but especially among those believers with whom the missionaries had formerly shared a common faith. This movement took various forms. Mark 13:5–6, 21–22 par. warns of false prophets. The Johannine school and Ignatius had to deal with docetists (see below). Paul opposed those “Paulinists” who expected to be supported financially by others (cf. 2 Thess. 3:11–12), exhibited libertine behavior (cf. 1 Cor. 5:1–5), disdained the law (cf. Rom. 6:1, 15), or believed that the resurrection had already taken place spiritually (cf. 1 Cor. 15:12 with 2 Tim. 2:18). People with this mind-set are credited with “what is falsely called knowledge” in 1 Timothy 6:20. The so-called Nicolaitans are combated in Revelation 2:6, 14, and so on. The appearance of all these false teachers and enthusiasts split early Christianity into house churches that tried to hold on to the tradition of faith handed down from the apostles, and heretical circles that reinterpreted this tradition or rejected it outright. This struggle against heresy has also left its mark on Jude and 2 Peter.

1 Our two letters are closely related in content: Both are concerned to combat theological opponents by means of a striking presentation saturated with Old Testament and legendary apocalyptic examples of the shameful thinking and drives of the heretics. Both Jude and 2 Peter speak a refined Greek with many formulations that do not appear elsewhere in the New Testament. Both writings point to the irreplaceability of the apostolic tradition and make clear that the struggle against heresy is a part of the end-time conflict that the apostles have already foreseen and announced to the church (cf. Jude 17–19 and 2 Pet. 3:2–7).

Against these similarities must be set the clear differences. Whereas Jude is no longer than an antiheretical leaflet dressed in letter form, 2 Peter is a circular letter framed as the testament of the apostle Peter (cf. 2 Pet. 1:13–15). In Jude it is striking that the author refers with great freedom not only to the core Old Testament writings but also to the Enoch tradition, the *Assumption of Moses*, and early Jewish legends. 2 Peter also knows these traditions but rests its argument more squarely on the core of the Old Testament. Whereas Jude only wants to inveigh against the false teachers, 2 Peter argues in detail, declares their arbitrary Scripture interpretation to be illegitimate, and develops the first model of church hermeneutics as an alternative.

The similarities and differences between the two letters suggest interpreting them in the light of one another. This is most successfully done when one assumes with most recent exegetes that the author of 2 Peter used Jude as his *Vorlage*. Jude must therefore have been composed before 2 Peter and have been considered important enough to be reproduced.

2 When we seek to give a historical profile to these letters, we encounter the following data. The Letter of Jude claims to be written by a certain Ἰούδα or "Judas," a brother of James, conventionally translated here as "Jude" (1:1). However, the reference can only be to the Jude/Judas named as a brother of Jesus in Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3. Outside Paul's brief mention of the missionary activities of "the brothers of the Lord" in 1 Corinthians 9:5, we know nothing of the ministry of this Jude. Nevertheless, Eusebius reports with reference to Hegesippus (*Historia ecclesiastica* 3.18.4–3.20.7) that two grandsons of Jude the Lord's brother were denounced as Davidides and brought before the emperor Domitian but released again once it became apparent that they were only poor Palestinian farmers whose hope concerned only the next world. Jude the Lord's brother was therefore well known in early Christianity. Whether he himself composed this short letter is disputed. But once we take account of the fact that the author of a pseudepigraphical letter could very easily have chosen a more luminous and authentic apostolic name as a pseudonym, it seems likely that the Letter of Jude was actually written by the Lord's brother Jude himself during the lifetime of his brother James in Jerusalem, since after this time it would make little sense for him to introduce himself as the brother of James. (Jude's reference to "the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" in Jude 17 need not indicate that the letter was written

after the death of James and the other apostles, but only that Jude himself was not an apostle. Moreover, warnings against godless scoffers and confusion in the last times such as we find in Jude 18 do not appear only 1 John 2:18ff. and 2 Timothy 3:1 but already in the synoptic apocalypse, and Paul took up these warnings in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11 and 2 Thessalonians 2:3ff.) The Letter of Jude presupposes a precise knowledge of Old Testament and early Jewish literature among its readers and therefore particularly addresses Jewish Christians. Because the false teachers still take part in the communal love feasts of the church (cf. Jude 4, 12) and Jude does not yet prohibit his readers from praying for them, as John does for his docetic opponents in 1 John 5:16–17, this letter, like that of James, apparently addresses an acute and current evil.

2 Peter must be dated later than Jude. Unless appearances are entirely deceiving, it is a classic pseudepigraphon. More precisely, it is a pseudonymous circular letter written at the end of the first or beginning of the second century AD that seeks to defend the faith tradition founded on Peter and Paul against rising heresy, advocating an interpretation of the Holy Scriptures in conformity with this apostolic tradition.

2 Peter presents itself as a testament of the apostle Peter which he wrote down after he was told of his impending martyrdom by the risen one (cf. 2 Pet. 1:13–14 with John 21:15–19). The author’s designation of this as his “second letter” in 2 Peter 3:1 points explicitly to 1 Peter, which was already well known in the church. He also makes constant use of Jude (cf. the comparative table in H.-J. Klauck, *Ancient Letters and the New Testament* [2006], 415–18; also U. Schnelle, *The History and Theology of the New Testament Writings* [1998], 428–29), but makes its Scripture use more precise. In 3:15–16 the author defends the letters of Paul, but his language departs strongly from the Greek of the rest of the New Testament. The letter belongs to a church milieu in which Peter and Paul were equally highly regarded, as for example in Rome; the church archive there could very well have contained the author’s exemplar of Jude along with other New Testament books. Where and when 2 Peter was really written is unknown. An end date is probably set by *1 Clement*, since the statement in 23:3, “We have heard these things from the time of our fathers, and look! We have grown old, and none of these things has happened to us,” either refers to 2 Peter 3:4 or identifies the same front that 2 Peter 3:4 opposes: “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since our fathers died, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation!” The letter was long disputed in the ancient church, and Origen says that its Petrine authorship was still doubted in his time (cf. Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 6.25.8). Whatever the circumstances of writing, Jude and 2 Peter reflect two consecutive phases of the emerging church’s struggle against heresy in its own ranks; the Johannine letters present a parallel front to be investigated later.

3 The theological meaning of Jude and 2 Peter gains a sharper profile when we seek to deduce from their polemical statements the type of false teaching they oppose. Although the heretics are equally sharply condemned

in both letters (cf. Jude 4, 14–16; 2 Pet. 2:1–3), it is better to differentiate than to equate the false teaching addressed in each, since the two letters arose sequentially.

3.1 Jude accuses the heretics of perverting the grace of God and denying “our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ” (cf. Jude 4 with Matt. 7:21–23), and also of slandering the angels (cf. Jude 8–10). He refers to the heretics as “worldly people, devoid of the Spirit” (ψυχικοί, *πνεῦμα μὴ ἔχοντες*, Jude 19; cf. 1 Cor. 2:14) who feed themselves at the church’s love feasts (cf. Jude 12 with *Did*. 11:9, 12), seek an advantage over others by their boastful and flattering speech (Jude 16), indulge their own lusts (v. 18), and cause divisions in the church (v. 19). These divisive people could be *wandering teachers with a Paulinist frame of thought* (G. Sellin) who appealed to the apostle’s doctrine of grace, his teaching about the superiority of believers to the angels (cf. 1 Cor. 6:3; 8:6; Col. 2:10, 18), and the motto also known from Corinth, *πάντα μοι ἔξεστιν*, “everything is lawful for me” (cf. 1 Cor. 6:12; 10:23). Because Paul himself was suspected of holding such a theology by some Jewish Christians (cf. only Gal. 1:10; Rom. 3:8) and had to take a stand against some Paulinists (see above), it is quite possible that the appearance of these people outside the Pauline school was seen as a fundamental threat to the faith of the Christian church. The sharpness with which the Letter of Jude distances itself from the false teaching corresponds to the general tenor of early Christian polemic against heretics, which does not seek rapprochement but rather separation.

3.2 Although the author of 2 Peter predicts that there “*will be* false teachers (ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι) among you” in the future tense (2:1), the precise picture that he presents of them shows that he is speaking of heretics who are already at work. They deny the master who bought them freedom (from sin), bring swift destruction on themselves and others by their licentious example, and cause the “way of truth” to be maligned (cf. 2:1–3). They have no fear of angelic powers (cf. 2:10–11); they consider talk of Christ’s kingship and parousia to be a “cleverly devised myth” (1:16); and, as already mentioned, they pose the ironic question: “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since our ancestors died, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation!” (3:4). According to 2:21, they have turned aside from the “way of righteousness” and the “holy commandment” in which they had been instructed. In order to provide a basis for their

teaching, they twist the letters of Paul and the other Holy Scriptures read in the church (cf. 3:16). The resulting picture of the heresy recalls the gnostics opposed in the Pastoral Letters (see above, 465, §3.1.1). Because a Christian gnosis appealing to Paul is certainly attested in the second century AD, it is best to ascribe the false teachers opposed in 2 Peter to the early gnostic spectrum as well.

Jude and 2 Peter therefore reflect two phases of the Jewish Christian struggle against a heretical and gnostic-leaning Paulinism. Their battles against this common front explain why 2 Peter turned to Jude to defend the received apostolic faith and why there are also affinities between Jude and James.

4 Both Jude and 2 Peter presuppose the high Christology that was uncontested in Petrine-Roman Christianity and erect a twofold bulwark against the heresy: They emphasize the fundamental significance of the apostolic teaching tradition and hold fast to the expectation of the parousia and final judgment. 2 Peter also insists that the Holy Scriptures read in the church are to be interpreted only by the standard of the apostolic faith tradition.

4.1 The *christological statements* of the two letters are similar in content, although the formulations of 2 Peter are much closer to the Hellenistic thinking of the second century than those of Jude.

4.1.1 According to Jude, Christ is worthy of the divine title *ὁ μόνος δεσπότης καὶ κύριος ἡμῶν*, “our only Master and Lord” (cf. Jude 4 with, e.g., Job 5:8 LXX; Sir. 23:1; Dan. 9:15–19 LXX). God’s love and grace have been savingly manifested through Christ (cf. Jude 1, 4); God preserves the believers for Christ (cf. Jude 24); and Christ is the end-time bestower of mercy who grants believers eternal life (cf. Jude 21). But Christ the Lord is also the one who will execute the final judgment of all the ungodly announced in *1 Enoch* 1:9 and quoted in Jude 14–15.

4.1.2 From the very beginning 2 Peter also designates Christ by the divine title *ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν καὶ σωτήρ*, “our God and Savior” (cf. 1:1–2). As such he is worthy of the divine doxology, “To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity” (cf. 3:18 with 2 Tim. 4:18; Rev. 1:6). The Christ who is equal to God is the “Lord and Savior” par excellence for this letter (cf. 1:1, 11; 2:20; 3:2, 18). In his gracious “righteousness” (*δικαιοσύνη*)

Christ has granted the addressees a faith and especially a faith-knowledge that is equal in value to that of the apostle Peter himself according to 2 Peter 1:1 (although the author's Hellenistic concept of compensatory or distributive *δικαιοσύνη* is completely different from that of Paul). He has cleansed them of their past sins and redeemed them, set them on the "way of righteousness," and given them the saving "knowledge" (*ἐπίγνωσις*) of himself (cf. 1:3, 9; 2:1, 20–21). Through this knowledge believers can "escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and may become participants of the divine nature" (1:4). According to H. Windisch, "Escape from corruption, participation in the divine nature granted by God, life in God, knowledge of God, and an incorruptible being constitute the essence of Hellenistic piety" (H. Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, rev. H. Preisker [1951[3]], 85). Our author's language conforms closely to this ideal (cf. similar Hellenistic formulations in Ignatius, *Eph*. 20:2; *Rom*. 6:2; *Phil*. 9:2; *Pol*. 2:3). For 2 Peter the knowledge of Jesus Christ is the center and goal of a faith in which knowing and doing form a unity typical of wisdom literature (cf. 1:2–8; 2:20–21; 3:18). At the same time, the traditional future expectation is not lost in this spiritual manner of expression. On the contrary, as an eyewitness of Jesus's transfiguration (cf. 1:16–18), the author decisively holds to the expectation of the parousia (cf. 1:16, 19), the eschatological judgment (cf. 2:3; 3:7, 10–12), and the hope of entrance into Christ's kingdom (cf. 1:11). Hence, when it comes to knowing Christ and participating in the divine nature, the author's concern is not that believers should flee all bodily existence, but rather that they will participate in the fulfillment of the divine promise of "new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness dwells" (cf. 3:13 with Isa. 65:17; 66:22). Yet this participation is a valid prospect only for those who, after receiving the cleansing of sins, prove themselves by good deeds according to their abilities (cf. 1:5–11; 3:17–18). The concept of salvation in 2 Peter is therefore closer to that of James than of 1 Peter.

4.2 How highly these two letters value the *apostolic faith tradition* and seek to protect it against all innovation is immediately apparent in their manner of expression. Jude 3 speaks of "the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints," and Jude 20 similarly of "your most holy faith," in which the addressees should build themselves up. This faith has the same precious value as that of the apostles (cf. 2 Pet. 1:1), and only it guarantees

salvation. The "commandment" (ἐντολή) of the Lord mentioned in 2 Peter 2:21 and 3:2 may refer to the ethical teaching tradition that goes back to Jesus (cf. Matt. 28:19–20; *Barn*. 2:6). At a time when Peter has departed from the church (cf. 2 Pet. 1:14–15) and the fathers have fallen asleep (cf. 2 Pet. 3:4), the transmitted witness of "the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 17) or "the holy prophets" and "your apostles" (2 Pet. 3:2) acquires the highest standing. According to 2 Peter, the apostolic tradition includes the testimony about God's voice spoken over Jesus on the mount of transfiguration, particularly according to Matthew's version (cf. 2 Pet. 1:17 with Matt. 17:5), as well as the Gospel of Matthew as a whole (cf. 2 Pet. 2:21 with Matt. 21:32; 28:19–20); the letters of Paul, which apparently already existed as a collection; and "the other scriptures," αἱ λοιπαὶ γραφαί (cf. 2 Pet. 3:15–16). Judging by the parallel reference to "the rest of the [Old Testament] books" (τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν βιβλίων) in the prologue of Sirach 25, the expression αἱ λοιπαὶ γραφαί in 2 Peter 3:16 could refer to other Old Testament Scriptures in addition to the "prophetic word" from the Psalms and the Prophets already mentioned in 2 Peter 1:19. But we cannot exclude the possibility that other New Testament books may also be meant, such as 1 Peter (cf. 2 Pet. 3:1) or other Gospels (besides Matthew). In any case, the *basic elements of the Christian canon* are already visible in 2 Peter. It includes the Holy Scriptures (of the Old Testament) and the New Testament Scriptures that come alongside them in the form of the Gospels and the letters of the apostles, especially Paul. The occasion for the formation of this two-part canon was the quest to adhere to the authentic apostolic tradition together with the biblical testimony that sustains it. As if there had never been any controversy between Peter and Paul about the truth of the gospel (cf. Gal. 2:14), 2 Peter 3:15–16 refers to Paul as Peter's "beloved brother" and praises the divine wisdom reflected in his letters, even though they are hard to understand. Peter therefore becomes Paul's apologist in 2 Peter, because the differences between them were not fundamental according to 1 Peter and completely paled in the light of the heretical challenge.

4.3 Countering heresy meant not only holding fast to the fixed tradition of the faith, but also preserving the received expectation about the future.

On this score Jude simply threatens the heretics with the fact of the final judgment announced by Enoch, which Christ will execute with the help of

his angels (cf. Jude 4, 14–15). At the same time, he calls his addressees to look forward to the future mercy of Jesus, standing before God's throne, and the gift of eternal life (cf. Jude 21, 24).

However, for 2 Peter such simple paraclesis is no longer sufficient, since the heretics massively deny the expected parousia (cf. 3:4 with *1 Clem.* 23:3). Therefore in 1:16–21 and 3:5–15 the author opposes their criticism with the following arguments. First, the parousia is already vouched for by the highest authority, since according to Matthew 17:5 God's voice called out to Jesus as the messianic Chosen One and Son of God in the presence of the apostolic witnesses (cf. 1:16–18). Moreover, because the world has already been judged once by a nonrepeatable flood (cf. 3:5–6), the final judgment on the day of the Lord, which is bound up with the parousia and will come like a thief, can only be the eschatological judgment of fire (cf. 3:7, 10–12 with 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Thess. 1:7–8). The difference between the divine and human reckoning of time must also be taken into account, since "with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day" (3:8), alluding to Psalm 90:4, where a thousand years are like yesterday to God. Earthly calculations of the end therefore only lead to error (cf. Matt. 24:36; Acts 1:7). On the whole, however, God does not want anyone to perish but wants to give "all" (*πάντες*) an opportunity for repentance in his enduring patience (cf. 3:9 with 1 Tim. 2:4; possibly this *πάντες* is connected with the sayings about *πάντα τὰ ἔθνη*, "all nations," in Matt. 24:14; 28:19). The beloved brother Paul has already spoken to the addressees in his letters about the period of God's patience, which gives God's people the opportunity for repentance (cf. 3:15–16 with Rom. 2:4; 11:22). In a manner characteristic of Jewish Christianity but totally un-Pauline, our author adds that by living holy lives the addressees can "speed" or "hasten" the coming of the parousia and the day of God (cf. 3:11–12 with *b. Yoma* 86b). With these arguments the author of 2 Peter has contributed to the preservation of the end-time expectation in the church, but he has not been able to prevent the imminent expectation from becoming a doctrine of last things that no longer affects church life immediately, but only its perspective.

4.4 A third element in the struggle against heresy, after the preservation of the faith tradition and the defense of the received eschatology, was the

development of church standards for the interpretation of the biblical writings, which were also read by the heretics.

4.4.1 In Jude the Old Testament is still used freely and naturally with the openness characteristic of the early Jewish and New Testament period. Jude 6 presupposes that its readers are familiar not only with the fact of the so-called angel marriages from Genesis 6:1–4, but also with the further interpretation of this text in *1 Enoch* 6–11 (*OTP* 1:15–19) and the story of the fall of the angels and their imprisonment in the underworld (cf. 1 Pet. 3:19–20 and *1 En.* 12:4; 18:11–19:1). After citing the biblical example of the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah according to Genesis 19:1–29 in Jude 7 (cf. with Matt. 10:15), the author falls back in verse 9 on the Jewish legend about the archangel Michael's dispute with Satan over the body of Moses. According to the church fathers, this dispute was mentioned in a work now usually called *The Testament of Moses*, a Jewish apocalypse from around the beginning of the common era, unfortunately preserved in only one fragmentary Latin manuscript reworked with Christian editing (cf. *OTP* 1:919–34). Verse 11 recalls with a Jewish legendary accent the biblical scenes of Cain's fratricide (Gen. 4:1–16), Balaam's counsel to the women of Midian to entice Israel into the error of idolatry and immorality (Num. 31:16; cf. Num. 25:1–18; 31:8; 1 Cor. 10:8; Rev. 2:14), and the rebellion of Korah and his company against Moses and Aaron (Num. 16), while in verses 14–15 the prophetic announcement of judgment is cited verbatim from *1 Enoch* 1:9 ("Behold, he will arrive with ten million of the holy ones in order to execute judgment upon all" [*OTP* 1:13–14]). The author therefore works with both Old Testament and Jewish apocalyptic materials. Both are valid prophecy for him. The Letter of Jude apparently does not yet know the distinction between the primary Old Testament writings and the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha.

This begins to change in 2 Peter. The heretics' charge that the Christians were following abstruse myths (cf. 2 Pet. 1:16) apparently prompted the letter's pseudonymous author to tone down (though not to eliminate) the apocryphal examples from his *Vorlage*, the Letter of Jude. Hence where Jude in verse 6 alludes pictorially to the angels "leaving their proper dwelling" in heaven to come to earth (and impregnate the daughters of humans; cf. Gen. 6:1–4), 2 Peter presupposes the same story but says only flatly that the angels "sinned" (2 Pet. 2:4). A second example comes in the context of the heretics' readiness to slander the angels or "glorious ones."

Jude corrects them by pointing out that even the archangel Michael, with far greater right to do so, did not accuse the devil, the prince of the glorious ones, of slander on his own authority but only in the name of the Lord (Jude 8–9). But in 2 Peter 2:10b–11 the legendary dispute between Michael and Satan is dropped entirely, and Jude's point is partly reversed by the observation that "angels, though greater in might and power [than the heretics], do *not* bring against them [sc. the glorious ones] a slanderous judgment from the Lord" (2 Pet. 2:11). Instead of dwelling on these apocryphal examples to warn the heretics, the author of 2 Peter especially highlights the biblical examples of Noah (2:5), Sodom and Gomorrah (2:6), Lot (2:7–8), and Balaam (2:15–16). In 2 Peter 2:15ff. the pseudepigraphical citation from *1 Enoch* 1:9 in Jude 14–15 is entirely suppressed. The author's reservation toward the legendary material in Jude is conspicuous. Because he does not entirely eliminate the material he has borrowed from Jude in 2 Peter 2:4 and 11, we can assume that, like Jude, our author still presupposed an open Old Testament. Yet his concentration on the main writings of the Old Testament remains unmistakable.

4.4.2 This concentration on the Old Testament in 2 Peter is flanked by the first holistic draft of a *church hermeneutic of the Christian Bible*. In 2 Peter 1:16–21 the eyewitness and earwitness figure "Peter" harks back to the synoptic transfiguration scene in Matthew's version (cf. Matt. 17:1–9), laying special emphasis on the voice spoken over Jesus "by the Majestic Glory" which said, "This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased" (cf. 1:17 with Matt 17:5). Behind this formulation stand Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1. For this reason the "voice" of 1:17 can be called *ὁ προφητικὸς λόγος*, "the prophetic word," in 1:19 (for the expression, cf. *2 Clem.* 11:2; comparison of *2 Clem.* 11:2 with *1 Clem.* 23:3 shows that *προφητικὸς λόγος* and *γραφή*, "Scripture," are interchangeable). According to "Peter," Jesus is not only presented to the eyewitnesses as the υἱὸς θεοῦ by God's voice, but is also qualified and obligated to carry out his messianic mission until the day of the parousia. This view results from the messianic interpretation of Psalm 2:8 and Isaiah 42:1. In Psalm 2:8 God says to his Son, *δώσω σοι ἔθνη τὴν κληρονομίαν σου καὶ τὴν κατάσχεσιν σου τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς*, "I will give you the nations as your inheritance and the ends of the earth as your possession," while in Isaiah 42:1 it says of the Lord's Servant, *κρίσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἐξοίσει*, "He will bring forth

judgment/justice to the nations." Psalm 2:7–8 and Isaiah 42:1 therefore point forward to the consummation of the Son of God's messianic rule. According to 2 Peter 1:19, the day of the parousia is also the day on which the knowledge of Jesus as the messianic "morning star" will finally rise in the hearts of believers (cf. Num. 24:17; Luke 1:78).

When the heretics dispute Christ's kingship and give up the expectation of the parousia, they contradict the voice of God heard by "Peter" himself, which, because of its biblical wording, is also *προφητεία*, "prophecy" (cf. 2 Pet. 1:20 with 3:2). As 2 Peter 1:20–21 says, by their criticism the heretics subjugate the prophetic word of God to "their own interpretation" (*ἰδία ἐπίλυσις*) and miss the true sense that has been revealed to the apostolic witnesses by God's voice. In the author's view the only correct and legitimate interpretation of prophecy is that which follows the faith-knowledge given to the apostles. The prophecy (of Scripture) produced by human authors who were "moved" or "carried along" (*φερόμενοι*) by the Holy Spirit is therefore properly interpreted only when it is interpreted in the spirit of apostolic faith in Christ. What this means hermeneutically is that the Spirit-inspired Holy Scriptures that are read in the church are interpreted as God wants them to be only within the framework of the faith tradition founded by the apostles. Legitimate Scripture interpretation in the church is set over against the illegitimate gnostic interpretation. Like Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:6–16 and the Pauline school in 2 Timothy 3:14–17 (cf. also Mark 12:36 par.; Acts 3:21; Heb. 10:15; etc.), the author of 2 Peter affirms the late Old Testament and early Jewish view of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and on this basis he develops instructions for the whole church regarding the interpretation of the Bible *κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως*, "according to the analogy of faith" (cf. Rom. 12:6). Although Paul's context in Romans 12:6 is not actually about hermeneutics but spiritual gifts (prophecy must be exercised "in proportion to faith" [NRSV]), the Reformation principle of the "analogy of faith" that takes its name from this verse states that Scripture is to be interpreted by Scripture and that obscure passages are to be interpreted in agreement with the core of the apostolic faith. The English translation of Romans 12:6 that most closely resembles this understanding is the HCSB, "If prophecy, use it according to the *standard* of one's faith."

According to 2 Peter 3:15–16, the letters of Paul that are filled with divine wisdom are also open to such church Scripture interpretation, whereas the “ignorant” and “unstable” heretics “twist” the apostle’s letters to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures read in the church. The inspired Scriptures, the apostolic faith tradition, and the church that respects both of them form a hermeneutical circle. With the help of this model the gnostic misinterpretation of the Old Testament, the letters of Paul, and the Gospels could be warded off at the beginning of the second century. The church has drawn on this hermeneutical circle to fend off arbitrary heretical Scripture interpretation in later times as well.

5 The theological gains of Jude and 2 Peter do not lie in the first instance in their evaluation of the apostolic faith tradition, whose importance the Pastoral Letters also emphasize, or in their defense of eschatology, and certainly not in their problematic stereotype of the heretics. 2 Peter in particular also leaves much to be desired in terms of soteriology. Its real value lies in its sketch of a church hermeneutic of the two-part Christian canon of the Old and New Testaments (including the apocryphal and pseudepigraphal tradition). This hermeneutic combines respect for the inspired biblical word of testimony, high regard for the apostolic faith tradition, and the community’s awareness of its faith in a way that has proved exemplary for the church. It is therefore inadvisable to disqualify Jude and 2 Peter by labeling them “speculative and early Catholic.” It must rather be noted that with their available means these letters have successfully taken up their post in a battle against heresy that the church has still not fought to the end.

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PART FIVE

The Proclamation of the Synoptic Gospels

The Synoptic Gospels are of fundamental importance for the New Testament. They were first edited in their present form after Jesus's disciples James the son of Zebedee and Peter as well as Paul and James the Lord's brother had been martyred, the early Jerusalem church had gone into exile at Pella, and Jerusalem had been threatened and destroyed. Until about AD 120 Papias of Hierapolis continued to track down the remainders of the Jesus tradition that the apostles and early Christian elders passed on orally as a "living and abiding voice" (cf. Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.39.4). Nevertheless, the central pieces of this tradition had long since been fixed in writing: The Gospel writers had sought out these collections and sources of tradition and bound them together into books that showed what Peter and the other disciples, the family of Jesus, and the founders of the missionary church of Antioch knew and taught about Jesus. Fixing the Jesus tradition in writing did not simply prevent it from being forgotten; it also protected it against being subverted by heresy and gave the emerging church the opportunity to orient itself to Jesus and his teaching beyond the time of the apostles.

The Jesus tradition outlined in the Synoptic Gospels goes back to a carefully cultivated continuum of tradition. This stretches from Jesus and his disciples to the early Jerusalem church, and from there to the known and unknown witnesses of the Gentile mission who went out from Jerusalem to take the message of "the kingdom of God" (ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ) that had dawned in and with Jesus to the ends of the earth. The Synoptics do not offer simply the sincere but historically uncertain and divergent view of the three Evangelists about Jesus, nor merely secondary stories to help clarify who Jesus was to the simple listeners to the Christian message in the postapostolic period. Rather, these three books build on reliable apostolic tradition and confront their readers in a surprisingly unanimous way with the person, teaching, and life of the one historically distinctive Jesus of Nazareth, who represents God and his kingdom on earth and understood his ministry as a fulfillment of the prophetic promises.

It is no accident that we have only scant knowledge of the three synoptic Evangelists. The superscriptions and subscriptions in certain Gospel manuscripts mention them by name, and behind these names stand individuals who have put their stamp on the texts they composed and edited. The Evangelists were collectors, preservers of tradition, interpreters, and witnesses all in one. But their individuality takes a backseat in all three Gospels to the goal of letting the Jesus tradition speak for itself and bearing witness to the Messiah Jesus, whom God has appointed as the Lord of the world.

Each Evangelist has a particular collection of tradition in view. John Mark oriented himself to the teaching of Peter; the tradition of the pillar apostles of Jerusalem, Peter, James, and John, has made its way into the Gospel of Matthew; and Luke has collected what was offered by the preservers of the tradition in Jerusalem and the archives of the mission church in Antioch. Because these collections of tradition touched and overlapped each other, the three Synoptic Gospels also touch and overlap in various ways. They were also probably not directed in each case only to a particular group of addressees but have been written to be read to many people in many places.

The Synoptic Gospels are not meant to replace the gospel of the kingdom of God that Jesus instructed his disciples to proclaim from place to place. But they are meant to help men and women in the mission churches speak about Jesus not only in doctrinal formulas but also in a graphic historical way, to give early Christian teachers the concrete material for their teaching, and to offer catechumens the opportunity to deepen and sharpen their knowledge of the faith through Gospel reading. Ever since the founding of the early church in Jerusalem, these two means of communication always went hand in hand in early Christianity: the preaching that awakens faith, and the (baptismal) instruction in which the knowledge of the faith was exercised, the commandments were learned, and stories about Jesus were told. The juxtaposition of the apostolic letters and the Gospels in the New Testament canon corresponds to this twofold reality and demonstrates that the message of the apostles and the historical presentation of Jesus were both equally important for the emerging church.

The Gospel of John differentiates itself linguistically and materially from the Synoptics. It is written for readers who already knew of parts of

the synoptic Jesus tradition and leads them to see Jesus Christ as the truth and reality of God par excellence. For this reason it must be dealt with not here but in the context of the Johannine writings. Our next four chapters therefore deal with the origin of the Synoptic Gospels and with the proclamation of each of the three Evangelists. The book of Acts is integrated into our presentation of Luke, because Luke himself placed it beside his Gospel and presented both in Acts and in the Gospel what the church commissioned by the exalted Christ has to preach and do.

The apocryphal gospels, some of them in a fragmentary state, which are collected in the first volume of the *New Testament Apocrypha*, offer interesting comparative material to the Synoptics, but their value as sources for the time of Jesus is generally far beneath that of the synoptic tradition. Only the Coptic gnostic *Gospel of Thomas* contains in part some older sayings that are directly comparable with synoptic texts. But this gospel consisting only of sayings of Jesus did not reach its final form until “the middle of the second century in eastern Syria” (B. Blatz in W. Schneemelcher, ed., *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 1 [1991^{2}], 113). There is therefore no reason to accord these “secret sayings that the living Jesus spoke and Didymus Judas Thomas recorded” (*Gospel of Thomas* 1) an equal status with the four canonical Gospels (on the *Gospel of Thomas*, see also G. Theissen and A. Merz, *The Historical Jesus* [1998], 37–41).

CHAPTER 31

The Origin of the Synoptic Gospels

In chapter 2 above (55–58, §2.2), we called attention to the carefully preserved continuum of tradition behind the synoptic tradition that makes it possible for us to draw a (relatively) reliable picture of the ministry of Jesus. Before we proceed to bring out the preaching interests of each of the Synoptic Gospels, we need to explain why they were written in the first place, how their mutual relationship is to be understood, and who their addressees were.

1 The Gospel Genre. The wide variety of ways in which the literary genre of the "gospel" has been and continues to be understood becomes clear from the brief survey in U. Schnelle, *The History and Theology of the New Testament* (1998), 151–61.

1.1 Schnelle views the origin and meaning of the noun *εὐαγγέλιον* in the same way as his teacher G. Strecker (cf. idem, *Theology of the New Testament*, 336–39). According to Schnelle, "the traditional roots of the New Testament concept of *εὐαγγέλιον*" do not lie in the Old Testament nor in the proclamation of Jesus, but "in the Hellenistic ruler cult" (*History and Theology*, 153).

In fact, there are interesting inscriptions illustrating that the report of the birth or good deeds of the Roman emperor was called "good tidings" or *εὐαγγέλια*—a Greek plural that can also be translated with the English singular as "good news." Most famous is the calendar inscription of Priene (col. 105.40) published in 1899 and written during the reign of Augustus in 9 BC. This says that "the birthday of the god (= Augustus) was for the world the beginning of the joyful messages (*εὐαγγέλια*) which have gone forth because of him" (G. Friedrich, *TDNT* 2:724). In the light of this inscription and similar Hellenistic texts, scholars, including Friedrich, Strecker, Schnelle, and others, assume that the early Christian witnesses took up the language of emperor worship and used it as a technical term, both for the "gospel of God about Jesus Christ" (cf. Rom. 1:1–4) that they preached and for the books of the gospel genre that they wrote. But this account of the term's origin overlooks three factors: (1) In Hellenistic emperor worship the "good news" is spoken of only in the plural as *εὐαγγέλια* ("joyful messages"); there is no technical term *εὐαγγέλιον* in the singular. (2) The New Testament language of the *εὐαγγέλιον* does not involve any fundamental contrast to the emperor cult. (3) Jews, including Peter, John, James, and Paul, who had been converted by the Easter appearances of the exalted Christ, had not the slightest reason to think of the Hellenistic emperor cult when they used the term *εὐαγγέλιον* for the saving message revealed to them. A. von Harnack was also initially fascinated with the Priene inscription, but he saw the difficulties mentioned above and therefore

already in 1910 he recommended seeking the origin of the New Testament term “gospel” in the Old Testament and the teaching of Jesus (cf. his study on “Evangelium”). A better possible explanation is to be found along this trail that Harnack has marked out.

1.2 If one had asked a pious *Jew* in Jerusalem, Caesarea, or elsewhere in Palestine what *εὐαγγέλιον* meant, perhaps such a person could have referred to the imperial inscriptions (which were found in the great Hellenistic cities of the East, though not in Jerusalem). But above all, a Jew would have pointed out that the word *εὐαγγέλιον* or its Hebrew or Aramaic equivalents בְּשׂוֹרָה (*bəśôrâ*) and בְּסֹרְתָא (*bəsōrtāʾ*) were used in the synagogues in paraphrases of biblical texts containing the salvation oracles of the prophets.

Isaiah 53:1 in the original Hebrew reads: “Who has believed our *report/what we have heard* (שְׁמֻעָתֵנוּ)?” But in the Aramaic Targum it reads: “Who has believed our *message* (בְּסוֹרְתְנָא)?” The term or concept of the *εὐαγγέλιον* (Heb. בְּשׂוֹרָה or Aram. בְּסֹרְתָא) is first used in ancient Judaism for the message about salvation presented by the prophets or God’s other messengers (cf. Isa. 52:7 *εὐαγγελιζόμενος*), and this usage is maintained until the book of Revelation (cf. 14:6).

1.3 From here there is only a small step to the *Jesus tradition*. Luke 6:20–22 par., 7:18–23 par., and 16:16 par. confirm what Luke 4:16–21 presents to every reader: Jesus applied Isaiah 61:1 to his mission and understood himself as the messianic evangelist of the “poor” (cf. above, 79, §6.4).

Schnelle’s objection that Isaiah 61:1 was applied to Jesus in Matthew 11:5/Luke 7:22 only after Easter (*History and Theology*, 152) is countered by Qumran passages in which Isaiah 61:1 and 52:7 are applied to the saving message proclaimed by God himself, his Messiah, or a prophet (cf. 4Q521 frag. 2 II, 1 and 11Q13 [11QMelch] II 4, 15–17, *DSSSE* 2:1045, 1209). Jesus and his disciples could easily align themselves with this language.

1.4 Whether Jesus’s message and teaching were referred to as בְּשׂוֹרָה (בְּסֹרְתָא) or *εὐαγγέλιον* already before Easter cannot be clearly determined. What is certain is that the *apostles* used this noun after Easter for the saving message about Jesus Christ, entrusted to them for all nations (cf. Mark 13:10; Matt. 24:14; Acts 15:7; 20:24). Paul quotes the *εὐαγγέλιον* that was definitive for him and all other apostles in 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 and 11. In Romans 1:16–17 Paul describes the gospel as a revelatory power of God that creates final salvation (*σωτηρία*) by its own working (cf. similarly Eph. 1:13). The essential content of the gospel revealed to Paul according to 1

Corinthians 15:3b–5 is Jesus's saving death and resurrection. Paul served this gospel to the point of surrendering his own life. As Romans 10:15–17 (and Eph. 4:7–11) shows, Paul and the apostles called before him understood themselves as the "evangelists" or "preachers of good news" (*εὐαγγελιζόμενοι*) announced in Isaiah 52:7, Joel 3:5 (ET 2:32), and Ps 67:12 LXX, whose task was to proclaim the "message" of Christ (*ἀκοή*) of Isaiah 53:1 to all nations. They received this message from the Christ exalted to God's right hand (cf. Rom. 10:17 with Matt. 28:16–20) and called it the *εὐαγγέλιον* because it dealt with the saving message of the in-breaking of the *βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ* in the mission of Jesus the Christ.

1.5 The gospel that the apostles had to pass on was summarized from the very beginning in formulas that were easy to memorize in the course of instruction (cf. above, 193–96, §§3.1–2). But stories about Jesus were also told in sermons and missionary instruction. An example is *Acts 10:36–43* (cf. above, 61, §6, and 69–70, §5).

M. Dibelius (*From Tradition to Gospel* [ET 1971], 17n1, 22, 25, 230, 274) and C. H. Dodd (*The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments*, 46–47) consider Acts 10:36–43 a *sermon outline* that the Evangelist Mark followed in writing his Gospel. Against this U. Wilckens (*Die Missionsreden der Apostelgeschichte* [1974[2]], 63ff.) and a whole line of biblical commentators have objected that this text was developed independently by Luke, apart from antecedent tradition, and put into Peter's mouth by him. But this judgment ignores the striking traditional elements (cf. P. Stuhlmacher, *Das paulinische Evangelium*, 277–79) as well as the underlying midrash pattern of this text (from Ps. 107:20; Isa. 52:7 [Nah 2:1 (ET 1:15)]; Isa. 61:1; Deut. 21:22; Hos. 6:2; Isa. 43:10, 12; 11:3–4; 33:24), which G. Stanton has appealed to (*Jesus of Nazareth in New Testament Preaching* [1974], 70ff.). In the light of these traditional features, R. Guelich and I have favored the procedure of Dibelius and Dodd (cf. P. Stuhlmacher, ed., *The Gospel and the Gospels* [1983], 22, 171–72, 198–202). Subsequent to this, F. Neirynck has once again championed the purely Lukan character of Acts 10:36–43 ("Ac 10:36–43 et l'Évangile," *ETL* 60 [1984]: 109–17), while R. Pesch pointed afresh to the text's many traditional elements (*Die Apostelgeschichte*, vol. 1 [1986], 342ff.). In view of this stagnant debate, one should remember that synchronic and diachronic perspectives on texts need not be exclusive but can supplement one another. If one accepts this principle, then it must surely be admitted that Acts 10:34–43 was written by Luke and fitted into his narrative context. But this does not change anything regarding the occurrence of striking traditional elements: Luke puts into Peter's mouth a speech that begins with a notorious grammatical problem in 10:36 that makes understanding difficult and hints at the influence of earlier material (for a solution, see H. Riesenfeld, "The Text of Acts X.36," in *Text and Interpretation*, FS M. Black, ed. E. Best and M. Wilson [1979], 191–94). Moreover, Peter's speech does not simply summarize the Gospel of Luke, but evidences remarkable points of contact with the proto-Lukan tradition (see below). Also striking are the application of Isaiah 52:7 to *God's* proclamation of peace through Jesus Christ in Acts 10:36, the presentation of Jesus as a messianic miracle worker in verses 37–39, and the midrash pattern recognized by Stanton (see above). Another peculiarity is the piling up of references to Isaiah (cf. Isa. 52:7 in Acts 10:36; Isa. 61:1 in 10:38; Isa. 43:10, 12 in 10:41–42 [and Acts 1:8]; Isa. 11:3–4 in 10:42; Isa. 33:24 in 10:43).

If one compares the probably Lukan or proto-Lukan sermon outline of Acts 10:36–43 with Mark 1:1–2 and the Gospel of Mark as a whole, an interesting result emerges: According to Mark 1:1–2, the Evangelist wants to tell about "the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God," particularly "as it is written in the prophet Isaiah." Yet because καθὼς γέγραπται, "as it is written," never introduces a new sentence in the New Testament but always provides the grounds for something that has gone before, no period is needed between 1:1 and 1:2. These two verses are therefore to be translated continuously: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as it is written in the prophet Isaiah" (cf. R. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26* [1989], 6). Mark intends to narrate the gospel of Jesus Christ just as it stands written (or promised) in the prophet Isaiah. This presentation plan corresponds exactly to the sermon outline of Acts 10:36–43: According to Mark 1:2–3, it is *God himself* who gets the gospel under way by announcing to his (preexistent) Son (in heaven), with words drawn from Exodus 23:20 and Malachi 3:1, that he is sending his messenger to earth. This messenger embodies the promised "voice" (φωνή) that calls out to prepare the way for the Lord (cf. Isa. 40:3). Following this announcement John the Baptist appears on the scene in Mark 1:4. Jesus is baptized by him in the Jordan, anointed with the fullness of the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 10:38 with Isa. 61:1), and acknowledged by the voice from heaven as the chosen and beloved Son of God (cf. Mark 1:11 with Isa. 42:1; 44:2; Ps. 2:7). After the Son of God has successfully passed the test of temptation (cf. Mark 1:13 with Isa. 11:6–9) and the Baptist has been imprisoned, he begins his ministry in Galilee with the words: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the gospel" (cf. Mark 1:15 with Isa 52:7, and for the expression πιστεύειν ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ the language of *Tg. Isa.* 53:1). According to Mark, Jesus gives concreteness to his message from Galilee to Jericho by spectacular healings and exorcisms performed with messianic authority; the theological climax in this section is the forgiveness of sins that is directly promised by the Son of God (cf. Mark 2:5). This corresponds exactly to Acts 10:37–39, 43.

Unless these connections are entirely accidental, we may draw an important conclusion: *the narrative scheme that Luke has placed in the mouth of Peter was seminal for the writing of the Gospels*. The Evangelist Mark has filled out the preexisting framework that we find in Acts 10:36–43 with various pieces of tradition, thus creating a story of the ministry of Jesus that constitutes the core of the gospel of God.

1.6 The *superscriptions* (*inscriptiones*) that the early Christian scribes added to the manuscripts to form the titles of the Gospels can readily be explained in the light of the above scenario. They read, respectively, Εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Μαθθαῖον, Μᾶρκον, Λουκᾶν or simply Κατὰ Μαθθαῖον, Μᾶρκον, Λουκᾶν, that is, "Gospel according to Matthew, Mark, Luke" or simply "According to Matthew, Mark, Luke."

The unusual wording of these superscriptions is conspicuous: the preposition κατά, "according to," is a circumlocution for a plain genitive (cf. BDAG 513, s.v. κατά 7c and BDF §224.2 with n. 4), but is rare in ancient book titles. A superscription in normal Greek would have run: Μάρκου Εὐαγγέλιον (Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), "Mark's Gospel (of Jesus Christ)," or something similar. The superscription Κατὰ Μᾶρκον is simply an abbreviation with the word "gospel" understood. This linguistically conspicuous κατά is apparently intended to express two things: first authorship, and second the fact that the one

gospel (of Jesus Christ) is not exhausted in the book of Mark (or Matthew or Luke) but is only testified to in a way that still leaves room for other testimonies to the same gospel.

Exegetes have repeatedly asserted that the superscriptions were first added to the Gospels in the first half of the second century AD, subsequent to their original composition. Before this time they are thought to have carried the name of their author, but were not designated with the “standard titles” Εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ . . . (cf., e.g., H. Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels* [1992³], 26f.). However, the supposedly different original book titles are not cited by Koester from manuscript evidence but are only a matter of speculation. His hypothetical view is therefore less reliable than the result of M. Hengel’s investigation of the Gospel superscriptions (*Die Evangelienüberschriften*). According to Hengel, the stereotypical occurrence of the superscriptions in the manuscripts is best explained by assuming that the superscriptions were added to the Gospels as soon as they were set down in writing. Because the four-Gospel canon did not come into common use until the end of the second century, people in earlier times had to deal with the use of individual Gospels. According to Hengel, in every church library that contained several books, the writing of the title at the beginning and end of the Gospels was necessary to enable the individual codices to be differentiated from each other. The book of *1 Clement* shows that at the end of the first century, there were church libraries in Rome and Corinth, but such libraries probably already existed earlier in Christian centers such as Jerusalem, Antioch, and Ephesus. As long as the Gospels were being used individually, the full superscription Εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ, etc., was the norm (cf., for example, P⁶⁴). Only after the four books were assembled into a four-Gospel canon could one get by with the abbreviated title Κατὰ Μαθθαῖον and so on.

If one asks why the full Gospel superscriptions always read Εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ . . . , then the introduction to the Gospel of Mark provides the best answer. Only here is the term εὐαγγέλιον used with reference to the following book; this is no longer the case with Matthew and Luke (or John). Mark 1:1–2 therefore seems to have provided the impulse for using εὐαγγέλιον not only for the apostolic message about Christ (and the narrative of the gospel in Acts 10:36–43) but also for a book that offers this message in the form of a written narrative of Jesus’s person and work. This

influence of Mark 1:1–2 is all the more easy to explain the more the authority of the apostle Peter stood behind Mark and his work. The almost total integration of Mark's material into Matthew and Luke indicates that the Gospel of Mark contains apostolic tradition that was held in high esteem. Whereas in the Gospel superscripitions the two meanings of *εὐαγγέλιον* as the message attested by the Evangelists and as the book of the gospel genre complement each other, from the time of the *Didache* (cf. 8:2; 15:3–4) and Justin Martyr (cf. *1 Apology* 66.3), the word is definitely attested as a designation for fixed literary gospels.

2 The Writing of the Gospels. In the Jewish Christian traditional milieu, the transition from oral tradition that is memorized and handed down to the fixing of this tradition in writing does not involve a transformation into another genre or *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*. Nevertheless, the writing of the Gospel of Mark has had long-lasting effects. As we have already seen, the Evangelist was the first to support the early missionaries' oral proclamation of the *εὐαγγέλιον* (and of faith in Jesus Christ) by a book, and this set an example for the other Evangelists. Mark in his Gospel bound together what were until then individually transmitted (collections of) stories and Jesus sayings with the likewise separately transmitted passion narrative to form a literary whole. M. Kähler coined the classic description of this composition: "To state the matter somewhat provocatively, one could call the Gospels passion narratives with extended introductions" (*The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic Biblical Christ*, trans. and ed. C. E. Braaten [1988], 80n11).

2.1 If one considers the combined facts that the writing of fixed literary gospels began only after James the Lord's brother had been stoned in Jerusalem, the early church in Jerusalem had been forced to leave the city because of the Jewish revolt, and all the great apostles had died a martyr's death, then one can say that for the emerging church, *the fixed written gospels became a literary substitute for the Jesus tradition that was available and maintained above all in Jerusalem into the decade of the 60s.*

2.2 Behind each of the four Gospels stands a chain of tradition bearers. Each chain has two or three links and reaches from the Jerusalem apostles to their pupils and on to individual early Christian teachers. These tradents and their addressees kept in close contact with each other and had been warned about false prophets (cf. Mark 13:22 par.). Under these

circumstances, serious distortions of the gospel tradition were as good as excluded (see below).

2.3 Classic form criticism understood the goal of gospel writing completely from the perspective of the proclamation or kerygma, emphasizing the difference between the kerygmatic presentations of the Evangelists and the modern presentations of the life of Jesus that rest on historical reconstructions. Today, however, the proper starting point of gospel studies with the kerygma is supplemented by the recognition that "among the comparable types of texts in the Hellenistic world, the Hellenistic *biography* stands closest to that of the gospel genre" (Schnelle, *History and Theology*, 160, italics added). This new view could develop because the ancient comparative material opposes any sharp antithesis between proclamation and historiography.

In his essay "The Gospels and Greek Biography," A. Dihle has shown that the alternative of proclamation versus history writing has been overdrawn. The classical Greek biographies such as Plutarch's *Lives* are admittedly still completely ideal types, but already in the biographies of the Roman historian Suetonius about the Roman emperors, this begins to change, because here "a human life appears as an incomparable and unrepeatable piece of history" (Dihle, 383). H. Cancik has confirmed this view in his essay "Die Gattung Evangelium." If one compares the Synoptics (and the Fourth Gospel) with the biographies of the emperors, the ancient Alexander novel of Pseudo-Callisthenes that is available in various versions, or Lucian's description of the life of the Cynic philosopher Demonax, it becomes clear that not a few Gospel pericopes bear biographical features (cf., e.g., Mark 1:29–31 par.; 3:20–21 par.; 3:31–35 par.). Because the Gospels take a special interest in the God-directed history of Jesus that precedes and grounds faith (cf. Rom. 5:6–8) yet must also account for the very unique features of this history, it makes little sense to erect an opposition between the proclamation of the Christ and the narration of the life history of Jesus.

When one recognizes the fragmentary nature of the biographical element in the Gospels and recalls that the church fathers referred to the Gospels since the second century as the *ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν ἀποστόλων* or "memoirs of the apostles" (Justin, *1 Apology* 66.3; 67.3), it appears that the Gospels are *fixed written proclamatory narratives of Jesus's person, work, and fate.* Therefore, while allowing for some similarities with Hellenistic biographies, we concur with U. Schnelle regarding the ultimate distinctiveness of the Gospels: "The Gospels do take a distinctive place within ancient literature on the grounds of their content: only they declare that in a concrete and limited event of the past, a decisive turn has been made in history so that now both present and future are determined by this event. In this respect the Gospel is in fact sui generis, and cannot be

incorporated as a subgenre into any higher category” (*History and Theology*, 161).

2.4 The traditions that have flowed into the Gospels already have their place in the pre- and especially postbaptismal *instruction in the church:* The acknowledged authentic letters of Paul show that the apostle used Jesus traditions and Gospel materials in his instruction (cf. above, 334–38, §4.4.3). Paul presupposes such instruction and an understanding of his allusions to Jesus traditions even among the Christians in Rome whom he himself had not converted or taught (cf. Rom. 6:17–18; 8:15; 12:14; 14:14; 15:3–4, 7). A knowledge of the tradition of the Gospels among believers in the churches is also suggested by the references to the exemplary faithfulness and suffering of Christ in Hebrews 5:7–9, 12:2, and 1 Peter 2:21. The reference in Luke 1:1–2 to the “many” who have sought to present the history of Jesus prior to Luke similarly points to the activities of the early Christian teachers who passed on the Jesus tradition. Finally, the report going back to Papias saying that Mark incorporated into his Gospel Peter’s “teachings” (αἱ διδασκαλίαι) after his martyrdom (Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.39.15) attests the use of Jesus sayings and Gospel traditions in the apostolic instruction. The written Gospels confirm this picture. According to Mark 13:14 (“let the reader understand”) and Justin, *1 Apology* 67, the Gospels were read in church meetings. Matthew 28:20 shows that the Gospel of Matthew was used in missionary instruction, and according to Luke 1:1–4, the Gospel of Luke is intended to give interested catechumens reliable information about the basis and content of the faith in which they have been instructed. The Gospel traditions and the Gospels therefore have a catechetical *Sitz im Leben*.

The synoptic tradition and the written Gospels have guided the church from the very beginning and have contributed decisively to the spread, clarification, and confirmation of the apostolic missionary message, the gospel of Jesus Christ. This influence gives the Gospels considerable weight and provides the grounds for the canonical status of the four-Gospel canon in the New Testament.

3 The Character and Relationship of the Synoptic Gospels. The enormous amount of scholarly effort expended on the Synoptic Gospels over the last 250 years alone can readily be seen from presentations of the Synoptic problem in modern introductions to the first three Gospels or to

the whole New Testament. The relationship of the Synoptics to each other has been explained above all by three models that continue to be discussed today: the so-called tradition hypothesis, which postulates especially oral tradition behind all three Gospels; the utilization hypothesis, which assumes a literary relationship between the canonical Gospels but no extrabiblical written sources; and the two-source theory, which sees the Gospel of Mark and the so-called sayings source Q as the *Vorlagen* for Matthew and Luke.

3.1 Behind the *tradition hypothesis* stands the old assumption of J. G. Herder that the Synoptics have at their base the oral proclamation of a primitive gospel. The most important recent representative of this hypothesis is B. Reicke. In Reicke's view the agreements between the Synoptic Gospels are to be traced back to carefully passed-down oral traditions. But although Reicke's assumption that the first three Gospels reflect variations of a single continuum of tradition emanating from Jerusalem is commendable, his attempt to explain the relationship of Matthew, Mark, and Luke totally without written *Vorlagen* is problematic. The exact agreement between Matthew and Luke both in the reception of Markan material and in the reproduction of other traditions that many other exegetes (unlike Reicke) assign to the sayings source finds a much less forced explanation if the Evangelists also had written *Vorlagen* at their disposal.

3.2 According to the *usage hypothesis*, which Augustine already followed, Mark used the Gospel of Matthew in the finished written form that was available to him, and Luke was composed on the basis of Matthew and Mark. J. J. Griesbach transformed this hypothesis, and W. R. Farmer developed it as the “two-Gospel hypothesis.” In Farmer's view Matthew was composed first, then Luke, and finally Mark on the basis of Matthew and Luke. Unfortunately, both variants of the usage hypothesis cloud rather than illuminate the origin and significance of the Gospel of Mark. In writing down his Gospel, the Evangelist, working either with Matthew alone or with both Matthew and Luke before him, would not only have had to leave out a considerable part of Matthew's material (and all of Luke's special material), but also would have had to break up the catechetical macrocomposition of Matthew. Because such a way of dealing with the Jesus tradition can be made historically plausible only with great difficulty, this “usage hypothesis” finds only a few followers today.

3.3 Matters are different with the *two-source theory* that goes back to C. Lachmann and H. J. Holtzmann. This sees Mark as the oldest Synoptic Gospel while simultaneously confirming its significance, because neither Matthew nor Luke could or would leave the Markan material out of consideration. Whereas the Evangelist Mark incorporated into his Gospel only a certain selection of the apostolic Jesus tradition, Matthew and Luke were eager to compile this tradition completely and to fix in a literary form what was available to them. Besides the Gospel of Mark, both Evangelists used a (probably written) sayings source, and each supplemented his Gospel with his own special material.

There is a broad consensus today about this two-source theory, even though this theory is meaningful only within certain limits and still has a number of problems.

One of these problems lies in the question of whether the version of Mark that was available to Matthew and Luke contained the following Markan texts that appear in neither of these larger Gospels: Mark 4:26–29, 7:31–37, 8:22–26 and the individual verses Mark 1:1; 2:27; 3:20–21; 7:3–4; 9:29, 48–49; 12:32–34; 14:51–52; and 15:44–45. Or put differently: Did the Gospel of Mark before or after its use by the two great Gospels still go through stages of redaction that would necessitate a distinction between an *Ur-Markus* or "primitive Mark" and a deutero-Mark? This is also suggested by what B. H. Streeter (*The Four Gospels* [1924]) termed the *minor agreements*. These involve a number of smaller literal agreements between Matthew and Luke in their taking over of Markan material that departs from the current text of Mark. Compare, for example, Mark 4:11 with Matthew 13:11/Luke 8:10, where both have *ὑμῖν δέδοται γνῶναι τὰ μυστήρια τῆς βασιλείας* ("to you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom [of heaven/of God]") instead of the Markan *ὑμῖν τὸ μυστήριον δέδοται τῆς βασιλείας* ("to you has been given the mystery of the kingdom [of God]"), as well as Mark 14:65 with Matthew 26:68/Luke 22:64: both add over against Mark *τίς ἐστιν ὁ παίσας σε*, "who is it that struck you?" A synoptic overview of all the relevant examples is offered in the appendix of A. Ennulat, *Die "Minor Agreements"* (1994).

3.4 The assumption of the existence of a written *sayings source* (Q) available to Matthew and Luke has been motivated above all by the observation that there is a partly verbatim agreement in wording in about two hundred verses shared between these Gospels that are not in Mark. The existence of fixed written collections of sayings in the early Christian period can hardly be doubted since the discovery of the Coptic gnostic *Gospel of Thomas* (for English translations, see W. Schneemelcher, ed., *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 1 [1991^{2}], 110–33, or K. Aland, ed., *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum* [1996^{15}], 517–46). But Q presents a very different textual sequence from this gnostic gospel (cf. Schnelle, *History and Theology*, 182–85). Because there are no common passion predictions

or traditions shared by Matthew and Luke but not found in Mark, it may be assumed that Q did not contain such texts.

Opinions vary widely when it comes to determining the pre- or post-Easter *Sitz im Leben* of Q. If parts of this source were already in use before Easter, then one can imagine them being applied to the situation described in Luke 10:1–12 concerning the sending of the seventy disciples to proclaim the βασιλεία: If one follows A. Polag, then the bearers of the Q tradition before and especially after Easter put together this material "in order to offer the teachers *assistance* in their teaching and also to strengthen their own conviction in the face of a present or expected persecution" (*Die Christologie der Logienquelle*, 22). This characterization is plausible from the perspective of the mission history, but is not undisputed. M. Sato, in his 1988 dissertation "Q und Prophetie" (supervised by U. Luz), claims that the various recensions of the sayings source had "the form of an unfinished collection of notes" (409). In terms of content, Sato compares Q to the Old Testament prophet books and considers it to be "*a type of 'prophet book' behind whose formation stood a traditionally prophetically-oriented circle of disciples of Jesus*" (409). Sato believes that in addition to passing on the teaching of Jesus, this circle "practiced disciple prophecy on the basis of the master language of Jesus and adopted the master life of Jesus in radical discipleship" (410).

Several other influential theses about Q may be considered. One of these is presented by G. Theissen (*The Gospels in Context* [1991], 203–34). Theissen traces the beginnings of Q to wandering Christian charismatics and concludes on the basis of contemporary historical allusions that the source must have been set down in writing in the middle of the first century in Palestine. He believes the collection was used in the mission to the Jews (cf. Gal. 2:7–8). U. Schnelle also follows Theissen's general view, but rightly emphasizes that many sayings in Q presuppose a settled existence rather than a wandering life for at least some of the bearers of the tradition (cf., e.g., Luke 12:39–40; 13:18–21). Schnelle writes, "The wandering missionaries had many settled sympathizers in the local communities who offered them a material basis for their mission and who provided them with lodging (cf. Luke 9:58Q) and support (Luke 10:5–7Q)" (*History and Theology*, 194). Historically much less guarded than those mentioned above are scholars including S. Schulz (*Q—Die Spruchquelle der Evangelisten* [1972]), W. Schmithals (*Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien* [1985], 215ff., 384ff.), and H. Koester (*Ancient Christian Gospels*, 128ff.). In their various ways these scholars trace the foundational layer of Q back to followers of Jesus (in Galilee) who carried on Jesus's way of life after Easter and rejected the (Jerusalem) kerygma of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

All these theories raise questions of method. Because we have no historical knowledge of a Galilean Jesus sect opposed to the Jerusalem apostles or of a special prophetic circle behind the Q tradition, and only a little knowledge about early Christian wandering charismatics (cf. Matt. 10:5–10, 41 with 3 John 5–8 and *Didache* 11:3–12), we must be very careful about tracing Q texts back to a specific circle of tradition bearers. Although this is a standard approach of form criticism, it is questionable from the standpoint of the history of literature. The associative and open manner of thinking in the early Christian tradition also keeps us from citing the (possible) lack of passion texts in Q as evidence that the bearers of the Q tradition rejected the passion kerygma.

What we call Q is in fact only a *source layer* that appears only in Matthew and Luke and probably took a fixed written form. This layer perhaps goes back to a text collection assembled for the mission of the disciples during the earthly ministry of Jesus, which was successively supplemented after Easter and spread in various recensions. A separate

theological evaluation of the sayings source (cf., e.g., A. Weiser, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, vol. 2 [1993], 21ff.) is something that one does better to refrain from. It is still disputed whether there even was an independent sayings source Q; it plays no independent role in the Bible, and all judgments about it must necessarily remain hypothetical and imprecise.

3.5 According to the two-source theory, the sources that have been combined to form the Gospel of Luke include the Gospel of Mark, the Lukan version of the sayings source, and Luke's special material (sometimes called L). This special material appears not only at the beginning of the Gospel with the birth and childhood stories (1:5–2:52) and at the end with 24:9–53, but is also used elsewhere in the Gospel; it furthermore permeates the entire Lukan passion narrative. If one observes the manner in which this material is pieced together in the Gospel, one encounters a striking system of literary blocks. In his work *The Four Gospels* (1924), B. H. Streeter already suggested that Luke may have combined his special material with Q material to form a Proto-Luke, into which the Markan material was then incorporated. J. Jeremias took up this suggestion and developed it in his "Perikopen-Umstellungen bei Lukas?" (*Abba* [1966]: 93–97) and *New Testament Theology* ([1973[2]], 48–49; [1971], 40–41). According to his analysis, Luke combined his special material (L) with Q material and merged it with Markan material as follows:

(1) Luke 1:1–4:30 (L + Q)

← (2) Luke 4:31–44 (Mark 1:21–39)

(3) Luke 5:1–11 (L)

← (4) Luke 5:12–6:19 (Mark 1:40–3:19)

(5) Luke 6:20–8:3 (L + Q)
"Small Interpolation"

← (6) Luke 8:4–9:50 (Mark 4:1–25; 3:31–35; 4:35–6:44; 8:27–9:40)

(7) Luke 9:51–18:14 (L + Q)
"Large Interpolation"

← (8) Luke 18:15–43 (Mark 10:13–52)

(9) Luke 19:1–28 (L + Q)

← (10) Luke 19:29–38 (Mark 11:1–10)

(11) Luke 19:39–44 (L)

← (12) Luke 19:45–21:33 (Mark 11:15–13:31)

(13) Luke 21:34–38 (L)

← (14) Luke 22:1–13 (Mark 14:1–2, 10–16)

(15) Luke 22:14–24:53 (L)

This arrangement can be interpreted in two ways: Either Luke followed the outline of Mark and then fitted in his special material together with the Q material while also supplementing Mark's presentation at the beginning and the end, or he did the opposite, incorporating those blocks of Markan material that were important to him into an already existing collection of special material and Q material, the so-called Proto-Luke. A definitive judgment about Luke's procedure is not easy to reach, because the Evangelist did not simply proceed mechanically in his redaction: he did not keep his special tradition and the Q tradition free from further redaction on the basis of the Markan material, nor did he simply incorporate Markan material unedited into the framework of Proto-Luke. However, J. Jeremias, in his most recent detailed linguistic investigation of all the material in Luke's Gospel, observes that "the non-Markan material was available to Luke in an already established form and was not first compiled by him" (*Die Sprache des Lukasevangeliums* [1980], 9). In view of this observation, the Proto-Luke hypothesis merits further investigation. It points to preliminary stages of the writing of the Gospels that cannot be adequately understood by the two-source theory alone.

3.6 The 1998 essay collection *The Gospels for All Christians* edited by R. Bauckham also focuses on the open questions of synoptic research. The authors proceed from five fundamental observations: (1) Unlike the Pauline Letters, for example, the Synoptic Gospels are not addressed to particular churches but leave it open where, when, and to whom they would be read. (2) There is no example in which ancient biographies (among which the Gospels can also be included; see above) were intended only for a particular group of readers. (3) The early Christians did not use scrolls for the dissemination of their literature, but the substantially cheaper and more manageable form of the codex, which suggests a wider distribution. (4) The apostles and early church leaders traveled widely and kept in close contact with each other. (5) Ever since their founding, there was also a brisk exchange between the great Christian churches in Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, and Rome.

In view of these virtually undeniable facts, Bauckham and his coauthors call for a revision of the prevailing theory that each Synoptic Gospel was directed to a particular church and that these churches can be precisely differentiated. Although the authors have no wish to flatten out the differences of form and content between the Synoptics, they do wish to point out that the Gospels were relatively "open texts" (U. Eco), and they consider it highly likely "that the Gospels were written for general circulation around the churches and so envisaged a very general Christian audience" (*The Gospels for All Christians*, 1). Whether this assessment also applies to the Fourth Gospel, as the authors believe, must be decided later. But as applied to the Synoptics, this approach makes clear that we

encounter here a tradition that was *widely* accepted in early Christianity, and that, in the opinion of both tradition bearers and recipients, contained *no* serious distortions of the Jesus tradition that goes back to the Jerusalem apostles.

4 Behind the Synoptic Gospels stands a longer tradition history of individual synoptic traditions and collections. The synoptic tradition is therefore considerably older than the three Gospels in which it has come to us. They are no longer simply apostolic eyewitness testimonies of Jesus's ministry and destiny, but literarily crafted books. If one considers this, then one must refer to the Evangelists in the first instance as *collectors and carriers* of the Jesus tradition. But because they have selected, placed, and edited their materials, they are also *redactors and theological teachers* of the tradition. The superscriptions and subscriptions of the Gospels indicate only whom the Gospels go back to, and despite Luke's prologue, the individuality of the Evangelists in the Synoptics completely recedes behind the material they have to offer. Under these circumstances the Evangelists were indeed collectors, tradition bearers, redactors, and teachers in one person. But above all, they wanted to be *witnesses* who would preserve and pass on the gospel about Jesus Christ that was already given to them and a Jesus tradition that they themselves had not created.

The Synoptic Gospels can be read both diachronically (i.e., historically) and synchronically (i.e., analytically in their own right). The results of our diachronic reading have already been presented in chapters 3–11. As we now turn to a synchronic reading, the statements that we will make about "Mark," "Matthew," and "Luke" and their theology must not be allowed to obscure their role as witnesses. The authors behind the Synoptics do not wish to report about themselves and their faith but to place their readers in the presence of Jesus Christ, who is the gospel of God in person (cf. Luke 17:21).

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CHAPTER 32

The Gospel of Mark

According to its superscription and subscription, the Gospel of Mark is the work of a Mark who is not mentioned in the book itself. From the perspective of Acts 10:36–38, the book has the effect of a sermon of Peter expanded by literary means. According to Mark 13:14, it was meant to be read in church meetings. If one follows the two-source theory, Mark is the oldest of the Synoptic Gospels, and almost all its content is taken over by Matthew and Luke.

1 Author and Date of the Gospel of Mark.

1.1 In its attempts to identify the author of the Gospel of Mark, scholarship has literally come full circle since 1952, when V. Taylor wrote: "There can be no doubt that the author of the Gospel was Mark, the attendant of Peter" (*The Gospel according to St. Mark* [1952], 26). This opinion has been sharply criticized in the meantime, but M. Hengel has recently agreed with it (cf. *Studies in the Gospel of Mark*, 45ff.). The ancient church was unanimous in the opinion that "Mark" was the *John Mark* mentioned in Acts 12:12, 25; 13:5, 13; 15:37, 39; Philemon 24; Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11; and 1 Peter 5:13. Papias, bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia in Asia Minor, included in one of his writings around AD 120 the following report about John Mark, which he owed in part to John the Elder (or Presbyter). The report has been preserved by Eusebius:

> The Presbyter [or Elder] used to say this, "Mark became Peter's interpreter (ἑρμηνευτής) and wrote accurately (ἀκριβῶς) all that he remembered, not, indeed, in order (τάξει), of the things said or done by the Lord. For he had not heard the Lord, nor had he followed him, but later on, as I said, followed Peter, who used to give teaching (ἐποιεῖτο τὰς διδασκαλίας) as necessity demanded but not making, as it were, an arrangement (σύνταξιν) of the Lord's oracles, so that Mark did nothing wrong in thus writing down single points as he remembered them. For to one thing he gave attention, to leave out nothing of what he had heard and to make no false statements in them." (*Historia ecclesiastica* 3.39.15, LCL Lake)

Papias (by way of John the Elder) claims that Mark was active as Peter's ἑρμηνευτής or "interpreter" and that he concentrated his Gospel on themes and materials that Peter emphasized in his missionary teachings.

Ἑρμηνευτής means “translator,” “interpreter,” occasionally also “advocate (in court)” (cf. J. Behm, *TNDT* 2:661–63; cf. LXX Gen. 42:23). It is historically completely believable that Peter made use of Mark’s services as an interpreter. The apostle spoke Greek but was unschooled in rhetoric (cf. Acts 4:13) and therefore invited Mark to help in the formulation (and dissemination?) of his teaching. Josephus similarly availed himself of help in the composition of his books (cf. *Ag. Ap.* 1.50). Papias praises the Evangelist’s accuracy in details but criticizes his overall lack of organization or σύνταξις of the words of the Lord. Presumably Papias’s model for this was the Evangelist John (cf. the debate summarized by M. Hengel, *Studies*, 47–50).

As already indicated, this ancient understanding of the role of both Peter and Mark in the composition of Mark’s Gospel is by no means unanimously shared today. Several scholars, including E. Schweizer, E. Haenchen, R. Pesch, and U. Schnelle, believe that the close working relationship between Mark and Peter that Papias presupposes was not a historical reality at all but only a secondary tradition that developed from the mention of “my son Mark” in 1 Peter 5:13, which Peter on this view did not write in any case. But this judgment overlooks the fact that in the course of the process of canonization, objections would almost certainly have been raised against the work of an unknown Mark; the name makes sense only in the light of a real connection between Mark and Peter. This approach also fails adequately to appreciate the fact that Papias refers to the reports of John the Elder on the matter; there are two different traditions about Mark and Peter here. Finally, the large role Peter plays in the Gospel of Mark must not be forgotten: Peter is mentioned twenty times in the sixteen chapters of the Gospel (cf. 1:16ff.; 1:29ff.; 1:36; 3:16; 5:37; 8:29; 8:32f.; 9:2ff.; 10:28; 13:3; 14:29; 14:33; 14:54; 14:66ff.; 16:7 [!]), and even biographical details such as the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law are retained. The ancient church tradition about the teaching of Peter behind the Gospel of Mark is therefore not to be rejected out of hand.

K. Niederwimmer and others have referred to Mark 7:31 and 11:1 to object that the author of the Gospel had an imprecise knowledge of Palestinian geography and therefore cannot have been identical with John Mark of Jerusalem. To this it may be responded that although it seems strange at first—since Sidon lies north of Tyre (and therefore not en route)—that the sweeping travel report in Mark 7:31 should say that Jesus returned from the region of Tyre by way of *Sidon* to get to the Sea of Galilee, in fact, Jesus was not going out of his way if he wanted to avoid the territory of Herod Antipas altogether. Perhaps this verse also indicates the regions where the Christian mission was active after Easter (cf. F. G. Lang, *ZDPV* 94 [1978]: 145–60). Moreover, to use Mark 11:1 to criticize Mark’s knowledge of geography on the basis of our supposedly better knowledge is highly problematic, for even today archeology has not discovered the precise location of Bethphage, and there were doubtless several ways in antiquity to make pilgrimages to Jerusalem that traversed the eastern slope and the crest of the Mount of Olives before descending the western slope to the city.

In sum, the writing of the Gospel of Mark by John Mark, the apostle Peter’s missions helper and “interpreter,” is the best attested view historically and is also perfectly comprehensible in its details.

The close connection between Mark and the teachings of Peter offers a partial explanation for certain phenomena that recur throughout the Gospel, such as the fact that the Evangelist repeatedly gives a compressed presentation of traditions and events that are described in much more detail in Matthew and Luke (as well as John); Mark's presentation of Jesus's passion is the best example of this. Moreover, Mark also does not take over the Q texts literally. When one compares, for example, the message of John the Baptist in Mark 1:7–8, the temptation of Jesus in 1:12–13, the discussion about Beelzebul in 3:22–30, the parable of the mustard seed in 4:30–32, the sending of the Twelve as missionaries in 6:7–11, and the sayings against the scribes in 12:38–40 with the Q versions of these stories, one quickly notices that the Evangelist knew the Q traditions but used them only occasionally to supplement his own tradition(s).

1.2 If we stay within the historical framework delimited above, then the Gospel of Mark was probably composed only *after* the death of Peter. Assuming that the apostle died a martyr's death under the emperor Nero perhaps in AD 64 (cf. *1 Clem.* 5:4; Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 3.1.1), the writing of the Gospel cannot have occurred before the *second half of the decade of the 60s*. Unlike the Gospels of Luke (19:43–44) and Matthew (22:7), there are no direct allusions in Mark to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Therefore the final redaction of the Gospel should probably be dated *before* this event.

1.3 Mark gives no precise indications of the *addressees* of his work. Mark himself probably had a knowledge of Aramaic. However, his translations of Aramaic expressions into Greek (cf. 7:11; 10:51; 14:36; 15:22, 34), explanations of Jewish customs (e.g., in 2:18; 7:3–4), and explicit and pleonastic indications of the timing of the festivals of Passover and Unleavened Bread (14:1, 12; cf. with Josephus, *Ant.* 14:21) show that he was writing for readers who no longer knew Aramaic and were not necessarily familiar with Jewish customs. This readership is to be located above all among Greek-speaking Gentile Christians in the Diaspora. A few Latinisms (cf. the list in U. Schnelle, *The History and Theology of the New Testament Writings* [1998], 201); the striking designation of the woman who came pleading to Jesus in Mark 7:26 as "a Gentile, of Syrophoenician origin" (cf. M. Hengel, *Studies*, 29); and the time of writing shortly after the martyrdom of Peter (see above) all suggest that the Gospel originated in Rome. Its readership was however not confined to the Christians of the city of Rome alone but reached far beyond (cf. R. Bauckham, *The Gospels for All Christians* [1998], 16ff.).

2 Structure and Content of the Gospel of Mark. As a collector and transmitter of traditions, Mark had access to (Petrine) materials and

collections that still form striking parts of the Gospel today, including the exemplary report of Jesus's ministry in Capernaum (2:1–3:6), the collections of parables (4:1–34) and miracle stories (4:35–6:52), the eschatological discourse (13:1–37), and the passion story told immediately thereafter (14:1–16:8). As a storyteller and witness, Mark wove together three structural threads: (1) the preexisting *narrative pattern of the gospel of God* (Acts 10:36–43) and its content (see above), (2) early Christian *scriptural proofs*, which were likewise already available to Mark but which he expanded, and (3) hints of a *messianic secret* surrounding Jesus.

2.1 The Gospel is composed so clearly that its *structure* can hardly be in doubt. After a brief opening in 1:1–2a which transitions into a prologue in 1:2b–15, the Gospel consists of three main parts:

I. Jesus's Ministry in Galilee and Beyond (1:16–8:26)

II. Jesus's Way of Suffering and the Discipleship of the Cross (8:27–10:52)

III. Jesus's Ministry in Jerusalem and His Passion and Resurrection (11:1–16:8)

Whether Mark 16:8 forms the original conclusion of the Gospel is disputed. But K. Aland ("Der Schluß des Markusevangeliums") has shown that the textual tradition confirms that the Gospel concludes at 16:8. The materials printed from Mark 16:9 onward in our Bibles are only text-critically secondary endings.

2.2 When one considers the fact that up to the time of Mark and beyond, the expression *εὐαγγέλιον* (*τοῦ Χριστοῦ*) referred to the missionary message of Jesus Christ, which he revealed to his apostles and appointed them to proclaim (cf. Acts 15:7; 20:24; Rom. 1:16; etc.), then the pointed use of the word in Mark (cf. 1:1, 14, 15; 8:35; 10:29; 13:10; 14:9) also appears in a special light, since *εὐαγγέλιον* also refers to the message (of Christ) in Mark 8:35, 10:29, and 13:10. Testifying to it can cost people their lives (cf. 8:35); it is the reason the apostles left their homes and families (cf. 10:29); and it must be proclaimed to all nations before the day of the parousia (cf. 13:10). However, this message also connects seamlessly with the narrative of the story of Jesus (cf. 1:1; 14:9), and a central feature of this story is that Jesus himself proclaims the gospel (cf. 1:14–15). *Mark*

therefore wants his book to serve the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and he does so by binding this proclamation tightly with Jesus's own message and story. This bond protects the missionary message from evaporating into spiritualism or arbitrariness. It also gives the message a theological dimension: God himself has determined the beginning of the gospel. He promised it through the prophet Isaiah and gave it content in and with the mission of Jesus. This divine "beginning" (ἀρχή) corresponds to the God-ordained "end" (τέλος) of the gospel in the form of the parousia of his Son, which is to be brought about at a time known only to God. The gospel about which Mark reports is God's gospel in the strict sense of the word, and its central content is the establishment of the kingdom of God through Jesus's words and deeds, his suffering and death for the "many" (cf. 10:45; 14:22–24), and his Easter appearance in Galilee, which he himself announced (cf. 14:28; 16:7). For the Gospel's readers the Evangelist's presentation involves an invitation to *remember*: they must learn to orient themselves in a Christian way by seeing themselves placed in the presence of Jesus and by experiencing his story with and after him.

2.3 The reference in Mark 1:2a to the gospel "written" in Isaiah the prophet recalls the narrative pattern of Acts 10:36–43 (which is permeated with allusions to Isaiah and the Holy Scriptures) and gives Mark's report about the gospel a *salvation-historical depth dimension*: Jesus's mission fulfills and accomplishes what Isaiah testified to, and not only Isaiah but also David, the spirit-filled author of the Psalms (cf. Mark 12:36), and the rest of the authors of the Holy Scriptures (cf. Mark 14:49).

E. Schweizer holds that in the context of Mark's Gospel, Mark 1:2a, "just as it is written in Isaiah the prophet," was meant to introduce the mixed quotation of Exodus 23:20 and Malachi 3:1 found in Mark 1:2b. He therefore regards the quoted material to be "attributed incorrectly to Isaiah," perhaps because "this passage was found in a collection of Bible quotations treasured by the church, in which it originally followed the one from Isaiah [i.e., Isa. 40:3 in Mark 1:3], so that later the second quotation was considered Isaianic also" (*The Good News according to Mark* [1970], 29). However, as we have already seen (cf. chap. 31, §1.5), Mark 1:2a belongs with Mark 1:1. Mark 1:2b then serves as the beginning of Mark's prologue, whose theme is the fulfillment of the Scriptures, among which the prophecies of Isaiah carry special weight.

2.3.1 Mark's *direct quotations* of Scripture should stand out to every reader (even though Mark 1:11 and 9:7 are not treated as quotations in the UBS and Nestle-Aland Greek texts): Mark 1:2a (cf. with Exod. 23:20; Mal. 3:1); 1:3 (cf. with Isa. 40:3); 1:11 (cf. with Isa. 42:1; 44:2; Ps. 2:7; Gen.

22:2); 4:12 (cf. with Isa. 6:9–10); 7:6–7 (cf. with Isa. 29:13); 9:7 (cf. with Isa. 42:1; Ps. 2:7; Gen. 22:2); 11:9–10 (cf. with Pss. 118:25–26; 148:1); 12:10–11 (cf. with Ps. 118:22–23; see below); 13:24–25 (cf. with Isa. 13:10; 34:4); 14:27 (cf. with Zech. 13:7); 14:49 (the Scriptures are fulfilled in Jesus's way of suffering; see below).

2.3.2 Mark's even more numerous *indirect references* to the Scriptures presuppose a readership with a good Bible knowledge, as the following examples show: *Mark 1:9–11*: Jesus's baptism is his messianic anointing with the Spirit and commissioning according to Isaiah 61:1–2; *Mark 1:12–13*: Jesus stands the test of temptation according to Isaiah 11:6–9; *Mark 1:14–15*: Jesus appears on the scene as the messianic evangelist of the kingdom according to Isaiah 52:7; *Mark 1:21–34*: Jesus teaches and heals with divine authority (see below); *Mark 8:31*: Jesus *must* (δεῖ) be rejected (ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι), like the stone that the builders rejected (ἀπεδοκίμασαν) in Psalm 118:22, but after three days he will rise again according to Hosea 6:2; *Mark 9:31*: "The Son of Man [sc. Jesus] will be *delivered* (παραδίδοται) into the hands of men" (NRSV: "human hands") according to Isaiah 43:4 (cf. δώσω); 53:6 (cf. παρέδωκεν), 12 (cf. παρεδόθη), but after three days he will rise according to Hosea 6:2; *Mark 10:33–34*: Jesus will be *delivered* (again παραδοθήσεται) to the chief priests and scribes in Jerusalem according to Isaiah 43:4; 53:6, 12, and will be mocked, spit upon, flogged, and killed according to Isaiah 50:6, but after three days he will rise according to Hosea 6:2; *Mark 12:1–11*: Jesus preaches judgment against God's vineyard Israel (cf. Isa. 5:1–2; Ps. 80:9–10 [ET 80:8–9]), is rejected according to Psalm 118:22a, but is installed by God as the chief cornerstone according to Psalm 118:22b–23; *Mark 10:45*: Jesus is prepared to give his life as the λύτρον or ransom for many (cf. Isa. 43:3 ἄλλαγμα) that God was determined to give for Israel according to Isaiah 43:3–4 (cf. Isa. 53:10–12); *Mark 14:1–16:8*: In Jesus's suffering and death the Scriptures are fulfilled (14:49), especially Psalms 22 and 69 (cf. the overview of passages in A. Weiser, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, vol. 2 [1993], 74–75); *Mark 14:24*: Jesus pours out his "blood of the covenant" for the many (cf. Isa. 53:11–12) as an end-time counterpart to blood of the covenant of Exodus 24:8; *Mark 14:58*: Jesus announces the destruction of the old temple made with human hands and the establishment of the eschatological temple prophesied in Exodus 15:17, and he himself suffers the fate of temple

destruction (cf. Mark 15:29 with John 2:17, 21); *Mark 15:34–35*: Jesus dies with the cry of Psalm 22:2 (ET 22:1) and 22:12 (ET 22:11) on his lips (cf. G. Lohfink, *Der letzte Tag Jesu* [1987[6]], 74–76]); *Mark 15:38*: Jesus's death on Golgotha leads to the tearing of the temple curtain that separates the holy of holies from the rest of the temple; this means that Jesus's death is a God-ordained end-time act of atonement replacing the Jerusalem temple (cf. with Heb. 7:27; 9:12; 10:10), in which atonement was accomplished only symbolically (cf. Lev. 16:12–15); *Mark 15:46*: Jesus is buried in a rich man's tomb according to Isaiah 53:9; *Mark 16:1–8*: Jesus rises from the dead after three days according to Hosea 6:2, and an angel instructs the women to tell the disciples about his imminent appearance in Galilee (cf. with Matt. 28:16–20 and Ps. 80:2–3 [ET 80:1–2]; Mic. 2:13; see below).

These examples show that it was not in the first instance the Gospel of Matthew but already Mark who used Scripture quotations and allusions to present the *story of Jesus Christ as an event of messianic fulfillment*.

3 The Story of the Son of God. Mark unfolds the gospel in narrative form. His Christology must therefore be deduced not only from his titles for Christ but also from the emphases in his story of the gospel.

3.1 Markan Titles for Christ. Like other New Testament authors, Mark uses the titles of Christ *cumulatively*, in a Jewish Christian way. Thus, for example, in Mark 14:61–62 where Jesus is referred to in rapid succession as Christ (i.e., the Messiah), Son of the Blessed One (i.e., Son of God), and Son of Man, these titles do not represent three separate Christologies that have been connected only subsequently. Rather, Jesus as the Christ is simultaneously also the Son of God and Son of Man, and each of these three titles indicates only a certain aspect of his person and work.

3.1.1 According to A. Weiser (*Theologie*, 2:66), already in the introductory verses of his Gospel Mark wanted to show "that Jesus is to be recognized and honored not only as a man but in the comprehensive way of faith." Unfortunately Weiser's correct insight is combined with the well-known notion of a development of Christology "from below" (rather than from above) and is thus distorted. In fact, the titles of Christ that Mark uses in 1:1 show precisely which Jesus he wants to present, namely, the one Jesus Christ who is the Son of God. Only here does Mark use this form of the name, "Jesus Christ" (Ἰησοῦς Χριστός), which in turn presupposes an

earlier Jewish Christian confession that makes the second term the predicate of the first: “Jesus (and no other) *is* the Messiah.”

3.1.2 The title *Son* or *Son of God* is central in Mark’s Gospel (cf. 1:1; 9:7; 12:6; 14:61–62; 15:39; further 3:11; 5:7). It designates the messianic Son of God who does his divine work on earth, suffers death on the cross, and rises from the dead three days later. The title Son of God belongs closely with the titles Son of Man and Messiah (see above).

3.1.2.1 Although it has repeatedly been denied that Mark has any *preexistence Christology*, the introduction to his Gospel attests it in all clarity. After the introductory clause in 1:1–2a (see above), there follows in 1:2b–3 a component of the prologue consisting of several Scripture quotations in which God uses words from Exodus 23:20 and Malachi 3:1 to tell his Son about the sending of his earthly forerunner. The setting of this dialogue can only be in heaven. Mark changes Malachi’s expression “before *my* face” (πρὸ προσώπου μου) into “before *your* face” (πρὸ προσώπου σου) and thereby shows that God is sending his Son as the representative of his person and will on earth. He is to be preceded by John as the “voice of one crying in the wilderness” predicted in Isaiah 40:3, who will summon the people to “prepare the way of the Lord,” namely, Jesus, the Son of God and designated Lord of the world (cf. Mark 12:35–37). Mark 1:2b–3 therefore testifies to Jesus’s preexistence and full sonship to God (cf. above, 77, §5). With the title Son of God Mark presents Jesus as “the one and only counterpart who stands opposite to the Father” (J. Gnilka, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* [1994], 159).

P. Vielhauer has suggested interpreting the stories of Jesus’s baptism (Mark 1:9–11) and transfiguration (9:2–8) as well as the confession of the Roman centurion (15:39) against the background of the ancient Egyptian enthronement ritual as reconstructed by E. Norden (cf. Vielhauer, “Erwägungen zur Christologie des Markusevangeliums”). Accordingly Mark 1:1 is supposed to represent the adoption, 9:9 the presentation, and 15:39 the acclamation of the Son of God. However, as G. Friedrich has gathered from the Egyptologist H. Brunner (cf. *ZTK* 80 [1983]: 150), the ritual reconstructed by Norden was never a historical reality. The three texts (to which 14:61–62 may be added) must therefore be interpreted differently from the way that has suggested itself to Vielhauer.

3.1.2.2 In Mark 1:4 *John the Baptist* appears on the scene as the earthly embodiment of the “voice” of Isaiah 40:3, and in 1:7 he announces the imminent arrival of the “stronger one” who is to come after him. John’s appearance in the garb of Elijah, including a leather belt and a distinctive prophetic cloak of animal hair (cf. 2 Kings 1:8 RSV), and his baptizing in

the Jordan (cf. 2 Kings 2:8) make it clear to the Scripture-knowledgeable reader that the new end-time people of God will emerge from John's baptism (cf. Mal. 3:23 [ET 4:5] and above, 75–76, §4). The *baptism of Jesus* is presented to readers in Mark 1:9–11 as the bestowing of the Spirit (cf. Isa. 61:1–2). Here readers also witness Jesus being addressed as the beloved and chosen Son (cf. Isa. 42:1; Ps. 2:7) by the voice from heaven, and they understand this as God's call to Jesus to begin his messianic work. As the Son of God, Jesus immediately passes the test of temptation laid on him (cf. Mark 1:12–13 with Isa. 11:6–9). After the arrest of the Baptist, Jesus makes his way back to Galilee and proclaims there "the gospel of God" (i.e., the message of the dawning of the kingdom of God in his person and work), calling people to repent and to believe in this gospel. In this scene Jesus appears as the (messianic) evangelist of the kingdom announced in Isaiah 52:7.

3.1.2.3 According to Mark, Jesus also referred to himself as the *Son of Man* (cf. 2:10, 28; 8:38; 9:9, 12, 31; etc.). In Daniel 7 the Son of Man is not one of the four beasts that emerge from the chaotic waters of the sea (cf. Dan. 7:2–8), but is rather a ruler with human appearance who comes "with the clouds of heaven" to stand before the Ancient of Days (7:13). In the *Similitudes* of *1 Enoch*, the Son of Man is identified with the Chosen One, that is, the Servant of Isaiah 42:1 and 52:13 and the promised Messiah of Isaiah 11:1–5; *1 Enoch* 48:3–6 even speaks of his preexistence. The messianic Son of Man of the Enoch tradition is no longer a mere human figure but is rather a ruler who belongs to the heavenly world. Jesus applied this tradition to himself and connected it with the idea of suffering (cf. above, 75–80, §§3–6, and 136–43, §7, esp. 138–40, §7.3.2), and Mark has taken up this special combination of language (cf. 8:31–33; 9:31–32; 10:32–34).

3.1.2.4 A. Weiser has pointed out that ancient Judaism had no concept of a suffering, dying, and rising *Messiah*, adding that "the Messiah was also not thought of as a divine being. People expected one Messiah to come from the line of David. . . . The other Messiah was expected to be a son of Aaron" (*Theologie*, 2:67). This in fact holds true for the two human "anointed ones" of Zechariah 4:1–14 and 1QS 9:10–11. However, as soon as Messiah, Son of God, and Son of Man become identified with each other, as suggested already in Isaiah 9:5 (ET 9:6) and Psalm 45:7 (ET 45:6) and in *1 Enoch* 48 and the Jesus tradition, the Messiah gains divine stature.

Because the messianic title “Son of the Most High,” equivalent to the title “Son of the Blessed One” which the high priest uses as a query to Jesus in Mark 14:61, is now also attested in the *4QAramaic Apocalypse* 4Q246 2:1 (*DSSSE* 1:495), we should no longer assume with Weiser that Mark 14:61–62 “clearly shows the influence of post-Easter early Christian composition” (ibid.). Rather, we should note that the Evangelist’s presentation has a firm basis in the actual event of the conversation between Jesus and the high priest (cf. above, 133–36, §6).

3.2 The Messianic Miracle Worker. For Mark, Jesus was not least a *messianic miracle worker*. Therefore, in his brief Gospel he offers seventeen healing and miracle stories (cf. 1:23–28; 1:29–31; 1:40–45; 2:1–12; 3:1–6; 4:35–41; 5:1–20; 5:21–43; 6:30–44; 6:45–52; 7:24–30; 7:31–37; 8:1–9; 8:22–26; 9:14–29; 10:46–52; 11:12–14), to which may be added three summaries of Jesus’s healing ministry (cf. 1:32–34; 3:10–11; 6:53–56). According to Mark, Jesus went through the country exactly as described in Acts 10:38: “he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil” (cf. Mark 1:32; 3:10; 6:53–56). Nevertheless, these healings are effective only for those who trust Jesus; where he finds no faith he can do few if any miracles (cf. 6:5).

3.2.1 Two results emerge from Weiser’s worthwhile analysis of the Markan miracle stories (cf. *Theologie*, 2:60–65) that deserve further attention: (1) The reports of Jesus’s miraculous deeds follow a conventional pattern that was also common in Hellenistic sources. Therefore, even before their incorporation into Mark’s Gospel, these stories were told and retold in stereotypical ways. (2) The reports of Jesus’s miracles of deliverance and provision (4:35–41; 6:32–44, 45–52; 8:1–10) contain a whole series of “Old Testament compositional motifs.” According to Weiser, Jesus’s exorcisms and healings stand in close relationship with his authentic proclamation of the kingdom of God. The reports of Jesus’s epiphanies, namely, his baptism (1:9–11), walking on the water (6:45–52), and transfiguration (9:2–8), and of his miracles of deliverance provision, namely, the calming of the storm (4:35–41) and the feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand (6:32–44; 8:1–9), are pre-Markan but nevertheless first originated “from Easter faith” (ibid., 63).

In the light of our insight that the earthly Jesus claims to live out of his identity with the Father in both being and actions, Weiser’s overly schematic line of thinking appears questionable. The Old Testament motifs in the reports of Jesus’s epiphanies and miracles of provision by no means prove

the post-Easter origin of these texts. Instead they show that from the very beginning, the disciples had the experience of facing the one and only God in and through Jesus. Therefore they presented Jesus's ministry before and after Easter in terms of motifs that the Holy Scriptures had already made available to them. Thus, for example, when Jesus in his "epiphany" calls out to his terrified disciples while walking on the water, he addresses them with God's own "It is I" (ἐγώ εἰμι) from Exodus 3:14 and Isaiah 43:10.

3.2.2 Mark's miracle stories have raised considerable problems in research. Scholars have long assumed that Mark wanted to use these stories to present Jesus as a Hellenistic "divine man" (θεῖος ἀνήρ) to show his readers that Jesus really was the Son of God. Ironically, this supposed Markan θεῖος ἀνήρ Christology is then sharply criticized by some of the same scholars who constructed it (cf., e.g., S. Schulz, *Die Stunde der Botschaft* [1967], 46–59).

In the Hellenistic period, people did in fact know of and esteem divinely empowered heroes, miracle workers, and philosophers. Prototypes include Heracles, the philosopher Pythagoras (580–500 BC), his pupil Empedocles (ca. 450 BC), Menecrates of Syracuse, and Apollonius of Tyana (first century AD). However, one must not overlook the fact that all the reports of the deeds of such men were first written down from the second to the fourth century AD, after the origin of the New Testament. Moreover, P. Wülfing von Martitz (*TDNT* 8:338–40) has shown that the unified type of the divine man that was being promoted in his day by L. Bieler (ΘΕΙΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ*: Das Bild vom göttlichen Menschen in Spätantike und Frühchristentum*, 2 vols. [1935–1936]) is only a modern construct. The ancient authors did not yet know of this type, nor did they connect their portrayals of heroes and miracle workers in any fixed way with the adjective θεῖος or the title υἱὸς θεοῦ. Under these circumstances there would be no opportunity for Mark to apply the concept of *the* θεῖος ἀνήρ to Jesus.

Mark and the other early Christian tradition bearers presented Jesus as a divine physician and miracle worker *not* because they venerated "divine men," but because of the *messianic expectation* that began to be fulfilled for them in Jesus's ministry.

The (post–New Testament) *Targum of Isaiah* 53:8 runs: "Who can tell of the miracles that will occur for us in his [sc. the Messiah's] days" (trans. B. D. Chilton, *The Isaiah Targum* [1987]). What this means is nicely illustrated by the *4QMessianic Apocalypse* 4Q521 (*DSSSE* 2:1045–47). According to this text, in the messianic time of salvation heaven and earth will no longer depart from the teaching of the Messiah, and God will enable Israel to participate in the deliverance and restoration spoken of in Psalm 146:7–8, Isaiah 26:19, 35:1–6, and 61:1–2. Peter and the apostles already saw this expectation fulfilled in a symbolic way as they accompanied Jesus: They experienced Jesus as the messianic evangelist of the poor (cf. Luke 7:18–23/Matt. 11:2–6 with Isa. 61:1–2), and before their eyes he in fact healed the blind (cf. Mark 8:22–26; 10:46–52), the lame (cf. Mark 2:1–12), the lepers (cf. Mark 1:40–45), and the deaf (cf. Mark 7:31–37), raised the dead (cf. Mark 5:21–43), and gave sinners a sign of divine forgiveness in the form of table fellowship (cf. Mark 2:15–17; etc.).

When one measures Jesus's ministry as presented by Mark against 4Q521 (and *Tg. Isa.* 53:8), Jesus appears not as a divine man, but as the Son of God ministering with divine authority. This unique authority is clearly expressed in Mark 2:1–12: Jesus deals with the paralyzed man in Capernaum exactly as it is said of God in Psalm 103:3, "who forgives all your iniquity, / who heals all your diseases." According to the presentation of the Markan miracle stories, Jesus is the messianic Son of God who challenges the devil's authority over the sick and commands the elements as creator. Mark's reports record an essential feature of Jesus's ministry: he proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom of God in both word and deed. This is precisely what Mark emphasizes.

3.3 The Way of the Son of God. Jesus's way on earth unfolded in three stages according to Mark's condensed presentation (cf. Acts 10:36–43): Jesus first ministered in Galilee and vicinity (cf. Mark 1:16–8:26); he then made his way to Jerusalem (8:27–10:52); in Jerusalem he intentionally sought the final verdict, took the death of the cross on himself, and three days later experienced the resurrection (11:1–16:8).

3.3.1 In the *first part of the Gospel* (Mark 1:16–8:26), the reader learns that after his baptism and his successful withstanding of temptation, Jesus went to Galilee and there began to go his messianic way: He proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom of God and chose *twelve disciples*, of whom the first three, Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, play a special role throughout the Gospel. Jesus develops his message above all in *parables*, *exorcisms*, and *healings*. The healings are proof of Jesus's divine authority. This authority is also illustrated by those *miracles of provision* and *epiphanies* in which Jesus's work is presented with the help of Old Testament motifs: He could command the wind and waves with God's power (cf. 4:41 with Pss. 77:17–20; 104:6–7), he walked on water like God himself (cf. 6:49–50 with Job 9:8), and he had the power to feed God's people with bread from heaven (cf. 6:32–44; 8:1–9 with Ps. 104:27–28; Exod. 16).

3.3.2 The scene of Peter's confession in Caesarea Philippi (8:27–30) is Mark's narrative watershed, and it begins the *second part of the Gospel* (8:27–10:52). In this central part of his story Mark leads his readers to see Jesus as the Christ who intends to bring about the salvation of Jews and Gentiles by his vicarious suffering. Mark uses the example of Peter to show

how hard this message was to accept even for Jesus's closest companions: On the one hand, it is Peter who represents all the other disciples in recognizing and confessing Jesus as the Messiah: "You are the Christ" (8:29). On the other hand, Peter sharply objected to Jesus's announcement that he would have to suffer and die, and thereby experienced a rebuke that is hard to surpass: "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things" (8:33). This scene establishes the faithfulness of the tradition that Mark is following, for it preserves an unretouched presentation of the weaknesses of the apostles (cf. also 14:30–31, 66–72). Jesus's readiness to suffer is made explicit for the readers through two more passion predictions, which prepare them in ever more detail for the actual passion events (cf. 9:31–32; 10:32–34); one can therefore properly refer to these texts as passion summaries. These passion predictions are strengthened by the (authentic) saying of Jesus in Mark 10:45: "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many" (see above, 139–40, §7.3.2.2).

3.3.3 A central text that stands over against the passion summaries as a complement is the *transfiguration story* (Mark 9:2–10). Jesus is here addressed a second time by God's voice as God's Son, this time in the presence of the heavenly witnesses Moses and Elijah, as well as Peter, James, and John. These three are admonished to "listen" to the Son of God: ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ (9:7). This command alludes to Deuteronomy 18:15, Moses's famous prophecy that was equally important for ancient Judaism and early Christianity (NIV): "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must *listen* to him" (cf. Acts 3:22; 7:37). Through God's voice, Jesus is presented to the apostles (and Mark's readers) as God's beloved Son and as *Moses's successor*.

As soon as one sees this, the multiple typological references to the Moses tradition in the transfiguration story can be explained without difficulty (for the following, see H. Gese, "The Law," in *Essays on Biblical Theology* [1981], 99–89): Just as Moses in Exodus 24:1, 16–18 took with him up Mount Sinai only Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu (as well as seventy elders) and first heard the voice of the Lord on the seventh day after the cloud of God's glory had covered the mountain for six days, so also after six days Jesus takes with him only Peter, James, and John up a "high mountain" (Mount Hermon?). And as Moses is transfigured on the mountain with heavenly radiance according to Exodus 34:29–35, so it is now with Jesus. To him and his disciples there appear the two main witnesses of the old covenant, Moses and Elijah, each of whom had no grave on earth because they were directly translated to the heavenly world (cf. Deut. 34:5–6 and 2 Kings 2:11–12). As the representatives of the law and the prophets, they enter a conversation with Jesus, the importance of which is underscored by the voice that sounds from the cloud of God's presence (which descends

upon the scene in Mark's text as in Exod. 24:15–18): "This is my beloved Son; listen to him!" *Jesus is the consummation of God's revelation.* The three shelters or temporary dwellings (cf. *σκηνή*) that Peter wants to erect for Elijah, Moses, and Jesus are, like the original shelters or booths (*sukkôt*, סֻכּוֹת) of the Feast of Tabernacles, places of refuge. In these shelters people should be able to take refuge and have the opportunity for sustained fellowship with Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. Peter's plan shows a lack of understanding (cf. Mark 9:6) only to the extent that he wanted to set up these shelters before the passion and therefore once again to prevent Jesus's suffering. Mark 9:8–10 should be read as Jesus's renewed rejection of Peter's request.

The story of Jesus's transfiguration indeed points forward to Easter (cf. Mark 9:9 with John 14:26), but it has its historical place *before* the passion and goes back to the fact that Peter (and other disciples) recognized Jesus as the Son of God already before Easter. For the readers of the Gospel, the content revealed by this text can hardly be surpassed, since it allows them to talk about Jesus's transfiguration, which the original disciples were forbidden to do (cf. Mark 9:9–10).

3.3.4 The *third part of the Gospel* (11:1–16:8) presents the most memorable part of the story of Christ that Mark narrates. Jesus no longer teaches only in parables but also teaches in pointed exchanges with opponents, and he gives extensive information about the end times. He also is no longer hesitant about his messianic claims. Instead, in his "triumphal entry" he rides into Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives along the old royal road on which Solomon was once led from the Gihon Spring through the City of David to the south forecourt of the temple (cf. 1 Kings 1:38–40). For this he uses the old royal mount, the colt of a donkey (cf. Zech. 9:9–10), and he is greeted with the messianic royal acclamation,

"Hosanna!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!" (Mark 11:9–10, *ὡσαννά* = Aram. הוֹשַׁע נָא [*hôšaʿ nāʾ*] = Heb. הוֹשִׁיעָה נָּא [*hôšîʿâ nnāʾ*]; cf. Ps. 118:25–26)

After this Jesus briefly enters the temple. On the next day, to fulfill his messianic mission (cf. 2 Sam. 7:12–16; 1 Chron. 17:11–14; Zech. 4:8–10a; 6:9–15; 14:20–21; *Tg. Isa.* 53:5), he performs the so-called cleansing of the temple against those doing business there (cf. Mark 11:15–17 and above, 97, §4.5, and 173–74, §4.3.1). With this act Jesus consecrates himself to dying an atoning death for Israel and provokes the chief priests to instigate his death. In the parable of the wicked tenants (12:1–11), Jesus identifies himself to anyone who can hear as the *Son* (of God). He then engages in various debates with friend and foe and teaches his disciples about the coming events of the end times. In the

course of his farewell Passover meal with the twelve disciples, he gives his table guests an advance share in the saving fruit of his death (cf. 14:22–24 with Exod. 24:8 and Isa. 53:10–12), applies Zechariah 13:7 (“I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered”) to himself on the way to the Mount of Olives (cf. Mark 14:27), and finally takes on himself the suffering that God laid on him without attempting to escape or resist in his “parting of the ways” in Gethsemane (F. Neugebauer). Before the Sanhedrin he admits to being the messianic Son of God, and he announces to his judges his intention to appear to them soon as the Son of Man and Judge of the World exalted to the right hand of God (14:61–62). On the basis of this statement, which his opponents found blasphemous, he is found worthy of death, then is accused as a messianic agitator the next morning before Pilate and condemned by him after a brief trial to death by crucifixion. The following story of Jesus’s passion, which is patterned on Psalms 22 and 69, interprets his death as the vicarious death of the messianic righteous one, through whose fate God intends to establish his kingdom and also bring about the conversion of the Gentile nations (cf. Ps. 22:28–29 [ET 22:27–28]). The tearing of the temple curtain in front of the holy of holies after Jesus’s death (Mark 15:38) shows the reader that the atonement effected once for all through this death has made the temple obsolete as the place of atonement. Finally, Mark’s predominantly Gentile Christian readership can and should find itself reflected in the *confession* of the Roman centurion that follows in 15:39, “Truly this man was God’s Son!”

3.3.5 Mark’s Gospel closes with the report of the discovery of the empty tomb on Easter morning in 16:1–8. If one follows the oldest form of the Greek textual tradition with K. Aland, then no shorter or longer ending concerning Jesus’s resurrection appearances should be added after 16:8. Through details such as the setting at the tomb, the return of the women mentioned already in 15:40–41, and the reference in 16:7 to Jesus’s prediction in 14:28 about his going to Galilee after his resurrection, Mark 16:1–8 is closely connected to the preceding passion narrative. The verses are meant to show that death and the grave have no lasting power over Jesus. Instead he has risen bodily from the dead on the third day, just as he predicted (cf. 8:31; 9:9, 31; 10:34). The unheard-of novelty of this event is underscored by the fact that the resurrection is announced not by humans but by an angel (cf. 16:6).

It is no accident that the angel’s message includes the instruction: “See the place where they laid him” (16:6 NIV). In the context of Jewish Christian tradition, this reference to the empty tomb confirms that Jesus is something decisively different from a Jewish martyr. People at that time assumed that the bones of the martyrs rested undecayed in the tomb while their souls or spirits were already present in heaven to intercede for Israel (cf. Rev. 6:9–11 and J. Jeremias, *Heiligengräber in Jesu Umwelt* [1958], 126ff.). With Jesus it was different. He was the Son of God whom God had raised bodily, and his resurrection was the promising opening act of the end-time resurrection of all the dead (cf. Rom. 1:3–4 with Rev. 1:5 [3:14]; 1 Cor. 15:20; Col. 1:18 and Ps. 89:28 [ET 89:27]). Mark 16:7 takes up Jesus’s announcement from 14:28 that he will appear to the disciples in Galilee and names Peter explicitly as the leader of the disciples who will see him there. This signals to the readers that the gospel of Jesus Christ to which they owe their faith does not simply go back to the discovery (as important as it is) of the empty tomb by the women, who at first kept silent about their wonderful experience in fear and trembling (cf. 16:8 with 1 Sam. 3:15–17; *L.A.B.* 53:12; Dan. 7:28

LXX), but also to the initial appearance of the Christ to Peter (and the Twelve) in Galilee (cf. Matt. 28:16–20; see below).

Even at the end of his Gospel, Mark does not provide his readers with any direct look at the risen Christ; only on the day of his parousia from heaven will people be able to see him (cf. 13:26–27; 14:62). But until then readers of the Gospel can and should answer the question of who the risen Christ is as follows: He is the Son of God, as he was from the beginning, and it is as God's Son that he ministered on earth and was raised by God. This insight is totally in keeping with the Evangelist's goal of tracing back the missionary gospel to the message and story of Jesus and of inviting his readers to take their orientation from their act of remembrance (see above).

3.4 The Messianic Secret. Mark never keeps it a secret from his readers that Jesus is the Son of God who stands and ministers in a unity of being and action with his heavenly Father. Nevertheless, Mark presents Jesus's earthly way and work before Easter as surrounded by a veil of secrecy that can be lifted only after Easter (cf. the command of silence until the resurrection in 9:9). Therefore, ever since the appearance of W. Wrede's famous book *The Messianic Secret* (1901; ET 1971), scholars have spoken of the theory of a "messianic secret" that is determinative for Mark's Gospel.

Like every reader of Mark's Gospel, Wrede faced a complex collection of facts: (1) The same Jesus who especially according to the Gospel of Mark performs the most astounding exorcisms and miracles wants these miraculous deeds kept secret: He orders the *demons* or "unclean spirits" who acknowledge him as "the Holy One of God" to keep silent (cf. 1:25, 34; 3:12), and in this case Jesus succeeds with what he commands: people hear the initial testimony of the demons, but then the demons are expelled and speak no more of this "secret." But he no longer succeeds when he asks humans to keep his healing miracles a secret: It makes a certain amount of historical sense when Jesus orders the leper in 1:44 not to report his healing to anyone before he presents himself to the priest and makes the offering for his cleansing stipulated in Leviticus 14. But it no longer makes any historical sense when Jesus seeks to have the raising of Jairus's daughter (cf. 5:43) and the healing of the deaf-mute man (cf. 7:36) kept secret, or sends the healed blind man of Bethsaida directly home without allowing him to enter the village (cf. 8:26).

(2) According to Mark, Jesus also orders his *disciples* to keep silent. According to 8:30, the disciples should not reveal their knowledge that Jesus is the Messiah to others prematurely, and according to 9:9 they should not speak openly of the transfiguration until after Easter. The disciples follow these orders. But despite all the special teaching that they receive, they remain without understanding and uncertain throughout the entire period of Jesus's earthly ministry (cf. 4:13; 4:40; 6:52; 7:18; 8:32; 9:32; 10:32). Jesus is betrayed to the chief priests by Judas, and when he was arrested in Gethsemane, all the other disciples "deserted him and fled" (14:50). Even Peter lacks the strength to confess Jesus in the courtyard of the palace of the high priest (14:66–72). It is improbable that all these reports of the lack of understanding and failure of the disciples are only post-Easter

formations. At the same time, Mark's presentation suggests that he is following a special interest in his portrait of the disciples.

(3) Readers of the Gospel witness how Jesus, after speaking to the public in parables, explains this practice to his disciples alone in Mark 4:10–12 by an appeal to Isaiah 6:9–10: "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables so that [sc. the Scripture might be fulfilled (cf. Mark 9:12)], 'they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; *otherwise* (μήποτε) they might turn and be forgiven!'" (NIV; or: "*so that* they may not turn again and be forgiven," NRSV). (On the translation of μήποτε, see BDAG 648, s.v. 2bα, 4, and on the text as a whole see R. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 198–215.)

According to this "theory of parables," Isaiah 6:9–10 is fulfilled in Jesus's speaking in parables, which divides those who understand and turn to God from those who do not. How seriously this is meant can be seen from the use of Isaiah 6:9–10 in Acts 28:26–27 (cf. also Rom. 11:8). This is also a surprising conclusion, since parable research since A. Jülicher's seminal work on the parables (*Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*, 2 vols. [1888; 1910[2]]) has assumed that Jesus's parables are the most understandable part of his message.

3.4.1 Wrede considered it impossible to explain the above phenomena historically, and therefore he spoke of the messianic secret not as a fact of Jesus's earthly ministry but as a *theory* first developed in Mark's Gospel or preexisting materials. Wrede believes that the preexisting tradition available to Mark had already sought to reconcile post-Easter faith in Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God with the supposed fact that the earthly Jesus did not make any messianic claims. He finds the key text for understanding this theory in Mark 9:9–10, where the disciples are prohibited from speaking of the transfiguration until after the resurrection (see above).

Wrede's view continues to be discussed critically to this day. R. Bultmann similarly saw Mark's theory of a messianic secret as "a veiling of the fact that faith in Jesus's Messiahship begins from belief in his resurrection" (*History of the Synoptic Tradition* [1968[2]], 347). By contrast, M. Dibelius, in his work on form criticism (*From Tradition to Gospel* [1934], 230), explains Mark's messianic secret in terms of the problems he faced with grouping his material: The evangelist wrote "a book of secret epiphanies" because only in this way could he make a plausible case that Jesus was indeed the Son of God but was nevertheless misjudged as a blasphemer who deserved to die on the cross. In an extension of this view, H. Conzelmann thinks that Mark could combine the disparate materials available to him only under the rubric of a secret that needs to be deciphered by Easter: "the theory of a secret is the hermeneutical presupposition of the 'gospel' genre" ("Gegenwart und Zukunft," 60). On the other hand, H. Räisänen has accused Wrede, Bultmann, Dibelius, and Conzelmann of being too quick to stylize Mark's intention. In his monograph on the messianic secret in Mark (*Das "Messiasgeheimnis" im Markusevangelium* [1976]), Räisänen has therefore recommended viewing the data in a tradition-historically more nuanced way: Because Mark already had available to him various statements about the disciples' lack of understanding, the so-called theory of parables, and Jesus's orders for people to keep quiet about his healing miracles, one can speak of a *messianic* secret in the strict sense of the word only in the case of Jesus's orders in 1:34 and 3:11–12 for the demons to keep quiet about his identity as the Son of God, and his orders in 8:30 and 9:9 for the disciples to keep quiet about his identity as the Christ and his transfiguration. However, because these passages

also go back in part to the preexisting tradition to which Mark had access, it is hardly possible to use this material to conclude something about the overall theological concept of the Evangelist himself. R. Pesch takes a similar view when he claims that “Mark did not construct a theory about a secret but only developed motifs already available in his traditions” (*Das Markusevangelium*, vol. 2 [1977], 37). Against this background, M. Hengel has gone back to the starting point of the entire debate and has traced the messianic secret to the mysterious messianic authority of Jesus (*Studies in the Gospel of Mark*, 41–45).

3.4.2 In fact, the decisive root of the Markan motif of a secret appears to lie with *Jesus himself*. His ministry was in fact surrounded by a veil of secrecy: How Jesus should be viewed and who he should be thought to be were disputed among Jesus’s friends and foes alike from Galilee to Jerusalem. Even his parables were by no means formulated in a self-evident way. Instead, the decisive point in Jesus’s teaching in parables was for the listeners to let themselves be drawn in and then play the role that the parables assigned them. At the end of his ministry Jesus indeed spoke openly (rather than in parables) to the disciples and the Jewish high court of his messianic mission, but then precisely for this reason he was accused of blasphemy and nailed to the cross. The awful enigma of this end made the question of who Jesus really was appear unanswerable before Easter. Only the Easter appearances enabled the disciples to understand the divine being and supernatural status of Jesus. Yet despite these fixed elements of the tradition that were given to Mark, an independent *literary purpose* may be discerned behind his presentation. The Evangelist especially developed the motif of a secret that was handed down to him, and he also brought it to bear where it makes little sense in the context, as in the case of the raising of Jairus’s daughter and the healing of the deaf-mute (cf. 5:43; 7:36 [see above]). Mark also added the motif of a secret, or rather of the disciples’ lack of understanding of Jesus’s identity, to the story of Jesus’s walking on the water in 6:52, and he even incorporated it into the summaries that he himself formulated (cf. 1:45; 3:12; 4:33–34). According to 9:9–10, Jesus’s divine status and role as the mediator of revelation should be spoken of only after his passion and resurrection. The Evangelist apparently wanted to ensure that Jesus’s resurrection and messianic acts of deliverance would remain closely connected with his readiness to suffer and his God-forsaken death as the Son of God on the cross. Only this connection constitutes the gospel that the reading community should commemorate. *Mark’s way of speaking about the messianic secret is structured around the theology of the cross and the act of remembrance*.

Analogies to the Markan messianic secret may be found above all in Paul and the Gospel of John. According to *Paul*, the only people who gain a share in the gospel are those who by virtue of the gift of the Holy Spirit penetrate the apostolic word (which is open to misunderstanding) to get at its real revelatory content, stand in the service of righteousness, and take no offense at the fact that Christ's witnesses on earth must endure severe sufferings (cf. 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 Cor. 1:18–25; Rom. 8:35–39). According to *John*, it is only the Holy Spirit granted to the persecuted church after Jesus's death, the so-called παράκλητος, who leads people into the whole truth of who Jesus was and is. He reminds people of Jesus, makes understandable the proverbs or figures of speech (παροιμίαι) in which he sometimes expressed himself before Easter, and helps people to apply the Holy Scriptures to Jesus's person and work (cf. John 2:17, 22; 10:6; 14:25–26; 16:12ff., 25ff.).

4 Discipleship and the Church according to Mark. The importance of the story of Christ that Mark created can hardly be overestimated. Mark requires his reading community to think through their existence as witnesses and the story of the Son of God until they become one. But here it must be remembered that the Evangelist wrote for people who already knew the basics of Christian teaching and the Holy Scriptures from their baptismal instruction. Under these circumstances we need not elevate a catechetical element out of the midst of the Gospel of Mark, but can rather concentrate on what the Evangelist writes about the life and way of the community of disciples.

4.1 Mark emphatically points out that *the time and situation of the reading community are to be differentiated from the time of the ministry of Jesus*. Whereas the disciples could experience a messianic high point in the presence of Jesus, the days have now come when they must fast (2:20) and expect persecutions (διωγμοί) (cf. 4:17; 10:30). Now when the missionaries speak openly of Jesus, they must be prepared to be dragged before Jewish and Gentile courts for the sake of their message and even to be put to death (cf. 13:9–13). The time and place in which Mark's readership finds itself can easily be recognized from chapter 13: The messianic woes have begun, Jerusalem is about to fall (cf. also 12:9), and false prophets and false teachers are at work. But the proclamation of the gospel to all nations is still being carried on (cf. 13:10), and the hour of the parousia of the Son of Man (expected in the near future in 9:1) has not yet arrived (cf. 13:32). Steadfastness and alertness are the order of the day for the reading community (13:13, 33–37). Nevertheless, in the midst of ongoing suffering or tribulation (θλῖψις), they may hold on to the fact that heaven and earth will pass away, but Jesus's words will never pass away (13:31).

4.2 According to Mark, the readers of his Gospel can and should see themselves reflected in the figures of Jesus's disciples. This explains the surprisingly unflattering picture that the Evangelist has painted of the lack of understanding and failure of the disciples (see above). At the same time, this picture required the reading community to have a high level of maturity in the faith. Mark leads his readers to see in Peter not only the founder and shepherd of the church but also an exemplarily weak person, who was unable really to understand Jesus and too weak to remain faithful to his Lord in time of need. In Judas the readers are even presented with an example of a disciple of Jesus who jeopardized his election by his betrayal (cf. 3:19; 14:10, 43). In both cases the readers are to test themselves by the example of the apostles. For the sake of his readers Mark also presents Jesus teaching his disciples how things will be from now on with marriage and divorce, children, riches, and sitting at Jesus's right or left hand (cf. 10:2–12, 13–16, 17–27, 35–45). The disciples provided Mark himself with the continuity between the time of Jesus and the time of the church. He therefore wrote his Gospel to preserve this continuity beyond the martyrdom of Peter.

4.3 The reading community is given the task of being the *true family of Jesus* in the post-Easter world, made up of people who do God's will as Jesus taught (cf. 3:33–35). This points forward to the Pastoral Letters. The Christians dwell together in houses and live a fraternal (rural) life (cf. 10:30), but stand at a distance from the unconverted world. The members of the reading community pay the usual poll tax to Caesar (cf. 12:13–17), but they do not follow the leadership patterns of the pagan rulers. Instead, those who are first in the church should be the servants of all in keeping with Jesus's example (cf. 10:41–45), and the church as a whole should follow the double commandment of love for God and neighbor (cf. 12:28–34).

4.4 In Mark 13:13 Jesus tells his disciples, and through them the reading community: "You will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved." Enduring means persevering in one's confession of Jesus as the Christ and Son of God. This endurance proves the faith (πίστις) about which Mark speaks so vividly. According to Mark's presentation, πίστις is first and foremost faith in the gospel proclaimed by Jesus. As such it implies a repentance or turnaround from a godless life to the one living God who appears on the scene in Jesus (cf.

1:15). But faith is also a living trust in Jesus in times of need (cf. 4:40), including the times of illness when people look to Jesus for healing and help (cf. 2:5; 5:34, 36; 10:52). But the boldest statement about faith is found in 9:23: “All things are possible for the one who believes” (NET). This saying does not envision *Jesus* as the one who believes (cf. *ὁ πιστεύων*), as proposed by J. Gnilka, who thinks that Jesus is here presented “as the believing one and therefore as an example that admittedly can never be attained” (*Theologie des Neuen Testaments* [1994], 170), because Mark never presents Jesus’s special relationship with God in terms of *πιστεύειν* or *πίστις*. The saying rather serves as a spur for others to trust in the God for whom all things are possible (cf. 14:36) and who therefore grants his help to all who earnestly seek it (cf. 9:29; 11:22–24). For the post-Easter readers of the Gospel there is a flowing together of faith in God and the faith in Jesus Christ (*πίστις εἰς Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν*) of which Mark only indirectly speaks (the well-known saying in 16:16, “The one who believes and is baptized will be saved,” is not an original part of Mark’s Gospel). According to Mark, members of the reading community can comfort themselves with the assurance of forgiveness on the way that leads them through the messianic woes to their coming Lord. For Jesus has gone to his death as the ransom for the “many,” including them (cf. 10:45), and they can continually celebrate the Lord’s Supper with the master of the table, who went to his death for them and has prepared a place for them at the heavenly banquet (cf. 14:22–25). In the crucified and exalted Son of God, forgiveness of sins and salvation are promised to the readers in the final judgment. According to 3:28–30, the readers can lose this forgiveness only when and to the extent that they make a total break with the Holy Spirit (cf. the “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit”) in whose power Jesus ministered on earth (cf. 1:10, 27) and who is also at work after Easter in Jesus’s witnesses (cf. 13:11) and in the church (cf. Rev. 2:7; 3:6; 22:17).

5 Summary. The picture Mark draws of Jesus in his Gospel is indebted to the insight that Jesus really was, is, and remains the messianic Son of God whom God sent into the world—an insight possible only after Easter. Nevertheless, even in this post-Easter form the Evangelist’s presentation has a firm anchor in the Christ Jesus who chose Peter and the Twelve to be his earthly companions. It is therefore historically much more reliable than often assumed.

5.1 The fact that Mark especially recorded the teaching tradition of Peter explains not only why Matthew and Luke have largely taken over Mark's tradition but also why Mark's Gospel was preserved intact next to these two longer Gospels. The Gospel of Mark carries considerable weight for biblical theology.

5.2 By creating the larger genre of the "gospel," the Evangelist put the emerging church in a fortunate position. The church was able to spread and hand down the Jesus tradition, which had become "homeless" after the martyrdom of the great apostles, in a form that kept subsequent grave distortions of Jesus's teaching to a minimum.

5.3 Mark created a model for integrating the Jesus tradition with the kerygma of Jesus's death and resurrection that according to 1 Corinthians 15:1–11 constitutes the core of all apostolic preaching. He thereby created a sure foundation for church instruction and showed missionaries how to distinguish the gospel they were to proclaim to all nations (cf. 13:10) from competing messages of salvation.

5.4 Mark's picture of Christ, his emphasis on the theology of the cross, his picture of the church, and the imminent expectation of the parousia that characterizes his work can all be thought through and combined equally well with the letters of Paul, the message of 1 Peter, and the tradition of the Jerusalem "pillars" preserved by the Evangelist Matthew (see below). The message of the Gospel of Mark does not polarize but rather brings together essential streams of early Christian thought.

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CHAPTER 33

The Gospel of Matthew

The Gospel of Matthew is not only the most important Jewish Christian book of the New Testament next to the Letter to the Hebrews, but also the best-known and most influential Synoptic Gospel. It owes its importance to the fact that it preserves Jesus tradition of the Jerusalem pillar apostles (Peter, James, and John) and tells the story of God's saving act in and through Jesus Christ more completely and memorably than does the Evangelist Mark. Even today, the general picture of Jesus in the church is much more strongly influenced by the didactically clever presentation that Matthew developed for the early Christian mission than it is by the presentations of Mark or Luke. For the sake of convenience, we shall refer to the author of this Gospel as "Matthew" or "the Evangelist," distinguishing him from the apostle Matthew only where necessary (see below, §3.1, esp. 3.1.2).

1 Structure and Content of the Gospel of Matthew. In his monumental three-volume commentary on Matthew (Hermeneia, 2001–2007) and in his book *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew* (1995), U. Luz has proposed the following rough outline of Matthew, which A. Weiser has also adopted (*Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, vol. 2 [1993], 80–83):

I. Prelude: 1:1–4:22
II. Jesus's Activity in Israel in Word and Deed: 4:23–11:30
III. Jesus Withdraws from Israel: 12:1–16:20
IV. Jesus's Activity in the Church: 16:21–20:34
V. Jesus in Jerusalem: 21:1–25:46
VI. Passion and Easter: 26:1–28:20

Matthew offers a host of signals that reveal his outline or mark smaller structures in his text (cf. U. Luz, *Matthew 1–7*, Hermeneia [2007], 1–13). Thus, for example, the two identically worded *temporal markers* in 4:17 and 16:21, "From that time on, Jesus began to preach" or "to show" (ἀπὸ τότε ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς κηρύσσειν or δεικνύειν), are just as striking as the parallel formulation of the *summaries* in 4:23 and 9:35. The Evangelist also offers *collections*, for example, of miracle stories in chapters 8–9 or parables in 21:28–22:14. He uses *key words*, such as δικαιοσύνη, "righteousness" (cf.

5:6, 10, 20; 6:1, 33). He employs *kəlālîm* (כְּלָלִים) or *central verses* to identify themes (cf., e.g., 5:17, 20; 7:12; 18:10, 14; etc.). He emphasizes certain issues by *duplication*, as in the repetition of the quotation of Hosea 6:6 in 9:13 and 12:7. He creates *inclusions*, such as the resumption of the "God with us" Emmanuel saying of 1:23 (Ἐμμανουήλ . . . μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός), and ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι in 28:20. And he works with "*predictions* and '*signals*' that anticipate things to come . . . and sensitize the readers for what is to be told later" (U. Luz, *Matthew 1–7*, 8), as when 1:23 and 2:15 prepare the way for Jesus to be called God's Son at his baptism in 3:17. In fact, because Matthew includes so many redactional features, some recent commentaries confine themselves to demarcating his individual units precisely while only hinting at the Gospel's macrostructure (cf., e.g., D. A. Hagner, *Matthew*, WBC, 2 vols. [1993–1995]).

The many structural and outline features in this Gospel make it clear that the Evangelist Matthew, much like Mark, has designed his Gospel for public reading in church meetings and has therefore created an *ecclesiastical instructional work*.

2 The Relationship of Matthew to Mark. If one follows the two-source theory, then Matthew is a larger Gospel compiled especially on the basis of the Markan tradition. It is therefore by comparison with Mark that one can best trace the Evangelist's redactional aims.

2.1 *Matthew has taken over his* Vorlage *in Mark almost completely.* The only Markan passages left out are the report of Jesus being out of his mind and the reaction of his family (Mark 3:20–21), the parable of the growing seed (Mark 4:26–29), the story of the disciples reporting to Jesus after their mission (Mark 6:30–31), the story of the healing of the blind man of Bethsaida (Mark 8:22–26), and a few individual verses (e.g., Mark 2:27; 9:29, 48; 14:51; 15:44). Matthew's connection to Mark is especially clear from Matthew 12:1 onward. This shows that the Evangelist *took over Mark's outline of Jesus's way of suffering, which led him from Galilee to Jerusalem. He also affirmed Mark's anamnetic intention of binding the gospel message that must be proclaimed to all nations (cf. Mark 13:10 with Matt. 24:14) to a fixed written narrative of Jesus's mission, person, and teaching. This makes the gospel memorable and the past events of Jesus present.*

2.2 Nevertheless, the marked *differences* between the two Gospels show that Matthew did not just intend to create an expanded edition of Mark, but intended rather to create a book that would teach the story of Jesus to his reading community more extensively and exactly than Mark did.

2.2.1 Matthew's *introduction* is already considerably different from Mark's. Instead of opening with "The beginning of the *gospel* of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1:1), Matthew writes: "The *book of the genealogy* (Βίβλος γενέσεως) of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt. 1:1).

Matthew's opening phrase, Βίβλος γενέσεως, sometimes translated as "The book of the genealogy" (RSV), corresponds to the *tôlədôt* (תּוֹלְדוֹת, "generations/descendants") formula that provides the outline of salvation history in Genesis 2:4, 5:1, 6:9, 10:1, etc. The formula in Genesis 5:1 mentions a book, list, or story of a genealogy (סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדֹת, βίβλος γενέσεως), and this "list of the descendants of Adam" (NRSV) ultimately explains the origin of Noah (Gen. 5:29). In much the same way, Matthew 1:1 introduces the origin of Jesus beginning with Abraham. We may therefore translate: "The *story of the origin* of Jesus Christ."

Matthew 1:1 appears to be patterned on Genesis 5:1 and casts its ray over the entire Gospel. Matthew evidently wants to present the *life story of Jesus the Christ* as the story that brings salvation history to its conclusion. Jesus's genealogy stretches over three spans of fourteen generations each from Abraham to Joseph: the first series of generations runs from Abraham to David; the second from Solomon to "Jeconiah," that is, Jehoiachin (cf. 2 Kings 24:8–16); and the third from Jehoiachin (cf. 2 Kings 25:27–29) to Joseph. Hence J. Gnilka writes, "Matthew views the promise to Abraham that all the families of the earth would be blessed in him (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18) as fulfilled in Jesus" (*Theologie des Neuen Testaments* [1994], 176).

2.2.2 Also new over against Mark is Matthew's *prehistory*, consisting of the *genealogy* and the *birth and infancy narratives* (Matt. 1:2–2:23). These sections incorporate old Jewish Christian tradition and show how Matthew connects Jesus's identity as a child of God with his identity as a son of Abraham and David. Through his earthly father Joseph, Jesus stands in a family tradition that goes back to David (and to Abraham) (see above). He bears the name *Yēšûaʿ* (יֵשׁוּעַ), a short form of *Yəhôšûaʿ* or Joshua (יְהוֹשׁוּעַ), which means "Yahweh is salvation," because he is the one who will save God's people (to which he too belongs) from the consequences of their sins (cf. 1:21). According to 1:22–23, he is the Spirit-conceived son of a virgin promised in Isaiah 7:14, the messianic Immanuel in whom God himself is present with his people. As the Scriptures announced beforehand (cf. Mic. 5:1, 3 [ET 5:2, 4]), he was born in Bethlehem, where he is acknowledged by the magi from the East, the highest representatives of

pagan science and religion, as the king of salvation (2:1–12). As the baby Moses was providentially preserved according to the Old Testament and early Jewish tradition, so also God protects Jesus from the devices of Herod and finally has him find his home safely in Nazareth in Galilee (cf. 2:13–23). There he grows up (although Matthew is silent about the details) as the Ναζωραῖος or "Nazorean," that is, as the Son of God over whom the "crown" (*nēzer*, נֵזֶר) of the Messiah shines, as in Psalm 132:18, "on him, his crown will gleam" (from personal communication with H. Gese).

2.2.3 Matthew also makes clear changes over against Mark at the *conclusion* of his Gospel. He not only includes his special tradition about the guard at the tomb (27:62–66) and other Easter stories that depart from Mark, but concludes with the programmatic report of the risen one's appearance to the eleven disciples on the mountain in Galilee and his sending them out on a mission to the nations (28:16–20; see below, §7.2). The *inclusio* formed by 28:20 ("I am with you always") and 1:23 ("God with us") shows how important the birth narratives and expanded conclusion are to the Evangelist: The Jesus Christ of whom he writes is the Immanuel in whom God is present not only with Israel, but also with all the nations of the world.

2.2.4 Matthew has also supplemented his *Vorlage* in Mark in other ways. The version of the *sayings source Q* that was available to Matthew (Q^{Mt}) is the source of substantial parts of the Sermon on the Mount (5:1–7:29), but also, for example, of the report about John the Baptist's question to Jesus (11:2–6) and of important parts of Matthew's characteristic message of judgment (cf. especially 24:26–28, 37–41, 43–51; 25:14–30). Matthew's *special material* includes, in addition to the already mentioned prehistory and Easter stories, such famous texts as Jesus's invitation to the weary and heavy laden (11:28–30); the parable of the weeds among the wheat together with its interpretation (13:24–30, 36–43); the parable of the net (13:47–50); Jesus's reply to Peter after Peter's confession, including the saying about Peter as the rock (16:[16] 17–19); the parable of the unmerciful servant (18:23–35); and the story about the last judgment as illustrated by the sheep and the goats (25:31–46). The inclusion of all these traditions shows that the Evangelist seeks to present Jesus's teaching and work as *completely* as possible.

2.2.5 Matthew’s expansion of Mark’s presentation is also combined with a vigorous and sometimes rigorous *redaction* of the material; possibly the beginnings of this were already present in the tradition Matthew was following.

2.2.5.1 The Evangelist summarizes Jesus’s teaching in *five great narrative complexes*: the Sermon on the Mount (5:1–7:29); the Mission Discourse (10:1–42); the Parables (13:1–52); the Ecclesial Discourse (18:1–35); and the Eschatological Discourse (24:1–25:46). Each discourse is delimited by an introduction and a stereotypical conclusion: “When Jesus had finished these words” or “parables” or “instructions” (cf. 5:1–2 and 7:28; 10:1–5a and 11:1; 13:1–3a and 13:53; 18:1 and 19:1; 24:1–4a and 26:1). The fact that there are *five* discourses was probably important to the Evangelist, “as it recalled the five books of the Pentateuch” (U. Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew*, 121). According to these discourses, Jesus is the one messianic teacher of the disciples and the entire people (cf. 23:10 with 7:29). Because the discourses were first created redactionally by Matthew, they also attest his didactic interests.

2.2.5.2 Matthew affirms the picture Mark has handed down of the miracle-working Jesus. Therefore, in 8:1–9:34 he offers *a collection of the messianic saving acts of Jesus* in which the broad novelistic narrations characteristic of the Markan miracle stories are sometimes tightly compressed in order to highlight the healing power of Jesus’s word (e.g., Mark 5:21–43 is reduced to a few verses in Matt. 9:18–26). By framing the Sermon on the Mount and this collection of miracle stories together between almost identically worded summaries in 4:23 and 9:35, Matthew teaches his readers to see Jesus as “a preacher, the Messiah of the word (Sermon on the Mount, chaps. 5–7) and a healer, the Messiah of deeds (miracle stories, chaps. 8–9)” (J. Schniewind, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* [1968^{12}], 8). However, Matthew is no more dependent on a divine man or θεῖος ἀνήρ Christology than is Mark.

2.2.5.3 Also characteristic of Matthew’s theological presentation are the twelve *fulfillment quotations* (all using the verb πληρόω, except for 3:3) that run through his Gospel: 1:22–23; 2:15, 17–18, 23b; (3:3); 4:14–16; 8:17; 12:17–21; 13:14–15, 35; 21:4–5; 27:9–10. They demonstrate that and how God’s saving will announced in the Scripture is realized in Jesus’s mission. The quotations always stand *after* the stories they illustrate and

take their name from the almost invariable formula: “This took place so that what was spoken though the prophet(s) *might be fulfilled* (ἵνα πληρωθῇ)” (or similar). The term πληρόω in Matthew is “a ‘christological’ word” and emphasizes that God’s saving resolve announced in Scripture has become a reality in a special way in and through Jesus (U. Luz, *Matthew 1–7*, 130).

Behind Matthew’s fulfillment quotations stands the scribal work of a person well trained in the Scriptures. In adjusting his quotations to his context, the Evangelist goes back behind the Septuagint to the Hebrew text where necessary (cf., e.g., the non-Septuagintal quotation of Isa. 42:1–4 in Matt. 12:18–21). Matthew usually indicates which Scripture passage or passages are fulfilled in Jesus’s life and ministry: In the birth story it is Isaiah 7:14 (cf. Matt. 1:22–23); in the story of the adoration of the magi, Micah 5:1 (ET 5:2) and 2 Samuel 5:2 (cf. Matt. 2:5–6); in the flight to Egypt, Jeremiah 31:15 (cf. Matt. 2:17–18); at the beginning of Jesus’s preaching in Galilee, Isaiah 8:23–9:1 (cf. Matt. 4:14–16); in Jesus’s healings and miracles, Isaiah 53:4 (cf. Matt. 8:17) and Isaiah 42:1–4 (cf. Matt. 12:18–21); at Jesus’s entry into Jerusalem, Isaiah 62:11 and Zechariah 9:9 (cf. Matt. 21:4–5); and in the case of the thirty pieces of silver as spoken by “Jeremiah” according to Matthew 27:9–10, it is Jeremiah 32:7–9 or rather Zechariah 11:13 (on the scribal technique behind Matt. 27:9–10, see R. Hanhart, *ZTK* 81 [1984]: 414–15). K. Stendahl has traced the fulfillment quotations back to the Jewish Christian *school* of Matthew, in which Old Testament texts from the Psalms and Prophets were interpreted according to the *pesher* method exemplified in the commentaries on the Psalms and the Prophets by the Essenes of Qumran (cf. K. Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew*). But this assessment is just as uncertain as the assumption that Matthew took his quotations from an already existing collection of Old Testament testimonies or Scripture proofs of the type exemplified by the Qumran collection *4QTestimonia* (4Q175). In any case, the fulfillment quotations present a typical example of early Christian exegesis of the Old Testament according to the principle of the *sensus plenior* or “fuller sense” that the Holy Scriptures gain by the Spirit who inspires them. The Spirit points to Christ (cf. D. A. Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:lvi).

2.2.5.4 According to Matthew 4:23 and 9:35, Jesus did not simply proclaim τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ, “the gospel of God,” as in Mark 1:14–15, but τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας, “the gospel of the *kingdom*” of God. And whereas Mark 13:10 says merely, “And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations” (and then the parousia of the Son of Man will come, cf. 13:26–27), Matthew writes: “And *this gospel of the kingdom* (τοῦτο τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ) will be proclaimed throughout the world, as a testimony to all the nations; and then the end will come” (24:14). The expression “*this* gospel” is also found in Matthew’s version of the anointing at Bethany (cf. 26:13). Matthew thus ties the missionary gospel to be preached after Easter much more tightly than Mark does to his *own* gospel presentation. The conclusion of the Gospel confirms this. According to 28:19–20, the apostles are to make people of all nations of the world into disciples of Jesus by baptizing them and teaching them to obey *everything*

that Jesus commanded his disciples. If one asks where the missionaries are to find all this recorded, the answer lies close at hand: They find it first and foremost with Matthew himself.

2.3 On the whole, it appears that Matthew wants to report about Jesus more extensively, precisely, and catechetically memorably than Mark without abandoning Mark's presentation and tradition. The Evangelist's carefully edited work makes a great claim (paralleled in the Gospels only in John 20:30–31; 21:24–25): According to 28:20, it is to be *a textbook of doctrine and life for the world mission* that the exalted Son of Man assigned to his disciples.

3 The Author, His Traditions, and His Addressees. The attempt to place the Gospel of Matthew in the process of handing down the traditions to which we owe the synoptic tradition leads to interesting insights.

3.1 The ancient church identified the *author* "Matthew" named in the Gospel's (probably very old) superscription and subscription with Jesus's disciple Matthew mentioned in Matthew 9:9–13 and 10:3 (note also the change from "Levi" in Mark 2:14 and Luke 5:27 to "Matthew" in Matt. 9:9).

3.1.1 The oldest testimony about Matthew is found in Papias as preserved in Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.39.16, right after the comment about Mark as the interpreter of Peter (see above, chap. 32, §1): "And so Matthew composed (συνετάξατο) the sayings (τὰ λόγια) in the Hebrew tongue (Ἑβραΐδι διαλέκτῳ), and each one interpreted (Or: *translated* [ἡρμήνευσεν]) them to the best of his ability" (Papias fragment 3, trans. B. D. Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, LCL 2:103).

In the overwhelming majority of its occurrences, διάλεκτος means the "*language* of a nation or a region" (BDAG 232 s.v.). Therefore, the translation above by "Hebrew tongue" or "language" is to be preferred over the translation of J. Kürzinger: "So then Matthew put the words (about the Lord) into literary form in a *Hebrew style*. Each one presented them as he was able" (J. Kürzinger, *Papias von Hierapolis und die Evangelien des Neuen Testaments* [1983], 103, italics added). Kürzinger wants to relate Papias's comment to the present (Greek) form of Matthew's Gospel and therefore does not speak of the Hebrew "language" as such (for further criticism, cf. W. R. Schoedel, "Papias," *ABD* 5:141–42, §E).

Papias's report about an original composition in Hebrew seems odd, since the Gospel is demonstrably composed on the basis of existing Greek *Vorlagen* (i.e., Mark and probably a written Q) and is written in good

Greek, with Matthew sometimes even improving on the language of these traditions (cf. U. Luz, *Matthew 1–7*, 22–25). Under these circumstances, the book of Matthew cannot be a direct Greek translation of a Hebrew or Aramaic original by an eyewitness of Jesus. For this reason, U. Luz shares with many other exegetes what he calls the “normal hypothesis” that the Gospel did not originate from the apostle Matthew and that “*κατὰ Μαθθαῖον* is a secondary attribution based on Matt 9:9 and 10:3” (ibid., 59).

3.1.2 However, Luz is quick to point out the difficulties of this prevailing hypothesis regarding non-Matthean authorship, beginning with the ascription’s early date, which Luz places before AD 100; this “leaves little time for ascribing to the apostle an originally anonymous book or a book that came from an unknown Jewish Christian named Matthew,” which is a relatively uncommon name (ibid., 59 with n. 301). The historical credibility of Papias’s related report about the Elder identifying Mark as the interpreter or translator of Peter (see above, 572–74, §1.1) can also be used to argue that the Elder was right about the apostle Matthew as an author (although not a position Luz holds; see the more detailed comments in his first edition, *Matthew 1–7*, trans. W. C. Linss [1989], 94–95, esp. 94 item 2). If one attributes the Semitic original form of Q not to early Christian prophets and wandering radicals (cf. U. Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew*, 17–21) but to *Matthew* the disciple of Jesus, then an interesting possibility for understanding our Gospel emerges. D. A. Hagner (appealing to B. Gerhardsson) has suggested one version of it (cf. *Matthew*, 1:xlvi–l). According to Hagner, not only the original form of Q but also a part of Matthew’s special material goes back to a collection of sayings of Jesus that the apostle Matthew compiled. Because the existence of Semitic versions of the Gospel of Matthew is certainly attested in the early church (cf. Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 3.1.1, and P. Vielhauer and G. Strecker, “Jewish-Christian Gospels,” in *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. W. Schneemelcher, vol. 1 [1991²], 134–78, esp. 135–53), Hagner’s suggestion is well worth considering. Our Gospel of Matthew appears to be a Greek expansion of this sayings collection, and the original Semitic traditions incorporated by the Gospel’s author could very well stem from the apostle Matthew’s collection. If this is correct, then the relationship between the Evangelist and the apostle Matthew would be one that is characteristic of biblical traditional thinking: the younger collector and redactor understands himself as an agent of the older apostolic tradition bearer and therefore sees him as

the authoritative author of the work. This phenomenon that we casually but incorrectly call biblical “pseudepigraphy” therefore “is not a case of perpetrating a literary deception under the name of a false author. On the contrary a connection that is important in terms of tradition history is given appropriate expression” (H. Gese, “The Biblical View of Scripture,” in *Essays on Biblical Theology* [1981], 9–33, esp. 23).

3.1.3 Nevertheless, the superscription “Gospel according to Matthew” is explicable only if the Evangelist’s respect for the tradition going back to Matthew outweighed his interest in the tradition of Peter taken over by Mark. This too is perfectly conceivable: According to Josephus (*Ant*. 20.200), James the Lord’s brother, who had replaced Peter as leader of the early Jerusalem church since about AD 42 (when James the son of Zebedee was killed and Peter imprisoned), was himself stoned in Jerusalem twenty years later in 62 at the instigation of the high priest Ananus II. The rest of the members of the Jerusalem church, which was in particular danger after James’s martyrdom, emigrated to Pella in East Jordan even before the outbreak of the first Jewish revolt (cf. Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.5.3). They naturally took their traditions with them, but these traditions differed from the traditions of the mission church in Antioch in one important respect: They were formulated not only in Greek, but also partly in Aramaic, because they needed to be understood not only by the Greek-speaking “Hellenists” (Ἑλληνισταί) but also by the native “Hebrews” (Ἑβραῖοι) in Jerusalem and all Palestine (cf. Acts 6:1). This accenting of the tradition corresponded to the division of labor agreed upon at the apostolic council between the Jerusalem “pillars” and the Antioch delegates: James the Lord’s brother, Peter, and John the son of Zebedee were to specialize above all in mission to the Jews, and Barnabas and Paul in mission to the Gentiles (cf. Gal. 2:9). After being targeted in the same persecution in Jerusalem under Herod Agrippa around 42 in which John’s brother James the son of Zebedee was killed (cf. Acts 12:1–19), Peter could take part in the agreed Jewish mission only indirectly, and he himself suffered martyrdom in Rome even before the fall of Jerusalem. The Jewish mission threatened to come to a complete standstill after the other pillar apostles James the Lord’s brother and perhaps also John had likewise suffered martyrdom, the early church had gone into exile, and Jerusalem had been destroyed—for, contrary to the dominant church tradition that John reached old age and died in peace, there is another tradition that suggests that John

too suffered martyrdom as his brother James had done, though at a later time: see the "prophecy" of Mark 10:35–40 par. Matt. 20:20–23 about both sons of Zebedee undergoing the "baptism" and drinking the "cup" of violent death, which had perhaps already been fulfilled for both brothers by the time Mark was written, together with the Papias fragment declaring that "John the theologian [i.e., apostle] and James his brother were killed by Jews" (preserved in the fifth-century church history of Philip of Side, numbered fragment 12.2 in B. D. Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, LCL 2:112–13 or fragment 5 in M. W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers* [updated ed., 1999], 573; cf. further H. L. Jackson, *The Problem of the Fourth Gospel* [1918], 142–51). It is in such a situation that our Evangelist appears to have adopted the tradition of the pillars and incorporated it into his Gospel.

3.1.4 In view of the findings sketched above, it is not sufficient to attribute the tradition about Matthew the tax collector as author of the Gospel simply to the ancient church's desire to give the Gospel of Matthew an "apostolic" seal of approval. From the standpoint of tradition history, the matter is deeper and more complicated: *The Gospel of Matthew appears to have preserved the Jesus tradition of the Jerusalem pillar apostles with the aim of ensuring the continuation of the world mission commanded by the exalted Christ for the coming generation*.

3.1.5 The Evangelist is frequently referred to in the secondary literature as a Christian "scribe" who "brings out of his treasure (of knowledge) what is new and what is old" (cf. 13:52). The correctness of this observation is illustrated by the following examples: (1) Matthew repeatedly takes up *teaching traditions* that are freshly reworked over against Mark and the material represented in the Lukan version of Q (Q^{Lk}). These may include the series of eight beatitudes that introduce the Sermon on the Mount, and they certainly include both the liturgically augmented Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9–13 (as compared with the shorter version in Luke 11:2–4) and the Matthean report of the institution of the Lord's Supper in 26:26–29, similarly edited for liturgical use. (2) Matthew also contains a whole series of redactional innovations. These include the antithetical composition ("You have heard that it was said, . . . but I say to you") of the material in Matthew 5:38–42, 43–48 (cf. Luke 6:29–30; 6:27, 32–36); the transformation of Mark 9:1 (which serves in its context as a warning) into a word of consolation about the coming of the Son of Man in 16:28; the

embellishment of the woes in 23:1–36 that were only partly given in Q^{Lk}; the insertion into the parable of the great banquet (cf. Luke 14:15–24) of a sentence in 22:7 about an angry king who sends troops to destroy a city, which points forward to the destruction of Jerusalem; and the expansion of Mark 13:26 about "the Son of Man coming in clouds" (cf. Dan. 7:13) by Matthew's mention of the "*sign* of the Son of Man" in 24:30. Whether these passages had any precedent in the tradition Matthew has taken up cannot be determined with certainty. Yet the growth of the tradition does not happen arbitrarily, but by way of the Spirit-inspired *further interpretation* of existing sayings of Jesus (cf. Matt. 10:20 with John 14:26).

3.2 The above considerations carry two consequences for the *dating* of the Gospel of Matthew. The decisive occasion for the writing of the Gospel seems to lie in the martyrdom of the pillar apostles and the subsequent exodus of the Jerusalem church to Pella before the destruction of Jerusalem. But the final redaction cannot have taken place before the publication of the Gospel of Mark. Because Matthew gives clear indications of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans (see below) and because the main opponents of Jesus in Matthew are the scribes and Pharisees, who became the leading party in ancient Judaism only after AD 70, one cannot very well date the Gospel before 70 (as D. A. Hagner wishes to do; cf. *Matthew*, 1:lxxiv–lxxv and 2:712), but must rather reckon with a date in the period *after* the destruction of Jerusalem.

In Matthew 22:7 the Evangelist has supplemented the parable of the great banquet (Matt. 22:1–14/Luke 14:15–24) with an announcement of the destruction of Jerusalem by enemy troops: The words "and burned their city" (*καὶ τὴν πόλιν αὐτῶν ἐνέπρησεν*) recall Jeremiah 52:13 LXX (cf. K. H. Rengstorf, "Die Stadt der Mörder [Mt 22,7]," in *Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche*, FS J. Jeremias, ed. W. Eltester [1964[2]], 106–29). This verse, inserted into the Q *Vorlage*, is most easily explained if it already has the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 in view.

3.3 The Gospel of Matthew is no more addressed only to one particular church than is the Gospel of Mark. Nevertheless, we should seek the Evangelist's *addressees* above all in Hellenistic Jewish Christianity as it was dispersed after AD 70 from Syria to Asia Minor and all the way to Rome. The Evangelist does not need to explain Jewish customs to his readers (cf. Matt. 15:1 with Mark 7:1–4) and sometimes even goes without translating Aramaic words (cf. 5:22; 27:6). He assumes that his readers know of the phylacteries or *tefillin* (leather Scripture boxes worn on the forehead) and the fringes on the garments of observant Jews (cf. 23:5 with

Exod. 13:9; Deut. 6:8; 11:18), and he even instructs them to keep certain halakic regulations (cf. 5:32; 19:9; 23:3, 23). The Evangelist brings bitter accusations against the scribes and Pharisees (cf. 23:1–33) and speaks in a distant way of "their" synagogues (cf. 4:23; 9:35; 10:17; 12:9; 13:54; 23:34). He and his addressees were probably converted Jews who had distanced themselves from all critics of the Torah but no longer belonged to the synagogue.

The Evangelist does not only turn against the Pharisees and scribes, but also turns against Christian antinomians. G. Barth appropriately compares the polemic in 7:15–23 and 24:11–12 with James 2:14–26 ("Matthew's Understanding of the Law," in G. Bornkamm, G. Barth, and H. J. Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* [1963], 58–164, esp. 160–62). Even if the redaction of Matthew was first completed a fairly long time after the composition of James, it cannot be denied that there were Christians throughout the entire second half of the first century who considered the Torah simply outmoded and obsolete (cf. Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:15; Heb. 7:18–19; 8:13). Against them our Jewish Christian Evangelist takes his stand, because he sees Jesus as the authoritative interpreter of the law and the prophets (cf. Matt. 5:17–19). If one situates the Gospel of Matthew in Gentile Christianity at the end of the first century, as proposed by W. Trilling (*Das wahre Israel* [1964[3]], 215) and G. Strecker (*Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit* [1971[3]], 15ff.) and as mentioned as a possibility by U. Schnelle (*The History and Theology of the New Testament Writings* [1998], 221–22), then one is faced with the astonishing fact that the Evangelist has preserved and passed on all his Jewish Christian traditions without any contemporary point of reference and has shared them with an audience that had long since outgrown them.

4 Matthew's Proclamation of Christ. The author of Matthew has taken the main outline of his story of Jesus's mission, work, and way from Mark. He too saw Jesus as the *Messiah* (cf. 1:1), who was and is the *Son of the living God* (cf. 2:15; 3:17; 4:3; 14:33; 16:16; etc.). According to the Matthean fulfillment quotations, Christ's mission and work are a *messianic event of fulfillment* for the Evangelist Matthew as well as for Mark.

4.1 Matthew's Understanding of the Messiah. The Evangelist's understanding of the Messiah bears clear Christian features. As the Messiah, Jesus is the "Son of the living God" (16:16), and as such, also the humbly serving Servant of God and the self-sacrificing Son of Man.

4.1.1 Matthew's *birth narrative* (1:18–25) has its closest parallels in Luke 1:26–38 and 2:1–7. It presupposes the case of a Jewish man who had a wife who was legally engaged to him but whom he had not yet brought into his household, who then becomes pregnant, apparently by reason of adultery. In such a case the man could proceed in one of two ways: "either he filed an application with the court requesting her punishment according to the law [i.e., by stoning according to Deut. 22:23–24] or he dismissed her

by a certificate of divorce" (Str-B 1:51). Joseph is prevented from taking this latter course, which he had contemplated, by the promise of a son spoken by an angel of the Lord in 1:20–21: The child, who comes from Mary by power of the Holy Spirit, is the Son of God and the promised Davidide of Isaiah 7:14, who will bear the name Jesus. As H. Gese has shown, the Jewish Christian concept of the virgin birth has nothing to do with the Egyptian notion of the ἱερὸς γάμος or "holy wedding" of the pharaoh or with Philo's idea that God consorts only with virgin souls. The conception and birth of the messianic Son of David were rather viewed together from the perspective of Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 7:14 and seen as the saving event that constitutes the gospel. Gese writes, "The thrust of this tradition is not that Jesus was lifted out of the human realm, but on the contrary that the Holy sank down into this world. In the *natus ex virgine* ['born of the virgin (sc. Mary)'] God's dwelling in this world becomes an event with a finality that can no longer be superseded" (Gese, "Natus ex virgine," 146). If one takes the birth story in 1:18–25 together with Jesus's references to himself as the Son with exclusive knowledge of the Father in 11:27 and as the "son" in the parable of the wicked tenants in 21:37, then it becomes clear that Matthew holds a *high Christology*, which includes the notions of Jesus's preexistence and virgin birth.

4.1.2 Matthew's *temptation story* (4:1–11) strengthens the Christian picture of the Messiah: Jesus renounces all claims to political power and dedicates himself to obedience to the only true God (cf. the quotation of Deut. 6:13 in 4:10). Through this act of obedience he creates a new beginning (cf. B. Gerhardsson, *The Shema in the New Testament* [1996], 20).

4.1.3 For Matthew Jesus was above all the *messianic teacher* or *Messiah of the word*. The figure of the teaching Messiah was well known in ancient Judaism (cf. Isa. 11:2–4; *1 En.* 49:1–3; 51:3; *Pss. Sol.* 17:43; 4Q521 frag. 2.1–2; *Tg. Isa.* 42:1; 53:5, 11–12; further references in A. S. van der Woude, "χρίω, χριστός, κτλ.," *TDNT* 9:526). Matthew's presentation ties in with this tradition but also goes beyond it: According to 5:17–20, Jesus by his teaching brings the law and the prophets—that is, the entire Holy Scripture—to its fulfillment, and according to 23:8–10 he is the one and only "instructor" (καθηγητής) to whom the disciples should look, while also declining to use the title "rabbi" among themselves. S. Byrskog sees in the

threefold εἷς of 23:8–10 (“*one* teacher, *one* Father, *one* instructor”) an allusion to the Shema: “Jesus’ disciples are to abstain from claiming or relying on the authority of human teachers, because adherence to Jesus as teacher equals adherence to the one and only God” (*Jesus the Only Teacher*, 302).

4.1.4 In 8:1–9:34 and 11:2–6 Matthew also introduces Jesus as the *Messiah of deeds*. Ancient Judaism nurtured the hope for the healing and reestablishment of the people of God in the messianic time of salvation (cf. 4Q521; *Tg. Isa.* 53:8; and above, 580–81, §3.2.2), but never do the sources speak, as in Matthew (and Q), of the Messiah ministering here and now in divine power and authority, working healing miracles, raising the dead, and establishing the kingdom for the poor in a promising way through his message (see above, 79, §6.4).

4.1.5 Already in the Enoch tradition the coming Son of Man and judge of the world is also the Messiah and the chosen Servant. But not until Matthew 8:17 and 12:17–21 are the Son of Man’s messianic saving ministry, humility, and readiness for sacrifice (with reference to Isa. 42:1–4 and 53:4) tightly bound together. The same happens in the three passion predictions based on the Markan tradition in Matthew 16:21–23, 17:22–23, and 20:17–19. According to Matthew, Jesus himself “practices the Sermon on the Mount” (U. Luz, *Matthew 8–20* [2001], 195), enters Jerusalem as the messianic prince of peace (cf. 21:1–11), and is prepared to take upon himself the God-ordained atoning death for sinners (cf. 20:28).

4.1.6 The title of *Messiah* has a special ring to it for Matthew. The best example of this is the Matthean version of Peter’s confession at Caesarea Philippi (16:13–20). Whereas in Mark, Peter’s confession σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός (“you are the Christ”) is immediately followed by Jesus’s command not to divulge his identity and then interpreted by his prediction of the coming sufferings of the Son of Man (cf. Mark 8:29–33), Matthew first underscores its significance before continuing with the Markan narrative: He adds to Mark’s determinate articular predicate ὁ Χριστός (“the Messiah” [NRSV]) the messianic title ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος, “the Son of the living God,” and confirms Peter’s confession with a saying of Jesus: “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven” (16:17). The confession of the Messiah thereby acquires the greatest significance.

4.1.7 Jesus came on the scene as the “messianic teacher of wisdom” (M. Hengel) (cf. 92–94, §2). Matthew has taken over from the sayings source (cf. Luke 10:21–22) Jesus’s cry of jubilation, in which the Son praises the heavenly wisdom that the Father has revealed only to the Son and those the Son chooses to enlighten (11:25–27). But Matthew also expands this cry of jubilation in 11:28–30 with Jesus’s invitation to the weary and heavy laden, which has close connections to Sirach 51:23–27 and 6:24–31: “Come to me, all you that are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:28–30).

Because it is customary in Judaism to identify the “yoke” (ζυγός or עוֹל) with the (instructions of) the Torah (cf. Str.B 1:608–9), the easy “yoke” and the light “burden” in Matthew 11:30 are the instruction of Jesus, as summarized especially in the Sermon on the Mount. In contrast to the unbearably heavy Torah interpretation of the Pharisees (cf. 23:4), Jesus’s teaching is easy to learn and practice according to Matthew. If the disciples are diligent in this practice, they will be “blessed in what they do” (James 1:25).

4.1.8 For ancient Judaism the Son of Man is above all the *ruler and judge of the world* whom God has appointed for Israel (cf. Dan. 7:14, 27; *1 En.* 49:4; 61:8–9; 62:2). Matthew took over this view and developed it christologically beyond what was given in Mark 8:38, 13:26–27, and 14:62: To the end-time apocalypse of Mark 13 he added the parable of the faithful and the unfaithful servant (Matt. 24:45–51) and the eschatological parables of the wise and foolish virgins (25:1–13), the talents (25:14–30), and the final judgment (25:31–46). He has also added other references to the coming world judgment elsewhere in his presentation (cf., e.g., 13:40–43, 47–50; 16:27). He thereby urgently calls his readers to prepare themselves to meet the Christ who has been exalted to the position of judge of the world, and he makes it pointedly clear to them that the Son of Man will accept only those who have not simply called him “Lord” but who have also practiced the surpassing righteousness he requires (cf. 5:20; 7:21–23; 25:35–40).

4.2 Matthean Soteriology. Soteriologically our Jewish Christian author presents an *ambivalent* picture. On the one hand, there is plenty of emphasis on the divine provision of salvation. Hence Jesus becomes human to save God’s people from their sins and to be their Immanuel (1:22–23). In the temptation he performs a vicarious act of obedience, and at his baptism he

stands at the side of sinners (3:14–15). The Sermon on the Mount is composed around the Lord's Prayer and is therefore conceived as instruction for Christians who pray this prayer and stand in forgiveness (cf. figure 1 in U. Luz, *Matthew 1–7*, 173). In 8:1–9:34 and 11:2–6, Matthew presents his readers with the Messiah of the poor. According to Matthew's version of the parable of the lost sheep, God is not willing for even a single one of his sheep to be lost (18:12–14). In the church people should forgive one another seventy-seven times (18:22). The ransom saying from Mark 10:45 is taken over unaltered in Matthew 20:28, and in Matthew's report of the Last Supper, the cup saying is expanded over against Mark's version by the three words *εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*: "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many *for the forgiveness of sins*" (26:28). Therefore, the two classical themes of soteriology and forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God through the God-ordained atoning death of Christ are by no means foreign to the Gospel of Matthew. Furthermore, through the parables of the unmerciful servant (18:23–35), the workers in the vineyard (20:1–16), and the wedding feast (22:1–14), the Evangelist emphasizes that God's grace precedes all obligations of believers to do deeds of obedience. Yet, on the other hand, the Evangelist never lets his addressees rest in their trust in God's prevenient grace, but repeatedly confronts them with conditional promises of salvation: Only the one who practices forgiveness will receive it (5:23–26; 6:14–15; 18:35); only the one who has put on a wedding robe in response to the invitation will not be thrown out (22:11–14); only the faithful servant who has made a profit with the talent entrusted to him will find acceptance in the judgment (25:24–30); only the one who really loves will not be condemned (7:21–23; 25:45–46); etc. For the Evangelist, the reconciling Christ, the ruling Christ, and the judging Christ belong inseparably together, and the members of his reading community are regularly forced to reckon with the fact that they can ask Jesus Christ for assistance and hope for acceptance in the final judgment only if they follow his instruction and have no lack of good works.

5 The "Way of Righteousness." According to Matthew, John the Baptist already taught the "way of righteousness" (cf. 21:32 with Prov. 8:20; 12:28). But Jesus teaches this way even more intensely.

Righteousness is biblically the quintessence of the good order that the one God creates and preserves in the world. He guides and sustains the world in righteousness, and in Malachi 3:20 (ET 4:2) he promises that in the time of salvation the "sun of righteousness" will rise for those who fear his name

(cf. also 1Q27 1:6–7). The earthly trustee of the divine righteousness is the ideal king, and in the end times, the Messiah (cf. Ps. 72; Isa. 11:1–5; Jer. 23:6); both see to it that the weak get justice (cf. B. Janowski, *Stellvertretung* [1997], 41ff.). From an anthropological perspective, righteousness means correspondence to God's will. The righteous person is the one who faithfully keeps God's instructions (cf. Pss. 15:2–5; 24:4–5; Ezek. 18:5–9; Job 31:1–32; and G. von Rad, "'Righteousness' and 'Life' in the Cultic Language of the Psalms," in *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays* [1966], 243–66).

5.1 The Evangelist's biblical orientation can be seen in the fact that he programmatically characterizes Jesus's messianic ministry and teaching by the key term "righteousness" (*δικαιοσύνη*). All passages where this word appears in the Gospel of Matthew are redactional (cf. 3:15; 5:6, 10, 20; 6:1, 33; 21:32); there are no such occurrences in Mark and only one in Luke (cf. 1:75, not paralleled in Matthew). *Δικαιοσύνη* in Matthew is oriented to the good order of the kingdom and aims at the praxis of the disciples: By imitating God and practicing (the new) righteousness, they go the way that Jesus himself went and taught.

5.1.1 In Matthew 3:15 Jesus has himself baptized by John over the latter's protests, because it is fitting for both of them "to fulfill all righteousness." Here, at the beginning of his public ministry, Jesus overtly goes over to the side of sinners and goes ahead of them in exemplary obedience to the will of God. Moreover, the Sermon on the Mount stands completely under the sign of righteousness: Jesus counts those blessed who "hunger and thirst for righteousness" (5:6), who are "persecuted for righteousness' sake" and "reviled" for Jesus's sake (cf. 5:10–11 with 1 Pet. 3:14). They are the ones who long for the rising of the "sun of righteousness" (Mal. 3:20 [ET 4:2]) over the world and follow Jesus where he leads. In Matthew 5:20 Jesus requires of his disciples a righteousness that "exceeds (*περισσεύσῃ*) that of the scribes and Pharisees" if they want to enter the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:43–48 shows what is meant by "exceeding": The disciples should elevate their love for neighbor to love for enemies according to God's own example and be as perfect (*τέλειος*, תָּמִים [*tāmîm*]) as their heavenly Father is (cf. also 19:16–22). Matthew 6:1 illustrates correct behavior by the example of spontaneous almsgiving. In 6:33 Jesus's disciples are once again called while out on their mission to seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness, because then God himself will take care of their bodily sustenance. Jesus's teaching about the new righteousness finds its conclusion in the parable of the final judgment in

Matthew 25:31–46. The righteousness of deeds that pleases Jesus consists of “works of mercy” (cf. Str-B IV/1:559ff. and J. Friedrich, *Gott im Bruder?* [1977], 164ff.) toward the poor and helpless with whom Jesus totally identifies; here the Evangelist is also thinking of poor and needy fellow Christians (cf. 25:40, 45 with 10:42; 12:48–50; 18:6, 10).

5.1.2 Matthew’s four statements on “lawlessness” (ἀνομία) confirm what has just been said. Lawlessness for Matthew means lovelessness. The Christian miracle workers and false prophets who are sent away for being “workers of lawlessness” (NRSV: “evildoers”) according to 7:23, the doers of lawlessness who are rejected in the final judgment according to 13:41, the scribes and Pharisees who appear outwardly righteous but who inwardly are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness according to 23:27–28, and the false prophets who according to 24:11–12 lead many astray and cause the love of Christians to grow cold because of the increase of lawlessness—all these people transgress in their behavior against Jesus’s interpretation of the law, which culminates in the love commandment (cf. 5:43–48; 7:12; 22:37–40).

5.2 Such remarks by Jesus on righteousness and lawlessness can be understood properly only when one remembers that Jews and Jewish Christians were filled with joy over the gift of the law (cf. Deut. 4:7–8; Ps. 119:14; etc.). Matthew shares this joy because he knows that when Jesus teaches about the double commandment of love for God and neighbor (cf. 22:34–40) and about the new righteousness that climaxes in the love of enemies (cf. 5:43–48), he does not abolish the Torah but rather *fulfills* it and shows his disciples the way through the narrow gate to the road that leads to the kingdom (cf. 5:17–19 with 7:12–14). For Matthew, this recognition and new evaluation of the Torah by Jesus fit seamlessly together.

Because Matthew thinks about theology and soteriology in a less nuanced fashion than Paul (see above) and John (see below), he can speak of continuity and fulfillment where these other writers find it necessary to differentiate on two levels: The coming of Jesus has put an end to the Torah as a way of salvation (cf. Rom. 10:4; John 1:17), and the new instruction of Jesus that enables the revelation of God’s will to reach its objective can be put into practice only by those who have found their salvation in Jesus and are filled with his Spirit (cf. Rom. 8:2–11; John 13:34–35).

6 Matthew’s View of the Church. According to Matthew 28:19, the mission to the nations has the goal of making Jews and Gentiles into disciples of Jesus. In keeping with this goal many passages in which Matthew speaks of Jesus’s disciples have an exemplary character and teach how the disciples should behave in the church of Jesus Christ. The Ecclesial

Discourse in 18:1–35 offers an entire unit on this subject composed of sayings of Jesus. The importance of this theme for Matthew is underscored by the fact that he is the only synoptic Evangelist who uses the term *ἐκκλησία*, "church" (cf. 16:18; 18:17).

6.1 In Matthew's presentation the founding of the church of Jesus Christ goes back to the will of Jesus himself: He chose Simon Peter and gave him the honorary Aramaic name "Cephas" or Κηφᾶς (cf. Aram. כֵּיפָא), translated into Greek as "Peter" or Πέτρος (cf. the feminine noun *πέτρα*), both of which mean a "stone" or "rock" (cf. 16:17–19). Peter was to be the rock or earthly foundation stone of the church of Jesus. With his expression *ἡ ἐκκλησία μου*, "my church" (corresponding to the Semitic קְהָלִי or עֲדָתִי), Jesus had in mind the messianic people of the twelve tribes that he himself established and wanted to gather together and reign over with the help of the Twelve. He promised this church that it would stand against all powers of darkness.

In view of the Qumran parallels and other linguistic and substantial Jewish analogies to Jesus's saying about Peter as the rock in Matthew 16:18 presented above (133, §5.5) and cited by H. P. Rüger (*TRE* 3:606–7), it is impossible to maintain that the crucial wordplay about the "rock" would be possible "only in a Greek linguistic milieu" (A. Weiser, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, 2:107) and that this saying about Peter must be attributed to "early Hellenistic Jewish Christianity" (J. Roloff, *Die Kirche im Neuen Testament* [1993], 162). Rather, this saying is of pre-Easter origin, presents the special role of Peter within the circle of the Twelve, and finds its confirmation in the founding of the Jerusalem church.

The power of the "keys" for binding and loosing that is given to Peter according to Matthew 16:19 is the authority to make binding doctrinal decisions and on this basis to retain or forgive sins; according to 18:18 (cf. with John 20:23), this authority comes to the whole church of the disciples: "whatever *you* (plural) bind on earth," etc. This authority works itself out concretely in such a way that forgiveness is always granted within the church, but that notorious sinners or false teachers are expelled from it (see below).

6.2 Like Mark, Matthew also brings out the significance of the *circle of the Twelve* (cf. 10:1–4; 19:28). But he describes their behavior less critically than Mark does (compare, for example, the respectively milder and sterner rebukes for the disciples' misunderstanding in the discussion of the "yeast of the Pharisees" in Matt. 16:11–12 and Mark 8:21), thus making it easier

for his readers to find themselves represented in the disciples and their relationship to Jesus.

In his essay "The Stilling of the Storm in Matthew," G. Bornkamm (in G. Bornkamm, G. Barth, and H. J. Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* [1963], 52–57) has shown that Matthew has presented his story of the stilling of the storm in 8:23–27 as "a kerygmatic paradigm of the danger and glory of discipleship" (57). Redactional markers of this reinterpretation include Matthew's use of the verb ἀκολουθεῖν in 8:23 ("his disciples *followed* him"); his characterization of the "windstorm" (NRSV) in 8:24 by a term for violent shaking, σεισμός, which is very unusual with reference to a storm but elsewhere can refer to an earthquake as an apocalyptic portent (cf. Mark 13:8/Matt. 24:7/Luke 21:11; Matt. 27:54; 28:2), over against Mark's simpler expression λαῖλαψ ἀνέμου ("storm of wind," Mark 4:37); his depiction of the disciples calling for help in 8:25 using the address κύριε, "Lord"; and finally the reversal of the order (over against Mark 4:39–40) in 8:26 according to which Jesus's rebuke of his disciples' small faith *precedes* his sea miracle. Matthew's presentation has certainly promoted the later metaphorical comparison of the church with a ship.

6.3 Being a Christian for Matthew means following Jesus as a disciple. The decisive factor in discipleship is faith (cf. 17:20). Matthew's typical accusation in which Jesus rebukes his disciples for being ὀλιγόπιστοι, "people of little faith" (cf. 17:20 with 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8), shows that Matthew does not think of πίστις in the first instance as *fides quae creditur* ("the faith which is believed") but rather as the mind-set of faith that includes willing and doing. The opposite of πίστις, "faith," is ὀλιγοπιστία, "smallness of faith" (17:20). By this Matthew means "the interrupted, temporarily absent faith" whose weakness consists of the fact that "it ends when a harrowing impression must be repulsed and a task exceeding one's powers fulfilled" (A. Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus* [1963^{6}], 534). According to Matthew, whoever follows Jesus must not only be filled with a firm trust in Jesus's divine authority (cf. 8:10) but must also be ready for his name's sake to take persecution upon himself and do without a good reputation, home, family, and possessions (cf. 5:11; 8:18–22; 10:37–39; 16:24–27).

6.4 Matthew's *Ecclesial Discourse* (18:1–35) is composed of Jesus sayings and parables. It has two parts, each of which concludes with a parable: In 18:1–14 the focus is the great and small in the kingdom, and in 18:15–35 it is church discipline and forgiveness.

6.4.1 In Matthew 18:1–14 a "little child" (παιδίον) is made the example of greatness in the kingdom of God, and the language of the "little ones" (μικροί) who believe in Jesus already found in Mark (9:42) is made the

characteristic feature of all members of the church. Jesus comes to the defense of these little ones: He identifies with them (18:5), warns others about causing them to stumble in their faith (18:6–7), and places them in God's care with his parable of the lost sheep (18:12–14). The Evangelist opposes both careless spiritual interaction among church members (cf. 1 Cor. 8:1–13; Rom. 15:1–13) and hierarchical power relationships in the church (cf. also Matt. 20:20–28; 23:8–12).

6.4.2 Matthew 18:15–35 sets down the rule for dealing with sinners in the church. The offender is first to be reproved in private by the offended party, then in a small circle of two or three, and finally before the entire church assembly. Offenders are to be expelled from the church only when they have refused to listen to any of the corrections in the course of this threefold procedure. However, from that point onward they are to be treated —in Matthew's once again typically Jewish Christian formulation—as "Gentiles and tax collectors" (18:17), that is, as notorious sinners (cf. 1 Cor. 5:1–13; 1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:17). In order to prevent this rule from being abused, Matthew adds that church members should forgive one another up to seventy-seven times (cf. 18:21–22 with Gen. 4:24). The concluding parable of the unmerciful servant (18:23–35), which threatens grave consequences for those who fail to forgive, makes living by this rule an end-time existential question for every Christian.

6.5 Ever since the days of the ancient church, the two parables of the weeds among the wheat (13:24–30) and the net (13:47–50) have been taken as evidence that Matthew saw the church as a mixed body (*corpus permixtum*) of righteous and unrighteous persons who are separated only at the judgment throne of God. But neither text supports this view. Rather, these are parables of the end times, which describe the position of the world (not just the church) before God. In the world it is impossible to differentiate between the righteous and the unrighteous prior to the judgment day. However, matters are different for the disciples and the reading community. According to 18:15–18, they stand under a principle of holiness and church discipline that is just as strict as the one applied by Paul and his school (cf. 1 Cor. 5:1–6:11; 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1; Titus 3:10). Since the parable of the weeds among the wheat in 13:24–30 is followed in 13:36–43 by an interpretation that Matthew inherited but also greatly expanded (cf. J. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, rev. ed. [1963], 81–85; J. Friedrich, *Gott im Bruder?*, 66–87), it is easy to see his intention: Matthew was keenly

aware that even church members could still sin, and therefore he urges the disciples repeatedly to ask if they are really “children of the kingdom” (13:38) who may hope as righteous ones to “shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father” (cf. 13:43 with Dan. 12:3; Judg. 5:31; the same critical question is raised in Matt. 22:12). As the hyperbolic but nevertheless unambiguous warnings in 18:8–9 about cutting off a hand or foot or tearing out an eye show, every church member is obligated to offer the ultimate resistance to the causes of stumbling into sin.

7 The Mission to the Nations. Like Mark, the Gospel of Matthew has the anamnetic purpose of making the past time of Jesus present, but it does not make any naive identification between the time of Jesus and the time of the church. Rather the Evangelist makes it clear that after Jesus’s death and resurrection, the church of his disciples will have to reckon with a long time of persecution and persevere through it (cf. 5:10–12; 10:22; 24:9–12). During this period faithfulness and watchfulness are called for (cf. 24:42–51). Yet the apostles also have a great work to do: Before the parousia they are to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of God throughout the whole world “as a testimony to all nations” (24:14). This also means that they must prepare the world for judgment and salvation through their message (cf. John 16:8–11): Whoever accepts the gospel and follows Jesus as a disciple will be accepted, but whoever rejects the message of the apostles and refuses to become a disciple will perish (cf. 10:32–33).

7.1 The topic of *mission* has a special place in Matthew’s Gospel: During Jesus’s earthly ministry the mission of his disciples was concentrated on Israel alone, just as Jesus’s mission was (cf. 10:5–6 with 15:24), but after Easter it is aimed at all the nations (cf. Matthew’s addition of *καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν*, “as a testimony to them *and to the Gentiles*,” in 10:18 [par. Mark 13:9] with 24:9, 14; 28:19). Matthew has the mission to the nations in view as early as 4:12–17 with his mention of “Galilee of the Gentiles” (4:15 [Isa. 8:23 LXX]), and there are additional references to Galilee in 26:32; 28:7, 10, 16. He stresses the Gentile mission’s end-time significance in 24:14 and sets it out programmatically as Jesus’s legacy at the close of his Gospel.

7.2 Matthew 28:16–20 presents a kind of *charter document of the apostolic world mission*. If one analyzes these verses in a biblical-theological sense (as suggested by H. Gese), then it appears that the

Evangelist has taken up a tradition that represents the fulfillment, from a Jewish Christian perspective, of the expectations raised by the Feast of Tabernacles, namely, that all the nations would be gathered on Mount Zion under the banner of faith in the Messiah Jesus. The text in its present form runs (28:16–20):

> [16]Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. [17]When they saw him, they worshiped him; but they doubted [on the translation of οἱ δὲ ἐδίστασαν, see D. A. Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:884–85]. [18]And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. [19]Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20]and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

7.2.1 These verses represent at their core the *call narrative of the apostles*. The appearance of the Son of Man to the eleven disciples on the mountain in Galilee followed by their initial hesitation and subsequent commitment to the mission to the nations bears a structural resemblance to the Old Testament call narratives of Moses (cf. Exod. 3:1–12), Gideon (cf. Judg. 6:11–16), and Jeremiah (cf. Jer. 1:4–8), concluding, as these other call narratives do, with the formulaic promise that God (here in the person of Jesus) would be "with" them: "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (cf. Matt. 28:20 with Exod. 3:12; Judg. 6:16; Jer. 1:8).

7.2.2 The text in Matthew 28:16–20 has a rich background. In 26:31–32 (cf. Mark 14:27–28) Jesus counterbalances his last passion prediction, oriented to Zechariah 13:7–9, with his announcement that he will go ahead of his disciples to Galilee after his resurrection (cf. John 10:3–4 and, on the background, Ps. 80:2–3 [ET 80:1–2]; Mic. 2:12–13). Galilee here is not just the territory of Jesus's first public ministry (cf. Matt. 4:12–17), since from the perspective of Isaiah 8:23 (ET 9:1) it is also the northernmost region of the former Davidic kingdom, whose end-time restoration Israel hoped for. This hope was also kept alive in the circle of Jesus's disciples according to Luke 24:21 and Acts 1:6. Its *Sitz im Leben* was above all the Jewish *Feast of Tabernacles* (or *Booths*). This pilgrimage festival was of great

significance in early Judaism according to 2 Maccabees 10:1–8, *Jubilees* 16:20–31, and Josephus, *Antiquities* 8.100. It was the festival of joy over God's reign par excellence (cf. Ps. 47) and provided an annual occasion for Israel (cf. Isa. 49:6; Ps. 96:3) to look forward to the time when the peoples of the world, in response to the missionary message brought to them by Israel, would make pilgrimage to Zion and would acknowledge that they were all born in Jerusalem and could call Zion their "mother" (cf. Ps. 87:4–7; Zech. 14:16–19; Ps. 96:7–13). The tradition underlying Matthew 28:16–20 takes up this expectation: The journey of the risen one to "Galilee of the Gentiles," his appearance on the mountain to the eleven disciples with the authority of the Son of Man (cf. Dan. 7:14), and his sending of his disciples into the mission to the nations all serve to establish the "kingdom for Israel" (Acts 1:6). By this symbolic action Jesus lays his claim to a restored greater Israel and makes his disciples the core and vanguard of the new people of God of Jews and Gentiles that he heads up. The disciples are instructed to carry out Israel's missionary task to the ἔθνη or nations of the world. They must proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of God to all nations within the Son of Man's sphere of authority and make them into Jesus's disciples by baptizing them in his name and instructing them in his teaching. Once this great work is accomplished with the help of the ever-present Immanuel, he will appear from Zion on the clouds of heaven and completely establish the kingdom (cf. 28:20 with 24:14, 29–31). Matthew 28:16–20 takes up the Jewish hope based on the Festival of Booths for the "Israelizing of the world" (H. Gese) and transforms it from the perspective of Jewish Christianity: The return of all the nations to Zion is accomplished by the world mission that Jesus commanded, thus paving the way for the establishment of the kingdom.

7.2.3 Peter and the ten other disciples of Jesus followed the instructions given to them in Galilee: They returned to Jerusalem, founded the early church there, and freshly constituted the circle of the Twelve who were appointed to rule the end-time people of the twelve tribes composed of Jews and Gentiles (cf. Acts 1:15–26 with Matt. 19:28). On the first Feast of Weeks after Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection, they began their mission among the Jewish festival pilgrims, and Peter extended the Jewish mission to Lydda, Joppa, and Caesarea. The Jerusalem apostles actively supported the transition from the Jewish mission to the mission among Samaritans and Gentiles by the Stephen circle and the founding of the mission church of

Antioch. Finally, according to Galatians 2:9, the apostles made the Gentile mission a separate enterprise at the apostolic council: The pillar apostles were to dedicate themselves especially to mission among the Jews from their base in Jerusalem, while Barnabas and Paul were to dedicate themselves especially to mission among the Gentiles from the base in Antioch. The Gentiles were not to be urged to accept circumcision (since the passages about the conversion of the Gentiles in Isa. 49:6; 66:18–21; and Ps. 87 make no mention of circumcision), but it was decided to organize a collection for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem (cf. Gal. 2:10 with Rom. 15:26–27) as a demonstration of the solidarity of the converted Gentiles with the mother church in Jerusalem. Paul kept this agreement his whole life and pursued his work as apostle of the Gentiles for Israel’s sake (cf. Rom. 15:16, 19 with Isa. 66:18–21 and above, 373–74, §2.4.2.5): He acknowledged the early church of Jerusalem as the mother church of all Christian communities (cf. Gal. 4:25–26 with Ps. 87:5) and lost his freedom and life in the service of his church (cf. above, 392, §3.1.1).

7.2.4 When one considers the tradition-historical and mission-historical contexts of Matthew 28:16–20, then the objections against its antiquity and authenticity fall by the wayside. The text offers an authentic ancient tradition and provides an insight into the Jewish Christian concept of mission that determined the entire post-Easter behavior and procedure of the Jerusalem pillar apostles.

7.2.5 Because the work of the world mission remained incomplete after the martyrdom of the pillar apostles and the destruction of Jerusalem, the Evangelist took up the old mission tradition and made it into the finale of his Gospel: He refers his readers three times to the special event of Jesus’s appearance on the mountain in Galilee (cf. 26:32; 28:7, 10). By alluding in 28:18 (“all authority has been given to me”) back to 11:27 (“all things have been handed over to me”), Matthew wants his readers to understand that the exalted Son of Man is none other than the earthly Jesus whom the heavenly Father has made the sole revealer of truth. With the command to “make disciples” (*μαθητεύσατε*) in Matthew 28:19, the Evangelist makes it clear that the mission to the nations is supposed to make both Jews and Gentiles into disciples (*μαθηταί*) of Jesus in the sense in which this term is understood in Matthew. The command to baptize, which the Evangelist may

have inherited from earlier tradition, is brought up to date according to the pattern of the tripartite baptismal formula that was current in Syria in the Evangelist's day (cf. 28:19b with *Did*. 7:1). Jesus's instruction to "teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (28:20a) connects the "gospel of the kingdom" that the apostles are to proclaim according to 24:14 with the teaching of Jesus, as summarized by Matthew's five major discourses. Finally, with his christological formulation of the motif of the divine presence "with us" in 28:20b, the Evangelist brackets the Immanuel saying of 1:23 (cf. Isa. 7:14) with the conclusion of his Gospel: The risen Son of Man invested with divine authority remains for the disciples before and after Easter the loving and attentive presence of God in person.

7.2.6 Did Matthew by the command to disciple the nations in 28:19 (cf. 24:14) intend to replace the Jewish mission by the Gentile mission? This was once considered a serious possibility by U. Luz (*The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew*, 11–17). But the analysis of our text and the course of early Christian missions history speak against this: (1) The universal sphere of authority granted to the Son of Man (cf. 28:18) includes not only the Gentiles but also the Jews. (2) While the expression "the nations," *τὰ ἔθνη*, indeed designates the Gentiles in 4:15, 6:32, 12:18, and 20:19, elsewhere in Matthew, in 24:9 (where Christians will be "hated by all nations") and 25:32 ("all the nations will be gathered" for judgment), it refers to Jews and Gentiles alike. This inclusive usage also lies close to hand for 28:19 (and 24:14). (3) Passages such as 5:18–19 (a statement that the law's commandments will not pass away and should continue to be taught) and 23:3 (an affirmation of the Pharisees' teachings, but not their actions) show that the Evangelist and his readers were Jewish Christians who held to Judaism as it was known in Jerusalem. It is historically scarcely conceivable that these Jews, after moving to Pella or elsewhere, turned their attention exclusively to Gentiles and no longer pursued the mission among their Jewish compatriots. (4) Luz's theory is also improbable in the light of missions history, since the continuation of the Jewish mission into the second half of the second century is certainly attested in Justin Martyr (H. Kvalbein): In his *Dialogue with Trypho* 47.1–3, Justin acknowledges as true Christian brothers those Jewish Christians who combine Torah observance with their own confession of Christ without requiring Gentile Christians to do the same (e.g., by receiving circumcision or keeping the Sabbath). The position of these brothers comes very close to that of Matthew. (5) As will

be shown in more detail in the next section, Matthew reserves a strict judgment for the majority of Israel that has rejected Jesus. Nevertheless, J. Roloff's cautious formulation of the possibility of an ongoing Jewish mission in Matthew remains apposite: "[Matthew] at least left open the possibility of a Jewish mission, which admittedly no longer understood itself as the priority over against the Gentile mission, but as simultaneous and parallel with it (cf. 10:23). To this it can be added that Matthew knows only of a *call* of the Gentiles, but not of an already effective *election* (22:14). If the final election is still not decided, it will hardly be different with a final rejection" (J. Roloff, *Die Kirche im Neuen Testament*, 154).

8 Matthew and Israel. A future hope of salvation for all Israel in the sense of Romans 11:25–27 cannot be found in the Gospel of Matthew. According to the Evangelist's presentation, Israel has forfeited its privilege of election by rejecting and killing Jesus. To be sure, Jesus is born and sent to save the people of Israel from their sins (cf. 1:21–23 with 23:37), but already in his redactional enhancement of the Q tradition in 8:11–12 (cf. Luke 13:28), Matthew speaks of the rejection of the "sons of the kingdom," and he follows this up with other hints of judgment in 11:23–24; 21:41, 43; 22:8–10; and 23:38. Matthew elevates Mark 4:12 to a formal statement of Israel's hardening in 13:10–15, and he reworks Jesus's woes against the Pharisees into a comprehensive speech of judgment against the scribes and Pharisees in 23:1–36 (cf. Luke 11:42–52). Matthew alone among the Evangelists has the entire Jewish people (πᾶς ὁ λαός) cry out at Jesus's judicial sentencing, "His blood be on us and on our children!" (27:25; on the expression, see 2 Sam. 1:16; Jer. 26:15; 51:35). Historically this statement may be connected with the bloody pogroms that cost thousands of Jews in Scythopolis (Beth-shean) and many Syrian cities their lives at the outbreak of the first Jewish revolt according to Josephus, *Jewish War* 2.457ff. (so M. Hengel). If one combines this with the Evangelist's distancing language regarding "their" synagogues (4:23; 9:35; 10:17; 12:9; 13:54) and "the Jews" (28:15), one must conclude with D. A. Hagner that "The Church and Israel . . . stand in obviously painful tension in Matthew" (*Matthew,* 1:lxvii).

Historically speaking, Matthew's statements about the Jews should not be judged simply as expressions of anti-Judaism. The Evangelist does not appear to be moved by any "*a priori* generalized enmity against the Jews aimed at stirring up agitation and pogroms" (C. Thoma, "Antijudaismus," in *Lexikon der jüdisch-christlichen Begegnung*, ed. J. J. Petuchowski and C.

Thoma [1989], 16–21, esp. 17). Rather, as a Jewish Christian, he still stands within the inner-Jewish debate about the significance of “Jesus the Messiah” (1:1 NRSV). While believing in this Messiah, Matthew still wishes to hold to the law and the prophets as well as the Pharisaic halakah (cf. 5:17–19; 23:3), and he argues against his Jewish opponents with the help of an antithetical rhetoric that was familiar to him from the denunciatory speeches of the prophets, John the Baptist’s preaching of repentance (cf. Luke 3:7–9/Matt. 3:7–10), and Jesus’s words of judgment (cf. Luke 10:12–15). Not until a long time after Matthew did Gentile Christians and Jewish apostates begin to recast Matthew’s formulations as anti-Semitic slogans. By so doing they laid the foundation for the Gospel of Matthew’s fatal influence and effects throughout certain periods of history, which requires us today to deal very cautiously with the Evangelist’s statements.

Despite what has been said above, a comparison with the testimony of another Jewish Christian, namely, Paul, concerning Israel also shows that *Matthew has overdrawn the contrast between Jesus and Israel*. Jesus’s claim of gathering the new people of God with the help of twelve disciples chosen from empirical Israel can no more be ignored than can the deep διαμερισμός or “division” (cf. Luke 12:51) between Jesus and the leaders of his people who were for the most part closed to his message of repentance, which ultimately led to his crucifixion. Nevertheless, as long as the early church in Jerusalem formed the earthly vanguard of the end-time people of the twelve tribes, neither Peter, John, and James the Lord’s brother nor Barnabas and Paul were of the opinion that Israel had lost its election once for all on Good Friday. A comparison of Paul’s statements in 1 Thessalonians 2:14–16 and Romans 11:1–32 shows that Paul once shared the Matthean view that God’s wrath had finally come upon the Jews because of their killing of Jesus, but that he grew past this view theologically. Because the apostle Paul was also involved in the universal mission to the nations, Matthew 28:16–20 can also be read in his sense: The gospel of the kingdom of God must be proclaimed among both Jews and Gentiles, because neither group has any other end-time Lord and Savior than the Messiah Jesus (cf. Acts 4:12; Phil. 2:9–11). However, the question of the election of Israel, which is determined not by humans but by God, was not already decided on Golgotha but will be decided only on the day of judgment by God and the Son of Man who is judge of the world (cf. Matt. 23:39).

9 Summary and Evaluation. Matthew repeatedly confronts his audience with contradictions. Especially in the areas of the law (cf., e.g., 5:17–19; 16:12 with 23:2–3, 15–24) and soteriology (cf., e.g., 10:32–33 with 25:31–46), our Jewish Christian Evangelist combines statements that

severely strain “our modern concepts of coherence and logic” (U. Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew*, 13). But it must also be noted that the typical Reformation-inspired theology, which is especially oriented to Paul, has had very little practice in allowing Jewish Christian arguments that depart from Pauline teaching to retain their own validity.

9.1 Neither the Gospel of Matthew nor any of the other Gospels was the only Christian doctrinal writing that a Christian reading community typically possessed. The texts of our Evangelist did not stand on their own in Antioch or Rome or anywhere else. Therefore no self-contained doctrinal system should be derived from Matthew, but only elements of such a system.

9.2 The Gospel of Matthew claims to contain the authentic teaching of Jesus on which the Christian mission depends. It has an independent historical profile compared to Mark, but it also has distinctive *tendencies* that cause it to take different positions on Jesus and salvation and on the will of God from those of the two other Synoptic Gospels and the letters of Paul: There is no talk in Matthew of the justification of the ungodly (Jews and Gentiles) by grace and faith alone (cf. Rom. 4:5; 5:6). Instead—much like James and Hebrews but also Revelation—Matthew offers an open Jewish Christian doctrine of salvation that has a voluntaristic tendency and that lacks the finely differentiated reflections with which not only the letters of Paul but also the letters and the Gospel of John speak of God’s grace, the work of Christ, and the position of Jews and Gentiles before the judgment throne of God.

9.3 Matthew emphasizes that Jesus did not annul the will of God revealed in the Torah of Sinai, but brought it freshly into force and taught his disciples to follow it. He thereby provides a counterbalance to the type of exegesis of Paul that tends to antinomianism to the extent that it relies mainly or exclusively on Galatians and overlooks the continuity between the Torah and the spiritual instructions of Christ attested in Romans 2:12–16 and 7:7–8:14. Because Matthew’s doctrine is backed by the Jesus tradition, his presentation is not only to be measured by Paul’s, but also Paul’s by his.

9.4 The church’s habit of reading the Gospel of Matthew to the neglect of Mark and Luke leads to one-sidedness. One should avoid this by

comparing the testimony of the other Synoptics to that of Matthew and carefully weighing their messages.

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CHAPTER 34

Luke and Acts

Like Matthew, the Gospel of Luke has taken over almost the entire tradition of Mark. Yet Luke's distinctive features cannot be brought out solely by a comparison with Mark. As we have already seen, Luke did not simply follow the example and outline of Mark, but inserted the Markan material as blocks into the framework provided by Proto-Luke (see above, 567–68, §3.5). Luke furthermore supplemented his Gospel by the Acts of the Apostles and tied the two books together by his special tradition of the forty days between Easter and the ascension, in which Jesus instructed his disciples about the kingdom and their missionary task.

1 Structure and Content of the Gospel of Luke. If one attempts to structure Luke according to the Evangelist's own narrative interests, the following outline results:

Prologue: 1:1–4

I. Jesus's Beginnings: 1:5–4:13

II. Jesus's Ministry in Galilee: 4:14–9:50

III. Jesus's Journey to Jerusalem: 9:51–19:27

IV. The Last Days in Jerusalem: 19:28–21:38

V. Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension: 22:1–24:53

Especially conspicuous in this structure are the polished prologue and the arrangement of the travel report in 9:51–19:27. Luke is no longer interested only in tying the missionary gospel to the story and proclamation of Jesus (as were Mark and Matthew), but wants to write *a report of the story of Jesus from the beginnings to the ascension* that will serve as a kind of textbook for deepening the instruction of catechumens (see below). This report continues into the book of Acts. Together the two books form a kerygmatic historical work that describes the salvation-historical place and task of the emerging church in the ancient world.

1.1 In Luke 1:1–4 the Evangelist prefaces his first book with the following short but very carefully stylized *prologue*:

> [1]Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account (διήγησις) of the events (πράγματα) that have been fulfilled among us [by God], [2]just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, [3]I too decided, after investigating (παρηκολουθηκότι [παρακολουθέω]) everything carefully (ἀκριβῶς) from the very first (ἄνωθεν), to write it out for you in order (καθεξῆς), most excellent Theophilus (κράτιστε Θεόφιλε), [4]so that you may know the certainty (ἀσφάλεια) of the things (λόγοι) about which you have been instructed (κατηχήθης [κατηχέω]). (NRSV modified; cf. NASB on καθεξῆς; NIV on ἀσφάλεια)

In biblical literature the prologue of Luke 1:1–4 can be compared, for example, to the prologue to the book of Sirach or also to 2 Maccabees 2:19–32, while in extrabiblical literature a certain parallel may be found in the prologue with which Josephus has prefaced his apology *Against Apion* (1.1–4 and 2.1). However, according to the study of L. Alexander, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel* (cf. especially the structural analysis on pp. 69ff. and the appendix with precise textual comparisons on pp. 213ff.), the brief Lukan prologue is not as similar to the extensive preambles of ancient historians (including Josephus) as it is to the short introductions of scientific and medical works in antiquity, such as those of the physician Diocles of Carystus (end of the fourth century BC) and of the famous medical doctor Galen of Pergamum (second century AD). Such prologues often contained a dedication, directed in this case to the κράτιστος Θεόφιλος. Alexander thinks that Theophilus was a *patron* of Luke who was also a catechumen who promoted Christian instruction (*Preface to Luke's Gospel*, 188ff.). M. Dibelius furthermore points out that "while the dedication of a work to a person of standing such as the κράτιστος Θεόφιλος honors the addressee, it also obligates him to disseminate the book, whether he is a believing Christian or an interested pagan" ("Aufsätze zur Apostelgeschichte," 127). How this dissemination took place cannot be determined with certainty (for an analogy, see Hermas, *Vision* 2:4 [M. Hengel]). All we can safely say is that Luke expected Theophilus to be interested in his Gospel (as well as in

the book of Acts, according to Acts 1:1) and to be willing to promote the reading of both works.

It is disputed whether the prologue in Luke 1:1–4 relates only to the Gospel or to both the Gospel and Acts. In approaching this problem one must remember that the textual tradition has left no trace of a single comprehensive Lukan work we sometimes refer to as "Luke-Acts." The Gospel and Acts always appear separately in the manuscripts, with the Gospel much more frequently attested than Acts (cf. B. M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament* [1987]). Whoever wants to refer Luke 1:1–4 to both the Gospel and Acts would have to assume that despite the related (but by no means identical) statements at the end of Luke (24:44–53) and the beginning of Acts (1:1–14) that might indicate separate works, Luke originally published both books together, only to have this double work immediately divided by the recipients and given different superscriptions and subscriptions: the Gospel of Luke (*Εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Λουκᾶν*) and the Acts of the Apostles (*Πράξεις τῶν ἀποστόλων*). This division will need to have taken place before Polycarp of Smyrna (who died ca. 155) wrote his letter to the Philippians or Justin Martyr wrote his two apologies and his *Dialogue with Trypho* between 150 and 160, since both authors include clear references to Luke and Acts as separate works. Since there is no evidence of a division of a single Lukan composite work subsequent to its publication, *Luke 1:1–4 should be referred primarily to the Gospel*.

1.2 According to 1:3–4, Luke wants to give Theophilus *ἀσφάλεια* or "certainty" (NIV) about the *λόγοι* (NRSV: "things") in which he has been instructed. Oἱ *λόγοι* is a common Greek expression for "teaching," but in Luke it can also refer to the *words* of the Lord (cf. Acts 20:35). The verb *κατηχέω*, from which we get our word "catechism," means to "report," "tell," or "inform" in Acts 21:21 and 24, but in Acts 18:25 and Galatians 6:6 it is also used for the *teaching* or *instruction* that Christians receive in the church. If one understands *λόγοι* and *κατηχέω* in this technical sense, then Luke wants to give Theophilus a reliable knowledge of the teaching (including the words of the Lord) that he has already heard about in his instruction as a catechumen. The Evangelist recommends himself to his patron as an author who has reviewed "many" other examples of accounts (*διηγήσεις*) of the events (*πράγματα*) that constitute the Christian faith, but who has again carefully investigated (*παρακολουθέω*) the traditions that stem from the first eyewitnesses and "servants of the word." *Παρακολουθέω* does not mean only to "research" and "investigate" but also to "appropriate" the subject matter and "penetrate" it (cf. Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 1.218, of the inability of pagans "to follow" or penetrate Jewish writings; 1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 3:10 [D. Moessner]). Luke therefore claims not only to be well informed but also to be personally proficient and experienced in Christian teaching. With this twofold qualification, Luke wishes to present

Theophilus with a report that will bear comparison with the works of his predecessors but also excel them in scope and quality (note that Luke's Gospel is longer than Matthew's, despite its fewer chapters).

It was customary to begin historical narratives by referring to numerous predecessors (cf., e.g., Josephus, *J.W.* 1.17). However, Luke is not merely following a literary convention in 1:1, for we can identify at least three pre-Lukan narrators of the Gospel: the evangelist Mark, Matthew the disciple of Jesus who may have been responsible for the original Aramaic version of the sayings source (cf. Papias in Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.39.16), and the author of Proto-Luke, into whose work Luke has inserted the Markan material in blocks.

1.3 With his expression "the events that have been fulfilled among *us*" in 1:1, Luke suggests that he and his addressee wish to call to mind the original events to make them real in the present (cf. 22:19). But according to 1:2–3, the Evangelist is no longer a man of the first days of the Christian faith, but rather a carrier and teacher of a tradition that goes back to the eyewitnesses and heralds of the gospel whom Jesus originally called. His claim to have traced this tradition back carefully (ἀκριβῶς) to its roots (ἄνωθεν) in order to be able to narrate it in order (καθεξῆς) promises a *careful historical presentation*. If one takes into account the formal, scholarly tone of the prologue (see above), then the Gospel of Luke appears as a *specialized textbook intended to deepen instruction in Christian beginnings*. This conclusion also makes it easier to understand the book of Acts. Unlike the other Evangelists, Mark, Matthew, and John, Luke has followed his Gospel by a second textbook that presents the history of the gospel's spread from Jerusalem to Rome. Luke is the *first historian of early Christianity* who sets out to document the realization of God's kingdom in the Christ event and the church's task of witness that grows out of this. His two books are meant to help his readers recognize this task and persevere in it against all opposition.

2 Luke's Relationship to Mark. According to our discussion of the question of Proto-Luke (see above, 567–68, §3.5), Luke did not simply follow Mark's outline but inserted the Markan material into an already existing proto-Lukan gospel presentation. This procedure is best explained if the Evangelist came across a fixed written gospel of Proto-Luke during the course of his research mentioned in 1:3 and made it the basis of his own new account or διήγησις.

2.1 Like Matthew, Luke begins his Gospel with "prehistories" (1:5–2:52) that have no parallel in Mark and concludes it in chapter 24 with Easter stories that are independent of Mark. Lukan special material is also found in the middle of the Gospel and is of great importance for understanding the proclamation of Jesus. This special material includes such famous texts as the report of the raising of the widow's son at Nain (7:11–17); the Jesuanic version of the Lord's Prayer (11:2–4); the parables of the Good Samaritan (10:25–37), the rich fool (12:13–21), the lost coin (15:8–10), the prodigal son (15:11–32), the rich man and Lazarus (16:19–31), and the Pharisee and the tax collector (18:9–14); and the story of the call of Zacchaeus (19:1–10). In his presentation of the passion as well, Luke follows almost continuously a special tradition that he has subsequently edited from the perspective of Mark. This has repeated points of contact with the Johannine tradition. We may compare, for example, Luke 22:39–40 with John 18:1–2; Luke 22:50 with John 18:10; the new version (as compared to Mark and Matthew) of Jesus's last words in Luke 23:34, 43, 46 with John 19:30; Luke's concentration of the Easter appearances in Jerusalem that diverges from Mark 16:7 and Matthew 28:16–20; the parallel of Luke 24:36–43 and John 20:19–23; etc.

2.2 It is disputed where the *Lukan special tradition* originated. Together with other scholars, R. Riesner wants to trace parts of it back to circles surrounding James the Lord's brother in Jerusalem. That is certainly conceivable, but it should not obscure the fact that Luke is especially dependent on the church tradition that was at home in Antioch. The Greek version of the Lukan prehistories is just as conceivable in Antioch as is the (proto-) Lukan passion narrative, which lays the stress elsewhere than the Jerusalem passion kerygma (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1–11). The special tradition of the forty days between Easter and the ascension, many particulars of Acts, and the missions perspective that ties the Gospel and Acts together all point to the mission church in the metropolis on the Orontes (see below). If this is correct, then through Luke we gain access to a third early Christian version of the Jesus tradition. Mark held to the tradition of Peter, Matthew brought together the traditions of the Jerusalem pillar apostles, and Luke went back to the traditions of the mission church of Antioch, whose foundation was laid by the Hellenists expelled from Jerusalem (cf. Acts 11:19–21).

3 The Acts of the Apostles. Luke expanded his Gospel by a second volume in the form of the Acts of the Apostles, which is likewise dedicated

to Theophilus (cf. Acts 1:1). Acts has the following outline:

Prologue: 1:1–5

I. The Beginnings in Jerusalem: 1:6–8:1a

II. The First Stage of the Spread of the Church: 8:1b–9:43

III. The Beginning of the Gentile Mission: 10:1–12:25

IV. The Consolidation of the Gentile Mission: 13:1–15:35

V. Paul's Mission in Europe and Asia: 15:36–19:20

VI. Paul's Journey to Jerusalem: 19:21–21:14

VII. Paul's Imprisonment: 21:15–26:32

VIII. Paul's Journey to and Testimony in Rome: 27:1–28:31

Our author is an evangelist and a chronicler in one person. In his presentation he follows the salvation history and mission history line of thinking that was already sketched out for him in the Jewish Christian mission concept that we have studied in connection with the Gospel of Matthew (see above, 608–12, §7). Jesus's story is an event of messianic fulfillment given to the mother church founded by the apostles in Jerusalem as a basis for faith. The risen Christ commissioned the apostles to take the message about the kingdom of God that dawned with his mission from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. The final establishment of the "kingdom for Israel" that the prophets promised and the apostles longed for will only occur when this great missionary work is completed, at a time known only to God (cf. Acts 1:6–7).

3.1 The complex question of what types of *traditions* Luke has incorporated into Acts can be treated here only briefly (cf. the overview in U. Schnelle, *The History and Theology of the New Testament Writings* [1998], 265–71). (1) In his various studies and his monograph on the language of Luke's Gospel (*Die Sprache des Lukasevangeliums* [1980]), J. Jeremias has shown that in his Gospel, Luke not only used extensive source material but also handled it very carefully. It is highly unlikely that he treated his sources totally differently in Acts. (2) A. von Harnack's thesis that next to other traditions Luke especially followed an "Antiochene source" in Acts points in the right direction. The incorporation of Antiochene traditions is suggested not only by many individual texts and

the overall missionary theological perspective Luke pursues in Acts, but also by the picture of Paul that diverges from that of the Pauline Letters (see below). (3) According to M. Dibelius, the many *speeches* that Luke presents in Acts are not the records of actual testimony but fictitious texts that above all fulfill a literary and compositional function. Nevertheless, these speeches do not rest simply on Luke's historical imagination because they reflect the picture, checked and confirmed by many others, concerning the teaching and significance of Peter, Stephen, James, Paul, etc., that was held by members of the Antioch church. (4) The general harmony and similar feel of the public missionary speeches in Acts 2:14–39, 3:12–26, 4:8–12, 5:29–32, 10:34–43, and 13:16–41 can be attributed to their use of the commonplaces of Jewish Christian preaching about repentance (cf. 1 Thess. 1:9–10; Heb. 6:1–2). But their individual statements are sometimes so strange and cumbersome in their context that one cannot get by with the one-sided judgment of them as purely Lukan creations any more than one can say this about Paul's Areopagus speech in Acts 17:22–31. Even in his reports of the mission speeches Luke does not want to be only a creative writer, but also a tradition bearer and a presenter of source material.

3.2 Exegetical scholarship has responded with very different appraisals of the continuation of Luke's Gospel by Acts and Luke's overarching salvation-historical approach.

3.2.1 The New Testament scholar and church historian F. Overbeck of Basel (1837–1905) commented already in his book *Christentum und Kultur* (edited posthumously by C. A. Bernoulli in 1919) that the continuation of Luke's Gospel by Acts was "a piece of tactlessness of worldwide historical dimensions, the greatest excess of false statement that Luke was involved in. . . . Luke treats historiographically what was no history at all and also was not handed down as such" (ibid., 78–79). Overbeck's guiding principle of the contrast of the gospel and history was also a decisive motivation for the radical criticism of Luke that was practiced after the Second World War especially in the Bultmann school. Hence Luke was presented by E. Käsemann, E. Haenchen, H. Conzelmann, P. Vielhauer, and many others as a representative of early Catholicism in the New Testament who was guilty of multiple unforgivable theological mistakes, including the following: (1) Under the influence of the delay of the parousia, Luke supposedly placed the gospel and the Christ who had proclaimed only himself (and not any larger "salvation history") into an epochally divided salvation history, thus

abandoning Christ and the gospel to the clutches of objectivizing historical examination. (2) In Acts, Luke furthermore used legendary traditions and fictitious apostolic speeches to develop an ideal picture of the church and to simulate historical events, thus leaving his readers with no real way of knowing about the actual bitter early Christian controversies about the faith. (3) Luke not only withheld from Paul the title of apostle, but also distorted his message of justification into a proclamation of forgiveness for all the Godfearing Gentiles who could not master the huge number of Jewish commandments and were too weak to fulfill the Torah completely.

3.2.2 Other exegetes have evaluated Luke's overall project more positively. In a well-founded protest against the Bultmann school, O. Cullmann set out the fundamental meaning of salvation history for the theology of the New Testament (cf. *Salvation in History* [1967]). U. Wilckens crossed over to Cullmann's side by calling into question, in the third edition of his postdoctoral work on the mission speeches in Acts (*Die Missionsreden der Apostelgeschichte* [1974^2]), his own earlier acceptance of the idea that these speeches were purely Lukan creations. W. G. Kümmel contradicted step-by-step the radical criticism summarized in our preceding paragraph and concluded: "Luke is doubtless one of the most important and authoritative witnesses for us of the New Testament proclamation" ("Anklage," 100). C. K. Barrett no more cooperated with this hypercriticism of Luke than did J. Jervell. Already in 1979, M. Hengel, in his study *Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity*, showed that Luke's historical writing could stand qualitative comparison with the works of other ancient historians, while in his more recent book written in collaboration with A. M. Schwemer, *Paul between Damascus and Antioch* (1997), the two coauthors declare Acts to be "a work that was composed soon after the Third Gospel by Luke 'the beloved physician' (Col. 4.14), who accompanied Paul on his travels from the journey with the collection to Jerusalem onwards. In other words, as at least in part an eye-witness account for the late period of the apostle, about which we no longer have any information in the letters, it is a first-hand source" (7). The recent commentaries on the writings of Luke by C. K. Barrett, D. L. Bock, F. Bovon, E. E. Ellis, J. Jervell, I. H. Marshall, R. Pesch, J. Roloff, G. Schneider, and others are in part much more accommodating toward this point of view. Nevertheless, the more radical ideological criticism of Luke

continues to dominate the discussion (especially in Germany) and can be overcome only by further historical research.

A few examples of such research can be given here. In his essay "Luke the Historian and the Geography of Palestine in Acts" ("Der Historiker Lukas und die Geographie Palästinas in der Apostelgeschichte" [1983]), M. Hengel demonstrates that Luke had a very precise knowledge of Jerusalem (but less precise knowledge of Galilee). L. Alexander's analysis of Luke 1:1–4 against the background of ancient scientific and medical works (see above) allows us to think once again that the Third Gospel (and Acts) may really have been written by Luke the physician (cf. Col. 4:4), and Hengel and Schwemer support this view with considerable historical arguments (cf. "Exkurs I: Lukas der Artzt," in *Paulus zwischen Damaskus und Antiochien*, 18–26 [not in the English edition]). According to the 1991 dissertation by C.-J. Thornton that approaches Luke as an eyewitness of Paul, "The Witness's Witness" (*Der Zeuge des Zeugen*), the ancient church tradition about the writing of the Gospel and Acts by Paul's companion Luke is not late, but early. The "we" sections in the second half of Acts that begin abruptly in 11:28 according to Codex D or in 16:10 in other manuscripts (cf. Acts 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1–28:16) have virtually no stylistic analogies in ancient literature according to Thornton. Because a subsequent inventor of these reports who wanted to pass himself off as an eyewitness would hardly have resorted to a previously unused literary technique as a way of making his report more believable, these independent stylistic elements probably go back to Luke himself. The possibility that *the Gospel and Acts both come from Luke the companion of Paul* therefore once again merits serious consideration. J. Jervell has taken up this idea in his recent major commentary on Acts (*Die Apostelgeschichte*, KEK 3 [Göttingen 1998]) in a fresh but also highly idiosyncratic way.

3.3 Why Luke accompanied Paul already on his second missionary journey according to Acts 16:10, then on the collection journey to Jerusalem and finally to Rome, has not yet been explained. Following W. Neil (*The Acts of the Apostles* [1973], 23), Thornton wants to view Luke as "the representative for the collection of the church of Philippi" (*Der Zeuge des Zeugen*, 271). But this explains neither why he accompanied Paul as early as the second missionary journey, nor why he also remained with Paul after the collection was delivered, during his imprisonment in Jerusalem and his two-year imprisonment in Caesarea, and finally followed him to Rome. If Luke accompanied Paul (on behalf of the Antioch church?) as a *physician* (see above), then the facts can be explained much better (cf. Col. 4:14; Philem. 24; and 2 Tim. 4:11).

3.4 Appealing to A. von Harnack, B. Reicke has suggested dating Luke's writings on the basis of the ending of Acts with Paul under house arrest in Rome in Acts 28:30–31. According to Reicke, this open ending of Acts is best understood if Luke at the time of writing still did not know of the stoning of James the Lord's brother in AD 62 or of a martyrdom of Paul. Reicke assumes that Acts was written around 62, the Gospel of Luke around 60, and Mark and Matthew "about the same time" (*Roots of the*

Synoptic Gospels, 180). These early dates are attractive at first glance, but also lead to problems in the case of Luke's writings: Paul's farewell to the Ephesian elders at Miletus in Acts 20:22–25 points forward to his imprisonment and death; Jesus announces the forthcoming destruction of Jerusalem in typical prophetic style ("days will come") in Luke 19:43–44 (cf. Isa. 29:3; Hos. 10:14; 2 Sam. 17:13), but in a second prophecy in Luke 21:20–24 the statements of Mark 13:14–20 are so clearly corrected that one must think of a reworking of the material after the fall of the city in 70; comparison of these verses with Josephus, *Jewish War* 6.384–386 strengthens this assumption. According to Hengel and Schwemer, Acts concludes only with Paul's Roman house arrest, even though by the time of writing Paul's martyrdom had probably also taken place, because this additional information could be taken for granted among Luke's readers: "the recipient Theophilus himself knew the events of that time, those that had taken place since about the year 62" (this comment about Theophilus appears only in the expanded German version of Hengel and Schwemer's work: *Paulus zwischen Damaskus und Antiochien* [1998], 11; but it is also implied in a later passage in the English: *Paul between Damascus and Antioch*, 9 [cf. German p. 15 with cross-reference back to p. 11]: "Luke only alluded to Paul's martyr death in hints. . . . However, because Luke is narrating what he himself experienced from the last years of Paul and is writing for people who still themselves knew about these events [i.e., including Theophilus] the allusions say 'all'"). Moreover, sayings that reflect an imminent expectation of the end or the parousia are clearly corrected in Luke's writings (see below). For all these reasons, it is advisable to adopt the following dates: *The Gospel of Luke can only have reached its final edited form some time after AD 70, and because Acts supplements the Gospel, it is not to be dated before the year 80*.

While the primary addressee of Luke and Acts is the patron Theophilus, their implicit readers are to be found from Antioch to Rome wherever early Christian catechetical instruction was given and could be deepened with the help of Luke's writings.

4 The Gospel of Christ and Salvation History. Luke avoids the noun *εὐαγγέλιον* (gospel) in his Gospel and uses it first in Acts 15:7 for Peter's missionary message to the Gentiles and then in 20:24 for the good news of God's grace as proclaimed by Paul. By contrast, the verb εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, to

“evangelize” or “announce” or “preach good news,” is a favorite word of Luke (not used by the other Evangelists with the sole exception of Matt. 11:5) that appears in both the Gospel (cf. 1:19; 2:10; 3:18; 4:18, 43; 7:22; 8:1; 9:6; 16:16; 20:1) and Acts (cf. 5:42; 8:4, 12, 25, 35, 40; 10:36; 11:20; 13:32; 14:7, 15, 21; 15:35; 16:10; 17:18). According to Luke 4:16–21, 4:43, 8:1, and Acts 10:36, Jesus was the God-sent messianic evangelist of the poor (cf. Isa. 52:7; 61:1–2). Already before Easter (cf. Luke 8:1) but especially after Easter, the apostles whom he sends out must proclaim the kingdom of God as he taught them to do (cf. Luke 24:47–48; Acts 1:3–8). Luke deliberately sets the events that constitute the gospel in the context of world history.

4.1 In Acts 26:26 Luke has Paul say in his speech before the Roman procurator Festus that God’s saving acts in and through Christ have “not been done in a corner.” In order to highlight the traces of this ongoing influence in world history, Luke always tells exactly when and under what circumstance the saving events took place.

4.1.1 Synchronizing Luke’s story about Jesus’s parents traveling to Bethlehem to be enrolled in the census of the Roman governor Quirinius (Luke 2:1–5) with extrabiblical records presents historical difficulties that cannot be fully resolved (for the actual contexts, see B. Reicke, *The New Testament Era* [1968], 106–7, 134–37; further P. C. Schmitz, “Census,” *ABD* 1:883–85; D. S. Potter, “Quirinius,” *ABD* 5:588–89). Josephus devotes considerable attention to a census or “registration,” *ἀπογραφή* (*Ant*. 18.3; cf. *J.W.* 7.253), of persons and especially their *property* that Quirinius carried out in AD 6–7 (for the date, see *Ant*. 18.26). This happened immediately after Quirinius became governor of the province of Syria together with the recently annexed regions of Judea and Samaria, which had been added to the province after the deposition of Herod’s son Archelaus (*Ant*. 17.355). From the start Josephus emphasizes that Augustus sent Quirinius to be “governor of the nation and *an assessor of their property* (*τιμητὴς τῶν οὐσιῶν*)” (*Ant*. 18.1). He follows this up with several words related to property assessments for tax purposes, including the noun *ἀποτίμησις* (*Ant*. 18.4, 26) and the verbal expression *ἀποτιμᾶν τὰς οὐσίας* or *τὰ χρήματα* (*Ant*. 18.2, 3; cf. 17.355). The ancient Greek translator of Augustus’s account of his imperial accomplishments uses the same technical term *ἀποτίμησις*, parallel to the Latin term *census*, in speaking of Augustus’s three censuses

and associated taxations in 28 BC, 8 BC, and AD 14 (see §8 of Augustus's *Res gestae* in F. W. Shipley, *Compendium of Roman History; Res gestae divi Augusti*, LCL [1924], 356–57, or A. E. Cooley, ed. and trans., *Res gestae divi Augusti: Text, Translation, and Commentary* [2009], 66–67, 139–43). However, Luke avoids these technical terms for tax assessments and focuses instead on the ἀπογραφή, the "census" (NIV), "enrollment" (RSV), or "registration" (NRSV) of persons in a census list, which is said to have included Mary and Joseph (Luke 2:2). But Mary and Joseph clearly cannot have been registered in a list compiled by *Quirinius* in AD 6–7 if Jesus is supposed to have been born before Herod's death in 4 BC. Moreover, distinguishing an ἀπογραφή of Mary and Joseph from a later ἀποτίμησις under Quirinius that assessed property in Judea is hardly a solution, since it leaves a decade between the two events, while the harmonizing approach that claims that Quirinius had two terms in office, in 6–4 BC and in AD 6–9, corresponding to a "first" census in Luke 2:2 and a second in Acts 5:37, has not proved convincing. Most scholars therefore assume that Luke's statements are historically imprecise or that there was an error in the sources he followed. (Possibly Luke has collapsed two events, the provincial census of Quirinius in AD 6–7 and the empire-wide census of Augustus in 8 BC, although it remains unclear whether Augustus's action affected Herod's kingdom.) Nevertheless, to the extent that Luke's use of the term ἀπογραφή emphasizes the counting and registration of *persons*, it recalls the sin of "numbering Israel" that subjected King David to divine punishment according to 2 Samuel 24:1–17. For a hated Gentile power to count the Jewish population was even more of a provocation. Therefore in Acts 5:37 Luke correctly understands that a Roman census (again ἀπογραφή) could provoke Jewish revolt, led in this case by Judas the Galilean. Although Luke does not explicitly associate this census (and revolt) with Quirinius in Acts as he does in his Gospel, Josephus makes precisely this connection, including the role of Judas (*Ant*. 18.4–10, 23–25). Luke therefore presents a generally reliable picture of Judaism under Roman fiscal administration. The birth of Jesus occurred during the time of the censuses and tax assessments of Caesar Augustus. The one and only God and Father of Jesus Christ used the hated order of the Roman emperor to allow his Christ to become human in Bethlehem. (See further P. Stuhlmacher, *Die Geburt des Immanuel* [2006^{2}], 48–50.)

4.1.2 In Luke 3:1–2 Luke reports that John the Baptist appeared on the scene in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, that is, in AD 27–28 (A. Strobel, in *BHH* 3:2223, pleads with impressive arguments for the year 26–27, because he begins the reign of Tiberius over the provinces already in AD 11–12). Luke's details can be followed exactly: Tiberius reigned from AD 14 to AD 37; Pontius Pilate was prefect of Judea from 26 to 36; Herod Antipas was tetrarch of Galilee from 4 BC to AD 40; Philip his brother was tetrarch of Transjordan from 4 BC to AD 33/34; Lysanius is attested in inscriptions as tetrarch of Abilene near the Antilebanon mountain range; Annas was high priest from AD 6 to AD 15 and remained influential afterward; his son-in-law Caiaphas held the same office from 18 to 36. Luke 3:1–2 therefore shows that the Evangelist spared no effort in reporting as exactly as possible the events he had investigated.

4.1.3 Luke also gives precise reports in Acts. The proceedings of the Jewish king Agrippa I against James the son of Zebedee and Peter described in Acts 12:1–3 can be dated relatively precisely to about AD 42; the proconsulate of Gallio (a brother of the philosopher Seneca) mentioned in Acts 18:12 dates to 51–52; and the procuratorship of Antonius Felix, who appears in Acts 23:24–26 and 24:22, dates to 49–59.

According to Luke, God acted for the benefit of Jews and Gentiles in Christ Jesus not just sometime and somewhere, but in concrete places and circumstances that are accessible to general historical memory.

4.2 Such accessibility does not however mean that the saving events can simply be absorbed into the chronological course of history. Luke sees the history of Jesus and the history of the spread of the apostolic witness as an indispensable, God-directed *salvation history*, in which God's kingdom spreads further and further until it reaches its goal at the end of time in the establishment of the kingdom for Israel that the prophets promised (cf. Acts 1:6; 3:21).

The Jewish Christian prehistories of Luke 1:5–2:52 already emphasize that Jesus is the messianic mediator of salvation promised to Israel (and the Gentiles) through whom God establishes his kingdom (cf. Luke 1:33). John the Baptist goes before Jesus as his forerunner in the spirit and power of Elijah in order "to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:17; cf. with Mal 3:23 [ET 4:5]). According to the Benedictus spoken by his father Zechariah (Luke 1:68–79), John's role as forerunner is part of the messianic saving event. With Jesus's ministry the prototypical realization of the kingdom of God began in the true sense of the word (cf. 4:16–21; 11:20); according to 17:21 ("the kingdom of God is *in your midst*" [ἐντὸς ὑμῶν]), Jesus is the kingdom in person (Origen). On

the orders of the risen one, the message of the kingdom is to be carried to the ends of the earth after Easter and proclaimed until all Jews and Gentiles have heard it (cf. Luke 24:47–48; Acts 2:36–40; 4:11–12; 10:36–43; 13:38–39; 17:30–31; 28:23–28). Only when this has happened will the promised “restoration of all things” (*ἀποκατάστασις πάντων*) come (cf. Acts 3:21), at a time that God alone knows and has determined (see above).

4.3 Because the discussion of the theological correctness or otherwise of the Lukan conception of salvation history has been ignited by *Luke 16:16*, two notes about this verse are necessary. It runs: “The law and the prophets were in force until John; since then, the good news of the kingdom of God has been proclaimed, and everyone *is urged* [or *forcibly attempts*, βιάζεται] to enter it” (NET).

4.3.1 Already in the first edition of his redaction-critical study *The Theology of St. Luke* (1960), H. Conzelmann designated Luke 16:16 as “the key to the topography of redemptive history” (23). According to Conzelmann, Luke distinguishes three salvation-historical epochs: the period of Israel, the period of Jesus’s ministry, and the period of the church, which ends with Christ’s parousia (16–17). The life of Jesus therefore lies at “the *centre* of the story of salvation” (37), but not in such a way that the end time has already dawned in him; rather, the future time of salvation is only prefigured. Conzelmann’s view has been taken over by many, but has also drawn a critical response from W. G. Kümmel (cf. his essay “Das Gesetz und die Propheten gehen bis Johannes”). According to Kümmel, Luke 16:16 differentiates not three but only two salvation-historical epochs. The first comprehends the law and prophets and extends up to but does not include John the Baptist. During the second epoch, which begins with the birth and public appearance of the Baptist (see above), the kingdom is proclaimed and everyone is urged (or forcibly tries) to enter it. The second epoch is still ongoing, because the work of proclamation given to the apostles (in Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8) is not yet completed. Or, formulated more precisely with G. Lohfink: “For Luke the entire salvation history is consummated in two great epochs: the *period of the law and the prophets*, in which the promises were given, and the *New Testament period of salvation*, in which the promises are fulfilled and the kingdom proclaimed. The New Testament period of salvation again unfolds for Luke in two phases, the *period of Jesus* and the *period of the church*” (*Die Himmelfahrt Jesu*, 255).

Under these circumstances one cannot accuse Luke of depriving the time of Jesus of its end-time component and illegitimately historicizing it. In his double work Luke has only clarified more enduringly than other New Testament authors that the church remains dependent on the unique historical tradition of the ministry of Jesus, and that it must continue the work of preaching the gospel given to it by the risen Christ until the message of Christ has actually reached the ends of the earth.

4.3.2 In Luke 16:16 the verb *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι* has the "kingdom," *ἡ βασιλεία*, as its logical object (it happens to be the grammatical subject here only because the verb is not middle deponent, as most frequently, but passive: *ἡ βασιλεία εὐαγγελίζεται*, "the kingdom is *being* proclaimed"). Although the roots of this usage lie in the Old Testament (cf. *εὐαγγελιζόμενος ἀγαθά*, "proclaiming good things," Isa. 52:7), it remains striking because within the New Testament, it is only in Luke that *ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ* is connected with *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι* and other verbs of speaking such as *λέγειν*, *λαλεῖν*, *κηρύσσειν*, *διαγγέλλειν*, *διαλέγεσθαι*, and *διαμαρτύρεσθαι* (cf. Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2, 11, 60; 16:16; Acts 1:3; 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31).

In his dissertation "The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God" (*Die Verkündigung der Gottesherrschaft* [1996]), A. Prieur has investigated these Lukan collocations and come to a notable result: When Luke speaks of the proclamation of the *βασιλεία*, he has in view "the Christian message," more precisely the message of God's saving plan and its realization. God announced this plan "through his Spirit in the law and prophets," and at its center stand "the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus, his ascension, as well as his activity as the exalted one" (281). The risen Christ himself makes "the eleven apostles witnesses of his saving plan" and later brings alongside them "Matthias as the twelfth and Paul as the thirteenth witness," so that their "insight into the saving plan opened up to them by Jesus and their preaching of the *βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ* based on this insight and enabled by the gift of the Spirit are authoritative for the church's proclamation" (282). The church has the one great task of proclaiming the realization of God's saving plan in the sending and the (still ongoing) work of his Christ. If one builds a bridge from Luke 4:43 by way of Luke 16:16 to Luke 24:44–49, from there to Acts 1:1–8, and from there to Acts 28:23, 31, then a great overarching structure becomes visible: Jesus proclaims the *βασιλεία* by his own divine authority, but after Easter the witnesses can complete the worldwide proclamation of the *βασιλεία* only by the power of the Holy Spirit whom the risen one has sent them (cf. Acts 1:8; 2:1–4; 4:8; 6:8; 13:9; 20:22–23). The Lukan double work does not reduce the gospel to the level of empirical history, but documents the realization of the gospel in the Christ event and its proclamation through the church, so that "Christians like Theophilus faced with the rise of false teaching in the church can be assured of the message to be believed and of the divine plan of salvation" (282).

4.3.3 There is nothing illegitimate about the way Luke has related the proclaimed gospel to salvation history and world history. Nor has he done this only under the dictates of the delay of the parousia. Luke has admittedly rolled back the expectation of an imminent final salvation (cf.

Luke 9:27; 19:11–27; 21:6), and he has the risen one say in Acts 1:7 that it is not for the apostles to know the dates of the end times that God himself has set. But he views the time between now and then positively rather than negatively: it can and should be used by the church for the world mission (cf. Mark 13:10 par.).

In the light of the evidence presented above, Luke hardly deserves a serious theological scolding. Rather, such censure itself rests on hermeneutically questionable premises: First an opposition that only makes sense to existentialist thought is postulated between word of God (gospel) and world history or salvation history, then this opposition is made the standard for Luke's writings, and finally a dividing line is drawn between Luke here and Paul and John there that is contradicted by both the texts and the course of early Christian mission history.

5 Luke's Picture of Christ. For Luke, Jesus is the messianic Son of God and evangelist of the poor who establishes God's kingdom and prototypically embodies it. In narrative terms, the establishment of the kingdom by Jesus is underscored by the fact that the devil departs from Jesus after he successfully withstands the temptation (4:13) but returns when Judas plans his betrayal of Jesus to the chief priests and scribes (22:3).

5.1 Luke 1:5–80 contains a whole series of Semitisms. To begin with, Luke 1:32, "Son of the Most High," may be compared with *4QAramaic Apocalypse* 4Q246 2:1, "He will be called son of God, and they will call him son of the Most High" (*DSSSE* 495). The Jewish Christian Magnificat of Mary (Luke 1:46–55) and the Benedictus of Zechariah (1:68–79) go back to Semitic models just as do the angels' Gloria in Excelsis Deo (2:14) and Simeon's Nunc Dimittis (2:29–32). H. Gese's analysis of the tradition of the virgin birth (on the tradition itself, see above, chap. 14, §3.4.2) strengthens the assumption that these artfully abridged narratives of the announcement and birth of Jesus and John the Baptist involve traditions that "the Hellenists may have taken . . . from the Jewish Christian circle of James, the Lord's brother" (F. Bovon, *Luke 1*, Hermeneia [2002], 30). Even in these old texts that were part of Proto-Luke, Jesus is the *messianic Son of God* who becomes human in fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14, through whom the kingdom promised to Israel in Isaiah 9:6 (ET 9:7) is established (cf. Luke 1:32–33 and 1:78–79). Already at his birth Jesus is called χριστὸς κύριος, "the Messiah, the Lord," by an angel of the Lord (Luke 2:11 NRSV), and after his resurrection he is exalted to the right hand of God and made "Lord and Messiah" (cf. Acts 2:36 with Phil. 2:6–11). At his baptism and

transfiguration Jesus's status as Son of God is confirmed by God's voice (cf. Luke 3:22; 9:35). The subordination of the Son to the Father is not questioned by Luke (cf. 4:8, 12; 10:21, 27; 22:39–46; Acts 1:7; etc.). But the Son remains the quintessential representative of the kingdom (cf. Luke 17:21), to whom worship is due even before he is taken up into the heavenly world (cf. 24:52).

5.2 According to the sermon outline of Acts 10:36–43 (see above, 560–61, §1.5), Jesus's mission is to be understood from the perspective of Psalm 107:20 and Isaiah 52:7 (Nah. 2:1 [ET 1:15]). He is the God-sent word by which God preaches his promised salvific peace to the children of Israel (Acts 10:36). After Jesus's baptism by John, God anointed him with the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:37–38; cf. Isa. 61:1–2), thus empowering him for his messianic work (cf. with Luke 3:22). He entered his ministry in God's strength (cf. Isa. 58:11), doing good and healing all the demon possessed (Acts 10:38). This view is taken up in the Gospel of Luke: The appearance of the Virgin's son from on high is meant for those who live in darkness and the shadow of death (cf. 1:78–79 with Isa. 9:1); he is the promised *messianic evangelist of the poor* (cf. 4:16–21; 7:18–23), and the main addressees of his work are "the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame" (14:21). This is shown not only by the blessings and woes that begin the Sermon on the Plain (cf. 6:20–23 with Isa. 61:1–2 and 6:24–26 with Isa. 65:13–14), but also by the reports of Jesus's acceptance of tax collectors and sinners (cf. 5:27–32; 7:36–50; 19:1–10), his raising of the widow's son at Nain (7:11–17), his healing of the crippled woman (13:10–17) and the ten lepers (17:11–19), and his instructions for the rich to invite the poor to their banquets (cf. 14:12–14). Jesus defends and explains his behavior in his parables of the lost—the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost (prodigal) son (15:3–7, 8–10, 11–32)—and summarizes his mission's goal at the end of his encounter with the tax collector Zacchaeus: "The Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost" (19:10; cf. also the variant reading at 9:55–56, where after rebuking James and John for wanting to call down fire from heaven on the Samaritans, Jesus adds: "You do not know what spirit you are of, for the Son of Man has not come to destroy the lives of human beings but to save them" [NRSV margin]).

Luke's beatitudes and woes in Luke 6:20–26 as compared with Matthew's version in Matthew 5:3–12, his warnings about riches and greed (cf. 12:13–15, 33–34 [special Lukan material]; 18:18–23, 24–30), and his parable of the rich man and Lazarus (16:19–31) all show that Luke had no tendency

to spiritualize Jesus's care for the poor. Nevertheless, he did not limit the circle of those helped by Jesus to the socially poor and weak alone, but rather measured people's poverty and need by their distance from God (cf. 19:1–10).

5.3 In Acts 3:15 Jesus is called the ἀρχηγὸς τῆς ζωῆς, "the leader to life" (German: *Anführer zum Leben*; cf. "Leader and Savior" in Acts 5:31 NRSV) or "author of life" (3:15 NRSV). Jesus appears as the leader to life above all in the travel narrative in Luke 9:51–19:27. This text sequence narrates Jesus's progress toward Jerusalem in considerable breadth (cf. 9:51 with 13:22; 17:11; 18:31). According to J. Roloff, "Jesus' way to Jerusalem is portrayed as an event of fulfillment" (*Die Kirche im Neuen Testament* [1993], 196).

Luke's travel report is easier to understand when one is clear about the background traditions Luke assumes. According to Luke 13:31–33, Jesus preaches and ministers like a prophet: He casts out demons and performs healings and must be on his way today and tomorrow at God's behest, but he expects to suffer the typical fate of a prophet in Jerusalem (cf. Neh. 9:26). Which particular prophet is in view becomes clear to the readers of the Gospel from the allusion to Deuteronomy 18:15 in Luke 9:35 ("This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!"): Jesus is the promised *end-time prophet like Moses*, to whom the readers must listen. Moreover, according to Isaiah 52:7 (Nah. 2:1 [ET 1:15]), the *messianic messenger of peace* will hurry over the mountains to Jerusalem and announce to Zion, "Your God reigns!" Jesus himself is this messenger (cf. Acts 10:36). On his journey to Jerusalem Jesus brings people God's kingdom or βασιλεία in three ways: he issues calls to discipleship (cf. Luke 9:57–62; 14:25–35; 18:24–30), honors God's will (cf. 10:25–28 + 29–37), and establishes the kingdom through his exorcisms (cf. 11:20), so that the kingdom is present in the people's midst in and with Jesus (cf. 17:21). Jerusalem's tragedy lies in the fact that it does not recognize Jesus as the kingdom's representative (cf. 13:34–35; 19:41–44) and arranges for the death of this God-sent "author of life" within its own walls (cf. 13:33 with 18:31–34).

5.4 In addition to the christological motifs already mentioned, it must not be forgotten that Luke saw Jesus as the *Suffering Servant* and presented him vividly as such to his readers. According to Luke 22:37, Jesus saw his path of suffering sketched out before him in Isaiah 53:10–12, while according to Luke 24:25–27 and 44–46, the risen one taught his disciples one last time that the Christ *had* to suffer (ἔδει παθεῖν) everything that the prophets had written about him.

However, Luke does not leave the matter with these references to the Servant of Isaiah 53, but also presents Jesus as the Servant in narrative form: In his farewell Passover meal with the Twelve, Jesus consecrates himself to a vicarious atoning death on their behalf (cf. Luke 22:19–20). As the Servant intercedes for transgressors and makes the many righteous according to Isaiah 53:11–12, so Jesus prays for Peter that his faith will not fail (Luke 22:31–32), pleads during his execution for his enemies who do not know what they are doing (cf. the old textual variant in Luke 23:34 [bracketed in the text of the NRSV]), and opens the gate of paradise to one of the criminals crucified with him (cf.

23:43 with *T. Levi* 18:10). Even *before* Jesus's death the curtain in front of the temple's holy of holies is torn in two according to Luke 23:44–45 (this occurs only *afterward* in Mark 15:38 par. Matt. 27:51), and then according to Luke 23:46 this virgin-born Son of God ends his life on earth with the cry from Psalm 31:6a (ET 31:5a), which has become an evening prayer for Judaism: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (Luke's present tense for "commend," παρατίθεμαι, fits better with the event and the Hebrew text than the Septuagint's future παραθήσομαι). Because the Roman centurion immediately confesses, "Surely this was a *righteous man*" (Luke 23:47 NIV; the predicate δίκαιος or "righteous" seems to allude to the righteous Servant of Isa. 53:11 [NRSV's "innocent" weakens the allusion]), the reader may readily supply the scene of the next half-verse in Psalm 31:6b (ET 31:5b), "you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God." *The Lukan Jesus dies only after he has completed his God-given messianic work of redemption (cf. Luke 1:68; 2:38) on the cross.* In the speeches of Acts Jesus is explicitly given the title παῖς θεοῦ or "Servant of God" (cf. Acts 3:13, 26; 4:27, 30), and finally in his conversation with the Ethiopian eunuch, Philip applies Isaiah 53:7–8 to Jesus's death (cf. Acts 8:32–35).

5.5 For Luke, Jesus is also the end-time *Judge and Savior*. In 12:8–9 he presents a Son of Man saying that can be traced back to Jesus with reasonable certainty (cf. above, 141, 142–43, §7.3.3): "And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God; but whoever denies me before others will be denied before the angels of God."

The saying presupposes the final judgment scene of Daniel 7:13–14 (cf. with *1 En.* 61–62). But although Jesus begins in first person with "I" and "me," he speaks of the Son of Man in the third person, as in all the other synoptic Son of Man sayings. K. Berger has pointed out that such variation between the first and third person finds a parallel in God's own speech in the Old Testament prophets (cf. Amos 5:4–12; Ezek. 44:2, 5; Jer. 14:10; 31:38–40; Mal. 3:23 [ET 4:5]). He correctly concludes that "When Jesus speaks of the Son of Man in the third person he means himself. He thereby imitates the style of God's own speech in the prophets. He speaks of himself in the same way that God does. It is precisely in this way that he proves himself to be a legitimate representative of God" (*Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums* [1995^{2}], 665).

The final judgment over which Jesus will preside as the Son of Man at the end of days is also referred to in Luke 21:27 and 22:69. Such sayings continue into Acts: According to Acts 10:42 and 17:31, God has appointed Jesus as the judge of the living and the dead. As in many other New Testament witnesses, Jesus in Luke and Acts is both the Son of Man and Judge of the World and the end-time Savior (σωτήρ) in one person (on the appellation σωτήρ, see Luke 2:11; Acts 5:31; 13:23).

5.6 It has long been noticed that Luke sets *other soteriological accents* from those found in the old (Jerusalem) catechetical formula of 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 and in Mark and Paul.

Such differences have been pointed out for example by G. Delling (*Der Kreuzestod Jesu in der urchristlichen Verkündigung* [1972], 76–97) and A. Weiser (*Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, vol. 2 [1993], 144–47). The ransom saying of Mark 10:45 (cf. Matt. 20:28), "the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many," does not appear in the Gospel of Luke, but rather only the paraenetically reworked variant of this saying in Luke 22:24–27, including the statement that "the greatest among you must become like the youngest (ὁ νεώτερος), and the leader (ὁ ἡγούμενος) like one who serves" (v. 26). Yet this does not have the end time in view, but rather the church in which the young men or νεώτεροι (cf. Acts 5:6; 1 Tim. 5:1; Titus 2:6) and the leaders or ἡγούμενοι (cf. Acts 15:22; Heb. 13:7, 17, 24) stand opposite one another (on the relationship of the Markan and Lukan versions of this saying, see J. Jeremias, "Das Lösegeld für Viele (Mk. 10,45)," in *Abba* [1966], 216–29, esp. 224–27). Luke knows that Paul spoke about the forgiveness of sins and justification granted in and through Christ (cf. Acts 13:38–39) and about the church that God "obtained with the blood of his own Son" (Acts 20:28). But he himself speaks about Jesus's atoning death only in the course of his detailed report of the Last Supper (cf. Luke 22:19–20 with 1 Cor. 11:23–25) and in the scene of Jesus's death (Luke 23:45–47: see above), which diverges from the report in Mark and Matthew and points forward to John 19:30.

According to Luke, Jesus effects salvation for Jews and Gentiles through his entire messianic existence for others, including his intercession for his enemies and his sacrificial death. His appearance on the scene is God's demonstration of grace par excellence (cf. Luke 1:79; 2:10–11). He is Savior, teacher, and example for all who confess him (cf. Luke 1:79 with 6:20–49 and Luke 23:33–34, 46 with Acts 7:59–60). Acts repeatedly points out that believers are granted "forgiveness of sins," ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν (cf. Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18), in the one and only *name* Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, which encapsulates Jesus's entire messianic existence (cf. Acts 3:6; 4:12). The how and why of this forgiveness is not further explained, but the two decisive conditions for its reception are given: repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Acts 2:38; 5:31; 11:18; 20:21; 26:20). Soteriologically, Luke's statements are therefore more open than those in the traditional formula of 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 and in Paul, yet they by no means contradict them and always have the saving work of the kingdom's representative in view (see below).

5.7 Luke concludes his Gospel and begins Acts with a doublet report of Jesus's forty-day period of encounters with his disciples from Easter until the ascension (cf. Luke 24:13–52 and Acts 1:1–11).

As in Luke 4:1–2, the forty days are a holy round number, used for example for Moses's reception of the Torah (cf. Exod. 34:28; Deut. 9:9) and for Elijah's flight from Mount Carmel to Horeb (cf. 1 Kings 19:8). These forty days were filled with appearances, teachings, and shared meals that Jesus allowed his disciples to experience. The special feature of Luke's reports lies in their concentration on Jerusalem and in the fact that although the other New Testament authors report about special

Easter appearances and Jesus's exaltation to God's right hand, they mention neither a long time between Easter and the exaltation, nor the ascension (cf. Matt. 28:16–20 and John 20:1–21:23 as well as Rom. 1:3–4; 1 Tim. 3:16; and Heb. 1:1–4). We should not assume that the presentation of Luke 24 and Acts 1 is simply Luke's personal construct. Probably here as well the Antiochene tradition gave him the decisive leads. Luke's literary accomplishment is to have dovetailed the era of Jesus's ministry with the era of the church by means of his report about the forty days and to have clarified above and beyond Matthew 28:16–20 that the period of their first encounters with the risen one gave the Jerusalem Easter witnesses groundbreaking knowledge for the faith and teaching of the church as well as for the mission to Jews and Gentiles.

Christologically the two reports about the forty days in Luke and Acts carry great weight, in four ways: (1) They make it clear to every reader that Jesus rose *bodily* and also appeared this way to his disciples (cf. Luke 24:36–43). He thereby bars the door to any attempts to spiritualize Jesus's resurrection, just as clearly as do Matthew (cf. 28:8–10, 16–20) and John (cf. 20:11–29). (2) It becomes apparent in each report that Jesus once again had table fellowship with the disciples who had been unfaithful to him and in this way freshly *accepted* them (cf. Luke 24:13–35; Acts 1:4; 10:41). (3) The special position of Peter is clearly emphasized: After Jesus in Luke 22:32 prays for him and instructs him to strengthen his brothers once he himself has returned to his Father, the subsequent formula (which is related to 1 Cor. 15:5b) in Luke 24:34: "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" makes it clear that he is the first and foremost apostolic eyewitness. (4) As in Matthew 28:18–20, the disciples are called during these forty days to spread the message of the kingdom from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth (cf. Luke 24:47–49; Acts 1:8). In order to be able to discharge their duty as witnesses, they are instructed by the risen one in the christological understanding of the Holy Scriptures (cf. Luke 24:25–27, 44–47) and told how things stand with the kingdom (cf. Acts 1:3, 6–7). The authority for their missionary proclamation lies in the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus will send from heaven (cf. Luke 24:49; Acts 1:5, 8; 2:33).

The mission to the nations that emanates from Jerusalem is intended and authorized by the risen Christ himself according to Luke. The decisive content of the missionary message that is to be carried from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth is the establishment of the kingdom of God in and through Jesus. This agrees in substance with Matthew 24:14 and 28:19–20 (see above, 608–12, §7), except for the fact that the beginnings in Luke are not set on the mountain in Galilee but in Jerusalem. This probably reflects the Antiochene perspective on the mission to the nations (cf. Luke 24:47 and Acts 1:8 with Rom. 15:19).

5.8 The *ascension* is presented in Luke 24:50–51 and Acts 1:9 as a rapture to heaven: Jesus is lifted up, surrounded by the cloud of God's

presence, and taken up in glory (cf. 1 Tim. 3:16). Only from this time forward does he sit at the right hand of God where he exercises divine dominion (cf. Acts 2:33; 5:31); from there he is also expected to return in order finally to establish the "kingdom for Israel" (cf. Acts 1:11; 3:21).

If one takes all these christological motifs together, a rich picture of Jesus emerges. Without a doubt, Luke also represents a *high Christology*. In Luke 1:78 he presents Jesus as the messianic "*branch* from on high," using the same term that the Septuagint uses to translate the Hebrew term for a "branch" in Zechariah 3:8 and 6:12 (צֶמַח, *ἀνατολή*; cf. alternatively NRSV, "the *dawn* from on high," with Jer. 23:5 LXX, "I will raise up for David a righteous *dawn*"). Jesus became man, performed his messianic work on earth, suffered death on the cross, taught his disciples about the kingdom for forty days after Easter, and was enthroned in heaven as Lord and Messiah (cf. Acts 2:36) in order to return to earth after the completion of the mission to the nations and fully establish God's kingdom. Luke's writings therefore teach us to see Jesus as the *messianic representative of the kingdom par excellence*.

6 Luke's Picture of the Church. The old allegation that Luke developed only an undifferentiated ideal picture of the "one holy church" must be drastically revised. Already in 1975 G. Lohfink commented that "after the loss of respect that Luke has experienced as a *historian* in recent years, it is surprising to discover how carefully he differentiates in the question of the origin of the church" (*Die Sammlung Israels*, 98). J. Roloff has similarly dropped this allegation in his presentation of Lukan ecclesiology (cf. *Die Kirche im Neuen Testament*, 190–221). What we actually find in Luke is a description of the path the church took to become the true Israel according to God's will.

The equation of the "church of Jesus Christ" with the true people of God goes back at its core to Jesus (cf. Matt. 16:18–19), is held in high regard by the early church in Jerusalem, and is also taken up in the schools of Paul (cf. Gal. 6:16; 2 Cor. 6:16–18; Eph. 4:4–6) and John (cf. Rev. 7:4–8; 14:1–5; John 15:1–8).

6.1 According to Lohfink's presentation, the church undergoes four stages of development. The first begins in and with *Israel*. Stephen's speech (Acts 7:2–53) takes up the Deuteronomistic allegation that ever since the times of the fathers, Israel has been stiff-necked and repeatedly opposed the Holy Spirit, broke the law, and persecuted the prophets (cf. Acts 7:51–53

with 1 Kings 19:10, 14; 2 Chron. 36:16). Yet a final verdict has by no means been spoken over Israel. Rather, by the examples of Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth, Mary the Lord’s mother, the aged Simeon, and the prophetess Hannah, the Lukan prehistories show that there were also pious and righteous people in Israel who looked forward to the promised salvation and lived accordingly (cf. Luke 2:38). God’s historical act of grace in and through Jesus is directed toward this true Israel.

The second stage is the work of *John the Baptist*. His birth marks the beginning of the historical realization of the salvation promised to Israel (cf. Luke 1:13–17 with 1:76–78). His task is to prepare the way for the kingdom as the Elijah *redivivus*, to be a forerunner to Jesus, and to call all Israel to repentance. Luke 3:1–20 reports John’s appearance on the scene and his preaching of repentance.

With the birth and public appearance of *Jesus* comes the decisive time for the kingdom to be (prototypically) realized and proclaimed. Luke emphasizes that Jesus, the Twelve whom he sent out (cf. Luke 9:1–6), and the seventy-two others (cf. Luke 10:1–12) all proclaimed the kingdom of God throughout Israel. But the result was simply that Jerusalem rejected the message of Jesus (cf. Luke 13:34) and that only a “little flock” was gathered around him, on whom he verbally conferred the end-time kingdom twice during his earthly ministry (cf. Luke 12:32; 22:29–30 with Dan. 7:14, 27).

Finally, during the *forty days between Easter and the ascension* the risen Christ freshly accepts the disciples as his servants and assigns them the task of carrying the message of the kingdom from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth, as soon as they have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit (cf. Luke 24:47–49 and Acts 1:4–5, 8). This mission among Jews and Gentiles is principally carried out by the apostles chosen by Jesus (cf. Acts 10:41). Those not among this number, including Stephen, Philip, Barnabas, and Paul, can also be authoritative witnesses of Christ according to Luke, but not members of the Twelve (cf. Acts 1:15–26).

6.2 The gathering of the people of God from among the Jews and Gentiles takes place in three steps: After the apostles receive the Spirit on Pentecost, Peter and John begin the mission among the *Jews* in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 2–5). Philip testifies about the kingdom also to the *Samaritans* (cf. Acts 8:4–13). Finally God opens the door of faith even to the *Gentiles*, first

through Peter (cf. Acts 10), then through the followers of Stephen who were driven out of Jerusalem (cf. Acts 11:19–21), and finally through Barnabas and Paul (cf. Acts 11:25–26; 13:2–14:28). At the apostolic council reported by Luke in Acts 15, James the Lord’s brother comes to two realizations: He sees the founding of the early church as the fulfillment of the prophetic promise of Amos 9:11–12 that God would rebuild David’s fallen tent, that is, Israel (cf. Acts 15:16–17). He furthermore notes that it is completely in keeping with the spirit of this prophecy that God should also take for himself “a people for his name” from among the Gentiles (Acts 15:14). James then makes the decision that the Gentiles should not be required to accept circumcision but only to keep the minimal Noachian laws (cf. Acts 15:19–21). *The true Israel therefore consists of Jews and Gentiles who believe in Jesus*.

This understanding of the place of the Gentiles in God’s plan can be found not only in the LXX version of Amos 9:11–12, which explicitly says that God will rebuild David’s fallen tent so that the rest of humanity, the Gentiles, will “seek” (*ἐκζητήσωσιν*) him, but also in the Hebrew text, which says that God will rebuild David’s fallen tent so that David’s royal descendants “may *possess* (יִירְשׁוּ) the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name.” For, as Jörg Jeremias has pointed out, the Hebrew text of Amos 9:11 has in view the reestablishment of David’s reign according to God’s ideal beginnings with the Davidic dynasty, “as in the days of old” (an allusion to the promise to the Davidide in 2 Sam. 7), while verse 12 focuses on the Davidides’ sphere of rule, “those nations and boundaries that constituted David’s kingdom,” since God mentions the nations “upon whom my name has been called,” which is a legal expression of ownership (J. Jeremias, *The Book of Amos* [1998], 167). This perspective corresponds exactly to the Jerusalem mission tradition that stands behind Matthew 28:16–20 (see above, 608–12, §7).

According to the end of Acts, the process of gathering this true Israel is unfinished and must continue. Only when “all nations” have heard the testimony about God’s kingdom (cf. Luke 24:47 with Acts 28:28) will Jesus come, at a time known to God alone, to “restore the kingdom to Israel” (Acts 1:6).

Luke’s Jewish Christian Antiochene view of the church and mission leaves itself exposed to the same criticism as Matthew’s: Luke’s writings “lack any indication that Luke shared Paul’s hopeful salvation-historical perspective on Israel (Romans 11). There is no hint of the idea of an ongoing place in God’s saving plan for those Jews who have refused to put their faith in Jesus” (J. Roloff, *Die Kirche im Neuen Testament*, 206). The hopes for Israel are absorbed into the new people of God of Jews and Gentiles headed by Jesus the Christ. As soon as this view is adopted by a majority Gentile Christian church, a problematic “substitution” theory arises in which the church has taken Israel’s place before God. One must constantly be on guard against this theory.

6.3 In composing his two volumes, Luke worked with a *concept of tradition* that points forward to the Pastoral Letters and became authoritative for the ancient church: The teaching about the kingdom of God as given by Jesus to the apostles during the forty days between Easter and the ascension is definitive for the church and its mission. This teaching is retained in the circle of the twelve apostles freshly gathered by Peter in Jerusalem. The apostles guarantee the continuity of church teaching from Jerusalem to Samaria (cf. Acts 8:14–17) and on to Antioch (cf. 11:22–26). Paul and Barnabas are sent out into mission through prayer and the laying on of hands in Antioch (13:3), and continuity of teaching in the churches they founded is guaranteed by the elders (*επίσκοποι*) and overseers (*πρεσβύτεροι*) whom they likewise appointed by prayer and presumably the laying on of hands (cf. 14:23; 20:28 with 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6; the hand laying in Acts 14:23 may be implied by the Greek word translated by "appoint," *χειροτονεῖν*). The Jerusalem apostles are then also the ones who decide about the legitimacy of the mission to Jews and Gentiles (cf. Acts 15:6–29). Paul is made to conform to this concept of tradition (see below), and it only indirectly leaves room for the independent witness of the Johannine writings. This concept of tradition has definitely helped to stem heretical infiltration of the churches (cf. Acts 20:28–31), but it has also submitted the spirit, teaching, and life of the church to stricter norms than Paul and John endorsed.

7 Luke's Presentation of Paul. Many exegetes today shy away from the ancient church's identification of "Luke" the author of Luke and Acts with Luke the coworker and companion of Paul mentioned in Philemon 24, Colossians 4:14, and 2 Timothy 4:11. In their view a real travel companion of Paul would never have withheld from him the title of apostle, or reported about the apostolic council so differently than Paul himself does in Galatians 2:1–10, or presented the Pauline proclamation of grace in such an attenuated form as the author of Acts does (see, respectively, Acts 13:16–41; 15:1–29; and 20:18–35). It is also frequently considered impossible that the historical Paul had Timothy circumcised, as Acts asserts (cf. Acts 16:3 with Paul's critical statements about circumcision in Gal. 2:3; 5:1–13; 6:11–16; and Phil. 3:2–3). It is just as problematic for some interpreters that the Lukan Paul stresses that he does not disregard or break the law (cf. Acts 24:14; 25:8; 28:17), in spite of his criticisms of the law attested in the

genuine Pauline letters, including Galatians 3:13, 17–18; 4:21–31; Romans 10:4; Philippians 3:7–8; etc. However, even U. Schnelle, who likewise considers the identification of the author of the Lukan writings with Luke the companion of Paul to be impossible, nevertheless correctly concludes that “the Lukan picture of Paul is the real theological center of Acts” and adds that “Paul should by no means be degraded in contrast to the Twelve, for he is the ‘thirteenth witness’ called by the Lord himself (cf. Acts 22:15; 26:16)” (*The History and Theology of the New Testament Writings,* 274).

7.1 There is no dispute about the fact that it is first and foremost the Pauline Letters that show us who the apostle was and how he taught. Nevertheless, a critical attempt must still be made to fit together Paul’s own statements with Luke’s reports about him. This is necessary because Luke does not seek to criticize Paul in Acts but rather to highlight his significance: more than half his book is dedicated to his presentation of Paul. Three times Luke presents his readers with the story of how the persecutor Saul was overpowered by an appearance of Christ and made into a servant of the same Lord he had persecuted (cf. Acts 9:1–29; 22:3–21; 26:9–23). According to Acts 13:47 and 26:16–18, Paul is the “thirteenth witness” (C. Burchard) chosen by Christ in accordance with Isaiah 49:6 (“a light for the Gentiles”): He has been appointed “to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me” (Acts 26:18). This specially chosen witness is consistently presented in Acts as a faithful servant of his Lord (cf. esp. Acts 20:17–38). Because the “we” passages in Acts 16:10–17, 20:5–15, 21:1–18, and 27:1–28:16 offer evidence that the author was Paul’s travel companion (see above), we must assume that Luke in fact accompanied Paul from his second missionary journey onward, was with him in Jerusalem, and also traveled with him on his last journey to Rome.

7.2 In seeking to understand the Lukan presentation of Paul, there are several points to consider: Luke was a companion of Paul but not necessarily also a member of his party; if he accompanied the apostle as a physician on behalf of the church of Antioch (see above), then his nearness to and distance from Paul can be explained without difficulty. Luke’s travels with Paul were not only his Christian duty but also, as for other physicians of the early imperial period, an essential part of his medical practice and training: “The physicians of the early imperial period were also great

travelers. . . . These travels promoted their continuing education by providing essential personal contacts, but they also served medical practice by facilitating public demonstrations of medical techniques and allowing the traveler to search for information about new drugs, plants, minerals, and therapies" (Hengel and Schwemer, *Paulus zwischen Damaskus und Antiochien*, 20). As a chronicler, Luke in his presentation of Paul followed the material that the mission church of Antioch offered him. Christians in Antioch respected Paul but were never slavishly dependent on him, and it is uncertain whether this church, which neither Barnabas nor Paul had founded, participated in Paul's collection from his Gentile churches for the poor in Jerusalem; the church was not obligated to do so. Paul and Barnabas engaged in Gentile mission from a base in Antioch for many years, but at the so-called Antioch incident, which arose when the Jewish Christians broke off their table fellowship with the Gentile Christians, the majority of the Antioch church, including Barnabas, sided with Peter (and James) and not with Paul (cf. Gal. 2:11–21). Similarly, in his description of the apostolic council in Acts 15:1–35, which departs from Paul's version in Galatians 2:1–10, Luke is following the view and documentation of the event that the people in Antioch had. However, concerning his travels with Paul and Paul's arrest in Jerusalem, imprisonment in Caesarea, transfer to Rome, and first years of his ministry there under house arrest, Luke reported from his own perspective.

7.2.1 Because Luke knew Paul personally, it was unnecessary for him to check his presentation against the copies of Paul's letters that had been collected for example in Rome. But this only makes it all the more interesting to note that Luke's presentation of Paul agrees in important ways with the Paul of the letters. Paul understands himself as the chosen witness to the Gentiles called by God before he was born in accordance with Isaiah 49:1 (cf. Gal. 1:15–16), and in 1 Corinthians 15:10 he stresses that he worked harder and accomplished more as a missionary by God's grace than all the other apostles. Luke makes both of these points in Acts (the former by reference to Isa. 49:6 in Acts 13:47, the latter by the great space devoted to Paul's mission). But there is still more: Paul fitted into the Jewish Christian concept of the Gentile mission that was being followed in Jerusalem and Antioch not only according to Luke but also according to his own testimony. He accorded great significance to his agreement with the Jerusalem "pillars," and to the extent that this included his obligation to

"remember the poor" (Gal. 2:10), which he discharged by his collection for the saints in Jerusalem that ultimately led to his imprisonment and death, he actually gave up his life in service of the Jerusalem mother church (cf. Gal. 2:2, 9–10 with Rom. 15:16, 19, 25–27). As to Paul's circumcision of Timothy mentioned in Acts 16:2–3, if a young man like Timothy, born of a Jewish mother, had remained uncircumcised, Paul could not have taken him into the synagogues; therefore Acts 16:2–3 is historically believable (and, moreover, agrees with Paul's mission principle of "becoming like a Jew to win Jews" in 1 Cor. 9:20 and with the positive evaluation of circumcision in Rom. 2:25). James's advice that Paul should use part of the collection to pay the expenses of four poor Nazirites so that they could perform their purification rites and fulfill their vows (Acts 21:23–24) corresponds exactly to Paul's statement that the collection was meant for "the poor among the saints at Jerusalem" (Rom. 15:26). Not only Luke's Paul points to his faithfulness to the Torah, but Paul himself (cf. Rom. 3:31; 8:4, 7). Luke's presentation of an apostle who worked with his own hands (cf. Acts 18:3; 20:34) agrees with Paul's own testimony (cf. 1 Cor. 4:12; 9:6; 1 Thess. 2:9; 2 Thess. 3:8; etc.). The same holds for Luke's picture of Paul as an apostolic miracle worker (cf. Acts 14:8–10; 16:18; 19:11–12; etc. with 2 Cor. 12:12; Rom. 15:19; and Mark 6:7 par.). Finally, Paul's terse references to his sufferings in 2 Corinthians 11:23–27 find no better illustration than in the numerous depictions in Acts.

7.2.2 Nevertheless, there are substantial differences between the presentation of Paul in Acts and that of Paul's own letters. The title of "an apostle of Jesus Christ" for which Paul fought his whole life (cf. Gal. 1:1; 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:1–10; Rom. 1:1) is reserved only for members of the Twelve according to Luke (cf. Acts 1:2, 26; 10:39–42); Paul and Barnabas are called *ἀπόστολοι* in Acts 14:4 and 14 only in the broader sense in which that term can refer to the "emissaries" of the churches (cf. 2 Cor. 8:23 NJB; Phil. 2:25), because they had been "sent" on their mission by the church of Antioch (cf. Acts 13:2–3, using *ἀπολύω* rather than *ἀποστέλλω*). The palpable tension in Paul's letters between the priority of the Twelve and himself, who was appointed later but was nonetheless an exceptionally effective missionary (cf. 1 Cor. 15:8–10), has been eased in Acts by Luke's references to Paul's special role and unique qualifications for his task (cf. Acts 13:47; 26:16–18). Although Luke thereby falls short of doing complete justice to Paul's personal claim (even though Paul himself had

made inner peace with his missionary rivals during his Roman imprisonment, according to Phil. 1:12–18), he nevertheless succeeds in showing Paul’s unique missionary significance.

Similarly, the sharp contours of the Pauline doctrine of the justification of the ungodly by faith alone apart from the works of the law (cf. Rom. 4:5; 5:6) have been largely rounded off in Luke’s presentation of Paul’s preaching in Acts 13:38–39 and 26:17–18. But in this respect Luke hardly proceeded any differently from Paul’s own pupils, who treated their teacher’s proclamation of justification as a traditional theme (cf. Eph. 2:8–9; Titus 3:5).

7.2.3 Luke composed Acts only after Jerusalem had already been destroyed and Paul had suffered martyrdom (under Nero?). At that time the apostle was a controversial figure even in Rome (cf. 2 Tim. 4:16). When one takes this into account and also compares Luke’s picture of Paul with that of the Pastoral Letters and *1 Clement* 5:5–7, Luke appears as an *apologist for Paul in the post-Pauline period*. He paid Paul great respect, and he acknowledges the special role of this “thirteenth witness” in spreading the gospel of the kingdom of God by reporting to Theophilus (and all his readers) not only about the Twelve and the work of Peter, but even more extensively about the election of Paul and the unique way that led him from Damascus to Rome.

8 Summary and Evaluation. In looking back on the two writings of Luke, we emphasize the following points.

8.1 We are indebted to Luke’s double work for unique reports about Jesus’s birth, his work on earth, and the impact of this work on the church of Jews and Gentiles that he intended to found. Moreover, only Acts enables us to follow historically the founding of the early church in Jerusalem, the course of the mission among Jews and Gentiles, and Paul’s path from Damascus to Rome.

8.2 The traditions Luke presents are not created by him arbitrarily but go back to the mission church in Antioch and his memories of his own travels. Luke’s Gospel is no less significant for our knowledge of Jesus than the two other Synoptic Gospels, and the value of Acts is indisputable, despite its fragmentary and tendential coverage.

8.3 Luke was an engaged Evangelist and a careful chronicler. He was mainly interested in presenting the salvation history that is fundamental for

the church of Jesus Christ. Jesus's story is a messianic event of fulfillment and is tied to the founding story of the Christian mission through the forty-day ministry of the risen one between Easter and the ascension. This salvation history has left its mark on world history, but it must be understood above all as the history of the realization of the kingdom of God that is determined only by God's will. The key representative of his kingdom was and is Jesus Christ.

8.4 Luke's picture of Paul corresponds to that of Paul's letters and supplements it, but also departs from it in a few important points. It can best be understood as an attempt to present the importance of Paul for mission history at a time when Paul's legacy was increasingly being criticized.

8.5 The church continues to depend on Luke's account of its place in salvation and mission history. The hypercriticism of Luke inspired by F. Overbeck and continued in the second half of the twentieth century especially by the Bultmann school can and must be overcome, because it is based on the projection of a one-sided kerygmatically accented Paulinism onto Luke's writings and does violence to them as tradition texts.

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PART SIX

The Proclamation of John and His School

The Johannine writings include the Gospel of John, the three letters of John, and the Revelation of John (the Apocalypse). Although it is still debated whether and to what extent they belong together, there is no doubt about the theological importance of the Gospel and the letters; by contrast, the place and significance of Revelation in the Johannine corpus and in the New Testament as a whole are highly contested. This state of affairs would seem to suggest dealing with the Johannine writings separately in the following chapters, in such a way that the Gospel and the letters move closer together while the Apocalypse moves further away from them. Nevertheless, such a procedure would lead to repetitions and also has other disadvantages. It fails to account for the fact that the ancient church attempted to trace all the Johannine writings back to a single (apostolic) author, and it obscures the tradition-historical connections between them. If one respects these lines of tradition, another method of presentation must be chosen. An introductory chapter must first describe the development of the Johannine tradition as a whole and explain why it can be called a school tradition. Further chapters must then sketch how differently, yet consistently, the members of the school of John (the elder) thought about Jesus Christ, faith and love, and the church. If one proceeds in this manner, then the obvious differences between the Apocalypse, the letters, and the Gospel are not glossed over, yet at the same time the astonishing theological breadth and independence of the Johannine teaching are brought out more clearly than by a presentation that would separate the writings. We therefore seek to follow the second, more holistic type of presentation. As must be shown specifically at the end, while the preaching and teaching of the Johannine school is in many respects totally independent and biblically highly important, it is not in every respect the high point of the message of the New Testament. The sum and center of the New Testament proclamation are not to be determined by John alone, but on the basis of the teaching of all the authoritative witnesses.

CHAPTER 35

The Tradition of the Johannine School

The Johannine writings consist of five New Testament books: the three letters of John, the Gospel of John, and Revelation. The ancient church ascribed all these books to the apostle John. Today this judgment is almost universally questioned. At the same time, scholars continue to ask how many of these writings can be attributed to a common Johannine school tradition. In such a situation the scope of this tradition can only be determined after a series of questions has been considered: How is the particular linguistic stamp of the Johannine writings to be evaluated? How are their authorial designations to be understood? What relationship did these five books have to one another? What does it mean to speak of a Johannine “school”? Was a specifically Johannine type of thinking cultivated in it? Such are the questions to be pursued below.

1 The Language of the Johannine School. Because it is debated who wrote the Johannine writings, it is best to approach the question of the scope of the Johannine school tradition from the linguistic form of the five books.

1.1 While the Gospel of John affirms that Jesus taught using striking riddles or figures of speech, *παροιμίαι* (cf. 10:6; 16:25, 29), it does not offer even a single example of the types of parables of Jesus that characterize the synoptic tradition. In their place we find a whole series of long revelatory and farewell discourses of Jesus that have no counterpart in the Synoptic Gospels (apart from the brief statement about the revelation of God’s truth to “infants” in Luke 10:21–22 par. Matt. 11:25–27). These discourses show especially clearly that the Johannine Christ no longer proclaims the kingdom of God, as the synoptic Jesus does, but rather proclaims *himself* as “the bread of life” (6:35), “the light of the world” (8:12), “the good shepherd” (10:11), “the resurrection and the life” (11:25), “the way, and the truth, and the life” (14:6), “the true vine” (15:1), and even as God’s own “I” (8:24, 28, 58; 13:19). One must therefore conclude that *the Johannine Christ speaks and teaches very differently from the synoptic Jesus*.

1.2 This impression is confirmed when one pays attention to the *special language* in which the Fourth Gospel is composed. As has been proved by E. Schweizer in his investigation *Ego Eimi* and by E. Ruckstuhl in his dissertation “The Literary Unity of the Gospel of John” (*Die literarische Einheit des Johannesevangeliums*) as well as in his related book with P. Dschulnigg on stylistic criticism and the question of authorship in the Gospel of John (*Stilkritik und Verfasserfrage im Johannesevangelium*), the Johannine school language of the Fourth Gospel clearly contrasts with that of the Synoptics. The distinctiveness of John’s language can be observed statistically in several different linguistic categories:

1. Striking *metaphors for Christ*, such as “the Word,” ὁ λόγος (only in John 1:1, 14), “the bread of life,” ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς (only in 6:35, 48), “the good shepherd,” ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός (only in 10:11, 14), or “the true vine,” ἡ ἄμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή (only in 15:1).

2. *Special substantives* that occur only in the Johannine writings or with special frequency in these writings. These include “the truth,” ἡ ἀλήθεια (40 occurrences in the Gospel and 20 in the Johannine letters against only 10 in the Synoptics); “the Jews,” οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι (67 occurrences in the Gospel against 16 in the Synoptics); “the world,” ὁ κόσμος (78 occurrences in the Gospel and 23 in the letters against 13 in the Synoptics); “the witness” or “testimony,” ἡ μαρτυρία (15 occurrences in the Gospel and 10 in the letters against only 4 in the Synoptics); ὁ παράκλητος, “the Paraclete” (an English technical term in the NJB), variously translated as “the Advocate” (NRSV), “the Counselor” (RSV; NIV), or “the Helper” (NASB) (1 John 2:1; John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7); ὁ πατήρ, “the Father,” as a term for God (118 occurrences in the Gospel and 16 in the letters against 66 in the Synoptics); the “figure of speech” or “proverb,” ἡ παροιμία (John 10:6; 16:25, 29; elsewhere in the New Testament only in 2 Pet. 2:22 [Prov. 26:11]); τὸ ὀψάριον as a term for “fish,” where the Synoptics use ὁ ἰχθύς (John 6:9, 11; 21:9, 10, 13); etc.

3. *Favorite Johannine verbs.* These include “to love,” ἀγαπᾶν (44 occurrences in the Gospel and 29 in the letters against 29 in the Synoptics); “to remain” or “abide,” μένειν (40 occurrences in the Gospel and 26 in the letters against 12 in the Synoptics); “to send,” πέμπειν (32 occurrences in the Gospel against 15 in the Synoptics); “to believe in someone,” πιστεύειν εἴς τινα (36 occurrences in the Gospel and 2 in the letters against 7 in the Synoptics); “to keep,” τηρεῖν (18 occurrences in the Gospel and 7 in the letters against 7 in the Synoptics); “to lay down one’s life,” τιθέναι τὴν ψυχήν (8 occurrences in the Gospel [including 2 in 10:18 with αὐτήν for ψυχήν] and 2 in the letters against zero in the Synoptics); ὑψοῦσθαι in the sense of being “lifted up” on the cross (4 occurrences in the Gospel against zero in the Synoptics); and a second word for “to love,” φιλεῖν (13 occurrences in the Gospel against 8 in the Synoptics).

4. *Typical Johannine adjectives.* These include two words for “true,” ἀληθής (14 occurrences in the Gospel and 3 in the letters against 2 in the Synoptics) and ἀληθινός (9 occurrences in the Gospel and 4 in the letters against only 1 in the Synoptics), as well as μικρός, “little,” to indicate the shortness of the time, as in “a little while,” μικρὸν χρόνον (11 occurrences in the Gospel against 2 in the Synoptics).

5. *Synoptic terms missing from John.* These include such important and frequent synoptic terms as “mercy” (ἔλεος, only in 2 John 3 in the Johannine writings), “to have mercy” (ἐλεεῖν), “to preach”

(κηρύσσειν), “to proclaim good news” (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι), “gospel” (εὐαγγέλιον), “repentance” (μετάνοια), etc. (cf. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John* [1978²], 5–6).

6. *Stylistic peculiarities of the Johannine writings*. Alongside the characteristic Johannine vocabulary we also find stylistic features that are rare in the rest of the New Testament. Precisely because these do not betray any particular theological interest, they show that one must in fact speak of a specifically Johannine manner of speaking or writing. Examples include John’s consistent use of paratactic (coordinate) rather than hypotactic (subordinate) constructions (e.g., John 9:6–7); the use of asyndeton, a stylistic device in which the expected καί connecting to the previous phrase or sentence is lacking (e.g., at the transition between the verses in John 1:41–42 ἤγαγεν [i.e., not καὶ ἤγαγεν], 44–45 εὑρίσκει, 46–47 Εἶδεν; 2:16–17; 4:6–7; etc.); the constant use of narrative οὖν, when only a time sequence (“then”) and not a logical conclusion (“therefore”) is in view (e.g., John 1:22; 2:18, 20; 4:5, 6, 9; etc.; this οὖν is often left untranslated, as in John 4:6, 9 NRSV, NIV); the use of the expression “this is . . . , (namely) that,” οὗτός ἐστιν . . . , ἵνα (ὅτι), in which the ἵνα or ὅτι clause is epexegetic (e.g., John 3:19; 6:29, 39, 40, 50; 1 John 1:5; etc.) or the similar epexegetic expression “by this . . . , (namely) that,” ἐν τούτῳ . . . , ἵνα (ὅτι) (e.g., John 9:30; 15:8; 1 John 3:16; 4:9; etc.), the placement of the possessive pronoun ἐμός, ἐμή, ἐμόν, “my,” in the second attributive position, after the noun (e.g., John 3:29; 5:30; 6:38; 1 John 1:3; etc.); the use of ἐκεῖνος, “that one,” as a singular personal pronoun translated by “he” and referring to Jesus (or to God in John 1:33; cf. John 1:8, 18, 33; 2:21; 1 John 2:6; 3:3, 5; 4:17; etc.); the attributive use of the genitive of an articular noun (e.g., ἡ ἑορτὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων, John 6:4; ἡ κοιμήσεως τοῦ ὕπνου, 11:13; τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα, 13:1); or the stylized negation “not forever” to mean “never,” οὐ μὴ . . . εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (e.g., John 4:14; 8:51, 52; 10:28; etc.).

1.3 The peculiar Johannine language has also left its mark on the three letters of John, moving them close to the Fourth Gospel. There are only minor linguistic differences between the letters and the Gospel (cf. U. Schnelle, *The History and Theology of the New Testament Writings* [1998], 454):

Terms found in the Johannine letters but not in the Gospel occur mainly in the shorter letters, 2 and 3 John. These include μέλαν, “ink” (2 John 12; 3 John 13; cf. 2 Cor. 3:3); κάλαμος, “pen” (only in 3 John 13 in this sense); ἔλεος, “mercy” (2 John 3; 26 times elsewhere in the NT); ἀγαθοποιεῖν and κακοποιεῖν, “to do good” or “evil” (3 John 11; 11 times elsewhere in the NT); and εὐοδοῦσθαι, “to prosper” (3 John 2; cf. Rom. 1:10; 1 Cor. 16:2). Two terms found in 2 and 3 John occur nowhere else in the New Testament: φιλοπρωτεύειν, “to love to be first” (3 John 9), and χάρτης, “paper” (2 John 12). To these we may add a few unique expressions, such as ἐχάρην λίαν, “I rejoiced greatly” (2 John 4; 3 John 3); περιπατεῖν ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, “to walk in the truth” (2 John 4; 3 John 3, 4); and ἡ ἐκλεκτὴ κυρία, “the chosen lady” (2 John 1).

Because the occurrence of these special terms can be explained partly by the character and content of 2 and 3 John as private letters, each of which covered only a single papyrus sheet, it is much too daring to conclude from these small differences of language that there must have been three different authors for 2 and 3 John, 1 John, and the Gospel of

John, as U. Schnelle does (*History and Theology*, 454–56). By contrast, E. Ruckstuhl and P. Dschulnigg correctly see the largely common language of the Gospel and letters of John as an “idiolect” and therefore assume a common author of these writings. With R. A. Culpepper (*The Johannine School*), we can also call the special Johannine language a “sociolect,” indicating that the Gospel and letters of John were written by a particular teacher in a specific *school language* in order first and foremost to be read and received in the circles of his students.

The Hebraized language of the book of Revelation departs from the sociolect in which the three letters and the Fourth Gospel are written. Therefore language alone cannot determine whether the Apocalypse also belonged to the Johannine school tradition (see below).

2 The Johannine School and Its Head. Attempts to identify the common author of the Johannine letters and the Fourth Gospel and thereby the head of the Johannine school lead no further than the conclusion that the “elder” or “presbyter” (πρεσβύτερος) John mentioned in 2 and 3 John and by Papias was *probably* the founder of this school. Its location seems to have been in Ephesus in the province of Asia (cf. Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 3.1.1; 2.22.5).

2.1 From *the letters of John* one can conclude that the elder founded his own school and gathered students around him, just like ancient philosophers, Jewish wisdom teachers like Ben Sira, and also Paul (cf. Acts 19:9).

In 2 and 3 John “the elder,” as he styles himself, writes to his Christian brothers and sisters who live together in small house churches and are visited by itinerant teachers who should receive acceptance and financial support only if they stand in the same “truth” as the elder and his followers. Although 1 John does not name its author, its language and style identify it as a circular letter from the elder to his students who are threatened by false teachers. He taught them to confess Christ as the preexistent, incarnated, and exalted Son of God at God’s right hand who has made atonement for the sins of humanity with his blood and is now active before God as advocate for all those who believe in him and keep his commandments. The elder’s followers recognize each other by this confession, practice mutual brotherly love, and keep their distance from the unbelieving world (cf. 1 John 2:1–2; 4:4–10). However, against them stand other Christians who were originally part of the elder’s circle but are now no longer willing to acknowledge Jesus’s real incarnation and bloody death and have broken fellowship with their former brothers and sisters in the faith. In 1 John 2:18–29 and 3:7–10 the elder’s remaining followers are warned about being deceived by these spawns of the antichrist. These data yield the following overall picture: the elder (John) who presided over various individual congregations teaches the “truth” of the Christian faith, but a schism has developed among his followers. The core of the dispute is the confession of the real “coming” of Jesus in the flesh (cf. 2 John 7 and 1 John 2:23; 4:2) and his bloody death on the cross (cf. 1 John 5:6–8). The elder encourages his “little children” (τεκνία, 1 John 2:1, 12, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21) to uphold the

traditional confession and to love one another (cf. 1 John 4:4–11), but he also warns them to be on their guard against their former comrades in the faith (cf. 1 John 2:18–19; 3:7–10; 4:1–3).

2.2 Whether the elder also wrote the *Gospel of John* is not very easy to determine. Immediately after "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (ὁ μαθητὴς ὃν ἠγάπα ὁ Ἰησοῦς, 21:20) is mentioned in the story in John 21:20–23, in verse 24 he is designated as the author and guarantor of the tradition of the Gospel. In addition to John 21:20, this "beloved disciple" is referred to as such in 13:23, 19:26–27, 20:2–10, and 21:7, and he is perhaps also the unnamed disciple of John the Baptist in 1:35 and 40 and the unnamed disciple of Jesus in the high priest's courtyard in 18:15–16. He stands closer to Jesus than any of the other disciples.

If one follows these passages, then "the disciple whom Jesus loved" was perhaps already a disciple of John the Baptist, who then crossed over to the disciples of Jesus and stood so close to Jesus during his lifetime that he was allowed to take the special place of friendship at Jesus's right side during the Last Supper (cf. John 13:23 with 1:18). According to 18:15, he had access to the palace of the high priest and therefore may have come from Jerusalem priestly circles, and according to 19:26 he did not deny Jesus (like Peter and all the other disciples) but remained faithful to him and received at the cross the responsibility of caring for Jesus's mother. He was also the first disciple to believe in Jesus's resurrection in the light of the empty tomb (20:8). The picture that emerges is one of an *ideal* disciple. U. Wilckens therefore considers the beloved disciple to be only "a theological symbolic figure . . . , a representative of the true believers of the post-Easter church in the pre-Easter circle of the Twelve" (U. Wilckens, "Maria—Mutter der Kirche," in *Ekklesiologie des Neuen Testaments*, FS K. Kertelge, ed. R. Kampling and T. Söding [1996], 247–66, esp. 263).

Oddly enough, the beloved disciple is never identified by name in the Fourth Gospel. The ancient church identified him with John the son of Zebedee (cf. Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 3.1.1) and thereby went beyond the undetermined presentation of the Gospel.

2.2.1 Two factors especially speak against the ancient church's identification of the author of the Gospel of John (equated with the beloved disciple in 21:24) with John the son of Zebedee.

First, the Gospel of John lacks all the scenes from the Synoptics in which John the son of Zebedee and his brother James play a special role (though see the brief mention of the "sons of Zebedee," not identified by their personal names, in John 21:2). These include their being called to follow Jesus in Mark 1:19–20 par.; their being given the name Βοανηργές, "sons of thunder," in Mark 3:17; their fiery "zeal" against the inhospitable Samaritans in Luke 9:52–56; their eyewitness experience of the raising of Jairus's daughter and Jesus's transfiguration in Mark 5:35–43 and 9:2–10

par.; their instigation of the debate about which disciple is the greatest in Mark 10:35–45 par.; their private audience (with Peter and Andrew) for Jesus's teaching about the end times in Mark 13:3–37 par.; and their accompanying Jesus to the Garden of Gethsemane in Mark 14:32–42 par. (on the whole, see W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament*, rev. ed. [1975], 245).

Second, Papias of Hierapolis and various other ancient church witnesses (cf. M. Hengel, *Die johanneische Frage*, 88–91; more briefly, idem, *The Johannine Question*, 21 with 158–59n121) report that John the son of Zebedee also died a martyr's death as his brother James had done (as suggested already in Mark 10:38–39 par.). In the fifth-century church history of Philip of Side, we find the following summary of a statement by Papias: "In his second book Papias says that John the theologian [i.e., apostle] and James his brother were killed by Jews" (fragment 12.2 in B. D. Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, LCL 2:112–13). Unlike his brother James, who according to Acts 12:2 had already been executed by Herod Agrippa I (AD 41–44), John the son of Zebedee still took part in the apostolic council of Acts 15 (cf. Gal. 2:9). But it is highly uncertain whether he outlived Peter—as the "beloved disciple" did, according to John 21:22–23—who suffered the martyrdom referred to in John 21:18 under Nero. Irenaeus admittedly reports that John the disciple of the Lord lived "up to the times of Trajan" (*Adversus haereses* 2.22.5). But against this stands the report of the martyrdom of John the son of Zebedee.

2.2.2 A way out of this uncertainty results only when one includes in this discussion *the elder John* (ὁ πρεσβύτερος Ἰωάννης), who was the author of 2 and 3 John and presumably also of 1 John. Papias mentions in a single passage *two* persons named John who were disciples of Jesus: John the son of Zebedee, who suffered martyrdom, and the elder John, who lived to old age. Eusebius has excerpted from Papias's works the following fragment, preserved in *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.39.4 (Papias fragment 3 in B. D. Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, LCL 2:99): "But whenever someone arrived who had been a companion of one of the elders, I would carefully inquire after their words, what Andrew or Peter had said, or what Philip or what Thomas had said, or James or John or Matthew or any of the other disciples of the Lord, and what things Aristion and the elder John (ὁ πρεσβύτερος Ἰωάννης), disciples of the Lord, were saying."

Eusebius concludes from his reading of Papias that while Papias knew the teachings of John the son of Zebedee only at second hand, he knew the elder John personally: "Papias . . . acknowledges that he received the words of the apostles from those who had been their followers, and he indicates that he himself had listened to Aristion and the elder John" (*Historia ecclesiastica* 3.39.7 [Ehrman, *Apostolic Fathers*, 2:101]). When one

considers that the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine letters are composed in the same idiolect and that the author of the Gospel must have outlived Peter by quite a few years (cf. John 21:23), only the *elder John* comes into consideration as the author of the Fourth Gospel (cf. W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction*, 239–44, and M. Hengel, *Frage*, 264–74; *Question*, 102–8).

2.2.3 If the above conclusion about John the elder as author of the Gospel is correct, then it is still necessary to clarify the relationship between this John, John the son of Zebedee, and the beloved disciple of the Fourth Gospel. According to M. Hengel (*Frage*, 214–24, 321–25; *Question*, 77–83, 131–35), the equation of John the elder with the author of the Gospel and hence with the beloved disciple, and this same figure's identification with John the son of Zebedee, *could* have the following roots: the elder John in his early youth was first a disciple of John the Baptist (cf. John 1:35), then became a disciple of Jesus and, because he himself did not belong to the circle of the Twelve, chose John the son of Zebedee to be his teacher. If one considers the fact that the Jewish name John (Ἰωάννης) was unknown in the Diaspora but was popular in Palestine, especially in priestly circles (cf. M. Hengel, *Frage*, 103, 275–76; *Question*, 26, 109–10), then the elder John could have stood close to the high priestly family of Annas and have experienced the passion of Jesus in Jerusalem. This would provide a historical explanation for the astonishing topographical knowledge of Jerusalem in the Fourth Gospel as well as for the disciple who was known to the high priest in John 18:15–16 and for the presence of the beloved disciple at the cross in John 19:25–27. After Easter the elder was a member of the early church in Jerusalem. Later he went into exile and founded in Ephesus the Johannine school.

This view of the Gospel's authorship by the elder John, who was personally linked to the apostle John and his teaching, has implications for how the Gospel may have been understood at the time of its publication and may even suggest a way of reading it today. A deliberate ambiguity about the identity of the beloved disciple seems to be built into the Gospel that goes beyond the traditional explanation that the apostle John was the author but avoided mentioning himself directly out of modesty. The "sons of Zebedee" are indeed mentioned—though not by their personal names James and John—in the story of Jesus's postresurrection appearance to the disciples at the Sea of Galilee in John 21:2. Interestingly, "the disciple whom Jesus loved" also plays a role in the same story in 21:7. Yet any unambiguous identification between the beloved disciple and one of the sons of Zebedee is prevented, apparently intentionally, by the author's or the final editors' additional mention in 21:2 of ἄλλοι ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ δύο, "two others of his [sc. Jesus's] disciples" beyond the sons of Zebedee. These, too, remain unnamed but serve to create ambiguity: Could one of them be the "beloved disciple"?

The assumption of a deliberate ambiguity lies behind what M. Hengel refers to as a "double aspect" in the presentation of the beloved disciple (this is J. Bowden's translation of *Doppelantlitz*, which may rather suggest the image of a photographic double exposure capturing two "faces" or "countenances"). The following two excerpts make clear the subtleties of Hengel's position:

> Did the final redactor(s) . . . quite deliberately project two different Johns on to this shimmering ideal form [sc. of the beloved disciple] and combine them: John the son of Zebedee, who therefore may not appear elsewhere in the gospel, and John the presbyter, head of the Johannine school, who came from the Jerusalem aristocracy?
>
> This would mean that this figure has a double aspect (*Doppelantlitz*) . . . like a photograph which has been exposed twice, containing the pictures of two different persons merged together on the same film. First it shows the face of the second man after Peter in the earliest community [i.e., the son of Zebedee] and then that of the founder and head of the Johannine school, John the elder, of whom the tradition said that he too had been one of Jesus's disciples. First, then, that of an "old disciple" of great repute who later became a martyr, and then that of quite a young hearer of Jesus, who later settled in Asia Minor as a result of the turmoil of the Jewish war. (Hengel, *Question*, 130; cf. *Frage*, 317–18)

A little later Hengel continues:

> Given the unique way in which the figures of John the son of Zebedee and the teacher of the school and author of the gospel are deliberately superimposed in a veiled way, it would be conceivable that with the "beloved disciple" "John the elder" wanted to point more to the son of Zebedee, who for him was an ideal, even *the* ideal disciple, in contrast to Peter, whereas in the end the pupils impressed on this enigmatic figure the face of *their* teacher by identifying him with the author in order to bring the gospel [German adds: and its author] as near to Jesus as possible. (Hengel, *Question*, 131–32; cf. *Frage*, 321)

Scenes influenced by the figure of John the son of Zebedee could include those involving both Peter and the beloved disciple in 13:23–24, 20:2ff., and 21:2ff. (cf. Hengel, *Frage*, 321–22 [not in the English]), while the scenes in the high priest's palace in 18:15–16 and at the cross in 19:25–27 and 35 might rather display the features of "a disciple who did not belong to the group of the Twelve but to the priestly aristocracy in Jerusalem" (*Question*, 132; *Frage*, 322).

2.2.4 If the above reconstruction is correct, then *a well-maintained continuum of tradition stands not only behind the Synoptics but also behind the Gospel of John*. As in the case of the Gospel of Matthew, which may still preserve a tradition-historical connection to the apostle Matthew (cf. above chap. 33, §3.1.2), the ancient superscription and subscription attributing the Fourth Gospel to "John" as well as the ascription of authorship to the beloved disciple in John 21:24–25 both show that the content of the Gospel ultimately goes back to the disciple whom Jesus especially loved. John the elder understood himself as his tradition-bearer, mouthpiece, and pen.

3 The Johannine School Tradition. The contemporary problems of faith and mission reflected in the Johannine letters were not the only topics

discussed in the school of John the elder. Above all, members of this school discussed and further interpreted the Jesus tradition that John the elder had taken over from John the son of Zebedee and took with him when he left Jerusalem. In the Gospel of John this tradition is fixed in the form that it achieved in school discussions with the elder. The editing of the Gospel made this tradition accessible to the whole church.

3.1 The Gospel of John was not written all in one step but was rather edited by the elder's students after his death. It still bears clear traces of redactional reworking. Examples include the glosses in 2:22; 3:24; 4:2; 18:9, 32; and 19:35; the problem of the temporal and geographical sequence of chapters 5 and 6; the disruption of the connection between 14:31 and 18:1 by the insertion of 15:1–16:33 and 17:1–26; and the inclusion of yet another complete chapter after the apparent conclusion in 20:31.

Although these traces of redactional activity clearly raise the possibility of *source and literary criticism*, such criticism is just as clearly limited by the relatively unified linguistic stamp of the texts. It was (and is) common practice in Johannine scholarship not only to speak of an "ecclesiastical redaction" of the Gospel and to rearrange the current sequence of the individual texts, but also to reconstruct the pre-Johannine sources that the Evangelist is supposed to have reworked critically. R. Bultmann, in his analysis of the Johannine writings as developed in his commentaries on the Gospel and the letters but also summarized in his dictionary articles (cf. "Johannesbriefe" and "Johannesevangelium," *RGG*[3] 3:836–40, 840–51), spoke of three sources: a special source for revelatory discourses, a second source for miraculous signs (the *semeia* source), and a third source for the Johannine passion narrative. Many exegetes have followed in his footsteps, but in the meantime scholarship has become more cautious and ready to heed the warning of E. Ruckstuhl and P. Dschulnigg: "The author of the Gospel of John is at the same time the literary executor of the beloved disciple. . . . The author stamps the entire writing with his own linguistic and compositional arrangement, although this need not exclude his taking account of earlier oral or written outlines. Nevertheless, *it is better to abstain from literary critical reconstruction of possible earlier sources*, which is much too uncertain in the light of the author's own ability to determine the language and melt it down into a unity" (*Stilkritik und Verfasserfrage*, 19, italics added).

The recent commentaries on the Fourth Gospel by U. Wilckens (*Das Evangelium nach Johannes*, NTD 4 [1998]) and U. Schnelle (*Das Evangelium nach Johannes*, THKNT 4 [1998]) therefore appropriately proceed from the assumption of the Gospel's unity.

3.2 The novel school language in which the Johannine tradition is composed corresponds to a special perception of the person, teaching, and history of Jesus. In view of the linguistic similarity of Matthew 11:25–27 (Luke 10:21–22) and the Johannine Jesus texts, one can *suspect* that the Johannine school continued the style of thinking and teaching that characterized the internal didactic discussions of Jesus with Peter, James, John, and the whole circle of the Twelve prior to Easter. John 14:25–26

furthermore implies that the Johannine perception is indebted to the gift of the Spirit that the disciples received from the risen Jesus (cf. John 20:22). While the synoptic tradition shows how the apostles and their students spoke about Jesus in missionary and church instruction, in John's circle people presupposed this instruction and went on to discuss the revealed secret of God's self-disclosure in "the Son." The art of remembrance (*anamnesis*) already practiced by the synoptic Evangelists to make the past events of Jesus present has become for the Fourth Evangelist the Paraclete-inspired way of recognizing the truth par excellence (cf. 14:26; 16:13). As U. Schnelle aptly writes, "The *backward look after Easter* is for John both a theological program and a narrative perspective, enabling the fourth evangelist to transpose theological insights into narrated history" (*Das Evangelium nach Johannes*, 21).

3.3 Once one has observed this hermeneutical principle, the *relationship between the Gospel of John and the Synoptics* becomes easier to understand. Clement of Alexandria well expresses a common assumption of the ancient church when he writes (cf. Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 6.14.7, LCL 2:49): "John, last of all, conscious that the outward facts (*τὰ σωματικά*) had been set forth in the [sc. existing synoptic] Gospels, was urged on by his disciples, and, divinely moved by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel (*πνευματικὸν εὐαγγέλιον*)."

Although modern scholarship on John and the Synoptics originally proceeded in a totally different direction from that of Clement and the ancient church, scholars are now returning to the more ancient view: where they formerly doubted whether the Fourth Evangelist knew any synoptic traditions at all, scholars today tend to presuppose that John had a knowledge of the Gospel of Mark (and also Luke). Nevertheless, this assumption is not always worked out in the same way. Scholars who assume that John knew Mark and Luke can claim either that the Fourth Gospel was intended to *displace* the Synoptics in church usage (so, e.g., H. Windisch, *Johannes und die Synoptiker* [1926]) or that it was intended to *supplement* the Synoptics and in a certain sense to surpass them without completely superseding them. All the historical considerations favor the latter view: (1) In early Judaism older and different traditions are not simply erased in favor of new ones but are rather preserved, supplemented, and reinterpreted. The Jewish Christianity from which the Johannine tradition sprang proceeded in the same way. John never polemicizes against Mark or Luke, yet at the same time he never reproduces any of their reports unaltered. Instead, he always formulates and accents the old traditions in new ways. Examples include the different reports of Jesus's prayer and temptation in Gethsemane in Mark 14:32–42 par. (and Heb. 5:7–9) and in John 12:27–33, or the two scenes of the bearing of the cross by Simon of Cyrene or by Jesus himself in Mark 15:20b–21 par. and John 19:17; possibly John's change of the synoptic passion chronology also belongs in this category (cf. above, 67–69, §4). (2) Like the Synoptics, the Fourth Gospel was not edited for any one special circle of readers but was intended for public reading in many churches in which other gospels were also known (R. Bauckham). (3) Furthermore, Christian instruction without any knowledge of one or more

of the Synoptic Gospels is unthinkable in a city such as Ephesus, where the elder John had his school (see above). (4) The theory that John was intended not to replace but only to supplement (and surpass) the Synoptics is also supported by the view of Peter in the Fourth Gospel. Peter is highly respected in the Gospel of John at the same time as he is surpassed by the "beloved disciple" in every way. According to John 1:42, Peter is the "rock" (Greek: Κηφᾶς; Aramaic: כֵּיפָה) who was given this name by Jesus himself. He is the speaker for the Twelve (cf. 6:68), and despite his denial he is charged by the exalted Christ to "feed" Jesus's lambs (cf. 21:15–17). The Evangelist does not dispute Peter's right to this office of shepherd or bishop (cf. Eph. 4:11), but rather points to the martyrdom Peter must suffer (cf. 21:18–19). Nevertheless, Peter is also constantly surpassed by "the disciple whom Jesus loved." This disciple stands closer to Jesus than Peter does (cf. 13:23–26); he gains Peter access into the courtyard of the high priest's palace (cf. 18:15–18); he remains faithful to his Lord until he stands under the cross and is called to be the protector of Jesus's mother (cf. 19:25–27); he comes to faith in Jesus in the light of the empty tomb before Peter does (cf. 20:3–10); he is the first to recognize the risen Christ at the Sea of Tiberias (cf. 21:7); and he is permitted to outlive Peter to become the quintessential witness to the truth (cf. 21:20–24).

In sum, the Fourth Gospel is not intended to displace the Synoptics, but to supplement them. Or more precisely, it is intended to surpass the Synoptics to the same degree that the beloved disciple surpasses Peter.

According to Irenaeus, the Gospel of John was not written until the end of the first century, by John (the son of Zebedee) in Ephesus (cf. *Adversus haereses* 2.22.5; 3.1.1; and 3.3.4). There is no getting around this late date assigned by the early church, and accordingly all modern attempts to date the Fourth Gospel back into the period before AD 70 are questionable (cf., e.g., J. A. T. Robinson, *The Priority of John* [1985]). K. Berger (*Im Anfang war Johannes*) considers John to be the oldest Gospel and goes beyond other theories by proposing Andrew (cf. John 1:40) as the Gospel's author and Egypt as its place of origin. The grain of truth in these early datings lies (only) in the fact that the Evangelist presupposes ancient apostolic traditions and claims to speak for Jesus pneumatically from the heart.

4 The Relationship of the Gospels and Letters of John. The letters of John were obviously written during the lifetime of the elder and attempt to intervene in an acute situation in the Johannine circle. Because 3 John 9 ("I have written something to the church") probably refers to 2 John, 2 John must have been written before 3 John. 1 John sheds more light on the problematic situation in 2 John and therefore belongs with 2 and 3 John in both time and subject matter. Matters are different with the Gospel. John 21:23–25 probably reflects upon the death of the author and differentiates three voices: first, the voice of the "beloved disciple," who *wrote* (ὁ γράψας) the Gospel; second, the voice of the "we" who *know* (οἴδαμεν) that his witness is true; and third, the opinion of the "I" who knows of many other Jesus traditions that have not been incorporated into the Fourth Gospel but *supposes* (οἶμαι) that the world itself would not have room for all the books

that could be written about him. Therefore the Gospel was evidently edited and prepared for publication by his students only after the author’s death. If this is correct, then the Johannine letters written by the same author cannot have followed the edition of the Gospel but must have *preceded* it. This eliminates the possibility of seeing 1 John as a later “Johannine pastoral epistle,” as H. Conzelmann has done (“Was von Anfang war,” 214); the same goes for 2 and 3 John. The three Johannine letters should therefore be adduced in the theological exegesis of the Gospel, as reports of the elder exposing problems he and his school confronted as they discussed, penetrated, and reformulated the traditions collected in the Gospel.

If one takes the letters and the Gospel together in this way, it becomes clear that the small Johannine circle pursued its mission according to its ability, but that it was threatened in its existence from two sides: the Judaism of the synagogue was hostile to it, and within its own ranks a special group had formed that destroyed the school’s cohesion.

4.1 From John 17:18–20 and 20:21 it can be seen that just like the early church in Jerusalem, the mission church of Antioch, and the apostle Paul, the elder and his students understood the world mission to be mandated by Jesus and looked forward to the gathering and uniting of the children of God from among Jews and Gentiles, that is, to the end-time people of God headed by Jesus (cf. John 10:16); the same view is also found in Revelation 7:4–8 and 14:1, 3. In so doing the Johannine circle also kept in mind that only those Jews and Gentiles could be won to the faith whom the Father had “given” to Jesus (cf. John 17:6 with 6:44).

4.2 The *external* threat to members of the Johannine circle is reflected mainly in the Gospel of John. For the sake of their christological confession, more particularly their equating of Jesus with the one God (cf. 1 John 1:1; John 1:1, 18; 5:18; 20:28), and because of their claim to belong to the true vine of Israel embodied by Jesus (cf. John 15:1–8 with Ps. 80:9–20 [ET 80:8–19]), they seem to have been expelled from the synagogue (cf. John 9:22; 12:42; 16:2; and J. L. Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* [1979^{2}]). The school of John was therefore originally a *Jewish Christian* group that was forced into the role of despised and persecuted apostates. This is the decisive reason why the Johannine circle saw “the Jews” as the enemies not only of Jesus but also of their own group (cf. 5:18; 7:1; 10:31; 11:8 with 15:20; 16:2). This view does not yet have

anything to do with the militant Gentile Christian *anti-Judaism* of the later Great Church. Neither do the designation of the Jews as “children of the devil” (cf. 8:44) and the equation of the Jewish synagogue with the “synagogue of Satan” in Revelation 2:9 and 3:9 betray any Gentile-like anti-Semitic tendency. Rather, Jewish Christians are here using an early Jewish prophetic manner of speaking to refer to their opponents in the faith as offspring of the end-time adversary.

4.3 The *internal* threat to the Johannine circle is seen particularly in the Johannine letters, and also in the Gospel. This threat came from a group that had arisen within the circle’s own ranks that made concessions regarding the real incarnation of Christ, his bloody death on the cross, his bodily resurrection, and the traditional expectation of the parousia (cf. 2 John 7; 1 John 2:19; 4:1–3; and John 6:66–71). Because the views of this group have points of contact with the docetists opposed by Ignatius (cf. *Smyrn*. 2; 5:2; *Trall*. 9–10), many exegetes regard them as “ultra-Johannines” whose error arose from “the exaggeration of individual points of Johannine thought” (P. Vielhauer, *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur* [1975], 472). Instead of this, U. Wilckens wants to see the apostates as Jews for whom the “confession of the *man* Jesus as the *Son of God* is pure blasphemy” and who according to 1 John 2:19 “have become apostate by returning to the synagogue congregation” (“Monotheismus,” 92–93). But this view does not line up with the characterization of the opponents in the Johannine letters.

5 The Revelation of John and the Johannine Tradition. According to the current prevailing view, the *Revelation of John* (Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰωάννου) is to be relegated to the margins of the Johannine school tradition at best. But this view also has its weaknesses.

5.1 In the ancient church the Revelation of John was ascribed to John the son of Zebedee only with reservations. The Muratorian Canon (line 71) admittedly attributes it to John (cf. W. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, rev. ed., 1:36), but the Roman presbyter Gaius (ca. 198–217) and the Alexandrian bishop Dionysius (ca. 247–265) denied its authorship to the apostle on the grounds of language and content. They thereby initiated a point of view that influenced Luther’s first preface to the Apocalypse in his New Testament of 1522 and has become a general conviction today. On this view the Apocalypse does not go back to John the son of Zebedee. Its author indeed bears the name John (cf. 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8),

but he bears no relationship either to John the son of Zebedee or to the author of the Gospel (and letters) of John. Rather, he was only a wandering prophet generally recognized at the end of the first century in Asia Minor, who has otherwise left behind no historical traces of himself (cf., e.g., J. Roloff, *The Revelation of John* [1993], 8–12; U. Schnelle, *History and Theology*, 523; H. Giesen, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* [1998], 36ff.). Yet such a reference to a *de facto* unknown author contributes nothing from a literary or tradition-historical standpoint. One must not forget, in the words of A. von Harnack, "that the Apocalypse also makes a well-founded claim to come from the same man who wrote the gospel" (*Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius*, II/1 [1897], 678n2).

In favor of Harnack's view is the fact that the exile of John to the island of Patmos mentioned in Revelation 1:9 only makes sense if the exiled man was a person of such high standing that the Romans dared only to banish him to the island, rather than do away with him by execution. Such circumstances would much more readily apply to the "elder" John, who may have come from the Jerusalem priestly aristocracy (see above), than to an unknown Christian wandering prophet (cf. M. Hengel, *Frage*, 310–11).

5.2 Also pointing in Harnack's direction is the *language* in which the Apocalypse is composed. According to the minute analysis of J. Frey, this language is at the same time both far from and astonishingly close to the manner in which the three letters and the Gospel of John are formulated: "For all the differences and indeed contrasts between them, the Revelation of John and the Gospel of John together with the three letters associated with it exhibit a *series of conspicuous points of contact in phraseology*, as well as *other remarkable commonalities in many theological and especially central christological motifs*. These include those that have no real parallel anywhere else in the entire New Testament" (Frey, "Appendix," in Hengel, *Frage*, 415).

Examples of these linguistic points of contact between the Gospel (and letters) of John and the book of Revelation include especially the sayings about the "water of life" (ὕδωρ ζωῆς) in Revelation 7:16–17, 21:6, 22:1–2, and 22:17 and the very similar "living water" (ὕδωρ ζῶν) or related sayings in John 4:10, 13–14; 6:35; and 7:37–39; the designations of Jesus Christ as the "lamb of God" in Revelation 5:6, 12; 13:8; etc., and John 1:29, 36 and as the "word of God" in Revelation 19:13 and 1 John 1:1; John 1:1, 14; or also Jesus's self-designations by his "I am" (ἐγώ εἰμι) sayings in Revelation 1:17, 2:23, 22:13 and John 8:24, 28; 13:19 (absolute uses without a predicate) as well as in John 6:35, 51a; 8:12; 10:9, 11, 14; etc. To this may be added also a "common special vocabulary" and, beyond the realm of vocabulary, the common use of the non-Septuagintal term ἐξεκέντησαν, "him whom *they have pierced*" (where the LXX has κατωρχήσαντο, "they have mocked") in the quotation of Zechariah

12:10 in John 19:37 and Revelation 1:7 (cf. J. Frey, “Appendix,” 341–42). All these agreements can hardly be a matter of chance.

Nevertheless, considerable linguistic *differences* also exist between the Apocalypse and the Gospel: Christ the “lamb” is always *ἀρνίον* in Revelation but *ἀμνός* in the Fourth Gospel; the “I am” predications have very different content in the Apocalypse (e.g., “the Alpha and the Omega”) and the Gospel (e.g., “the bread of life”; “the good shepherd”; “the true vine”); and the “Word of God” is the judging Christ of the parousia in Revelation 19:13 but the preexistent, incarnate, and proclaimed Christ in 1 John 1:1 and John 1:1, 14. Moreover, the Apocalypse also lacks “a considerable number of theologically important words and expressions of the Fourth Gospel” (J. Frey, “Appendix,” 345).

According to Frey, the Apocalypse and the Gospel and letters exhibit this two-sided phenomenon of linguistic nearness and distance because the author of the Apocalypse was influenced by the theological school language of the Johannine circle. The author “*took up and reworked older material* that for the most part already bore a Christian stamp; it is to be assumed that at least some of this material came to him from the circle to which he belonged, that is, *from the ‘Johannine school’*” (“Appendix,” 421). Because the Apocalypse often argues more primitively and with less literary subtlety than the letters and Gospel, Frey (“Appendix,” 419, following O. Böcher) assumes that material in Revelation that belongs to the Johannine school has been preserved there more faithfully than by the Fourth Evangelist, who reworked and changed it in his own sense.

5.3 As already indicated above, on the basis of the early Jewish understanding of tradition, it appears plausible that the different traditions of the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel (as well as the Johannine letters) belong together. The composition of the Pentateuch by layering (not deleting) of the various Pentateuchal sources (cf., e.g., Exod. 14), the growth over time of certain Old Testament prophetic books and collections (cf., e.g., the trilogies of Isaiah and Zechariah, or the book of the Twelve Prophets), the continuation of the canonical book of Deuteronomy in the Qumran *Temple Scroll*, and the astonishing breadth and size of the Qumran library all show that ancient Jewish writers and editors did not expunge old traditions (and books) even when they no longer agreed with them, but always added the next new layer on top of and alongside the old material.

Because the Johannine circle emerged out of the synagogue and had a tradition whose roots reached all the way back to Jerusalem and the time of Jesus, it should be assumed that *the material summarized in the Apocalypse belonged to the Johannine school tradition just like the Jesus tradition summarized in the Fourth Gospel*. It is for this reason that the Apocalypse and the three Johannine letters and the Gospel of John should not simply be interpreted independently of each other. Instead, the attempt must be made to relate their different theological statements to one another and to understand them in terms of this relationship.

5.4 If one does not simply wish to leave open the question of the authorship of the Apocalypse, then there are two possibilities to be considered. J. Frey ("Appendix," 424ff.) suggests interpreting the name John (Ἰωάννης) in Revelation 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8 *pseudepigraphically*. Like the Gospel of John, the Revelation of John will then have been edited by a member of the Johannine school and attributed to the school's head, John (the elder), only after his death. Because systematic Roman persecutions of Christians did not begin under the emperor Domitian in the early 90s, as is often claimed, but were rather institutionalized only under Trajan (who died in 117), Frey's dating of the Apocalypse extends into this period ("Appendix," 425ff.). M. Hengel regards this view well worth considering, but also proposes his own alternative: the Revelation of John could derive from an early work of John the elder that was composed already in the period of burning apocalyptic expectation of the end between 64 and 70, when the elder was forced to leave Palestine and founded his school in Ephesus. This preliminary draft will then have been "reworked and edited much later by his [sc. the elder's] pupils after his death" (*Frage*, 312; cf. *Question*, 127). Hengel's proposal is perfectly consistent with the final literary form of the Revelation of John. Its central main part (4:1–22:5) is set within an overall letter frame consisting of an epistolary opening, a report of an appearance of Jesus, the letters to the seven churches at the beginning (1:1–3:22), and a postscript at the end (22:6–21), including an epistolary grace benediction (v. 21). The overall effect is to give the book the character of a long circular letter to the Christian churches in the Roman province of Asia. Interestingly, it is precisely in the letter frame that we find "a special concentration of linguistic echoes" between the Apocalypse and the Gospel and Johannine letters, whereas these recede in the main part (cf. J. Frey, "Appendix," 358, 380). This suggests that the book of Revelation

could really be an older apocalyptic work of John the elder that was framed by 1:1–3:22 and 22:6–21 and brought up to date only after his death. The elder's students, carrying on his work in his name, may have wanted to make the Christian churches in Asia Minor freshly aware of this book. According to the dating that has been customary since the time of Irenaeus, the students will have published the book "towards the end of Domitian's reign" (*Adversus haereses* 5.30.3).

According to Revelation 21:14, where the foundations of the new Jerusalem's city wall are said to be inscribed with "the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb," the church's literally foundational period of the twelve apostles is now past. But this does not exclude the possibility that parts of the tradition preserved in the Apocalypse might be traced back through the elder John to the apostle John, the son of Zebedee, whom Jesus called a "son of thunder" (cf. Mark 3:17). For example, the parallel use of a striking expression from 2 Kings 1:10 and 12 ("let fire come down from heaven and consume you") in both Luke 9:54 and Revelation 20:9 deserves attention. The synoptic apocalypse, which was part of Jesus's private instruction to his disciples according to Mark 13:3, has points of contact with the Revelation of John that extend to the individual motifs, including the false prophets in Mark 13:22 compared with Revelation 16:13, 19:20, and 20:10; the darkening of the sun and moon in Mark 13:24 compared with Revelation 6:12–13; and the power and glory of the Son of Man at his coming in Mark 13:26 compared with Revelation 19:11–16. Finally, the designation of Jesus as the "lamb" (ἀρνίον), which may involve an analogy to the regular or continual (תָּמִיד, *tāmîd*) offering of the Old Testament, certainly has very old roots.

6 The Johannine School's Truth Claim. All the writings of the Johannine corpus present an exclusive spiritual truth claim that can hardly be surpassed.

6.1 Although the Revelation of John is expressed in terms of the Johannine sociolect only in its epistolary frame and a few other passages, it nevertheless claims to be the message of God and his Christ given through John to the seven churches in Asia (cf. Rev. 1:1–3; 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22; 14:13; 19:10). As testimony to this message, it is intended to be a sacrosanct book, to which nothing can be added and from which nothing can be taken away. Whoever alters it despite this warning loses eternal life (cf. Rev. 22:18–19 with Deut. 4:2). Such a warning at the end of a book is exceptional in the history of early Christian literature; only John 21:24–25 is (remotely) comparable.

6.2 According to 1 John 4:6, in the "last hour" before the parousia in which the school of John finds itself (cf. 1 John 2:18, 28; 4:1), there are already two spirits in the world that can determine the lives of people both inside and outside the church: "the spirit of truth" (τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας)

and “the spirit of error” (τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς πλάνης) (on the terminology and conceptual background, see 1QS 3:17–26). According to 1 John 4:2, 6, and 12–13, the elder’s faithful addressees demonstrate that they are filled with the spirit of truth by accepting his teaching, confessing that Jesus Christ has really come in the flesh (and will return in the flesh), and exercising brotherly love toward one another. Accordingly, the knowledge of the truth that is central to the elder’s teaching is traced back to the “anointing” (χρῖσμα) with the Holy Spirit in 1 John 2:20 and 27. The πνεῦμα or spirit bears true testimony to Jesus Christ (cf. 1 John 5:6). Conversely, the apostates have fallen prey to the spirit of error. In them the spirit of the expected antichrist of the end times is evident (cf. 1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3). The readers of the Johannine letters therefore know that they have to follow the elder’s testimony to the truth. Those who fail to do so will lose their share in eternal life (cf. 1 John 5:9–12).

6.3 The picture arrived at so far is confirmed and rounded out by the findings in the Fourth Gospel. In the farewell discourses the Johannine Christ designates himself as the truth (cf. John 14:6), and he promises his disciples who remain on earth that after his departure, he and his heavenly Father will send “another Advocate” (ἄλλος παράκλητος) to be with them forever, namely, “the Spirit of truth (τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας), whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you” (14:16–17; the apposition ὁ δὲ παράκλητος, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον in 14:26 shows that the Paraclete or Spirit of truth of 14:16–17 is identical with the Holy Spirit). This Spirit-Paraclete will teach the disciples everything and remind them of all Jesus taught (14:26). He will give the disciples’ testimony the power to bring conviction about end-time realities (16:6–11) and will guide them “into all the truth” (16:13). According to 20:22, the risen Jesus imparted the Spirit to his disciples on the evening of Easter Day; among them was the disciple whom Jesus loved (cf. 20:2, 8, 19). In John 21:24 the Fourth Gospel is attributed to this disciple, and his students testify (to the readers) that his testimony is true. With this concluding remark the entire Gospel receives the seal of approval of its testimony to the truth that was opened up by the Spirit of truth.

The truth claim that marks all the Johannine writings cannot be superseded. As speech initiated and given by the Spirit, its particular

testimony to Christ is incontestable.

Nevertheless, this Johannine testimony, formulated in a special language, also presents a *problem*. The problem is not simply that the Johannine school as reflected in the Gospel and letters sets very different eschatological accents from Revelation (see below, 696–98, §7). The core of the problem becomes clear when one compares the Fourth Gospel with the Synoptics and discovers that the Synoptics have a different presentation of Jesus's proclamation, behavior, passion, and Easter appearances that extends even to the historical details and the course of events. John superimposes his own construction on the synoptic presentation to the point of direct contradiction (cf., e.g., Mark 14:32–42 par. with John 12:27–36; Mark 15:20b–21 par. with John 19:17; and the divergence of the Johannine passion chronology from the synoptic chronology). It is therefore not without reason that E. Käsemann has accused John of going so far in emptying the life story of Jesus of its content that "it seems almost a projection of the present into the past" and of doing more violence to biographical history than all other New Testament authors (Käsemann, "The Problem of the Historical Jesus," in *Essays on New Testament Themes* [1964], 32). This judgment cannot be refuted simply by pointing to the astonishingly precise historical and geographical details that John offers above and beyond the Synoptics (cf., e.g., John 2:20; 3:23; 4:5–6; 5:2; 7:2; 10:23; 11:1; 12:1; 18:1, 13, 15–18; 19:13, 31–37, 41; 21:1). Like the Synoptics, the Fourth Evangelist also offers a historical narrative in his Gospel, but he makes faith in Jesus Christ (and with it salvation) totally dependent on the authority of the testimony to Christ that was first developed in the Johannine school (cf. 18:37; 19:35; 21:24).

7 Conclusion. According to the above reflections, the Johannine school tradition includes not only the three Johannine letters and the Fourth Gospel, but also the Revelation of John. The center of this tradition is the Gospel. The three letters provide insight into the difficult internal situation of the Johannine circle, while the Apocalypse shows that the circle of students that had gathered around the elder John also knew and cultivated traditions that stood in tension with the statements of the letters and the Gospel. Nevertheless, all the Johannine writings make an extremely high truth claim. Therefore, in the following chapters it will be necessary in each case to begin with the entire Johannine tradition and to bring out both the astonishing breadth and the special accents of the Johannine teaching. Finally, it must be asked whether the biblical theology of the New Testament reaches its zenith with the testimony of the Johannine writings, or whether other testimonies to the gospel must be set alongside this one.

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CHAPTER 36

Johannine Christology

Christology is the leading theological theme of the five Johannine writings. But it is subject to so many different interpretations that every new attempt must begin with a survey of the sources and the main types of interpretation.

1 The Sources. The Johannine writings contain at least three sets of christological statements with different tradition-historical foundations, formulations, and accents.

1.1 The *Revelation of John* focuses mainly on the risen Christ and his end-time work. Jesus's life and atoning work are important for John the seer, since as early as 1:5 he refers to Jesus as "the faithful witness" who "freed us from our sins by his blood" (cf. also 5:9; 7:14; 12:11), while in 1:18 he has the same Christ say, "I was dead, and see, I am alive forever and ever; and I have the keys of Death and of Hades." But most important to John is his presentation of Christ as the conqueror who has risen from the dead and is presently reigning on the throne of heaven with his heavenly Father (3:21). The risen Christ who shares God's throne is referred to in 5:6 and frequently thereafter as "the lamb" (τὸ ἀρνίον). What is meant is a male sheep whose throat is still slit from the slaughter, but who stands before God alive with seven horns and seven eyes as a sign of his divine power and omniscience. He alone is mighty and worthy to direct the end of history that will establish God's kingdom. However, the philologically possible translation of ἀρνίον by "lamb" (so O. Hofius and most English translations) does not fit well with the end-time messianic rule of the ἀρνίον. The translation "ram" (O. Böcher) fits better with the Apocalypse's vision of the heavenly Christ's work, battle, and victory. As conqueror of death and Lord over all powers opposed to God, the Christ of Revelation promises a share in his thousand-year reign and a dwelling place in the heavenly Jerusalem to all who remain faithful to him (cf. 3:21 with 20:4 and 21:3–4).

1.2 The *letters of John* still speak (as in the Apocalypse) of Christ's parousia and end-time appearance (1 John 2:28; 3:2). But christologically

more important for these letters is the confession of the Christ whom the elder has seen with his eyes, touched with his hands, and proclaimed to his "little children" (*τεκνία*) as the Word of life that "was from the beginning" (1 John 1:1–3; cf. 2:1). True faith in this Christ requires believers to confess three things: that he has already come in the flesh (1 John 4:2), that his coming in the flesh occurred by water and by blood (1 John 5:6), and that he will come again in the flesh, as suggested by the polysemic present participial expression *ἐρχόμενον ἐν σαρκί*, "coming in the flesh" (2 John 7). The heretics from the Johannine community's own ranks (cf. 1 John 2:19) want nothing to do with this kind of concrete Christ.

1.3 The *Gospel of John* testifies to Christ, the Son of God, by telling of his incarnation, way, teaching, passion, and resurrection. The Fourth Evangelist consistently has in view the *Christus praesens*, the present Christ who lives and acts in the unity of God the Father and God the Son (cf. 10:30 and 17:21). This Christ is present to the Gospel's readers in the proclamation, and they grasp his essence best by the Paraclete-inspired practice of *ἀνάμνησις* (cf. Luke 22:19), that is, "anamnesis" or "remembrance" (cf. John 14:26 *ὑπομιμνήσκειν*, "to remind"). The Johannine Christ is the only revealer and mediator of salvation (cf. 14:6). Through faith in him people gain salvation already in the present (cf. 3:15–16, 18; 5:24; 17:2–3). One hears of his future work, the final judgment, and the resurrection of the dead only occasionally in John's Gospel (cf. 5:28–29; 14:2; 16:13; 17:24; etc.).

1.4 The christological interest of the Johannine writings therefore lies not only with the Christ who returns to do battle in the end times, but also and above all with the preexistent, incarnate, crucified, and bodily resurrected Son of God, who is present in the proclamation of the witnesses and opens eternal life to believers already in the here and now. This complex interest, with its special accents in the Apocalypse, the letters of John, and the Fourth Gospel, makes it hard to do justice to particular individual statements without losing sight of the whole. The history of research makes this clear.

2 Main Accents of Research. Because the Christology of the Revelation of John is usually dealt with separately from the christological witness of the Johannine letters and the Fourth Gospel, we begin with Revelation.

2.1 The standard work on the understanding of Christ in Revelation remains T. Holtz's 1962 dissertation *Die Christologie der Apokalypse des Johannes* (1971[2]). Holtz nicely brings out the partly primitive character of the statements about Christ in Revelation and is on the whole of the opinion that Revelation "displays a pronounced *exaltation* Christology" (164, italics added). This suggests that Christ first became who he is at his exaltation. But this view certainly needs correction.

In his essay on Revelation's testimony to Jesus's divinity ("Das Zeugnis der Johannesoffenbarung von der Gottheit Jesu Christi"), O. Hofius has shown that "the author of the Apocalypse does not see Christ as a created being who has been exalted to divine honor and power and seated at God's side, but rather as the one and only 'Son' who in his origin and being belongs on the Father's side from all eternity" (516). Hofius finds evidence for this view in Revelation 1:14 with its presentation of Jesus on the pattern of the Ancient of Days of Daniel 7:9, as well as in the inclusion of Jesus Christ in the doxology in 1:6; the self-designations of the risen one as Alpha and Omega, first and last, and beginning and end in 1:17b, 18a; 2:8b; and 22:13; and the worship offered to the Lamb in 5:8–14. These passages show that Christ stands in a unity of being and action with the Father.

M. Hengel has also taken up the issue of a supposed exaltation Christology in Revelation in his essay on the Lamb's sharing God's throne ("Die Throngemeinschaft des Lammes mit Gott in der Johannesapokalypse"). Hengel points out that Revelation speaks of Jesus's exaltation only once and indirectly, in 3:21, where the risen Christ says, "To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne." But conspicuously absent here is any reference to the exaltation to God's right hand in Psalm 110:1 (found, for example, in Mark 14:62 par.; Acts 2:34–35; Heb. 1:3, 13). Instead, the author speaks here in 3:21 as well as in 5:6 and 7:17 only about Christ the Lamb being on the throne or at the "center" of God's throne (cf. NIV and NJB against NRSV in 5:6, *ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ θρόνου*), or about the throne of God and of the Lamb in 22:1. The seer of Revelation presents Christ as the exalted one only in 3:21, but elsewhere as the ruler who shares God's throne; and the divine titles "the first and the last and the living one" (1:17–18) and "the beginning and the end" (22:13) point not to an exaltation Christology, but rather to "a preexistence Christology in its nascent state" (Hengel, 174).

Revelation therefore already presents a decidedly *high Christology*, which, while differentiating between God the Father and God the Son, nevertheless confers on the Son an "identity of being with the Father and thereby true and essential divinity" (Hofius, 527).

This high Christology was nevertheless no reason for the Apocalypse to abandon the distinction between the messianic time of salvation and God's eternal reign suggested in Ezekiel 37:15–28, Daniel 7:22–27, and the Jesus tradition (cf. Luke 12:32; 22:28–30). In Revelation 20:1–6, 7–15, and 21:1–22:5, the thousand-year reign of Christ, the final judgment, and the new heaven and new earth that find their center in the glorious city of God are juxtaposed. The *thousand-year intermediate messianic reign* represents the fulfillment of salvific promises such as Revelation 3:21, 6:10–11, and 14:1–5, but it is open only to the martyrs and the tried and tested witnesses to the faith, whereas the end-time city of God and the new earth are not inhabited by these faithful witnesses alone, but also by all others who have found acceptance with God in the eschatological judgment (cf. Rev. 20:11–15). This expectation of an intermediate messianic reign is not unique to the Apocalypse. It has

parallels in ancient Judaism (cf. *4 Ezra* 7:28; *2 Bar.* 29; *T. Isaac* 6:13; 8:6) and also seems to have been kept in view by Paul (cf. 1 Cor. 6:2–3; 15:23; and above, 341–42, §4.5.2.5).

2.2 The discussion of the *Christology of John's Gospel and letters* continues to be dominated by the question of whether it centers on Christ's cross or his glory (cf. 1 Cor. 1:18–2:5). But little by little, other Johannine aspects are also coming to the fore: the idea of Christ's being sent into the world, the overlapping of the times in the Christ event, and predestination.

2.2.1 According to R. Bultmann's commentary on the Gospel of John, Johannine Christology is marked by an offensive *paradox*: When John 1:14 says that the Logos and Revealer became *flesh*, this must mean that "the Revealer is nothing but a man" and that it is precisely "in this sheer humanity that he is the Revealer" (*The Gospel of John* [1971], 62, 63). Therefore in the man Jesus "the revelation is present in a peculiar *hiddenness*" (63), and the confession of John 1:14, "and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son," is for Bultmann "the confession of those who, having overcome the offence, have perceived the divine glory in the man Jesus" (67). The paradox is taken to the extreme when the Fourth Gospel nudges the man Jesus close to God and says that God is accessible to people only in him and his word.

2.2.2 In his analysis of the Johannine prologue ("Anliegen und Aufbau des johanneischen Prologs") and then in his study of Jesus's last testament, *Jesu letzter Wille nach Johannes 17*, E. Käsemann held up against his teacher R. Bultmann the fact that the Fourth Gospel presents Jesus as the exalted God who strides over the world above all temptation. John contains no paradoxical theology of the cross, but rather a theology of glory supported by a *naive docetism* (*Jesu letzter Wille*, 61–62, 98, etc.). U. B. Müller agreed with Käsemann's view in his essay on the meaning of Jesus's death on the cross in John ("Die Bedeutung des Kreuzestodes im Johannesevangelium"), while others have vigorously opposed it (cf., e.g., E. Haenchen, *John*, Hermeneia, vol. 1 [1984], 131–40, or J. Becker, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes, Kap. 11–21* [1981], 401ff.). In fact, one cannot accuse John of any naive docetism, because he has composed his entire Gospel on the basis of the "hour" of Jesus's being lifted up on the cross (cf. 3:14) and has given Jesus enough human features to differentiate him from an impassible divine being (cf. the references to Jesus's weariness from his

journey in 4:6, his emotions in 11:32–35; 12:27; 13:21; his thirst in 19:28; and the water and blood from his pierced side in 19:34).

2.2.3 According to H. Conzelmann, "in John we find the *theologia crucis* at its sharpest," because "the crucifixion is itself already the exaltation" (cf. 3:14; 8:28; 12:32–33). However, this merging of the two ideas seems irreconcilable with any "realistic understanding of resurrection and ascension," which is "evidently broken up in interpretation, in gnosticism" (*An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament* [1969], 325). With such statements Conzelmann set a direction that many exegetes have followed: M. Hengel, T. Knöppler, U. Schnelle, and others have correctly pointed to the antidocetic and theology-of-the-cross accents in John, but they have also been at pains to free the discussion of Johannine Christology from the stranglehold of an (essentially Pauline) alternative of a theology of the cross and a theology of glory—a distinction Conzelmann still made for Paul, even though he tried to hold the two ideas most closely together (cf. Conzelmann, 325: "In Paul, the cross is the saving event; it belongs most closely with the exaltation; we know the Exalted One only as the Crucified One. John goes one step further," etc.). J. A. Bühner has shown that the idea of Christ's being *sent* into the world by the Father that is so determinative for Johannine Christology (cf. 4:34; 5:23, 37; 8:16, 29; 12:45; 13:16; etc.) has its primary analogy in the early Jewish understanding of an agent or messenger. This follows the principle that "a man's agent is like to himself" (*m. Ber.* 5:5), and it "legally binds the messenger to the one who sent him" (Bühner, *Der Gesandte*, 423). U. Schnelle, following the lead of G. Bornkamm and F. Mussner, emphasizes that "in the Fourth Gospel, the unfolding of the Christ event occurs as a post-Easter anamnesis effected by the Spirit (cf. John 2.17, 22; 12.16; 13.7; 20.9)" (*The History and Theology of the New Testament Writings* [1998], 509). J. Frey has shown in his three-volume work on Johannine eschatology that one can grasp the christologically centered eschatology of the Gospel and letters of John only by refusing to isolate these writings from one another and by reenacting the overlapping of the times in the Christ event through an act of anamnesis or remembrance:

> As the preexistent and eternal Son of the Father, Jesus is co-present in both the historical past and the historical and eschatological future. His whole history is summed up in his person in the Johannine view: his

> preexistent being with the Father, his way as the incarnate one, the event of his "hour," and his status as the one glorified with the Father. . . . Because Jesus in person encompasses the times and possesses the eschatological power over life and death, the eschatological decision about salvation and condemnation—the definitive impartation of life or the final, valid sentence of death—also occurs in a historical encounter with his person. Because he participates in the timeless being of God, the eschatological consummation toward which the church on earth is heading can already be proleptically present in him. (*Die johanneische Eschatologie*, 3:487)

Finally, O. Hofius has shown that the idea of *election and predestination* plays a far greater role in the Christology of the Fourth Evangelist than many exegetes would like to admit. This holds even, and especially, for the famous declaration of John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son [over to death], so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (cf. Hofius, *Johannesstudien*, 64). According to Hofius, the words *πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτόν* ("everyone who believes in him") are in keeping with the predestinarian thought of the Fourth Evangelist. They define "precisely what is to be understood by the *κόσμος* ['world'] that God so loved: It is not the whole of humanity in its numerical totality, but only those whom the Father has given the Son 'out of the world' (17:6; cf. 15:19)." Similarly, "in John 6:45 the *πάντες* ['all'] from Isaiah 54:13 is expressly interpreted in a predestinarian sense" (*Johannesstudien*, 66). In John 6:45 Jesus first quotes the Isaiah passage: "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall *all* (*πάντες*) be *taught* by God' " (Isa. 54:13), then identifies the "all" and the "taught" more precisely as "*everyone* (*πᾶς*) who has heard and *learned* from the Father," before concluding with predestination: "comes to me."

2.3 The Christology of the Johannine writings gains its richness from its tradition-historical depth. Beginning in the Apocalypse, then more clearly in the Johannine letters and most clearly in the Fourth Gospel, readers are presented with the Son, who is of one essence with the Father and who is viewed simultaneously from the beginning and the end of time. From the beginning Jesus appears as God's Son and "exegete" (cf. 1:18, *ἐξηγήσατο*), and from Easter he can be seen to have been already in his earthly work and on his way to the cross the conqueror who has "overcome the world" (16:33). This double perspective transcends the alternative of a theology of the cross versus a theology of glory and opens up a comprehensive view of Christology: in the one and only Son the history of the one God with humanity is summarized from beginning to end, and in the Spirit-enabled encounter with the Son through an act of remembrance (cf. 14:26), believers of all times discover divine grace and truth (cf. 1:17).

3 Christological Titles. Although the Christology of the New Testament cannot be determined by the christological titles alone, these titles do provide important clues for understanding the earthly and exalted Christ. This is also true for the writings of John. The titles are used in a cumulative fashion here, just as in the rest of the New Testament. However, because the Apocalypse, the three letters of John, and the Gospel of John each favor particular titles, one can use the titles to identify christological accents that should stand out to readers.

3.1 In the *Apocalypse* the risen Christ is designated successively as “the faithful witness” (1:5; 3:14), “the firstborn of the dead” (1:5; cf. Col. 1:18 and Ps. 89:28 [ET 89:27]), “the origin of God’s creation” (3:14; cf. with Prov. 8:22), “the Lion of the tribe of Judah” and “the Root of David” (5:5; cf. with Gen. 49:9; Isa. 11:1, 10), “one like the Son of Man” (14:14; cf. with Dan. 7:13), “King of kings and Lord of lords” (17:14; 19:16; cf. with Dan. 2:47), “the Word of God” (19:13; cf. with Wis. 18:15), “the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end” (22:13; cf. with Isa. 44:6), and “the bright morning star” (22:16; cf. with Num. 24:17). Each of these titles opens up an entire world of Old Testament and Jewish background. John wants to present the appearance of Christ as an event of messianic fulfillment. But Christ for John is above all the reigning and soon-returning Savior, to whom the church on earth can and must hold fast in order to receive a share in his kingdom and the heavenly Jerusalem.

3.2 The dominant title for Christ in the Apocalypse is *τὸ ἀρνίον*, “the lamb” or “the ram.” It is unattested elsewhere in the New Testament outside John 21:15 (where it refers not to Christ but to the disciples), but it appears twenty-eight times with reference to Christ in Revelation (and once with reference to a “beast” having “two horns like a lamb” in the parody of the Christ-lamb in 13:11), thus putting all the other christological titles in the shade. T. Holtz, O. Hofius, and many others wish to interpret this from the Passover tradition, but this is far from certain. The paschal lamb was not an atoning sacrifice in ancient Judaism, and the Passover blood first began to be interpreted in terms of atonement theology by the rabbis in the second century AD (cf. the references in J. Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 225–31). The Apocalypse never refers or alludes to the Passover tradition, and this tradition also lacks the messianic connotations necessary for interpreting the strong and victorious lamb with horns. Matters are different when one assumes the background of the Old Testament ritual of

the “regular” or “perpetual” (תָּמִיד, *tāmîd*) daily burnt offering. According to Exodus 29:38–42, Numbers 28:3–8, and *Jubilees* 50:11, this was the most regular and therefore most important Jewish atoning sacrifice, which was offered every morning and evening in the Jerusalem sanctuary to redeem Israel from the guilt of its sin anew every day. (The idea of *atonement* is explicit in *Jubilees* 50:11, “that they may *atone* for Israel with sacrifice continually [or with a continual gift] from day to day for a memorial well-pleasing before the Lord,” and it is implicit in Exodus 29:41 and Numbers 28:8 with the mention of “an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD.”) Only unblemished year-old male sheep were acceptable for these daily burnt offerings, which were paid for from the temple tax, understood as a means of “ransom” (כֹּפֶר [*kōper*], λύτρον) for the lives of the Israelites (hence the tax could not include contributions from Gentiles). According to J. Ådna, the identification of the crucified and risen Christ with the lamb of the daily *tamid* offering goes back to Jesus’s own rededication of the temple for the purpose of sacrifice in his temple act (Mark 11:15–17 par.) (cf. above, 97, §4.5, and 173–74, §4.3.1). It therefore involves an early and primitive christological element that comes from the oldest apostolic source.

3.3 In the *letters of John*, the rich diversity of titles in Revelation is narrowed down, with particular concentration on the title “Son of God,” where the discussion centers on the question of the proper confession of Christ. These three letters also use the christological titles cumulatively: In 1 John 2:1–2 Jesus is not only called Ἰησοῦς Χριστός but also ὁ δίκαιος, “the righteous one,” and ὁ παράκλητος, the Paraclete or “advocate.” In 4:14 he is called both ὁ υἱός, “the Son,” and ὁ σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου, “the Savior of the world,” while 5:20 includes three appellations: ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, ὁ ἀληθινὸς θεός, and ζωὴ αἰώνιος, “the Son of God,” “the true God,” and “eternal life.” Jesus is furthermore called ὁ λόγος τῆς ζωῆς, “the word of life” (1 John 1:1); ἡ ζωή, “the life” (1 John 1:2); and ὁ Χριστός, “the Messiah” or “Christ” (1 John 2:22; 2 John 9). But three titles dominate the discussion: Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, “Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3; 2:1; 3:23; 4:2; 5:6, 20; 2 John 3, 7); ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ or ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ, “the Son of God” or “his Son” (1 John 1:3, 7; 3:8, 23; 4:9 with the addition of μονογενής, “only begotten”; 4:10, 15; 5:5, 9–13, 20; in 2 John 3 Christ is called ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ πατρός, “the Son of the

Father"); and the sevenfold absolute use of ὁ υἱός, "the Son" (1 John 2:22, 23 [twice], 24; 4:14; 5:12; 2 John 9). Jesus, for John the elder, is the God-sent, truly incarnate, only begotten *Son (of God)* who has died to atone for the sins of the world and now stands before God as champion and advocate for believers. In 1 John 5:20 the elder calls him "the true God and eternal life."

This manner of speaking in the Johannine letters stands both close to and far from that of the Apocalypse: The title ὁ λόγος τῆς ζωῆς, "the Word of life," in 1 John 1:1 can be viewed together with the title ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ, "the Word of God," in Revelation 19:13. A frequent title of the letters, Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, "Jesus Christ," also occurs in Revelation 1:1, 2, 5, while ὁ Χριστός, "the Christ," occurs in Revelation 11:15; 12:10; 20:4, 6. Christ is already the true God (cf. 1 John 5:20), or the "true one" for the seer of Revelation (cf. Rev. 3:7, ὁ ἀληθινός). Finally, the language of Jesus as the "coming one," ὁ ἐρχόμενος, in Revelation 1:4 and 4:8 may be compared with the ἐρχόμενον ἐν σαρκί, "coming in the flesh," in 2 John 7. However, the Apocalypse uses the frequent title of the letters, "the Son of God," only in 2:18 and knows of no absolute christological use of "the Son." Conversely, the letters do not speak of the ἀρνίον or "lamb."

The elder seeks to defend the person and work of the Son of God, who came by water and blood (1 John 5:6) and will come again in the flesh (2 John 7), against spiritualists or docetists from his own ranks. In viewing them as a manifestation of the ἀντίχριστος or antichrist in 1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; and 2 John 7, the elder formulates independently but thinks in a similarly apocalyptic manner as Revelation 11:7; 13:1ff.; etc.; Mark 13:14, 22 par.; 2 Thessalonians 2:3–12; and *Didache* 16:3–4.

3.4 In the *Gospel of John* we encounter a presentation of Christ that corresponds to the testimony of the letters. Its leading title is once again Christ as *the Son (of God)*. The Evangelist speaks of him in two ways. He uses the traditional title ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, "the Son of God," or its equivalent ten times (1:34, 49; 3:16 "*his* [sc. God's] only begotten Son"; 3:18; 5:25; 10:36; 11:4, 27; 20:31; anarthrous in 19:7). But it is more typical of his style to speak absolutely of ὁ υἱός, "the Son," found eighteen times (see below).

3.4.1 The traditional title ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, "the Son of God," is used in various contexts. It appears in John 11:27; in 20:31 parallel to ὁ Χριστός, "the Messiah"; and in 1:49 parallel to ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ, "the king of Israel." It therefore bears a messianic stamp (cf. with 2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 2:7; and the *4QAramaic Apocalypse* 4Q246 2:1: "He will be called son of God,

and they will call him son of the Most High" [*DSSSE* 495]). The title indicates that Jesus has been sent into the world to act as the Father's emissary and representative and to give believers eternal life (cf. the full title "the Son of God" in 5:25 and 11:4, the equivalent expressions of God's fatherhood in 5:17–18, and the absolute uses of "the Son" in 5:21 and 26). Jesus's claim to be the Son of God or to have God as his Father caused the Jews to accuse him of blasphemously making himself equal to God and to judge him as worthy of death according to the law (cf. 5:18; 10:33, 36; 19:7 with Lev. 24:16). Jesus willingly took upon himself the death by crucifixion that resulted from this conflict. But even more characteristic for John than the full title ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ is the *titular use of the abbreviated expression ὁ υἱός, "the Son."* This language appears only three times in the Synoptics (cf. Matt. 11:27 par.; Mark 13:32 par.; and Matt. 28:19), once in Paul (cf. 1 Cor. 15:28), and five times in Hebrews (although four are anarthrous: cf. 1:2; 3:6; 5:8; 7:28, articular only in 1:8). By contrast, the Johannine writings are full of the expression "the Son," which occurs seven times in 1 and 2 John (see above, §3.3) and eighteen times in the Fourth Gospel (3:17, 35–36; 5:19–23, 26–27; 8:35–36; 14:13; 17:1, not counting the textual variant "the only begotten *Son*" in 1:18, A C[3] Θ Ψ 𝔐 etc. [cf. KJV, RSV]). "The Son" is therefore a favorite Johannine title that emphasizes the unique connection of Jesus with God. As W. G. Kümmel nicely formulates it, "for John Jesus as 'the Son' is the *full-fledged presence of God*" (*The Theology of the New Testament according to Its Major Witnesses* [1973], 273).

3.4.2 John's language of God as *the Father* is in keeping with the above evaluation of the title "Son of God." Whereas God is spoken of as the "Father" of Jesus Christ only 5 times in the book of Revelation (1:6; 2:28; 3:5, 21; 14:1), this expression occurs 17 times in the letters of John and 120 times in the Fourth Gospel, so that this Gospel speaks more often of the Father than any other New Testament writing (compare Matthew, with 44 occurrences). According to both the Gospel and the First Letter of John, God is the one and only πατήρ who has given to his μονογενής or *"only (begotten)" One*—further specified as the "Son" (John 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9), "God" (John 1:18), or "the One and Only, who came from the Father" (John 1:14 [NIV])—a share in God's divine being from all eternity (cf. John 1:1; 1 John 1:1). This becomes especially clear when in the 𝔓[66] text (cf.

also ℵ* B C* etc.) of John 1:18, the anarthrous collocation *μονογενὴς θεός* (articular in 𝔓[75] ℵ[2] etc.) is judged with NA[28] as original against *ὁ μονογενὴς υἱός*, "the only begotten Son" of the Textus Receptus, and is read as two substantives in apposition. The resulting *μονογενής, θεός* may then be translated with reference to the second person of the Trinity as "the only Son, God" (NAB), "the only One, who is God" (ESV margin), "the one and only Son, who is himself God" (NIV11), or, with reversal of word order, "God the only Son" (NRSV) or "God the One and Only" (NIV). This One is said to exist or have his being (cf. *ὁ ὤν*) "in the bosom of the Father" or "at the Father's side." The Son has furthermore been given the divine prerogative on earth to raise the dead (cf. 3:35; 5:21, 26 with 11:25). Since only the Son has seen the Father face-to-face (cf. 1:18; 6:46), he alone can make the Father known (cf. 1:14; 12:45; 14:9). But he also has the authority to lay down his life voluntarily as a sacrifice and to take it up again at the completion of his sacrifice (cf. 10:17–18).

In the formulas of *sending Jesus and giving him up to death* in 1 John 4:9–10 (God "loved us and *sent* his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins" [NIV]) and John 3:16 ("God . . . *gave* his only Son"), the author of the Johannine writings emphasizes that Jesus was sent into the world as an act of God's love to die an atoning death. The two formulas have close parallels in the sending formulas in Galatians 4:4–5 and Romans 8:3–4. Behind these formulas stand the traditions of the sending of (preexistent) wisdom into the world (cf. Wis. 9:10; Sir. 24:8) and of the delivering up of Isaiah's Suffering Servant to the death that leads to the justification of the many (cf. Isa. 53:6, 10–12).

3.4.3 The Johannine view of Christ can hardly be better characterized than by Jesus's claim in John 10:30 (and 17:11), "I and the Father are one" (*ἕν ἐσμεν*), together with the similar language of mutual immanence whereby the Father and the Son are said to be "in" one another (cf. 10:38; 14:10–11, 20; 17:21). Jesus is the Son *only in his origin from and relationship to the Father, but the Father also encounters the world only in and through him*. The sharing of the throne by God and the Lamb (*ἀρνίον*) in Revelation (cf. Rev. 5:6; etc.) is extended in the Fourth Gospel to the incarnate Christ. For the Evangelist the fellowship of God the Father and God the Son is christologically fundamental, but for early Jewish sensibilities it constitutes an even more flagrant breach of the fundamental monotheistic confession of the Shema in Deuteronomy 6:4 ("the Lord is one") than the inclusion of Christ in the Shema in 1 Corinthians 8:6 and 1 Timothy 2:5–6 (one God and one Lord/mediator, Jesus Christ). The

Christology of the Johannine circle is the main reason for its expulsion from the synagogue (cf. John 16:2).

3.4.4 Despite their confession of the equality in essence and immanence between God the Father and God the Son, the members of the Johannine school also held to the *subordination* of the Son to the Father's will. The Fourth Evangelist repeatedly emphasizes that the Son does not act on his own initiative, but only says and does what the Father gives him to say and do (cf. 5:19, 30; 8:28; 9:33). He also speaks formulaically of the Father as the one who "sent" Jesus (cf., e.g., 1 John 4:9, 10, 14; John 3:17; 5:36; 6:57; 7:29; 8:42; 10:36; 11:42; 17:3, 8, 18, 21, 23, 25; 20:21). For the Johannine letters and the Gospel, Jesus is God's "sent one" par excellence, who received the "command" (ἐντολή) for his mission from God himself (cf. John 10:18; 12:49–50; 14:31 with Sir. 24:8). This command includes the duty to take up the cup of suffering and to surrender his life to death on behalf of the world (cf. John 12:27–28; 18:11).

3.5 The designation of Jesus by John the Baptist as ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου, "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29; cf. 1:36), once again offers a new approach over against the other word for a lamb, τὸ ἀρνίον, "ram," in the Apocalypse (see above). In the Fourth Gospel Jesus is never called the ἀρνίον, but rather ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, to which the Evangelist adds ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου. The present participle αἴρων ("taking away") deserves special attention, as does the universal statement, "the sin of the world" (cf. 1 John 2:2).

The statements in John 18:28 and 19:14 about Jesus's trial before Pilate on the day of preparation for the Passover indicate that Jesus suffered death on the cross outside the gates of Jerusalem at the same time as the Passover lambs were being slaughtered in the temple. It has repeatedly been deduced from this circumstance that John's Lamb of God refers to the Passover lamb in the person of Jesus Christ that was given up for the sins of the world. This understanding is consistent with the quotation in John 19:36 of the law of the Passover lamb from Exodus 12:10 and 46 LXX, which says that none of the lamb's bones should be broken. But it also has its historical difficulties. To begin with, according to J. Jeremias, the phrase "the lamb of God," ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, "gives us a highly singular genitive combination" that is probably to be understood on the analogy of the expression "Servant of the Lord" (cf. Isa. 52:13) (Jeremias, *TDNT* 1:339). This phrase has no precise parallel in the New Testament or elsewhere in Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic writings and apparently depends on the less exact expressions in the LXX of Isaiah 53:7 and 12: see 53:7, ὡς ἀμνὸς ἐναντίον τοῦ κείροντος αὐτόν ἄφωνος, "as a lamb before its shearer is silent," and 53:12, αὐτὸς ἁμαρτίας πολλῶν ἀνήνεγκεν, "he *bore* the sins of many" (instead of the "taking away," αἴρων, of John 1:29). There is also an allusion to Isaiah 53:11 in 1 John 2:1, with its language of Jesus as the δίκαιος or "righteous one" who

intercedes for believers as their advocate before God. It must furthermore be remembered that the Passover lamb was not an atoning sacrifice in ancient Judaism; the Passover blood was not interpreted in terms of atonement theology until rabbinic times (cf. above, §3.2). Therefore the equation of the Lamb of God in John 1:29 and 36 with the Passover lamb would not have been self-evident for early Jewish Christian readers. Under these circumstances it seems best to interpret the ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ of 1:29 and 36 primarily from *Isaiah 53*, and to see the reference to the Passover lamb in the Evangelist's statement about the Scripture predicting that none of Jesus's bones would be broken (cf. the "fulfillment" citation of Exod. 12:10, 46 in John 19:36) as a secondary connotation that functions not only as a statement about atonement theology but also as an etiological explanation: Because Jesus Christ died on the cross while the Jews were slaughtering their Passover lambs, the (Jewish) Christians who believe in him are no longer obligated to celebrate the Passover, but instead should remember Jesus's death on the cross (cf. Luke 22:19).

3.6 The designation of Jesus as the *Messiah* is by no means unimportant for the Fourth Gospel. It is no accident that the New Testament's only two uses of the Greek Μεσσίας to transliterate the original Hebrew or Aramaic term (see below) are found in John (1:41; 4:25). The Johannine school has brought the Christian interpretation of Jesus's messiahship most consistently to its objective: the Messiah Jesus is one in essence with God and the representative of his kingdom par excellence. This completes a line of development that begins with Isaiah 9:5 (ET 9:6) (a son with the name Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace) and Psalm 45:7 (a king anointed by God), continues with the developing expectation of the messianic Son of Man (cf. Dan. 7:13–14, 27; *1 En.* 48:2–10), and ultimately finds its historical center in the Jesus tradition (cf. only Matt. 11:25–27; 16:16–17; Luke 17:21; Mark 14:61–62 par.). Whereas the Revelation of John speaks of Christ's divine glory and end-time work (see below), the Gospel of John makes it clear that God's sending his preexistent Son to earth is already an event of messianic fulfillment.

3.6.1 The only begotten Son (of God) appears on earth and reveals his divine glory by performing seven great *miraculous "signs," or σημεῖα*: changing water into wine at the wedding at Cana in Galilee (John 2:1–11, esp. v. 11 for σημεῖα), healing the son of a royal official from Capernaum (4:46–54, esp. v. 54), healing the lame man at the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem (5:1–16; cf. 6:2), feeding the five thousand (6:1–15, esp. v. 14) and then walking on the water at the Sea of Galilee (6:16–21; cf. v. 26), healing the man born blind by sending him to the pool of Siloam in Jerusalem (9:1–7, 8–41, esp. v. 16), and raising Lazarus in Bethany (11:1–44; cf. 12:18). According to John 2:23 (cf. with 4:45; 6:2; 20:30), these

seven *σημεῖα* represent only a selection of the many *σημεῖα* that Jesus did. Because these seven *σημεῖα* are meant as aids to faith just as are the reports of Jesus's Easter appearances (see below, §6), we will first investigate them in detail in chapter 37 about faith and love (see below, 704–8, §1.2.5). Here it need only be pointed out that these miraculous signs do not only testify to Jesus's divine *δόξα* or "glory" in his earthly ministry (cf. 2:11), but also stand as advance signs of the messianic time of salvation that will be filled with countless miraculous and beneficial acts of God according to the *Targum of Isaiah* 53:8 ("the wonders which will be done for us in his days, who will be able to recount?"). The first *σημεῖον*, the wine miracle at the wedding at Cana, points forward to the wedding of the Lamb (cf. Rev. 19:7; 21:2, 9), while the last, the raising of Lazarus, offers a foretaste of the end-time resurrection of the dead by the messianic Son of Man (cf. John 11:40–44 with 5:26–29).

3.6.2 The overall aim of Jesus's messianic work is the establishment of the transcendent kingdom of God, which from the Johannine perspective has nothing to do with political systems of rule and therefore does not compete with them (cf. 18:36–37 with 3:3 and M. Hengel, "Reich Christi"). The world opposes this work of Jesus and nails its God King to the cross. But it cannot hinder his triumphal procession, because the way to the kingdom and eternal life is opened up precisely through Jesus's being "lifted up" on the cross (cf. 3:14–15; 8:28; 12:32).

3.6.3 According to John 1:20 and 25, the title *ὁ χριστός* does not apply to John the Baptist but only to Jesus, while in John 19:19–20 Pilate names the crucified Jesus "the King of the Jews" (*ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων*) in all three ancient world languages—Aramaic, Greek, and Latin.

As indicated above, the importance of the messianic tradition for the *Fourth Evangelist* can be seen in the fact that no other New Testament or early Christian author transcribes the Hebrew or Aramaic term הַמָּשִׁיחַ or מְשִׁיחָא so precisely by (*ὁ*) *Μεσσίας* and then applies it to Jesus as does the Evangelist in John 1:41 and 4:25 (the added Greek translation *χριστός*, "anointed one," in both instances attests to the foreignness of the transliterated term). Moreover, John 1:19–51 attests to the cumulative application to Jesus of various titles well known from the early Jewish messianic tradition, including *ὁ χριστός*, "the Christ" (vv. 20, 25, 41); *ὁ προφήτης*, "the prophet" (vv. 21, 25; cf. Deut. 18:15); *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*, "the Son of God" (v. 34; cf. also the textual variant *ὁ ἐκλεκτός*, "the *chosen one* of God" in א* and a few other manuscripts); *ὁ Μεσσίας*, "the Messiah" (v. 41); *βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ*, "the King of Israel" (v. 49); and *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, "the Son of Man" (v. 51). In a great many additional passages Jesus is called precisely *ὁ χριστός*, or the question is raised whether Jesus can indeed be *ὁ χριστός* (cf. John 3:28; 4:29; 7:26, 27, 31, 41, 42; 10:24; 11:27; 12:34). A series of verses in John 4

(vv. 19, 25–26, 42) makes it completely clear that in the person of Jesus, John wants to present his readers with the true messianic prophet, king of salvation, and Savior of the world awaited by both Jews and Samaritans.

Whereas the *letters of John* also speak of the "Christ" (cf. 1 John 2:22; 5:1; 2 John 9) but leave the title's messianic connotations in the background, the presentation of the *Apocalypse* supplements and complements the testimony of the Fourth Evangelist. The seer of Revelation agrees with the Fourth Evangelist that the ἀρνίον or "lamb" that sits on God's throne is not only a human being from the line of David who has been exalted to the right hand of God, but is also in one and the same person "the first and the last" (cf. 1:17; 2:8; 21:6; 22:13 with Isa. 44:6; 48:12), the preexistent ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ or "beginning of the creation of God" (cf. Rev. 3:14 with Prov. 8:22; Sir. 24:9), and the messianic "firstborn of the dead" (cf. Rev. 1:5 with Ps. 89:28 [ET 89:27]). Yet with other designations such as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" and "the Root of David" (Rev. 5:5) as well as "the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star" (Rev. 22:16), the seer signals that the risen Christ must still fulfill the original tasks of the Davidic Messiah: he must cast down God's enemies and prepare the way for the rule of God's people (cf. Isa. 8:23–9:6 [ET 9:1–7]; 11:1–16; Ezek. 37:15–28; Ps. 89:20–28 [ET 89:19–27]). For the seer John, Christ's messianic work reaches its goal in the establishment of his thousand-year reign (cf. Rev. 20:1–6).

3.7 The *Son of Man* sayings in the Johannine corpus once again show how deeply rooted John's school is in the Old Testament–Jewish and Jesuanic–early Christian tradition, while also demonstrating that the school has integrated almost all the important traditions from such sources into its Christology.

In the *Apocalypse* Jesus is still presented in a completely primitive fashion as "one like a son of man" coming with the clouds of heaven according to Daniel 7:13 (cf. Rev. 1:7, 13), who also bears the divine features of the Ancient of Days from Daniel 7:9 (cf. Rev. 1:13–14). According to Revelation 14:14, he also has a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand to execute judgment on the earth.

Although the Johannine letters do not use the title Son of Man, it appears thirteen times in the *Fourth Gospel*, but only on the lips of Jesus, as in the Synoptics (cf. John 1:51; 3:13, 14; 5:27; 6:27, 53, 62; 8:28; 9:35; 12:23, 34 [twice]; 13:31; the only exception is 12:34, where the question "Who is this Son of Man?" is raised by the crowd). Although these sayings are historically secondary compared to the synoptic Son of Man sayings, they remain characteristic of Johannine Christology. They receive their distinctive Johannine stamp "both by their integration into the Christology of preexistence and incarnation and by their interpretation in the framework of the Christology of the cross, ὑψωθῆναι [being 'lifted up'] and of the exaltation, δοξασθῆναι [being 'glorified']" (U. Schnelle, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* [1998], 74). John's sayings speak about the Son of Man's

descent from heaven (3:13), his end-time authority to execute judgment which he already possesses (5:27), his being lifted up and glorified on the cross (cf. 3:14; 8:28; 12:23, 34; 13:31–32 with Isa. 52:13; 53:10–12), and his ascent into heaven from whence he came (6:62). The Johannine tradition therefore confronts the reading community with the messianic Son of Man who has not only descended from heaven and been lifted up on the cross, but has also ascended again into heaven (cf. 3:13).

4 The "I Am" Sayings of Jesus. One form of Jesus's self-proclamation that is especially characteristic of the understanding of Christ in the Johannine school is Jesus's *"I am" sayings*. The Apocalypse shows their original prophetic form, while the Fourth Gospel uses them to present the uniqueness of Jesus.

4.1 The "I am" sayings in the Johannine corpus have only one real parallel in the synoptic tradition, in Mark 13:6 par. Matthew 24:5; Luke 21:8 (otherwise compare only John 4:26; 6:20; 18:5–6 with the two sayings "it is I" and "I am [sc. the Messiah]" in Mark 6:50; 14:62). Mark 13:6 warns against false prophets who will come in Jesus's name and say ἐγώ εἰμι, "I am he!" (so also Luke 21:8). According to the parallel in Matthew 24:5, the false prophets even dare to say ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ χριστός, "I am the Christ" or "Messiah."

In the *Apocalypse* ἐγώ εἰμι formulations appear twice in the mouth of God (cf. 1:8; 21:6) and four times in the mouth of the exalted Christ (cf. 1:17; 2:23; 22:13 [with εἰμι implied], 16). The divine title "the first and the last" (cf. Isa. 44:6) is applied to Jesus in Revelation 1:17 and 22:13, while Revelation 2:23 applies to Jesus two Old Testament invocations: "the one who searches minds and hearts" (cf. Jer. 11:20; Ps. 7:10 [ET 7:9]) and one who "will give to each as their works deserve" (cf. Jer. 17:10; Ps 62:13 [ET 62:12]). Finally, Revelation 22:16 is a purely messianic saying: "I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star" (cf. with Isa. 11:1 and Num. 24:17). All four of the christological "I am" sayings in Revelation cohere closely with the speech patterns of the Fourth Gospel, since only in the Fourth Gospel and Revelation in the New Testament "is the ἐγώ εἰμι of Jesus *purposefully used as an expression of his divine authority* and his unity with the Father, *and introduced as a structural element*" (J. Frey, "Erwägungen," 400).

As in Mark 13:6 and Matthew 24:5, the ἐγώ εἰμι sayings of the Apocalypse have a *prophetic origin*: they are statements of the exalted Christ that a Spirit-filled prophet has conveyed to the churches (so also in Rev. 3:20). The Johannine school identifies him by name—Ἰωάννης (cf. 1:9–11; 22:8–9). Because all the christological ἐγώ εἰμι sayings of Revelation mentioned above are found in the outer frame of the book that surrounds its traditional body in 4:1–22:5 (but cf. the application of ἐγώ εἰμι to God in 21:6), they probably go back to the prophetic ministry of John, whose speech pattern was then extended to the testimony of the earthly Jesus in the Fourth Gospel.

The "I am" sayings of the Johannine school therefore give evidence of the process postulated by form criticism with reference to Revelation 3:20 whereby the words of early Christian prophets were conflated with those of the earthly Jesus (cf. R. Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition* [1968[2]], 127–28). But the Johannine linguistic character of these sayings and the evidence of Mark 13:6 and Matthew 24:5 also show that this process cannot simply be applied wholesale to the synoptic tradition, as E. Käsemann (following Bultmann) did when he claimed "that *countless* 'I' sayings of the Christ who reveals himself through the mouth of the prophets have entered into the Synoptic tradition as sayings of Jesus" ("Zum Thema der Nichtobjektivierbarkeit," in *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen*, vol. 1 [1970[6]], 224–36, esp. 234, italics added).

4.2 The "I am" sayings of the Fourth Gospel come in two linguistic forms: the ἐγώ εἰμι is used either absolutely (cf. 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19) or with a following noun.

4.2.1 The statements with a following noun are the better known of the "I am" sayings. Jesus designates himself in one expression after another as "the bread of life" (6:35, 48), "the (living) bread that came down from heaven" (6:41, 51), "the light of the world" (8:12; 9:5), "the gate (for the sheep)" (10:7, 9), "the good shepherd" (10:11, 14), "the resurrection and the life" (11:25), "the way, and the truth, and the life" (14:6), and "the (true) vine" (15:1, 5).

The syntagmatic relationship of the ἐγώ εἰμι to the following nouns can be explained in two main ways, as an "I am" formula or as an "It is I" formula. The former reads these sentences in ordinary subject-verb-complement word order, with ἐγώ as the subject and the εἰμι + noun as the predicate, where the noun is the predicate nominative or complement. The other option reverses this syntax and reads the noun as the subject and the ἐγώ as the complement. The more usual subject-verb-complement syntax also has several semantic variations, as outlined by R. Bultmann (*The Gospel of John*, 225–26n3). The "I am" formula can either be (1) a "presentation formula," which replies to the question: "Who are you?" or (2) a "qualificatory formula," which answers the question: "What are you?" But it can also be (3) an "identification formula," in which "the speaker identifies himself with another figure or object." However, reversing the syntax and reading complement-verb-subject word order results in (4) a "recognition formula," which answers the question: "Who is the one expected, asked for, spoken to?" Answer: "It is I" (more precise than the "I am he" of the English edition of Bultmann). Because all the "I am" sayings emphasize the "I" of Jesus as the subject rather than the predicate, the first type of interpretation (encompassing 1–3) is more plausible than the second (item 4).

Like the “I am” sayings in the Apocalypse, the Fourth Gospel’s ἐγώ εἰμι sayings with a predicate noun aim to say that *in Jesus the saving reality of the one God has entered once and for all on the scene.* In the background of these sayings lie the Old Testament–early Jewish discourses about God, the Messiah, and Wisdom, as the following examples show:

When Jesus speaks of himself in John 6 as the *bread of life* (6:35, 48) or the *living bread* (6:51), the report of the miracle of the manna from Exodus 16 and Numbers 11 is christologically surpassed: Not Moses but only Jesus fed God’s people with “the true bread from heaven”; he is this bread in person (6:32–35). The christological interpretation of the manna miracle is prepared for by Wisdom 16:20–29 (God gave his people “food of angels” and “bread from heaven ready to eat,” etc.).

Jesus’s self-identification as the *light of the world* in John 8:12 is based on biblical statements about the light that is sent out from God (cf. Pss. 36:10 [ET 36:9]; 43:3; Isa. 60:1). Moreover, Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6 refer to the Servant of the Lord (Israel) as “a light to the nations,” and this title is then transferred to the Son of Man/Messiah in *1 Enoch* 48:4. According to Wisdom 7:26, wisdom is “a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness.” Jesus’s “I am” saying stands at the intersection of these traditions.

Messianic tradition also stands behind Jesus’s saying in John 10:7 and 9, *“I am the gate (for the sheep).”* The metaphor can be explained by Psalm 118, which was interpreted messianically in early Judaism and early Christianity. Psalm 118:20 speaks of “the gate of the LORD” through which “the righteous shall enter,” and this is precisely how Jesus presents himself. The genitive *τῶν προβάτων* in 10:7, the gate “of the sheep” (KJV, RSV, NASB) or “of the sheepfold” (NJB, REB), should be translated by “*for* the sheep,” as in several recent English versions (NRSV, NIV, NAB), and not as “*to* the sheep” (*zu den Schafen*), as in both major current German Bible versions (the 2017 Lutherbibel and the Roman Catholic Einheitsübersetzung). This is shown by John 10:9, where Jesus alone offers the sheep access to God: “Whoever enters by me will be saved.” When one considers the fact that according to Hebrews 10:19–20, Jesus as the heavenly high priest opens up for believers “a new and living way” to God by the vicarious surrender of his life, then the statements of John 10:7 and 9 also become understandable: Jesus is the gate *for* the sheep *to* God, because through his word and his sacrifice he has opened up access to God and his kingdom.

The background to the language of the *good shepherd* in John 10:11 and 14 is once again found in the Old Testament–early Jewish tradition. God himself is the (good) shepherd in Psalm 23, Micah 4:6–8, Ezekiel 20:37 (cf. with Lev. 27:32), and Ezekiel 34:11–16. However, in Ezekiel 34:23–24, 37:24, and Zechariah 13:7–9, the shepherd metaphor is also used messianically, as in “one shepherd, my servant David” (Ezek. 34:23) and “‘my shepherd, . . . the man who is my associate,’ says the LORD” (Zech. 13:7). John 10 takes up this messianic usage.

Jesus’s self-designation as *the resurrection and the life* (*ἡ ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ ζωή*) in John 11:25 places him entirely on the side of God. According to Deuteronomy 32:39, 1 Samuel 2:6, and Wisdom 16:13, God alone is Lord of life and death, and God is also praised in the Eighteen Benedictions as the God who “resurrects the dead” (Benediction 2). In early Judaism the abstract noun *ἀνάστασις*, “resurrection,” was used of the end-time resurrection of the dead (cf. 2 Macc. 7:14; 12:43), and this usage is taken up in early Christianity, including the Johannine writings (cf. only Rev. 20:5–6; John 5:29). In John 11:25 *ἀνάστασις* becomes a title of Jesus. He is the God-appointed Lord of life and death (cf. 5:26–29), the end-time *ἀνάστασις* and (eternal) life in person. The pairing of *ἀνάστασις* and *ζωή* shows that the primary purpose of Jesus’s mission is the salvation (not the condemnation) of the world (cf. 3:16–17).

In John 14:6 Jesus calls himself *"the way and the truth and the life"* (ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωή). As is shown in the next sentence, "No one comes to the Father except through me," and further confirmed in the "gate" sayings in John 10:7 and 9, this statement is meant exclusively: only Jesus leads to the Father, nobody else. The accent in Jesus's self-designation lies on the first noun, ἡ ὁδός, and the two remaining nouns, ἀλήθεια and ζωή, clarify what this means: Jesus is the only way to the Father, because he and the Father are one (10:30). As R. Schnackenburg correctly puts it, this ἐγώ εἰμι saying "is a culminating point in Johannine theology. It forms a classical summary of the Johannine doctrine of salvation that is based entirely on Jesus Christ" (*The Gospel according to St. John*, vol. 3 [1982], 65). In the background lie the Old Testament praises of God, who is surrounded by ἀλήθεια, "truth," according to Psalm 88:9 LXX (Ps. 89:9 MT [89:8 ET] reads somewhat differently, אֱמוּנָה, "faithfulness"), as well as the praises of God's commandments, which are ἀλήθεια (Ps. 118:86 LXX [Ps. 119:86 MT]) and which show the "way" to life (Deut. 5:33, ὁδός, דֶּרֶךְ). Moreover, according to Baruch 3:37–4:4 LXX (= 3:36–4:4 NRSV; cf. also Wis. 9:9–19, without ὁδός), wisdom, which is identical with the Torah, reveals the "way" or ὁδός (Bar. 3:37 LXX) that leads to life: "All who hold her fast will live" (Bar. 4:1).

Finally, the saying *"I am the (true) vine"* (ἡ ἄμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή) in John 15:1 and 5 can also be explained from the Old Testament–early Jewish background: In Psalm 80:9–12 (ET 80:8–11) Israel is compared with a vine planted by God, and Sirach 24:12 and 17 speak in very similar fashion of wisdom. As the adjective ἀληθινή signals, Jesus and his disciples constitute the true Israel for the Johannine school.

4.2.2 In the second group of ἐγώ εἰμι sayings, found in only four passages in John 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19, the ἐγώ εἰμι appears absolutely without any predicate. These four logia have special importance for Christology. In John 8:24 Jesus tells the Jews: "For if you do not believe *that I am He* (ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι), you will die in your sins" (NJB), and he follows this up immediately in 8:28: "When you have lifted up the Son of Man [on the cross], then you will realize *that I am he* (ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι), and that I do nothing on my own, but I speak these things as the Father instructed me." In 8:58 Jesus places himself above Abraham: "before Abraham was, *I am* (ἐγὼ εἰμί)." Finally in 13:19, Jesus predicts Judas's betrayal but adds: "I tell you this now, before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe *that I am he* (ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι)."

The absolute use of ἐγώ εἰμι goes back to Yahweh's *self-presentation formula* in the Old Testament, which is closely bound up with the famous explanation of the name יהוה or "Yahweh" in Exodus 3:14–16, explained in verse 14 by the Hebrew expression אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה and by the Greek ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὤν. The notoriously difficult Hebrew, which involves the imperfect of the verb "to be," ***hāyâ*** (הָיָה), is left untranslated by the new Jewish Publication Society *Tanakh* version as "Ehyeh-Asher-Ehyeh" in verse 14, where Moses is also instructed to tell the Israelites, "*Ehyeh* sent me to you" (*not* "Yahweh" or "the LORD"; cf. v. 15). NRSV suggests three possible translations of verse 14: "I AM WHO I AM" (text), "I AM WHAT I AM," or "I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE" (notes). The Greek also

involves a form of the verb "to be" (the substantival present participle) and styles God as ὁ ὤν, "the Being" or "the Existent One" or "the One who Is" (cf. Rev. 1:4, *ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος*, the One "*who is* and who was and who is to come"). After the introduction of the "I am" formula in Exodus, the Lord appears as Israel's helper in Deuteronomy 32:39 and says: "See now that I, even I, am he" (Hebrew: רְאוּ עַתָּה כִּי אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא; Greek: ἴδετε, ἴδετε, ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι, "Behold, behold that I am he"); "there is no god beside me. I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and no one can deliver from my hand." However, the most impressive occurrences of אֲנִי הוּא, "I [am] he," or ἐγώ εἰμι, "I am [he]," occur in Second Isaiah, where the formula appears repeatedly: Isaiah 41:4; 43:10, 13; 46:4; 48:12.

In sum, the Johannine Christ speaks in John 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19 in the style of God's own self-attestation. He accomplishes his work by virtue of his unity of action with the Father (cf. 10:30). *The absolute* ἐγώ εἰμι sayings articulate the divine claims of the Johannine Christ.

5 The Logos Prologue. John 1:1–18 is both a programmatic and an "eminent" text (H.-G. Gadamer). It is programmatic because it puts the readers in the right frame of mind for reading the Fourth Gospel and shows how Christ is to be seen and confessed. It is eminent because without this text there would have been no Logos Christology in the ancient church. Three fundamental questions face interpreters of this text: Does 1:1–18 take up a Johannine or pre-Johannine hymnic tradition? Where do the text's motifs and statements derive from? How is the text as a whole to be interpreted?

5.1 Regarding the question of the *tradition* that may lie in or behind our text, some exegetes seek to get by without distinguishing from the final prologue a traditional underlying Christ hymn and a subsequent redaction that will have expanded the hymn to the prologue's final form (cf., e.g., W. Eltester, "Der Logos und sein Prophet," and C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John* [1978^2], 149–51, 159, 167). Others assume that the final text does indeed go back to a pre-Johannine or Johannine Christ hymn that the Evangelist has expanded and commented on with narrative and argumentative details. Nevertheless, opinions regarding the scope of this pre-Johannine or Johannine tradition and of the later Johannine or even post-Johannine additions are so divided that they cannot currently be harmonized. As to whether one can or should distinguish tradition and redaction in 1:1–18, there is much to be said for the view that an older traditional text stands behind the prologue. Nevertheless, the disparate analyses caution against making the differentiation of tradition and redaction an end in itself. What needs to be interpreted is not only a

traditional *Vorlage*, however reconstructed, but also and above all the final form of the text that introduces the Gospel.

5.1.1 If one considers the peculiarities of the Johannine language (see above) and exercises consistent form and stylistic criticism, then according to O. Hofius, one encounters an artfully composed hymn ("Struktur und Gedankengang des Logos-Hymnus in Joh 1,1–18," in O. Hofius and H.-C. Kammler, *Johannesstudien*, 1–23). The original hymn is comprised of verses 1–5, 9–12c, 14, and 16, while the Evangelist's expansions are to be found in verses 6–8, 12d–13, 15, and 17–18, as indicated by the italics in Hofius's layout (reproduced below).

Hofius's criteria for differentiating tradition and redaction in the prologue include structure and meter, as well as usual and unusual vocabulary in the Gospel of John and even unique expressions. Outside of John 1:1 and 14, the absolute use of ὁ λόγος occurs neither in the Gospel nor elsewhere in the New Testament. Restricted within the Gospel to the traditional *Vorlage* of the prologue are the verb *φωτίζειν*, "to enlighten," in 1:9; four words or expressions in 1:14—*σάρξ γίνεσθαι*, "to become flesh"; *σκηνοῦν*, "to dwell" (with possible allusion to the *σκηνή* or tabernacle); *μονογενὴς παρὰ πατρός*, "the only begotten from the Father"; *χάρις καὶ ἀλήθεια*, "grace and truth"—and finally three more words or expressions in 1:16: *πλήρωμα*, "fullness"; *χάρις*, "grace"; and the *καὶ . . . ἀντί* construction *καὶ χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος*, "and grace upon grace." Moreover, these traditional verses are rooted in the Old Testament–Jewish wisdom theology right down to the minute details.

By contrast, the Evangelist's additions to the prologue exhibit stylistic features typical of the body of the Gospel: John 1:6–8 and 1:15 are recognizable as insertions not only by their content, but also by the fact that *μαρτυρία*, "testimony," and *μαρτυρεῖν*, "to testify"; *ἐκεῖνος*, "that one," instead of the simple pronoun *αὐτός*, "he"; and *κράζειν*, "to cry out," are all favorite Johannine terms, occurring in the Gospel body, respectively, 13, 31, 55, and 3 times. The same goes for the following words or expressions of the Evangelist in 1:12d–13: *πιστεύειν εἰς*, "to believe in" (33 times in the Gospel body); *ὄνομα*, "name" (23 times in the body); *θέλημα*, "will" (10 times in the body); and *γεννᾶσθαι*, "to be born" or *γεννᾶσθαι ἐκ*, "to be born of" (17 times in the Gospel body, including 5 with *ἐκ*). *Χάρις καὶ ἀλήθεια* in the redaction in 1:17 are taken from the tradition in 1:14, whereas Μωϋσῆς, "Moses," and *νόμος*, "law," in 1:17 as well as *ὁρᾶν θεόν*, "to see God," in 1:18 are once again typical Johannine terms also found in the Gospel body (respectively, 12, 14, and 5 times, although in the last case we find "see *the Father*" instead of "see *God*"; cf. John 6:46; [8:38]; 14:7, 9; 15:24).

Nevertheless, it must also be kept in mind that even the terminology that is unique to the prologue within the Gospel or occurs only seldom in the body of the Gospel also has parallels elsewhere in the Johannine corpus: *φωτίζειν*, "to enlighten," and *σκηνοῦν*, "to dwell," occur, respectively, three and four times in the Apocalypse; *μονογενής*, "only begotten," outside the unique expression *μονογενὴς παρὰ πατρός* in the traditional *Vorlage* of the prologue (v. 14), occurs not only in the redaction of the prologue in 1:18 and in the body of the Gospel in 3:16 and 18 but also in 1 John 4:9; *χάρις*, "grace," is used twice in the Johannine letters and twice in the Apocalypse; etc. From this it may be concluded that the tradition underlying the final form of the prologue was at home in the school of John the elder.

Behind the final text of John 1:1–18 lies an original four-strophe hymn to the Christ-λόγος, artfully composed in the style of the psalms: see the nonitalicized text in 1:1–3; 1:4–5, 9; 1:10–12c; and 1:14–16. The first and the fourth strophes form an *inclusio*, because only here does the christological title ὁ λόγος appear. The first and the second strophes and the third and fourth strophes of the original hymn are not only constructed in *parallel* (seven lines in the first and second, eight lines in the third and fourth, excluding the intervening italicized material), but also combine to form a *diptych* whose first part speaks of the λόγος ἄσαρκος or "unincarnate Logos" and whose second part deals with the λόγος ἔνσαρκος or "incarnate Logos." The first three strophes speak the language of the hymnic report, whereas the fourth is composed in the "we" (or "I") style of the hymnic confession (for this change of styles see Ps. 19:2–11 MT report; 12–15, "I" style [ET Ps 19:1–10, 11–14] and Ps. 33:1–18 report; 20–22 "we" style). The reconstruction that Hofius has presented is still seeking its equal in the exegetical literature for precision and beauty. It yields the following picture of the traditional hymn, with the Evangelist's additions in italics (the marginal roman numerals I, II, III apply to the final form of the prologue, discussed further below):

(Plain text indicates the original hymn, italics the final redaction.)

(Hofius: 1st strophe):

I (1) In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
(2) He was in the beginning with God.
(3) All things came into being through him,
and without him there came into being
not one thing that has come into being.

Note: MSS 𝔓[75c] C D L, church fathers, NA[28], and NRSV punctuate: "and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being [4] in him was life. . . ."

(Hofius: 2nd strophe):

(4) In him was life,
and the life was the light of all people.
(5) And the light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness did not overcome it.

(6) There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

(7) He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. (8) He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

II (9) He was the true light,
which enlightens everyone
by coming into the world.

(Hofius: 3rd strophe):

(10) He was in the world,
and the world came into being through him;
yet the world did not know him.
(11) He came to what was his own,
and his own people did not accept him.
(12) But all who received him,
to them he gave power
to become children of God,

(12d) those who believe in his name,
(13) who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

(Hofius: 4th strophe):

III (14) And the Word became flesh
and lived among us,
and we have seen his glory,

glory as of the only begotten from the Father,
full of grace and truth.

(15) John testified to him and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’”

(16) For from his fullness
we have all received,
even grace upon grace.

(17) For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

(18) No one has ever seen God. It is the only begotten one, [who is himself] God [cf. 1:1c] who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known.

What is especially notable about the original hymn is that it does not speak of the mission, death, and resurrection of Jesus—as do the Christ hymns in Philippians 2:6–11 and Colossians 1:15–20 and the statement in Hebrews 1:3—or of the Easter event, as in 1 Timothy 3:16, but (only) of the incarnation. The hymn thereby provides an independent counterpart to the presentations of the miracle of Christ’s birth in Matthew and Luke. Together with those texts, the hymn documents that the (Jewish Christian) witnesses of the New Testament did not just praise God for Christ’s death and resurrection but also declared the Messiah’s appearance on earth to be a “mighty deed” of God (μεγαλεῖον θεοῦ, cf. Acts 2:11). Otherwise they would not have been able to see Jesus’s entire life and ministry as the messianic event of fulfillment par excellence.

5.1.2 Nevertheless, the above differentiation of the hymnic tradition from the redaction must not be allowed to obscure the fact that the hymn forms only the *background* of John 1:1–18. The hymnic text is provided with various insertions and expansions by the Evangelist that develop it into the prologue of the Gospel. However, the prologue exhibits a *different structure* from the hymn, and this is what is actually authoritative for interpretation. As the three roman numerals above in the margin of the text suggest, John 1:1–18 no longer has four, but only *three*, major parts: The first encompasses verses 1–5 and tells about the divine being and activity of the preexistent Logos, to whom the world owes its existence but against whom it also rebels from the beginning (cf. v. 5). Verses 6–8 are then inserted in order to narrate the ministry of John the Baptist in

correspondence with the Synoptic Gospels. The placement of this insertion suggests that verses 9–12 should be seen as the second part of the prologue. It deals with the λόγος ἔνσαρκος or incarnate Logos and his appearance in the world that he created as his own possession. In this world he encounters *rejection*, with only a few exceptions, by “his own people.” The special importance of these few exceptions is described in the inserted verses 12d–13: “those who believe in his name” are “born of God.” The third main part of the text, 1:14–18, stands in contrast to the second and speaks in confessional style of the grateful *acceptance* of the λόγος ἔνσαρκος by these few believers. In 1:15 John the Baptist himself emphasizes once again that the Logos ranks ahead of him. John 1:16 praises the fullness of grace that comes from the Logos, while verses 17–18 present his superiority to Moses.

The *contrast of the rejection and acceptance* of Christ in John 1:1–18 has a number of parallels elsewhere in the New Testament: the parable of the wicked tenants in Mark 12:1–12 par. speaks of both the Son of God’s rejection by Israel and his post-Easter recognition by believers as the “cornerstone” in the light of Psalm 118:22–23. But even closer to John is 1 Corinthians 2:6–12, where Paul contrasts the misunderstanding of Jesus by the Jewish and Gentile leaders responsible for his crucifixion—“the rulers of this age”—with the Spirit-inspired confession of the members of the Christian church, who speak in “we” style of their countercultural “wisdom” and their reception of the Spirit.

5.1.3 Scholarship has reached a certain consensus about the thesis that the original Christ hymn and the full prologue in John 1:1–18 are stamped by the thought patterns and expressions of Jewish *wisdom* theology (חָכְמָה [*ḥokmâ*], σοφία). As H. Gese has shown (cf. “The Prologue to John’s Gospel”), already in the Old Testament period wisdom was identified not only with the law, but also with God’s creative word (cf. God’s word in Isa. 44:26–27; 55:10–11 with wisdom in Sir. 24:3–6 and the parallelism of God’s creative λόγος and his creative σοφία in Wis. 9:1–2). The application of the wisdom tradition to Christ gave early Christianity the language to speak of Christ’s preexistence and his mediation in creation and redemption (cf. 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:15–20; and Heb. 1:3). Two aspects of the Christianized wisdom tradition especially stand out in the prologue: John 1:1–5 goes back to the creation story of Genesis 1 and presents the Logos as the effective word of the Creator, and Genesis 3 is alluded to in 1:5. From John 1:9 onward the text makes use of the view found in Sirach 24:7–12 and also in *1 Enoch* 42 that wisdom first sought a home in vain in the world she had created; then at God’s command she made her dwelling in Israel,

particularly in the tabernacle or "holy tent" (cf. *σκηνὴ ἁγία* in Sir. 24:10 with *σκηνοῦν* in John 1:14), which was the "pattern" for the temple on Zion (cf. Exod. 25:8–9). The prologue interprets Jesus's being and his appearance on earth in an analogous way: when the Logos appeared in the world and sought a home, he was rejected by "his own (sc. people)" (v. 11: *οἱ ἴδιοι*) and received only by a few willing ones. In plain language: whereas Christ in his appearance on earth was rejected by the majority in Israel, he found acceptance only in a small band of believers, from which the Johannine circle also emanated. Verses 12–13 also establish independently that the acceptance of Christ by these few people was not the result of their own merit but was proof of the grace of the Logos, who had given them faith, status as God's children, and new birth.

From 1:14 onward this band of the chosen children of God sings the praises of the Logos. They praise his incarnation, his dwelling in the church, the display of his glory, and the fullness of the gifts of grace that they have received from him. In verse 14 the verb *σκηνοῦν* takes up the tradition of wisdom dwelling on Mount Zion (see above), and in anticipation of 15:1–8 the worshiping church's exclusive consciousness of election is also hinted at: the church is the true Israel. With the titles *μονογενὴς παρὰ πατρός*, "the only begotten from the Father," in 1:14 and *μονογενὴς θεός*, "the only begotten one, God," in 1:18 (understood as an appositive applying the title "God" to the begotten one, Jesus; see above, §3.4.2), the unique being of the Logos also in his incarnate state is presented: he is the one (and only) Son begotten (but not created) by God, and as such is identical with the Father not in his person but in his essence (cf. 1:1). John 1:15 picks up from 1:6–8 and shows together with 1:19–28 that the Fourth Evangelist has distanced himself from followers of John the Baptist who have attributed messianic qualities not to Jesus but to their teacher. In 1:16 *τὸ πλήρωμα* means (as it does in Col. 1:19) the divine "fullness" (Heb. מְלֹא) that is proper to the Logos. According to 1:14 and 16, this fullness consists of the fact that God is "present" in Christ and that the worshiping church has received from him the fullness of grace par excellence; the construction *χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος*, "grace upon grace," in verse 16 underscores this (cf. BDAG 88, s.v. *ἀντί* 2: "God's favor comes in ever new streams"). Verses 17–18 substantiate verse 16: the Johannine community sees Moses as the mediator of the Torah (which bears witness to

Christ; cf. 5:45–47), but it does not acknowledge him as the mediator of salvation between God and humanity any more than Paul does (cf. Gal. 3:20). Only the Logos reveals God's faithfulness and reliability (cf. John 1:14). Despite the report in Exodus 33:18–23 about Moses having God's glory pass before him, Moses saw only God's back, not his face. He did not see God himself in his heavenly glory any more than other created beings do (cf. Sir. 43:31: "Who has seen him and can describe him?"). Only the only begotten Son of God, who was beside God since the beginning, can mediate a true knowledge of God and serve as his appointed "exegete." The related verb ἐξηγεῖσθαι in 1:18 appears only here in the Gospel of John and means to "tell" or "make known" in the sense of mediating revelation.

5.1.4 The prologue has a three-pronged argument. First, it teaches readers to confess Jesus as the Logos who shares the same nature or essence as the one God, who alone is able (and authorized) to "exegete" God. Second, it clearly differentiates the only begotten Son (of God) from the man named John, who is only a forerunner of the faith and a witness of Jesus. Third, it establishes that the revelation that came through the Logos puts in the shade the gift of the law through Moses. With all these statements the text prepares the audience to read the Gospel and invites them to join the small community of born-again children of God that praises Christ and sees in the Logos the only begotten one, who is himself God (cf. 1:18).

5.2 The christological title ὁ λόγος, when used absolutely, without qualifier, is unique to the Johannine prologue (cf. 1:1, 14). Nevertheless, behind it stands a longer process of tradition building in the Johannine circle. The Johannine writings speak of Christ as the word (of God) in three ways:

5.2.1 The oldest layer of the christological "word" title from a tradition-historical standpoint is found in the still totally apocalyptic presentation of Christ in Revelation 19:11–16 (or 11–21). Christ appears as the head of the heavenly host, sits on a white warhorse, wears a robe dipped in blood—an image applied to God in Isaiah (cf. Isa. 63:2–3)—and defeats the army of the wicked with the sword of his mouth (cf. Isa. 11:4, "the rod of his mouth"; Ps. 2:9, "a rod of iron"). On his robe and on his thigh (cf. Isa. 11:5) he has a name inscribed "King of kings and Lord of lords." But his main name is ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ, "The Word of God" (Rev. 19:13). This

designation, particularly in this context in Revelation, may go back to Wisdom 18:14–16: “your all-powerful word . . . , a stern warrior, carrying the sharp sword of your authentic command.” The Christ who defeats God’s enemies bears the name “The Word of God” because God makes himself known through him as κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ, “the Lord God the Almighty” (seven times in Revelation: 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7; 19:6; 21:22), who executes judgment through his messianic Son on all people and powers who resist his holy will.

5.2.2 The next layer of the “word” tradition is accessible in 1 John 1:1–4. Here the elder proclaims Christ to his addressees as ὁ λόγος τῆς ζωῆς, “the Word of life” (1:1). This word of life was with the Father from the beginning (cf. 2:13); was revealed on earth; was heard, seen, and touched by the author himself (1 John 1:1; cf. John 13:23; 20:20); and was taught to the church from the beginning (cf. 1 John 2:24). Here Christ is called the God-sent “Word of life” (for the expression, see also Phil. 2:16; Acts 10:36) because he is present in the teaching of the Johannine circle and opens up eternal life to those who stand with Christ in the fellowship of the believing community (cf. 1 John 5:10–13).

Before one attempts diametrically to oppose the warlike “Word of God” in Revelation 19:13 and the seemingly antithetical “Word of life” in 1 John 1:1, one must observe that already in the Wisdom of Solomon, God’s word is spoken of in three ways: It is the all-powerful (παντοδύναμος) *judging word*, the “stern warrior” with the “sharp sword,” mentioned above, that enforces God’s will (cf. Wis. 18:14–16); the *healing word* of the Lord of life and death (cf. 16:12–13); and the *creative word* to which every creature owes its existence (cf. 9:1–4). If these different aspects of the activity of the word of God can be seen together in the wisdom tradition, one need not tear them apart in the Johannine writings.

5.2.3 The definitive third layer in the development of the christological word of God tradition, which has been most influential in subsequent theology, is found in the Johannine prologue. Here Christ is called ὁ λόγος absolutely, the quintessential “Word” (John 1:1, 14). This exclusive title teaches and requires readers to see and confess Christ as the incarnate divine word of the creator in person. Through the Logos who is one in essence with God, the world is created and God reveals himself supremely in his glory, grace, and truth. Beside or above the Logos there is no equal revealer and also no one to lead the way to eternal life in the heavenly city of God (cf. Rev. 21:22–27).

6 The Death and Resurrection of Jesus. The many sayings of the Johannine Christ about his death confirm the specifically Johannine idea that Jesus is “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (cf. John 1:29, 36). However, the Fourth Gospel’s presentation of Christ does not break off with the report of Jesus’s crucifixion (19:16b–37) and burial (19:38–42), but also includes detailed reports of his Easter appearances. Jesus’s death *and* resurrection therefore take up a decisive place in the Christology of the Johannine circle.

6.1 In John’s presentation God’s sending his Son into the world means sending him to an atoning death (cf. 1 John 2:2; 4:9–10; John 3:16). References to the Son of God’s conflict with the world permeate the whole Gospel from John 1:5 and 11 onward and reveal an eschatological process: according to God’s will, the saving light of revelation enters the darkened world with Jesus, and therefore his person and work involve a judgment (κρίσις) between light and darkness (cf. 3:19–21 with 5:24–29; 8:12; 9:5; 12:46). But people love the darkness rather than the light, accuse the Son of God of blasphemy, and put him on trial (cf. once again 3:19–21 and 7:7; 8:22–30, 48–59; 10:31–39; 15:18; 18:30; 19:7). In the decisive “hour” of the crucifixion (see below), the darkness appears to conquer the light, but in fact the world is judged, its satanic ruler is deprived of power, and the Son is glorified by the Father (cf. 12:31; 16:11; 17:1, 5). He takes up again the life he freely surrendered (cf. 10:17), returns to the Father, and is justified or vindicated and crowned with righteousness (cf. 16:10 with 1 Tim. 3:16 and Isa. 53:11 LXX). In the missionary preaching of the Johannine witnesses, the judicial process of dividing light from darkness continues and finds its conclusion on the day of judgment. Then the dead are raised and judged, and God’s people, consisting of the Jews and Gentiles gathered by Jesus, gain access to God’s eternal city (cf. 5:28–29; 10:4, 16; 17:24 with Rev. 14:1–5; 20:11–15; 21:9–14).

6.2 The Fourth Gospel does not start speaking about Jesus’s passion only in 18:1, but speaks of it from the very beginning. Instead of speaking of Jesus’s temple act late in his ministry in connection with his triumphal entry into Jerusalem (cf. Mark 11:15–17 par.), the Fourth Evangelist introduces this early on, in John 2:14–22, in a hyperbolic manner that exceeds what is said in the Synoptics. The early placement of John’s story of the temple act makes it clear that Jesus’s work fundamentally opposes the religious interests of the world (here represented by the Jews). John’s

text can be interpreted as a prophecy of Jesus's death and resurrection in the light of 2:17, "Zeal for your house will *consume* me" (Ps. 69:10 MT [69:9 LXX and ET]), and 2:19, "Destroy this temple (i.e., the temply of Jesus's body), and in three days I will raise it up." In John 3:14 Jesus refers to the *necessity* (ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ) of his being "lifted up" (on the cross), and 3:16 confirms that God willed this to happen as it did. Similarly, according to 6:48–58, Jesus is the bread from heaven, but only in the sense that the world gains eternal life through his death (cf. esp. 6:51c: "the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh"). The statements in 10:11, 15, 17, and 18 present Jesus as the good shepherd who "lays down his life" (τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ τίθησιν) for the sheep, and, according to the prophecy of Caiaphas in 11:49–52, Jesus needed to die for the nation of Israel and, as John adds, in order "to gather into one the dispersed children of God."

According to Josephus (*J.W.* 1.68–69 and *Ant*. 11.327; 13.299–300), the incumbent Jewish high priest possessed the gift of "prophecy," προφητεία. The Fourth Evangelist interprets this to mean that as God's prophetic tool, Caiaphas was destined not only to insist on Jesus's death, but also unconsciously to present its atoning significance.

In John 12:24 Jesus compares himself with the grain of wheat that bears fruit only if it falls into the earth and dies. In 12:31–32 Jesus refers to his being "lifted up" (ὑψοῦσθαι) on the cross (as the Evangelist's comment in v. 33 makes clear) and its saving significance in drawing all people to himself. In 15:9 and 13 he speaks of "laying down his life" (τιθέναι τὴν ψυχήν) for his friends out of love (for the ancient ethic of friendship here alluded to, cf. M. Hengel, *The Atonement* [1981], 13, and T. Knöppler, *Die theologia crucis*, 209). Both these Greek expressions, ὑψοῦσθαι with reference to the cross and τιθέναι τὴν ψυχήν, are unique to the Johannine writings over against the Synoptics (cf. respectively John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 34 and John 10:11, 15, 17, 18; 15:13; 1 John 3:16). Finally, in his high priestly prayer in John 17, Jesus "consecrates" or "sanctifies" himself to dying an atoning death for all those whom the Father has given him (cf. 17:19). Therefore it cannot be said with R. Bultmann that "Jesus' death has no preeminent importance for salvation" in John or that "the common Christian *interpretation of Jesus' death as an atonement for sins*" is not "what determines John's view of it" (*Theology of the New Testament*, vol. 2 [1955], 52, 53). Rather, "Jesus' death on the cross gains decisive christological weight in the Fourth Gospel" (Knöppler, *Die theologia*

crucis, 277). Indeed, Jesus's vicarious surrender of his life is the decisive goal and high point of his mission.

The Apocalypse and the letters of John show that the Johannine school emphasized Jesus's atoning death from the beginning. The Apocalypse mentions the redeeming power of the blood of Christ the Lamb four times (Rev. 1:5; 5:9; 7:14; 12:11; in the background stands above all the tradition of the daily *tamid* burnt offering; see above, §3.2). 1 John emphasizes the atoning and cleansing power of the blood of Christ in 1:7 and 5:6–8, and speaks in 2:2 with terminological precision of the *ἱλασμός*, the "atoning sacrifice" (NRSV, NIV: see below) that Christ has effected not only "for our sins" (*περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν*) "but also for the whole world" (*ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου*). According to 1 John 3:16, Jesus laid down his life "for us" (*ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν*), and according to 4:10, his being sent as "the atoning sacrifice for our sins" (*ἱλασμὸς περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν*) is the epitome of the love of God and his Son. These statements can best be understood against the background of a christological interpretation of Isaiah 53:4–6 and 10–12. This interpretation is also determinative for the language of Christ the Lamb in John 1:29 and 36; of God's "giving" (*ἔδωκεν*, cf. Isa. 53:6) of his Son in John 3:16; of the good shepherd's voluntary laying down of his life for the sheep in John 10:11, 15, 17, and 18; and of his going away to the Father in John 16:10 (see below).

The use of *ἱλασμός* in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10 and of the cognate term *ἱλαστήριον* in Romans 3:25 has caused difficulty for translators ever since the time of the Old Latin and the Latin Vulgate, both of which flattened the distinction in the Greek by using the same Latin term in all three passages, *propitiatio*, that is, "propitiation." This was taken up in the KJV from the Bishops' Bible and rejected by the RSV with its alternative "expiation" (cf. also NEB and REB). Yet in English both "propitiation" and "expiation" usually function as *abstract verbal nouns*, referring to the means or activities that result in the propitiating or appeasing of God and his wrath or the expiating or neutralizing of human sin (or both); propitiation and expiation do not refer to concrete things. By contrast, *ἱλαστήριον* usually refers to inanimate physical objects (with potential metaphorical uses in Rom. 3:25 and 4 Macc. 17:22 Codex S) while *ἱλασμός* can refer to the victim of a sacrifice. Readers should therefore contrast the accuracy of the NRSV and NIV translations of *ἱλασμός* in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10 by "atoning sacrifice," which suggests a live victim, with the *inaccuracy* of the same versions in translating *ἱλαστήριον* in Romans 3:25 by essentially the same expression, "sacrifice of atonement." For, while *ἱλασμός* refers to an atoning victim in Ezekiel 44:27, *προσοίσουσιν ἱλασμόν*, "they shall offer an *atoning sacrifice*" (for Heb. אָשָׁם, *ʾāšām*, "guilt offering"), thus providing support for the above translations of 1 John, *ἱλαστήριον* never refers to a victim in any known ancient Greek primary source. (For the use of the related term *ἐξιλαστήρια* that appears as part of the definition of the term λωφήια, "propitiatory," in the scholion on Apollonius of Rhodes 2.485b, and sometimes thought to refer to a victim, see the essay by Daniel P. Bailey below, 856.) Rather, outside Romans 3:25 and the apparently metaphorical use of *ἱλαστήριον* comparing Maccabean martyrs' "death" to a propitiatory "votive offering" in 4 Maccabees 17:22 Codex S (cf. ESV, "their death as a propitiatory offering"), *ἱλαστήριον* always refers to a concrete object, such as the "mercy seat" (כַּפֹּרֶת, *kappōret*) in the Old Testament or various Greek votive offerings in pagan inscriptions and literary texts. For overviews of the biblical atonement tradition, see above, 157–64, §5.3, 215–22, §5; for Jesus as the new "mercy seat," see the essay at the end of this volume.

6.3 The references in John's Gospel to Jesus's redeeming death are supplemented by the announcements of the coming *hour* (*ὥρα*) of his death on the cross (cf. 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1). According to 3:14;

8:28; 12:32, 34, Jesus is “lifted up” (ὑψοῦσθαι) on the cross, and this paradoxical lifting up or “exaltation” (the term can mean both) is the time when the Father and the Son *glorify* each other according to 12:28; 13:31; and 17:1, 5.

The *Septuagint* uses ὑψοῦν (passive ὑψοῦσθαι), meaning “to exalt” someone, when people are confirmed by God and endued with power. Compare Psalm 88:20 LXX of the Davidic king, “I *exalted* one chosen from my people”; Psalm 111:9 LXX of the individual righteous person, “his horn will be *exalted* in glory”; and Isaiah 52:13 of the Lord’s Servant, “See, my servant shall understand, and he shall be *exalted* and glorified exceedingly” (the Hebrew in each case is רום, *rwm*). According to the *Synoptics*, it is only after Jesus is exalted to God’s right hand (cf. Mark 14:61–62 par. with Psalm 110 [LXX 109]:1) that he receives his share of the divine glory (cf. Mark 10:37; Matt. 19:28). The book of *Acts* also uses ὑψοῦσθαι twice for Jesus’s exaltation to God’s right hand according to Psalm 110:1 (cf. Acts 2:33; 5:31). Finally, *Paul* says in Philippians 2:9–11 that God responds to Jesus’s obedient self-abasement on the cross by “hyperexalting” him to the divine heights—compare *ὑπερύψωσεν αὐτόν* in Philippians 2:9 with the same word in Psalm 96:9 LXX (97:9 MT/ET), *κύριος . . . σφόδρα ὑπερυψώθης* ὑπὲρ *πάντας τοὺς* θεούς, “the Lord is . . . greatly *exalted* above all gods.” God then crowns Jesus with the divine name *κύριος*, “Lord.”

Whereas the early Christian language of exaltation is usually concentrated on Jesus’s installation as Lord and Christ at Easter, the Fourth Evangelist also uses ὑψοῦσθαι to interpret the crucifixion: the event which was the absolute “disgrace” or “abuse” of Christ in the eyes of the world (cf. *ὀνειδισμός*, Heb. 11:26; 13:13) and which appeared as the lowest point of humiliation even to Christians (cf. Phil. 2:8) is the goal and high point of Jesus’s mission for the members of the Johannine school. For them the crucified one is the victor who drives out and judges the ruler of this world (cf. John 12:31 with 16:11); not only does the risen one appear before them in divine glory, but also the crucified one. Therefore in the Fourth Gospel the stumbling block of Jesus’s cursed death on the cross (cf. Deut. 21:22–23) blends over into the faith-knowledge that God has glorified his Son who went to the cross and has established salvation for the world through his death.

The language of the exaltation of the crucified one has nothing to do with naive docetism (E. Käsemann); rather, “Jesus’ glory (δόξα) is drawn into his death and thereby worked through in terms of the theology of the cross” (T. Knöppler, *Die theologia crucis*, 173). Taking John 17:19 and 2:21 into account enables one to go even further. According to 17:19, Jesus sanctifies himself for his own, so that they also may be sanctified in truth. The formulation is apparently dependent on the tradition of the sanctifying of the Israelite tent of meeting by God’s glory and a regular burnt offering (עֹלַת תָּמִיד, *ʿōlat tāmîd*) in Exodus 29:42–44 (cf. Knöppler, 213–14), and suggests that the children of God (cf. John 1:12; 11:52) are sanctified for their meeting with God by Jesus’s consecration as a *tamid*

offering (see above, 668–69, §3.2). The Father's glorification of the crucified one can also be interpreted in the light of temple and sacrificial theology. In Ezekiel 43:4–5 the prophet Ezekiel is allowed to see how God's glory enters and fills the new temple in order never to leave it again. For John the body of Christ is God's temple (cf. 2:21 with 4:22–26). According to John 1:14, the (Zion-) indwelling of God (cf. *ἐσκήνωσεν*) among his people takes place in the incarnation of the Son, and the whole movement finds its climax when the Father completes his saving work for the world on the cross in and through the Son, who is filled with his glory according to John 12:28, 13:31, and 17:1. In these verses and in the *τετέλεσται* of John 19:30 (see below), the Fourth Evangelist has the same subject in view as Paul when he writes in 2 Corinthians 5:19, "*God was in Christ* reconciling the world to himself" (the reference to Ezek. 43:4–5 is the suggestion of Prof. Dr. Thomas Pola, Dortmund).

6.4 It is consistent with this view that according to John 19:28–30, Jesus *finishes* his work on the cross. John's crucifixion scene allows the God-forsakenness that Jesus suffered according to Mark 15:34 par. to recede entirely into the background. Rather, knowing that he stands at the end of his journey, Jesus consciously fulfills the Scripture by saying, "I thirst," according to Psalm 63:2 (ET 63:1), and also by drinking the vinegar offered to him according to Psalm 69:22 (ET 69:21). After this he completes his earthly journey with a saying that he can utter only as the Son in and through whom God is at work: "It is accomplished" (τετέλεσται, John 19:30). With this saying the battle between light and darkness that Jesus engaged is decided. The darkness has not been able to overcome the light, but is rather overcome by the only begotten (Son of) God (cf. 1:5, 18).

The theological deep structure of the Johannine tradition allows us to search for a biblical background for the *τετέλεσται* of John 19:30. For example, one can refer to Isaiah 55:11 with A. Dauer (*Passionsgeschichte*, 212–13): God says that his word will not return to him "until all the things which I willed have been finished/accomplished" (LXX: *ἕως ἂν συντελεσθῇ ὅσα ἠθέλησα*). Or literally with the Hebrew text: the word of command that proceeds from God's mouth "shall not return to me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it." Jesus, the Logos, has completed his earthly journey and returns to the Father having accomplished his mission. M. Hengel thinks additionally about Genesis 1–2 ("Schriftauslegung," 284ff.; *Johanneische Frage*, 200). The LXX text of Genesis 2:2 reads: *καὶ συνετέλεσεν ὁ θεός ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἕκτῃ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ, ἃ ἐποίησεν, καὶ κατέπαυσεν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑβδόμῃ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ, ὧν ἐποίησεν*, "And God finished on the sixth day his works that he had made, and he ceased on the seventh day from all his works that he had made." This connection suggests (similarly to Col. 1:15–20 and the reference to Christ as "the beginning and the end" in Rev. 22:13) a correspondence between creation and redemption: as God finished his "works" (*ἔργα*) of creation on the sixth day and rested on the seventh, so also the Logos finishes his "work" (*ἔργον*, John 4:34; 17:4) on the sixth day, Good Friday, and rests on the following Sabbath (honorably laid to rest according to 19:38–42) from the work he had completed as mediator not only of creation (cf. 1:1–5) but also of redemption.

6.5 The depth and grandeur of this Johannine presentation must not obscure the fact that the Fourth Evangelist deals very freely and selectively with historical tradition. He reports Jesus's way of suffering more consistently than the Synoptics, but describes the decisive stages along this way very differently from Mark, Matthew, and Luke. John reports Jesus's temple action already in 2:13–22 and presents it as a demonstration of Jesus's power, motivated by zeal for God's house. In 12:27–33 he transforms Jesus's fear of death in Gethsemane as reported in Mark 14:32–42 (cf. also Heb. 5:7–8) into the opposite. According to John, the forces that arrest Jesus in the garden on the other side of the Kidron Valley (18:1) include not only the Jewish temple police but also the entire Roman cohort or *σπεῖρα* (18:3, 12). Jesus's powerful self-identification, "I am he" (*ἐγώ εἰμι*), at first throws his pursuers to the ground (18:5–6), and he surrenders to them only on his own initiative with the words, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go" (18:8). This fulfills Jesus's prophecy in 6:39 that he would not lose a single one of those whom God had given him (cf. 18:9). Whereas readers of John's Gospel learn only that Jesus had the boldness to answer back the Jewish high priest Annas to his face at his preliminary hearing (cf. 18:12–13, 19–23 with Deut. 17:12) and are not told at all what happened when Jesus stood before Caiaphas (18:24), John's report of Jesus's interrogation by Pilate in 18:28–38 is expanded to become the perfect model of the *καλὴ ὁμολογία* or "good confession" before the Roman governor (cf. 1 Tim. 6:13). John does not report any physical weakness of Jesus, either when he is presented to the crowd after having been flogged (cf. 19:5) or on his way to Golgotha. Rather, it becomes clear in 19:17 that Jesus carried his own cross to the Place of the Skull (in contrast to Mark 15:21 par., where it is carried by Simon of Cyrene). Over against the Synoptics, John shortens Jesus's suffering on the cross to three hours (19:14). The title on the cross, written in Hebrew (Aramaic), Latin, and Greek, "Jesus of Nazareth, the *King* of the Jews" (19:19–20)—a wording Pilate insists on (19:21–22)—identifies the crucified one as the Messiah before the whole world. From the cross Jesus entrusts his mother Mary to his only faithful disciple, the disciple whom he loved, and points this disciple to Mary as his new mother (19:25–27).

However this scene about Mary and the beloved disciple beneath the cross is to be judged historically, as a Johannine construction it creates a close association: Mary—and therefore also the tradition associated with her—is entrusted to the church as represented by the beloved disciple, and

the church in the person of this disciple is pointed to Mary. Because the Marian tradition also encompasses the Jewish Christian material preserved in the Lukan prehistories, which record several events that Mary "treasured in her heart" (cf. Luke 2:51), one can hardly deny the Fourth Evangelist a knowledge of those texts.

In John 19:28–30 Jesus's death is presented as his last sovereign act of obedience and as the finishing of his work (see above on *τετέλεσται*). The report in John 19:31–37, absent from the Synoptics, about the *crurifragium* or breaking of the legs of the two thieves and the lance wound to Jesus's side, is used by the Fourth Evangelist to point to the reality of Jesus's death "by water and blood" and the mysterious fact that, according to the beloved disciple's testimony, baptism and Lord's Supper give believers a share in the fruit of this death (cf. John 19:34–35 with 1 John 5:6–8).

The interpretation of the lance wound in John 19:34–37 by formula quotations of Exodus 12:46, "Not one of his bones shall be broken," and Zechariah 12:10, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced" (cf. Rev. 1:7), allows us to ask whether the Johannine passion chronology, which departs from that of all three Synoptic Gospels but is preferred over the synoptic chronology by several prominent exegetes (e.g., B. Reicke, A. Strobel, M. Hengel, G. Theissen, etc.), was not in fact developed after the fact with the theological intention of contrasting the slaughter of the Passover lambs with the death of Jesus on the cross, and establishing people's view of the crucified and pierced one as the decisive datum in the end-time judgment, as discussed above in chapter 3 (cf. 68–69).

Finally, according to John 19:38–42, Jesus is honorably and properly buried by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus before sundown on Good Friday, thus contradicting the synoptic report that Jesus received only a hasty and provisional burial. The Fourth Evangelist lets Jesus rest in his grave from his works (see above), in order that on Easter he might take up again the life that he voluntarily surrendered (cf. 10:17) and ascend to his Father.

Summing up the matter of historical tradition, it can hardly be said that history is suppressed in the Johannine passion narrative. Rather, historical details are presented that are lacking in the Synoptics (cf., e.g., 18:12–18; 19:13, 31–37, 41). Nevertheless, the author's overall presentation remains entirely determined by his christological interest in interpreting Jesus's going to the cross as an end-time event of judgment (see above) and as the means of the mutual glorification of the Father through the Son and the Son through the Father (cf. 17:1–5). Hence the texts sometimes present an actual opposing view to the Synoptics. Mark compresses the historical events in his passion narrative, whereas in John they are selected, composed, and

infused with theology in such a way that new facts and realities are thereby postulated.

In the *Dialogue* between Justin Martyr and Trypho the Jew around AD 150, it still remained necessary for the two interlocutors to discuss Trypho's objection: "But we [Jews] doubt whether the Christ should be so shamefully crucified, for the Law declares that *he who is crucified is accursed*" (*Dial*. 89.2; cf. Deut. 21:22–23). Justin accepts the offense of the crucifixion (and tries to present it as a blessing in disguise); Trypho does not. In the light of these opposing views, the picture John paints is understandable and impressive. It offers a spiritual inside look into the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus that the Johannine school had wrested from its opponents in the faith. As long as such an opposing position remains and the synoptic and Pauline crucifixion texts stand next to the Johannine ones, the inside look of the Johannine school is of even greater theological importance than Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 2:8 that in their blindness, the rulers of this age crucified "the Lord of glory," ὁ κύριος τῆς δόξης (which can be seen as a divine title transferred to the crucified one in the light of *1 En.* 22:14; 63:2). But as soon as the contrasts that the Fourth Evangelist refers to are forgotten and his view is flattened into a self-referential report of mere events, then precisely that naive docetism is promoted that E. Käsemann incorrectly found in John himself. Nevertheless, Käsemann correctly saw that it is not by accident that docetic views arose in the wider Johannine circle (see above, 666, §2.2.2).

6.6 John's Gospel does not end with Jesus's burial on Good Friday in John 19:42, but rather offers extensive reports of Jesus's Easter appearances in chapter 20. The Evangelist's pupils then extended these stories by another whole chapter in John 21. Although the high point of Jesus's mission is to be seen in the crucifixion (see above), the resurrection also has great significance for the Johannine school.

6.6.1 Jesus's resurrection from the dead is already fundamental for the message of the *Apocalypse*. Jesus Christ is here "the (messianic) firstborn of the dead" (cf. 1:5 with Col. 1:18 and Ps. 89:28 [ET 89:27]) who has "the keys of Death and of Hades" (1:18), the conqueror of death who takes his place on the divine throne with his heavenly Father (cf. 3:21), the ἀρνίον or Lamb whose slit throat is still visible but who appears alive in the midst of the four living creatures and is endued with all heavenly power (5:5–6), and the messianic "King of kings and Lord of lords" who strikes down God's enemies with a sharp sword (cf. 19:16 with Ps. 136:2–3; Dan. 2:47). Those who remain faithful to him on earth may share his resurrection glory (cf. 2:7; 3:21; 20:6). The *letters of John* also give Jesus's resurrection a leading role. The author's testimony derives from the risen one who appeared in visible and tangible form (cf. 1 John 1:1 with John 1:14; 20:20). He is the heavenly advocate of believers before God (1 John 2:1–2), and they await his parousia, his second coming in the flesh, with the hope of becoming

"like him" (1 John 3:2). (For the second coming, see 1 John 2:28 and especially 2 John 7, where the present participle *ἐρχόμενον* allows for a future coming in the flesh; so NIV against NRSV.) Jesus's resurrection becomes completely decisive for the *Fourth Gospel*. According to 20:30–31, Jesus's Easter appearances are the quintessential aids to belief for the disciples, and by raising Lazarus he posts an advance "sign" (12:17–18) of the resurrection of his "friends" on the last day (cf. 11:40–44 with 6:39, 44 [and 5:28–29]).

R. Bultmann holds that John 20:30–31, which speaks of "many other signs" of Jesus, originally formed the conclusion of the *σημεῖα* or "signs" source, which the Fourth Evangelist used in order "outwardly to conform his book to the form of Gospel literature as it had already become traditional" (*The Gospel of John*, 698). This point of view naturally stands or falls with the assumption of the *σημεῖα* source, but it also encounters the additional difficulty that verses 30–31 speak of signs that Jesus did especially "in the presence of his disciples" (*ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ*). Because none of Jesus's miraculous signs as presented in John 2–11 were performed only in the presence of the disciples, it is better to refer these two verses "to the self-attestations of the Risen One in the presence of his disciples" and to abandon Bultmann's more complex hypothesis (H.-C. Kammler, "Die 'Zeichen' des Auferstandenen," in O. Hofius and H.-C. Kammler, *Johannesstudien*, 191–211, esp. 201). Furthermore, under these circumstances, John 21 is no longer to be understood merely as a *Nachtrag* or "postscript" (Bultmann's term), but as an *extension* of the Easter tradition(s).

6.6.2 Christologically speaking, the resurrection appearances narrated in John 20 and 21 are necessary only to confirm earlier statements such as John 5:26 and 10:17, which claim that the Son of God can lay down his life and take it up again because he has life in himself. But for Jesus's disciples in the Gospel (and for the Johannine reading community), these appearances are indispensable.

6.6.2.1 In John 5:26 the Johannine Christ says, "For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself," and in 10:17–18 he emphasizes that he has divine authority to lay down his life of his own free will (for the world) and the same authority to take it up again (after his sacrifice). This manner of speaking is unparalleled in the New Testament, because it makes Paul's bold statement that the one and only God is the same one "who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Rom. 4:24; 8:11) christologically superfluous. For the Fourth Evangelist, Jesus is the Son who is one in essence with the Father (cf. 10:30). He is therefore the end-time *ἀνάστασις* or "resurrection" (from the dead) in person (11:25). This view of Christology means that the Easter appearances only confirm the divine being that Jesus had from the very beginning. By the same token,

these appearances also prevent any spiritualizing of Jesus's resurrection: the risen one is also the crucified one who rose "in the flesh" (cf. 20:20, 27).

6.6.2.2 Matters stand differently with the disciples of Jesus in John's Gospel. In the Farewell Discourses Jesus announces that, in a little while, the world will rejoice when it no longer sees him while the disciples will weep and mourn, but the disciples will also soon see him again and be filled with a joy that no one can take from them (cf. 14:18–21; 16:20, 22). After such an announcement the readers of the Gospel may expect to experience something concrete about Jesus's resurrection and the appearance of his Risen One through his disciples. This expectation is fulfilled in John 20:1–29: The disciples' confession of Jesus as their Lord and God, their missionary commission, and their ecclesiastical power to forgive or retain sins are all founded on their fresh encounter with the risen Christ.

The three stories in John 20:1–29 of Jesus's resurrection appearances to Mary Magdalene and to the fearful disciples on Easter Day, and to Thomas a week later, have no exact parallels in the Synoptic Gospels. But some of these stories do find certain analogies in the Lukan tradition (cf. 20:1–18 with Luke 24:1–11 [and Mark 16:9]; 20:3–10 with Luke 24:12; 20:19–23 with Luke 24:36–43 [and Luke 24:47–48; Acts 1:3–8]). Nevertheless, the report of Jesus's appearance to Thomas in 20:24–29 is without analogy and therefore often regarded as a purely Johannine creation (cf., e.g., C. Dietzfelbinger, *Osterglaube*, 46). In any case, John 20:1–29 contains reports of appearances that seem to have grown up from a type of rereading of the Lukan tradition:

(1) John 20:1–18 presents readers with the empty tomb and the significance of Mary Magdalene as an Easter witness. The appearance of the tomb with the neatly folded linen wrappings and head cloth (which exclude any hasty robbery of the body or transference to another grave) awakens faith in the beloved disciple, even though he and Peter do not yet understand the Scriptures as testifying to Jesus's death and resurrection (as they will understand after full realization of the resurrection according to John 2:17, 22).

(2) John 20:19–23 portrays the fulfillment of Jesus's prophecy of his resurrection in 14:18–21 and 16:16–22: Jesus appears to his fearful disciples locked inside a house as the risen crucified one, establishes new fellowship with them, and sends them out on their mission to the world (cf. 17:18). At the same time, he gives them the gift of the *πνεῦμα ἅγιον* or "Holy Spirit" (cf. with 14:16, 26) and grants them the "office of the keys" (cf. Matt. 18:18) to forgive or retain sins. The report carries antidocetic features and shows, just like the following scene about Thomas, that the Fourth Evangelist has great interest in Jesus's bodily resurrection from the dead.

(3) Special Johannine features are evident especially in the third report of Jesus's resurrection appearances in John 20:24–29. This takes up a personal report known in John's school about an appearance to Thomas, a member of the Twelve also called Didymus or "the Twin" (cf. 11:16; 20:24), and makes it into a didactic text on true faith. The risen one overcomes Thomas's doubts by appearing in bodily form and inviting him to touch his wounded side. In response, Thomas confesses Jesus in verse 28 with the words: "My Lord and my God!" This statement in John 20:28 therefore forms an *inclusio* with 1:18, which identifies the *μονογενής* or "only begotten one" as "God." This link to the prologue shows that Thomas's confession has great importance to the Evangelist. Thomas confesses Christ with the same words used to call upon the one God in the Psalter: Κύριε, *ὁ θεός μου*

(אֱלֹהַי יהוה) (cf., e.g., LXX Pss. 7:2, 4; 12:4; 17:29 [ET 7:1, 3; 13:3; 18:28]). Yet without downplaying this confession, the next verse, John 20:29, proceeds to differentiate between the special case of Thomas and the normal case of subsequent Christians: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." These believers must find their way to faith without being immediate witnesses of the resurrection. They owe their faith only to the word of the first witnesses, and Jesus calls them blessed because they follow this word. Because this beatitude style is used elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel only in 13:17 ("If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them"), the style itself underscores the importance of the statement. This does not devalue Thomas's special experience of faith or that of the rest of the Twelve, but it underscores that the faith of later believers (who agree with Thomas's confession only on the basis of the word of the first witnesses) is in no way inferior to the faith of Thomas or these witnesses. Through the Johannine word of testimony they share the experience of the Easter witnesses, and in this word the risen one comes to them with the same authority as he does to the disciples in Jerusalem.

Finally, the supplementary chapter John 21 tells of an appearance of Jesus to the disciples (seven of whom are identified in 21:2) by the "Sea of Tiberias" in Galilee, but leaves open the question of when and why the disciples returned to Galilee. According to Mark 14:28/Matthew 26:32 and Mark 16:7/Matthew 28:7, the motive for their return lies in Jesus's announcement that after he has risen from the dead he will "go ahead of" them (*προάγει* or *προάξω ὑμᾶς*) to Galilee, where they will see him. John 10:4, where Jesus is said in slightly different Greek (*ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῶν πορεύεται*) to be the shepherd who also "goes ahead of" his sheep (cf. with Ps. 80:2–3 [ET 80:1–2] and Mic. 2:12–13), suggests that these synoptic traditions were not unknown to the Fourth Evangelist. If this is correct, then Jesus's appearance to the disciples in Galilee in John 21 presents a counterpart to his Great Commission appearance in Galilee in Matthew 28:16–20.

6.6.3 Looking back, *the testimony about the bodily resurrection of the crucified one that concludes the Fourth Gospel proves to be a constitutive element of Johannine Christology*. This testimony invites readers to see Jesus as "the first and the last, and the living one" (cf. Rev. 1:17–18), to confess him as Lord and God (cf. John 20:28), and to take comfort in the fact that he has already overcome the world that was hostile to him (cf. 16:33). The stories of the resurrection appearances in John 20 and 21 are no substitute for Jesus's parousia. The parousia is expressly referred to in the Apocalypse and in 1 John 2:28 (as well as 2 John 7), and John 14:2–3 and 17:20–24 also point forward to the uniting of the "true Israel" of believers with God the Father and God the Son and to the view believers will have of Jesus's glory (cf. Rev. 21:22). However, since Jesus's resurrection and return to the Father, the disciples have received the Spirit that supports their missionary testimony, and this testimony will advance and complete the process that began with Jesus's being sent in the flesh, and will conclude with his end-time coming in the flesh (cf. 2 John 7 *ἐρχόμενον ἐν σαρκί*; see above, §6.6.1).

7 The Christ-Centered Imminent Eschatology of the Johannine School. Eschatology is a function of Christology for the Johannine school, as it is for Paul. In his three-volume German work *Die johanneische Eschatologie* (*The Johannine Eschatology*), J. Frey has shown what an enormous effort scholarship has invested in understanding the eschatology of the Johannine writings. The key question has been and still is how the present-oriented and future-oriented statements about judgment and salvation in the Johannine corpus are related. Answering this question has sometimes been made more difficult by certain research assumptions. Scholars have often isolated the Apocalypse from the Johannine letters and the Fourth Gospel and seen in the letters only the late aftereffects of the "pure" theology of the (original) Gospel. In this way the problem of present and future in the Johannine writings could be reduced to the literary critical question of whether and why the Gospel, which at first offered only a present eschatology, was subjected to a subsequent ecclesiastical redaction that accounts for most of the future statements encountered in the Gospel today. The problem changes to the extent that scholars ascribe all the Johannine writings to the Johannine school tradition, date the letters before the Gospel, and for the most part do without a detailed determination of literary layers and sources that supposedly preceded the Gospel, on the grounds that the final redaction has unified the style and left few reliable traces of compositional "seams" (see above, chap. 35, §3.1). The crucial question is then not whether the juxtaposition of present- and future-oriented christological statements is original or not, but rather how the two series of statements came together in the one school of John the Elder. The answer runs: In the Johannine circle Christ is not understood as "the beginning and the end" (cf. Rev. 22:13) only in the sense that he makes the times touch or overlap; the time of Jesus and the time of the church have actually been fused together with the help of the Spirit-inspired practice of remembrance (cf. John 14:26). In this way eschatology has become an inside aspect of Christology in the Johannine school, while the school's christological thought has also acquired a breadth unparalleled in the New Testament. It encompasses past, present, and future, extending literally from eternity to eternity.

7.1 The *Apocalypse* vividly portrays the end-time event that is already under way but still awaits its consummation, emphasizing the living Christ-Lamb as the one who directs history (cf. Rev. 5:5–6). Readers are reminded

that they need both the unmerited recording of their names in the "book of life" and meritorious faithfulness to the point of martyrdom in order to take part in the wedding of the Lamb and his bride, the church (cf. 2:10, 26–28; 3:5; 20:11–15). Present accents are found in the book of Revelation only rarely: Christ has already made believers to be a kingdom of priests (1:6; cf. Exod. 19:6), and Satan has already been thrown down from heaven, although he can still make mischief on earth with his angels for a short time (cf. 11:15–19; 12:7–12). For the future yet to come, Revelation differentiates between a first, limited resurrection in 20:5—reserved, according to 20:4, for the martyrs "who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus" (and presumably also for the other νικῶντες or "overcomers" mentioned nine times elsewhere in the book)—and a second, universal resurrection of all the dead (cf. 20:12–13). The first resurrection marks the beginning of the Messiah's thousand-year reign (cf. 20:1–6); the second is a constitutive element of the universal world judgment (cf. 20:11–15).

In the *letters of John* the future and present statements balance out. According to 1 John 2:18 and 28, this is "the last hour" before the imminent παρουσία or "coming" of Christ, while 1 John 3:2 states: "Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is." This assurance of faith (cf. 1 John 3:19–20) rests according to 1 John 2:1–2 on the fact that "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world."

The *Fourth Gospel* only hints at the distinction between the first and the second resurrection of the dead (cf. John 6:39–40, 44, 54 with reference to the one resurrection of all believers to eternal life on the last day, and 5:28–29 with reference to a resurrection of life and a resurrection of condemnation [cf. Dan. 12:2]). The key word παρουσία is also lacking, and only once is it said that Jesus will come again to take his own to their heavenly dwellings (cf. 14:2–3). Instead, the emphasis lies entirely on the present encounter between Christ and the reading community. This results in a true reversal of accents over against the Apocalypse: The decisive gaining or losing of salvation does not occur in the near (or distant) future,

but already in the present, where one can learn with God's help to believe in Jesus, or remain in unbelief (cf. John 3:18–21; 5:24–27).

As already hinted at above, this emphasis on present eschatology in the Gospel of John does not exclude statements about the future. As early as John 3:5, in his conversation with Nicodemus, Christ speaks about "entering the kingdom of God" as a future event. According to the trial narrative before Pilate in 18:36, Jesus's kindgom is "not of this world" and therefore not yet established on earth. In 14:2–3 Jesus promises to secure for his disciples the right to live in his Father's heavenly house with its many "rooms" (NIV) or "dwelling places" (NRSV). This saying is best explained with reference to the many equally sized living units in the heavenly Jerusalem described in the *5QNew Jerusalem* document, 5Q15 frag. 1 II, 6–8 (reference from A. M. Schwemer; cf. *DSSSE* 1141). Revelation 21:2, 9–14, with its description of the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven and having twelve foundations inscribed with the names of the twelve apostles, is therefore not somehow "corrected" by John 14:2; rather, the two passages correspond to one another. According to John 16:13, the Paraclete will declare to the disciples "the things that are to come," *τὰ ἐρχόμενα*. This can hardly refer to the events described as *τὰ ἐρχόμενα* in 18:4, because the expression refers in context to Jesus's (not the Paraclete's) advance knowledge of the passion events (cf. Ἰ*ησοῦς οὖν εἰδὼς πάντα τὰ ἐρχόμενα ἐπ' αὐτόν*), which the disciples experienced before the coming of the Paraclete. It is much more natural to refer the expression in John 16:13 to the many coming persons, events, and things spoken of in Revelation 1:4, 8; 6:1, 3, 5, 7, 17; 11:18; 16:15; 17:10; 18:10; 19:7; 22:17, 20. In John 17:24 Jesus prays: "Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world." What this glory looks like is described in Revelation 21:22–27. All these Gospel statements show that the Evangelist not only does not deny the future consummation of salvation or the heavenly city of God, but rather has precise ideas about them that he also presupposes among his readers.

7.2 Nevertheless, despite devoting a certain level of attention to the future, the Fourth Evangelist is most concerned to show that the essential issue of salvation and life has already been decided in the person of Christ, and that this becomes *accessible*—not just sometime and somehow, but here and now—to all who believe in him. This coherence of the present and the future is expressed in a nutshell in Jesus's "I am" saying in John 11:25–26, *ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ ζωή*, "I am the resurrection and the life." J. Frey explains the rest of this passage by means of the following paraphrase and glosses (*Die johanneische Eschatologie*, 3:452):

ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμὲ	The one who believes in me,
κἂν ἀποθάνῃ	even if he dies (bodily),

ζήσεται	will live (i.e., come to life again bodily, by participating in Jesus's already accomplished resurrection of life),
καὶ πᾶς ὁ ζῶν	and everyone who lives (i.e., has eternal life)
καὶ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμε	and believes in me (or by believing in me)
οὐ μὴ ἀποθάνῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.	will never die (spiritually, definitively, "in sin"; i.e., he or she is freed from the eschatological judgment of condemnation or from "eternal" death).

7.3 The Christ-centered imminent eschatology was no mere hermeneutical theory for the Johannine circle. It was a life-sustaining reality in the school's meditative and eucharistic remembrance of the passion story of Jesus (cf. Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24–25) as well as in the liturgy, in which even now the church on earth may enter heaven and see and praise the one God and his Christ together with the angels. We may compare the presentation of the heavenly liturgies in Revelation 4:11; 5:9–10, 12 or 12:10–12 and the prayer cry of Revelation 22:20, which belongs in the eucharistic service: ἔρχου κύριε Ἰησοῦ, "Come, Lord Jesus!" This corresponds to the Maranatha of 1 Corinthians 16:22 (cf. above, 208–9, §2).

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CHAPTER 37

Life in Faith and Love

The Johannine circle understands the life of believers in Jesus Christ totally from the perspective of their relationship to Christ. It is a life determined by the Spirit in faith and love.

1 Faith and Believing (πίστις and πιστεύειν). The Johannine writings speak of faith in different ways but also reveal two things: First, πίστις, "faith," and the related verb πιστεύειν, "to believe," are favorite Johannine terms; and, second, instruction about (true) faith was fundamentally important in the Johannine school.

1.1 The book of *Revelation* uses the noun πίστις only four times, in the sense of a person's faith *in* or faithfulness *to* (cf. Ger. *Glaubenstreue*) Jesus (the genitives μου and Ἰησοῦ in Rev. 2:13 and 14:12 are objective) that remains steady under trial (cf. also 2:19; 13:10). The adjective πιστός occurs eight times and means "faithful" (cf., e.g., 2:10, 13; 17:14), but the verb πιστεύειν does not occur at all (unlike in 1 John and the Gospel). Revelation 2:13 parallels believers holding fast the *name* of Jesus and not denying their *faith* in Jesus. This suggests that believing in Jesus and being faithful to him also involve confessing him by name according to the christological titles of Revelation, such as firstborn from the dead, conqueror, Lamb, etc.

The *letters of John* present a different picture. In the debate with docetically minded false teachers, confession of the true faith becomes a matter of great importance. According to 1 John 5:4, the faith of believers in Jesus Christ is the decisive victory that overcomes the world. Elsewhere the verb πιστεύειν is used nine times as a technical term to refer to this faith. Semantically the verb occurs in the construction "to believe" or "to believe *in*"—expressed by the preposition εἰς with an object (1 John 5:10, 13), by a dative object (3:23; 4:1; 5:10), or by an accusative direct object (4:16)—as well as in the construction "to believe *that*" (ὅτι) certain theological propositions are true. Hence true believers are those who believe that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God (cf. 5:1, 5) and who believe in or trust the

name of the Son of God (cf. 3:23; 5:13), God himself and his testimony about his Son (cf. 5:10), and God's love as demonstrated in Jesus Christ (cf. 4:16).

The *Fourth Gospel* never uses the noun πίστις, but instead uses πιστεύειν 92 times with explicit or implicit reference to belief in Jesus and his words, works, and name, or in the Father who sent him. Nowhere else in the New Testament—not even in the Pauline corpus (with 54 occurrences)—is there such a concentrated focus on πιστεύειν, the process and event of believing. The verb is used in the Gospel in the same technical sense as in 1 John, with the object of belief being marked various ways: 14 times by the dative case (cf., e.g., John 5:24; 8:31, 46), once by the accusative case (cf. 11:26), once by ἐν (cf. 3:15), 36 times by εἰς (cf., e.g., 1:12; 2:11, 23; 3:16; 14:1; 17:20), and 11 times by ὅτι (cf., e.g., 11:27, 42; 13:19; 16:27). The verb also occurs 29 times absolutely without the stated object of belief (cf. 1:7, 50; 3:12 [2*x*], 18; 4:41–42, 48, 53; 5:44; 6:36, 47, 64 [2*x*]; 9:38; 10:25–26; 11:15, 40; 12:39; 14:11, 29; 19:35; 20:8, 25, 29 [2*x*], 31). The synoptic idea that Jesus promoted a novel concept of a faith that could move mountains (cf. above, 106–7, §4.2) is taken up and reformulated in the Gospel of John: the Johannine Christ teaches people to have faith *in himself* and promises eternal life to all who have such faith.

1.2 If one examines these statements about faith more closely, then, especially in John's Gospel, readers are confronted with very formidable claims about faith and believing: John 1:12 already makes it clear that the human capacity for believing (πιστεύειν) and the authority to become children of God are both gifts of grace from the Logos. The Nicodemus discourse confirms this in John 3:3, 5: only the person born again (ἄνωθεν) can see and enter the kingdom of God.

As shown by J. Jeremias (*Die Kindertaufe in den ersten vier Jahrhunderten* [1958], 63ff.) and confirmed by O. Hofius ("Das Wunder der Wiedergeburt," in O. Hofius and H.-C. Kammler, *Johannesstudien*, 40ff. [33–80]), John 3:3, 5 represents a Johannine rereading of the Jesus saying from Matthew 18:3, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." The Johannine school applied this logion to birth by water and the Spirit. "By water and Spirit" could be a hendiadys for the power of the Spirit alone, since water is pictorial language for the Spirit in John 7:37–39 and water and Spirit are closely related according to Ezekiel 36:25–27. However, since this Ezekiel passage had already been applied at Qumran to immersion in the waters of purification necessary for entrance to the community (1QS 3:6–9) and furthermore seems to have lain behind John's baptism (cf. F. Lang, "Erwägungen zur eschatologischen Verkündigung Johannes des Täufers," in *Jesus Christus in Historie und Theologie*,

FS for H. Conzelmann, ed. G. Strecker [1975], 459–73 [464]), it makes even better sense to refer the phrase “by water and Spirit” to baptism. Baptism is thereby understood, as in Titus 3:5 and Justin (*1 Apology* 61.1ff.; 66.1), as an act of rebirth by the power of the Holy Spirit. This interpretation of baptism also provides a clearer trajectory of interpretation leading from Matthew 18:3 to John 3:5 (cf. Hofius, 49–50).

1.2.1 Passages such as John 6:37, 44, 65; 17:2, 6; and 18:37 make it unambiguous that the only people who will come to Jesus and believe in him are those whom the Father draws (6:44), to whom it has been “given” (6:65), and who are “of the truth” (18:37; cf. with 1 John 3:19). Jesus furthermore points out in John 12:37–40 that the majority of the Jews were unable to believe in him because the prophecies of Isaiah 6:10 and 53:1 had to be fulfilled in their case. *Faith in the Son of God is therefore a saving gift reserved for the elect alone*.

In the Johannine letters and the Fourth Gospel there is no mention of justification of the ungodly by faith alone (cf. Gal. 2:16; Rom. 3:28; 4:5). Nevertheless, in agreement with Paul, these writings teach that only faith in Jesus Christ leads to eternal life, and this faith is even more clearly a spiritual gift of grace than it is in Paul (cf. Gal. 3:2, 23; Rom. 10:17 with John 7:37–38 and 1 John 5:5–10). There is therefore no contradiction of the principles of grace alone (*sola gratia*) and faith alone (*sola fide*) between Paul’s letters and the letters and Gospel of John.

Matters are different in the Revelation of John. The author indeed speaks in Revelation 3:5 and 20:15 of people having their names written in the “book of life” independently of their own merit (for the book of life or the recording of people’s names in heaven, see Dan. 12:1; Ps. 69:29 [ET 69:28]; Mal. 3:16; *1 En.* 47:3; 103:2; 108:3, but also Luke 10:20; Phil. 4:3; and Heb. 12:23). But people can forfeit this by having their names blotted out of the book of life due to their unfaithfulness (cf. Rev. 3:5). Only the “conquerors” (3:5), those who are faithful until death, whose (meritorious) deeds will follow them (cf. 14:13), will stand in the unrelenting final judgment according to works (cf. 2:23; 20:12–13; 22:12), for their names are not blotted from the “book of life.” Revelation therefore represents a much stricter doctrine of salvation than the other Johannine writings.

1.2.2 Help with the interpretation of these predestinarian statements comes in the form of the verb ἕλκειν, “to draw,” in John 6:44: “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me *draws* them” (NIV). This has a parallel in Jeremiah 38:3 LXX (31:3 MT). Here the Lord says to Israel, “I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have *drawn* you in compassion.” This usage suggests that the gift of faith, in the Johannine statements, can be understood as an act of God’s prevenient love: just as the Father sent his Son in love “so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (John 3:16), so also in his eternal love the Father has chosen people, given them to the Son, and drawn them to him. The Son’s work is to draw all the elect to himself by means of his exaltation on the cross, that is, to wrest them from the kingdom of Satan and make

them his own people (12:32). The elect may be assured of their salvation, since according to John 6:37, 10:27–29, and 18:9, no one whom the Father has given to Jesus will be driven away from him.

The Reformed doctrine of the *perseverance of the saints* finds a clear scriptural precedent in John 6:37, “Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away” (cf. O. Hofius, “Erwählung und Bewahrung,” in O. Hofius and H.-C. Kammler, *Johannesstudien*, 81–86). This doctrine is not contradicted by the reference to the disciples who left Jesus in John 6:60, 66, or the false teachers who emerged and departed from the Johannine circle according to 1 John 2:19, for their denial of the (true) faith shows that they were never among the elect from the beginning. Judas was also one of these nonelect, according to John 6:64.

1.2.3 If one seeks to penetrate the Johannine statements about faith more deeply, it is best to begin with the sayings that connect faith with the word (of Jesus). *For John, hearing is the most important structural element of faith* (cf. John 5:24; 6:68–69; 8:47; 10:3, 16, 27; 14:23–24; 17:8). Because there is a close connection between faith and the word of Jesus (6:68–69; 11:27), between the word of Jesus and the word of God (1:1, 14; 3:34; 1 John 1:1–3), and between the word, name, and truth of God (cf. John 1:17–18 with 17:6–8, 17), faith in the word binds a person to Jesus, and through Jesus to the one God who ultimately communicated himself to the world in the Word that Jesus himself is. Because Jesus overcame the world on the cross (16:33) and communicated himself to the church in the Spirit-filled word (cf. 16:33), faith participates in Jesus’s victory over the world opposed to God (1 John 5:4).

1.2.4 Faith for the Johannine circle is not blind trust in God’s providence, but involves insight and knowledge. Knowing (*γινώσκειν*) is therefore an essential feature of believing (*πιστεύειν*). Nevertheless, according to H. Schlier, knowing for John is not a “non-committal process in which the knower stands at a free distance from the known,” but rather means “to stand in the effective call of the one who is known or allows himself to be known, and to be affected by him in this knowledge” (H. Schlier, “Glauben, Erkennen, Lieben,” 265). As support for this view Schlier cites John 8:31–32 and 10:14.

John 7:17 shows especially clearly that John’s concept of knowledge is influenced by the *wisdom tradition*: “Anyone who resolves to do the will of God will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own.” Jesus’s teaching is only understood by those who acknowledge it and live accordingly (cf. G. von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel* [1972], 171–76).

Faith and knowledge are interchangeable in the Fourth Gospel (cf. 6:69; 14:9–10; 17:8), but knowledge never exalts itself above faith or pushes itself away from faith. Instead, knowledge deepens a person's faith relationship to Jesus because knowledge penetrates God's word and perceives with an understanding heart (cf. Bar. 2:31) how the one God communicated himself to the word in Christ and how Christ represents and glorifies the one God in the world. In this way believers gain insight into the event of revelation that was granted to them prior to their own response.

A twofold parallel to Paul results: Paul too teaches that being known by God precedes knowing God (cf. Gal. 4:9; 1 Cor. 13:12) and that by the Spirit believers can know what God has done for them and the whole world through the cross (cf. 1 Cor. 2:6–16).

1.2.5 Although the Johannine school considers faith to depend primarily on Jesus's word and states that those who believe without seeing will be blessed (cf. John 20:29), believers may nevertheless *see* Jesus's glory (cf. 1 John 1:1–3; John 1:14; 11:40; 14:9; etc.). This is shown first and foremost by Jesus's Easter appearances to his disciples, which are the last events that John includes among the "signs" (*σημεῖα*) that awaken and strengthen faith according to John 20:30–31 (see above, 692–96, §6.6, esp. 693). But Jesus's glory is also seen in the signs that he performed publicly.

1.2.5.1 As already mentioned, the Fourth Gospel includes seven detailed reports of Jesus's miraculous signs: the miracle of the water turned to wine at the wedding at Cana (2:1–11), the healing of the royal official's son (4:46–54), the healing of the lame man at the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem (5:1–16), the feeding of the five thousand (6:1–15), Jesus's walking on the water (6:16–21), the healing of the man born blind (9:1–7, 8–41), and the raising of Lazarus (11:1–44). According to John 2:23 (cf. 4:45; 6:2), these seven signs are only a selection of the many signs that Jesus performed, and the same can be said of the Easter appearances recorded in John 20:1–29 (cf. 20:30).

All seven reports of Jesus's signs are formulated in typically Johannine fashion, including those with synoptic parallels (cf. the healing of the official's son in John 4:46–54 with Luke 7:1–10 par.; the feeding of the five thousand in John 6:1–13 with Mark 6:32–44 par.; and the walking on the water in John 6:16–21 with Mark 6:45–52). Each report highlights the particular miracle with narrative enhancements. Hence, according to John 2:6, each of the six stone vessels at the wedding at Cana contained up to three "measures" (*μετρηταί*) of fluid, where a measure is 39.17 liters, yielding 117.51 liters of wine per vessel or about 705 liters (186 gallons) of wine for all six vessels (cf. R. Deines, *Jüdische Steingefäße und pharisäische Frömmigkeit* [1993], 28–29); according to 4:50–53, the royal official's son in Capernaum experienced a long-distance healing at the exact hour when Jesus uttered

the healing word in Cana; according to 5:5–7, the lame man at the pool of Bethesda had already been waiting thirty-eight years for healing; in 6:5–6 Jesus tests Philip by asking where the disciples could go to buy bread for five thousand people; according to 6:19, the disciples' boat was already 25 to 30 *stadia* or 2.9 to 3.4 miles (4.7 to 5.5 kilometers) from the shore—more than halfway across the lake—when Jesus began to walk on the water (according to Josephus, *J.W.* 3.506, the Sea of Galilee is about 40 stadia or 4.6 miles/7.4 kilometers across); according to 9:1, the man whom Jesus healed had been blind from birth; and according to 11:39, Lazarus had already been dead for four days and was beginning to stink when Jesus raised him. Such conspicuously detailed presentations in combination with other phenomena (such as the summaries of Jesus's signs at the Passover feast in Jerusalem in 2:23 and 4:45, which interrupt the sequential numbering of his first and second signs in Galilee in 2:11 and 4:54) have led some scholars to assume that the Evangelist has used a "signs source" that was marked by a strong belief in miracles and a Hellenistic divine man or θεῖος ἀνήρ Christology; the conclusion of this source is supposedly preserved in 20:30–31. According to this theory, the Evangelist used the source but tried to check its crass belief in miracles by attaching and subordinating the signs narratives to Jesus's discourses. However, H. Thyen (*TRE* 17:207) has declared this entire theory to be untenable, both because the various reconstructions of the source disagree with one another and because the Hellenistic Christology that supposedly held together the different pieces of this source cannot be demonstrated. Instead Thyen maintains that "The background of the [signs] narratives is genuinely Jewish. They are specifically messianic signs." Like E. Käsemann (*Jesu letzter Wille nach Johannes 17* [1980[4]], 53) and following W. J. Bittner (*Jesu Zeichen*) and U. Schnelle (*Antidocetic Christology*), M. Hengel understands the Johannine signs not as a "foreign body" but as a "fundamental part" of the Gospel's presentation of Jesus. At best, one can speak of a "signs source" only in the sense that "the teacher and his pupils collected reports of Jesus's miracles that the leader of the school then interpreted in oral lectures as σημεῖα—in contrast to the δυνάμεις of the synoptic evangelists—from which he then selected seven for the Gospel" (Hengel, *Die johanneische Frage*, 247).

Because John 20:30–31 is not the conclusion of a special signs source but rather the regular conclusion of chapter 20 and because the supposedly erroneous numbering of the first and second signs in John 2:11 and 4:54 corresponds exactly to the order in which the Evangelist offers the readers detailed reports of Jesus's miracles in Galilee, it is best to do without the hypothesis of a signs source. Although part of the rationale behind this hypothesis is to explain how miracle stories not essential to the author's theology nevertheless entered his Gospel, the author could easily have suppressed miracle stories that did not really matter to him. Because he does not do so but rather refers to the miracles as "signs," his presentation must be intentional.

1.2.5.2 In order to understand the author's intention, one must first notice that σημεῖα, according to Numbers 14:22, Isaiah 66:19, Psalm 74:9 (LXX 73:9), etc., are visible deeds of God's power on behalf of Israel (or an individual pious person according to Ps. 86:17). Miracles are also a sign of the messianic time of salvation in early Jewish texts such as the *Messianic Apocalypse* 4Q521 frag. 2 II, 4–13 (esp. line 11) and the *Targum of Isaiah* 53:8, which says that this time will be filled with countless wonders and blessings. This is confirmed in the New Testament by the references to the marriage of the Lamb (cf. Rev. 19:7) and the presentation of the new Jerusalem (cf. Rev. 21:9–22:5). H. Thyen's conclusion that the Johannine

signs should be viewed in a Jewish context is therefore well founded. The Fourth Evangelist evidently wishes to show that the Messiah Jesus (cf. Μεσσίας in John 1:41; 4:25) has performed the divine saving wonders of the end time. It is no accident that John's Gospel never uses the usual synoptic expression for Jesus's miracles as deeds of power, δύναμις (cf., e.g., Mark 6:2, 5, 14 par.; Luke 10:13 par.), but rather speaks of the σημεῖα or signs that reveal Jesus's divine glory (cf. John 2:11 with 9:3; 11:40). John realizes just as well as the synoptic Evangelists that Jesus's miraculous deeds were controversial (cf. 7:3; 9:16; 11:47–48), and he has clear reservations about a faith based merely on signs and wonders (cf. 4:48; 6:14–15; 11:45–48 [cf. with 12:37–40]). But none of this prevents him from regarding the σημεῖα he narrates as important *aids to seeing* that bring their fullest benefit to believers when they do not merely observe these events in astonishment (their reality as events was not in doubt in the Johannine school) but also grasp their end-time messianic depth dimension. This is well illustrated by the stories of the wine miracle in Cana, the multiplication of the loaves, and the raising of Lazarus.

1.2.5.2.1 At the end of the story of the *wine miracle* the Evangelist adds, "Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him" (2:11). The disciples (and with them the readers) who see Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God (cf. 1:41–42, 45, 49) understand what just happened in Cana: Jesus did not simply remedy a shortage of wine at a Jewish wedding but gave a sign of the wedding of the bridegroom (cf. 3:29 with Mark 2:19 par.) or of the Lamb (cf. Rev. 19:7), at which there is delicious wine to drink in abundance (cf. Gen. 49:11; Isa. 25:6). Purification for the messianic feast is no longer accomplished with the water held in the six stone vessels in Cana, but with the blood of the Lamb (cf. John 13:10 with Rev. 7:14). The story of Jesus's wine miracle in Cana is animated by messianic motifs and has nothing to do with superseding or thwarting the festival of Dionysius, in which empty pots left overnight in his sealed shrine are found to be filled with wine by the morning (cf. on this problem H. Noetzel, *Christus und Dionysos* [1960], and R. Deines, *Jüdische Steingefäße*, 275ff.).

1.2.5.2.2 The Evangelist uses the miracle of the *multiplication of the loaves and fishes* in John 6:1–15 as the starting point for Jesus's Bread of Life discourse in Capernaum (6:22–59), thereby reworking the comparison

of the manna and the word of God suggested in Wisdom 16:26. In this role Jesus presents himself as the Son of God who supersedes Moses and the feeding of God's people with manna, because he himself is the "bread of life" (6:48) or the "living bread that came down from heaven" that imparts eternal life to everyone who eats of it (6:51). John 6:51–58, which points to the Lord's Supper, is not a subsequent appendix to this discourse but is rather, according to M. Hengel, its climax, which "places the central Christian 'sacrament' at the heart of Jesus's work." Therefore, instead of viewing in isolation "the traditional Eucharistic words at the Last Supper, knowledge of which is presupposed among the listeners," the readers of the Gospel are urged to view "this fundamental revelatory speech" together with "the testimony of the beloved disciple before the cross concerning the flowing blood and water from the spear wound (19:34–35; cf. 6:53–56)" (M. Hengel, *Die johanneische Frage*, 247).

Or, to formulate in the light of John 6:63, 67–68: through the bread miracle and the eucharistic Bread of Life discourse, readers are led to faith—a faith that sees beyond the feeding of the five thousand to the miracle of the Lord's Supper instituted by Jesus's words, and a faith that gains eternal life through this Supper's power.

1.2.5.2.3 When one observes that the story of the *raising of Lazarus* (11:1–44) comments upon Jesus's previous statements about resurrection in John 6:39 and 44 (and 5:28–29), some odd features become more understandable. According to John 11:4–6, Jesus did not immediately travel to his friend Lazarus upon hearing of his illness, but only pointed out that Lazarus's illness would serve to glorify the Son of God; Jesus did not depart for Bethany until two days later. Jesus therefore did not intend to perform a healing but a raising of a dead man, whose corpse had already begun to decompose (cf. 11:17, 39). Lazarus offers a realistic example of the resurrection of Jesus's friends and all the dead on the last day (cf. Rev. 20:6, 12–13). In his conversation with Martha in John 11:20–27, Jesus's act is clearly differentiated from a mere healing and even contrasted with the Jewish expectation of the end-time resurrection of the dead. The text thus uses the typically Johannine technique of misunderstanding and directs it at the readers: Martha believes that Jesus has the power to heal and also shares the general Jewish belief in the resurrection. Nevertheless, Jesus's divine authority, by which he is already here and now (and for all time) the resurrection and the life, is something that first becomes clear to Martha on the basis of Jesus's saying about the resurrection and the life in verses 25–

26. Only this word of Jesus awakens in Martha the faith that enables her to make a confession that is fully valid in the Johannine sense: “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world” (11:27). The actual scene of the raising of Lazarus in verses 38–44 consequently becomes a demonstrative proof of God’s glorious power to raise the dead that fills Jesus (cf. Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12). The narrator accepts the fact that Lazarus is only raised to a new life that will once again end in physical death, but because of the statements about believers never dying or living even if they die in verses 25–26, the impact of this *σημεῖον* is undiminished. (The presentation of John 11 is so independent that it requires much effort and even more fantasy to understand it as a Johannine rereading of the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38–42 or of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19–31.)

1.2.5.2.4 The rest of the reports of Jesus’s *σημεῖα* confirm the picture seen above: in the healing miracles Jesus acts as the divine physician (cf. Exod. 15:26), through his word (cf. John 4:50; 5:8) but also through his saliva (cf. 9:6 with Mark 8:23 and on this practice, J. Preuss, *Biblisch-talmudische Medizin* [1911], 321f.). In walking on the Sea of Galilee Jesus appears to his threatened disciples as an emergency rescuer who “treads on the waves of the sea” like God himself (cf. John 6:16–21 with Job 9:8).

1.2.6 Faith in Johannine thought is entirely dependent on Jesus’s word. Therefore there is nothing more important and urgent than to abide or remain (*μένειν*) in this word. When Jesus in John 8:31 tells the Jews who had believed in him, “If you continue [remain] in my word, you are truly my disciples,” the Fourth Evangelist views “the word of Jesus as a living space . . . in which a person may remain continually,” and in this exclusive orientation to Jesus’s word he sees “the sign of true discipleship” (U. Schnelle, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* [1998], 158). In agreement with this, 1 John 2:24 guarantees that people’s remaining in the teaching (of the elder) guarantees their remaining in the Son and in the Father. The relationship of the word and faith is therefore worked out in the Johannine writings even more clearly than it is in the statement that faith comes from hearing the word in Romans 10:17.

2 Love (*ἀγάπη* and *ἀγαπᾶν*). The relationship of God to his Son, of the Son to the Father and to the people the Father has given him, and of these people to one another is described in central passages of the Johannine

writings with the term “love” (noun ἀγάπη, verb ἀγαπᾶν). Revelation 1:5 speaks of Jesus Christ as the one “who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood” (cf. also 3:9), and in 2:19 love (for God and people) is one of the fundamental Christian virtues.

According to the letters of John, love is the life dimension par excellence for those who have been chosen to come to faith: “God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them” (1 John 4:16). This statement brings the relationship sketched above to a focal point: God loved his only begotten Son with an eternal love even before the creation of the world (John 17:24), and the Son is one with the Father in this love (John 17:22–23). God sends his Son into the world out of love for the world and surrenders him to an atoning death on the cross, so that everyone who believes in him receives eternal life by virtue of this death (1 John 4:9–10; John 3:16). Out of love for the Father (14:31) and those who are his own in this world (13:1), the Son sacrifices himself for his “friends” (15:13), and by his exaltation on the cross he draws to himself all those whom the Father in his love has drawn to him (cf. 12:32 with 6:44 [and Jer. 38:3 LXX/par. 31:3 MT]). The love relationship between God and his Son and the loving action of God through his Son precede all human love for God and his Christ (1 John 4:10, 19), making love the realm in which believers can and should live before God and his Christ as well as among one another.

2.1 From John 10:30, the comparison of 1 John 5:3 and John 14:15, and John 15:9–10 one can see that love for God (in the sense of the Shema of Deut. 6:4) and love for Jesus are virtually identical in the Johannine understanding. Instead of the finely differentiated instructions about love in Mark 12:28–34 par., Matt. 5:43–48 par., and Luke 10:25–37, the Johannine Christ gives his disciples only *one new commandment*: “that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another” (John 13:34). There is only *one* commandment because it is the ultimate divine instruction Jesus leaves behind for his disciples, and it is a *new* commandment (even though the command to love one’s neighbor was already known from Lev. 19:18) insofar as Jesus now writes this instruction on the hearts of his disciples (cf. Jer. 31:33–34).

By his *foot washing* Jesus furnishes the decisive proof of his love for his disciples and also gives them an example of how they should treat one another (cf. John 13:1–17). This double dimension explains the two layers of the text. First, John 13:1 forms the thematic heading for the whole. Jesus’s

action is presented in verses 2–11, where the slave's task of foot washing symbolizes the sacrificial death of Jesus by which his disciples will become "entirely clean" before God (cf. v. 10 with 1 John 1:7). Secondly, in verses 12–17 the example or ὑπόδειγμα (v. 15) of Christ as the servant is emphasized (cf. also Luke 22:27): the disciples are to do to one another just as Jesus has done to them. The disciples are thereby encouraged by Jesus's example and his new commandment to extend his existence for others in their love for one another.

According to John 13:34, 1 John 2:5–6, 3:11, 4:11, and 2 John 4–6, mutual brotherly and sisterly love for one another is the distinguishing mark of (Johannine) Christians. 3 John 5–8 shows how this love is practiced. According to 1 John 3:16, love extends even to the point of laying down one's life for one's brothers and sisters in the faith (cf. *1 Clem.* 55:2). Nevertheless, love is restricted (as in Israel, cf. above, 115, §2.1) to other elect comrades in the faith, and believers are instructed to keep their distance from opponents of the faith (cf. 2 John 10; 1 John 2:18–19; 4:1, 3; 5:16; and perhaps 5:21).

2.2 If one compares the new commandment of mutual love among Christians in the Johannine writings with Matthew 5:43–48 par., Luke 10:25–37, Romans 12:9–21, 13:8–10, and Galatians 6:10, it becomes clear how differently the Synoptics and Paul have formulated the matter. Whereas these sources emphasize that according to Jesus, all people, including one's personal or religious enemies, are to be shown love and that Jesus died on the cross for both friend and foe alike (cf. Luke 23:34), the Johannine Christ offers himself up only for his friends (cf. John 15:12–13) and commands only mutual love among Christians. The horizon of this love is not expanded by the cosmic perspective of John 3:16 or the global missionary commission of the disciples (cf. 17:15–21; 20:21–23). In both cases it is not lost humanity as a whole that is in view, but only those Jews and Gentiles whom the Father draws to Jesus and to whom the gift of faith in Jesus is therefore granted (see above). The besieged situation in which the small churches in Asia Minor (cf. Rev. 2:1–3:22) and the Johannine circle in the narrower sense (cf. 3 John 9–10; 1 John 2:18–25; 3:13–16; John 16:2) found themselves makes the Johannine concentration on mutual love for one's Christian brothers and sisters readily understandable. But it does nothing to alter the strange contrast this bears to Jesus's teaching about love for one's enemies.

3 Eternal Life. The outcome of faith in the Johannine writings is *eternal life*—ζωὴ αἰώνιος. The importance of this language and idea of

eternal life in the Johannine school can already be seen from the concordance: many eschatologically colored collocations involving *ζωή* appear in Revelation, and the expression “life” or “eternal life” occurs thirteen times in 1 John and thirty-six times in the Fourth Gospel. Closer observation reveals that the specifically Johannine accents are to be found in three areas:

(1) Revelation does not use the expression “eternal life,” but its uses of *ζωή* in collocations such as “crown of life” (2:10), “book of life” (3:5; 20:15), “tree of life” (2:7; 22:2, 14, 19), and “water of life” (cf. 21:6; 22:1, 17 with John 4:14) point forward to the consummation of life in eternal fellowship with God and the Lamb. Moreover, the vivid presentations of eternal life in Revelation 20:1–6 and 21:1–22:5 are without parallel in the New Testament. Hence, the seer John presents eternal life in more detail than any other New Testament witness.

(2) The vista of the glorious future of God’s children is not completely faded in John’s Gospel and letters (cf. 1 John 3:2; John 14:2; 17:24). But the emphasis clearly lies on the gift and benefit of eternal life in the present (cf. John 3:14–16, 36; 5:24): Whoever believes in the Son of God has eternal life even now (cf. John 5:24; 6:47; 1 John 5:11–13), and those who remain with Jesus will never have this life taken from them (cf. John 10:28).

(3) Eternal life has a different quality from earthly life. Creaturely life is referred to in the Johannine writings by *ψυχή* or occasionally by *βίος τοῦ κόσμου* (cf. Rev. 12:11; 16:3; 1 John 3:17 [those who have “the world’s goods”]; John 12:25). Whereas earthly life comes to an end, eternal life never ends. One can and should “hate” one’s earthly life in order to gain eternal life (cf. John 12:25 with Mark 8:35 par.), and one can lose earthly life through persecution (cf. Rev. 2:13; 11:7–8; John 16:1–2) or by laying it down—as Jesus did—for one’s spiritual brothers and sisters (1 John 3:16). But eternal life is a gift of God that Jesus opens to believers through his word, and this gift endures (cf. 1 John 5:18; John 6:27). John 17:3 offers the ultimate definition of eternal life: “This is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” This knowledge of God is received in the encounter with the word, develops in the life of faith, and culminates in the end-time vision of and fellowship with the Father and the Son in heavenly glory.

4 The Holy Spirit and the Paraclete. For John, life in faith and love is a gift of grace that springs from the new birth bestowed by God (cf. 1 John 4:7; 5:1; John 1:12–13), the new birth "of water and Spirit" (cf. John 3:5 with 1 John 5:7–8). In all probability this expression alludes to baptism, which is similarly referred to as "the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" in Titus 3:5. The experience of being granted God's Spirit (in baptism) was so fundamental for the Johannine circle that the Johannine writings present *the most detailed and precise doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the entire New Testament*. With this doctrine the Johannine circle decisively helped the nascent church of the late first century to understand itself exclusively from the perspective of Jesus's person and teaching and to lead a life that conforms to this relationship.

4.1 The language concerning the Spirit in the Johannine writings is notably differentiated and multilayered. It also has special significance because it goes beyond the traditional early Christian language, providing a new way of speaking about the Spirit in the sayings about the Paraclete (παράκλητος).

In *Revelation* the risen Christ speaks as "the Spirit" (τὸ πνεῦμα) to the seven churches of Asia Minor (cf. Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). The Spirit-Christ promises the martyrs heavenly rest from their labors (14:13), stands behind the prophetic testimony about Christ (cf. 19:10 with 1:2), and helps the church to ask (in the eucharistic worship service) for the end-time coming of Christ (cf. 22:17 with Rom. 8:16, 26).

According to *1 John*, the Spirit is only given to (true) believers (3:24). Therefore it is only believers who can confess Christ as the one who has come and is to come in the flesh (cf. 1 John 4:2 with 2 John 7). Agreement or disagreement with this confession determines who belongs to "the spirit of truth" (τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας) and who belongs to "the spirit of error" (τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς πλάνης) (4:6); the comparison of these two spirits recalls 1QS 3:17–26 (see below). Whereas the Spirit (of truth) supports the addressees' faith and testimony about Christ on earth, the exalted Christ represents them before God in heaven as the Paraclete (cf. 1 John 2:1–2 with Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 9:24).

The *Fourth Gospel* speaks of Spirit simultaneously as the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, and the Paraclete. According to 4:24, "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." The

incarnate Son is animated by the Spirit in his earthly ministry (1:33; 3:34) and imparts the Spirit by his word (6:63). In his Farewell Discourse Jesus promises his disciples that after his departure he will ask his Father to send them "another Advocate (ἄλλον παράκλητον), to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth (τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας), whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him" (14:16–17). This Spirit-Paraclete is also spoken of in 14:25–26, 15:26–27, and 16:4b–15 (see below). At his Easter appearance the risen Christ breathes the Holy Spirit into his disciples so that they can exercise the Office of the Keys by forgiving and retaining sins (cf. 20:22–23; Matt. 16:19).

4.2 Crucial aspects of the ongoing influence and effects of the Johannine doctrine of the Spirit become especially evident in the *five Paraclete sayings*; one may examine them in their own right only as long as one keeps in mind that they are not a foreign body in the Johannine tradition. These five sayings (1 John 2:1–2; John 14:16–17; 14:25–26; 15:26–27; 16:4b–15) have in view the time when Jesus will have ascended to the Father, but during which his disciples must continue on earth in fear and under persecution (1 John 3:13; John 16:2, 33). In this dangerous situation the Paraclete stands by them in a fivefold capacity: (1) He intercedes for them before God as their heavenly advocate (1 John 2:1–2). (2) He fills the disciples on earth and remains with them (John 14:16–17). (3) He helps the disciples to remember Jesus and his words and to understand them (14:26; 16:12–13). (4) He enables the disciples to interpret the things to come (16:13). (5) He gives content and authority to the disciples' testimony (15:26–27; 16:8–11).

In John 14:16 the Paraclete is called ἄλλος παράκλητος, "another paraclete." The first Paraclete was Jesus himself, who during his earthly ministry prayed for his disciples and kept them out of the grasp of their enemies (cf. 17:9, 20; 18:8). On the basis of the parallelism of 14:16; 15:26; 16:7, 13 on the one hand and 14:18, 23; 16:14–15 on the other, one can go even further and say: *The Paraclete is the living Christ ministering as Spirit before God and among people*. Paul already had no problem juxtaposing the work of the Spirit (of Christ) on earth, his help in prayer, and the heavenly intercession of Christ (cf. Rom. 8:4, 9–11, 16, 26–27, 34). The Johannine school also saw no contradiction in referring to the Christ who intercedes for believers in heaven as the Paraclete (1 John 2:1) while using the same

word in the Gospel for the Spirit's work on earth. The work of the Christ-Paraclete before God in heaven does not exclude the work of the Spirit-Paraclete on earth, and vice versa.

4.3 With its doctrine of the Paraclete the Johannine school set a clear standard for the Christian understanding of the Holy Spirit: the Spirit has his decisive criterion in Jesus himself. He proceeds from the Father (cf. John 14:16, 26) and from the Son (cf. 15:26; 16:7), connects them (cf. the use of *παράκλητος* in 1 John 2:1–2), and acts in their name on earth. This description of the relationship of Father, Son, and Spirit clearly anticipates and preformulates the Trinitarian theology of the ancient church.

It is no accident that the Johannine circle chose the *juristic technical term παράκλητος*, which appears nowhere else in the New Testament. As indicated above, the term occurs four times in John's Gospel (14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7) and once in 1 John (2:1). In pre-Christian or non-Christian sources the term occasionally has the legal technical meaning "lawyer," "attorney," but usually has a more general sense: "one who appears in another's behalf, *mediator, intercessor, helper*" (BDAG 766, s.v. *παράκλητος*). *Παράκλητος* also became a Jewish loanword, transliterated as פְּרַקְלֵיט (Hebrew) or פְּרַקְלֵיטָא (Aramaic). The rabbis used it for the legal advocate or defender in the present or future judgment of God (cf. Str-B 2:560ff.). The translation of *παράκλητος* by "helper," "intercessor," or "advocate" works well in 1 John 2:1, and it is no different in the Fourth Gospel. The juristic tone of the word resonates in all the relevant passages: Christ represents his own before God's judgment throne in heaven and helps them on earth to carry on and persevere until the end in the same judicial process of dividing light from darkness in which he himself was involved on earth (see the conclusion of this chapter). In 1522 Luther translated *παράκλητος* by *Fürsprecher*, "advocate," in 1 John 2:1, but by *Tröster* or "comforter" in the Gospel of John. These two different senses were directly taken over into English by William Tyndale in 1526 (and hence by the KJV). This tradition of different translations for the Gospel and 1 John goes back to the Vulgate's *paracletus* in the Gospel and *advocatus* in 1 John. The Latin fathers in turn equated *paracletus* with *consolator*, "one who consoles or comforts," eventually influencing Luther (and Tyndale). In terms of both language and content, Luther's idea of the "advocate" makes sense, but the "comforter" does not. Therefore, against KJV's "Comforter," modern English translations of the Gospel of John also agree with the Vulgate translation of 1 John 2:1 by speaking of the Paraclete as the "Advocate" (NRSV, REB, NAB, NIV11), "Counselor" (RSV, NIV 1984, HCSB), or "Helper" (NASB, ESV, TEV); differently, "Companion" (CEB); NJB merely transliterates: "Paraclete."

4.4 The Johannine use of *παράκλητος* represents a creative use of language. Nevertheless, it was prepared for by the language of wisdom, early Jewish teaching about angels, Jesus's own Son of Man sayings, and the concept of mission in the Jerusalem church.

In the *wisdom tradition*, *σοφία* is equated with God's "holy spirit" or the "spirit of the Lord" (cf. Wis. 1:4–10; 7:22–8:1; 9:17). Wisdom fills the whole world, makes sin and unrighteousness evident before God, but also leads people to obtain friendship with God (7:14, 27), to be careful in judgment, and to lead a life that pleases him (8:11; 9:9–12). These statements point forward to John 14:26; 16:8, 13.

Ancient Judaism developed detailed ideas of angels who direct all earthly and cosmic events. These include *advocate* or *helper* angels who intercede for Israel (or individual people) when the people of God or individual Israelites fall into hardship (cf. Job 1:6–12; Zech. 3:1–7). The book of Daniel (10:13, 21; 12:1) mentions the angel prince Michael who intercedes for Israel in the cosmic battle, and this idea is maintained in *Testament of Levi* 5:6 and *Testament of Dan* 6:2 and on to rabbinic times. The Qumran texts also know of the angel prince Michael who fights for Israel in the end times and establishes Israel's dominion (cf. 1QM 17:5–8). Michael is also identified with the prince of light, who stands by the godly in their daily struggle for purity and helps them withstand the hostilities of the prince of darkness. According to 1QS 3:13–4:26, the Essene community sees itself engaged in an ongoing battle between light and darkness, or between the prince of light and the angel of darkness. In this battle the "spirit of truth" stands by the godly and helps them to lead a righteous life, whereas the "spirit of deceit" threatens the godly, reigns over the "sons of darkness," and leads them to live an ungodly life. Because the "spirit of truth" in 1QS 4:21 stands parallel to the "spirit of holiness" who according to Ezekiel 36:25–27 will be poured out upon the godly in the last days in order to purify them, give them knowledge of God, and make their walk blameless (cf. 1QS 3:6–9), we have in Qumran statements that have very close points of contact with the teaching about the Spirit in the Johannine writings (cf. Rev. 12:7–9; 1 John 4:6; John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13).

1 John 2:1, Romans 8:34, and Hebrews 7:25 and 9:24 all point to the Christ who intercedes for believers in heaven. This idea goes back to synoptic *Son of Man sayings* such as Luke 12:8–9. The expression "Son of Man" in these sayings is certainly a reference to Jesus himself. The alternation between the first and third person that is characteristic of such logia (e.g., "everyone who acknowledges *me* before others, the *Son of Man* also will acknowledge") corresponds to the style in which God refers to himself as both "I" and "he" in Amos 5:4–12 and Ezekiel 44:2 and 5. Jesus therefore speaks of himself in the style of divine speech (cf. K. Berger, *Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums* [1995[2]], 665).

In Mark 13:9–11 par. the disciples of Jesus are told how to prepare themselves for the proclamation of the gospel in the whole world in the end times and for the persecutions they will encounter because of their testimony. At the same time, they are assured that they will be armed with the Spirit and heavenly wisdom for their appearance before the tribunals of the world. These statements correspond to John 14:16, 15:26–27, and 16:7–11.

4.5 The Paraclete was of the greatest significance for the self-understanding of the Johannine circle. This group assumed that Jesus and the reality and character of God revealed through him cannot be understood apart from the gift of the Holy Spirit. The group claimed the inspiration of the Spirit-Paraclete for the elder's teaching and the beloved disciple's testimony (cf. 1 John 5:6 with John 19:35; 21:24) as well as for themselves (cf. 1 John 3:24; 4:13).

4.5.1 According to John 14:26, the knowledge that the Paraclete gives does not go beyond Jesus and his word, but it offers full and deepened insight into who Jesus was and what he said. John 2:17, 22; 12:16; and 20:9 show how this is meant: it is only the gift of the Spirit that enables the disciples who lacked understanding before Easter to understand Jesus's work and words, to interpret the Holy Scripture with reference to him, and

to gauge the fullness of the revealed reality (ἀλήθεια) of God that is present in him. When it says in John 16:13 that when the Paraclete comes, ὁδηγήσει ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ πάσῃ, "he will guide you in/into all the truth" (א[2]; or εἰς τὴν ἀλήθειαν πᾶσαν, A, B), this recalls Psalm 25:5 and Wisdom 9:10–11 and 10:10. The Paraclete will lead the disciples in the way of truth and teach them to understand what God's revelation in and through Jesus means. This teaching will also enable them to speak more accurately about the truth than others. The elder and his pupils insisted on the special quality of their knowledge of and testimony to the truth over against other early Christian witnesses to the faith (cf. 1 John 5:5–8; John 19:35; 21:20–25).

4.5.2 The Johannine school was probably only a small circle of people who separated themselves from this world, which lies in the power of the evil one (cf. 1 John 5:19; John 16:33). But this did not prevent them from being active in mission (cf. John 17:18; 20:21) and trusting the Paraclete to support their missionary testimony. According to John 15:26, the Paraclete comes to testify about Jesus, and according to 15:27 the disciples must also testify (about Jesus); the disciples' testimony is therefore supported by the Paraclete. John 16:8–11 should be interpreted in the same way: the Paraclete "convicts" the world through the witness of the disciples that he inspires; the verb ἐλέγχειν means to convict a person of something in court, to prove him wrong (cf. NRSV: "he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment," 16:8). Through the missionary testimony of the disciples the world that has rejected faith is legally convicted: it is convicted, first, of *sin*, because unbelief is the essence of sin (16:9). The world is also convicted of opposing *righteousness* by the fact that Jesus is going (ὑπάγει) to the Father (16:10). Jesus's going away proves that the world has opposed righteousness because by so doing he fulfills the role of the righteous servant of Isaiah 53:11–12: after the completion of his work on the cross, the Son ascends to the Father in heaven where he is vindicated and given his rightful place, and henceforth intercedes as the "righteous one" before God on behalf of his own (cf. 1 John 2:1). (Paralleling John 16:10, 1 Timothy 3:16 similarly says on the basis of Isaiah 53:11–12 that the risen Christ was "vindicated [or justified] in spirit," ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι.) Finally, the disciples' testimony convicts the world of disregarding *judgment* (John 16:11). Jesus by his sacrifice has already condemned Satan as "the prince of this world" by depriving him of his

power and opening the way of eternal life to those who believe in him (cf. John 12:31–32 with Luke 10:18 and Rev. 12:10). Therefore, the Paraclete helps the missionary disciples to speak about Christ in all clarity and to generate belief or unbelief through their word. The disciples thereby continue the same judicial process of dividing light from darkness, belief from unbelief, that Jesus began with the world (see above, 686, §6.1).

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CHAPTER 38

The Johannine View of the Church

In order to understand the teaching and preaching of the members of the Johannine circle completely, we must clarify their understanding of the church, the tasks they saw themselves facing as Jesus's “friends” (cf. John 15:15), and the role baptism and the Lord’s Supper played for them.

1 The Johannine Concept of the Church. The multilayered Johannine tradition shows great interest in the church but does not exhibit any unified concept of it. In *Revelation* each of the seven churches addressed by letter is represented before the living Christ by its own angel, and the churches are referred to individually as “the church in Ephesus” or “Smyrna” or “Pergamum,” etc. (cf. Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, etc., and L. T. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration*, 235ff.). The church of Jesus Christ as a whole is represented as the twelve-tribed people headed up by the Christ-ram (*ἀρνίον*, cf. 7:4–8; 14:1–5) and also as the bride of Christ (cf. 21:2, 9–10 with 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:32), which is equated with the heavenly Jerusalem (cf. *4 Ezra* 7:26; 8:52; 13:36; *2 Bar.* 4:2–6, and the detailed presentation of the “New Jerusalem” documents from Qumran, 1Q32; 2Q24; 4Q232; 4Q365a; 4Q554–555; 5Q15; 11Q18; cf. J. Maier, *Die Tempelrolle vom Toten Meer und das “Neue Jerusalem”* [1997[3]], 315ff.). The individual churches and especially the church as the people of God and bride of the Lamb are more important for John the seer than the individual believers (though these are a focus in the Gospel: see below); his concept of the church is therefore eschatological and collective. Only three church offices are mentioned in Revelation: the office of the twelve apostles, which is foundational for the church (cf. 18:20; 21:14); the office of the apostles of the churches (cf. 2:2 with 2 Cor. 8:23); and the office of the prophets (10:7; 11:18; 16:6; 18:20, 24; 22:6, 9).

In the *letters of John* a local church is referred to by the term *ἐκκλησία* (cf. 3 John 6, 9–10), while one of the house churches led by a pupil of John is called the “elect lady,” *ἐκλεκτὴ κυρία* (cf. 2 John 1). This address, “elect lady,” is unique in the New Testament; it takes up the Old Testament

language of the elect people of God, while the Greek adjective ἐκλεκτός (which implies a certain special status) emphasizes the authority of the individual churches (cf. H.-J. Klauck, *Der zweite und dritte Johannesbrief* [1992], 33–37).

The *Fourth Gospel* speaks of the church only in metaphors, especially "flock" (ποίμνη) (10:16) and "the (true) vine (with its branches)" (cf. 15:1–6). Designations of various church offices do not appear in John's Gospel or letters; according to John 21:15–17, only Peter counts as the shepherd of Christ's sheep whom the risen one has appointed, that is, as bishop of the entire church (cf. Eph. 4:11; 1 Pet. 5:1).

In the ecclesial thought of the Johannine school, the people of God do persevere (cf. Rev. 7:4–8 with John 10:16; 11:52; 15:5), but the accent is shifted from a collective idea of the church to the circle of the elect children of God and friends of Jesus. This new concept of the church emphasizes each individual believer so conspicuously (cf. John 10:3, 14–15, 27; 15:4–5) that "*the existence of the church seems to have become a function of the fellowship with Christ that the individual believers have*" (J. Roloff, *Die Kirche im Neuen Testament*, 299). However, the statements about mutual love (ἀγάπη) among Christians show that the church for John was and is more than just a gathering of individual believers (cf. 1 John 4:7–21; 3 John 5–8; and John 17:20–23).

Even the members of the Johannine circle who flocked around the elder in Ephesus did not want to form a special church over against the mainstream church led by Peter but rather to belong to it (cf. John 21:15–17). Therefore this circle's statements about the church do not necessarily point to special Johannine churches, but rather present thoughts about the church that people had in the school of the elder.

2 Essential Features of the Church. We should envision the Johannine school as a parachurch fellowship of pupils of the elder who belonged to various house and local churches. This did not prevent them from thinking deeply about the essence of the church. The Johannine school assumed that Jesus himself founded the church, willed it into existence, and promised it a glorious future.

2.1 According to John 15:1–8, the relationship of Jesus to the disciples is like that of the *grape vine* to its *branches*. This pictorial language makes three points. The first is that the vine gives life to the branches; the branches live entirely from the vine and are destroyed if they do not bear abundant

fruit. In plain language: the disciples live from the love of Jesus, but are obligated to remain in this love for better or worse (cf. 15:9; 17:23).

The second point lies in the fact that in John 15:15, Jesus no longer calls his disciples slaves (δοῦλοι) who do not know what their master is doing, but rather friends (φίλοι) who are filled with the true knowledge of God. The honorific title "friends of Jesus" stands opposite the Jewish-Christian common language of "slaves of Jesus" or "of God," retained in Revelation 1:1; 2:20; 7:3, etc., and found elsewhere for the apostles and church members (cf. Rom. 1:1; 6:15–23; 1 Pet. 2:16; James 1:1; Jude 1, etc.) and has sapiential roots: According to Wisdom 8:18, people who gain wisdom are no longer enslaved but "in friendship with her," while according to Wisdom 7:14 and 27, when wisdom passes into holy souls she makes them "friends of God." The friends of Jesus therefore stand in a special relationship to their Lord.

The third point of John 15 lies in the expression "true vine," ἀληθινὴ ἄμπελος (John 15:1). Because the vine is a common symbol for Israel (cf. Ps. 80:9 [ET 80:8]), the metaphor suggests that it is not empirical Israel, but Jesus and his disciples, who are the true people of God.

2.2 This self-understanding of the disciples as the people of God also stands behind the pictorial language of the "flock" that is tended by the "good shepherd" (ποιμὴν καλός) in John 10:16. The good shepherd is naturally the Messiah in the person of Jesus (cf. John 10:11 with 1:41; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:4; Ezek. 34:23; 37:24), and his flock is the people of God that he leads (cf. John 10:16 with Jer. 13:17; Isa. 40:11). The good shepherd knows every sheep by name (John 10:3) and lays down his life for them (10:11, 15). Nevertheless, these sheep come not only from Israel but also from the whole world, and they will someday form a single large flock with one shepherd (cf. 10:16). John 11:52 shows that this large flock consists of greater Israel with the inclusion of believing Gentiles. This passage has the fulfillment of Isaiah 56:3–8 in view (see below). Therefore, in John's view, the church of Jews and Gentiles is the true Israel that lives before God in the forgiveness that Jesus won by laying down his life for all his sheep (cf. 1 John 2:2; 4:10).

This universality of the end-time people of God is already taken into account in Revelation. In the list of the names of the twelve tribes in Revelation 7:5–8, after the sons of Leah, Judah and Reuben, the next named are Gad, Asher, and Naphtali, even though they were only the sons of the two maids

Bilhah and Zilpah (cf. Gen. 30:1–13). They are placed before Leah's sons Simeon, Levi, Issachar, and Zebulun and before Rachel's sons Joseph and Benjamin. C. R. Smith ("The Portrayal of the Church as the New Israel," 114) and P. Hirschberg ("Das eschatologische Gottesvolk," 231) see this special order as an "indication of the integration of the Gentiles" (Hirschberg) into the people of God. The end-time people of God will include individuals from every people and nation according to Revelation 7:9 and 14:1–5.

2.3 It is possible that the Johannine report of *Jesus's temple action* in John 2:13–22 has not only christological but also ecclesiological connotations. According to 2:20–22, the temple saying that Jesus spoke at the time of his action refers to the temple in the form of the *body of Christ*. What this means is best determined by a comparison with Mark 14:58. According to Mark, the temple that Jesus had in view in his temple saying was not the temple built with human hands but rather (in accordance with Exod. 15:17) the end-time sanctuary on Mount Zion to which all nations will stream (cf. Isa. 2:2–4; Mic. 4:1–4 with Matt. 8:11–12/Luke 13:28–29). According to the Fourth Evangelist, Jesus had in view "the temple of his body" and therefore himself, through whom and in whose fellowship God is worshiped "in spirit and truth" (cf. 4:24). Or formulated differently: "For John Jesus himself is the place of the ongoing presence of God (cf. John 10:38; 14:6, 9–10) and thereby the true temple" (U. Schnelle, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes*, 66). To this temple belong all who live in and with Jesus and are filled by his Spirit (cf. 6:56; 14:20; 17:23; 1 John 3:6, 24). This view corresponds to Paul's language about the church as the body of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 12:12–13; Rom. 12:4; Col. 1:18; Eph. 4:4) and about God's temple filled with the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Eph. 2:21). The Johannine school in Ephesus could have known this Pauline terminology; John 2:21 may even allude to it.

2.4 The church for John includes only those whom God has chosen for faith, who confess Christ in the sense of the elder (cf. John 3:27; 6:37, 39, 44, 65; 17:2–7; 18:9; 1 John 2:18–27; and above, 608–12, §7). Once they all are gathered together by the Christian mission, they will form an indivisible unity with the Father and the Son (cf. John 17:20–23). It is not improbable that the Johannine school, which we must imagine as a small Jewish Christian convent of brothers and sisters tightly bound together, already wanted to live out this unity for other Christians to some extent (cf. 1 John 1:3, 7).

2.5 This concentration on the elect finds its corresponding opposite in the Johannine community's boundaries toward the outside: those born of God are surrounded by a world that on the whole lies in the power of the evil one (cf. 1 John 5:19). The world is represented above all by the Jews who have persecuted the Johannine circle and expelled them from the synagogue (cf. John 9:22; 12:42; 16:2). When these Jews are identified as "children of the devil" (cf. John 8:41, 44 with Rev. 2:9; 3:9), this is in keeping with the style of the bitter dispute among Jews and Jewish Christians about the truth of the faith in the first century.

J. Roloff has investigated the Johannine equation of "the Jews" with "the world" and has correctly emphasized two points: First, "it is absolutely necessary to distinguish between the original intention of the Johannine statements and their catastrophic history of influence, which allowed them to become the starting point of Christian anti-Judaism." The Evangelist's own presentation of the Jews "is still marked to a great extent by the contemporary experiences of the Johannine group as a minority that was discriminated against in a Jewish environment." The Evangelist does not represent a principled enmity against the Jews, but rather still knows how to present the nuances: In Nicodemus (John 3:1, 10; 19:39) and Joseph of Arimathea (19:38) the Evangelist sees "secret sympathizers of Jesus," and in the passion narrative he "by no means assigns all the guilt for Jesus's death to the Jews" (*Die Kirche im Neuen Testament*, 303). Roloff's second point is that for John, "the crisis of Israel is ultimately only *one especially emphasized sign of that great crisis that affects the whole world*," so that one can and must draw conclusions from the Jews to all humanity (304).

2.6 According to the Johannine writings, the church's decisive task consists of *mission*. Revelation shows this by references to the testimony both of the seer John himself (1:2, 9) and of the unknown martyrs (6:9; 11:7; 12:11). Moreover, Revelation's expectation of the end-time procession of the Gentile nations to the city of God on Mount Zion (cf. 21:24–26 with Isa. 60:3, 5, 11; Ps. 72:10; Zech. 14:16–17) is to be traced back to the "Christian mission that precedes the end" (H. Giesen, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* [1997], 472). 3 John 5–8 makes it clear that the elder's followers supported traveling Christian missionaries. 1 John 1:2 and 5:10–12 show what the elder understood as the true missionary testimony: It is the divinely authorized message about the Son of God, who opens eternal life to those who believe in him. Finally, in John's Gospel many passages (10:16; 11:52; 12:32; 16:5–11; 17:18, 20; 20:21) show that the Fourth Evangelist also saw the mission to the nations as the decisive task of the risen Christ (cf. Matt. 28:18–20).

When one considers the context and the deep tradition-historical layers of these Johannine passages, one sees that even the Johannine circle must have had very precise ideas of the mission to the nations and a detailed familiarity with the Jerusalem concept of mission. Otherwise, this circle could hardly

have spoken of Jesus in John 10:3–4 as the messianic shepherd and leader of the end-time people of God from the perspective of Psalms 95:7 and 80:2–3 (ET 80:1–2) and Micah 2:12–13, or have brought together conceptually the gathering of the diversely scattered children of God with the gathering of Israel (cf. John 11:52 with Isa. 56:8), or have promised the disciples many "rooms" or "dwelling places" (*μοναί*) in the heavenly Jerusalem (cf. John 14:2–3 with 5Q15 frag. 1 II, 6–7, "houses," באתין [Aramaic]), or have spoken of end-time Israel as in Revelation 7:4–8 and 14:1–5 (see above), or have seen the heavenly Jerusalem whose wall is founded on the work of the twelve apostles of the Lamb as the fulfillment of all the promises of salvation (cf. Rev. 21:9–27). In view of these traditions, one would do better not to accuse the elder and his pupils of the "unrealization" of the idea of the people of God, a distortion of the messianic shepherd idea, and a marginalization of the idea of the eschatological procession of the nations to Zion, as J. Roloff has done (305–6). But, as already mentioned above (§2.1, with reference to the "true vine"), our composite sketch of the Johannine writings also finds that they unfortunately leave no room for the end-time salvation of all Israel in the sense of Romans 11:25–32. This has had disastrous consequences for the history of missions and the history of influence of the Johannine writings.

2.7 It is a matter of great importance for the Johannine school that the church of Jesus Christ is not a mixed body (*corpus permixtum*) of sinners and righteous persons who will be sorted out only on the last day, but is rather the communion of the saints (*communio sanctorum*) in the true sense of the word, that is, the kingdom of priests purified and sanctified by Jesus's blood (cf. Rev. 1:6; 20:6 with Exod. 19:6; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9; and John 17:19). The call to conquer or overcome (*νικᾶν*) in the letters to the seven churches in Revelation has a rigorous tone (cf. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21), and the elevation of love for one's Christian brothers and sisters as the true sign of faith and church membership in 1 John 4:8 and 20 is not lacking in strictness. Nevertheless, the Johannine circle is not alone in its high requirements for believers, for in Matthew 18:15–18, 1 Corinthians 6:1–11, and 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1 the sanctified church and the sinful world are just as sharply separated as in the school of the elder. Moreover, as we shall see, the Johannine circle's insistence on exclusive holiness includes rather than excludes a measured treatment of the vexed problem of the sin of Christians.

2.8 The fact that questions of *church order* receive no more than a fleeting glance in the Johannine writings may be a consequence of the Johannine school's situation. According to Revelation 1:3 and 22:6–21, John the seer addresses himself as a prophet to other church prophets, but it would be more than daring to view these prophets as official church leaders. The Johannine letters show that the elder held a position of authority that allowed him to address his readers exactly as Jesus addressed his disciples

according to John 13:33, namely, as “little children” (τεκνία) (cf. 1 John 2:1, 12, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21). The “children” of the elder saw each other as “brethren” (RSV) or “brothers and sisters” (NRSV) (cf., e.g., 1 John 3:13–14; 5:16; John 21:23), and behind the forms of address “little children” (τεκνία), “children” (παιδία), “fathers” (πατέρες), and “young men” (νεανίσκοι, NRSV: “young people”) in 1 John 2:12–14, one could suspect a church order formed on the principle of the household codes (cf. Col. 3:20–21; Eph. 6:1, 4). But this order is nowhere clarified.

2.8.1 The elder’s followers also included (house) church leaders like Gaius, the recipient of 3 John. In 3 John 5–8 the elder commends Gaius for providing hospitality and lodging to some “brothers” (ἀδελφοί, NRSV: “friends”) who were “strangers” (ξένοι) to him, who were on a journey to testify for the truth. This seems to have involved traveling preachers who lived according to the tradition of Luke 10:1–12 and therefore depended on receiving room and board from fellow Christians (cf. *Did*. 11:3–13:7).

In 3 John 9–10 the elder complains that a certain Diotrephes, “who likes to put himself first” (ὁ φιλοπρωτεύων) in Gaius’s church, does not welcome the traveling brothers. Instead, he expels from the church any members who want to welcome the travelers (apparently including Gaius), and he also does not acknowledge the elder’s authority. E. Käsemann saw Diotrephes as an orthodox bishop and John the elder as an elder whom Diotrephes had excommunicated because he had become suspect of heresy (cf. Käsemann, “Ketzer und Zeuge”). However, E. Haenchen has assessed Käsemann’s view as a mere “stroke of genius” (cf. E. Haenchen, *Die Bibel und Wir* [1968], 299), and M. Hengel (*Die johanneische Frage*, 124ff.) has correctly reached the opposite conclusion from Käsemann: It was not John the elder but Diotrephes who was favorably inclined to the docetists, against whom 1 John 2:18–26, 4:1–3, and 2 John 7–9 are directed, and the elder wished to correct him (cf. 3 John 10, 14).

2.8.2 The Johannine school laid claim to a special knowledge of the truth, spoke of the nearness of Christ to his “friends,” and built upon the mutual love of Christians. But it apparently did not reflect upon institutional means of ensuring the future existence of the church or of guarding against the subversion of the church’s fundamental tradition, other than by literary threats (cf. Rev. 22:18–19) and assurances (cf. John 21:24–25). A church that must survive the passing of time and preserve its identity over generations can hardly orient itself to the Johannine writings alone.

3 Love and Lovelessness. It is not only the question of a concrete and enduring church order that is neglected in the Johannine writings. The concrete problems of the apostolic paraclesis as treated in the letters of

Paul, 1 Peter, Hebrews, and James also recede totally into the background in the Johannine writings. Only the presence or absence of mutual brotherly and sisterly Christian "love"—*ἀγάπη*—is considered in any detail, and with it the problem of sin in the Christian church.

3.1 Revelation addresses small Christian congregations that are threatened internally by various heresies (cf. 2:14–15, 20) and externally by the Roman state that places totalitarian demands on its citizens. The Spirit instructs these minority churches to return to their first love and first works, that is, to the behaviors that grew entirely out of their faith at the beginning (cf. 2:4, 26; 3:3, 15), although the Spirit also praises the love in which some of these Christians persevered since the beginning (2:19). The Johannine letters issue an emphatic call to love: According to 1 John 5:3, to love God is to "obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome" (cf. Matt. 11:28–30), because the test case for love is the love that one has for one's brothers and sisters in the faith (cf. 1 John 4:7–21; 2 John 4–6). The Gospel of John similarly condenses Jesus's admonition to love into a new commandment of mutual love among Jesus's disciples (cf. 13:34–35). *Love for one's Christian brothers and sisters is therefore the ultimate Johannine paradigm for the fulfillment of God's will* (see above, 708–10, §2).

According to the teaching of the elder, the commandments (*ἐντολαί*) call for faith and love (cf. 1 John 2:3–5; 5:2–3 with 3:22–24; 4:21). Therefore they cannot be equated without further ado with the instructions of the Sermon on the Mount or the commandments of the Torah. S. Schulz admittedly believes that whereas "the Mosaic cultic law has definitely lost its traditional function as mediator of salvation for John, the moral law has retained its theological significance for the final redactor" of John's Gospel and is "therefore an eschatological criterion in the final judgment" (*Neutestamentliche Ethik* [1987], 494). However, Schulz cites no passages to prove that John's *ἐντολαί* are really to be equated with the Torah's moral commandments. Unlike the Synoptics and Paul, John's letters and Gospel never speak explicitly of the significance of the Decalogue or other Torah commandments for Jesus's disciples. The issue is always only about love (for God and) for one's Christian brothers and sisters in the sense of Deuteronomy 6:4 and Leviticus 19:18, yet these two great commandments about love from the Torah are never quoted as such in the Johannine writings. Because the definition of sin as "lawlessness" (*ἀνομία*) in 1 John 3:4 also has only an indirect relationship to the Torah, we are faced with the strange finding that Jesus's "new" commandment about loving one's brothers and sisters has taken the place of the Torah. This is best understood from the perspective of Jeremiah 31:33–34.

3.2 No passage in the Johannine writings describes love in more detail than 1 John 4:7–21. The completed demonstration of God's love in and through his Son creates an *assurance of faith*. For those gripped by this love

there is no more fear of punishment (*κόλασις*) in the final judgment, because God’s perfect love casts out fear of judgment (4:17–18). Believers may have boldness (*παρρησία*) before God on the day of judgment, and even today they may live in this world like the living Christ, who has overcome the world (cf. 4:17–18 with 5:4–5; John 16:33). For believers there is only one fundamental (twofold) obligation: to believe in the Son of God (3:23) and to love one’s brothers and sisters as he commanded (4:21).

3.3 The elder states succinctly in 1 John 4:19: “We love because he [God] first loved us.” Nevertheless, even the elder was faced with questions of whether and how people can persevere in this love. Interestingly, this question is answered with both a clear yes *and* a clear no in the Johannine texts.

3.3.1 Revelation, the three Johannine letters, and the Fourth Gospel leave no doubts that people can persevere in faith and love. Revelation shows this by its statements about “the one who conquers/overcomes,” *ὁ νικῶν* (cf. Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12; 15:2; 21:7; of both Jesus and believers in 3:21). In 1 John 3:6 and 5:18 the elder states that anyone who is born of God and abides in Christ “does not sin” (NIV: “does not *continue* to sin,” *οὐχ ἁμαρτάνει*), and in 3:9 he even says that such a person “cannot sin because he is born of God” (RSV).

These statements about the sinlessness of those born of God are in line with Jewish thought (cf. H.-J. Klauck, *Der erste Johannesbrief* [1991], 195ff.). According to *Testament of Levi* 18:9, all sin and sinful actions will cease under the eschatological high priest, while according to *1 Enoch* 5:8–9 (cf. also *Jub*. 5:12), after the elect are bestowed with wisdom, “They shall all live and not return again to sin, either by being wicked or through pride; but those who have wisdom shall be humble and not return again to sin. And they shall not be judged all the days of their lives; nor die through plague or [divine] wrath” (*OTP* 1:15).

The ideal of sinlessness also stands behind *Testament of Benjamin* 8:2 (8:3 in *OTP*), where it says in direct parallel to 1 John 3:9 that a righteous man (in particular, the one with a pure mind who does not look at a woman with lustful thoughts) “has no pollution in his heart, because upon him is resting the Spirit of God.”

3.3.2 However, the elder can also represent sinlessness as an illusory claim, as in 1 John 1:8–10: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”

In 1 John 2:4, 9, and 4:20 the apostates' claim to be sinless is rejected: Whoever claims to have come to know God (cf. the perfect ἔγνωκα in 2:4) while failing to keep his commandments, or to love God while hating a brother or sister (4:20), is a liar; similarly, whoever claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness (2:9).

3.3.3 Understanding these statements about sin and forgiveness requires consideration of at least five issues:

(1) Baptism (in the name of Jesus Christ) was considered the means of rebirth by water and the Holy Spirit not only in the Pauline school (Titus 3:5) but also in the Johannine school (John 3:5). Therefore the elder writes in 1 John 3:9, "Those who have been born of God do not [practice] sin, because God's seed abides in them; they cannot sin, because they have been born of God."

(2) Christian gnostics of the second and third centuries happily claimed the idea of new birth for themselves (cf., e.g., Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.21.2; Clement of Alexandria, *Excerpts from Theodotus* 80; Hippolytus, *Refutation of All Heresies* 5.21.6), and the heretics opposed in the Johannine letters preceded them in this. According to 1 John 1:8, 10; 2:4, 9, these contemporaries of the elder and his followers claimed to be sinless, to know God, and to stand in the light, but at the same time they had distanced themselves from their former brothers and sisters in the faith.

(3) The false teachers' departure from the elder's group prompted the elder to dispute their claims and to conclude from their lack of brotherly and sisterly love that they were liars and not participating in the enlightening truth of the faith.

(4) This controversy shows that the elder and the heretics both assumed that the children of God who have received new birth through baptism (in water and Spirit) are sinless. But they interpreted this new birth differently: The false teachers claimed to have been perpetually sinless since their baptism. By contrast, the elder indeed addresses his "little children" on the basis of their new being and urges them to strive to live a sinless life, but he also admonishes them to test themselves before God (cf. 1 John 1:8 with 3:19–20), to confess their sins publicly, and to trust both God, who forgives sins through Christ (cf. 1:9), and Christ, the one "born of God," who keeps God's newborn children from the grasp of the evil one (cf. 5:18). Therefore the elder can write in 1 John 2:1–2: "My little children, I am writing these

things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate (*παράκλητος*) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice (*ἱλασμός*) for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world."

(5) Not content with this, the elder also differentiates in 1 John 5:16–17 between a "sin not leading to death," which God will forgive in response to prayer, and a "sin leading to death," for which intercessory prayer need not be made. 2 John 7–11 shows what is meant: The unforgivable sin consists of denying the incarnate Christ, who came in the flesh and will come again in the flesh (cf. the twofold time reference in *Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐρχόμενος ἐν σαρκί*, 2 John 7), and thereby of denying the saving truth of the faith; one can no longer have any fellowship with the heretics who do this. Sin is also committed by the followers of the elder, but this sin does not touch upon the confession of faith and is therefore forgiven when the elder's followers confess their sin and repent (cf. 1 John 1:8–10).

3.3.4 The elder's reflections have enormous theological significance. The foundation is the elder's conviction that baptism in the name of Jesus Christ is a new birth by water and Spirit (cf. John 3:5) by which the baptized receive the "anointing," *χρῖσμα*, with the Spirit—a term found only in 1 John 2:20 and 27 in the New Testament. The expression seems to allude to the dedication of the baptized person by the Holy Spirit and to have been spiritualized over against some of the uses of "anointing" language in the Old Testament. (See, for example, LXX and Theodotion at Daniel 9:26a, where instead of the expected term *χριστός* to translate the phrase with מָשִׁיחַ [*māšîaḥ*] as "an *anointed one* will be cut off" [so NRSV], the translators have used *χρῖσμα*, "an anointing," here and *χριστός* later in the passage for נָגִיד, "prince." This perhaps suggests that the dedication of the Messiah or of the temple by *anointing* will be withdrawn from Israel; cf. NETS: "And after seven and seventy and sixty-two weeks, *an anointing* [*χρῖσμα*] will be removed and will not be." Further on Dan. 9:26 in Greek text, see above, 131.) By virtue of baptism believers belong to the kingdom of the Christ and are henceforth separated not only from their own former life, but also from all the doings of the unbelieving world as a whole. The same context also accounts for the statement that Christians bestowed with the Spirit can no longer sin (cf. 1 John 3:9). When they nevertheless did so

and a schism actually arose in the Johannine school between orthodox and heretical Christians, the elder reacted as just described: He uncompromisingly stood up for the truth of the faith embodied in Christ and just as decisively maintained the distinction between the unbelieving world lying in the power of the evil one and the communion of the saints. But he also called his "little children" weighed down with transgressions to repent and confess their sins, trusting that God will not let the repentant fall because the risen Christ continuously and effectively intercedes for them on the basis of his atoning death (cf. the present tenses in 1 John 2:1–2 [and Rom. 8:34]). *The elder has therefore defined the sinlessness of the baptized ones (cf. 1 John 3:9) in terms of the saying about their Christ-enabled perseverance in 1 John 5:18*: Believers born of God do not commit any sin (unto death), because they are protected by "the one who was born of God" (ὁ γεννηθεὶς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, 1 John 5:18) or "the only begotten one, who is himself God" (μονογενὴς θεός, John 1:18), from the grasp of the evil one (Satan) and therefore also from falling away from faith. Because the ultra-Johannine group did not accept the elder's definition of the divine, incarnate, atoning, risen, and interceding Christ, they also did not accept this christologically based definition of being a Christian. Although the heretics retained the axiom of sinlessness from 1 John 3:9, they had altered the confession of faith and therefore, in the opinion of the elder, had knowingly committed the one unforgivable sin (cf. the saying about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit in Mark 3:28–30 par.).

The elder's statements about the sin of Christians lead even closer to Luther's formula about the Christian as "simultaneously righteous and a sinner" (*simul iustus et peccator*) than do the statements in Paul's letters (cf. above, 314–16, §5.4). Under the heading of Luther's understanding of "*Simul justus et peccator*" or "At One and the Same Time a Righteous Man and a Sinner," P. Althaus writes:

> Luther's famous formula . . . describes the Christian as at one and the same time a righteous man and a sinner, *simul justus et peccator* [cf. WA 56, 70, 272]. He is righteous through the forgiveness of sins, that is, through the judgment of God who accepts him as righteous for Christ's sake; and he is a sinner in himself, that is, as he now exists as a human being. "A righteous man and a sinner": each of these is valid in a different dimension. This one is true in terms of God's stern judgment; the other is true in terms of God's great mercy; or—and this is the same for Luther—the one in terms of myself without Christ and the other in terms of Christ who intercedes for me. "In myself outside of Christ, I am a sinner; in Christ outside of myself, I am not a sinner" [WA 38, 205]. This double character remains through all of life. Both are always true of me at one and the same time. (Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther* [1966], 242–43)

The difference between Luther and John the elder consists of the fact that the baptism of adult believers at conversion that John had in view signified a fundamental turnaround in the life of

Christians, and that John (like Paul) insisted on the distinction between the sanctified church and the unbelieving world. Luther knows neither of this fundamental turnaround of life (initiated at a believer's baptism) nor of this idea of the church, and it is correspondingly difficult to ground the *peccator* element of Luther's *simul* in the New Testament (on this problem, see W. Joest, *Gesetz und Freiheit* [1951], 55ff.).

3.4 The statements about love and lovelessness in the Johannine writings confirm the impression that has already registered in our analysis of the Johannine idea of the church (e.g., above, §§2.4, 2.5, 2.7). John advocates a life of faith nurtured in a community of the faithful (*communio sanctorum*) that keeps its distance from the world lying in the power of the evil one. Outside of the missionary task, he does not know of any other Christian obligation to the world. *Therefore Johannine Christianity was (and is) just as elitist as it is world fleeing*.

4 The Sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper). The discussion of baptism and the Lord's Supper in the Johannine writings is still influenced by R. Bultmann's thesis that belief in the sacraments was originally foreign to John's Gospel and that it was only an "ecclesiastical redaction" that "inserted belief in the sacraments into John's Gospel" (*RGG*[3] 3:841). Accordingly, Bultmann and many others viewed (especially) the statements about eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man in John 6:51b–58 and about the blood and water from Jesus's side in John 19:34b–35 as redactional glosses. Two considerations weigh against this view: (1) No known Christian group from the first and second centuries AD was completely disinterested in the sacraments; Bultmann's assumption therefore leads to a thesis about the original (on Bultmann's view, preredactional) form of John's Gospel that is out of touch with history. (2) In questions of the sacraments as with other questions, the Johannine texts do not allow any literary-critical differentiation between tradition and redaction on the basis of vocabulary and style. It should therefore be assumed that the Johannine texts dealing with baptism and the Lord's Supper are a genuine part of the Johannine tradition.

4.1 Concerning the sacraments, the Johannine texts once again raise many questions. *Revelation* suggests that its author valued the sacraments highly. The "seal" (*σφραγίς*) that the members of the end-time people of God bear on their foreheads probably refers to baptism (cf. Rev. 7:3–8 with 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30), and the symbol of the white robes that one can buy from Christ (Rev. 3:18), which are washed and made white in the

blood of the Lamb (7:13–14), belongs in the same context. The celebration of the Lord's Supper, to which the risen one himself invites believers in Revelation 3:20, was also of great importance. It is the place at which the bride, the church, together with the Spirit (of Christ) who is at work in her, cries, "Come, Lord Jesus!" (cf. Rev. 22:17, 20 with the μαραναθά in 1 Cor. 16:22; *Did*. 10:6).

In *1 John* Jesus's own baptism is alluded to by reference to the "water" by which he came (cf. 1 John 5:6, 8). Moreover, in 1 John 2:20 and 27 the term "anointing" (τὸ χρῖσμα) emerges as a metaphor for the baptism of believers and the reception of the Spirit that accompanies it (see above; cf. also 2 Cor. 1:21–22). The language of being "born of God" (ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγεννῆσθαι) also appears to belong to the same baptismal context (cf. 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18). A reference to the Lord's Supper may possibly be found in the mention of the "blood" (αἷμα) by which Christ has come (5:6) and which now testifies for him (cf. 5:6–8 with John 6:53–56).

For the *Fourth Gospel* baptism originates in the βάπτισμα that Jesus's circle practiced before Easter (3:22; 4:1–2). It is equated with being born again of water and Spirit (3:5), but also implies a reference to Jesus's death on the cross (cf. 19:34). Although there is no mention of the institution of the Lord's Supper in the account of Jesus's last supper with his disciples in John 13, Jesus makes it clear in his great revelatory Bread of Life discourse in John 6 that he himself is the bread of life and that true believers gain the provisions for eternal life by eating his flesh and drinking his blood (cf. 6:51–58).

Baptism and the Lord's Supper demonstrably play an important role in the Johannine writings. The only question is what occasioned these writings once again to report about these rites in a characteristically different way from the other early Christian writings.

4.2 The Fourth Gospel assumes that its readers are familiar with the *baptism of Jesus* (by John the Baptist). This is the *kairos* or decisive time at which Jesus was revealed in the Baptist's presence to be the Spirit-baptizer promised by God and permanently endowed with the Holy Spirit (cf. 1:31–34). Jesus's water baptism is closely related to his cross by the fact that in John's view, Jesus Christ "did not come by water only, but by water and by blood" (cf. John 19:34–35 with 1 John 5:6).

Because the manner of Jesus's coming (cf. ὁ ἐλθών, 1 John 5:6) into the world was disputed in the Johannine circle and spiritualized in a docetic fashion, the elder emphasizes in 1 John 5:7–8 that Jesus's coming into the world is attested by three witnesses speaking in agreement (cf. Deut. 17:6): the Spirit-Paraclete (cf. John 15:26), the water, and the blood. In the textual tradition of the Latin-speaking church, 1 John 5:7–8 was expanded to provide a scriptural proof text for the doctrine of the Trinity. This expansion has traditionally been called the *Comma Johanneum* or "Johannine Comma" (from Greek κόμμα, "short clause"). Although the Comma's Greek and Latin wordings are slightly different, its Greek version is printed in the apparatus of the Nestle-Aland 28th edition, translated in the text of the KJV, and printed in the margin of modern versions like the NRSV. The additions to the original text are printed below within brackets (1 John 5:7–8):

> [7]ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες [ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ πατήρ, ὁ λόγος καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἕν εἰσιν. [8]καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ], τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ τὸ αἷμα, καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἕν εἰσιν.

> [7]There are three that testify [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one. [8]And there are three that testify on earth]: the Spirit and the water and the blood, and these three agree. (NRSV margin in brackets)

The added material clearly differentiates between heavenly and earthly witnesses ("in heaven . . . on earth"). The heavenly triad consists of the Father, the Word, and Holy Spirit—"these three are one" (ἕν εἰσιν)—while the earthly triad consists of the Spirit, which descended on Jesus at his baptism, and the water and the blood, which the beloved disciple saw flowing from Jesus's side according to John 19:34–35: These three speak as one (εἰς τὸ ἕν εἰσιν).

4.3 According to John 3:5, *Christian baptism* is a new birth by water and Spirit. In the act of baptism the baptized are anointed with the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 John 2:20, 27), and they wear white baptismal robes as a sign that they have been washed clean and sanctified by the blood of the Lamb (cf. Rev. 7:14; 22:14 with 1 John 1:7). The Johannine tradition therefore binds together baptism, faith, Spirit, and new creation just as closely as the Pauline letters do (cf. above, 385–90, §1). The Gospel of John's understanding of baptism as a new birth or being born again suggests that 1 John's typical language about being "born of God," ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγεννῆσθαι, is to be referred to baptism (cf. 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18). Indeed, where the text of 1 John 5:18 speaks concretely of the individual person who is "born of God," ὁ γεννηθεὶς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, the secondary readings of a few Greek minuscules (e.g., 1852) and the entire Latin tradition speak more abstractly of baptism as ἡ γέννησις τοῦ θεοῦ or *generatio Dei*, a person's "birth from God," hence: "We know that any one born of God does not sin, but [his] *birth from God* preserves him, and the evil one does not touch him" (RSV modified).

According to the Fourth Gospel, Christian baptism is not a sacrament practiced only after Easter. The Fourth Evangelist reports in John 3:22–24 and 4:1–2 that John the Baptist and Jesus worked and baptized together for a while and that Jesus was considerably more successful in this than John. John 4:2 makes this more precise: Jesus himself was not actually performing the baptisms (οὐκ ἐβάπτιζεν [imperfect]) but had delegated this to his disciples (for such delegation, see also Acts 10:48; 1 Cor. 1:14–17). Therefore, for John the real beginnings of Christian baptism lie in the pre-Easter baptismal ministry of the Jesus circle. But the historicity of these reports is disputed. Whereas G. Barth, for example, thinks that they are provided only "to demonstrate the superiority of Jesus's baptismal ministry and therefore of Christian baptism to the baptism of John" (*Die Taufe in frühchristlicher Zeit*, 42), for K. Aland (*Taufe und Kindertaufe* [1971], 10) it is historically completely believable "that even during Jesus's lifetime water baptism for the forgiveness of sins was practiced in the circle of his disciples." Aland considers the statement in John 4:2 about Jesus's not performing the baptisms himself to be a subsequent correction of an earlier tradition about Jesus's baptismal ministry, and he takes the report in Acts 19:1–7 about disciples (of Jesus) who before meeting Paul knew only John's baptism and had not yet heard of the Holy Spirit (imparted by Christian baptism) as an indication that his assumptions are correct. Aland's view is preferable to Barth's because it is difficult to see why a Johannine circle that was in competition with the Baptist's followers would have invented reports that made Jesus himself into a baptismal competitor with the Baptist if in fact Jesus never had this ministry, whereas it is easy to see why the Fourth Evangelist might have edited the earlier reports about a historical baptismal ministry of Jesus and his disciples so that the Baptist would be surpassed.

The Johannine comments about baptism are idiosyncratic but *christologically consistent*: Immediately upon his baptism (with water), Jesus is revealed as the Spirit-baptizer who is filled with the Spirit. His baptismal ministry soon put the Baptist's in the shade. Therefore it is not the baptism of John the Baptist but that bestowed by Jesus that stands at the beginning of the Christian baptismal tradition. Jesus granted his disciples the Holy Spirit on Easter Day (cf. John 20:22), and the baptism they practiced in the name of Christ is the fruit of Jesus's coming by the water of baptism and the blood of the cross—the fruit of his entire existence for others. In and through baptism, those who have been chosen for faith experience the new birth that makes them children of God. For the Johannine circle baptism in the name of Christ therefore has a fundamental importance for the life of every Christian.

4.4 The Johannine statements about the *Lord's Supper* also bear their own distinctive stamp. As one can see in the "Come, Lord Jesus!" of Revelation 22:17 and 20, which alludes to the *maranatha* (cf. 1 Cor. 11:26; 16:22; and *Did*. 10:6), the seer John wrote for addressees who prayed in their eucharistic worship service for the end-time coming of Christ. Revelation 3:20 also alludes to the Lord's Supper: Christ knocks at the door (similarly to the master in Jesus's parable in Luke 12:35–38) and promises

table fellowship to everyone who opens it to him. From this pictorial saying one can conclude that the addressees of Revelation celebrated the Lord's Supper in expectation of the end-time arrival of Christ and with a view to the end-time banquet on Mount Zion that will be prepared by Christ (cf. Isa. 25:6).

While the Lord's Supper is not mentioned in the Johannine letters, it certainly is in the Fourth Gospel. Since in view of his special passion chronology John cannot speak of the institution of the Lord's Supper in the context of Jesus's final meal in John 13, he presents his interpretation of the Lord's Supper in John 6:51–58.

The structure and content of John 13 show that the Johannine report of Jesus's last supper, the foot washing, and the final identification of the betrayer follows the pattern of (Mark 14 and) Luke 22 right down to the order of the scenes (cf. the synopsis in K.-T. Kleinknecht, "Johannes 13," 370–71). Moreover, J. Jeremias (*The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 79–84) has already shown that John 13:10 also points back to a narrative tradition similar to the relevant synoptic passages that understood Jesus's farewell supper as a Passover meal. For example, the participle ὁ λελουμένος ("the one who has bathed") refers to the instruction that the Passover meal must be enjoyed in Levitical purity and that the table guests therefore had to take a ritual bath before the meal (cf. Josephus, *J.W.* 6:425–426 and *m. Pesah.* 8:5, 8; 9:1). Similarly, the identification of the betrayer as the one to whom Jesus would give the morsel dipped into the dish in 13:26 is most easily explained by the custom of dipping bitter herbs and greens into vinegar or condiments and eating them in a preliminary course of the Passover meal. All this suggests that the Fourth Evangelist had before him a report of the farewell Passover meal, but that he modified the (Lukan?) tradition he had received so that he replaced the footwashing (cf. Luke 22:27) for the words of institution and made it central to his narrative.

4.5 It stands out to every reader of Jesus's discourse on bread in John 6:26–58 that 6:51–58 not only forms the climax and goal of this discourse but also carries eucharistic overtones. John 6:51c, "and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh," has its closest parallel in the Lukan-Pauline saying about the bread (Luke 22:19 or 1 Cor. 11:24), except that John speaks of Jesus giving not his "body" (σῶμα) but his "flesh" (σάρξ). The drinking of Jesus's blood (John 6:53) is spoken of in Mark 14:24/Matthew 26:28. The verbs for eating and drinking, ἐσθίειν and πίνειν, which John uses in the aorist in John 6 (φαγεῖν, πιεῖν), are also used in the aorist in Luke 22:15–18 (and in Matthew 26:26–29). When John's usual φαγεῖν, "eat," is strengthened into τρώγειν, "chew," in John 6:54 and 56–57, this has no parallel either in the Synoptics or in Paul and also does not correspond to the LXX version of Psalm 40:10 (MT 41:10; ET 41:9), ὁ ἐσθίων ἄρτους μου, "the one eating my bread." This is quoted in John 13:18

but again reworded with *τρώγειν* as *ὁ τρώγων μου τὸν ἄρτον*, “the one chewing my bread” (Ps. 41:10 also stands behind Mark 14:18). There can therefore be no doubt that John 6:51–58 alludes to the eating and drinking of Christ’s flesh and blood in the Lord’s Supper: Jesus is the living bread that has come down from heaven and offers himself as the eucharistic food. Those who eat his flesh and drink his blood gain a share in eternal life and may be certain that Jesus will raise them on the last day. The clarity with which John 6:53–56 speaks of partaking of Christ’s flesh and blood may serve an antidocetic purpose. When one reads John 6:51–58 as the Johannine words of institution, it becomes clear that Jesus saw the goal of his being sent into the world as the feeding of the (new) people of God with his own flesh and blood. Not with the best will in the world can one speak of a lack of interest in the Lord’s Supper in the Johannine circle.

4.6 The invitation to partake of Jesus’s flesh and blood in the Lord’s Supper must have sounded especially strange to Jewish Christians because consuming blood was considered a sacrilege according to Leviticus 7:26–27 and 17:10 (and *m. Keritot* 5:1). Because of the docetists in his own ranks, the Fourth Evangelist certainly held to the real presence of Jesus in the elements of the Lord’s Supper. However, with his saying of Jesus, “It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life” (6:63), the Evangelist also counters any suspicion that Jesus called people to blood consumption and cannibalism in a coarse, sensual way, as the audience at the Capernaum synagogue assumed when they heard Jesus’s Bread of Life discourse (cf. 6:24–25, 41, 52, 59–61, 66).

When the Fourth Evangelist says in 6:63 that only the Spirit (*πνεῦμα*) gives life and that the flesh (*σάρξ*) as such is useless, in the Johannine context this means that the Spirit imparts understanding of Jesus and his words (cf. 14:26). The mere consumption of Jesus’s flesh (and blood) in the Lord’s Supper is useless unless one recognizes that Jesus’s words are Spirit and life (cf. 5:24; 6:68). Everything depends on the connection between Jesus’s words, the Spirit, and the elements of the Lord’s Supper. This combination enables Jesus’s words to become embodied in the elements of communion and allows the Lord’s Supper to become the spiritual food that sustains the community of disciples along its way.

On the basis of John 6:51–66 one can say that, like other early Christian groups, the Johannine circle viewed the Lord’s Supper as “a sacrament and divine word-sign” (Johannes Brenz). Jesus instituted it in order to impart himself in it as the saving “bread of life” and to bind his table guests to himself. When the Johannine community thinks about the sacrifice of Jesus

during their communal meal celebration accompanied by foot washing, the Bread of Life discourse that culminates in John 6:51–58 is the fitting subject of dinner conversation.

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CHAPTER 39

The Significance of the Tradition of the Johannine School

The similarities of language and content that connect the book of Revelation, the Johannine letters, and the Fourth Gospel show that the tradition of the Johannine school was fed by old Jewish Christian sources. But the "sociolect" in which the letters and the Gospel are written also makes it clear that the school of John the elder wished to occupy a special place in the realm of early Christian tradition. This is not based simply on the fact that the elder outlived all the apostles (cf. John 21:23). According to John 15:15, it also appears that the elder and his pupils understood themselves as Jesus's "friends," to whom the Lord had revealed everything that the Father had told him. They therefore dared to permeate their testimony about this revelation with the same wisdom language in which God the Father and God the Son spoke to one another in accounts such as Matthew 11:25–27/Luke 10:21–22 and John 17:1–26. According to 1 John 1:1–4, John 16:13, and 21:24–25, John wanted to pass on God's grace and truth revealed in Christ just as the Spirit had revealed it to him.

Our preceding chapters on the Johannine school justify the following conclusion: The Johannine testimony revealed by the Spirit-Paraclete, written in the language of the Johannine school and intended for God's children chosen for faith, is pathbreaking for Christology, soteriology, and pneumatology—but it is also esoteric and elitist. Therefore it can be understood as the climax of the formation of the entire New Testament tradition only with qualification: we must not allow the Johannine presentations to prevent us from also taking into account and accepting the message of the Synoptic Gospels, the Pauline Letters, and the Holy Scriptures, which together form a counterbalance to the esoteric element of the teaching of the Johannine circle.

1 In his essay "Die Schriftauslegung des 4. Evangeliums auf dem Hintergrund der urchristlichen Exegese" ("The Scriptural Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel against the Background of Early Christian Exegesis"), M. Hengel has shown that "the interpretation of the Old Testament played a

much greater role in the Johannine school than is usually assumed today" (288). Hengel points out three essential features of the use of Scripture in John's Gospel: it "presupposes a 'salvation-historical' presence of the word of God (i.e., the preexistent Logos) in ancient Israel" (cf., e.g., 12:38–41); it "stands entirely under the sign of the present 'messianic' fulfillment through God's sending of his Son" (cf. 5:39); and it reflects "a tragic yet unavoidable process of separation" from Judaism (cf. 5:45; 10:34–36) (p. 288). Above and beyond direct quotations, John's Gospel is saturated with allusions to the Old Testament, for example, to Isaiah 56:8 in John 11:52 regarding the gathering of the dispersed (*συνάγω*), and to Isaiah 55:11 and Genesis 2:2–3 in John 19:30 regarding the power of God's word to finish or accomplish its work (*τελέω*, *συντελέω*). This Scripture saturation can perhaps be seen even more clearly in Revelation and 1 John, where there are no formal quotations of Scripture as such but where the phrases of Scripture are just as unmistakably used. In Revelation we may compare 1:7, "He is coming with the clouds [*μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν*; cf. Dan. 7:13, *ἐπί*], every eye will see him, even those who pierced him [cf. Zech. 12:10 MT, Aquila, Theodotion], and on his account all the tribes of the earth [*πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς*, Gen. 12:3; cf. Zech. 12:12] will wail [*κόψονται*, Zech. 12:10]," as well as Revelation 2:27, an iron rod and clay pots (cf. Ps. 2:8–9); Revelation 4:8, six-winged creatures crying holy, holy, holy (cf. Isa. 6:3); and Revelation 6:16, people begging the mountains to fall on them (cf. Hos. 10:8). The scriptural references in 1 John are easily grasped, as in 1 John 1:1–2, hearing, declaring, and bearing witness to what was from the beginning (cf. Isa. 43:12–13 LXX; further Isa. 40:21; 41:26); 1 John 1:5, God as light (cf. Ps. 27:1; 36:10 [ET 36:9]; 104:2); 1 John 1:9, God as faithful and just (cf. Deut. 32:4); 1 John 2:27, "you do not need anyone to teach you" (cf. "no longer shall they teach one another," Jer. 31:31–34); and 1 John 3:12, Cain killing Abel (cf. Gen. 4:8; Wis. 10:3). In his dissertation *Die christologische Erfüllung der Schrift im Johannesevangelium: Eine Untersuchung zur johanneischen Hermeneutik anhand der Schriftzitate* (*The Christological Fulfillment of the Scripture in the Gospel of John*), A. Obermann confirmed Hengel's observations about John's use of Scripture and emphasized that "John demonstrates his independence by his exclusively christological understanding of Scripture" (425).

Whereas Revelation still deliberately speaks in an Old Testament style, the Fourth Gospel already evidences a distance from the Holy Scriptures that points forward to the process during which the New Testament became independent. Thus, for example, from John 18:8–9 and 32 it becomes apparent that Jesus's passion fulfills not only the Old Testament Scripture but also Jesus's own prophecies that he would not lose any of the followers the Father had given him (cf. John 6:39; 17:12) and that his death would occur by his being "lifted up" (cf. John 3:14; 12:32, 34), that is, by crucifixion (cf. John 18:31). On the basis of John 20:31 ("these things are written"), A. Obermann has even dared to characterize the Fourth Gospel as "authoritative and coming close to the Scripture in its dignity as Scripture 'itself'" (430). From the perspective of John 21:24–25, one can only agree with him. Further observations help complete the picture: Jesus's "friends" learned from the Paraclete to interpret the Scripture(s) with reference to Jesus and his death (cf. John 2:22; 12:16; 20:9), but they no longer read the Scripture as the salvation-historical word of God that points beyond the church to God's plan for Israel, as did Paul in Romans 9–11. The members of the Johannine community also did not take the opportunity to speak from the Scriptures about the well-being of the creation, but rather saw the whole cosmos as lying under the power of the evil one (cf. 1 John 5:19). Therefore the Johannine circle practiced only a special christological way of dealing with the Scriptures as documents that testify about Christ (cf. John 5:39).

2 The ancient church did not see the Fourth Gospel as an alternative to the Synoptics but rather viewed it from the beginning as the "spiritual Gospel" (*πνευματικὸν εὐαγγέλιον*) that supplemented the other three. In fact, the synoptic testimony about Christ is supplemented and deepened by the Johannine testimony. John's Logos Christology, "I am" sayings, and Christ-imminent eschatology all represent an enormous gain in christological knowledge beyond the synoptic tradition. Without John the church would have experienced even greater difficulty getting past the failure of the early Christian expectation of an imminent end and would have been unable to form a Trinitarian theology. The Johannine teaching about the Paraclete further enhances and consolidates this gain in christological knowledge. At each level of its tradition, John's testimony about Christ categorically opposes modern attempts to counter the New Testament's high Christology with a "Christology from below." This typically begins with the man Jesus of Nazareth and relies on only a few selected synoptic Jesus sayings together with a more or less plausible reconstruction of the "historical Jesus." However, only the faith that views the messianic Son of Man and Son of God from the perspective of the Old Testament and the insight granted by the Holy Spirit is able to comprehend the person, mission, passion, and resurrection of Jesus as a messianic eschatological event of fulfillment. Through this event God opens up salvation and eternal life once for all to Jews and Gentiles.

3 Nevertheless, it cannot be overlooked that the Johannine rereading of the synoptic tradition deals very freely not only with Jesus's words but also with the particulars of his history, so as to develop a picture of Jesus that almost allows the true man Jesus to be absorbed in the true God. The Johannine Christ is God and preaches himself instead of the coming kingdom of God. One can study how rigorously the Fourth Evangelist has redacted the synoptic tradition from the reports of Jesus's temple action (2:14–22), his dialogue with Nicodemus about entering the kingdom by being born again as compared with the synoptic idea of becoming like a little child (cf. John 3:5 with Mark 10:15 par.), his readiness to suffer (12:27–33), his last supper (13:1–17), his sovereign bearing and his exaltation or lifting up on the cross (3:14; 8:28; 12:32; 19:17), and his special passion chronology. In more than a few passages John has historically supplemented the synoptic tradition while also retouching the picture until it fitted the way in which Christ was confessed in the Johannine school. This confession is equivalent to the address that was still directed only to God in the Psalms: "My Lord and my God!" (cf. John 20:28 and Ps. 35 [LXX 34]:23, with inverted word order, *ὁ θεός μου καὶ ὁ κύριός μου*). Despite his having become flesh, the Johannine Christ remains one with the Father (10:30), and the Shema of Deuteronomy 6:4 is not merely expanded christologically in John as it is 1 Corinthians 8:6 and 1 Timothy 2:5–6, but is absorbed by the confession of Christ. Here lay one of the decisive reasons why members of the Johannine circle were excluded from the synagogues and threatened with death.

4 John's picture of Christ has its own dignity. Yet whoever wishes to approach the earthly Jesus and encounter his teaching must return from John to the Synoptic Gospels. The synoptic Jesus also claims to be the Son of God, but he proclaims not himself but the kingdom of God, both in the parables that we no longer find in John and by performing messianic signs about which the Fourth Gospel does report. This Jesus calls more immediately to a discipleship of the cross than the Johannine Christ does; he commands and practices the love of enemies that remains unmentioned in John; and he leaves room for grace where the Johannine tradition speaks of election and reprobation (cf. Matt. 11:28–30; Mark 10:27 par. with John 6:37–39). According to the synoptic presentation, Jesus voluntarily gives his life as a ransom for Israel and the nations, but he does so only after he has brought himself to accept his fate of suffering with trembling and

hesitation. In the Synoptics the cross on Golgotha retains the character of the deepest humiliation, agony, and alienation from God that it had in antiquity. The synoptic theology of the cross is more direct than John's, while the Easter stories balance each other out in the two traditions. When one acknowledges these differences and similarities, one will no longer simply make the Johannine Christ the theological standard for the synoptic Christ, but will set both side by side in order to think through their differences anew.

Luther's opinion about John's superiority to the Synoptics as expressed in his Prefaces to the New Testament from September 1522 can also no longer simply be accepted without hesitation:

> If I had to do without one or the other—either the works or the preaching of Christ—I would rather do without the works than without the preaching. For the works do not help me, but his words give life, as he himself says [John 6:63]. Now John writes very little about the works of Christ, but very much about his preaching, while the other evangelists write much about his works and little about his preaching. Therefore John's Gospel is the one, fine, true, and chief gospel, and is far, far to be preferred over the other three and placed high above them. So, too, the epistles of St. Paul and St. Peter far surpass the other three gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. (*LW* 35:362; WA DB 6:10.20–28)

Luther's train of thought here fails to consider the fact that Jesus's works in the Synoptics are messianic signs that do not deserve to be demoted by comparison to Jesus's words, because they enact the gospel (cf. Luke 7:18–23/Matt. 11:2–6). Writing long before the Enlightenment, Luther also did not yet recognize that the Synoptics report in a historically more accurate fashion than John, thus placing their readers more immediately in the presence of the earthly Jesus whom God sent into the world than the Fourth Evangelist does.

5 A *comparison of John with Paul* would lead us far afield and can therefore only be hinted at here: there are great differences but also astonishing commonalities between these two New Testament authors.

5.1 The *differences* come first into view: whereas behind the letters of Paul stands an apostle of Jesus Christ who did not know Jesus personally and did not think he deserved the title of apostle because he had persecuted God's church (1 Cor. 15:9), behind the Johannine writings stands the only loyal disciple of Jesus (and his pupil, the elder John), through whom the Spirit of truth speaks to the elect children of God. Paul teaches as the Pharisee who was called to be an apostle against all human expectation and who had personally experienced God's justification of the ungodly (cf. Rom. 4:5), whereas the Johannine writings are traced back to the disciple of Jesus who stood closest to his Lord and remained unshakably loyal to him. Paul is the most authoritative letter writer of the New Testament (cf. 2 Cor.

10:10; 2 Pet. 3:15–16), but he did not write a Gospel, whereas John the elder reached for paper and ink only reluctantly (*χάρτης καὶ μέλαν*, 2 John 12; cf. 3 John 13) yet recorded his spiritual insight about the future of the world in Revelation and about Jesus's mission in the Fourth Gospel. Paul was an apostle of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles for Israel's sake and saw himself obligated by his Damascus call to pursue the Gentile mission all the way to Spain before the parousia, whereas John the son of Zebedee was one of the missionaries to the Jews according to Galatians 2:9. (After the members of the school of John the elder that goes back to John the son of Zebedee were expelled from the synagogue, they found themselves at a distance from "the Jews" and likewise committed themselves to the Gentile mission with which the risen Lord had commissioned the apostles; cf. John 10:16; 11:52; 17:20; 20:21–23 with Matthew 28:16–20.)

5.2 In Paul's letters we encounter a highly reflected conceptual theological language but not the almost monotonous sociolect sometimes found in the Johannine letters and the Fourth Gospel. At the center of Pauline teaching stands the establishment of God's saving righteousness in and through Christ, which frees not only Jews and Gentiles but also the nonhuman creation from sin and death. The topic of Paul's letters is the gospel, but also the needs and prospects of the churches he planted. Although Paul occasionally speaks of the day of salvation as something that has already arrived (cf. 2 Cor. 6:2), according to his insight into the Holy Scriptures God's history with humanity can only reach its end after God's people Israel, which is still mostly hardened, comes to share in the salvation God has promised it (cf. Rom. 11:25–32). As Revelation shows, the Johannine school knows full well the apocalyptic horizons in which Paul thought, but these horizons recede so far into the background in the Johannine letters and Gospel that many exegetes no longer believe the Fourth Evangelist is capable of such thinking. For John the decisive benefit of salvation does not lie only in the future but already in the present when a person comes to faith in Jesus Christ (cf. John 3:16–18; 5:24–29).

5.3 Only when one has seen all these differences between John and Paul can one also point out their *commonalities*. Paul knew John the son of Zebedee from the apostolic council. Whether he also met John the elder we do not know. In any case, the book of Revelation is also addressed to churches founded by Paul, and the elder's school in Ephesus certainly knew Pauline doctrinal traditions. Theologically Paul and John show surprising

agreement in three central points: Faith comes only from the word of God; Jesus Christ alone is the Lord and Son of God; and salvation is established by God alone through Christ and granted only to those chosen for faith and deliverance.

5.3.1 Commitment to the *word* is shown in Paul's case by the fact that he himself depends for better or worse on God's gospel about Jesus Christ that was revealed to him (cf. 1 Cor. 9:16; Rom. 1:1–4), that he sees this gospel as God's power to create faith and righteousness (Gal. 3:2; Rom. 1:16–17; 10:16–17), and that Christians according to his teaching stand or fall with their faith in the gospel (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1–5; Rom. 6:17). For John, Christ himself is the word of God (cf. Rev. 19:13; 1 John 1:1; John 1:1–18), faith owes its existence to this word (cf. John 20:29, 31), and the disciples' prosperity or ruin depends on their continuing with and in the word that Jesus is and teaches (cf. 1 John 2:14; John 6:68; 8:31).

5.3.2 Paul and John both advocate an elaborate *high Christology* (cf. 1 Cor. 8:6; Phil. 2:6–11; 1 Tim. 2:5–6 with Rev. 1:17; 22:13; John 1:1–18; 10:30), provide parallel christological sending formulas (cf. John 3:16; 1 John 4:9 with Gal. 4:4–5; Rom. 8:3), speak of an atonement valid once for all that God put into effect by surrendering his beloved Son to death (cf. 2 Cor. 5:18–20; Rom. 3:21–26 with Rev. 1:5–6; 1 John 1:7; 2:1–2; 4:10; John 1:29, 36; 3:16; 12:32; 19:34–35), and attribute great significance to Jesus's bodily resurrection from the dead (cf. 1 Cor. 15:20 with John 14:19; 20:19–29).

5.3.3 The christological commonalities between Paul and John are deepened by the fact that they both see God's love as the decisive motive for his sending Jesus into the world (cf. 1 John 4:7–10; John 3:16 with Rom. 5:8–9; 8:31–39), consider faith as the only way of salvation (cf. Rom. 3:28 with 1 John 5:4; John 3:14–18), see baptism as the event of new birth by water and Spirit (cf. 1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 6:1–14 with Rev. 7:9, 14; 22:14; 1 John 3:9; John 3:5), entrust the church of Jesus Christ with the celebration of the Lord's Supper (cf. 1 Cor. 10:16–17; 11:23–26 with Rev. 3:20 and John 6:51–58, 62–63), and tell members of the church that nothing but unbelief can separate them from the love of God in Jesus Christ (cf. 1 John 5:18 with Rom. 8:34, 38–39).

5.3.4 There are even commonalities between Paul and John in the cosmic dimensions of justification, in the understanding of mission, and in

the expectation of the kingdom of God and of his Christ. According to the Gospel of John, by being sent into the darkened world Jesus has victoriously executed judgment on it. This process of judgment is carried forth after Easter by the proclamation of Jesus's disciples (cf. John 16:8–11). The process reaches its end in the final judgment in which Moses will accuse unbelievers (John 5:45) while Christ will protect believers by his intercession (1 John 2:1–2, 28; 4:17–18), so that they may share in the heavenly Jerusalem in the glory that unites the Father and the Son (cf. Rev. 21:22–23; 1 John 3:2; John 14:2–3; 17:24). Paul, with his strategically planned Gentile mission, also pursues the goal of qualifying the world of the nations for final salvation and the final judgment (cf. 2 Thess. 2:5–7; Rom. 11:25–28; 15:15–29 with Mark 13:10 par.). He sees the three end-time stages of the establishment of God's kingdom through Christ very similarly to the way they are presented in Revelation 20:1–22:5 (cf. 1 Cor. 15:23–26).

There is such unity in theological principles between the schools of Paul and John that one can go back and forth between their writings without needing to switch the foundations of faith. The traditions of the two schools cannot replace each other, but they complement one another so nicely that one can allow them to stand next to each other and appreciate them independently.

6 The Johannine writings form a common school tradition whose theological standing is beyond doubt. But this tradition also passes over a number of problems that the New Testament treats elsewhere in ways helpful for the church. Among these are questions about the social shape of the church and the concrete behavior of Christians in everyday life in the world. In the history of traditions, the writings of the school led by John the elder belong near the end of the formation of the New Testament. Yet this tradition does not climax in the Johannine writings alone, but had already reached previous high points that are indispensable for the church's theological orientation.

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BOOK TWO

The Problem of the Canon and the Center of Scripture

The task of a biblical theology of the New Testament is not exhausted by its analysis of the individual parts of the New Testament tradition, but includes the responsibility of viewing the individual traditions together and working out what they have in common. This will be our task for the next three chapters. However, because biblical exegesis does not claim to represent the whole field of theology but is only one theological discipline among several, the goal of the following chapters cannot be to sketch out an entire biblical dogmatics. Such an undertaking would require not only historically oriented critical exegesis but also intensive history-of-doctrine, hermeneutical, and dogmatic reflection. Because this full-scale reflection cannot be provided simply as an addendum, we shall deal here only with three fundamental problems that are especially important for biblical exegesis.

The first problem is how to evaluate *the canonical process and the two-part Christian canon of Old and New Testaments that resulted from it*. The individual biblical books have been handed down to us only by a canonical process and within the framework of the canon. The place of individual books in this collection must therefore be explained as far as possible.

A second complex of questions is connected to the first: What justification did the ancient church have for finding in the two-part Christian Bible a *κανὼν τῆς πίστεως*—the "rule of faith" or *regula fidei*—which together with the canon constitutes the church's entire authoritative tradition for faith and practice. The issue is not only how to validate the ancient rule or norm of faith, but also the potentially explosive theological problem of how the rule of faith attested in Scripture relates to the doctrine of the justification of the ungodly that the Reformation identified as the central biblical truth about salvation. We must therefore ask not only about the meaning of the canon, but also about the *center of Scripture*.

A third step of reflection must follow. We are by now academically accustomed to thinking—and sometimes even consider it a special spiritual and intellectual achievement to think—that the Bible must be interpreted in scholarly circles with exactly the same methods as other ancient texts. For more than two centuries this approach has brought with it a constant variety of exegetical methods and results. Many of them were and are important. But the history of scholarly exegesis also shows that the modern spirit has often rubbed against the biblical traditions and has whittled them down critically, instead of working with them and exposing clearly the truths to which they testify. It is therefore high time to be reminded that *the Bible itself suggests particular methods of interpretation that correspond to its special character*. Exegesis does well to recall these interpretive methods recommended by the Bible itself and to use them to expand the modern repertoire of methods. The academic value of scriptural interpretation is measured first and last by whether it does justice to its subject matter. Therefore, for a theology that intends its theme to be predetermined by the New Testament (and the Scriptures as a whole), it is essential to ensure that the interpretations do not constantly interrupt the texts, but allow them to have their say.

CHAPTER 40

The Formation of the Two-Part Christian Canon

The New Testament is unthinkable without the Old. For, as H. von Campenhausen has aptly expressed:

> If one had asked any Christian around the year 100 whether the church possessed a holy and authoritative book, he or she would have answered this question in the affirmative, proudly and without hesitation: the church does possess such books, the "Law and the Prophets," the so-called Old Testament of today. For more than a hundred years, up until the middle of the second century with Justin, the Old Testament appeared as the only authoritative and fully sufficient Holy Scripture of the church, to which the Jews who reject Christ appeal to no avail. For the prophecies of this book point to this Lord, Christ; he himself speaks loud and clear through the Old Testament prophets and stands at the convergence point of the entire preceding salvation history, which he brings to its goal. (H. von Campenhausen, "Die Entstehung des Neuen Testaments," 110)

The New Testament came only after the Old Testament, which was equally acknowledged by Jews and by Christians. It was not intended to replace the Old Testament but to supplement it and to testify to the revelation by which the church of Jesus Christ lives—namely, the Christ to whom Scripture points and the faith tradition his apostles founded. The New Testament is a *normative but selective collection* of early Christian writings from the period between AD 30 and 120, meant to be read in the Christian churches. That this is only a selective collection is clear from the historical data, for passages such as 1 Corinthians 5:9, 2 Corinthians 2:4, and Colossians 4:16 mention letters of Paul that we no longer have, while the writings from the so-called apostolic fathers (written between AD 95 and 150) and the New Testament Apocrypha are not included in the New Testament.

1 The *Hebrew Bible* or *Tanakh*—an acronym for the three divisions of Torah, Nevi'im, and Ketuvim (Law, Prophets, Writings; cf. NJPS)—was canonically fixed in a three-stage process that took place among the people of Israel over several centuries: (1) Around 398 BC the "book of the law of Moses" was read publicly by Ezra, and in this way the *Torah* was canonized (cf. Neh. 8:1–10:40). (2) From Sirach 44–49 it is evident that the books of the *Prophets* or *Nevi'im* were considered canonical by the third century BC. These include the Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, 1–2 Samuel, and 1–2 Kings, and the Latter Prophets: Isaiah (cf. Sir. 48:22), Jeremiah (cf. Sir. 49:7; Dan. 9:2), Ezekiel (cf. Sir. 49:8), and the Twelve Prophets considered as one book (the "minor prophets" Hosea through Malachi; cf. Sir. 49:10). (3) In the translator's prologue to the Greek book of Sirach written around 132 BC by the grandson of the original Hebrew-speaking author, the third Hebrew canonical division known as the *Writings* or *Ketuvim* comes into view. This third division is evident in expressions from the prologue such as "the Law and the Prophets and *the others that followed them*" (Sirach Prologue 1–2), "*the other books of our fathers*" (NRSV: *ancestors*, 10), or "*the rest of the books*" (25). However, unlike the Law and the Prophets, the content of this third canonical division was not yet fixed. The Psalms (of David) belonged to this collection from early on, as evidenced by the mention of "the book of Moses [and] the book[s of the pr]ophets, and Davi[d. . . .]" in the *4QHalakhic Letter*[d] (4Q397) frags. 14–21:10 (4QMMT[d]; *DSSSE*801). However, because Philo around AD 40 still speaks just as indefinitely as does the prologue to Sirach about "laws and oracles delivered through the mouth of prophets, and psalms and *the other* (sc. *books*)" (Gk. τὰ ἄλλα [sc. βιβλία], *Contemplative Life* 25 [LCL 9:125]), and because Luke 24:44 still uses the triad "the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms" to designate the entirety of Holy Scripture, the exact extent of the Scriptures can only have been fixed between the first and second Jewish revolts against Rome (AD 66–74, 132–135). It is only in this period that Josephus (*Ag. Ap.* 1.37–41) and *4 Ezra* (NRSV 2 Esdras) 14:18–47 begin to speak more specifically of twenty-two or the more traditional twenty-four Hebrew canonical books.

Josephus's figure of twenty-two canonical texts regarding which "no one has dared to add, to take away, or to alter anything" (*Ag. Ap.* 1.42) probably includes all the texts of the current Hebrew canon of twenty-four books rather than excluding, for example, Ecclesiastes and Esther. But, as J. M. G. Barclay explains, "it was in Josephus' [apologetic] interests to keep the total low [cf. 1.38], and to

place as many books as possible in the prophetic category, since he has declared all of the scriptures to be the product of prophets (1.37)" (Barclay, *Against Apion* [2007], 30n165; vol. 10 in S. Mason, ed., *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary*). In *Against Apion* 1.39–41 Josephus divides his twenty-two books into three categories comprising 5 + 13 + 4 books, with the first eighteen considered to be written by prophets, including Moses, as follows:

> [39]Five of these are the book of Moses, which contain both the laws and the tradition from the birth of humanity up to his death. . . . [40]From the death of Moses until Artaxerxes, king of the Persians after Xerxes, the prophets after Moses wrote the history of what took place in their own times in thirteen books; the remaining four books contain hymns to God and instructions for people on life. [41]From Artaxerxes up to our own time every event has been recorded, but this is not judged worthy of the same trust, since the exact line of the succession of the prophets did not continue. (*Ag. Ap.* 1.39–41, trans. Barclay, 29–30)

Josephus's category of the thirteen books written by prophets after Moses probably comprises the following: Joshua, Judges + Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah + Lamentations, Ezekiel, The Twelve, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah (= Esdras), Daniel, Job, and Esther (Barclay, 30n165; cf. Thackeray, LCL *Josephus* 1:179n*b*). Josephus's final category of "four books of hymns and instruction" includes Psalms and Proverbs, and probably Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes. It is mentioned not because it furthers the author's argument about the prophetic nature of Scripture or the small number of Jewish books "which are rightly trusted" (*τὰ δικαίως πεπιστευμένα*) in contrast to the thousands of contradictory books of the Greeks (*Ag. Ap.* 1.38), but rather because the canonical status of four additional books not by prophets was already recognized (Barclay, 30n166). Because Josephus elsewhere identifies Artaxerxes I (465–424 BC) as the Persian king of the Esther story (*Ant*. 11:184–296) following the LXX (Esther 1:1), for him the period of the prophets extends into the reign of this "Artaxerxes" but does not include his death (cf. *Ant*. 11.296 with Barclay, 30n163). However, in this case Greek Esther, and therefore Josephus, are technically mistaken in that the Hebrew name אֲחַשְׁוֵרוֹשׁ (*ʾăḥašwērôš*, trans. "Ahasuerus"; Gk. Α*σουηρος*) in Esther 1:1ff. (cf. Ezra 4:6) refers not to Artaxerxes, as Josephus thought (*Ant*. 11:184), but to his father Xerxes I (486–465 BC) (cf. E. M. Yamauchi, "Ahasuerus," *ABD* 1:105). Nevertheless, Josephus's point about the production of Israel's prophetic books coming to an end in the Persian period remains.

The rabbinic theory of the canon (cf. *b. B. Bat.* 14b–15a) agrees with Josephus in assuming that all the Hebrew canonical books were written between Moses and Artaxerxes I (465–424 BC) or Ezra (after 432 BC). Documents first composed after Ezra cannot be canonical, since with the death of the postexilic prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, "the Holy Spirit came to an end in Israel" (*t. Sotah* 13:3, trans. J. Neusner, *The Tosefta*, vol. 3 [1979], 201). The book of Sirach, whose Hebrew text originated in the early part of the second century BC, is therefore no longer counted among the Scriptures, although it is cited some seventy times in the Talmud and midrashim (being the only book of the Apocrypha treated this way) and is sometimes even quoted in matters involving the threefold exegetical proof from the Law, Prophets, and Writings (cf. *b. Baba Qamma* 92b, with a quotation of Sir. 13:15). One Jewish book composed after the

original Hebrew text of Sirach, namely, Daniel, which reached its full Hebrew and Aramaic text in the Maccabean period (ca. 164 BC), did make it into the canon. However, it is precisely this book's attribution to a figure of "biblical" (exilic) times that may have helped to promote its acceptance in contrast to Sirach, which was known to be by a latter-day writer (cf. J. J. Collins, *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible* [2004], 581).

Nevertheless, from the Qumran texts one can see that the traditional rabbinic idea of the waning of the spirit in Israel in the supposedly "postbiblical" period after Ezra is for the most part only a theoretical construct. The same goes for the rabbinic theory of the canon as a whole. The further scholarship advances into the textual history and character of the Qumran biblical manuscripts, the clearer the following three findings become: (1) The library of the Essenes of Qumran has been shown to have contained not only all the books of the Masoretic canon with the exception of Esther, but also an astonishing abundance of deuterocanonical writings. (2) There is also an astonishing variation in the wording and content of the biblical books. An example is the *Reworked Pentateuch* (4Q158; 4Q364–367). Here we find "both smaller and greater expansions and reductions of the text as well as textual transpositions" (Lange and Lichtenberger, "Qumran," 47). For example, compared with the original Song of Miriam in Exodus 15:21 ("Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea"), the corresponding lines of the *Reworked Pentateuch* in 4Q365 frags. 6a II + 6c:1–7 consist mainly of additions or expansions that leave little of Miriam's song but recall the immediately preceding Song of Moses in Exodus 15:1–18, with Miriam saying, among other things, "You are great, the savior [. . .], the enemy's hope has died and he is for[gotten . . .], they have died in the copious waters, the enemy [. . .], and extol him who raises up [. . .] . . . [. . .], [who perf]orms majestically" (cf. Lange and Lichtenberger, "Qumran," 47, and *DSSSE* 721). In addition to canonical psalms, the Psalms Scroll 11Q5 also contains Psalm 151, already known from the Septuagint, as well as five more psalms previously preserved only in a Syriac translation (text in *DSSSE* 1172–79; *OTP* 2:609–24). (3) The transition from canonical to deuterocanonical writings was still strikingly fluid in Qumran. A good example is the *Temple Scroll* (11QT = 11Q19–21), which has formal resemblances to Deuteronomy. This document "conflates textual material from the Pentateuch with previously unknown textual material to form a new Torah revealed to Moses on Sinai" (Lange, "Qumran," 51). The collection of apocryphal or noncanonical psalms of David in 4Q380–381 may also be mentioned here. These findings show that long after Ezra, even the already canonized parts of the Hebrew Bible—the Torah and the Prophets—were still being updated, revised, and expanded.

2 The *Septuagint* (LXX) was initially of enormous importance to ancient Judaism. It helped biblical monotheism to become known in the entire Greek-speaking world. The Septuagint's history and development partially overlaps that of the Hebrew Bible and influences it at certain points.

2.1 According to the testimony of the Jewish religious philosopher Aristobulus (frag. 3, *OTP* 2:839) and the *Letter of Aristeas* (*OTP* 2:7–34), the Pentateuch was translated into Greek in the third century BC. This was followed by translations of the Prophets, Psalms, and Daniel in the second

century BC. However, the process of translating the rest of the Writings into Greek lasted until the beginning of the second century AD. Whereas the canon of the Hebrew Bible was as good as closed by the end of the first century AD, this was not true of the Septuagint, and there was also no attempt on the part of the Jews to canonize it. Although the precision of the Greek translation of the Pentateuch by seventy-two Jewish elders is praised as a divine miracle in the *Letter of Aristeas*, later scribes compared the work of the original translators critically with the Hebrew text from early on. For example, the Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever (see DJD 8, by E. Tov) from the last half of the first century BC has been demonstrated to be an actual recension of the Septuagint in the direction of the Hebrew text. According to R. Fuller ("Minor Prophets," 555), "This recension is closely aligned with later Greek versions which are known to be attempts to produce a Greek translation that was close to the Hebrew text" (on these later versions by Aquila et al., see the next section). Moreover, even though it is based on the Septuagint, the recension conforms more closely to a proto-masoretic form of the Hebrew text than it does to other Hebrew texts of that period, some of which corresponded closely to the Septuagint. Whether intentionally proto-masoretic or not, this revision of an existing Greek translation in the direction of the Hebrew is only possible and reasonable if *the Hebrew text had normative priority over the Greek*. Nevertheless, during the first century AD, both the Hebrew and the Greek biblical texts were considered inspired by the Jews and later also by the Christians (cf. the Jewish sources in Str-B IV/1:435–51).

2.2 The Septuagint became the *Christian Bible* because the early Christian mission predominantly used it and the ancient church repeatedly appealed to it for scriptural proofs (cf., e.g., Justin's argument with the Jew Trypho in *Dialogue* 66.1–4 on the basis of the LXX translation of Isa. 7:14 by *παρθένος*, "virgin," instead of some other Greek term closer to the Heb. עַלְמָה [*ʿalmâ*], "young woman"). Motivated in part by this Christian use of the Septuagint, the synagogal Judaism that originally embraced this translation parted with it, then produced independent Jewish Greek versions (recensions) by Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, and finally declared in two of the minor tractates of the Talmud that "Seventy Elders wrote the Torah for king Ptolemy in Greek, and that day was as ominous for Israel as the day on which the golden calf was made, since the Torah could not be

adequately translated” (*Sefer Torah* 62a, §1:8; similarly *Soferim* 35a, §1:7, which mentions only five elders; both texts in Soncino Talmud, ed. I. Epstein, vol. 39, *Minor Tractates*, ed. A. Cohen). However, the Gemara in Babylonian Talmud tractate *Megillah* 8b–9b relates the story of the Greek translation of the Pentateuch for King Ptolemy more positively by claiming that “God prompted each one” of the translators, and it generally affirms the Mishnah proposition that “sacred scrolls may be written in any alphabet [‘language’],” including Greek (*m. Meg.* 1:8, trans. Neusner; cf. further Str.-B IV/1:414).

2.3 The canonization of the Septuagint came about only indirectly because the ancient church declared the Septuagintal books to be canonical together with the twenty-seven New Testament books (see below). In the Western Church the books of the Septuagint—including apocryphal or deuterocanonical works such as Judith, Tobit, 1–2 Maccabees, and the Wisdom of Solomon and Sirach (both attributed to Solomon)—were first listed as belonging to the Christian “canonical Scriptures” (*canonicae scripturae*) in 397 at the Third Council of Carthage (Denzinger, §186), and then Pope Innocent I counted them among the “books received in the canon” (*libri recipiantur in canone*) in his letter of response to Bishop Exuperius of Toulouse on February 20, 405 (Denzinger, §213). The Eastern Church also upheld the Septuagint as Holy Scripture, but it did not formally follow the West’s decision about canonization until the Second Trullan Synod (Quinisext or Fifth-Sixth Council) under Justinian II in Constantinople in 692.

Up until 692 members of the Eastern Church, apparently under Jewish influence, differentiated the twenty-four (or twenty-three, without Esther) books of the Hebrew canon from the additional books of the Septuagint, which they considered merely “instructional materials for minors, the catechumens” (H. P. Rüger, “Das Werden des christlichen Alten Testaments,” 187). A good example of this practice is the famous Thirty-Ninth Festal (Easter) Letter of Athanasius in 367 (see also below, §7.5). Here the books of the Old *and* New Testaments are listed first. (Athanasius counts twenty-two Old Testament books for the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, arriving at this figure by excluding Esther and by counting Jeremiah, Lamentations, and the Greek additions Baruch and the Letter of Jeremiah all as one book.) After praising these canonical biblical books as “the springs of salvation,” Athanasius goes on to speak of “other books besides these, which have not indeed been put in the canon, but have been appointed by the Fathers as reading-matter for those who have just come forward and wish to be instructed in the doctrine of piety: the Wisdom of Solomon, the Wisdom of Sirach, Esther, Judith, Tobias [Tobit], the so-called Teaching (διδαχή [*Didache*]) of the Apostles . . . and the Shepherd [sc. of Hermas],” reinforcing by way of conclusion that “the former are in the canon and the latter serve as reading-matter” (text in Schneemelcher and Wilson, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 1:350).

3 In view of these findings about the history of the canon, one cannot assume historically that the New Testament authors possessed an already closed Hebrew Bible. When the main traditions of the New Testament were being formed and its main books written down, the Hebrew Holy Scriptures and the Septuagint were accepted as Scripture without question by Jews and Christians, but the Hebrew and Greek biblical canons were still open at their margins. *The New Testament books were not set over against a long-since-established and self-contained Hebrew Bible, but they related to a canonically still-open collection of the Holy Scriptures in Hebrew and Greek*. Because the final canonical form of the Hebrew Bible was first reached at the end of the first century AD, the translation of the Septuagintal Scriptures lasted even longer, and the Septuagint achieved canonical status only together with the New Testament Scriptures, *one must speak of a complex but cohesive canonical process from which the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, and the two-part Christian canon of Old and New Testaments derive.* J. Trebolle Barrera clearly adheres to this new view:

> It is not possible to continue speaking . . . of a *closure of the canon* at the synod of Yabneh towards the end of the 1st cent. CE. Some authors tend to suppose that the Hebrew canon of the OT was already virtually formed in the mid-2nd cent. BCE. It cannot be said, however, that this path leads to a satisfactory explanation of the origin of the Christian canon of the OT from its Jewish precursors among the Essenes or among the Jews of the Greek diaspora, which supposed the existence of a canon which was still open or, at least, not completely closed. (*The Jewish Bible and the Christian Bible*, 11–12)

4 Considered in the light of the continuous canonical process sketched above, which extended basically uninterrupted from Ezra into the fourth century AD and involved the Septuagint as well as the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, the alternative theory of a long, decisive epoch of no canon-building activity between the Testaments appears to lead to erroneous results. The so-called “intertestamental” writings that originated in the period from about 200 BC to AD 100—books such as *1 Enoch*, *Joseph and Aseneth*, *Jubilees*, *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum*, *Psalms of Solomon*, *Sibylline Oracles*, *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, *Life of Adam and Eve*, *4 Ezra*, and *2 Baruch*—do influence and accompany the

canonical process, but they do not interrupt it or represent a gap period between the canonizing of the Old Testament and the canonizing of the New Testament.

Only when one underestimates the importance of the Septuagint for ancient Judaism, early Christianity, and the ancient church and furthermore equates the Old Testament with the Hebrew Bible alone can one arrive at the conventional theory of the origin of the two-part Christian canon, as it has been developed especially clearly and decisively by B. S. Childs (*Biblical Theology,* 55–69). According to Childs, the two-part Christian canon originated in the following stages: After the great corpora of the Old Testament tradition had already gone through a centuries-long canonical process, from the fourth century BC onward they were elevated to become the canon of the Hebrew Bible consisting of Torah, Prophets, and Writings. This Bible existed in finished form in the second century BC and was also gradually translated into Greek, although the Hebrew text always had the priority over the Greek, so that the Septuagint that resulted from the translation process did not have the same canonical quality as the Hebrew canon. After a period of almost two hundred years between the Testaments, the formation of the New Testament tradition began afresh in the first century AD on the basis of the Easter events, and then underwent its own canonical process of almost one hundred years. This process was sustained by two impulses: the weightiness of the Christ event and the light that the Holy Scriptures (of the Old Testament) shed on this event when one interprets them christologically. Whereas ancient Judaism rejected the Septuagint and conclusively fixed the canon of the Hebrew Bible after the failure of the two revolts against Rome, the ancient church took up the twofold impulse for the formation of the New Testament tradition and combined the writings of the Hebrew Bible with the twenty-seven books of the New Testament to form the two-part Christian canon. In the East the so-called Apocrypha of the Septuagint were excluded from this canon, whereas they were included in the West. Childs's reference to the canonical process and its importance for scriptural interpretation is correct and noteworthy, but the picture of the process itself that Childs has developed does justice only selectively to the facts about the history of the canon.

5 The relationship between the Old and New Testaments has exercised the church from the beginning. Investigators into this question today must guard against the absolutizing tendency of all hermeneutical schemes that contradict the complexities of the canonical process.

5.1 The New Testament witnesses wish neither to extend nor to replace the Holy Scriptures as they were available in the form of the Hebrew Bible and the Greek Bible. Instead, they assume that the Christ event is an event of messianic fulfillment and that, as such, it can only be properly understood with reference to and with the help of the Holy Scriptures. Because they saw the Christ event as the high point and goal of the revelation of the one God, the references of the early Christians to the Scriptures were tradition-historically and theologically foundational from the very beginning.

5.2 Like the Essenes of Qumran, the New Testament witnesses emphasize the quotation and interpretation of scriptural passages from the

Torah (about eighty quotations), the Prophets (about eighty quotations), and the Psalms (about fifty-five quotations). However, the distribution of the quotations here does not suggest, any more than it does in Qumran, that the rest of the books of the Hebrew Bible were unknown to the bearers of the early Christian tradition.

5.3 Despite their preference for the Torah, the Prophets, and the Psalms, the New Testament witnesses did not hesitate, any more than did the apostolic fathers, to quote books of the Septuagint Apocrypha or the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha as Scripture. The book of Sirach in both Hebrew and Greek has been influential, with quotations or borrowings in at least three passages of early Christian literature. First, it may be noted that in James 1:19, the first two of the three phrases "Be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger" (*ἔστω . . . ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι, βραδὺς εἰς τὸ λαλῆσαι, βραδὺς εἰς ὀργήν*) echo Sirach 5:11, perhaps with closer proximity to the Hebrew manuscripts of Sirach than to the LXX: היה ממהר להאזין ובארך רוח השב פתגם, "Be quick to hear [להאזין = articular inf. *εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι*] but give your answer with a slow spirit" (ms A) or היה נכון בשמועה טובה ובארך ענה תענה נכונה, "be certain to listen well but slow to answer with certainty" (ms C) (trans. M. Abegg); compare LXX, *Γίνου ταχὺς ἐν ἀκροάσει σου καὶ ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ φθέγγου ἀπόκρισιν*, "Be quick in your hearing, and with longsuffering utter a reply" (NETS). Second, in Mark 10:19, while speaking to the rich young man, Jesus lists as one of the commandments *μὴ ἀποστερήσῃς*, "Do not defraud." However, this commandment is not found in any of the Hebrew canonical books of the Septuagint, but rather in Sirach 4:1 according to the LXX (also relevant may be Deut. 24:14, "You shall not unjustly withhold the wages of a poor and needy person"). Third, *Barnabas* 19:2, *ἀγαπήσεις τὸν ποιήσαντά σε*, "You shall love him who made you," is an exact reproduction of Sirach 7:30 according to the LXX, except for the change of the verb from the aorist imperative (Sirach: *ἀγάπησον*, "love him") to the imperatival future used in the Ten Commandments and the Shema (cf. Deut. 6:5).

The pseudepigraphal book of *1 Enoch* is also well represented in early Christianity. Enoch's prophecy from *1 Enoch* 1:9, according to which the Lord "will arrive with ten million of the holy ones in order to execute judgment upon all" (*OTP* 1:14), is quoted as a prophecy in Jude 14–15,

where, however, the number of accompanying angels is on the order of tens of thousands (cf. NRSV, NET margin). There is also a close parallel to *1 Enoch* 91:13, “A house shall be built for the Great King in glory for evermore,” in *Barnabas* 16:6, “God’s temple will be built gloriously in the name of the Lord.”

A particularly difficult source question is posed by 1 Corinthians 2:9. Here Paul uses the standard citation formula καθὼς γέγραπται, “as it is written,” to introduce a biblical-sounding quotation, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him,” before introducing his own commentary. The same material is also reflected in *1 Clement* 34:8, *2 Clement* 11:7, and the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 2:3. Nevertheless, an unambiguous biblical source for this quotation has not been identified, although some modern scholars point to Isaiah 64:3 (ET 64:4). Origen attributed the material to the *Apocalypse of Elijah* (*Commentary on Matthew* 27.9), although the quoted material does not survive in the extant Coptic and Hebrew versions of that work (cf. *OTP* 1:721–53). Another source for 1 Corinthians 2:9 may have been *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah* 11:34, “for these are great things, for you have observed what no one born of flesh has observed.”

Finally, we may note that the Jewish wisdom tradition, which includes both canonical and extracanonical works, undergirds many important New Testament christological texts, such as 1 Corinthians 8:6; the sending formulas in John 3:16, 1 John 4:9, and Galatians 4:4; the hymn in Colossians 1:15–20; and the prologue in John 1:1–18.

The New Testament’s scriptural quotations usually come from the Septuagint. However, they may also go back to a revision of the LXX text, as D.-A. Koch has argued for some of Paul’s quotations of Isaiah (*Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums* [1986], 78), or to the Hebrew text itself, as in Matthew’s quotations of Micah 5:1, 3 (ET 5:2, 4) in Matthew 2:6; of Isaiah 8:23–9:1 (ET 9:1–2) in Matthew 4:15–16; or of Isaiah 42:1–4 and 41:9 in Matthew 12:18–21. An impression of the variety and variability of the New Testament’s Old Testament quotations is given by Hans Hübner in his work *Vetus Testamentum in Novo*, of which two volumes appeared before his death: *Corpus Paulinum* (1997) and *Evangelium secundum Iohannem* (2003). See also G. L. Archer and G. Chirichigno, *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament* (1983).

5.4 The New Testament’s conformity to the Old Testament ultimately reaches the point where its Jewish Christian authors do not simply move in a scriptural world of thought and language, but also speak with the texts of Scripture without citation formulas. This happens especially in Revelation.

Its author speaks constantly in the words of the Old Testament, even to the point of disregarding the rules of Greek grammar; apparently he saw this "biblical Greek" as the language the Spirit wanted to use to communicate to readers. The New Testament's reference to the Old Testament is therefore not exhausted by scriptural quotations and allusions, but extends to the very foundations of the language of faith and leaves its mark on the entire testimony about Christ.

5.5 For the New Testament authors the greatest problem concerning the connection between the two Testaments was not their extent or canonical relationship, but the christological interpretation of God's saving action in and through Jesus Christ with the help of the Scriptures. Hebrews 1:1–2 gives classic expression to this approach: "Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by the Son" (cf. NRSV margin). When the entire sum of God's varied ways of speaking is to be made plain, then the prophets, and with them the Holy Scriptures as a whole, must be referred to God's saving activity in his Son. Such a christological interpretation reads the Holy Scriptures according to the principle, "whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that . . . by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).

5.5.1 The methods of early Christian interpretation of the Old Testament agree for the most part with Jewish exemplars as found in the Qumran commentaries on the prophets, the rabbinic halakah, and the midrashim. Especially pronounced is the New Testament's typological reading of the Holy Scriptures (cf. 1 Cor. 10:11). Like early Judaism, the whole of early Christianity considered the Holy Scriptures inspired (cf. Mark 12:36 par.; John 5:39; 12:38–41; Acts 4:25; 1 Cor. 10:11; 2 Cor. 3:16–17; 2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 3:7–11; 10:15–17; 1 Pet. 1:11; 2 Pet. 1:20–21). The decisive difference over against the Jewish understanding of Scripture lay in the fact that for the New Testament, the Spirit that blows through the Old Testament Scriptures was no longer only the Spirit that communicates himself to Israel and the entire world in the Mosaic didactic tradition, but the Spirit of the Father of Jesus Christ and of the exalted Christ himself. Therefore the early Christian church read the Holy Scriptures with eyes that had been opened for her by the risen Christ and by the Spirit whom he sent (cf. Luke 24:27; John 2:22; 12:16; 14:26), and the words of Scripture were regarded in the church as the living speech of the Father of Jesus Christ (cf.

John 6:44–46; Acts 3:17–26; Rom. 1:1–6; 10:19–21; Heb. 4:7; 1 Pet. 2:6–10; 2 Pet. 1:17).

5.5.2 Justin Martyr's understanding of Scripture illustrates how the doctrine of the Logos based on John 1:1–18 helped the ancient church to achieve a comprehensive view of the Old and New Testaments that was in keeping with the full breadth of early Christianity's interpretive program. For, as M. Elze has written, for the ancient church Christ was no longer only "the future coming Lord or the eucharistically present Lord, but the eternal, preexistent Son of God, who testified about himself throughout the history of his ongoing revelation, from the beginning of the world through his birth, death, and resurrection" ("Häresie und Einheit der Kirche," 404). On this assumption the church fathers could understand the Old Testament Scriptures as testifying to a revelation from and about the preincarnate Logos (λόγος ἄσαρκος) and the New Testament Scriptures as testifying to a revelation from and about the Logos become flesh or the incarnate Logos (λόγος ἔνσαρκος). In the history of revelation, both types of testimony belonged—and still belong—most closely together. (Although these Greek terms are not yet found in Justin nor necessarily used to make this precise point in Origen, Origen does express the basic idea: "By the words of Christ we do not mean those only which he taught . . . when present in the flesh; for also before this Christ was the Word of God in Moses and the prophets," so Origen, *First Principles*, preface, 1; cf. R. Jenson, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2 [1999], 272.)

5.5.3 It is not only the Scriptures that are permeated by the Spirit. The Spirit also expressed himself in Jesus's person and teaching (cf. 2 Cor. 3:17) and in the apostolic testimony (cf. 1 Cor. 2:4; 1 Pet. 1:10–12). The words of Jesus and the teaching of the apostles could therefore be set alongside the Holy Scriptures in the Christian churches. The beginnings of this can already be seen in Paul's letters. The apostle refers to the Scriptures in his church teaching as well as in his letters (cf. only 1 Cor. 15:3–4; Rom. 1:2; 15:4). But in his letters he also establishes the authority of the words of Jesus (cf. 1 Cor. 7:10), receives and passes on tradition going back to Jesus (e.g., 1 Cor. 11:23; cf. Luke's Paul in Acts 20:35), and highlights the importance of the tradition proclaimed by the apostles (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1–11; Rom. 6:17), while also claiming spiritual authority for his own sayings (cf. 1 Cor. 7:40) and asking that his letters be read out loud during the

assemblies of the churches (cf. Col. 4:16). From here it is not far to the two-part Christian canon, whose New Testament part is defined by the Gospels' testimony about Jesus and by the apostolic letters.

6 The *formation and collection of the New Testament literature* can be explained by the needs of the early Christian mission. Fixing the Jesus tradition not only in Aramaic but also in Greek met the needs of mission (cf. Matt. 28:19–20), just as did the creation of easily learned formulas that captured the gospel of Christ and the confession of faith and enabled them to be passed on in baptismal instruction (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3b–5; Rom. 6:17; 10:9–10). But from the beginning the apostolic missionary instruction also included teaching about sanctification, a kind of ethical catechism (cf. 1 Thess. 4:1–11). When the apostles could no longer carry on their instruction in person after they had founded the churches, they sent their coworkers, who instructed the new converts in the apostles' "ways" (cf. 1 Cor. 4:17, concerning Timothy's teaching on behalf of Paul). To this end they also gave their coworkers letters to be read out loud in the churches (cf. Col. 4:16). As James the Lord's brother, Paul, and Peter all suffered martyrdom shortly after one another in the years following AD 62, it became necessary to fix the apostolic tradition in writing. John Mark took the first step by making room in his Gospel for substantial parts of the Petrine teaching tradition, and the Evangelists Luke and Matthew followed. The Pauline tradition was summarized didactically in Ephesians and the Pastoral Letters, and the apostle's letters were furthermore gathered into a collection (cf. 2 Pet. 3:16). Because 1 Peter was also preserved (cf. 2 Pet. 3:1), at the end of the first century we already have a foundation of apostolic letters. At the same time, the pupils of John (the elder) summarized the teaching tradition of the Johannine circle in the Fourth Gospel and also kept the traditions of the book of Revelation from being forgotten. The expectation of the imminent end did not hinder the formation of the New Testament teaching tradition consisting of Gospels and apostolic letters but rather promoted it, just as the same expectation promoted literature in Qumran, all the more so because it still remained a priority for the next generations in the early church to follow the mission and instruction of the returning Lord and his emissaries in every detail and to await the coming day of the Lord faithfully. As the parousia was delayed, the possibilities for mission expanded (cf. Acts 1:6–8), which only increased the need for early Christian traditions. The growing independence of the Christian churches

from the Jewish congregations and the fight against "what is falsely called knowledge" (1 Tim. 6:20) in the churches' own ranks further reinforced the need for and sensitivity to authentic traditions.

This picture is confirmed by a look at how the apostolic fathers and early apologists (e.g., Justin) refer not only to the Old Testament but also to the New Testament. We may begin with *1 Clement*. Written around AD 95–96, this earliest preserved Christian writing outside the New Testament repeatedly cites the Old Testament, but also draws upon the New Testament documents. These include, for example, 1 Corinthians and Romans but also 1 Peter. Compare *1 Clement* 35:5–6: Christians must cast off vices such as unrighteousness, covetousness, malice and deceit, gossip and slander, and hatred of God, because "those who do these things are hateful to God—and not only those who do them, but also those who approve of them" (cf. Rom. 1:29–32); *1 Clement* 37:5–6: "The head is nothing without the feet" (cf. 1 Cor. 12:21); *1 Clement* 47:3: Paul wrote to the Corinthian congregation, which Clement also addresses, "concerning himself and Cephas and Apollos" (cf. 1 Cor. 1:12; 3:6, 22; 4:6) and about the danger of partisanship or divisions; *1 Clement* 49:5: "love hides [Lake: covers] a multitude of sins" (1 Pet. 4:8); "love endures all things" (cf. 1 Cor. 13:4) and also avoids "schism" (cf. 1 Cor. 1:10; 11:18). Moreover, the author depends on Hebrews 1:3–5, 7, and 13 in *1 Clement* 36:2–5, and in 13:2 he appears to know the Gospels of Matthew and Luke (cf. Matt. 5:7; 6:14; 7:1–2; Luke 6:31, 36–38).

In its teaching about the two ways in 1:1–6:3, the *Didache* quotes the Sermon on the Mount (in Matthew) and the Sermon on the Plain (in Luke) as well as the Decalogue, and in 8:2–3 it instructs Christians to pray Matthew's version of the Lord's Prayer three times a day.

Ignatius of Antioch, who suffered martyrdom in Rome around AD 110, wrote seven letters in the collection of apostolic fathers. According to B. M. Metzger, Ignatius "certainly knew a collection of Paul's Epistles, including (in the order of frequency of his use of them) 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, Romans, Galatians, Philippians, Colossians, and 1 Thessalonians. It is probable that he knew the Gospels according to Matthew and John, and perhaps also Luke" (*The Canon of the New Testament*, 47).

The *Epistle of Barnabas* cites frequently from the Psalms and Isaiah and also other parts of the Old Testament. However, *Barnabas* 4:14, 5:9, and 7:3 refer to passages from the Gospel of Matthew (22:14; 9:13; 27:34), and in 2:6 the will of God revealed by Jesus is called *ὁ καινὸς νόμος τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἄνευ ζυγοῦ ἀνάγκης ὤν*, "the new law of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is without the yoke of compulsion," which may be a play on the "easy yoke" of Matthew 11:29–30.

In *2 Clement* we find next to frequent references to the Old Testament free citations of unknown words of Jesus (e.g., 8:5: "If you did not guard something small, who will give you something great?" [cf. Luke 16:10–12]; also 4:5; 13:2) as well as straight or mixed citations from Matthew and Luke and occasionally Mark (cf. *2 Clem*. 2:4 [Matt. 9:13/Mark 2:17]; 5:2–4 [Luke 10:3; Matt. 10:16; Luke 2:4–5]; 6:1 [Luke 16:13]; 6:2 [Matt. 16:26]; 7:6 [Mark 9:48 = Isa. 66:24]; 9:11 [Matt. 12:50/Mark 3:35/Luke 8:21]). But *2 Clement* also refers to 1 Corinthians and Ephesians (cf. 11:7 [1 Cor. 2:9]; 14:2, the church as the body of Christ [cf. Eph. 5:23]).

Around AD 150 Justin reports that not only the Scriptures of the prophets but also the Gospels were regularly read in Sunday worship services. In his *1 Apology* 67.3, he writes: "And on the day called Sunday (*τῇ τοῦ ἡλίου λεγομένῃ ἡμέρᾳ*), all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles [i.e., the Gospels] or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray" (*ANF* 1:186).

In sum, next to the Holy Scriptures (of the Old Testament), the Gospels and Letters, especially those of Paul, belong to the core of the emerging Christian Bible.

7 From the beginning of the second century AD the small Christian minority churches felt threatened from several sides—from inner-Christian heresies, from synagogal Judaism, which still had considerable influence in certain regions, and from the Roman authorities, who kept a careful eye on this Christian superstition from the East. This pressure from without and the need for teaching within accelerated the formation of the two-part Christian Bible.

7.1 The ancient church's commitment to the Septuagint is explained not only by the traditional role of the Holy Scriptures in teaching and liturgy, but also by the following circumstances: Christians in the second century were increasingly faced with a Judaism opposed to heresy and apostasy. In the course of this debate, Judaism distanced itself not only from the Septuagint but also from the corpus of Jewish apocalyptic writings, manifested in surprising variety in the library of Qumran but also in *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, and concentrated on the interpretation of the Hebrew biblical canon. The Christians could and would not follow in this direction. But neither could they accept the devaluation of the biblical primeval history (Gen. 1–11) that had become common among Christian gnostics in the second century. Still less were they prepared to follow the gnostics in seeing the sovereign God of creation as a lesser deity who had merely made the world (demiurge) and consigned people to creation's vicious cycle to keep them from a saving knowledge of the transcendent origins of existence. Moreover, from the middle of the second century onward the Christians saw themselves threatened by Marcion, a shipowner from Asia Minor who had been expelled from the Roman church, and by the separate church he founded in AD 144. Marcion abolished the use of the Old Testament in the congregations under his control and gave his followers his own Paulinistic scriptural canon. This consisted of an anti-Jewish edition of the Gospel of Luke and ten similarly reworked letters of Paul. In response, the "orthodox" congregations had to reconsider their position on the Old Testament and on the New Testament books already in use.

7.2 Over against Marcion (and the gnostics), those churches that held to the apostolic teaching tradition also continued to hold on to the *Septuagint as the (ancestral) Bible of faithful Christians*. They also rejected the idea that the Gospel of Luke and the letters of Paul were the only New Testament writings worthy to be included among the Holy Scriptures and read in the churches. Therefore Tatian's attempt to counter Marcion's canon

with his own Gospel harmony (the Diatessaron) and his stylistically improved and reworked edition of Paul's letters were also not successful (cf. von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible*, 179). The tradition-conscious churches continued to read the Gospels of Mark, Matthew, and John. Moreover, the respect for the work and teaching of all the apostles communicated in the book of Acts motivated the churches to include the Catholic Letters next to the Pauline Letters.

7.3 Collecting the authoritative New Testament writings was also necessary because in the second century a large number of secondary gospels and new Christian apocalypses and apostolic letters had begun to circulate that were not equal in value to the authentic tradition (cf. the documents in Schneemelcher and Wilson, *New Testament Apocrypha*, and the tables in J. Trebolle Barrera, *The Jewish Bible and the Christian Bible*, 246ff.). Moreover, from the middle of the second century the eschatological enthusiasm of the Christian prophet Montanus began to spread, first in the East and later in the West. He claimed to be the Gospel of John's promised Paraclete in person and combined the proclamation of the world's near end with a rigorous ethic. The church bishops and regional metropolitans therefore faced the difficult task of simultaneously stemming the influence of Marcionism and Montanism, selecting from the multitude of early Christian writings those suited to be read in the churches, and promoting their use. Even though they did not yet have the worldly power that they would later have in the post-Constantinian church, the bishops solved this problem successfully and with outstanding results regarding canonical content, although this also took a very long time. *The only Scriptures acknowledged as "canonical," that is, as suitable for reading in the churches, were those that could be traced back tradition-historically to the apostles or their direct pupils and corresponded in content to the norm of faith* (regula fidei) *that all the orthodox churches followed.*

How this gradual stepwise canonical selection principle functioned can be seen in the oldest canon catalogue that we have, the *Canon Muratori* or *Muratonian Canon*. Named after its discoverer L. A. Muratori, the canon is preserved in an eighth-century manuscript written in "barbarous" Latin (which makes interpretation difficult), first published in 1740. It is probably a translation of a Greek original dating from around AD 200 (see Schneemelcher and Wilson, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 1:27–29, text 34–36). The canon is a Scripture catalogue of the Western Church and documents only an in-between stage in the history of the canon. The following documents meet the criterion of apostolicity and agreement with the universally acknowledged rule of faith without question: the four Gospels (Matthew and Mark must be inferred from the canon's now-missing beginning, based on the canon's designation of Luke as the third Evangelist), Luke's Acts of the Apostles, and thirteen letters of Paul

listed in the following order: 1–2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, 1–2 Thessalonians, Romans, Philemon, Titus, 1–2 Timothy (lines 50–60). The Letter to the Romans is especially important, because here Paul "explains that Christ is the rule of the scriptures and moreover their principle" (lines 44–45). Also acknowledged are the Letter of Jude and two letters of John, the Revelation of John, and the Wisdom of Solomon, which was apparently used in catechetical instruction. The mention of the *Apocalypse of Peter* is followed by the comment, "which some of our people do not want to have read in the Church" (lines 72–73). The recommendation about the next book distinguishes private from public reading: the *Shepherd of Hermas*, written by Hermas "quite lately in our time in the city of Rome," is recommended for private reading by Christians, "but it cannot be read publicly in the church to the other people either among the prophets, whose number is settled, or among the apostles to the end of time" (lines 73–80). By contrast, the letters to the Laodiceans and to the Alexandrians, "forged in Paul's name for the sect of Marcion," are entirely rejected in the catholic church, "for it will not do to mix gall with honey" (lines 63–67). The fragmentary concluding lines of the canon contain similar critical references to the writings of the heretics Arsinous, Valentinus, Mitiades or Miltiades, and Basilides, the founder of the Cataphrygians (lines 81–85).

7.4 According to B. M. Metzger, "These three criteria (orthodoxy, apostolicity, and consensus among the churches) for ascertaining which books should be regarded as authoritative for the church came to be generally adopted during the course of the second century and were never modified thereafter" (*The Canon of the New Testament*, 254). When one compares the canon of Origen preserved by Eusebius (*Historia ecclesiastica* 6.25.3–14), the canon of Eusebius himself (*Historia ecclesiastica* 3.25.1–7, for which Metzger provides a fresh translation, 309–10), and later canon lists, it becomes clear that the ancient church did indeed use such criteria to distinguish three main groups of New Testament and other early Christian writings. Nevertheless, Metzger also notes that Eusebius's discussion is not very "tidy" and that "closer analysis leaves one perplexed" (204; cf. 201–7).

Eusebius's three most important categories to describe the status of the books that belong to the New Testament are first the acknowledged or "recognized" books, the ὁμολογούμενα (*homologoumena*, *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.25.3); then the disputed books, which Origen calls the ἀμφιβαλλόμενα or "doubted" books (*amphiballomena*, cf. ἀμφιβάλλεται, *Historia ecclesiastica* 6.25.8) and Eusebius calls the ἀντιλεγόμενα (*antilegomena*), that is, the "disputed" books (3.25.3); and finally Eusebius's category of the νόθα (*notha*), the illegitimate or "spurious" books (3.25.4, trans. Metzger), also sometimes translated as "not genuine" (LCL) or "rejected" (*NPNF*[2] 1:156). Despite the grave sound of this third term, these books do not necessarily contradict Christian orthodoxy (see below); Revelation is placed either here or with the *homologoumena*. However, a fourth class of writings do not qualify even as spurious; Eusebius calls them the "fictions" or "forgeries of heretics" (αἱρετικῶν ἀνδρῶν ἀναπλάσματα) which are to be cast aside "as altogether absurd and impious" (ὡς ἄτοπα πάντη καὶ δυσσεβῆ, 3.25.7). Metzger understands Eusebius as acting here in the dual role of both historian and churchman, which creates complex categories: "Eusebius classifies the books first in relation to canonicity, dividing them into the canonical and the uncanonical; and secondly, in relation to their

character, dividing them into the orthodox and heterodox. The orthodox books embrace the *homolegoumena* and the *antilegomena*, which are canonical, and the *notha*, which are uncanonical. The heterodox books, Eusebius says, are not and never have been accepted as of use or authority" (Metzger, 204–5).

From this analysis it is possible to summarize Eusebius's categories for the New Testament and other early Christian writings (cf. Metzger, 205):

A. ORTHODOX BOOKS	**1. Canonical books**	
	a. Recognized books *(homologoumena)*	Four Gospels, Acts, Pauline letters (probably including Hebrews, though not explicitly), 1 Peter, 1 John; perhaps **Revelation**
	b. Disputed books (*antilegomena*)	James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2–3 John
	2. Uncanonical books	
	a. Spurious books *(notha)*	*Acts of Paul*, *Shepherd* (of Hermas), *Apocalypse of Peter*, *Epistle of Barnabas*, *Teachings of the Apostles* (*Didache*), *Gospel according to the Hebrews*; perhaps **Revelation**
B. UNORTHODOX BOOKS	b. "Forgeries of heretics"	Gospels of Peter, of Thomas, of Matthias; Acts of Andrew and John and the other apostles

Metzger concludes that Eusebius is attempting to give an accurate statement of the general opinion of the orthodox church of his day regarding the number and titles of its sacred Scriptures. Therefore his lack of consistency, as when he groups together the disputed and spurious by classifying all of them as "disputed books" or *antilegomena* (3.25.6), may be evidence of his honesty and a desire to avoid an overly neat classification, which increases the historical value of his work (p. 206).

In the East the Revelation of John was especially counted among the *antilegomena* or disputed books because it appeared to promote the enthusiastic spirit of the Montanist sect; Revelation was less disputed in the West. Here the criticism was directed particularly against the Letter to the Hebrews, again in connection with Montanism. The denial in Hebrews 6:6–8 of the possibility that a lapsed believer could be “restored again to repentance” and thus to full church membership after grave sin or apostasy made the entire book suspect because it seemed to agree with the strict moralism of the Montanists, as illustrated, for example, by Tertullian (cf. his *Treatises on Penance: On Penitence and On Purity*, trans. W. P. Le Saint, ACW 28 [1959]). Nevertheless, customary usage and exchange between the churches of Hebrews and Revelation finally caused both of these books to be accepted into the New Testament.

7.5 In the Eastern Church the efforts to form the two-part Christian canon reached a certain conclusion in Athanasius’s *Thirty-Ninth Festal Letter*, written on the occasion of Easter, AD 367 (see also above, §2.3). Athanasius wrote the letter as bishop of Alexandria. This was therefore not a binding enactment of church law but only a bishop’s pastoral letter in which Athanasius sought to clarify for the churches under his oversight the Old and New Testament Scriptures that could be read in worship services without reservation. Yet despite this letter, the controversy about the status of Revelation in the New Testament canon lasted in the Eastern Church until the tenth or eleventh century.

Athanasius names twenty-two Old Testament books enumerated as follows: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1–4 Kingdoms counted as two books (1–2 Samuel and 1–2 Kings), 1–2 Chronicles counted as one, LXX 1–2 Esdras counted as one (LXX 1 Esdras = 1 Esdras in NRSV [3 Esdras in Vulgate] + LXX 2 Esdras = Ezra-Nehemiah), Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Job, the Twelve (Minor) Prophets counted as one book, Isaiah, Jeremiah (with Baruch, Lamentations, and the Letter of Jeremiah, all counted as one), Ezekiel, and Daniel. Although Athanasius excludes Esther, he includes LXX 1 Esdras = Vulgate 3 Esdras, which is in an appendix to the Vulgate and therefore not part of the Roman Catholic canon (for the text of Athanasius’s list, see W. A. Jurgens, *Faith of the Early Fathers*, vol. 1 [1970], 341–42). Athanasius also names twenty-seven New Testament books: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, seven Catholic Letters (James, 1–2 Peter, 1–3 John, Jude), fourteen Pauline letters (Romans, 1–2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1–2 Thessalonians, Hebrews, 1–2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon), and Revelation. Athanasius refers to these Old and New Testament books as the “fountains of salvation, that they who thirst may be satisfied with the living words they contain. In these alone the teaching of godliness is proclaimed. Let no one add to these; let nothing be taken away from them” (trans. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, 212; cf. 312–13). As we have already seen (§2.3), alongside these “canonical” writings Athanasius also allows other books to be read by “those who wish to be instructed in the doctrine of piety,” namely, the Wisdom of

Solomon, Sirach, Esther, Judith, Tobit, the *Didache*, and the *Shepherd of Hermas*. However, he warns against what he calls the "apocrypha," by which he means not the Old Testament Apocrypha, that is, the Roman Catholic deuterocanonical books (several of which he has just recommended), but the Pseudepigrapha, which he describes as "a fabrication of heretics . . . to deceive the guileless" (trans. Schneemelcher and Wilson, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 1:50).

7.6 In the West the Third Council of Carthage (AD 397) names in Canon 24 the canonical books of the Old Testament according to the Septuagint or Old Latin tradition. This includes "five books of Solomon," that is, the Wisdom of Solomon and Sirach (together with Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs), plus Tobit, Esther (excluded by Athanasius), Judith, 1–2 Maccabees, and both 1 Esdras and 2 Esdras (Denzinger, §186). The book of 2 Esdras (LXX numbering) is equivalent to canonical Ezra-Nehemiah, but LXX 1 Esdras, a paraphrase of Ezra and parts of Nehemiah and 2 Chronicles, is not included in the current Roman Catholic canon (see below, §7.7). Canon 24 of Carthage also names the twenty-seven New Testament books, including Hebrews and Revelation. Eight years later on February 20, 405, Pope Innocent I writes a letter of response to Bishop Exuperius of Toulouse in which he lists the books of the Old Testament (once again according to the Septuagint or Old Latin tradition, including Esther and two books of Esdras) and the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. In conclusion the pope advises the bishop, "Others, however, which were written . . . under the name of Matthias [cf. Acts 1:23, 26] or of James the Less, or under the name of Peter and John [or which were written . . . under the name of Andrew], or under the name of Thomas, and if there are any others, you know that they ought not only to be repudiated, but also condemned" (Denzinger, §213). But this papal document is still not a decree of church law. It no more ended the debate about Hebrews in the West than the Easter Letter of Athanasius ended the debate about Revelation in the East.

7.7 An official church decree about the canon did not come about until the sixteenth century at the Council of Trent, when the Roman Catholic Church definitively limited the canon to the scope of the books in the Vulgate, including what are now known as the Old Testament deuterocanonical books, but not including the books in the Vulgate appendix (see also below, §7.10). Hence, over against the canons of Athanasius and the Third Council of Carthage, Trent excluded LXX 1 Esdras (= 3 Esdras in Vulgate appendix, 1 Esdras in NRSV), which is

mainly a paraphrase of Ezra and parts of Nehemiah and 2 Chronicles, and renumbered canonical Ezra-Nehemiah (2 Esdras in LXX) as 1–2 Esdras, now sometimes spelled as “Ezra” in modern translations of Trent: “the first <book> of Ezra, the second <book> of Ezra called Nehemiah” (Denzinger, §1502). The council also limited the Psalter to 150 psalms, excluding LXX Psalm 151 (see below). The fourth session of the Council of Trent laid down the following authoritative statement of church law about the canon in the “Decree on the Reception of the Sacred Books and Traditions” of April 8, 1546: “Following, then, the example of the orthodox Fathers, it [sc. the Council] receives and venerates with the same sense of loyalty and reverence (*pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia suscipit et veneratur*) all the books of the Old and New Testament—for the one God is the author of both—together with all the traditions concerning faith and practice, as coming from the mouth of Christ or being inspired by the Holy Spirit and preserved in continuous succession in the Catholic Church” (Denzinger, §1501).

Then comes a list of the Old and New Testament books, followed by a conclusion that states: “If anyone does not accept all these books in their entirety, with all their parts, as they are being read in the Catholic Church and are contained in the ancient Latin Vulgate editions, as sacred and canonical . . . , let him be anathema” (Denzinger, §1504).

7.8 Lutheran Protestantism never reached a decision about the canon similar to that of the Council of Trent. The twenty-seven books of the New Testament retained their validity. However, Luther reordered these books, presenting the first twenty-three with numbers (concluding with the epistles of Peter and John), but leaving his final four—Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation—unnumbered at the end of the New Testament, thus according them lesser value. In the Old Testament Luther followed the instinct of the humanistic scholarship of his time by going back prior to the Vulgate and Septuagint to the Hebrew Bible, and then differentiating these canonical Old Testament books from the books of the Catholic (Vulgate) Apocrypha (Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Tobit, Sirach, Baruch, 1–2 Maccabees, Additions to Esther, Additions to Daniel). Luther only included the Apocrypha alongside the Old Testament for the reason stated in the title of the Aprocrypha section in his 1534 Bible: “The Apocrypha. That is, Books which are not to be esteemed like the Holy Scriptures, and yet which are useful and good to read.” In English we may compare the title of the Apocrypha in the 1535 Coverdale Bible, which does not explicitly speak of

the usefulness of these books: “APOCRYPHA: The books and treatises which among the Fathers of old are not reckoned to be of like authority with the other books of the Bible, neither are they found in the Canon of the Hebrew.” (However, it should be noted that the English Protestant Apocrypha contains three books not found in the Catholic and Lutheran collections; see below, §7.10, on the Eastern Orthodox canon.) Lutheranism adopted Luther’s judgments concerning the Hebrew and Septuagintal canons, which are not unquestionable from the perspective of the history of the canon, and therefore has lived since the sixteenth century with a two-part canon that is closed not from a church law or dogmatic perspective, but only from a practical perspective. (Further on these developments, see J. H. Hayes, “Historical Criticism of the Old Testament Canon,” in *Hebrew Bible, Old Testament*, ed. M. Sæbø, vol. 2 [2008], 985–1005, esp. 989–90.)

7.9 In Reformed Protestantism scholars did not follow Luther’s evaluation of the New Testament books as expressed by his reordering of them; in editing the Zurich Bible, they instead placed Hebrews and James in their traditional position at the beginning of the Catholic Letters and Jude at the end with 1–2 Peter and 1–3 John in between (as in English Bibles), concluding the New Testament canon with Revelation. But eventually Reformed theologians went beyond Luther in their approach to the Old Testament. The Zurich Confession of 1545 initially had a similar judgment of the Septuagint Apocrypha to Luther’s:

> However, those books beyond the ones listed above [sc. the books of the Hebrew canon, just listed], such as the books of Tobit, Judith, etc., we do not place alongside the aforementioned books, but neither do we for that reason reject them or shove them aside. For they have been read in the church from ancient times, and even today they bear fruit and are useful in the churches when rightly read. But where they are not considered to agree in all points with the aforementioned books, they should be judged according to the former. (Original Swiss German in E. F. K. Müller, *Die Bekenntnisschriften der reformierten Kirche* [1903], 155, lines 13–18, folio 45[r] in original, Heinrich Bullinger, *Warhaffte Bekanntnuss der Dieneren der Kirchen zuo Zürych* [1545]; trans. Amy Nelson Burnett)

However, in the third and fourth articles of the *Confessio Gallicana* or French Confession of Faith of 1559, for which Calvin was partly responsible, it was decided that only the writings of the Hebrew Bible (and the twenty-seven books of the New Testament) were authoritative for Christian doctrine, providing "the sure rule of our faith" (text in P. Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, vol. 3 [1931^{6}], 360–61). About a century later, in English Reformed theology (Puritanism), a parallel may be found in the 1646 Westminster Confession of Faith: "The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of the Scripture, and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of, than other human writings" (§I.3). Therefore, insofar as the Reformed church can be viewed as a unity, it has lived since the latter half of the sixteenth century—similarly to the Roman Catholic Church—with a canon of the Old and New Testaments which is closed in principle.

The differences between the classic Lutheran and Reformed positions on the Apocrypha discussed in this and the preceding section are still visible in English Bible publishing today. Hence Crossway Books (Good News Publishers), known for its theologically conservative Reformed booklist, is the copyright holder of the English Standard Version (2001) and publishes the popular *ESV Study Bible* (2007) covering the sixty-six canonical books. However, *The English Standard Version Bible: Containing the Old and New Testaments with Apocrypha* was originally published by Oxford University Press, New York (2009) under an agreement with Crossway, with Oxford holding the copyright to the Apocrypha (currently out of print). For confessional Lutherans, Concordia Publishing House of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod has a parallel to the *ESV Study Bible* in *The Lutheran Study Bible: English Standard Version* (ed. E. A. Engelbrecht, 2009), with notes by scholars from twelve Lutheran bodies. In addition, Concordia also publishes an annotated Apocrypha that explicitly follows Luther's recommendation of these books as profitable reading, in contrast to the later Reformed approach: *The Apocrypha: The Lutheran Edition with Notes* (ed. E. A. Engelbrecht, 2012), again based on the ESV. Significantly, this volume's Reading Guide begins: "A life goal for every mature Christian should be to read the entire Holy Bible *and the Apocrypha*" (xxviii, italics added; cf. xxiii, xxxix–xli)—obviously not a recommendation one would expect to see addressed to laypeople in a conservative Reformed context.

7.10 The Bibles of Eastern Orthodoxy—that is, the Greek and the Slavonic (Russian Orthodox) Bibles—include several books in their Old Testament canon that go beyond the limits of both the Roman Catholic deuteroncanon and the slightly larger English Protestant Apocrypha of three additional books. In the United States this has led to the formation of a "Common Bible" that contains all the books in the Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Old Testament canons, although the boundaries of the Orthodox canon are not officially fixed. In this section (original to the English

edition), several basic but little-known facts about the contents and languages of Bibles approved for Orthodox use are explained, concluding with vernacular versions in Russian and Modern Greek as well as two English Bibles specially edited for the Orthodox faithful.

Many non-Orthodox readers first encounter the longer Orthodox list of non-Hebrew books of the Bible, beyond those in the Roman Catholic canon, through the expanded Apocrypha of the NRSV under the editorship of B. M. Metzger. After the books of the Hebrew Scriptures, the NRSV table of contents for the apocryphal/deuterocanonical books begins with a section (a) covering the non-Hebrew biblical books acknowledged by both Catholics and Eastern Orthodox (i.e., "Books and Additions to Esther and Daniel that are in the Roman Catholic, Greek, and Slavonic Bibles"). There follow three more categories for a total of six works that have historically been included in Orthodox Bibles. All these books may be found in translation with annotations in J. H. Charlesworth's *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*:

(b) Books in the Greek and Slavonic Bibles; not in the Roman Catholic Canon

1 Esdras (= 2 Esdras in Slavonic = 3 Esdras in Appendix to Vulgate)

Prayer of Manasseh (in Appendix to Vulgate)

Psalm 151, following Psalm 150 in the Greek Bible

3 Maccabees

(c) In the Slavonic Bible and in the Latin Vulgate Appendix

2 Esdras (= 3 Esdras in Slavonic = 4 Esdras in Vulgate Appendix)

(Note: In the Latin Vulgate, Ezra-Nehemiah = 1 and 2 Esdras)

(d) In an Appendix to the Greek Bible

4 Maccabees

The above list of the "Orthodox" books should not be taken to imply that these books are found only in Orthodox Bibles, or that the Apocrypha sections of English Protestant Bibles are identical in scope with the Catholic deuterocanonical books. 1 and 2 Esdras, found in Metzger's lists b and c, were included as 3 and 4 Esdras in the first complete printing of the English Bible, the Coverdale Bible (1535), and the Prayer of Manasseh was added in the Matthew Bible of John Rogers (1537), since all three are in the Vulgate appendix. They continued to appear in all Protestant Bibles of the period: Great Bible, Geneva, Bishops, and King James (see also the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion [1571],

§VI). By contrast, the same three books have always been excluded from English Roman Catholic Bibles, beginning with the Douay-Rheims version of 1582–1610.

The longer canon list that includes in English all the books that have appeared in certain historically important Orthodox Bibles was first presented in a special study edition of the RSV, *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*, edited by H. G. May and B. M. Metzger, which has a separate title page for the Apocrypha section, edited by Metzger alone: "The Apocrypha of the Old Testament: Revised Standard Version. Expanded Edition Containing the Third and Fourth Books of the Maccabees and Psalm 151" (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977[2]). At the time of its publication, B. M. Metzger presented a copy of this RSV with expanded Apocrypha to Dimitrios I, archbishop of Constantinople and Orthodox Ecumenical patriarch, who acknowledged the Bible as one that could be read by members of Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestant churches. Metzger describes this as "the triumph of ecumenical concern over more limited sectarian interests" (B. M. Metzger, *The Bible in Translation: Ancient and English Versions* [2001], 122).

The scope of the Oxford expanded RSV carried over to the NRSV. The result is that all subsequent new translations of the Apocrypha have been obliged to include six books that are outside both the Protestant and Catholic canons. See the *Holy Bible: Contemporary English Version with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books* (New York: American Bible Society, 1999); *The English Standard Version Bible: Containing the Old and New Testaments with Apocrypha* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); and the *Common English Bible* (Nashville: Common English Bible, 2011). The trend is currently limited to the English language and American publishers.

Nevertheless, Bibles in actual use by the Eastern Orthodox do not always follow Metzger's maximal table of contents. The book from Metzger's list (b) most likely to be lacking in an Orthodox Bible is the Prayer of Manasseh, whose Greek text is available as Ode 12 in A. Rahlfs's *Septuaginta*. This book is indeed found in at least two classic Church Slavonic Bibles, the Ostroh Bible (1581) and the Elizabeth Bible (1751[1], 1756[2]), the second edition of which serves as the liturgical text for the Russian Orthodox until today. However, the Prayer of Manasseh is not generally included in Bibles printed in Greece, while 4 Maccabees, said by

Metzger to be in an “Appendix” (Gk. Παράτημα), is indeed printed under that heading at the end of the Old Testament in the standard edition of the Greek Orthodox Bible. This pairs a Septuagint edition based on Codex Alexandrinus with the official 1904 Patriarchal Text of the New Testament (the latter available online from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America: http://www.goarch.org/chapel/biblegreek).

Among Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and the Reformed, the positions about the canonicity, deuterocanonicity, noncanonicity, profitable “readability,” etc., of the Hebrew Bible and apocryphal books are all relatively stable (above, §§7.7–7.9). By contrast, the Eastern Orthodox approach to the Old Testament canon is still a matter of internal debate. Fortunately, it is now easier for non-Orthodox to listen in on the conversation given the recent book by E. J. Pentiuc of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, *The Old Testament in Eastern Orthodox Tradition* (2014). The author calls his book “a premier” whose “topic has never been discussed at length or in as many aspects as attempted herein” (p. 321). For example, in his chapter on *canon*, Pentiuc quotes T. G. Styloanopoulos as noting that “the Prayer of Manasses and Psalm 151 are accorded some value within the Orthodox tradition,” without calling them canonical (130). In his chapter on *text*, Pentiuc points out the incorrect assumptions often made about the supreme textual authority of the Septuagint by some in the Orthodox community:

> Since her inception, the Church appropriated and employed the Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures known under the name of Septuagint. The uninterrupted use of the Septuagint in the eastern side of Christianity during its long history may lead one to the erroneous conclusion that the Septuagint represents the only official and authoritative Old Testament text of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Turgid phrases like “the Old Testament text of the Orthodox Church has been and remains the Septuagint” are to be found in various printed and digital pamphlets aimed at introducing general readership to the tenets of Orthodoxy. Yet this expedient sketch is far away from truth. (62)

Pentiuc tries to qualify the common assumption that the Septuagint is the official, authoritative Old Testament text for the Orthodox, although the

matter will come up again further below in connection with a new translation of the Septuagint into Modern Greek:

> Despite its high popularity, however, the Septuagint has never reached the level of canonical authority in Eastern Orthodoxy enjoyed by the Vulgate in the Roman Catholic Church prior to the Second Vatican Council. Unlike the Latin Bible, the Septuagint has never become the "official" or "authoritative" text. No council in the East has ever sanctioned the text as such. Early translations in vernacular languages done in various Orthodox lands also witness to this fact. Up to [*sic*] nineteenth century, the basis for most of these translations was commonly the Greek Septuagint, though there are examples of early use of the Latin or Hebrew text as a basis for translation, not because the Septuagint was an "official" text, but rather for the mere reason that the early Church and the Church of ecumenical councils made extensive use of it. (63)

Beyond technical questions of *text*, *canon*, and *tradition* under Pentiuc's first main heading of "Reception," in his second main part, "Interpretation," Pentiuc deals with uses of Scripture in patristic exegesis and Orthodox liturgy and iconography (*discursive*, *aural*, and *visual*). While these aspects cannot be reviewed here, one appreciative Orthodox reviewer has concluded that "the message of this book surprises both the Orthodox that superficially believe in a non-scriptural Christian experience and the non-Orthodox who entertain the equally superficial notion that Orthodoxy is a non-biblical church" (D. Costache, *JRH* 39 [2015]: 438–40, at 440).

A survey of vernacular Bibles approved for Orthodox use yields several interesting historical, canonical, and ecclesiastical-cultural insights. Although E. J. Pentiuc does not discuss modern vernacular Bibles as such, he introduces the topic in the most dramatic way by narrating how at age thirteen in communist Romania, he surreptitiously read almost the entire Bible within one week in the recently released Fourth Synodal Bible of the Romanian Orthodox Biblical Institute (1968)—his "first encounter with the printed Word of God" (x). This particular Romanian Bible is a revision of a 1936 version by Gala Galaction and Vasile Radu, and was based on both the Hebrew text and the Septuagint for the Old Testament (cf. C. Scouteris and C. Belezos, "The Bible in the Orthodox Church from the Seventeenth

Century to the Present Day,” in *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, ed. J. Riches, vol. 4 [2015], 523–36, at 533).

Several other Bible translations for the Eastern Orthodox deserve mention, particularly those whose Old Testament has been translated from the Hebrew rather than the LXX. Perhaps most famously, Greek Orthodox cleric and educator Neophytos Vamvas (1770–1855) produced the first widely distributed translation of the Greek New Testament into Modern Greek, in its nonvernacular literary form known as “purist Greek” (*katharevousa*). However, the Old Testament of this Bible was translated from the Hebrew. C. Scouteris and C. Belezos (as above) record that the version was published by the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) over the decade 1833–44 (1850 is a more common date for the final edition). While Scouteris and Belezos point out that Vamvas’s version lacked great philological merit, popular reception, and church approval (527), it remains in print, is still used by the Orthodox in Greece and the Greek diaspora (as well as by Greek evangelicals and Pentecostals), and is proudly acknowledged as part of the heritage of the Greek Bible Society, now independent from the BFBS (since 2000). Vamvas’s translation is said to be a “classic” that has “served many generations of modern Greeks who could not access the original texts” (www.greekbibles.org).

Another important Greek Bible Society publication, known in English as *The Holy Bible in Today’s Greek Version with Deuterocanonicals* (1997; repr. 2003), is a modern demotic Greek version produced by a group of twelve professors from the theological schools of Athens and Thessalonica. Once again the Hebrew is the basis for the canonical Old Testament. Interestingly, the Old Testament section of this Orthodox Bible includes only two translations of Septuagint books beyond the Roman Catholic canon, namely, 1 Esdras and 3 Maccabees. Although the *Bible in Today’s Greek* contains two letters of recommendation from Orthodox Church authorities, the first of these makes clear that the Bible may be used for personal study but will not replace the Septuagint in the liturgy.

Nevertheless, there is also strong demand for a Modern Greek translation of the Septuagint, which is now nearing completion under sponsorship of the Greek Bible Society. As Scouteris and Belezos say in relation to this new translation, the Septuagint “is still the official Old Testament text of the Greek Orthodox Church” (528)—precisely the sort of

statement that Pentiuc characterized above as a mere “pamphlet” summary of the facts about various valid Old Testament textual witnesses in Orthodoxy.

Parallel to the above three developments in Bible translation into Modern Greek, it should be noted that the standard version of the Russian Bible used by Russian Orthodox, Baptists, Roman Catholics, and others, known as the Synodal Bible (1876), also uses the Hebrew Bible as its Old Testament textual base. A detailed archival history of this version is provided by S. K. Batalden in his *Russian Bible Wars: Modern Scriptural Translation and Cultural Authority* (2013), 125–62. In keeping with some of E. J. Pentiuc’s observations about the Orthodox canon, Batalden also speaks of “the abortive Russian attempt to canonize the Greek Septuagint Old Testament text, as opposed to the Hebrew Masoretic counterpart” (8).

We conclude this survey with two English Bibles edited for the Orthodox or those interested in Orthodoxy. *The Orthodox Study Bible* or *OSB* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008^{2}) is a unique ecclesial-cultural artifact. According to its title page, it was “Prepared under the auspices of the Academic Community of St. Athanasius Academy of Orthodox Theology, Elk Grove, California. Fr. Jack Norman Sparks, Ph.D., Dean.” Jack Norman Sparks (1928–2010) and the *OSB* New Testament Project Director Peter E. Gillquist (1938–2012) were both staff members with the evangelical ministry Campus Crusade for Christ in the 1960s before accepting the Orthodox faith and eventually becoming ordained priests in the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. This theological heritage may partly explain why the *OSB* includes instructions for seekers wishing to visit Orthodox churches, who must be prepared to listen to portions of the liturgy that are not in English (xxvii), as well as the comment that “the style of Orthodoxy looks complicated to the modern Protestant eye” (xxvi). E. J. Pentiuc is listed as one of the Old Testament editors, while the writers of study materials include the well-known Orthodox theologian Kallistos Ware (viii). The New Testament text is Thomas Nelson’s NKJV, representing the Byzantine text type. The Septuagint is the basis of the Old Testament text. The *OSB* largely follows Lancelot C. L. Brenton’s 1851 English translation of the Septuagint where the Greek differs from the Hebrew, but the NKJV Old Testament where the Septuagint and Hebrew are judged to be the same. Study notes emphasize

major themes of the Christian faith, including the Trinity, incarnation, church, and virtues, and include frequent references to the church fathers.

Most recently, an alternative English translation of the Greek Scriptures to that in the *Orthodox Study Bible* has been seen as necessary in some American Orthodox circles, in part because *OSB* publisher Thomas Nelson is not an Eastern Orthodox organization. The result is now the competing *Eastern Orthodox Bible* or *EOB*, whose New Testament portion is currently available for purchase on Amazon.com. The online blurb explicitly justifies the existence of the *EOB* over against the *OSB*: “Unlike the OSB (Orthodox Study Bible New Testament) which is actually the New King James version, the EOB is a fresh and accessible translation created within the Orthodox community.” The full title for the 2015 edition is: *The Eastern / Greek Orthodox New Testament: Based on the Official Text of the Greek Orthodox Church (Patriarchal Text of 1904). A New Translation with Extensive Introductory and Supplemental Material* (© Laurent Cleenewerck, Editor, 2007–2015, rev. ed., 2015). However, this “new translation” was not made from scratch, but is rather a revision of the public-domain World English Bible (which itself goes back to the ASV of 1901). Its stated “purpose” (below) includes the protection of Orthodox readers from the biases of other translations, both Protestant (NIV) and Catholic (NAB). Like the KJV, which was “Appointed to be read in Churches,” the *EOB* is also intended to be suitable for liturgical use: “The EOB New Testament was prepared for personal study and liturgical use in English-speaking Orthodox Christian communities. Its format and font are designed to make both activities accessible and rewarding. Every attempt has been made to offer an accurate and scholarly translation of the Greek text, free of the theological bias that has affected most other translations of the New Testament, including the NIV (2 Thess. 2:15) and NAB (Matt. 5:32)” (p. 15 in 2011 edition).

Extensive introductory material in the *EOB* includes explanations of primary Greek text(s), texts and variants, and proper Orthodox distinctions regarding terminology for church offices, temple and sanctuary, hell and Hades, worship and divine service, kingdom, Spirit and spirit, etc.

The above comparison of the *Orthodox Study Bible* and the *Eastern Orthodox Bible* only underscores what has been observed throughout the second half of this section. Vernacular Bible translations for the Eastern

Orthodox, based on the Septuagint or the Hebrew text of the Old Testament or a mixture of both, in languages including Romanian, *katharevousa* and demotic Modern Greek, Russian, and now English, become primary texts for the study of modern church history in the Orthodox communities. And there are certainly examples of such "identity Bibles" among non-Orthodox as well. The most obvious example among English-speaking evangelical Protestants is the popular *ESV Study Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Bibles, 2007). This includes 2,750 pages and 1.1 million words for the translation, notes, and essays and has become a cultural icon among Reformed evangelicals in particular (see K. M. Franco in "Further Reading" below).

To conclude this section on Eastern Orthodox Bibles, the general point may be made that there is room for more research into the interplay between Christian religious communities and the particular editions of the Scriptures that help to maintain their theological and cultural identity. However, interestingly, this is much less of an issue for German-speaking Protestants than it is for English speakers. The final edition of the Luther Bible of 1545, with its partial revisions in 1912, 1956, 1964, 1970, 1975, 1984, and now 2017 to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, remains the standard version used by almost all German-speaking Protestants, perhaps even exceeding the predominance of the KJV in English. (For the Swiss Reformed, there is the *Zürcher Bibel* [rev. 2007], though many Swiss doubtless still read Luther.) The Luther Bible is complemented by the *Einheitsübersetzung* ("Unity Translation") for German-speaking Roman Catholics. As the official text approved for the Catholic liturgy, the *Einheitsübersetzung* finds its English equivalent in the NAB for North American Catholics and the NJB in Great Britain.

8 Four conclusions emerge that are of fundamental importance for a biblical theology of the New Testament that is open to the Old Testament.

8.1 The two-part Christian canon is a collection of traditions assembled by the church. However, the church did not simply create it of its own accord, and therefore the canon is also not simply to be merged seamlessly into the continually flowing stream of church tradition, but rather to be set apart from it. The church admittedly made a conscious decision against Marcion in the second century to retain the Holy Scriptures (of the Old Testament), but these Scriptures existed prior to the church and had long

since been given to it by Israel and early Christianity. As born Jews, Jesus and the apostles gave the church a share in the Holy Scriptures of Israel and taught the church to read these Scriptures from the vantage point of Christ and with reference to Christ. The main writings of the New Testament also did not acquire their fundamental importance for the church's faith and mission through a decision of the ancient church, but made it into the canon by virtue of their own inherent weight and decisively influenced the canonical selection process through their weight. The church decided in favor of the two-part canon and exercised care about its limits, but the church was conscious from the beginning of owing its existence to the word of Scripture as the word of God. There are therefore both a qualitative difference and an indissoluble connection between the biblical word of God and the church's later tradition of interpretation that builds upon it.

8.2 Part of the essence of the Christian church's canon is that it consists of the Old and New Testaments and not of the New Testament alone. The tradition-historical connection between the two Testaments possesses a history-of-revelation quality. Ever since Justin the church has sought to plumb the depths of this connection with the help of the doctrine of the preincarnate and incarnate Logos (λόγος ἄσαρκος and ἔνσαρκος; see above, §5.5.2). The usual hermeneutical schemes to describe the relationship between the Old and New Testaments—"promise and fulfillment," "old and new covenant," "law and gospel"—are valid only to the extent that they are used in this broad history-of-revelation framework and not absolutized. In its contents, extent, and the order of its books, the church's Old Testament is the Septuagint. The books of the Septuagint with counterparts in the Hebrew canon are based on the Hebrew texts and are therefore also to be measured by them. (In addition to these Septuagint books with Hebrew canon counterparts, several other books were translated from Hebrew or Aramaic originals now partly or totally lost, including Tobit, Sirach, Baruch, and 1 Maccabees.) The New Testament refers to the Hebrew and Greek texts of the books of the Hebrew canon as well as to the other Septuagint books in the form of allusions, quotations, and scriptural proofs, at the same time as it comes from these texts in terms of the history of traditions and the history of revelation. It is therefore only in connection with the Hebrew Bible and the Septuagint that the New Testament can be understood as it wants to be understood.

8.3 The church's decision in favor of the two-part Christian canon was the consistent reaction to the history of tradition and revelation to which the church owes its existence. Jesus understood himself as the messianic Son of God, bearer of revelation, and representative of the kingdom of God, and saw his work as an event of messianic fulfillment. Therefore, from the beginning of the formation of the New Testament tradition, the Christ event has been attested and proclaimed as "an event of fulfillment that proceeds from the God of the Old Testament" (L. Goppelt, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments,* vol. 1, ed. J. Roloff [1975], 50). The ancient church followed the implications of this Old Testament–based Christology and acknowledged the canonical process—which gave rise to the canon of the Hebrew Bible and Septuagint books together with the New Testament—in its entirety. Early rabbinic Judaism arrived at its canon of the Hebrew Bible in its present extent by concluding the canonical process already with Malachi or the book of Daniel. This conscious decision deserves historical respect, but even among some Jewish biblical scholars today, it appears in the light of the Qumran texts to be a construct that needs further academic discussion. For Christians, however, the traditional Jewish view of the closing of the canon is not authoritative. In terms of the history of the canon and the history of revelation, the church made the right decision in adopting the Septuagint and canonizing it together with the New Testament. Nevertheless, the formation of the New Testament tradition is not a continuation of the Hebrew Bible or the Septuagint, but rather a complex of tradition that rests on both versions of the Holy Scriptures and owes its origin to the Christ event. In this event the New Testament witnesses see the high point and end point of the history of revelation, which the one God who created the world and chose Israel as his own people has used to communicate himself once for all to Jews and Gentiles.

8.4 The canonization of the New Testament Scriptures was also not simply an arbitrary act of the church in its fight against heresy that modern critically reflective and historical biblical interpretation can or should leave behind. For the church's distinction between canonical writings that are suitable to be read in worship services in all congregations and those unsuitable for such reading corresponds to the rule or norm for faith that is already established and given to the church in the main writings of the New Testament itself. This norm of faith is accessible in exemplary fashion in the "gospel" summary in 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5. It urges the distinction

between belief and unbelief and also sets the standard for distinguishing those writings that promote the edification or upbuilding (οἰκοδομή) of the church of Jesus Christ from those that do not. The ancient church succeeded in making this distinction with the means at its disposal. The church thereby acted consistently and correctly according to the facts, so that critical exegesis can affirm and follow the ancient church's decision and concentrate the work required for a biblical theology of the New Testament on the canonical Scriptures of the New Testament.

However, such exegesis of the New Testament texts will do justice to the canon only when it takes account of the canonical weight of *all* New Testament books, incorporating the Gospels as well as the Pauline Letters and fitting both corpora into the context of the apostolic and postapostolic tradition attested by Acts and the Catholic Letters.

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CHAPTER 41

The Center of Scripture

New Testament exegesis does well to bring its results into a working relationship with dogmatics. Exegesis cannot and will not be denied its own dogmatic judgments, but the exegetical enterprise will end only in dilettantism if it thinks it is able to do the work of dogmatics on its own or to make it superfluous. This applies also to the difficult and still explosive theological question about the center of Scripture. When this question is raised, biblical exegesis can do no better than to discuss the debated facts and texts with all the methods at its disposal. But exegesis must also respect the fact that it does not solely or conclusively make the decision about the Scripture and its center.

The search for the center of Scripture raises a whole set of debated problems: How are the Old and New Testaments related? Is it possible to comprehend the various New Testament traditions under a single theological perspective, or are they so different that they disallow any such panoramic view? How should we evaluate the ancient church's efforts to summarize the entire faith tradition in the so-called "rule of faith" and the two-part biblical canon? Is the Reformation decision to see the justification of the ungodly as the center of Scripture exegetically tenable? Can the center of Scripture be equated with a certain selection of biblical texts that would form a "canon within the canon," or should theologians abandon the search for such a "canon" and only point to the name of Jesus Christ? If these questions are answerable at all, they can be answered only one after another.

1 In his 1982 summary of research, *Problems of Old Testament Theology in the Twentieth Century* (ET 1985), H. Graf Reventlow differentiates three positions concerning the center of the two-Testament Christian canon in relation to the Old Testament and its own "center": The first assumes an Old Testament center (e.g., covenant; God's self-revelation) that stands independently over against the New Testament, the second denies the existence of any such center of the Old Testament, and the third emphasizes that "the only 'centre' there can be in the Old

Testament is the one God of Israel himself” (ibid., 132, ET modified). The first view is represented by scholars such as W. Zimmerli, W. H. Schmidt, and B. S. Childs; the second by G. von Rad and H. Gese; and the third by Graf Reventlow himself.

The views of these selected scholars as organized under Graf Reventlow’s three headings may briefly be surveyed. As to the first position, in his day Zimmerli emphasized that the Old Testament has its own center, which he saw in Yahweh’s self-presentation “I AM WHO I AM” and “the LORD (*Yahweh*) . . . is my name forever” (Exod. 3:14–15). W. H. Schmidt took up the idea of a center and declared the first commandment to be the center of the Old Testament witness. He also maintains that history of religion studies of the development of the idea of Yahweh’s exclusivity do not compromise its central importance in the Old Testament: “The Old Testament demands to be read as testimony to the *one* God. In its present form it either declares or presupposes this exclusivity, the importance of which is emphasized in the first commandment. This exclusivity provides the element that stamps the various motifs, traditions, and stories—regardless of the question of when it originated” (Schmidt, *Alttestamentlicher Glaube* [1996^{8}], 4).

B. S. Childs takes a similar view. He stresses that the independent witness of the Hebrew Bible must not be prematurely fused with the likewise independent witness of the New Testament, but that both parts of the Christian canon must first be properly understood and appreciated in their own right. In this connection Childs also points to the fundamental importance of three factors: Yahweh’s self-revelation in his name, his gracious self-disclosure to Israel in the covenant (cf. Exod. 34), and his “unity and uniqueness (Deut. 6.4f.) which calls for utter devotion—heart, soul, and might” (*Biblical Theology*, 355).

Like Zimmerli, Schmidt, and Childs, G. von Rad also did not miss the importance of the one God’s revelation of his name. Nevertheless, he emphasized that in the diversity and historical contingency of its witness, the Old Testament “has no focal-point [center] such as is found in the New” (*Old Testament Theology*, vol. 2 [1965], 362).

H. Gese shares the same opinion as his mentor, von Rad, regarding the lack of an Old Testament center. This is a corollary of Gese’s idea that the Old and New Testaments are bound together by a multilayered tradition process that has a history-of-revelation quality. The New Testament does not presuppose a closed canon of the Old Testament, although it could be said to lead to it. For, as Gese writes, “it is from the still developing Old Testament tradition that the New Testament tradition arises, which for its part must admittedly see all Old Testament tradition as closed to the extent that the Christ event is the end and goal of the history of revelation” (cf. Heb. 1:1–2 and Gese, “Hermeneutische Grundsätze,” 259). Nevertheless, this history-of-revelation connection between the Testaments does not imply any depreciation of the Old Testament tradition according to Gese, for he continues:

> Even as the New Testament—which as apostolic testimony is tradition-historically limited to testifying to the Christ event and its apostolic proclamation—differentiates itself from every Old Testament testimony as the *telos* [goal] of revelation, it is also to the same degree inseparably bound together with the Old Testament as the one revelation of God. Therefore separating the two from each other and regarding the Old Testament as an inferior revelation would mean missing the unity of God’s revelation and ultimately losing the dignity of the New Testament as the testimony to the end and goal of this entire revelation. (Gese, “Hermeneutische Grundsätze,” 259–60)

Finally, Graf Reventlow has certain reservations regarding Gese's idea of the history of revelation. He thinks that an Old Testament center is identifiable but limits this to the mere statement that "the only 'centre' there can be in the Old Testament is the one God of Israel himself" (*Problems of Old Testament Theology*, 132).

Despite their differences, all these Christian exegetes of the Old Testament agree that the many-sided Old Testament tradition testifies to the powerful name of the one God and that this one God is understood in the New Testament as the Father of Jesus Christ. Childs even claims that solid biblical theology is able to debunk the widespread notion "which still contrasts the strict God of the Old Testament with the friendly God of the New" (*Biblical Theology*, 373). As Childs further explains, "The Old Testament bears the same witness as does the New to the unity of God's righteousness and mercy which God made known in his history with Israel. However it is only in the concrete life and death of Jesus Christ that the full witness to God emerges in the gospel by which to interpret God's one just will established from eternity" (ibid., 374).

When asking about the center of the two-part Christian canon, we must keep in mind not only the Hebrew Bible but also the Septuagint, to which the New Testament witnesses repeatedly refer. Unfortunately, with the sole exception of Gese, the Old Testament scholars discussed above do not pay enough attention to the Septuagint. Nevertheless, their reference to the name and uniqueness of the one God as the essential element of all the Old Testament Scriptures remains valid and ultimately applies to the Septuagint version of these Scriptures. For the New Testament understands the Christ event as the messianic event of fulfillment set in motion by the one and only God without differentiating between the Greek and Hebrew text forms of the Old Testament (cf. Rom. 1:1–4; 15:8–12; 2 Cor. 1:20; John 1:41; 5:39; Heb. 1:1–2; etc.).

2 The question about the center of the Christian Bible can finally be answered only from the New Testament, because only here is the goal of the history of revelation reached and the final statement made that the Logos appeared in the flesh. The New Testament Scriptures speak about the revelation of the one God in Jesus Christ in many different ways. But this in no way means that we must declare with K. Berger: "No, the desired 'canon within the canon' does not exist exegetically, not even as the general tendency of a development" (*Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums* [1995^{2}], v). On the contrary, the question about an authoritative center is not foreign to the various New Testament witnesses, because they all assume that Jews (and Gentiles) are given "no other name under heaven . . . by which we must be saved" than the name Jesus Christ (cf. Acts 4:12). This statement does not replace the efficacious name of the one God by the name of Jesus Christ. It rather places the name of Christ alongside the name

of God, because in and through his Christ, the one God has accomplished salvation and opened access to himself for the whole world. If one pays attention to similar central statements in the New Testament Scriptures, then the result will by no means reveal only theological differences, but also astonishing correspondences.

2.1 According to the synoptic witness, *Jesus* understood himself as the “Son” of the one God (cf. Matt. 11:25–27) and as the messianic representative of the kingdom of God (cf. Luke 17:21). He summarized God’s will in the double commandment of love for God and one’s neighbor according to Deuteronomy 6:4–5 and Leviticus 19:18 (cf. Mark 12:28–34 par.), while in the Lord’s Prayer he taught his disciples to ask for the sanctification of the name of the one God (יהוה) (cf. Luke 11:2; Matt. 6:9). The post-Easter confessional traditions took account of these elements of the Jesus tradition.

2.1.1 *Paul’s letters* make the bold attempt to interpret the Shema of Deuteronomy 6:4–5 christologically. The basic idea is the one developed in hymnic form in Colossians 1:15–20: The Son is the image of God (εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ), and as such is mediator not only of creation but also of redemption, because all the divine πλήρωμα or “fullness” was pleased to dwell in the Son to accomplish reconciliation for the world through his atoning death on the cross (cf. similarly Heb. 1:1–4). It is in this sense that Paul teaches the church to confess: “There is *one* God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and *one* Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist” (1 Cor. 8:6). The same confessional statement is also found in 1 Timothy 2:5–6, where it is defined more particularly by means of the Jesus tradition: “For there is *one* God, and there is *one* mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, *who gave himself as a ransom for all*” (RSV; cf. Mark 10:45; Matt. 20:28).

2.1.2 The *Johannine tradition* also knows this confession. According to Revelation, it is not only the one God (Rev. 1:8; 21:6), but also Christ (22:13) who is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. He made believers to be an eschatological kingdom and priests through his atoning death (cf. Rev. 1:5–6); he lives from eternity to eternity and has the keys of Death and Hades (Rev. 1:18); and he shares the heavenly throne with God (Rev. 5:6). John 1:14 and 18 speak of the incarnation of the only begotten

Son of God and his *unity* with the Father (cf. also John 10:30; 17:11, 22). Because Jesus and the Father are one, Deuteronomy 6:5 can be grasped christologically and love for Jesus can be understood as love for God (cf. John 14:21, 23).

These passages show that the main witnesses of the New Testament confess together the one God who revealed himself finally in his only Son who is of one essence with him, through whom he accomplished the salvation of the world.

2.2 From 1 Corinthians 15:1–11 it is evident that the apostles also collectively proclaimed and taught *one gospel*. Paul quotes it in verses 3b–5 in the wording on which the faith and salvation of the Corinthian Christians depended (cf. vv. 1–2). In verse 11 Paul affirms that both he and all the other apostles called before him whom he names in verses 5–8, including Peter and James, proclaim this one gospel. Because Paul wrote 1 Corinthians a number of years after the apostolic council and the so-called Antioch incident involving Peter (see below), his comments show that both the Jerusalem apostles and he himself considered their common missionary task and common confession more important than their individual differences. According to the agreement of Galatians 2:7 and 9, Peter, James, and other apostles proclaimed to the Jews "the gospel for the circumcision," while Paul and Barnabas went to the Gentiles with "the gospel for the uncircumcision." In Romans 6:17 Paul declares that in their baptismal instruction the Roman Christians, whom he had not taught personally, had already been instructed in the one apostolic gospel (a single "form of teaching") and had been handed over or "entrusted" to this gospel as God's saving power par excellence (cf. Rom. 1:16). Paul also expects those in the Roman congregation with the gift of prophecy to use it *κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως*, "in proportion to faith" (Rom. 12:6), that is, in agreement with and in proper relationship to the teaching about faith. Admittedly, earlier in his ministry Paul had had a sharp disagreement with Peter about the truth of the gospel of God's grace through faith in Christ in front of the whole congregation at Antioch (cf. Gal. 2:11–21). Nevertheless, Paul later expressed himself as in 1 Corinthians 15:1–11, where he passes on the one gospel formulation he received from others and makes Peter a witness to it. In fact, it is from Corinth, shortly after his writing of Romans, that Paul finally departed for Jerusalem about eight years after his initial

agreement at the Jerusalem council in AD 48 about a collection for the poor (cf. Gal. 2:10) by which he could "serve the saints" in Jerusalem (cf. Rom. 15:25). For this service to the mother church Paul paid with his life.

According to the New Testament, the common confession of the one God who has revealed himself finally in and through Christ is inseparably bound together with the *proclamation of the one apostolic gospel of God concerning Jesus Christ* (cf. Rom. 1:1–4).

2.3 The gospel summary that Paul quotes in 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 states that "Christ died *for our sins* (ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν) according to the Scriptures." This idea is of fundamental importance for New Testament soteriology and can be expressed both with and without the characteristic soteriological preposition ὑπέρ, "for" or "on behalf of," which is found in the Lord's Supper tradition and many other passages.

The above-cited expression "Christ died *for* (ὑπέρ) our sins" from 1 Corinthians 15:3 is explicitly said to derive from the Old Testament Scriptures. This includes especially Isaiah 53:5 and 12 (cf. also vv. 6–8, 11), even though the Greek preposition there is not ὑπέρ but διά, "because of" (διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν/αὐτῶν, "*because of* our/their sins"), which forms a direct background to Romans 4:25 (διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν, "*because of* our transgressions"). Nevertheless, the main soteriological preposition does indeed become ὑπέρ in the New Testament and other early Christian writings such as *1 Clement* 16:7, which rewrites Isaiah 53:6 as "The Lord delivered him up *for* (ὑπέρ) our sins" (instead of the Septuagint's dative ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ἡμῶν, "*to* our sins"). This choice of ὑπέρ also has a background in Isaiah 43:3–4 (where nations are given up "for" or "on behalf of" Israel) and has probably been influenced by formulations from the Lord's Supper tradition, as found in the bread saying in 1 Corinthians 11:24–25 and Luke 22:19 ("given *for* you") and the cup saying of Mark 14:24 par. Luke 22:20 ("poured out *for* many/*for* you"). Matthew's cup saying (26:28) uses the synonymous preposition περί to describe Christ's blood as "poured out *for* many," which may allude to the "many" whose sins are borne by the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 53:12 (cf. NA^{28} margin).

As we have already established by working through the individual traditions of the New Testament, the soteriological understanding of Jesus's death on the cross in 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 goes back to Jesus himself (cf. Mark 9:31 par.; 10:45 par. with Isa. 43:3–4; 53:11–12) and runs through all the layers of the New Testament tradition after Easter as a scarlet thread. This gives special significance to the many statements that say Christ died or suffered or surrendered his life ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν / ὑμῶν / πάντων, "*for* us/you/all." Examples—of ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν unless otherwise indicated—include from the Pauline corpus Romans 5:8, 8:32, Galatians 3:13, Ephesians 5:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:10, 1 Timothy 2:5–6 (ὑπὲρ πάντων), and Titus 2:14, as well

as 1 Peter 2:21–25 (ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, v. 21) and 3:18–19, where *περί* is used for sins and ὑπέρ for sinful persons (Χριστὸς ἅπαξ περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν ἔπαθεν, δίκαιος ὑπὲρ ἀδίκων, v. 18). A particularly Johannine ὑπέρ expression is *τιθέναι τὴν ψυχὴν υπέρ*, "to lay down one's life *for*" others (1 John 3:16; John 10:11, 15; 15:13; cf. 17:19). The formulation "*for* our sins" of 1 Corinthians 15:3 also occurs in Galatians 1:4 (cf. Heb. 5:1; 7:27; 10:12), and can be expressed alternatively by the preposition *περί* in the expression ἱλασμός περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, "an atoning sacrifice *for* our sins" (1 John 2:2; cf. 4:10).

All this shows that Jesus's death on the cross was the God-ordained and God-initiated act of atonement effective once for all, which makes all other atoning sacrifice superfluous. In the words of 2 Corinthians 5:19 and 21, "God [himself] was in Christ reconciling the world to himself," and he fully accomplished this when "he made him who knew no sin to be sin [or *a sin offering*] for us (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν), so that we might become the righteousness of God in [or *through*] him." Other statements about blood atonement, reconciliation, access to God's presence, or the making of peace do not literally involve ὑπέρ but have a similar sense and the same importance. These include Romans 3:25–26 (Jesus as the "mercy seat," ἱλαστήριον); 5:9–11; 8:3 (Jesus as the "sin offering," περὶ ἁμαρτίας); Colossians 1:19–20; Ephesians 2:13–18; Hebrews 9:11–14, 22–28; 10:12–14; John 3:16; and Revelation 1:5–6. There can therefore be no doubt about the central place of atonement theology in the New Testament interpretation of Jesus's death on the cross.

The main New Testament witnesses are united in teaching that Jesus's death on the cross should be understood as an atoning death for "the many" carried out in God's name.

2.4 The various witnesses of the New Testament tradition are also united in their teaching about Jesus's resurrection and his heavenly honor as *κύριος* and in their expectation that he will come again in heavenly majesty and establish God's eternal kingdom through the final judgment. The divine title "[the God] who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Rom. 4:24) adds christological precision to the Jewish confession of the one God who raises the dead (cf. Rom. 4:17; Heb. 11:19), and the identification of God as the one who raised Jesus from the dead occurs repeatedly in the New Testament

(cf. only Rom. 8:11; 2 Cor. 4:14; Eph. 1:20; 1 Pet. 1:21). Here Jesus's resurrection is not understood as merely the revivification of a crucified martyr, but rather as the fundamental creative act of the one God that makes Jesus the "firstfruits" or "firstborn" standing at the "beginning" of the end-time resurrection of all the dead (cf. 1 Cor. 15:20 with Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5). 1 Thessalonians 1:9–10, Hebrews 6:9, and Romans 10:9–10 show together with Matthew 24:27, 1 Thessalonians 2:19, 1 Corinthians 15:23, 1 John 2:28, James 5:7, and 2 Peter 1:16 that expressions about Jesus's resurrection, divine majesty, and end-time coming (παρουσία) involve doctrinal statements that were not disputed by any apostolic witness.

The bearers of the New Testament tradition are united in seeing Jesus's resurrection as a creative act affecting all people performed by the one God who makes the dead alive, as well as in teaching Christians to expect the parousia and last judgment.

2.5 The apostolic and postapostolic witnesses furthermore agree that all the Jews and Gentiles who confess Jesus as Lord and Messiah form together the new people of God and stand together in the obligation to do the will of the one God that Jesus summarized in the double commandment of love for God and neighbor (cf. Mark 10:17–22 par.). This fulfilling of God's will by the church of Jesus Christ has symbolic significance in this world that has fallen away from God (cf. Matt 5:14–16 with Rom. 12:1–2; Eph. 2:10; 1 John 4:11–12; 1 Pet. 2:12). According to 1 Thessalonians 4:1–2, Romans 6:17–18, Hebrews 6:1, 12:14, and Matthew 28:20, the doctrine of the new life of believers that follows the instructions of the one God and his Christ was already part of the basic apostolic teaching.

The individual New Testament witnesses join together in calling believers in Jesus Christ to an exemplary practice of love for God and their neighbors.

2.6 The New Testament witnesses also agree in the realization that without the gift and the ongoing assistance of the Holy Spirit, it is impossible to receive or understand the saving message about Jesus Christ, to confess the one God and his Christ, to bear witness to them, or to lead a life of holiness and hope (cf. Gal. 3:2; 1 Cor. 2:16; 12:3; 2 Cor. 3:16; 4:5–6; Rom. 8:9–16; John 3:5–6; 4:24; 6:53; 14:15–17, 25–26; 15:26–27; 16:7–15; 20:21–23; Mark 13:11; Acts 1:7–8; 2:33; 5:32; Heb. 6:4; 1 Pet. 2:2; 4:14;

etc.). The gift of the Spirit proceeds from God and the risen Christ (cf. Acts 2:33; John 14:26; Rom. 8:9; etc.).

According to the united witness of the New Testament, the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the one God and his Christ, sustains and defines the witness, confession, and sanctification of the church of Jesus Christ.

2.7 Taking these six points together, we see clear contours of a doctrine of the Christian faith that stands above the differences between the various individual witnesses of the New Testament tradition. The ancient church was therefore well advised when it began to speak from the middle of the second century onward of a "canon of truth" (*κανὼν τῆς ἀληθείας*) or "rule of faith" (*regula fidei*) apparent from the Holy Scriptures. The example of the ancient church also allows us to answer positively the question of whether Scripture has any theological center: The New Testament witnesses saw themselves obligated together to maintain a theological truth and reality that was present in Christ and therefore already given to them in him. This truth united them, but did not force them into uniformity. They bore witness to the truth together, but they also fought hard over its understanding and consequences (cf. Gal. 2:11–21). Nevertheless, because the truth of this revelation was at work before any of the New Testament witnesses came to faith (cf. Rom. 5:6–8) and confronted them in Christ in person, the witnesses never definitively split up despite their disagreements, but rather maintained fellowship "in Christ" (cf. 1 Cor. 15:11 and Phil. 1:15–18). For the sake of their witness to Christ they also suffered martyrdom together, including Stephen (cf. Acts 7:54–60), James the son of Zebedee (cf. Acts 12:2), James the Lord's brother (cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 20.200), and Peter and Paul (cf. *1 Clem.* 5:4–7).

It would be logical to assume that such shared circumstances among the early Christian witnesses would tend to promote unity. Unfortunately, these circumstances were all too happily overlooked especially in modern exegesis that was more interested in differences. Hence, in his 1951 essay "The Canon of the New Testament and the Unity of the Church," E. Käsemann purposefully set forth the following antiecumenical thesis: "The New Testament canon does not, as such, constitute the foundation of the unity of the Church. On the contrary, as such (that is, in its accessibility to the historian) it provides the basis for the multiplicity of the confessions" ("The Canon of the New Testament and the Unity of the Church," in idem, *Essays on New Testament Themes* [ET 1964], 95–107, here 103; German reprinted in E. Käsemann, *Das Neue Testament als Kanon* [1970], 124–33, at 131). However, Käsemann here paid far too little attention to the lines of convergence between the different New Testament traditions and projected back far too indiscriminately onto the New Testament the problems with the different confessions. In 1970 Käsemann made his thesis even more radical by claiming that the New Testament canon "legitimizes as such more or less all sects and false teaching" ("Zusammenfassung," in *Das Neue Testament als Kanon*, 399–410, at 402).

Fortunately, this view is contradicted by the common shared teaching of the apostles attested in the New Testament and by the resulting “canon of truth.” Otherwise Käsemann’s statements would lead unintentionally to the conclusion that Luther’s idea of the twofold clarity (and obscurity) of the Scripture, as well as the Reformation principle of *sola Scriptura*, were only illusions that would have to be given up today.

3 By the middle of the second century the ancient church found itself in a very difficult situation. As K. Beyschlag explains: “The church was hated and persecuted from all sides, but also simultaneously undercut by emancipatory gnostic groups and counter-churches of all sorts, while itself still being without a binding norm of faith. It therefore seemed to be only a matter of time before the church would sink in the maelstrom of increasing Christian pluralism and its still outwardly maintained unity would dissolve into syncretistic phenomena” (*Grundriss der Dogmengeschichte*, 1:165).

In this state of emergency the tradition-conscious churches gathered around their appointed officeholders and teachers, formulated the canon of truth, and formed the two-part Christian canon.

The “rule of faith” (*regula fidei*) was at first captured only in decidedly open formulations. This becomes especially clear in Irenaeus in a section titled, “The Rule of the Truth Is One in the Church throughout the World,” *Against Heresies* 1.10.1:

> The Church, indeed, though disseminated throughout the world, even to the ends of the earth, received from the apostles and their disciples the faith in one God the Father Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth and the seas and all things that are in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who was enfleshed for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who through the prophets preached the Economies, the coming, the birth from a Virgin, the passion, the resurrection from the dead, and the bodily ascension into heaven of the beloved Son, Christ Jesus our Lord, and His coming from heaven in the glory of the Father to recapitulate all things, and to raise up all flesh of the whole human race, in order that to Christ Jesus, our Lord and God, Savior and King, according to the invisible Father’s good pleasure, *Every knee should bow* [of those] *in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess* Him, and that He would exercise just judgment toward all; and that, on the other hand, He would send into eternal fire the spiritual forces of wickedness, and the angels who transgressed and became rebels, and the godless, wicked, lawless, and blasphemous people; but, on the other hand, by bestowing life on the righteous and holy and those who kept His commandments and have persevered in His love—both those who did so from the beginning and those who did so after repentance—He would bestow on them as a grace the gift of incorruption and clothe them with everlasting glory. (Trans. D. J. Unger, *St. Irenaeus of Lyons against the Heresies*, ACW 55 [1992], 48–49; cf. 183–86 with nn. 1–23.)

The rule of faith is founded on the Scripture and forms together with it the whole of the church’s authoritative tradition. As Beyschlag writes, “If the ‘rule of truth’ constitutes the ‘is-form’ (*Ist-Gestalt*) of the Christian faith, then the two-part Bible is its original documentation. Both are

manifestations of the one norm of faith, which ultimately becomes one with the *reality* of revelation" (Beyschlag, *Grundriss*, 172–73). Sustained by the two-part Scripture and the rule of faith as well as the appointed church officeholders responsible for guarding this tradition, the ancient church was able to preserve its identity over the centuries in which it was still a minority church.

4 The problem of *soteriology* has not yet played any decisive role in our formulation of the canon of truth. Only when one includes this problem in the search for the center of Scripture does the debate acquire confessional and also controversial theological dimensions.

4.1 The historical theological controversy came about especially because in the sixteenth century, *Martin Luther* gave the Holy Scripture a priority in principle over the church's entire doctrinal tradition and saw the center of Scripture in the (Pauline) gospel of the justification of the ungodly by faith alone for Christ's sake. Therefore for Luther the decisive task of theology lay in the correct distinction between law and gospel. In the preface to the letters of James and Jude in the first edition of Luther's German New Testament of September 1522, he writes:

> All the genuine books agree in this, that all of them preach and inculcate [or promote, German *treiben*, "push" or "drive"] Christ. And that is the true test by which to judge all books, when we see whether or not they inculcate Christ. For all the Scriptures show us Christ, Romans 3[:21]; also St. Paul will know nothing but Christ, 1 Corinthians 2[:2]. Whatever does not teach Christ is not apostolic, even though St. Peter or St. Paul does the teaching. Again, whatever preaches Christ would be apostolic, even if Judas, Annas, Pilate, and Herod were doing it. (*LW* 35:396 with n. 50; WA DB 7:384)

The Christ of whom Luther speaks here is the "justifying Christ" or *Christus iustificans* (cf. Rom. 3:26 Vulgate for God as *iustificans*) who grants forgiveness of sins. For Luther this justifying Christ is not to be totally separated from the commanding and judging Christ, but is to be carefully distinguished from him. Luther finds testimony about the justifying Christ especially in John, 1 John, Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, and 1 Peter, which he recommends to his readers because they "show you Christ and teach you all that is necessary and salvatory for you to know"

(*LW* 35:362). Therefore Luther refers to these books (especially John, Romans, and 1 Peter) as "the true kernel and marrow of all the books. They ought properly to be the foremost books, and it would be advisable for every Christian to read them first and most, and by daily reading to make them as much his own as his daily bread. For in them you do not find many works or miracles of Christ described, but you do find depicted in masterly fashion how faith in Christ overcomes sin, death, and hell, and gives life, righteousness, and salvation. This is the real nature of the gospel" (*LW* 35:362; WA DB 6:10).

Luther was convinced that the gospel, which teaches about the justifying Christ, is attested in such clear and illuminating words in Scripture that there was no need of any ecclesiastical assistance or teaching authority in order for ordinary people to grasp this gospel as the center of Scripture and the ground of faith.

Luther's remarks about the Catholic Epistles and Revelation deserve a separate mention. Because they testify about the *Christus iustificans* less clearly or not at all, Luther placed the books of Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation unnumbered at the end of his 1522 New Testament. This practice has been followed in all subsequent editions of the Luther Bible (including the most recent revision of 1984), as it also was in the first edition of William Tyndale's English New Testament of 1526, which depended on Luther.

Luther's comment about *James* as "an epistle of straw" from his general preface to the New Testament is well known; he actually refers to it as "a right strawy epistle" (*eine recht stroherne Epistel*) that has "nothing of the nature of the gospel about it" (*LW* 35:362; WA DB 6:10). Luther speaks even more pointedly in his preface to James, where immediately after praising the books that promote or "drive" (*treiben*) Christ, he writes: "But this James does nothing more than drive (*treibt*) to the law and to its works. Besides, he throws things together so chaotically that it seems to me he must have been some good, pious man, who took a few sayings from the disciples of the apostles and thus tossed them off on paper" (*LW* 35:396–97; WA DB 7:386). A little later Luther continues: "In a word, he [James] wanted to guard against those who relied on faith without works, but was unequal to the task in spirit, thought, and words. He mangles the Scriptures and thereby opposes Paul and all Scripture. He tries to accomplish by harping on the law [*mit Gesetz treiben*] what the apostles accomplish by stimulating people to love" (*LW* 35:397 with n. 54; WA DB 7:386).

Because the *Letter of Jude* is only an extract or copy of 2 Peter and also quotes extrabiblical sayings and stories, Luther, while expressing his appreciation for it, ultimately considers it to be "an epistle that need not be counted among the chief books which are supposed to lay the foundations of faith" (*LW* 35:398; WA DB 7:387).

Luther sees *Hebrews* as "a marvelously fine epistle" by "an able and learned man," which "discusses Christ's priesthood masterfully and profoundly on the basis of the Scriptures" (*LW* 35:395; WA DB 7:344). Nevertheless, Luther also criticizes this book, because "there is a hard knot in the fact that in chapters 6[:4–6] and 10[:26–27] it flatly denies and forbids to sinners any repentance after baptism; and in chapter 12[:17] it says that Esau sought repentance and did not find it. This is [1546 ed. reads: seems, as it stands, to be] contrary to all the gospels and to St. Paul's epistles" (*LW* 35:394 with n. 45; WA DB 7:344).

In his preface to *Revelation* Luther writes in 1522: “My spirit cannot accommodate itself to this book. For me this is reason enough not to think highly of it: Christ is neither taught nor known in it. But to teach Christ, this is the thing which an apostle is bound above all else to do; as Christ says in Acts 1[:8], ‘You shall be my witnesses.’ Therefore I stick to the books which present Christ to me clearly and purely” (*LW* 35:399; WA DB 7:404). However, in his new preface of 1530, Luther attenuated this judgment somewhat.

Luther’s stark judgment of James, Jude, Hebrews, and Revelation drew criticism from *Reformed* theologians. At the beginning of the relevant section of the *Zurich Confession* composed by Heinrich Bullinger in 1545, the confession follows Luther in its high appraisal of the Bible:

> The holy biblical Scripture . . . is the most ancient, perfect, and highest teaching. It encompasses and teaches completely everything that serves the saving knowledge of God, true faith, fixed hope, sincere love; true honor of God and true Christian piety; the foundation and realization of an honorable, God pleasing and blessed life. And because it is God’s word, it has in and of itself sufficient authority, esteem, trustworthiness, solidity, truth, regard, and completeness, so that it does not need first to be authenticated or made trustworthy by the church or by men or replaced or completed by teachings of men. (E. F. K. Müller, *Die Bekenntnisschriften der reformierten Kirche* [1903], 154–55, excerpt translated by Amy Nelson Burnett)

However, after it lists the books of the Old and New Testaments, the confession includes a clear polemic against Luther’s opinions about Hebrews, James, and Revelation, as the italics indicate:

> In all of the books of the New Testament there is no *hard knot* to confuse us [cf. Luther on Heb. 6], nor do we hold that there might be some *useless straw* in them or that they mix up *one thing in another in a disorderly way* [cf. Luther on James]. And if the human spirit cannot make its sense of Revelation or other books, then we pay no regard to its problem. For we know well that we humans should be guided by the Scripture, not the Scripture by us. (Müller, *Bekenntnisschriften*, 155; trans. D. L. Guder and J. J. Guder in K. Barth, *Theology of the Reformed Confessions* [2005], 50, italics added)

4.2 *John Calvin* understood himself as a pupil of Luther. He gave the Holy Scripture a priority in principle over all church tradition and regarded Romans as theologically the most important book of the New Testament. Nevertheless, Calvin did not see the main task of theology and scriptural exegesis as differentiating between the commanding and the justifying Christ, or the law and the gospel. Instead, following Zwingli, Calvin emphasized the overarching *covenant* (cf. Exod. 20:2) spanning the Old and New Testaments: “Calvin allows . . . the Pauline and Reformational idea of the law as the demand of God that condemns all people, and of the gospel as the unconditional promise of grace, to be encompassed by a *broader understanding* both of the *law*, which includes God’s covenantal promise given to the patriarch Abraham and renewed at Sinai, and of the *gospel*, which in keeping with the New Testament exhortations includes the incipient obedience under God’s ongoing call to sanctification” (A. Peters, *Gesetz und Evangelium* [1981], 99).

If the analysis presented above in chapters 18, 19, 21, and 23 is correct (cf. esp. 297–99, §§5.4–6; 314–16, §5.4; 358–59, §1.2.2.3.4; 374–76, §2.4.2.7; 411–17, §2.2–3) concerning the Pauline understanding of law, justification, and sanctification, then Calvin with his view was by no means exegetically less well advised than Luther!

4.3 The *Roman Catholic* side massively contradicted the Reformation position at the Council of Trent: The Catholic authorities not only defined the two-part biblical canon according to the standard and wording of the Vulgate, but also designated Scripture and church tradition as worthy of equal veneration and reserved the teaching office exclusively for “holy mother the Church, . . . since it belongs to her to judge the true meaning and interpretation of Holy Scripture” (Denzinger, §1507). Moreover, Trent’s Decree on Justification from February 13, 1547, established an interpretation of the doctrine of justification that contradicted the Reformation understanding at decisive points (cf. Denzinger, §§1520–1583).

Nevertheless, at least on the question of the relationship between Scripture, tradition, and the teaching authority of the church (i.e., the magisterium), the church’s position as represented at Trent experienced some development at the Second Vatican Council with its Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*, “The Word of God,” of November 18, 1965 (Denzinger, §§4201–4235). Several passages give Scripture a certain priority over tradition as the two parts of the one word of God, speaking of this complex as theology’s “primary and perpetual foundation” (*DV* 24, §4231) and “the supreme rule of faith” (*DV* 21, §4228), and noting that “the apostolic preaching . . . is expressed in a special way in the inspired books” (*DV* 8, §4209). Admittedly, *Dei Verbum* still reserves the task of interpreting this single word of God exclusively for the magisterium: “Sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the Word of God, committed to the Church. . . . But the task of authentically interpreting the Word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively *to the living teaching office of the Church* (*vivo Ecclesiae Magisterio*), whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ” (*DV* 10, §§4213–4214, italics added).

However, this is immediately followed by an important qualification that places the church teaching office under the authority of the “word of

God” or “deposit of faith” comprised of both Scripture and tradition: “This teaching office is not above the word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on, listening to it devoutly, guarding it scrupulously, and explaining it faithfully in accord with a divine commission and with the help of the Holy Spirit. It draws from this one deposit of faith everything that it presents for belief as divinely revealed” (*DV* 10, §4214).

Such statements from *Dei Verbum* in 1965 point beyond the confessional controversy of the sixteenth century. (On this document, see further P. A. Egan, *Philosophy and Catholic Theology* [2009], 31–38.)

Despite this increasing agreement between Catholics and Protestants about the authority of Scripture and the relationship of Scripture and tradition, recent discussions between the confessions have still not made it possible to reach agreement on the question of justification. The conversations between Catholics and Lutherans in the USA and between the Lutheran World Federation and the Vatican about the priority and meaning of the doctrine of justification show that while both sides have made significant progress toward a common understanding of justification, full consensus has not yet been reached. Unfortunately, the Reformed churches have not yet been genuinely included in these discussions. As things stand, a confessional consensus will be attainable only when all sides are ready to inquire again exegetically about the center of Scripture, to think about Calvin’s unresolved questions to Luther, and to take the risk of recommending to their churches a theological change that is really based on Scripture.

5 In the context of this still-unresolved problem of Scripture’s center, it is advisable to pose the question in such a way that the ancient church’s “rule of faith” is not sidelined but is rather made soteriologically more precise. Such an approach is in keeping with the efforts of the apostolic witnesses to value their agreement in their confession of the faith and their teaching of the one gospel of Jesus’s death for our sins more highly than their disagreements.

5.1 As one proceeds to try to determine the center of Scripture under these presuppositions, three commonly proposed solutions should be excluded from the start. First, one should not undermine the quest for authoritative doctrine—which already exercised the minds of the New Testament authors—by pointing only to the person of the living Christ Jesus and saying that the center of Scripture must be sought first and last in Christ and the only true God. This is of course correct. But from the very beginning the church of Jesus Christ also needed to be able to confess the one God and his Christ with clear words and to proclaim the message of Christ no less clearly. The church is by no means relieved of this ancient duty today.

By the same token one must resist the temptation to assemble a small canon of Pauline texts, declare this to be the center of Scripture, and then marginalize all the rest of the New Testament witnesses by accusing them of representing “early Catholicism.” This procedure has little to do with Luther’s approach and nothing to do with Calvin’s. It leads only to the totally unsatisfying alternatives of Protestant Paulinism and Catholic breadth, of *sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone) and *tota Scriptura* (Scripture in its totality), leaving the unresolved doctrinal and confessional questions still hanging in the balance.

Finally, it is not enough simply to warn of the danger of a potentially mutable “canon within the canon” and to advise exegetes to pay equal attention to all the New Testament books, as B. M. Metzger has done: “New Testament scholars have the responsibility as servants of the Church to investigate, understand, and elucidate, for the development of the Christian life of believers, the full meaning of every book within the canon and not only of those which may be most popular in certain circles and at certain times. Only in such a way will the Church be able to hear the Word of God in all of its breadth and depth” (Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament* [1987], 282).

As welcome as this call to action is, it still does not relieve exegetes of the responsibility of informing their audiences about the central teaching of the New Testament.

5.2 In order to make progress, it is best to follow the experienced advice of W. G. Kümmel, who has worked through the problem of the canon in several standard works of exemplary clarity. According to Kümmel, after almost three hundred years of historical criticism of the canon and critical exegesis of the Old and New Testaments, the question of the center of Holy Scripture can no longer be answered only by a reference to the Reformation confessions. We must rather try to reach the center of Scripture by proceeding from the main traditions of the New Testament, without ignoring the Old Testament in the process.

Kümmel understands the main New Testament traditions to include the proclamation of Jesus, the kerygma of the early church, the testimony of Paul, and the message of John’s Gospel and letters. For him, two essential components belong to the center of the New Testament:

> On the one hand in the teaching of Jesus and the early church but also with Paul (and the Gospel of John), the message of the dawning of the eschatological time of salvation in Jesus Christ has its essential counterpart in the promise of the consummation of salvation in the future coming of

> the Risen One. On the other hand it must just as strongly be emphasized that according to all these witnesses, the essence of this present and eschatological saving event is to be found in this: that despite humanity's sin, God himself condescended to become human in Jesus Christ and offered to humanity his saving love, which finds its consummation in the cross and resurrection of Jesus. (Kümmel, "Das Problem der 'Mitte des Neuen Testaments,'" 73)

Kümmel himself adds precision to this statement by referring to W. Joest, who considers

> the Pauline-Reformational proclamation of justification to constitute the very center of the exegesis of the word of God that is spoken in Jesus Christ. But of course this holds true only under two conditions, first that justification is not detached from its connection to Jesus as the personal bearer of the gracious presence of the justifying God, so that Jesus is not understood only as the first preacher of justification; and second that justification is not detached from empowerment for the *nova oboedientia* ["new obedience"] and is therefore not understood as mere amnesty. (Joest, "Die Frage des Kanons," 198)

5.3 If one accepts Kümmel's advice, then the center of Scripture corresponds with the Pauline message of the justification of the ungodly by faith alone for Christ's sake (cf. Rom. 4:5) to the same degree to which Paul considered the one apostolic gospel he quotes in 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 to be the quintessence of God's gospel concerning Jesus Christ, which he was commissioned to proclaim by the risen Christ on his way to Damascus. At the center of the message that Paul called "his" gospel (cf. Gal. 1:11; Rom. 2:16) stood justification and the call to serve the righteousness that is God's will (cf. Rom. 6:17–18). Now that W. H. Schmidt and O. Hofius have shown that the justification of the ungodly can be designated the material center of the Scripture even according to the judgment of modern exegesis of the Old and New Testaments, nothing speaks against stating more precisely the one gospel of 1 Corinthians 15:3b–5 (above all) in a Pauline sense.

There is a unique depth to Paul's theological insight. Because he was a Jew and former Pharisee, Paul's Damascus call, which made him into an apostle of Jesus Christ, forced him into the kind of fundamental reflection about the relationship between the gospel of Christ and the law of Moses and between God's free and unconditional acceptance of the sinner in Christ and the sinner's position before God that was not required of Peter, James, or any of the other apostles.

In several essential points Paul thought soteriologically deeper and clearer than James, Peter, and other apostles. For this reason he was also repeatedly misunderstood and criticized. In the sometimes acrimonious debates that grew out of these misunderstandings, Paul took his stand on the uniqueness and immutability of the gospel revealed to him near Damascus. He called down a curse, the loss of salvation, upon all who would wish to

tie this gospel additionally to the demands of circumcision and life within Judaism (cf. Gal. 1:8–9). Paul did not direct this curse against Peter, James, John, or any other of the apostles called before him. But he did direct it against all the called or uncalled helpers and partisans of these apostles who proclaimed a different gospel and a different Christ from the one who had appeared to Paul outside Damascus (cf. Gal. 1:7; 2 Cor. 11:3–4; Rom. 3:8; 16:17–18; Phil. 3:18–19). There is no doubt that this curse was intended to safeguard the gospel of God's free electing grace in Jesus Christ, which is not bound to any preconditions whatsoever. However, this curse against distorters of the gospel of free grace without preconditions must not be extended illegitimately and redirected against a related teaching that is also and especially found in Paul. The fact is that God's gospel concerning Jesus Christ sets conditions for the sanctification of believers, obligating both preachers of the gospel and members of the church of Jesus Christ to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of that gospel (cf. 1 Cor. 9:12, 16–18, 27; Phil. 1:27; further 1 Thess. 2:12; Eph. 4:1; Col. 1:10). According to Romans 2:16 and 6:15–23, this earthly conduct has end-time significance.

5.4 From the letters of Paul on the one hand and Matthew, Hebrews, and James on the other, it becomes apparent that the understanding of the relationship between justification and the final judgment remained in dispute between Paul and the other main witnesses of Jewish Christianity. In the matter of the final judgment, as in justification, Paul saw the only hope of salvation for believers to lie in Jesus Christ and his intercession (cf. Rom. 8:34–39), without thereby denying that good deeds of righteousness will certainly bring their reward (cf. 1 Cor. 3:8, 14–15; 9:17–18; Rom. 6:22). By contrast, in Revelation, Matthew, Hebrews, and James God's saving acceptance of sinners in the final judgment by virtue of the intercession of the crucified Christ is not as clearly distinguished from reward and punishment for good words and evil deeds. Paul's subtly differentiated message of justification was regarded with suspicion as a message that disparages Christ as a servant of sin (cf. Gal. 2:17) and promotes Christian licentiousness (cf. Rom. 3:5–8; 6:1, 15); even Paul himself had to fight such a distorted understanding of his message in the churches he founded (cf. only 1 Cor. 5:1–5; 9:24–26; 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1). In view of this capacity for Paul's teaching of justification to be misunderstood, Jewish Christians outside the Pauline school had no reason to restrict the scope of their call to sanctification to different degrees of

heavenly reward as Paul did. But this is not yet the full story. As has already been suggested, from the perspective of their own personal and tradition-historical presuppositions, the Jewish Christian apostles before and alongside Paul were neither forced to nor in the position to formulate a soteriology as penetratingly and dialectically as the apostle himself did. For Paul himself had learned the hard way outside Damascus that even the most pious zeal for the Torah could lead to hostility to God's ways in and through Jesus Christ (cf. Gal. 1:13–14). The other apostles did not experience that in this way. Therefore they also saw no need to view both Gentiles and Jews as radically as sinners as Paul did.

When one considers these circumstances, one will neither absolutize nor trivialize the differences between Paul and the Jewish Christian witnesses discussed above. One can and should allow James 2:1–26 to lead one (back) to a full understanding of the often misunderstood Pauline doctrine of justification. One should take the statements of Hebrews about the impossibility of a person who had once been enlightened and shared in the Holy Spirit but then fell away to be restored again to repentance (cf. Heb. 6:4–6; 10:26–27) as an incentive and warning not to turn a deaf ear to Jesus's saying about the unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit (cf. Mark 3:28–29 par.). One must learn from Matthew not to separate the justifying and the commanding Christ, but to see him as the God-sent Savior whom God has made Lord and Judge of the world. There is also no reason to sideline the warnings to the seven churches of Revelation 2:1–3:22 by appealing to Paul; and the rest of the book is noteworthy if for no other reason than that it sheds light on how the apostles, including Paul, understood the end-time events (cf. only 1 Cor. 15:23–28 with Rev. 20:1–22:5). However, such a reading of James, Hebrews, Matthew, and Revelation cannot be an obstacle to understanding the one apostolic gospel in the entire depth, breadth, and logical consistency with which, by God's providence, it has been especially presented by Paul. This especially Pauline understanding of the gospel therefore deserves to be held up as the authoritative standard for the teaching of the church set by the New Testament itself.

6 There is also a special relationship between the testimony of the Synoptic Gospels and that of John's Gospel and letters. Whereas the Synoptics preserve the traditional apostolic Jesus tradition and package it in a form suitable for church instruction, in John's school this tradition is

steeped and formulated in the spirit of faith to such an extent that the ancient church rightly referred to the Johannine testimony as "spiritual." The Johannine testimony is not meant to replace the synoptic tradition. But it teaches readers to understand that tradition spiritually and to confess Jesus the Christ as the creative saving Word of the one God in person, thereby rendering an inestimable service to the church. If one reads John's letters and Gospel together, only a few hints about the justification of the ungodly show up. However, at a deeper level there is profound agreement with Paul. In fact, in some Johannine passages the one God's gracious dealings with believers through his only Son come to the fore even more pointedly than they do in Paul (cf. only 1 John 2:1–2; 4:9–10; John 3:16; 11:25–26; 14:6). On the other hand, the Pauline doctrines of justification and sanctification are incomparably more detailed than the Johannine teachings. The theological center of the New Testament and the Scripture is marked out not by Paul alone, but also by John's testimony. But the special accentuation of this tradition prohibits it from being put in the place of the Pauline teaching.

7 When these insights are all taken together, it appears that it is legitimate not only to speak of the center of Scripture but also to give it a particular formulation and make it more precise than has already been indicated in the six points above (§§2.1–2.6): *The one apostolic gospel concerns the atonement (at-one-ment) and reconciliation of God with humanity through his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. This gospel—lived by Jesus, proclaimed in exemplary fashion by Paul, and infused with the Spirit by the Johannine school—is the saving message for the world par excellence. The gospel proclaims that in the mission, work, atoning death, and resurrection of his Son, the one God who created the world and chose Israel to be his own people has provided for the end-time deliverance of Jews and Gentiles once for all. Whoever believes this gospel, acknowledges Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and follows his instructions in the community of believers gains a share in the kingdom of God. Christ represents this kingdom already today, and he will carry it through to the final judgment and establish it for the glory of God his Father on the last day.*

8 The center of Scripture is constituted by events and traditions that precede the Christian faith (cf. Rom. 5:6–8). It appears in central biblical texts that belong to very different genres. These include hymnic texts (Luke

1:46–55; John 1:1–18; Phil. 2:6–11; Col. 1:15–20; etc.), confessions (1 Cor. 15:3b–5; Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 8:6; Rom. 4:5, 17; 10:9; etc.), didactic texts (Rom. 1:1–4; 3:21–26; 1 John 2:1–2; 4:7–16; etc.), historical narratives (Luke 7:18–23 par.; Matt 11:25–27; 28:16–20; Mark 14:22–25 par.), and paraclesis (Mark 12:28–34 par.; 1 Cor. 13; Rom. 12:1–2; 1 Pet. 2:1–10; etc.). The variety of these different sorts of texts signals that the center of the Scripture is meant to be received simultaneously by mind, heart, and will. This center has wisdom character and enlightens a person only when and to the degree to which the person internalizes and obeys it (cf. John 7:16–17). The scriptural center testifies about the truth that determines life and death, which the New Testament sees embodied in the living Christ. It presupposes that through the word of the gospel, the Holy Spirit produces faith in this Christ and insight into the truth in individual believers and the church of Jesus Christ as a whole. The center of Holy Scripture can be summarized in statements, but is not exhausted by propositional truths. Fathoming its depths requires not only biblical exegesis but also biblical dogmatics, and true understanding requires participation in the life of the church.

In recent years systematic expositions of biblical theology have been presented especially by B. S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (1992), and F. Mildenberger, *Biblische Dogmatik: Eine biblische Theologie in dogmatischer Perspektive* (3 vols., 1991–1993). Childs takes the biblical texts of both Testaments as his starting point and inquires about their distinctive and common statements about God, creation, Christ, reconciliation, law and gospel, etc. By contrast, Mildenberger's *Biblische Dogmatik* follows a biblically based but dogmatically structured program: the first volume contains the prolegomena in the form of reflections on the understanding and authority of the Bible; the second and third volumes provide the content. Mildenberger consciously interrelates the doctrine of God and the teaching about God's economy or administration of his plan for the world. Accordingly, in volume 2 he presents how God can be spoken of appropriately in the light of this interrelationship, while in volume 3 he explains how under these conditions we should speak of the world and humanity before God.

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Further Reading

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CHAPTER 42

The Canon and Its Interpretation

The two-part biblical canon is a book of the church to which all the major confessions see themselves bound. There is therefore not only an academic but also an ecclesiastical interest in seeing that the canon is interpreted properly. The long, interesting, and varied history of Christian biblical interpretation cannot be presented here (cf. on this P. Stuhlmacher, *Vom Verstehen des Neuen Testaments* [1986^{2}]). But the question must still be raised: What should an interpretation that does justice to the biblical books look like? H. Gese has asked himself this question and advises exegetes of the Old and New Testaments to proceed from the following basic hermeneutical principle: "*A text is to be understood as it wants to be understood, that is, as it understands itself*" ("Hermeneutische Grundsätze," 249, italics added). If one follows this advice, then the proper interpretation must first and foremost respect the unique character of the biblical tradition, take this tradition's embeddedness in the biblical canon seriously, and face its claims squarely.

1 The unique character of the biblical texts derives from the fact that they have come down to us as a result of a long canonical process of handing on traditions in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. The churches view these texts as the original documentation of the unsurpassable revelation of the one God who has done everything necessary for the world's salvation in and through Christ. One can do justice to the historical and theological uniqueness of these texts only when one encounters them with a keen historical consciousness without silencing their claim to testify to a truth that precedes and surpasses all human understanding.

1.1 The *historical consciousness* that the biblical tradition requires of its interpreters is not exhausted by their being prepared to interpret the texts with the entire (constantly changing) methodological ensemble of the historical disciplines. Rather, historical consciousness also includes being willing to come to the tradition with "critical sympathy" (W. G. Kümmel), not least when the tradition's way of thinking is foreign to the modern

mind. Only when exegetes are ready and able to take up and accept statements that are foreign to them will biblical interpretation lead to the expansion of modern knowledge beyond the limits of modern experience.

There is no doubt that biblical texts (like others) must be interpreted with historical-critical methods. No solid knowledge comes without critical penetration of texts, traditions, and other evidence. However, biblical criticism especially must avoid absolutizing or ideologically overdepending on its own methodological doubts. Protestant biblical scholarship has suffered from such overdependence for a long time, and it can only do the discipline good to finally take a step back from this. A review of the history of biblical criticism shows that the historical-critical method at its best can be regarded as "a shorthand expression for that self-involvement with the past in which a life-giving act for the present takes place" (O. Merk, "Theologie des Neuen Testaments," 127). However, this is true only when the interpreter has learned no longer to speak with E. Troeltsch of an "omnipotence of analogy" which implies "the similarity (in principle) of all historical events" ("Historical and Dogmatic Method," 14). One must also have learned not only to desire to assimilate the biblical traditions to the modern consciousness, but also to accept and ponder afresh what is unwieldy and without analogy in them. Since the days of J. S. Semler, D. F. E. Schleiermacher, F. C. Baur, and J. Wellhausen, historical criticism has made not only great strides but also serious missteps, which have done and will continue to do harm to the truth of the gospel. One need think only of the disastrous depreciation of the Old Testament and early Judaism by Semler, Schleiermacher, and parts of the history of religions school, the radical Gospel criticism based on the erroneous assumption of the formation of traditions by anonymous church collectives, or the analysis and criticism of the New Testament resurrection texts by G. Lüdemann (*The Resurrection of Jesus* [1994]). We have no better instrument for unlocking historical phenomena and texts than the ensemble of historical-critical methods. Therefore we must also apply this instrument in biblical scholarship and constantly seek to improve it. But this is most likely to succeed when we renounce all Enlightenment pathos in our historical work and no longer cling to the allusion that the mere implementation of the historical-critical method necessarily guarantees realistic results.

1.2 Without solid *philological knowledge*—more precisely, without knowledge of Hebrew and Aramaic, of classical Greek and the only partly identical biblical Greek—the textual world of the Old and New Testament books cannot be opened up. Exegetes are required to become a Hebrew, an Aramean, or a Greek before approaching the texts entrusted to them and to interpret them only when they have identified themselves with the speakers of these languages.

Luther recognized the importance of the ancient languages for Bible study earlier and more clearly than many others. In his open letter "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools" of 1524 (just two years after his own epoch-making New Testament translation), Luther writes:

> Although the gospel came and still comes to us through the Holy Spirit alone, we cannot deny that it came through the medium of languages,

> was spread abroad by that means, and must be preserved by the same means.
>
> In proportion then as we value the gospel, let us zealously hold to the languages. For it was not without purpose that God caused his Scriptures to be set down in these two languages alone—the Old Testament in Hebrew, the New in Greek. Now if God did not despise them but chose them above all others for his word, then we too ought to honor them above all others.
>
> And let us be sure of this: we will not preserve the gospel without the languages. The languages are the sheath in which this sword of the Spirit [Eph. 6:17] is contained; they are the casket in which this jewel is enshrined.
>
> Hence, it is inevitable that unless the languages remain, the gospel must finally perish.
>
> (*LW* 45:358–59; WA 15:37–38)

1.3 Because the textual world of the biblical books grows out of particular historical circumstances, careful answers to the questions normally addressed in works of Old Testament and New Testament "introduction" are extremely important. This also holds true for the question of the historical setting of the Old and New Testament traditions as a whole. When one skips over the historical questions and considers only how the biblical texts may be understood in their canonical context, their original sense remains in the dark. But this is the sense that matters for theology, insofar as the texts want to bear witness to God's revelation. In order to arrive at the primary sense of the tradition, exegesis must differentiate between the tradition's deep and superficial layers and diachronic and synchronic aspects, and endeavor to gain the most precise picture possible of the tradition-building processes from which the biblical texts emerged. However, because one can often analyze these traditions only with the help of plausible hypotheses, the main task of critical biblical interpretation is not to exhibit the preliminary stages of the present texts, but to explain the *final canonical form* in which they have come down to us.

1.4 On the basis of the multilayered process of canon formation, the Old and New Testaments belong intrinsically together. This remains true despite the fact that the New Testament does not simply continue the Old

Testament but testifies to the mission of Jesus the Christ as the climax and completion of the revelation of the one God. However, because this testimony is given with constant reference to the Holy Scriptures and the most important authors and bearers of the New Testament traditions were Jews by birth, from a history of religions standpoint, their testimony is first and foremost to be understood from the Old Testament and in the context of *early Judaism*.

The supposed contrast between Judaism and Hellenism that was emphasized until the middle of the twentieth century has been proved by new textual and archeological discoveries to be mistaken. Therefore, it should now be easier for New Testament exegesis to give up the presupposition of the history of religions school, which understood the New Testament as the product of ancient syncretism. This view could only have arisen for two reasons: the long separation of Old Testament and New Testament studies in the universities, and the problematic assumption concerning the development of the canon that posits a long "intertestamental" period between the close of the Hebrew canon and the beginning of the New Testament tradition. Scholars also constantly misinterpreted history of religions analogies as genealogies or influences. However, for the Jewish Christian authors of the New Testament and for many of their readers, ancient Judaism and its faith-world were by no means just one element of the religious "environment" on a par with the religious philosophy of the Hellenistic period, the mystery religions, or the Greek and Roman ruler cults. Jesus, his chosen twelve apostles, James, Paul, Apollos, Barnabas, and many of their addressees were all religiously at home in Judaism. They therefore had no reason to derive the key concepts and content of their testimony about Christ from the traditions of those pagans that Judaism viewed as addicted to idolatry and as morally too weak to take on the demands of the Torah.

2 If exegetes wish to do justice to the biblical texts, they must not only respect their historical character and language, but also squarely face their truth claims. But in order to do so, exegetes will need to transcend the boundaries of historical criticism that objectify the texts as elements of the past in order to observe and analyze them better from a distance.

2.1 The first step in crossing these boundaries requires respect for the fact that many biblical texts—both in the process of canon formation and more fully throughout their history of influence and interpretation—have gained the status of "eminent texts" (H.-G. Gadamer). These texts are of such spiritual weight that they demand a response from their interpreters. In the Bible such texts include the definition of the name Yahweh in Exodus 3:14; the "ten words" of Exodus 20:1–21 (Deut. 5:6–22); the "holy, holy, holy" of Isaiah 6:3; the vision of the *Lord's chariot-throne* in Ezekiel 1:3–28; the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew 5:1–7:29; the Johannine prologue in John 1:1–18; the definition of the gospel from Romans 1:16–17; the song in praise of love in 1 Corinthians 13; etc. These (and many other) texts confront exegetes with traditions of such weightiness that they

cannot analyze or interpret them without being interpreted themselves in the process. If exegetes really want to do justice to the biblical texts, they should not resist the required modifications in their methods of interpretation so as to be more responsible to the textual tradition.

2.2 U. Wilckens has called attention to a second, deeper dimension of scriptural interpretation. Wilckens challenges New Testament interpretation not to suppress "the *spiritual-eschatological overall dimension* of the testimony of all the New Testament writings that is unambiguously recognizable by historical criticism." For there is "a dimension of reality that as such is not accessible to reason and is 'metaphysical,' whose 'real' effect in all of early Christianity cannot be eliminated from a proper historical picture of early Christianity" ("Schriftauslegung," 57). A look at passages like 1 John 4:6; John 3:5–6, 34; 4:23; 6:63; 14:17, 26; 15:26; 16:13; Gal. 3:5; 4:6; 1 Cor. 2:6–16; 12:3; 14:1–40; 2 Cor. 1:22; Rom. 5:5; 8:9–17; Col. 3:16–17; Rev. 2:7, 11, 17; etc., shows that Wilckens's challenge is justified. If this challenge is taken seriously, then biblical interpretation must not restrict itself only to the explanation of historical facts and textual statements. In order to really understand the texts entrusted to them, interpreters must also seek to get inside the "underlying spiritual experience" in which both the authors and recipients of these texts lived (ibid., 62). The powers of historical imagination on their own do not provide adequate access to the spiritual life of early Christianity. If interpreters really want to follow in the tracks of the texts they seek to interpret, they will have no choice but to make themselves at home in the spiritual and liturgical tradition of the church's life, which stands in continuity with the "spiritual worship" (λογικὴ λατρεία) of early Christianity (cf. Rom. 12:1).

What Wilckens refers to as the "spiritual criticism of historical critical exegesis" (ibid., 63) is not a new theme. In the preface to his famous study on faith, *Der Glaube im Neuen Testament* (1885), A. Schlatter wrote: "I must not fail to state that in my own view, whatever I myself may possess in terms of insight into the New Testament's attitude to faith has been made accessible to me only in the closest connection with that which I myself have received through the grace of God and Christ. Therefore, to me it is almost inconceivable that apart from my own believing posture, but relying only on the mediation of an imagination that strives to simulate and empathize with alien spiritual conditions, the New Testament concept of faith could ever become transparent" (A. Schlatter, *Der Glaube im Neuen Testament* [1982^{6}], xxii).

This conviction brought Schlatter much criticism. But it remains just as worthy of consideration as Schlatter's passionate plea in 1905 against "atheistic methods in theology" (in W. Neuer, *Adolf Schlatter: A Biography of Germany's Premier Biblical Theologian* [1995], 211–25). K. Barth

endorsed Schlatter's view in his own way when he wrote about the proponents of the radical historical biblical criticism of his day in the preface to the second edition of his Romans commentary in 1921:

> The critical historian needs to be more *critical*. . . . Criticism (κρίνειν) applied to historical documents means for me the measuring of words and phrases by the standard of that about which the documents are speaking—unless indeed the whole be nonsense. When documents contain answers to questions the answer must be brought into relation with the questions which are presupposed, and not with some other questions. And moreover, proper concentration of exegesis presses behind the many questions to the one cardinal question by which all are embraced. Everything in the text ought to be interpreted only in the light of what *can* be said, and therefore only in the light of what *is* said. (Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, "Preface to the Second Edition," trans. from 6th ed. [1933], 8, italics from Barth's German)

Biblical exegesis that seeks to do justice to the texts as given must not only subject the judgment of these texts to the autonomous reason that is active in historical criticism, but must also take into account the criticism of this reason pronounced by the biblical texts themselves (cf. 1 Cor. 1:18–31; 2 Cor. 10:3–6).

3 The problem of interpretation expands to include the entire Bible when one dares to take the *inspiration of the Holy Scriptures* into account. This inspiration is so clearly attested that exegesis must take a position on this phenomenon. Before the beginning of the Christian era, ancient Judaism already assumed that the Hebrew and Greek biblical texts were "God-breathed," θεόπνευστος (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16 NIV). Because Jesus while on earth ministered and taught by the divine Spirit, which he possessed "without measure" (cf. Mark 1:9–11 par.; Luke 10:21–22 par.; John 3:34), his word became just as authoritative for the church as the word of God in the Spirit-filled Old Testament Scriptures (cf. 1 Cor. 7:10; John 3:34 as well as John 3:14; 6:39 with 18:9). Paul claimed to speak by the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Cor. 2:10–16; 7:40), and his letters were collected because they were filled with revealed "wisdom" (cf. 2 Cor. 10:10 with 2 Pet. 3:15–16). The testimony of the Johannine writings also stands totally under the sign of the gift and activity of the Holy Spirit (cf. Rev. 2:7, 11, etc.; 1 John 5:6; John 14:26; 16:13). Under these circumstances it is perfectly understandable that the view of the Old Testament as inspired Scripture was extended to the New Testament. The biblical books united in the canon were considered inspired in the ancient church, and this view did not change in the confessional churches: In the Orthodox churches and the Roman Catholic Church the doctrine of inspiration remains constitutive for the understanding of the Bible, whereas in the Protestant churches inspiration is

still upheld dogmatically in some quarters, but has otherwise become an embarrassment under the influence of critical exegesis.

This embarrassment results above all from the fact that old Protestant orthodoxy used a theory of *verbal inspiration* to defend Scripture's exact wording, clarity, and inerrancy against critical Roman Catholic theologians such as Richard Simon (1638–1712) and Valerianus Magni (1586–1661). These theologians held that the Holy Scripture had been transmitted in such different text forms and with such diverse interests that the Christian Bible and its claims about faith could only be preserved with the help of the Catholic Church and its teaching office or *magisterium*. Furthermore, they claimed that only the church could guarantee authoritative scriptural interpretation and assurance of faith, because the Scripture in itself is unclear. Protestant orthodoxy failed with its view of verbal inspiration at every step, because it was impossible in the long run to deny the biblical textual variants that were already being discovered in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

3.1 Nevertheless, as in other cases of overinterpretation or mistaken interpretation of the biblical data, the failure of the Protestant orthodox idea of verbal inspiration offers no excuse to ignore the spiritual claims made by the biblical texts themselves. The idea of inspiration makes the best sense when one recalls its origins. In biblical times appeals to inspiration were only very marginally used to distinguish holy books and texts from "profane" ones, and therefore the doctrine of inspiration played only a marginal role in the history of canon formation. The real issue is made clear in Luke 24:25–27, 44–48; John 14:26; 16:13; Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:16; and 2 Peter 1:16–21: the doctrine of inspiration is intended to teach *proper handling of the biblical writings*. Those responsible for teaching must make sure that the one God and Father of Jesus Christ speaks especially through the Holy Scriptures to the church of Jesus Christ. Therefore, teachers should use the Spirit-filled Scriptures in proclamation and instruction (cf. 2 Tim. 4:2). Despite the common interpretation, 2 Timothy 3:16 does not define the inspiration of Scripture, but presupposes it. The crucial term here, θεόπνευστος, "inspired," is not a predicate adjective following an assumed verb "is," as in "All scripture *is* inspired by God" (NRSV), but rather an attributive adjective as part of a single phrase, "*all inspired scripture*" (REB; see above, 467–68). This passage is intended to impress upon Timothy (and all teachers in the church) that "All scripture given by God's Spirit is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness."

3.2 From 2 Peter 1:16–21 it becomes apparent how this view of inspiration was at work at the beginning of the second century in a conflict with Christian (probably gnostic) heretics. The author of this letter points

out that the Spirit-filled Holy Scriptures are to be interpreted in the light of the faith tradition that God revealed through Christ to Peter and the other apostles. The meaning of the Scriptures therefore remains hidden to people such as the heretics, who criticize the apostolic tradition and pursue their own "private interpretation" (*ἰδία ἐπίλυσις*, 2 Pet. 1:20 KJV, REB). According to 2 Peter 3:14–16, this criticism of the heretics' interpretation of the Old Testament also applies to their approach to the emerging New Testament. The author has already hinted at the inspiration of both Old and New Testaments by instructing his readers to "remember the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken through your apostles" (3:2). By contrast, the author describes the heretics as "scoffers" (3:3) who do not hold to the apostolic expectation of the parousia and the day of judgment (cf. 2 Pet. 3:3–13). They are "unstable" in faith and "twist to their own destruction" the wisdom-filled letters of Paul just "as they do the other [New Testament?] scriptures" (2 Pet. 3:16).

Here for the first time it is pointed out that the Spirit-filled Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments can only be properly expounded when they are interpreted in and for the church according to what we now call "the analogy of faith." (This is a theological expression taken from Romans 12:6, where Christians are instructed to use prophecy and other spiritual gifts *κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως*, "in proportion to faith.") Accordingly, *2 Peter 1:16–21 and 3:14–16 offer the first outline of a church hermeneutic of the Bible*. Ever since then the church's entire interpretation of the two-part Christian Bible has stood under the proviso but also the promise that only God himself, through Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, can open up the understanding of the biblical witness. Yet God also wants to open up the Scripture wherever people uphold the apostolic faith tradition and confess Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Interestingly, this hermeneutic was not subsequently imposed on the Bible, but was developed from the Bible itself.

3.3 The hermeneutic of the Bible first attested in 2 Peter has remained ecumenically valid in its basic structure until today in all the major Christian confessions. *Orthodox theology and the Orthodox churches* follow the example of the Greek church fathers, who saw scriptural interpretation in the closest connection with Christology. Referring to

Athanasius, *Against the Arians* 1.54, the modern Greek Orthodox writer J. Panagopoulos summarizes this hermeneutic: "By understanding and confessing the incarnation and the true person of the God-man Jesus Christ, one arrives at the right understanding of Scripture, and conversely, through the deep and right understanding of the word of Scripture and its historical circumstances one gains the correct and sound insight into the faith (Athanasius, *Against the Arians* 1.54). *The res scripturae* [subject matter of the Scripture] is established by a comprehensive exegesis that arises from the inner symphony of the text with its prevenient purpose, God's redemptive plan [cf. οἰκονομία, 'plan,' Eph. 1:10; 3:9]" ("Christologie und Schriftauslegung," 55).

According to the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum* ("The Word of God"), from the Second Vatican Council in 1965 (Denzinger, §§4201–4235: see chap. 40 bibliography), the *Roman Catholic Church* follows hermeneutical principles that build upon Origen, Jerome, and Augustine and point back to 1 Corinthians 2:6–16. Here Paul takes up in his own way the ancient philosophical theory of knowledge that claims that spirit can be understood only through spirit, that is, like through like (cf. the references in B. E. Gärtner, "The Pauline and Johannine Idea of 'to Know God' against the Hellenistic Background," *NTS* 14 [1967–1968]: 209–31). *Dei Verbum* first establishes that Holy Scripture must be interpreted with historical and linguistic precision: "However, since God speaks in Sacred Scripture through men in human fashion, the interpreter of Sacred Scripture, in order to see clearly what God wanted to communicate to us, should carefully investigate what meaning the sacred writers really intended, and what God wanted to manifest by means of their words" (*Dei Verbum* §12; Denzinger, §4217). But the following is added shortly thereafter: "But, since Holy Scripture must be read and interpreted in the sacred spirit in which it was written, no less serious attention must be given to the content and unity of the whole of Scripture if the meaning of the sacred texts is to be correctly worked out. The living tradition of the whole Church must be taken into account along with the harmony which exists between elements of the faith (Lat. *analogia fidei*)" (*Dei Verbum* §12; Denzinger, §4219).

During his lifetime *Martin Luther* expended all conceivable philological and historical effort on the translation and interpretation of the Bible. But as early as 1520, he also clarified his own attitude toward these efforts: "I do

not want to be praised as more learned than all others, but I want Scripture alone to be queen, and not to be interpreted through my spirit or that of any other person, but rather to be understood through itself and its own spirit" (WA 7:98–99). Luther held this view to the end of his life. In 1539 he expressly urged Bible interpreters toward humility before the Spirit-filled Scripture:

> Firstly, you should know that the Holy Scriptures constitute a book which turns the wisdom of all other books into foolishness, because not one teaches about eternal life except this one alone. Therefore you should straightway despair of your reason and understanding. With them you will not attain eternal life, but, on the contrary, your presumptuousness will plunge you and others with you out of heaven (as happened to Lucifer) into the abyss of hell. But kneel down in your little room [Matt. 6:6] and pray to God with real humility and earnestness, that he through his dear Son may give you his Holy Spirit, who will enlighten you, lead you, and give you understanding. (*LW* 34:285–86; WA 50:659)

The Reformed theologian *John Calvin* followed Luther's biblical hermeneutic in large measure with his doctrine of the "internal testimony of the Holy Spirit" that is given to the interpreter. In his *Institutes* of 1559 (1.7.4) he writes: "credibility of doctrine is not established until we are persuaded beyond doubt that God is its Author. Thus, the highest proof of Scripture derives in general from the fact that God in person speaks in it" (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. J. T. McNeill, trans. F. L. Battles, LCC 20 [1960], 78). Calvin continues: "For as God alone is a fit witness of himself in his Word, so also the Word will not find acceptance in men's hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit. The same Spirit, therefore, who has spoken through the mouths of the prophets must penetrate into our hearts to persuade us that they faithfully proclaimed what had been divinely commanded" (*Institutes* 1.7.4, p. 79).

3.4 In sum, according to the tradition held in common by the major Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant churches, the biblical doctrine of inspiration instructs people to read the Holy Scripture as a thoroughly human but also a thoroughly divine book, and so to be ready to experience how the word of God in this book can be heard not only by past but also by

present generations. The theological standard for interpreting the inspired Holy Scripture is the apostolic faith tradition founded by Scripture itself.

Dei Verbum from Vatican II takes a flexible and comprehensive approach to the faith tradition. As seen above (§3.3), the paragraph of *Dei Verbum* that concludes with an allusion to Romans 12:6 and its "analogy of faith" (English: "elements of the faith") begins with an instruction to take into account "the living tradition of the whole Church" (*Dei Verbum* §12; Denzinger, §4219). However, from the very beginning Roman Catholicism understood church tradition as a living entity that could grow and be added to. Lutheranism does not disregard church tradition, for it defines the *content of the faith* (*fides quae creditur*) not only on the basis of the scriptural "rule of faith" (cf. Rom. 12:6) but also with reference to the confessional traditions of the ancient church. Nevertheless, Lutheranism differs from Roman Catholicism in that its doctrinal norm remains the gospel that is to be derived from Scripture alone (*sola Scriptura*)—particularly the core gospel doctrine of the justification of the ungodly as a gift of grace alone (*sola gratia*) through faith alone (*sola fide*) (cf. Rom. 3:24; 4:5; 5:6; Eph. 2:8–9). Hence Lutherans have traditionally identified justification by faith to be the *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*, "the article by which the church stands or falls" (for an example of Luther's own wording, cf. "quia isto articulo stante stat Ecclesia, ruente ruit Ecclesia," "Because if this article [of justification] stands, the church stands; if this article collapses, the church collapses" [WA 40/3:352 line 3]). Because this doctrine can be designated as the center of the Scripture by solid exegetical reasoning even today, the Reformation position has not lapsed into obsolescence.

4 Behind the two-part Christian canon stands the many-sided canonical process sketched in chapter 40 above. Therefore this canon does not simply juxtapose the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, but rather presents the Old Testament books in their Septuagintal order: After the Pentateuch come the historical books, then the wisdom books including the Psalms, and finally the major and minor prophets. The New Testament opens with the four-Gospel canon, continues with the apostolic portion introduced by Acts and comprised of the Pauline and general epistles, and concludes with Revelation, which simultaneously concludes the whole canon.

This canonical presentation pictures a comprehensive way through salvation history that the one God has traveled with Israel and the world and will continue to travel until the end. When the Septuagint apocryphal books are included, the picture becomes even more clear than without them. God's way leads from creation to the election of Israel and the revelation at Mount Sinai. From there the people of God are led to Jerusalem and Mount Zion, Israel's prayers and wisdom are presented, and the prophets point forward to the New Testament fulfillment. The Gospels make it clear that the incarnation and the story of Jesus Christ climaxing in his cross and resurrection precede the church's faith and provide its foundation. The ministry of the apostles called by Jesus and newly commissioned after Easter stands under the missionary mandate to proclaim God's good news

about Jesus Christ throughout the whole world (*οἰκουμένη*) to Jews and Gentiles. At the end, the book of Revelation portrays the present and future work of establishing the kingdom through the risen Christ.

4.1 The canonical picture of the way through salvation history that God has traveled and will travel with Israel and the Gentiles is only inadequately grasped when one sharply contrasts revelation and history, as was done especially in German Protestant exegesis for decades. This antithesis partly reflects the debates about the theology of revelation and theology of history in the *Kirchenkampf* or German Church Struggle. (This refers to the struggle for the life and future of the German church in the period of National Socialism, during which prominent Protestant exegetes such as K. Barth emphasized “revelation *over against* history” in order to counteract the influences of the nationalistic “German Christian” school of thought, which viewed history as a source of revelation and therefore spoke of “revelation *through* history.”) Nevertheless, such an antithesis between revelation and history makes incomprehensible not only large parts of the Old Testament, but also the testimony of the Gospels. It therefore needs hermeneutical improvement, which can be provided in particular by the Old Testament–Jewish interpretive concept of “remembrance” (Heb. זִכָּרוֹן [*zikkārôn*]; Gk. *ἀνάμνησις*, “anamnesis”). The hermeneutical potential of this has already been pointed out by G. Bornkamm, H. Schürmann, and T. Söding. The idea of remembrance shapes and determines the collective memory of Israel from the very beginning and is therefore the presupposition for understanding all biblical historical narratives, liturgies, and prayers. The New Testament witnesses took over this concept from Jewish tradition.

The hermeneutical significance of the act of remembrance or anamnesis can best be illustrated by the examples of Passover and the Lord’s Supper. Israel has long celebrated the Passover by having members of each new generation place themselves back into the old salvation event of the exodus (cf. Exod. 12:14). Hence Mishnah tractate *Pesahim* 10:5 instructs: “In every generation a person is duty-bound to regard himself as if he personally has gone forth from Egypt, since it is said, And you shall tell your son in that day saying, it is because of that which the Lord did for *me* when *I* came forth out of Egypt (Exod. 13:8).” Jewish tradition likewise considers the so-called Hallel psalms sung at Passover (Pss. 113–118) to have been the songs of the original exodus generation. Passover therefore involves a conscious fusion of the present horizon with that of biblical history: every new generation celebrating Passover sees itself defined by the saving event proclaimed in the Passover haggadah. In the same way, Jesus’s words of institution in Luke 22:19 and 1 Corinthians 11:24–25—“this do in remembrance of me” (*τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν*)—teach Christian congregations to celebrate the Lord’s Supper in conscious remembrance of Jesus’s words and deeds

at his farewell Passover supper with the Twelve. Those gathered around the Lord's table for the Lord's Supper should recline at table with Jesus and the Twelve in their memories, "anamnetically." They should allow themselves to have the words of institution spoken to them by the Lord, who was ready to sacrifice himself and be raised for their sakes, just as the Twelve once did in Jerusalem.

Jesus's example at the Last Supper enables us to grasp the testimony of all four Gospels through an act of remembrance, as expressed in the fine formulation of G. Bornkamm:

> [The Gospels] take their hearers back to the beginning and lead them into an encounter with Jesus as on the first day, when he met his contemporaries with an appeal and a promise, with a call to repentance and saving acts, demanding a response. To our eyes this at first seems downright anachronistic, since after Easter the hearers already had the culmination of Jesus's journey and his resurrection behind them. They thereby ask the hearers at a later stage to understand themselves as the original hearers, the tax collectors and prostitutes, the just and the unjust, the Pharisees and the poor "people of the land," that is, in a situation in which the death and resurrection of Jesus were still in the future. ("Geschichte und Glaube im Neuen Testament," 24).

The idea of remembrance is the Bible's own way of reminding us that when reading Old and New Testament historical narratives, the Psalms, the canticles of Luke 1–2, and similar passages, members of the present-day church should find themselves encoded or written into the Holy Scriptures and should derive their identity from them. *The act of remembrance helps the community of Bible readers or listeners to determine their place before God in the history of salvation and revelation, which they need for their spiritual orientation*.

4.2 Within the two-part Christian Bible, *neither can the Old Testament be interpreted apart from the New nor can the New Testament be interpreted apart from the Old*. This statement bars the door against all efforts to free the New Testament from the Old and to make it the basis of an enlightened religion that wants to have nothing in common with the supposedly overly particular spirit of Israel and Judaism. J. S. Semler, D. F. E. Schleiermacher, and A. von Harnack favored such a decoupling of the Testaments, but they did the worst disservice imaginable to Protestant theology and the Protestant church in the process. Apart from the Old

Testament the New Testament is incomprehensible and susceptible to serious misinterpretations. The two-part Christian Bible also stands against the claim that, in and of itself, the Old Testament language and tradition fail to offer any adequate testimony to revelation. The texts of the Old Testament are filled with the same Spirit of the one God as those of the New Testament. They therefore do not require a christological reformulation to be able to speak to the church. Conversely, biblical exegesis that follows the canon can and must insist that the messianic and sapiential traditions of the Old Testament that point forward to Jesus Christ are not artificially marginalized but are properly presented and evaluated.

This hermeneutical requirement of presenting and evaluating messianic and sapiential traditions in Israel's Scriptures leads unavoidably to tensions with the understanding of the Scriptures among Jews, who distance themselves in principle from a christological interpretation of the biblical writings and thereby fade out essential components of the canonical process. Instead of prematurely resolving or silencing these tensions, Christian interpreters must embrace them and discuss them in fair critical dialogue with Jewish exegetes of the Old (and New) Testament(s). There are already encouraging examples of such dialogue.

4.3 Interpreting the biblical writings in their canonical context according to the rule or analogy of faith is something different from analyzing individual texts or books synchronically and diachronically. Canonical biblical interpretation must consider potential lines of connection between books that are often overlooked in interpreting individual books or passages.

Four examples briefly illustrate the point: (1) In a canonical exegesis of the Gospels, one may legitimately distinguish between the present Christ or *Christus praesens* to whom the Fourth Gospel bears witness, and the earthly Jesus who confronts readers of the Synoptics. But one must avoid playing off the historical Jesus behind the Gospel texts against the biblically attested Christ. (2) In a truly canonical interpretation of Paul, one cannot simply hold to Galatians but must also consider the Letter to the Romans that introduces the Pauline corpus, together with the deutero-Pauline epistles. (3) From a canonical perspective, the Johannine witness must not be derived from the Fourth Gospel alone but also from the Johannine letters, and the book of Revelation also cannot be neglected. (4) The overall character and contours of the New Testament testimony to the truth receive a different definition when one makes an effort to include the statements of Acts and the Catholic Epistles.

The particular historical characteristics of the individual biblical traditions are often difficult to understand and can sometimes be explained only hypothetically. Such problems of historical criticism are not a matter of indifference to canonical criticism. Nevertheless, the individual historical questions recede into the background in order to free up a view of contexts

and confessional traditions that were determinative for the canonical process and became definitive when the canon was elevated to be the norm of the church’s faith. Canonical exegesis measures the value of individual biblical texts and books by their proximity to or distance from the center of the Scripture. It therefore becomes clear that there are central and marginal statements in the Bible and that the primary and subsidiary writings of the canon must be distinguished. When readers orient themselves around Scripture’s center, they are also able to see which elements of the church’s teaching about faith were constitutive from the very beginning and which are later developments. Therefore, rather than flattening the biblical writings, canonical exegesis presents them in their definitive shape and contour. Because such results have dogmatic character, canonical exegesis crosses the boundary between historical and dogmatic study of Scripture. This is good because it commits exegetes to dogmatic reflection and accountability and also reminds dogmatic theologians of their exegetical responsibility.

The *Reformation Scripture principle* essentially has the canonical interpretation of Holy Scripture in view. The Lutheran Formula of Concord of 1577 puts it like this in its opening summary:

> We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and guiding principle according to which all teachings and teachers are to be evaluated and judged are the prophetic and Apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments alone. . . . Other writings of ancient or contemporary teachers, whatever their names may be, shall not be regarded as equal to Holy Scripture, but all of them together shall be subjected to it, and not be accepted in any other way, or with any further authority, than as witness of how and where the teaching of the prophets and apostles was preserved after the time of the apostles. (R. Kolb and T. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord* [2000], 486, §1–2)

Scripture can function as the “rule and standard” (*Regel und Richtschnur*) of the church’s faith and life only if it sets clear dogmatic and ethical standards. The framers of the Formula of Concord presupposed this with good reason. Nevertheless, the Reformation Scripture principle can be maintained only as long as the Protestant churches still have the will to uphold the doctrine of *sola Scriptura*, to hold to the norms of the faith established by Scripture, and to prevent departures from these norms through their doctrinal commissions and other means.

5. H. Gese’s hermeneutical maxim that the biblical texts and books are to be interpreted as they themselves wish to be interpreted commits exegesis to a method that conforms itself to the texts. Interpretation must pay all conceivable respect to the original wording of the text and the results of the canonical process; it must consider and affirm that the location of interpretation suggested by Scripture itself is the church, which owes its

existence to Scripture; and finally, interpretation may and must remain open to the miracle of God's self-disclosure through the texts. When one keeps in mind the canonical process of transmitting tradition and considers that the two-part Christian Bible emerged from this process, then the biblical canon beautifully illustrates and confirms K. Barth's observation that biblical theology is given the honored role "to accompany God on his path to people and thereby to gather people on this path of God" (quoted by H. Diem, *Ja oder Nein* [1974], 290). If exegesis succeeds in contributing to this gathering of people, then it has fulfilled its theological task.

Precise historical analysis of the biblical texts allows the richness and depth of the biblical traditions to be known to an often unimagined extent, and a well-thought-out hermeneutical method is indispensable for the interpretation of the individual biblical traditions and the canon. Nevertheless, these modern methods of historical analysis, text linguistics, and hermeneutics do not dispense with the need for humility (*ταπεινοφροσύνη*), with which the Bible must be read, contemplated, and taken to heart by those who wish to do justice to its claims. Without such humility it is impossible for people to understand and accept the truth of the revelation which is testified to, though not exhausted by, these texts (see above, 795–96, §2). There is therefore even today no better instruction for the understanding of Scripture than Proverbs 9:10 (NIV):

> The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
> and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
> (cf. Prov. 1:7; 15:33; Ps. 111:10; Job 28:28)

G. von Rad explains the significance of this theory of knowledge based on Proverbs 9:10:

> The thesis that all human knowledge comes back to the question about commitment to God is a statement of penetrating perspicacity. . . . It contains in a nutshell the whole Israelite theory of knowledge. In the almost abrupt way in which it is expressed, it gives the impression that some form of polemic might be involved. . . . At any rate, there lies behind the statement an awareness of the fact that the search for knowledge can go wrong . . . because of one single mistake at the beginning. One becomes competent and expert as far as the orders in

> life are concerned only if one begins from knowledge about God. To this extent, Israel attributes to the fear of God, to belief in God, a highly important function in respect of human knowledge. She was, in all seriousness, of the opinion that effective knowledge about God is the only thing that puts a man into a right relationship with the objects of his perception, that it enables him to ask questions more pertinently, to take stock of relationships more effectively and generally to have a better awareness of his circumstances. Thus it could, for example, be said that evil men do not know what is right but that those who seek Yahweh understand all things (Prov. 28.5). The opinion is evidently that turning to Yahweh facilitates the difficult distinction between right and wrong. But this was surely not true merely of the narrower sphere of moral behavior. Faith does not—as it is popularly believed today—hinder knowledge; on the contrary, it is what liberates knowledge, enables it really to come to the point and indicates to its proper place in the sphere of varied, human activity. (*Wisdom in Israel* [1972], 67–68)

It is no historical accident that the Old and New Testament traditions originated in the context of the history of *Israel* and therefore have a Jewish and Jewish Christian character. If one wishes to do justice to this character hermeneutically, then von Rad's above structural analysis of the Israelite perception of truth is of great importance for biblical exegesis. Working on this assumption, exegetes can best serve the texts entrusted to them by using their keen historical consciousness to "insert themselves back" (H.-G. Gadamer) into the matrix of Israel's old theory of knowledge and to fathom the biblical witness afresh under its banner.

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CHAPTER 43

Recent Work and Future Prospects

The original German version of this work first appeared in two volumes in 1992 and 1999 (with a substantial revision of the introductory chapter of the first volume in 2005). This was a period of rapid development of the discipline of biblical theology of the (Old and) New Testament, and the biblical theological approach was also not without its critics. This chapter therefore reviews biblical theological works, essay collections, or criticisms from this period in German by C. Dohmen and T. Söding, H. Hübner, and O. Merk, and in English by B. S. Childs, whose major work also merited a German translation; a less well-known but substantial English volume by C. H. H. Scobie is also reviewed (cf. the German review in *TLZ* 129 [2004]: 777–79, presented in English translation below, §4). In conclusion we also reflect on the unfinished tasks for those who see promise in biblical theological work in the future.

1 The volume of essays edited by **Christoph Dohmen** and **Thomas Söding**, *Eine Bibel—zwei Testamente: Positionen biblischer Theologie* (1995), documents how the discussion of biblical theology branched out in just a few years. At the same time, the volume also illustrates how exegetes have once again taken a promising new approach and shredded it into nothing more than "positions" which in their dissonant polyphony contribute less to the establishment of theological truth than the subject actually demands. Therefore one can only agree with Dohmen when he writes, "the fundamental charter of the Christian faith requires biblical theology to establish Christian identity," adding with a view to the Old Testament that because Christianity was born from and continues to be related to Judaism as its mother religion, Christianity "cannot dispense with theological reflection on the first and longest part of its Holy Scripture, Israel's Bible in the form of the Old Testament" (ibid., 16). Along the same lines, Söding emphasizes: "When exegesis seeks to account for the claims and message of the texts entrusted to it, it will be led by the texts themselves to the question about the *proprium* [proper subject matter and content] of the New Testament gospel, but also about its relationship to the

‘Scriptures’ of Israel and the theology encoded therein. The question about the unity of the Holy Scripture is implied in the New Testament’s own testimony to the faith. This question demands an answer, whose crucial point is the eschatological self-disclosure of God ‘in Christ’ ” (176).

Because both editors of this volume speak repeatedly of the Bible or the Scriptures of Israel, it is well to remember again that from the very beginning Jesus and his chosen apostles as well as Paul gave a full share in the Jewish Holy Scriptures to the New Testament church and assumed that the church was meant to embody the true Israel. Under these circumstances, the relation to the Holy Scriptures is not a Christian usurpation of Jewish traditional material, but rather an acknowledgment of the γραφαὶ ἅγιαι as the word of the one God who chose Israel to be his own people and sent Jesus the Christ for the salvation of Jews and Gentiles. On the whole, however, Dohmen and Söding are fully justified in their plea, and it is to be hoped that they will be heard.

2 The first volume of **Hans Hübner**’s three-volume *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* covers prolegomena and appeared in 1990, in time to be reviewed in the first German volume (1992) underlying the present English translation (see above, 41–43, §7). Hübner’s second volume appeared in 1993 with the subtitle: *Die Theologie des Paulus und ihre neutestamentliche Wirkungsgeschichte* (“The Theology of Paul and Its Influence within the New Testament”), showing how Hübner places Paul at the center of the biblical theology of the New Testament. Hübner’s final volume appeared in 1995, covering Hebrews, the Gospels, and Revelation and concluding the entire work with epilegomena. This concluding part contains many valuable remarks on the Old and New Testaments, New Testament Christology, and God’s way of revelation. According to Hübner, “In the *authoritative fabric* of *Holy Scripture* and *Christian* kerygma [the New Testament witnesses] see one and the same God in his self-revelation. . . . The God who has spoken—and continues to speak!—as the promise keeper in Israel’s Scriptures is the same God who has revealed himself in the historical *event* of Jesus Christ. Thus, the New Testament authors regard the God of the Scriptures as *their God*. This God of the Scriptures is *the divine Father of Jesus Christ*” (Hübner, *Biblische Theologie*, 3:276).

In view of Hübner’s three-volume work, nobody can claim any longer that it is impossible to write a biblical theology of the New Testament at the

highest level today. Whoever regards the biblical-theological approach as misguided can no longer do so only superficially, but must engage with Hübner in both method and content. The author deserves our thanks and appreciation for the fact that he has brought his theology to a conclusion and has presented results worthy of discussion. Given these results, however, there remain three critical questions that cannot be suppressed.

2.1 It is striking that Hübner as a rule adopts the current standard historical-critical judgments about the formation of the New Testament tradition. He apparently did not see himself obligated to ask fresh historical questions about the origin and transmission of the synoptic tradition, the polyvalence of the Johannine tradition, and the differentiation and synoptic comparison of the accepted and contested Pauline writings, or to reevaluate fundamental traditional texts like Colossians 1:15–20 or Matthew 28:16–20. The tradition-historical problems that have repeatedly engaged us in working through these traditions have left Hübner unmoved. Instead, he has built on the consensus of current critical exegesis of the New Testament and has glossed over the difficulties of this consensus. In this way he has deprived himself and his readers of the possibility of using biblical-theological questions to see the New Testament traditions in a different and historically more appropriate light than they appear in without these questions.

2.2 H. Gese has advised biblical exegetes to adopt a hermeneutic that will teach them to "receptively acknowledge, historically identify themselves with, and learn the reality of" the texts they interpret (*Alttestamentliche Studien* [1991], 265). However, Hübner has not been receptive to this approach. This is shown most clearly in his treatment of the topic of atonement (*Sühne*) in his second volume. From the beginning Hübner ties his analysis of Paul's understanding of redemption in Christ to the question of the existential interpretability of the Old and New Testament idea of atonement. Consequently, his argument constantly alternates between the two planes of an objectifying history of religions reflection and an acknowledgment of the revelation of the one God through the biblical texts.

For Hübner the interpretation of the key atonement text Romans 3:24–25 involves a stark alternative: "*Center of Christian faith or relic of outdated theological thinking?*" (*Biblische Theologie*, 3:278). To reach his

own result, Hübner first summarizes the (different) evaluations of the Old Testament atonement idea by Klaus Koch, Hartmut Gese, and Bernd Janowski, but then concludes that the Old Testament concept of atonement anchored in Leviticus 17:11 is “no longer comprehensible for us” and “collapses as theological statement as far as the *imagination* is concerned.” Nevertheless, Leviticus 17:11 remains capable of being interpreted existentially (284). Hübner sees the existential content of the atonement tradition in the fact that God takes the sinner seriously as a person, and that the person’s experience of sin is just as existential as the experience of forgiveness that God grants as the “*subject of the atoning action*” in and through Christ (ibid.). Since Romans 3:24–25 speaks of atonement for sins through Christ, and since Hübner interprets this to mean that Paul ignores “not only what the Priestly cultic law says, but also the real existing cultic practice” (286), Hübner believes that he is able to say with E. Käsemann that “although cultic language is not to be denied [in Rom. 3:25], what constitutes the essence of the [Israelite] cult is energetically negated” by Paul (287). Hübner further isolates Paul’s idea of atonement from that of the Old Testament by qualitatively distinguishing the reincorporation of the sinner into God’s people Israel—the goal of the Israelite atoning cult—from the Christian’s being in Christ, the essence of Paul’s thought.

These statements by Hübner are problematic because they fail to provide readers with several pieces of information they deserve to have. For example, Hübner’s readers are not informed that Paul in Romans 3:25–26a takes up an old Jewish Christian tradition and not only agrees with it but even places it at the center of his explanation of God’s righteousness. Hübner’s presentation also obscures the importance of atonement: the promotion of the atonement tradition of Leviticus 16 and 17:11 by Paul and his sources made atonement a major interpretive model for the cross event at Calvary. This only shows that atonement as achieved by God through Christ’s shed blood was supremely important to them. Hübner’s readers are also not told how Paul conceived the judicial event of the justification of the ungodly (cf. Rom. 4:5; 5:6). Therefore, it is also impossible for readers to be clear about what it means concretely to cite Paul when speaking about justification by faith alone for Christ’s sake because of God’s grace. Yet without such clarification, the Reformation understanding of justification also remains unclear! Hübner’s opposition of being-in-Israel versus being-in-Christ has little to do with Paul’s statement about Abraham as “our

Father” (Rom. 4:1) or with his idea of the church, because Paul did not reject the idea of the church as the people of God, but rather retained it (cf. Gal. 6:16; 2 Cor. 6:16; Rom. 9:25–26; 11:1–2; 15:10). In sum, Hübner’s treatment of Romans 3:24–26 shows by example that he does not follow the ancient biblical texts’ patterns of thought and language long enough to grasp what they are capable of accomplishing. Instead, he interrupts the texts with his program of existential interpretation and thus undermines precisely that biblical form of language with which biblical theology must be particularly concerned.

2.3 Hübner wants to bring the biblical texts to their proper theological application by interpreting them existentially according to the example of R. Bultmann. In the process he indeed gives more space and honor to the Old Testament than did the Marburg master. But like Bultmann, Hübner assumes that it is hermeneutically possible to separate the linguistic form of Scripture from its actual subject matter, and he simplifies the complicated historical and dogmatic questions regarding the form and substance of Christian doctrine just as freely as Bultmann did. Since the methodological shortcomings of existential interpretation are long since known, it is regrettable that Hübner has repeated (almost) all of them.

I am also not sure whether Hübner has really understood the methodological and doctrinal burden that the program of demythologizing or existential interpretation places on theology. After G. Ebeling claimed in his programmatic essay of 1950, “The Significance of the Critical Historical Method for Church and Theology in Protestantism,” that “assent to the critical historical method has essentially a deep inner connexion with the Reformers’ doctrine of justification” (*Word and Faith* [1963], 17–61, here 55), Bultmann made a contrary claim about his method of demythologizing:

> De-mythologizing is a task parallel to that performed by Paul and Luther in their doctrine of justification by faith alone without the works of the law. More precisely, de-mythologizing is the radical application of the doctrine of justification by faith to the sphere of knowledge and thought. Like the doctrine of justification, de-mythologizing destroys every longing for security. There is no difference between security based on good works and security built on objectifying knowledge. . . . Faith in God, like faith in creation, refuses to single out qualified and

> definable realms from among the observable realities of nature and history. (Bultmann, *Jesus Christ and Mythology* [1958], 84)

In Bultmann's statement, human praise for God's mighty works in nature and salvation history in the style of Deuteronomy 10:21, Psalm 71:19, Luke 1:49, and Acts 2:11 is ruled out from the start. But in a biblical theology of the New Testament, the goal and zenith of interpretation cannot possibly be to prevent people from joining in biblical praise. Since the program of demythologizing leads to this result, I consider it unusable for biblical-theological work.

Hübner is ultimately concerned about the encounter of believing Christians with the God who reveals himself in and through the Scriptures in what he calls "the time and space of grace" (*Zeit-Raum der Gnade*). Like all theology, biblical theology for Hübner is not the subject matter of revelation itself, "*but merely reflection on the subject matter*" (3:276). However, to the extent that thoughtful theologians do not speak about the biblical texts only in a distant religious-studies manner, but confess their faith in the one God as believing Christians, faith and thought coincide in their existential reality. Therefore, Hübner believes that biblical theology moves these theologians to deepen their faith and leads them beyond mere reflection "to a more intensive encounter with God. Theology begins with the self-revealing God; theology 'ends' with self-revealing God. *Principium et finis theologiae est Deus se revelans:* '*The beginning and the end of theology is God revealing himself*'" (3:276–77).

Taking together what has been said about Hübner in chapter 1 and also here, we see clearly that his work commands respect. But such respect does not answer the question of whether the discipline of biblical theology should commit itself to Hübner's program. Hübner underestimates the need for careful reconstruction of the Bible's tradition-historically diverse experiential and textual world, underplays the unique linguistic form of the biblical texts, and also glosses over the contribution of church history, history of doctrine, and systematic theology to the formation of the church's teaching. It is therefore not advisable to promote Hübner's approach as the working principle for biblical theology. The subject is better served when biblical theology attempts to do justice to the hermeneutical challenges of the canonical texts, concentrates on reconstructing the biblical traditions and highlighting the truth of the texts, and finally takes up and thinks

through the (important!) questions of interpretation long enough for them to be grasped by systematic theology and further developed.

3 The American Old Testament scholar **Brevard S. Childs** (1923–2007), who taught at Yale University from 1958 until his retirement in 1999, crowned his decades of research into a style of biblical interpretation that does justice to the two-part Christian canon with the publication of his *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* in 1992. One indication of its international importance is the fact that this is the only recent English-language work of biblical theology to have been translated into German, at the instigation of Christoph Dohmen and with Christiane and Manfred Oeming as translators, as *Die Theologie der einen Bibel*, "The Theology of the One Bible" (2 vols., 1994, 1996). Childs's work documents what biblical theology is capable of at an entirely different level from Hübner's theology. With expertise and remarkably wide reading, Childs traverses the entire canonical tradition of the Old and New Testaments; gives due consideration to the history of doctrine, the Reformation tradition, Lutheran and Reformed orthodoxy, and contemporary exegetical and doctrinal discussion; and finally outlines the principles and contents of a church doctrine and ethics that rest on the (always "discrete") witness of the Old Testament and the New Testament. Childs's book represents a real milestone in biblical-theological work and will hopefully silence the many critics of his "canonical approach": Childs reminds all whom it may concern that biblical exegesis leads to theologically substantial statements as long as it does not get lost in its own hypotheses and speculations, but rather follows the pathway of the tradition that finds its goal in the biblical canon of the Old and New Testaments.

It is with good reason that M. Oeming praises Childs's work in the preface to the second volume of the German translation:

> The work is so significant because it helps to overcome divisions to which we have long since grown accustomed, to the detriment of theological study: Childs tries to overcome separation of the theological disciplines. He not only bridges the improper separation of Old Testament and New Testament theology, but also brings exegesis and doctrine (along with church history and doctrinal history) together in a fertile, present-oriented dialogue. As a Reformed theologian who is strongly influenced by K. Barth's word of God theology, he seeks a

> critical conversation with neo-liberal theology in its various forms. . . . He overcomes an individualistic understanding by working out the hermeneutical importance of the church as the community of faith. Regarding the methods of scriptural interpretation, Childs shows that it is a dangerous narrowing to interpret individual texts only as single soloists in a particular historical situation; he draws attention to the multiple intertextual connections within the Bible . . . that help to give the texts classical meaning beyond a particular moment. Even if the bipartite nature of Childs's biblical theology [which emphasizes the "discrete witness" of each of the Testaments] may reflect the old divisions between historical and systematic approaches, there nevertheless flows from his emphasis on the real subject matter of the Bible, its actual substance, tremendous integrative power. (M. Oeming in Childs, *Die Theologie der einen Bibel*, 11–12)

Childs wants to see each Testament of the Christian Bible, Old and New, as fully valid testimony to God's reality. But he also emphasizes the connections between the two Testaments and understands the two-part Christian Bible as a witness to Christ: "The Christian canon consists of two different, separate voices, indeed of two different choirs of voices. The Old Testament is the voice of Israel, the New that of the church. But beyond this, the voice of the New Testament is largely that of a transformed Old Testament which is now understood in the light of the gospel" (Childs, 722).

For Childs, Jesus Christ is the goal of the entire Scripture. The model for this understanding of the Bible is Calvin. Childs writes about Calvin in the conclusion of his work: "It was the great insight of Calvin at this point to see that each individual passage, whether in the Old or New Testament, was able to bear a truthful witness while at the same time retaining its discrete literary, historical, and theological integrity" (ibid., 725).

Now that Childs has overcome in his *Biblical Theology* the separation between synchronic and diachronic approaches to the Old and New Testament traditions and books that had posed a problem in some of his earlier works, it remains to discuss his understanding of the canonical process and of the relationship between revelation and history.

3.1 Childs can set the Old and the New Testament over against each other as "distinct witnesses" because he believes the Old Testament was

already available to the New Testament authors in a (relatively) closed canonical form. He also points out that the New Testament witnesses did not wish to extend the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, but to bear fresh witness to the Christ event with their help. This second observation is correct, but in the first point about the historical development of the canon, Childs has adopted a construction that gives insufficient attention to the Qumran texts and the history of the Septuagint. Given the enormous importance of the Septuagint for the New Testament witness to Christ, New Testament scholars must reach a different conclusion from Childs about canonical history, and acknowledge that we have to do with a complex traditional canonical process, from which the Hebrew Bible on the one hand and the two-part Christian canon on the other have emerged (see above, chap. 40). Childs's stylization of the history of the canon fits well with his Reformed theological interests, but this respectable background does not provide a sufficient reason to hide from view the complex historical context of the canon.

3.2 Childs concludes his great work (p. 720) by appealing to a key phrase coined by K. Barth: "*Revelation is not a predicate of history, but history is a predicate of revelation*" (*Church Dogmatics* I/2, 58).

As the context shows, Barth coined this phrase in a critical conversation with G. Kittel, M. Kähler, and P. Althaus, who had some sympathy with the "German Christian" movement. Barth disputed the German Christians' theology of history, which spoke of the election of the Aryan race and was still in vogue in 1940 (see above, chap. 42, §4.1). The key issue for Barth is shown in the continuation of his text: "Of course, we can and must speak of relevation first of all in the principal statement, in order subsequently to speak of history by way of explanation. But we may not first of all speak of history in order subsequently or by epithet to speak with force and emphasis about revelation. When the latter happens, we betray the fact that we have gone our own way in interpreting, valuing, absolutising. We have not gone the only possible way, the way of obedience" (*Church Dogmatics* I/2, 58).

From this historical-theological vantage point Childs turns his attention to the theological work of G. von Rad. He praises von Rad's theological understanding of the history of the Old Testament tradition as a process of continual fresh and further interpretation of the great saving acts of God. But he censures von Rad for failing "to deal adequately with the post-exilic process of the textualization of the tradition which preceded and issued in the canonization of authoritative scripture" (*Biblical Theology*, 720). Childs also criticizes von Rad's view of a close tradition-historical connection between the Old and New Testaments, because it fails to recognize the fresh

beginning of the New Testament proclamation with the event of Jesus's resurrection. However, the data regarding the history of the canon that we have compiled following J. Trebolle Barrera significantly relativize this criticism of von Rad (see above, chap. 40, §3). In addition, Childs has not sufficiently appreciated the salvation-historical and history-of-revelation significance for biblical theology of Jesus's earthly ministry. Although he occasionally mentions the tradition of John the Baptist's question to Jesus of whether he was the coming one, and Jesus's answer, which refers to his healing the sick, raising the dead, and preaching the good news during his ministry (Matt. 11:2–6 par. Luke 7:18–23), Childs does not make it clear to his readers that it is precisely this Gospel text, which bears a curious relationship to the Qumran *Messianic Apocalypse* (4Q521 frag. 7+5 II, 6, "he who gives life to the dead of his people," *DSSSE* 1047), that compels us to understand the appearance of the earthly Jesus as an event of messianic fulfillment that caused a division of opinion even during Jesus's lifetime. The writing of the Gospels reminds us that the process of forming the New Testament tradition could be set in motion after Easter only because Jesus has already put it on track by his own messianic ministry.

Given his approach, Childs has also perceived the efforts toward biblical theology in Tübingen in an oddly distorted way. About this Tübingen work he makes the following charge: "The Old Testament has become a horizontal stream of tradition from the past whose witness has been limited to its effect on subsequent writers. The Old Testament has thus lost its vertical, existential dimension which as scripture of the church continues to bear its own witness within the context of the Christian Bible" (ibid., 77).

This verdict is very disconcerting, because it simply bypasses H. Gese's efforts—which are not oriented to K. Barth—to reach a theological understanding of Old Testament tradition history as the history of revelation. It also fails to notice that in my own view of the biblical tradition, the Old Testament textual witnesses do not require any kind of "baptism" by New Testament kerygmata in order to be fully valid testimony. Rather, the two Testaments, which essentially belong together, combine to show the way that the one God has traveled with Jews and Gentiles in order to place them all before Jesus the Christ, who represents God's kingdom. Unfortunately, a fruitful exchange between Childs and the

so-called Tübingen model never took place, but the reasons for this did not lie only on the banks of the Neckar River.

4 **Charles H. H. Scobie**'s *The Ways of Our God: An Approach to Biblical Theology* (2003; 1,038 pages) is not only an extensive but also a remarkable work. The author, who hails from Scotland, was most recently the Cowan Professor and department head in the Department of Religious Studies at Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada. He worked primarily as a New Testament scholar but also showed interest in the Old Testament from early on. As the summation of his research career he has presented a work on the theology of the whole Bible. He acknowledges Brevard Childs for encouragement with this project, although it will be clear that Scobie has taken an independent approach.

As he reveals in his preface, Scobie was at home with the historical-critical approach in an academic world in which "the Old and New Testaments were two totally different areas of study" (ix). But the longer he pursued critical exegesis, the more he became concerned about the fact that biblical scholars would make ever more precise historical distinctions but hardly ever arrived at syntheses, and also taught about the use of the Bible in the church only in passing. It is this gap between critical biblical scholarship and the use of Scripture in the church that Scobie seeks to bridge. Bible readers should not be spared exacting exegetical and systematic work with the texts. Rather, they should learn to appreciate the riches of the whole biblical tradition and to evaluate it theologically. For this reason Scobie concentrates on the final form of the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments. He only occasionally treats the books of the LXX Apocrypha, hardly ever cites other Jewish texts, and consistently neglects critical questions about the redactional layers of biblical texts or influences from the Bible's environment, because they are not decisive for biblical theology. One can also see all this differently.

The work consists of two parts of unequal length. In the first Scobie deals with the prolegomena to his biblical theology, while in the considerably longer second part he sketches its contents. His discussions reflect not only his wide reading, but also his penetration of the biblical texts down to the fine nuances. The book concludes with a comprehensive bibliography and extensive indexes of authors and subjects. Oddly, an index of sources is lacking; one must by all means be included in a new edition!

The section on prolegomena (pp. 1–102) covers the definitions and history of biblical theology, the problems of the canon, and the various possibilities for developing a canonical, whole-Bible biblical theology. For Scobie, the Old and New Testaments do not merely belong together because the one and only God is confessed in both, but rather and above all because the New Testament witnesses see the one God's aim of salvation, revealed in the Old Testament, as reaching its fulfillment in the New Testament.

To bridge the gap between a historical-critical presentation and the church's need for biblical orientation, in the second part of his work (103–927) Scobie organizes the biblical tradition into four large thematic circles: "God's Order," "God's Servant," "God's People," and "God's Way." These circles are then further broken down into topics. Scobie presents the Old and New Testament statements according to the scheme of *proclamation/promise—fulfillment/consummation*. The individual chapters consistently begin with the section heading "Old Testament: Proclamation." This is followed by "Old Testament: Promise." Both are compared with "New Testament: Fulfillment," followed by a concluding section titled "New Testament: Consummation." This fourfold scheme requires the reader to travel once again along the pathway of the biblical witnesses to revelation, from its Old Testament beginnings to its New Testament fulfillment and end-time consummation. However, by following this plan, readers may also lose sight of the Bible's historical witnesses and its hermeneutic centered on the idea of "remembrance" (*anamnesis*). Furthermore, they fail to learn how individual prophets or also Jesus, Paul, John, etc., taught. Scobie does not simply content himself with a thematic presentation of the biblical materials, but rather leads his readers to theological work by concluding each chapter with "Theological Reflections." Here he discusses, usually carefully, but also sometimes in ways that would require a critical rejoinder, the meaning of biblical themes for the present ecclesiastical-theological situation. In conclusion, an exhaustive synopsis of all the chapter headings and subheadings in Scobie's second part shows the standing of each theme or subtheme in the big picture of his biblical theology: the detail of Scobie's presentation is evident from the fact that this outline alone fills twenty-one pages (928–48). Beyond this one can see that Scobie presents the development of biblical revelation without splitting it artificially in the style of Childs into the independent

witnesses of the Old Testament and the New Testament, which then must be pieced back together again dogmatically.

The strengths and weaknesses of Scobie's presentation may be seen for example in the treatment of his second major theme, "God's Servant" (301–466). This encompasses five chapters: "The Messiah"; "The Son of Man"; "Glory, Word, Wisdom, Son"; "The Servant's Suffering"; and "The Servant's Vindication" (chaps. 6–10). Scobie provides detailed information on the Old Testament's understanding of various "anointed ones," on the messianic expectations, and on the christological reception of these expectations in the New Testament, which transcended all traditional presuppositions. He unpacks the difficult biblical Son of Man tradition and explains the language of the (personified) Word of God as well as the Son of God. The statements about the vicarious atoning death of the Servant, his resurrection and exaltation, and his future work are all thoroughly evaluated. The only problem in all this is the distribution of treatments of the Servant's various titles into multiple chapters ("Messiah," "Son of Man," "Wisdom," etc.), because already in the Old Testament and then again in the New Testament, these titles are used not as alternatives, but in a cumulative way. Scobie also does not show precisely enough that the Son of Man of Daniel 2 and 7 as well as the Enoch tradition is the messianic representative of the reign of the one and only God. Rather, he informs his readers of the kingdom or reign of God and his anointed one only in totally different contexts (e.g., 128–29 on realized eschatology in the ministry of Jesus; 140–41 on future eschatology). However, he rightly expends great effort in explaining the tradition of suffering and also correctly points out that from the New Testament point of view, atonement and reconciliation can only be understood together with the incarnation (436). Scobie refers to the conventional academic model of an only implicit Christology before Easter and an explicit one thereafter. But he adds that the confession, rooted in Isaiah 53, of the risen Christ who was delivered up to death "for us" has decisive grounds in the teaching and work of Jesus himself. Scobie also regards the Gospel reports of Jesus's resurrection as historically reliable. He concludes his comprehensive treatment of the topic of God's Servant with a statement well worth considering: "To accept Christ as Lord and Savior is to recognize that the claims he makes upon the lives of the believers are the claims that only God can make, and to respond by offering him the worship, the allegiance, and the service that are his due" (466).

In the context of today’s discussion, an author takes a considerable risk when he ventures to work through the theology of the whole Bible on his own. Scobie deserves high praise for not shying away from this task and placing his own book alongside the groundbreaking *Biblical Theology* of Childs published just a year earlier (see above). His book is written for men and women who are active in teaching in the church. Comparing his work with that of Childs will enliven the ongoing discussion of the possibility of a biblical theology of the whole Bible, which is still regarded with some skepticism.

5 The critics of biblical theology were also not silent during the 1980s and 1990s. In particular, **Otto Merk** distinguished himself by presenting his criticisms with a thorough knowledge of the history of research and in a form that invites an answer from the proponents of biblical theology.

Merk has commented on the topic of biblical theology in several places. He wrote the informative article “Biblische Theologie II. Neues Testament” for the *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* (6:455–77), as well as a critical review of the progress of the discipline of *Gesamtbiblische Theologie* or “whole-Bible biblical theology” in the 1980s, “Gesamtbiblische Theologie: Zum Fortgang der Diskussion in den 80er Jahren” (*VF* 33 [1988]: 19–40). More recently Merk has published a valuable essay in the Festschrift for G. Strecker: “Theologie des Neuen Testaments und Biblische Theologie” (in *Bilanz und Perspektiven gegenwärtiger Auslegung des Neuen Testaments*, ed. F. W. Horn [1995], 112–43). Here Merk again took a critical position toward the “Tübingen model” proposed by H. Gese and myself. The following response refers to this essay.

5.1 Because I have already spoken above about the capabilities and limitations of the radical historical criticism that Merk sees called into question by the Tübingen model (see chap. 42, §1.1), we can immediately proceed to the major substantive issues he raises. Merk criticizes the continuity and unilinearity with which I call attention to the tradition-historical connection between the Old Testament, ancient Judaism, and the New Testament, and he thinks that this obscures the New Testament’s proper subject matter or *proprium*. Therefore, he strongly reiterates the claim that “the Old Testament message reveals itself only in the New Testament witness,” citing as proof texts Hebrews 1:1–2 and 2 Corinthians 5:17 (“Theologie des Neuen Testaments und Biblische Theologie,” 142).

But how one can claim Hebrews 1:1–2 out of all possible passages for this view remains an exegetical puzzle to me. The striking opening sentence of Hebrews speaks of the earthshaking event whereby the one God who has already spoken to our spiritual ancestors by the prophets in many and various ways has now, at the end of these days, finally spoken to "us" in his Son, who was mediator of creation by God's will and is now appointed heir of all things. If anywhere, it is in Hebrews 1:1–2 that we are shown that the messages of the Old Testament and New Testament mutually open themselves to each other: There is no other way in which the Son can be comprehended as the Son and Word of God in person than from the Old Testament. Similarly, the juxtaposition in 2 Corinthians 5:17 of the "old things" that have passed away and "new things" that have come (*τὰ ἀρχαῖα, καινά*) acquires meaning only when we assume that Isaiah's promise of new creation in Isaiah 43:18–19 was already known to Paul and his addressees, so that its fulfillment through the Christ event can now be emphasized. The apostle's language is only explicable if he already knew the Torah and the Prophets. Therefore, Merk's proof texts do not say what he has demanded of them.

5.2 Merk accuses me of a "substantial reserve toward, even rejection of form-critical work" and an associated "almost 'uncontrolled' confidence in the tradition of the Synoptic Gospels" that "goes far beyond the 'critical sympathy'" that I claim to have toward these texts (ibid., 133). Admittedly, I have distanced myself from form criticism's far-reaching judgments about the authenticity and inauthenticity of Jesus sayings as represented by K. L. Schmidt, M. Dibelius, and R. Bultmann. However, O. Cullmann noted the problems of these judgments years ago, and Gospels research could have spared itself many errors of judgment had it listened to his warnings in time (cf. above, 55–56, §2.2). Because classical form criticism did not respond in this way, the only alternative was to develop a different view of the history of the synoptic tradition from that of Bultmann and Dibelius by building on the foundation of works by B. Gerhardsson, H. Schürmann, M. Hengel, and R. Riesner. According to this new perspective, the Synoptic Gospel material is based on a carefully maintained continuum of tradition, which can be traced all the way to the writing of the Gospels. In the process of being handed down and committed to writing, the tradition was redactionally edited and enriched, but not fundamentally distorted.

The key reason for this new orientation of historical Gospels research is that the old picture behind form criticism of anonymous post-Easter communities that supposedly created their own traditions is historically just as unverifiable as is the assumption that “countless ‘I’ sayings of the Christ who revealed himself through [church] prophets have entered into the synoptic tradition as sayings of Jesus” (E. Käsemann, “Zum Thema der Nichtobjektivierbarkeit,” in *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen*, vol. 1 [1970[6]], 224–36, esp. 234). If one further considers the fact that the primary bearers and addressees of the synoptic tradition were Jews and Jewish Christians, the essential analogies for the whole process of forming a tradition can be found in ancient Judaism and its patterns of education. M. Dibelius, R. Bultmann, and their pupils hardly paid any attention to the peculiarities of Jewish education.

5.3 The result of this alternative view of the Synoptic Gospel tradition was and is a very different picture of the earthly Jesus and the development of Christology from the one Merk is accustomed to. The story of Jesus also appears in new and different light, as God’s own ministry in and through Jesus the Christ, which precedes and grounds Christian faith. One can (and should) discover the story of Jesus afresh with the early Christian witnesses of Easter. But this does not change the fact that the original Jesus story was not a product of Easter faith, but of the time before such faith, when Jesus ministered as the Word of God in person on earth. During this time period, the teaching was proclaimed and the events occurred that made some Jews faithful followers but others bitter enemies of the Christ.

5.4 On the subject of the sacrificial death of Jesus, Merk expresses himself in a strangely categorical and un-Jewish way, following an essay by J. Becker (“Die neutestamentliche Rede vom Sühnetod Jesu”). As if J. Jeremias had never examined *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (1966) or spoken in detail about Jesus’s understanding of his suffering and death in his *New Testament Theology* (1971), Merk believes that the earthly Jesus did not develop any salvific understanding of his death, but that the understanding of Jesus’s death on the cross as a saving event was first formed by the post-Easter church (p. 134). But once again I stand before an exegetical puzzle, because this claim ignores the entire Jewish background of the passion. Jesus expected to die the death of a prophet in Jerusalem (cf. Luke 13:33), and he had in mind not only the execution of John the Baptist but also the fate of the Maccabean martyrs who were revered from Antioch

to Jerusalem (although the city of their execution is debated), and who had already interpreted their own sacrificial deaths as having saving significance for Israel (cf. Dan. 3:39–40 LXX; 2 Macc. 5:20; 7:33, 37–38; 8:5; 4 Macc. 6:27–29; 9:23–24; 12:15–19; 17:20–22; 18:4). Jesus's passion predictions, his ransom saying of Mark 10:45 (Matt. 20:28), his sacrificial dedication of the temple in his temple act, and the Lord's Supper tradition all show that Jesus understood his death as the divinely willed substitution of his existence for that of Israel, as previously ordained in the Old Testament. In remembering the words of Jesus preserved in these Gospel texts and the crucifixion that he willingly took upon himself without trying to flee, Peter, the Twelve, James the Lord's brother, and the early church around them learned to confess anew from a post-Easter perspective "that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3). But this confession did not arise from some decision of the apostles suddenly to interpret the hitherto silent and enigmatic cross as a means of salvation!

Equally disconcerting is what Merk writes (again, following Becker) about atonement. He says that one should not skip over centuries and assume the priestly view of atonement for Paul without clarifying how the underlying interpretive model would have changed in the meantime; he also notes that atonement and reconciliation are to be distinguished (135). I do not understand what that is supposed to mean: the cultic atonement ritual was performed daily in the Jerusalem temple during and after Paul's time until the year AD 70; the Day of Atonement was celebrated in Jerusalem and throughout the Diaspora; and the Jewish schools gave elementary instruction after the priestly model from the book of Leviticus! According to Acts 4:36–37, the early church in Jerusalem included the Levite Barnabas from Cyprus from early on, while according to Acts 6:7 a large number of priests (Essenes?) also joined the church. They all knew the priestly atonement tradition exactly. The tradition of Jesus as the new *ἱλαστήριον* or "mercy seat" that Paul quotes in Romans 3:25–26a was developed in Jerusalem even before his call to be an apostle. He took up this tradition, affirmed it, and quoted it at the center of his letter to the Romans. How Merk can ignore all this is just as puzzling to me as his claim that atonement and reconciliation were not closely related. Against this stand both the Jewish texts mentioned above (chap. 21, §1.2.2.1) and the Jewish way of celebrating the Day of Atonement, which is reflected in

Matthew 5:23–26 (which explicitly mentions “reconciliation”) but also in Matthew 6:12 and 14.

5.5 I must leave it to readers of the second half of this work (chaps. 24–43), which was not available to Merk when he wrote his “Theologie des Neuen Testaments und Biblische Theologie” (1995), to determine if they wish to agree with one of his criticisms of my first half, namely, that I am in danger of a flat presentation because I am supposedly too interested in “unilinearity within the New Testament” (ibid., 135). The development of the early Christian tradition was certainly not unilinear, but neither did it disintegrate into nothing more than fundamentally disparate doctrines and kerygmata (see above, chap. 41). Rather, together with the Old Testament, the New Testament still allows today’s readers to recognize a clearly formulable rule of faith (*κανὼν τῆς πίστεως*) and a no less clearly formulable center of Scripture, on which the church’s doctrine and testimony to Christ can be based.

6. Unfortunately, it is not yet clear whether there will be any room for biblical theology in the context of the present reorientation of exegetical scholarship and changes in the church. However, if there is room for such efforts, then there are several themes and fields of work that scholars should take up before others in order to overcome gaps and discrepancies in research that are reflected even in these lines.

6.1 If one looks at the open questions and needs of New Testament exegesis, then certain tasks appear especially urgent. Great progress has now been made in the first of these: (1) When the German version of this work was originally completed, there was still no usable translation of the Septuagint for German-speaking exegetes of the Old and New Testaments, and one wondered how long Septuagint research might continue to be a stepchild of biblical scholarship. Fortunately, the new German Septuagint, *Septuaginta Deutsch*, has appeared from a team of translators under the editorship of W. Kraus and M. Karrer (2009), complemented by an extensive two-volume commentary of 3,151 pages (2011). Two years earlier, a “new” Septuagint had also appeared in English to replace the classic 1844 translation of L. C. L. Brenton: *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, edited by A. Pietersma and B. G. Wright (2007). However, unlike the *Septuaginta Deutsch*, which is a fresh translation into German, the new English work is based on the NRSV, using departures from the

English of the NRSV to indicate departures in style or substance of the LXX from the MT. Both new versions deserve frequent consultation.

There are many other areas for further work: (2) The concept of *tradition* standing behind the (Synoptic) Gospels needs a fresh investigation that pays special attention to its early Jewish and Jewish Christian presuppositions. (3) The same holds for the idea of *truth* in both Testaments and its hermeneutical significance. (4) Jewish Christian texts like the Lukan and Matthean prehistories and the pictorial language of Revelation need fresh analysis and interpretation on the basis of Old Testament and early Jewish faith traditions. (5) We still know far too little about the significance of the three great Jewish *pilgrimage festivals*—Passover (*Pesach*), the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost (*Shavuot*), and the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles (*Sukkot*)—for early Jewish Christianity. (6) It would be good if the concept of *mission* binding together the major New Testament traditions were further investigated. (7) Our ideas of the earliest Christian education system are still far too vague, and the lines connecting this system to the teaching tradition of the Old and New Testaments as well as the *regula fidei* of the ancient church must be more clearly worked out. (8) The dialogue between exegesis and *dogmatics* needs more attention. This dialogue still suffers far too much from a situation in which the dogmatic tradition hailing from K. Barth denies exegesis the competence to contribute anything substantial to church doctrine, while the exegetes for their part still allow themselves to be misled into rejecting dogmatic work and considering it unimportant. (9) Finally, the problems of biblical *hermeneutics* also require further discussion. It is hardly helpful when the biblical traditions and statements are always forced to fit only into the framework of Western theology and thought. Instead, the dominant framework must itself be expanded and changed by an anamnetic fresh evaluation of the biblical worlds of language and experience.

6.2 In sum, there is more than enough biblical-theological work to do. In my generation it was possible to take up this work, but not yet to advance it beyond the stage of experimental trials, which have remained controversial. It is therefore crucially important to continue biblical-theological efforts with the texts of Holy Scripture. The treasures of wisdom and knowledge of God hidden in Jesus the Christ (cf. Col. 2:3) have still not been completely excavated, and must be further investigated. For the church of Jesus Christ lives only by the word of God attested in the two-

part Christian Bible, and it exists on earth to bear witness to that word to all peoples of the world.

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Biblical and Greco-Roman Uses of Hilastērion *in Romans 3:25 and 4 Maccabees 17:22 (Codex S)*

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Note: secondary literature citations in this excursus are often given by author name or name and short title (or journal publication), and both primary and secondary sources are listed in the bibliography in separate sections.

Professor Peter Stuhlmacher's single most influential exegetical essay has doubtless been his "Zur neueren Exegese von Röm 3,24–26" (1975), translated as "Recent Exegesis of Romans 3:24–26" (1981). It has been called a "classic article" by D. Stökl ben Ezra (200) and was judged by W. Kraus to be the most thorough defense of the idea that Paul used the term ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 to compare Jesus to the Old Testament *kappōret* or mercy seat—the most thorough, that is, prior to Kraus's own massive monograph of 342 pages on this verse, which largely supports Stuhlmacher's views (cf. *Der Tod Jesu als Heiligtumsweihe*, 152, and my review of Kraus in *JTS*). Stuhlmacher's essay did more than any other to steer German-language exegesis of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 away from a background in Maccabean martyr theology (esp. 4 Macc. 17:22) and back to the classic "mercy seat" interpretation of Jesus in Romans 3:25 that goes back to Luther and Origen and that has already been explained in chapter 14 above (218–21, §5.3.2.1). Jesus is the antitype of the *kappōret* or ἱλαστήριον in the tabernacle's holy of holies on the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16 (esp. vv. 15–16), which, when "publicly displayed" (cf. προέθετο) in contrast to the original ἱλαστήριον, hidden from the view of the high priest by a cloud of incense, signals for both Jews and Gentiles final atonement for sins and renewed "access" to God and his grace (cf. Rom. 5:2: "access by faith to this grace in which we stand"). Paul's application of ἱλαστήριον to Jesus involves a spatial metaphor, which cannot simply be reduced to juristic categories.

Accordingly, Stuhlmacher's translation of Romans 3:25 speaks of Christ, "whom God publicly appointed to be the place of atonement, (which is *accessible and effective*) through faith by virtue of his blood" (*Paul's Letter to the Romans*, 57), while the NET Bible, which was indirectly influenced

by Stuhlmacher through my PhD dissertation (cf. NET notes) which he helped to supervise, translates: “God publicly displayed him at his death as the mercy seat *accessible* through faith” (italics added).

The title of this essay, highlighting two different “uses” of ἱλαστήριον, encapsulates a major finding of Professor Stuhlmacher, namely, that there is a characteristic biblical and a characteristic Greco-Roman sense of the term ἱλαστήριον, and that these can be applied respectively to Jesus in Romans 3:25 and to the *death* of the nine Maccabean martyrs—not the martyrs themselves—in 4 Maccabees 17:22 Codex Sinaiticus. Stuhlmacher writes that “the death of the martyrs was a *hilastērion*,” and again that Codex S “interprets the death of the martyrs as a *hilastērion*, that is as an expiatory offering (*Sühnegabe*) to divine providence, which corresponds to the language of Greek inscriptions” (“Recent Exegesis,” 101). This study surveys all the available ἱλαστήριον inscriptions as well as other sources not usually reviewed (e.g., scholia on classical texts; certain later Byzantine writers like Eustathius of Thessalonica) in order to clarify the meaning of ἱλαστήριον in both 4 Maccabees 17:22 and Romans 3:25. In the process, it proposes an original theory about the polysemy of the biblical and Greco-Roman uses of ἱλαστήριον as representing two different technical terms with different semantic assumptions and histories.[1]

A fundamental distinction must be made to solve the problem of ἱλαστήριον. The biblical sense of ἱλαστήριον denotes a place, first and foremost the golden top-piece on the ark of the covenant, as exemplified in the translation of ἱλαστήριον by “place of atonement” in the NRSV margin at Hebrews 9:5, where the text retains the traditional term “mercy seat.” But the typical Greco-Roman application of ἱλαστήριον needs to be analyzed differently, as a two-word elliptical expression in which ἱλαστήριον is a hyponym or subset of the wider class of ἀναθήματα or Greek votive offerings, with the ἀνάθημα classification being understood (cf. Schreiber, “Weitergedacht,” 207–8, building on Weiss, “Christus Jesus”). Hence the typical Greco-Roman ἱλαστήριον is accurately defined in LSJ s.v., ἱλαστήριος II.2, “[ἱλαστήριον] (sc. ἀνάθημα) *propitiatory gift* or *offering*, *Ep.Rom.* 3.25; of a monument, *Inscr.Cos* 81, 347.” To date, S. Schreiber is the only German-speaking scholar to have cited this enlightening definition of LSJ among the major authors treating Romans 3:25 (ibid., 210n25).

By including Jesus in Romans 3:25 as a person who can be compared with a concrete propitiatory offering, the LSJ entry on ἱλαστήριον recalls a history of interpretation going back to A. Deissmann's *Bibelstudien* (1895; ET 1901, 124–35). This Greco-Roman approach to Romans 3:25 has now been revived in recent studies in German by S. Schreiber and A. Weiss (as above) as well as C. Eschner. However, regarding the use of ἱλαστήριον in 4 Maccabees 17:22 Codex S, Eschner finds it remarkable that my work (cf. *TynBul* 51 [2000]: 155–58)—and precisely the same could be said of Stuhlmacher's 1975 essay, which Eschner cites in the same footnote —"nevertheless pleads (*plädiert*) in 4 Maccabees 17:22 for the Greek background of a 'votive offering'" (*Gestorben und hingegeben*, 33n22), as if it were strange for me to make such a distinction after I had interpreted ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 in the light of the mercy seat. But this distinction between the senses of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 and in 4 Maccabees 17:22 is already accepted in English Bible translation. The ESV Apocrypha gives a Greco-Roman sense to ἱλαστήριον with respect to the death of the martyrs, "their death as a propitiatory offering" (4 Macc. 17:22), while the NET Bible refers to "the mercy seat accessible through faith" in Romans 3:25.

This essay's goal is therefore to lay out a basic framework for further discussion of 4 Maccabees 17:22 and its relationship to Romans 3:25, and to provide a kind of "workbook" for students interested in lexical semantics and translation theory. Several new theses should also provide guidelines for the next phase of scholarly discussion.

Five broad outline points cover:

1. The Hellenistic and Greco-Roman use of ἱλαστήριον (including in a scholion on Apollonius of Rhodes 4.1549) and its distinction from the biblical and Byzantine uses as these two streams might be understood by Philo, Josephus, and Eustathius of Thessalonica (twelfth century).

2. Textual criticism of 4 Maccabees 17:22, favoring Codex S over Codex A.

3. The lexical semantics of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 and 4 Maccabees 17:22 Codex S, with special reference to Bible translation.

4. The unfounded translation of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 by "sacrifice of atonement" and other theological problems.

5. The accessibility of the mercy-seat interpretation of Romans 3:25 to students and laypeople.

1. Background: The Hellenistic and Greco-Roman Meaning of ἱλαστήριον. Both literary and epigraphical sources establish *ἱλαστήριον* as a Hellenistic and Greco-Roman technical term for a concrete "propitiatory offering." This Greco-Roman use appears to be independent of the biblical use of *ἱλαστήριον* with reference to the mercy seat and later Jewish or Christian "places of atonement."

The term *ἱλαστήριον* is known in inscriptional texts or is said in literary texts to have been inscribed on seven or eight ancient objects dedicated to the gods or a particular god or goddess, including Zeus, Apollo, and Athena. Therefore, to the best of our knowledge, Hellenistic or Greco-Roman *ἱλαστήρια* are always "propitiatory offerings" to the gods. Five of the objects inscribed with the term *ἱλαστήριον*, or the Rhodian variant *ἱλατήριον*, have been discovered by archeologists; a sixth once existed but is now known only through a list of gifts in a temple of Athena; and the final two occurrences are found in literature by Dio Chrysostom and Josephus. The dates span from *The Lindian Chronicle* in 99 BC to Dio Chrysostom in the second century AD.

The five physical *ἱλαστήρια* discovered by archeologists include: (1) a statue or base of a statue dedicated to the gods (*The Inscriptions of Cos* 81, ed. Paton and Hicks), (2) a fragment of a pillar dedicated to Zeus (*Cos* 347), (3) a large marble base found in the Cos *Asklepieion*, dedicated to the gods (*Bullettino del Museo dell'Impero Romano* 3 [1932], 14, no. 11, ed. Patriarca), (4) a marble base in Cos dedicated to Apollo (SEG LIV [2004], no. 769), and (5) a small base from the Acropolis of Lindos in Rhodes with the variant Doric spelling *ἱλατήριον*, dedicated to the Most High God (*Lindos*, vol. 2/2, no. 425, ed. Blinkenberg). A final object (6), a *φιάλη*, drinking or libation bowl, also from Lindos with the spelling *ἱλατήριον*, was lost to posterity but is listed in the ancient gift inventory of the temple of Athena Lindia in the lengthy inscription known as *The Lindian Chronicle* (ed. Higbie, line B 49). This records that Telephus son of Heracles deposited a *φιάλη* as a *ἱλατήριον* to Athena bearing this label, "Τήλεφος Ἀθάναι ἱλαστή[ρι]ον, ὡς ὁ Λύκιος Ἀπόλλων εἶπε," "Telephos to Athena a supplicatory [i.e., propitiatory] gift, as Lycian Apollo said" (lines B 49–50; cf. *φιάλη*, line B 48, ed. Higbie, 24–25; cf. 83–85). Thus, the first four dedicated objects are from Cos, and the last two from the acropolis of Lindos in Rhodes.

A. Weiss conveniently provides the Greek text for all six inscriptions, along with German translations (296–98; cf. also Bailey, "Jesus," PhD diss., 31–32, 36–43). The most famous of these inscriptions is *Cos* 81, which is

datable to the reign of Caesar Augustus (27 BC–AD 14), and shows characteristic inscriptional syntax:

ὁ δᾶμος ὑπὲρ <τ>ᾶς Αὐτοκράτορος
Καίσαρος
θεοῦ υἱοῦ Σεβαστοῦ σωτηρίας
θεοῖς ἱλαστήριον

> The people (offer this) as a *propitiatory gift* (ἱλαστήριον) to the gods for the salvation of Emperor Caesar Augustus, son of God. *Inscr. Cos*. no. 81

Beyond inscriptions, Dio Chrysostom, in a clever retelling of the story of the Trojan War, decides to portray Odysseus as inscribing a gift-label on the Trojan horse identifying it as a ἱλαστήριον before leaving it for the Trojans to find; the label reads: Ἱλαστήριον Ἀχαιοὶ τῇ Ἀθηνᾷ τῇ Ἰλιάδι, "A Propitiatory Gift from the Achaeans to Athena of Ilium" (*Oration* 11.121; cf. 123 for the horse; text: LCL Cohoon). Dio introduces the gift-label by saying that the object would be "a very large and beautiful offering [ἀνάθημα] to Athena," showing that ἱλαστήρια belong to the larger class of ἀναθήματα.

However, Dio's projection of ἱλαστήριον back into Homer's time is anachronistic because this use is not known before 99 B.C. (cf. above), and Homer's -τήριον word for the horse is actually θελκτήριον, as in θεῶν θελκτήριον, "a *charm* of the gods" (*Odyssey* 8.509; cf. Bailey, "Jesus," diss., 46–47). Long after Dio, the Byzantine scholar Eustathius of Thessalonica similarly substitutes ἱλαστήριον for θελκτήριον in referring to the horse (see below), and this may represent an ancient exegetical tradition in that it is also found in an earlier, pre-Byzantine scholion on *Odyssey* 8.509 (cf. Bailey, diss. 48–49).

Josephus uses ἱλαστήριον similarly to Dio and the Greek inscriptions. He depicts Herod as erecting a marble monument as a ἱλαστήριον to appease God after he attempted to rob David's tomb and God retaliated by destroying two of his bodyguards (*Ant.* 16.182). Josephus explains what happened next:

> *περίφοβος δ᾽ αὐτὸς ἐξῄει, καὶ τοῦ δέους ἱλαστήριον μνῆμα λευκῆς πέτρας ἐπὶ τῷ στομίῳ κατεσκευάσατο πολυτελὲς τῇ δαπάνῃ.*
>
> The king himself [sc. Herod] became frightened, and as a propitiatory votive offering (*ἱλαστήριον*) arising from his terror (*τοῦ δέους*) he built at the entrance of the tomb a white marble monument (*μνῆμα*), which was a huge expense. (Josephus, *Ant.* 16.182, trans. Bailey, diss., 66–73, at 73)

Josephus does not say whether the term *ἱλαστήριον* was inscribed on the monument Herod erected, though that would have been the custom: Herod's monument was made at great expense, and telling God exactly what it was for (i.e., *propitiation*) would ensure value for money. A. M. Marshak, citing other secondary literature by A. Lichtenberger and D. M. Jacobsen, notes that Herod's monument may have been constructed 10–5 BC and may have looked "similar to Herod's other monuments to Jewish heroes, such as the enclosures at Hebron and Mamre" ("Glorifying the Present through the Past," 65nn27–28). However, although Marshak casts doubt on the historicity of Josephus's claim that Herod had tried to plunder David's tomb (since this could have been bereft of its treasures before Herod's time, cf. 66 with n30), this does not exclude the possibility that Josephus saw the marble monument at the entrance of the tomb bearing the label *ἱλαστήριον* and then invented the story of an attempted robbery to give the term a context. All the other Hellenistic *ἱλαστήρια* mentioned so far had the term *ἱλαστήριον* written on them, and David's tomb was a tourist attraction in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 2:29) where one could supposedly verify the inscription on the monument. Both points suggest that Herod's monument could very well have borne an inscription including this term. We can therefore provisionally confirm the count of eight ancient items outside of the distinctly Jewish religious realm bearing the label *ἱλαστήριον*, including one in a work of creative writing (Dio's Trojan Discourse, *Oration* 11).

The final relatively old (i.e., pre-Byzantine) text directly relevant to the Hellenistic use of *ἱλαστήριον* is one that I was apparently the first to exploit for purposes of biblical scholarship, but it becomes especially useful here because it helps to solidify the theory of *ἱλαστήριον* that Weiss and Schreiber very usefully worked out in 2014 and 2015. According to this

theory, already mentioned above, a Greco-Roman ἱλαστήριον is a particular type of ἀνάθημα or votive offering, a subset or hyponym of the wider class (cf. Schreiber, "Weitergedacht," 207–8). My new proof text for this theory is a scholion on Apollonius of Rhodes, *Argonautica* 4.1549 (noted now by Tabb, *Suffering*, 94, 111, and S. Hultgren, "*Hilastērion*," with reference to my "Jesus," diss., chap. 3, §3, "Apollo's Tripod," 43–46; cf. also my *TynBul* 51:155). The scholion (i.e., marginal comment in a manuscript) is concerned with the somewhat rare term μείλια in the primary text, which the scholiast explains by ἱλαστήρια, with both terms referring to Apollo's tripod. Μείλια is translated by "propitiatory offering" in W. H. Race's new LCL edition of Apollonius (2008). Presented here are lines 4.1547–1550:

[. . . .] αὐτίκα δ' Ὀρφεύς (4.1547)
κέκλετ' Ἀπόλλωνος τρίποδα μέγαν ἔκτοθι νηός
δαίμοσιν ἐγγενέταις νόστῳ ἔπι μείλια θέσθαι. (4.1549)
καὶ τοὶ μὲν Φοίβου κτέρας ἵδρυον ἐν χθονὶ βάντες·

And suddenly Orpheus
advised taking Apollo's great tripod from the ship
and placing it as a propitiatory offering to the indigenous divinities to secure their return.
So they disembarked and were setting up Phoebe's gift on the shore. . . .

Here, the sailors of the *Argo* are having trouble finding a passageway back to the sea from Lake Triton. The "placing" of Apollo's tripod on the shore as a "propitiatory offering" to the indigenous divinities, μείλια θέσθαι, eventually solves the problem. Although μείλια is plural, it is appropriately translated here by the singular "propitiatory offering" (as there is only one tripod); similarly in 3.594, μείλια τίσειν, "pay a fitting recompense" (cf. English "reparations," plural in form but not in sense). The old scholion on line 4.1549 treats μείλια as plural by supplying the plural δῶρα in the definition (K. Wendel, *Scholia in Apollonium Rhodium vetera*, 321, §1549):

1549. *μείλια: τὰ ἐκμειλίξασθαι δυνάμενα δῶρα, τὰ ἱλαστήρια.* Mss. L[m] (P)

soothing (sc. gifts): gifts able to appease, i.e. *propitiatory (sc. gifts).*

Note: The phrase "soothing (sc. gifts)" in the English lemma is not intended to suggest that there is an adjective *μείλιος* from which *μείλιον* derives (as *ἱλαστήριος* and *ἱλαστήριον*), but is supplied for consistency with the definition. The sense of "soothing" comes from the simplex verb *μειλίσσω*.

The earliest manuscript containing this scholion is Laurentianus no. 32.9, in Florence from the tenth century ("L"), perhaps representing earlier tradition that the scholia identify at the end of book 4 as deriving from three commentators spanning from the first century BC to the second century AD (cf. Dickey, 62–63; Mooney, *Argonautica*, 52, 56–60 [s.v. Apollonius in Sources]). The scholion confirms that ancient pagan *ἱλαστήρια* are a subcategory of gifts or *δῶρα*, in agreement with the LSJ definition "*ἱλαστήριον* (sc. *ἀνάθημα*)." We might even rewrite this scholion as a tautology: *τὰ ἱλάσαθαι δυνάμενα δῶρα, τὰ ἱλαστήρια*, "gifts able to propitiate = propitiatory (sc. gifts)."

It is precisely here that the key theoretical point of this essay can be made. Only objects that propitiate God or the gods are given the designation *ἱλαστήριον* in ancient pagan sources, as well as in Josephus. But there is another sense, which Jews originated and Christians expanded, in which a *ἱλαστήριον* is *not* an instrument, *not* a propitiatory offering, but rather a place, as first actualized in the idea of a "place of atonement" in reference to the mercy seat (cf. Heb. 9:5 NRSV margin), then extended to Noah's ark in the Greek translation of Symmachus in Genesis 6:15 (text in Wevers, *Genesis*), and finally taken up in Byzantine Christian culture with reference to places of mercy and atonement such as monasteries, churches, and sanctuaries (cf. Deissmann, "Mercy Seat," 3031–32; Manson, 4).

An ideal person to illustrate the difference between a Greco-Roman and a Byzantine Christian use of *ἱλαστήριον* has already been mentioned, Eustathius of Thessalonica (ca. 1115–1195/6), a Greek scholar and

archbishop of Thessalonica. In his commentary on Homer, Eustathius paraphrases a line in which the Trojans are debating what to do with the horse (*Odyssey* 8.509). The Trojans' third option, according to Homer, is not to destroy the horse but just to let it be as *μέγ' ἄγαλμα θεῶν θελκτήριον*, "a great offering, a charm of the gods." Eustathius rewrites this as *ἢ ἐάσαι εἷς ἱλαστήριόν φασι τοῖς θεοῖς*, "or to let it be as a propitiatory gift (they say) to the gods" (Eustathius, ed. Stallbaum, 1:313, line 17). The same exegetical tradition of the Trojan horse as a *ἱλαστήριον*, found here with Eustathius and earlier with Dio Chrysostom, is found also among the anonymous scholia on Homer, *Odyssey* 8.509 (cf. W. Dindorf, ed., *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Odysseam*, 397, lines 1–2).

As a thought experiment we might note that Eustathius, as a resident of Thessalonica who witnessed the sack of the city by the Normans in 1185 and wrote about it in his *The Capture of Thessaloniki* (trans. Melville Jones), would certainly have been interested in the firsthand account from about 280 years earlier with the same title, *The Capture of Thessaloniki*, in 904 by Arab pirates, as witnessed by Greek cleric John Kaminiates (ed. Frendo and Fotiou). However, as D. Frendo explains in his introduction (xxxvii–xl), Kaminiates's account was written not as literature but as an authentic letter to an otherwise unknown individual (xxviii). Therefore, although we cannot assume that Eustathius read Kaminiates's account of Thessalonica's capture because it is uncertain how and when his letter came into the public domain, Eustathius would in any case recognize Kaminiates's linguistic usage, especially regarding the Hagia Sophia, where Eustathius was bishop. Kaminiates speaks of the churches of Thessalonica, first and foremost the Hagia Sophia, here called "the house of the all-fashioning and divine Wisdom," as follows:

> (11:1) Ναοὶ *γάρ τινες παμμεγέθεις καὶ περικαλλεῖς τῇ ποικίλῃ διακοσμήσει, διὰ μέσου προβεβλημένοι τῆς πόλεως ὥσπερ τινὰ κοινὰ πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ἐξιλαστήρια* [var. *ἱλαστήρια*], *καὶ τούτων μάλιστα ὁ τῆς παντουργοῦ καὶ θείας τοῦ ὑπερουσίου λόγου σοφίας οἶκος, καὶ ὁ τῆς ἀειπαρθένου πανάγνου καὶ θεομήτορος, ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ ὁ τοῦ προλεχθέντος πανενδόξου καὶ καλλινίκου μάρτυρος Δημητρίου*. . . . (Böhlig, ed., *Ioannes Caminiatae de expugnatione Thessalonicae*, 12, lines 15–17)

> §11. Large and exquisitely decorated churches occupy prominent positions in the centre of the city and constitute a sort of public *place of intercession* with God, by far the most important of them being: the house of the all-fashioning and divine Wisdom of the supersubstantial Word, that of the holy and ever-virgin Mother of God, and that of the previously mentioned all-glorious and splendidly victorious martyr Demetrios. . . . (John Kaminiates, *The Capture of Thessaloniki*, trans. Frendo and Fotiou, 21, italics added)

The above translation of *κοινὰ πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ἐξιλαστήρια* in terms of "public place[s] of intercession with God" by D. Frendo and A. Fotiou is somewhat weak. It is better to think with G. Böhlig of "gemeinschaftliche *Versöhnungsstätten* mit Gott," "communal *places of reconciliation/atonement* with God" (*Die Einnahme Thessalonikes*, 27, §11, italics added). Indeed, rites of "atonement" for the Christian community (as perhaps in the Eucharist) may account for these churches being called *ἐξιλαστήρια* and not simply *ἱλαστήρια* (the former is the critical text, the latter a variant), since it is not *ἱλάσκομαι* but *ἐξιλάσκομαι* that is the verb for cultic atonement in Leviticus.

Differing from Böhlig's understanding of the churches of tenth-century Thessalonica as "places of reconciliation" or "atonement" (and therefore not as votive offerings), A. Deissmann, whose text of Kaminiates read the simplex *ἱλαστήρια*, explicitly turns to the use of *ἱλαστήριον* for various "propitiatory gifts" to the gods known from the Greco-Roman inscriptions, Dio Chrysostom, and Josephus, and insists that these church buildings must have been "gifts" by the Christian community to God, "as it were propitiatory gifts dedicated by the community to the deity" (Deissmann, "Mercy Seat," 3031; cf. "*ἱλαστήριος*," 197, "wie Versöhnungsgeschenke," etc.; L. Morris accepts Deissmann's opinion; cf. "Meaning," 36–37). Deissmann also applied the same concept of *ἱλαστήριον* in "its old meaning 'propitiatory thing,' more particularly 'propitiatory gift'" to Byzantine scholars' use of this term for other churches, as in Theophanes Continuatus (tenth century AD), and for monasteries, as in Menader the Guardsman (sixth-seventh century AD) and Joseph Genesios (tenth century AD) (cf. "Mercy Seat," 3031–32).

However, it would be extremely unlikely that Eustathius, who knows very well what a Greco-Roman ἱλαστήριον was through the treatment of the Trojan horse in the Homeric scholia (θελκτήριον = ἱλαστήριον), would agree with Deissmann that Byzantine churches or monasteries, when identified as ἱλαστήρια or ἐξιλαστήρια, represented anything like the use of ἱλαστήριον for the Trojan horse, or for other portable propitiatory gifts like Telephus's drinking bowl (*Lindian Chronicle*) or Apollo's tripod (scholion on Apollonius 4.1549).

In conclusion, it can be said that Deissmann brought a Greco-Roman *bias* to the Byzantine data: his opposition in principle to the understanding of churches and monasteries as "places of reconciliation/atonement," as distinct from Greco-Roman type "propitiatory gifts," seems forced.

However, another mistake, just as serious as Deissmann's, can be made in the opposite direction if one assumes that the Septuagint's notion of "place" as applied to uses of ἱλαστήριον with respect to the mercy seat, the ledges on Ezekiel's altar (cf. Ezek. 43:14, 17, 20), or a part of the illegitimate cult installation at Bethel (cf. Amos 9:1) was the ultimate source of the Greco-Roman use of ἱλαστήριον with reference to propitiatory votive offerings, so as to maintain one unbroken history of the term's development. Yet this is the position in the otherwise fine work of R. A. Mollaun, *St. Paul's Concept of ΙΛΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ* (1923). Mollaun poses the question, "which factor or which development caused the transfer of the LXX word ἱλαστήριον with its notion of locality into the Greek world at large?" and responds by saying, "The answer is Philo, or better, that movement of thought which is represented most distinctly by Philo, namely, Jewish-Hellenic speculation" (65). Mollaun goes on to claim that "with certainty it may be stated that the notions of expiation and propitiation in the word ἱλαστήριον were crystallized for the hellenic world by Jewish influence" (67) and that because the "word in the LXX signifies locality and nothing else," it would not be used in the Greek world with a different meaning (74).

But whatever the date of Mollaun's hypothesized postbiblical Jewish uses of ἱλαστήριον prior to Philo that are supposed to have influenced pagan usage, it would be precarious to simply assume a Jewish cultural background to the Rhodian form ἱλατήριον in the temple of Athena Lindia at

the early date of 99 BC for *The Lindos Chronicle*. And while stationary monuments designated as ἱλαστήρια like those in *Cos* 81 and 347 may indeed have created a sense of space, other portable ἱλαστήρια already mentioned in our criticism of Deissmann, namely, Telephus's drinking bowl and Apollo's tripod, do not suggest places or spaces.

The best solution to this problem is to allow the origins of the characteristic Jewish-Byzantine Christian and Greco-Roman uses of ἱλαστήριον to be independent of each other. Indeed, both Philo and Josephus give evidence of knowing both meanings, yet they seem to assume that non-Jews would recognize only the Greco-Roman one. This new claim about these two crucial Jewish authors must now be proved in some detail.

Josephus is generally very accommodating to his audience. Hence, in relating the story of Noah's ark, he refers to this object not by its biblical name κιβωτός (cf. Philo, *Worse* 170; *Planting* 43; *Confusion* 105), but by the classical term λάρναξ used in the parallel Greek flood myth of Deucalion, son of Prometheus (*Ant.* 1.77, 78, 90, 92 [2*x*], 93, 95; cf. Thackeray, LCL *Josephus*, 5:36 note "a" at *Ant.* 1.77). Josephus also explains that the ark of the covenant (again, κιβωτός) bears the Hebrew name ἐρών, transliterating אֲרוֹן (*Ant.* 3.134). And as noted above, Josephus uses ἱλαστήριον in its normal Greco-Roman sense of a propitiatory offering in reference to Herod's monument at David's tomb (*Ant*. 16.182). There is little chance for any of these uses to be misunderstood by non-Jewish readers.

However, when an opportunity arises for Josephus to identify the top-piece of the ark, the mercy seat, as a ἱλαστήριον, he avoids this biblical term and chooses a related one, ἐπίθεμα, which functions as an appositive to ἱλαστήριον in Exodus 25:17. The text reads: καὶ ποιήσεις ἱλαστήριον ἐπίθεμα χρυσίου καθαροῦ, "And thou shalt make a propitiatory, a lid of pure gold" (Brenton), or "And you shall make a propitiatory as a cover of pure gold" (NETS). Josephus says that the ark (κιβωτός) was made of wood and was covered with gold, and that it also "had a cover (ἐπίθεμα) united to it by golden hinges" (Ant. 3.135), taking up one of the two terms for the object on top of the ark from Exodus 25:17. But to add the other term, ἱλαστήριον, for the ark's top-piece, when Josephus knows Greeks use this term for a

propitiatory offering to the gods (cf. *Ant.* 16.182), would only invite confusion.

Philo takes similar care in addressing his wider audience regarding Jewish technical terms. He embarks on his allegorical interpretations of the tabernacle's sacred vessels with a list that does not include any distinctive Jewish terms: *κιβωτός*, *λυχνία*, *τράπεζα*, *θυμιατήριον*, *βωμός*—an ark, candlestick, table, incense altar, and altar (of burnt offering) (*Moses* 2.94). Philo identifies the tabernacle's main altar by the normal Greek term, *βωμός*. He knows that the Septuagint translators had coined a new word for a legitimate altar, *θυσιαστήριον*, "place of sacrifice." But since few non-Jews will have heard of this term, Philo delays mentioning the *θυσιαστήριον* until 2.106. There he explains that the altar in the open court, introduced as a *βωμός*, is actually called the *θυσιαστήριον*. This can be understood etymologically (cf. *θυσία* + *τηρέω*) as the "sacrifice-keeper," or "keeper and guardian of the sacrifices" (*ὡσανεὶ τηρητικὸν καὶ φυλακτικὸν ὄντα θυσιῶν*; cf. LCL).

Similarly, when Philo seeks to introduce the term *ἱλαστήριον* with reference to the mercy seat, he prepares his readers for it with two other words for the ark's top-piece or lid, *ἐπίθεμα* and *πῶμα* (*Moses* 2.95–96):

> **95** *δὲ κιβωτὸς ἐν ἀδύτῳ καὶ ἀβάτῳ τῶν καταπετασμάτων εἴσω, κεχρυσωμένη πολυτελῶς ἔνδοθέν τε καὶ ἔξωθεν, ἧς ἐπίθεμα ὡσανεὶ πῶμα τὸ λεγόμενον ἐν ἱεραῖς βίβλοις ἱλαστήριον.* **96** . . . *ὅπερ ἔοικεν εἶναι σύμβολον φυσικώτερον μὲν τῆς ἵλεω τοῦ θεοῦ δυνάμεως, ἠθικώτερον δὲ διανοίας πάλιν, ἵλεω δ' ἑαυτῇ.* . . .
>
> 95 The ark was placed on the forbidden ground of the inner sanctuary, within the veils. It was coated with costly gilding within and without, and had a top-piece (*ἐπίθεμα*), a sort of lid (*πῶμα*), which is called in the sacred books the *mercy seat* (*ἱλαστήριον*). 96 . . . It appears to be a *symbol* in a theological sense *of the merciful power of God* (*σύμβολον . . . τῆς ἵλεω τοῦ θεοῦ δυνάμεως*); in the human sense, of a mind which is *merciful* to itself. . . . (LCL Colson, modified)

Philo seems to say that he knows that the object "that is called in the sacred books the ἱλαστήριον" is *not* the sort of object that Greeks would normally call a ἱλαστήριον or propitiatory votive offering; this just happens to be the idiosyncratic usage of the Jewish Scriptures. But a more pointed example of Philo presenting Jewish neologisms to a wider audience is when he combines explanations of ἱλαστήριον with φυγαδευτήριον, "city of refuge." Philo begins his discussion in *On Flight and Finding* 53 with a quotation of the Lord's initial command to Moses in Exodus 21:12–14. The text talks about a place to which an unintentional killer can "flee," but does not yet introduce the technical term φυγαδευτήριον, first mentioned in Scripture in Numbers 35:6 along with the six cities of refuge: δώσω σοι τόπον, οὗ φεύξεται ἐκεῖ ὁ φονεύσας, "I will give you a place, there where the killer shall flee" (Exod. 21:12 [NETS]; cf. *Flight* 53, less LXX's ἐκεῖ). Philo uses the verb φεύγω six times after this, but does not introduce the τόπον, οὗ φεύξεται ὁ φονεύσας by its special Septuagintal name φυγαδευτήριον until he can pair it with ἱλαστήριον in *Flight* 100, along with allegorical interpretation of the six chosen cities and of the laws within the ark of the covenant: "Such are the six cities, which Moses calls 'places of refuge' (ἃς καλεῖ φυγαδευτήρια) (Num. xxxv.12), five of which were represented by symbolic figures which are in the sanctuary, the Laws laid up in the ark being symbols of injunction and prohibition; the top-piece of the ark, which he calls the Mercy-seat, representing the gracious power (τῆς δʼ ἵλεω δυνάμεως τὸ ἐπίθημα τῆς κιβωτοῦ—καλεῖ δὲ αὐτὸ ἱλαστήριον); while the creative and kingly powers are represented by the winged Cherubim that rest upon it" (*Flight* 100, LCL 5:65, modified).

It is crucial to notice Philo's twofold use of the verb καλέω to call attention to Moses's giving special "names" both to the six cities as φυγαδευτήρια, and to the ark's top-piece as a ἱλαστήριον, because in the former case, no known ancient pagan writer has ever called anything a φυγαδευτήριον, and Philo knows that non-Jewish readers will probably never have heard the term before. Rather, this is clearly an invented word, found only in Jewish and Christian sources (103 occurrences in the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae database). There are a total of five -τήριον neologisms in the Septuagint, namely, θυσιαστήριον, ἱλαστήριον,

φυγαδευτήριον, κατοικητήριον, and ἁγιαστήριον, where the last two represent a "dwelling place" and a "sanctuary." Although the word-form ἱλαστήριον is found in non-Jewish sources, the biblical technical term ἱλαστήριον was apparently formed in a particular way, on the analogy of biblical θυσιαστήριον to create a matching pair, according to Septuagint lexicographer J. A. L. Lee (*Lexical Study*, 52).

It is natural to see these biblical -τήριον words as denoting *places*, and therefore *not* as denoting *instruments* to enact their corresponding verbs. Thus the θυσιαστήριον does not θυσιάζει or sacrifice a victim; the φυγαδευτήριον does not φύγει or flee its own enemies; the κατοικητήριον does not κατοικεῖ or inhabit its own space—just as in English the *auditorium* does not listen to a lecture, the *natatorium* does not swim, the *observatory* does not observe, and the *laboratory* does not labor (note that -*torium* and -*tory* are derivatives of -τήριον via Latin). Therefore, it should also follow that the Pentateuchal ἱλαστήριον, the "mercy seat" or "place of propitiation" or "expiation," does *not* ἐξιλάσκεται, does *not* function as an instrument to propitiate God or expiate sin or atone for the sanctuary; it is the high priest who performs such rites *at the mercy seat* (as a *place*, not an instrument) on the Day of Atonement (cf. Lev. 16:14–16).

However, for ἱλαστήριον, there is clearly another sense that the term carries in the Hellenistic and Greco-Roman inscriptions and in reference to the Trojan horse in Dio Chrysostom (*Or.* 11.121) and Herod's monument in Josephus (*Ant.* 16.182), where the ἱλαστήριον in each case is an *instrument* rather than a place and fits the LSJ definition, "ἱλαστήριον (sc. ἀνάθημα), *propitiatory gift* or *offering*." I have argued that three writers from Jewish or Byzantine Christian culture—Philo, Josephus, and Eustathius of Thessalonica, in the light of his knowledge of the Homeric scholia in which the Trojan horse is a ἱλαστήριον—knew both the biblical (and Byzantine) and Greco-Roman uses. This is a distinction that present-day interpreters would also do well to adopt.

In his introductory essay on the Greek of the New Testament that is now printed with his lexicon, W. Bauer identified ἱλαστήριον as a "religious t.t." (BDAG, xvii). However, the "technical term" he has in mind is clearly the Greco-Roman one, not the biblical one. This can be seen from the following

English translation of the German entry (from Bauer–Aland, essentially unchanged from Bauer), which draws on the language of BAGD with abbreviations from BDAG:

> **ἱλαστήριον, ου, τό** (subst. neut. of ἱλαστήριος, ον [PFay 337 I, 3ff—II AD; 4 Macc 17:22; Jos., Ant. 16, 182]) *that which propitiates* or *expiates* [Ger. *das Versöhnende, das Sühnende*], concr. **a means of expiation, gift to procure expiation** (IKosPH, 81, 347 ὁ δᾶμος ὑπὲρ τᾶς Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος θεοῦ υἱοῦ Σεβαστοῦ σωτηρίας θεοῖς ἱλαστήριον; ChronLind B 49 Ἀθάναι ἱλατήριον; Dio Chrys. 10 [11], 121), of Christ, ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον **Ro 3:25.**—The LXX uses ἱ. of the lid on the ark of the covenant, כַּפֹּרֶת, which was sprinkled w. the blood of the sin-offering on the Day of Atonement (Ex 25:16ff al. Likew. TestSol 21:2; Philo, Cher. 25, Fuga 100, Mos. 2, 95). So **Hb 9:5**.

This entry places the earliest known use of the term ἱλαστήριον, with reference to the mercy seat in Exodus 25:17 (Göttingen v. 16), in the last position in the lexicon—after a dash so as to separate the mercy seat of Hebrews 9:5 from the interpretation of Romans 3:25 entirely, leaving no possibility for a "mercy seat" or "place of atonement" interpretation of that verse. There is also no preferred translation for ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25; the German reader can choose either the specific Greco-Roman sense of a "gift to procure expiation" (though "propitiation" would be more accurate), or the functional translation "means of expiation."

Because of this Greco-Roman bias in Bauer, one may need to speak more explicitly of two "technical terms," a biblical one and a Greco-Roman one, as suggested in the title of this essay. The Greco-Roman use is the one everyone well versed in the language of the first century might be expected to know—including people like Philo and Josephus, but also a much later Greek scholar like Eustathius. But a Jewish technical use like the application of ἱλαστήριον to the mercy seat would be hidden from most people, since the object went missing during the exile and the name of the object, ἱλαστήριον, was probably not created until the third century BC in connection with the Septuagint; it can only be known by contact with the Bible.

The recent revival of the Greco-Roman ἱλαστήριον for the interpretation of Romans 3:25 with German authors like Schreiber is based on the idea that comparing a person to a "propitiatory offering" (cf. his English summary), which he regards as equivalent to the German "versöhnendes Weihegeschenk" or "propitiatory votive offering" ("Weitergedacht," 213), would indeed be an unusual metaphor, but at least one in the public domain. Schreiber's development of this idea contains many nuances, but for the present state of research, my statement from eighteen years ago, which Weiss quotes (296n6), is still broadly true: "Yet no one has ever succeeded in showing how God is supposed to have presented humanity (or himself?) with a gift that people normally presented to the gods" (*TynBul* 51:157). However, it is a sign of progress that the two ancient "technical terms" are now recognized, and Schreiber also allows in his conclusion that some Jewish Christians in Rome may have associated Paul's term with what he calls the "covering plate" of the ark on the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16 (215).

But Schreiber's conclusion also recalls the idea of a split decision about interpretation in the Roman congregation, put forward for example by M. Black, who writes, "While for non-Jewish hellenistic readers the first meaning which would probably occur would be that of 'propitiatory offering,' for Jews it would tend to be taken as 'the Mercy Seat.' We need not assume that these different possible interpretations are mutually exclusive" (*Romans*, 69). Yet today, there is greater awareness of ancient letter-writing conventions, including the custom for a letter carrier to be *knowledgeable of the contents of the letter* and expected to read and if necessary explain it. Thus both R. Jewett (*Romans*, 942–43) and R. N. Longenecker have emphasized the importance of the *diakonos* Phoebe as the carrier of Paul's Letter to the Romans (Rom. 16:1–2). Longenecker identifies Phoebe as "the first commentator to others on Paul's letter to Rome." He bases this conclusion in part on the following assumptions (1064):

> Phoebe had been Paul's patron during his ministry at Corinth, had most likely heard from his own lips the contents of the letter as it was being formulated, and must have had some part in discussing with Paul and other Christians of that area at least a few portions of the letter—and therefore would have been in a position to explain to the Christians at

Rome (1) what Paul was saying in the various sections of his letter, (2) what he meant by what he proclaimed in each of those sections, and (3) how he expected certain important sections of his letter to be worked out in practice in the particular situations at Rome.

For Schreiber's thesis about a Greco-Roman sense of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 to be at all plausible, one has to imagine Paul giving Phoebe a letter that, in a key paragraph about the saving righteousness of God that is "attested by the law and the prophets" (Rom. 3:21), relies on a nonbiblical, Greco-Roman usage of a term that includes referents as diverse as the Trojan horse, Herod's monument at David's tomb, Telephus's wine mixing bowl, or Apollo's tripod, rather than alluding to the mercy seat and its prominent role on the Day of Atonement. An allusion to the ledges of Ezekiel's altar identified as ἱλαστήρια in Ezekiel 43:14, 17, and 20 also does not fit well in Romans 3:25, since that altar is already in the open air and therefore has no need to be "publicly displayed" (cf. προέθετο, Rom. 3:25). In any case, it is almost inconceivable that Paul would have intended to give a Greco-Roman twist to an early Jewish-Christian text that included widely shared pre-Pauline tradition, and it may be noted that Professor Stuhlmacher himself traces Romans 3:25 back "to Antiochene tradition and ultimately to the Stephen circle" (above, 218; cf. 216, 218–21, §5.3.2.1; 330–31, 370, 533; and below, 863). Finally, M. Wolter considers Schreiber's "[propitiatory/expiatory] votive offering" idea to be the least plausible interpretation of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 among four main alternatives (*Römer*, 258, with reference to Schreiber, "Weihegeschenk" [2006]).

The real benefit of a clearer distinction between the characteristic biblical and Greco-Roman uses of ἱλαστήριον may be to lessen the need for additional exegetical effort in certain dead-end directions. For example, the NRSV of 4 Maccabees 17:22, "And through the blood of those devout ones and their death as an *atoning sacrifice*, divine Providence preserved Israel that previously had been mistreated," makes it seem that an allusion to the Day of Atonement in connection with the martyrs' death is self-evident, and easily justifies the study Bible note, "This imagery, which draws on the description of the ritual of the Day of Atonement in Lev 16.1–34, is the most developed imagery in 4 Maccabees of vicarious atonement (see note

on 6.28–29)" (Tobin, "4 Maccabees," *The HarperCollins Study Bible* [1993], 1835, note at 17.21–22).

However, a different translation based on the Greco-Roman meaning of ἱλαστήριον, "through the blood of those devout ones and their death as a *propitiatory offering*" (ESV), would not normally raise the question of the biblical Day of Atonement at all for the average English-speaking reader. Neither would a Greek-speaking Jew have to think of the mercy seat just because it goes by the same-sounding word as the expression for a propitiatory votive offering, if in fact the two terms have very different semantic assumptions: the Pentateuchal ἱλαστήριον is not a ἱλαστήριον (sc. ἀναθήμα), as the typical Hellenistic ἱλαστήριον is.

To U. Wilckens's point that the Jewish author of 4 Maccabees must have been aware of the word's cult-technical meaning with reference to the mercy seat, and therefore unlikely to embody the common vernacular sense of "expiatory gift" or "votive offering" (though Wilckens regards the underlying S text as secondary), W. Kraus responds that the opposite is more likely the case, in the light of the author's pronounced Greco-Roman diatribe style and Josephus's use of ἱλαστήριον in its normal Greek sense in *Antiquities* 16.182 (Kraus, *Tod Jesu*, 41n66; cf. Wilckens, *Römer*, 192n538). Josephus's type of usage was probably also known to Philo, who seems to realize that terms such as the "top-piece" (ἐπίθεμα) or "lid" (πῶμα) of the ark to identify the Pentateuchal ἱλαστήριον would hardly be what non-Bible readers would expect a ἱλαστήριον to be. This may be why Philo immediately explains to any non-Jews in his readership that this type object is *called* a ἱλαστήριον *only in the holy books* (*τὸ λεγόμενον ἐν ἱεραῖς βίβλοις* ἱλαστήριον, *Mos*. 2.95).

Stylistically, it would presumably not be in the ancient author's interest to make too great a distinction between "blood" and "death" in 4 Maccabees 17:22, when they are so readily paralleled to good effect; for example, in the sense of the translation: "And through the *bloodshed* of those devout ones, *even* (καί) their *death* as a propitiatory offering, divine Providence preserved Israel." "Blood" and "death" are not substantially different here, even if in another context in 6:29 Eleazar's blood is clearly a means of purification *of the people*, ἀντίψυχον αὐτῶν (objective genitive). This has undeniable Levitical associations, though it also has associations

with human death in pagan contexts not commonly reported (see below on Callimachus, 844–45). The only necessary semantic assumption in 17:22 is that people can present the “offering” or “gift” of their own life through the act of voluntary death. Thus if the Codex S expression *τὸ ἱλαστήριον τοῦ θανάτου αὐτῶν* involves an epexegetic genitive, then indeed their “propitiatory offering” *is* their death. In English, this does not create any necessary reminder of the annual Day of Atonement or the mercy seat. And in Greek, it must be assumed that readers could also keep the characteristic biblical and Hellenistic senses of *ἱλαστήριον* as “place” and “instrument” distinct.

Fortunately, the ease of making precisely this type of distinction can be illustrated by two other noncontroversial -*τήριον* words that have a polysemy of both “place” and “means” or “instrument,” namely the adjective and noun pairs *βασανιστήριος* and *βασανιστήριον*, and *τελεστήριος* and *τελεστήριον*. Thus where the *βασανιστήριον* is a place, a “torture chamber” or “question chamber,” the *βασανιστήρια ὄργανα* are “torture instruments” in Josephus, *War* 2.152, though most other authors abbreviate this simply as *βασανιστήρια* (sc. *ὄργανα*), very similarly to our term *ἱλαστήριον* (sc. *ἀναθήμα*), and thus our author in 4 Maccabees uses the short form *βασανιστήρια* (cf. 6:1; 8:1, 12, 19). Likewise the *τελεστήριον* is a “place for initiation”; for example, the Telesterion at Eleusis, while the *τελεστήρια* (sc. *ἱερά*) are a “thank-offering for success,” the idea presumably being that the animal victims help fulfill or complete the process of human initiation, cf. *τελέω* (and LSJ).

Nevertheless, my attempt to simplify the interpretation of *ἱλαστήριον* in 4 Maccabees 17:22 by pointing out ordinary polysemic -*τήριον* words like *βασανιστήριον* and *τελεστήριον* is entirely new (R. A. Mollaun, 67–74, esp. 69–70, presumably saw but did not grasp the evidence for the polysemy of *τελεστήριον* and also *κολαστήριον*, “*a house of correction*” vs. “*an instrument of correction* or *torture*” in H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* [1897[8]], and accordingly recorded only the “place” senses). And if I attempt to show how *ἱλαστήριον* could have been used without necessarily reminding ancient readers of the Pentateuchal *ἱλαστήριον* that had gone missing with the ark at the time of the Babylonian

Exile (cf. Jer. 3:16; 2 Macc. 2:5; 2 *Bar*. 6:7; Tacitus, *Hist*. 5.9), or of the sin-offering victims on the Day of Atonement, I will currently be taking a minority view. The remainder of this section must therefore be devoted to setting the stage for the next phase of discussion.

The virtually unchallenged position today is that the author of 4 Maccabees intended the use of *ἱλαστήριον* (S) or possibly *ἱλαστήριος θάνατος* (A) in 17:22 as an allusion to the rite of the Day of Atonement as conceived in the Bible, that is, with the long-lost Pentateuchal *ἱλαστήριον* still in view in some ideal way, as part of a larger collection of thematically related words and expressions for vicarious death and atonement.

This may be summarized by the standard treatment of H.-J. Klauck. Klauck quotes the two concluding lines of the prayer by Eleazar the priest, "Be merciful (*ἵλεως γενοῦ*) to your people, and be satisfied with our punishment on their behalf. Make my blood their purification (*καθάρσιον*), and take my life (*ψυχή*) in exchange (lit., 'as a life-exchange,' *ἀντίψυχον*) for theirs" (4 Macc. 6:28–29, NETS). He then quotes the ancient author's summary in 4 Maccabees 17:20–22, which repeats the rare term *ἀντίψυχον* (v. 21, translated "ransom" rather than "exchange" in NRSV/NETS) and the reference to human "blood," while also introducing the adjective *ἱλαστήριος, ον* from 17:22 (Codex A). Klauck then summarizes as follows:

> The adoption of concepts from Old Testament sacrificial theology and terminology is obvious [lit., *liegt auf der Hand*]. In the ritual of the sin offering in the Old Testament, the blood of the sacrificial animal had to be smeared on the altar by the priest or sprinkled before the curtain of the sanctuary (Lev. 4:1–35). *ἱλαστήριος* in 17:22 *aims additionally at the ritual of the annual great Day of Atonement* [italics added] on which the high priest entered the Holy of Holies and applied the sacrificial blood to the golden cover of the ark of the covenant that was called the *ἱλαστήριον* in Leviticus (cf. Lev. 16:14–15 and its reception in Romans 3:25). (Klauck, *4. Makkabäerbuch*, 671)

It is noteworthy that Klauck thinks that Codex A's adjective *ἱλαστήριος* points unambiguously to the noun *ἱλαστήριον* as used in the LXX Pentateuch for the mercy seat. For contrary to the mistaken German theory

that all uses of ἱλαστήριον represent the substantival neuter form of ἱλαστήριος (Ger. "das Versöhnende, das Sühnende," see above, 835–36, on Bauer, *Wörterbuch*), the biblical noun almost certainly does not derive from this adjective, but is formed by adding the neuter place-noun suffix -τήριον directly to the stem ἱλασ- (cf. Doric ἵλαος, corresponding to Attic ἵλεως). This follows the pattern of θυσιαστήριον and all the other Septuagint place-nouns invented by Jews ending in -τήριον (see above, 835, 838–39, and below, 863). However, Klauck also rightly urges caution about potential over-interpretation of the details in 4 Maccabees 6:28–29 and 17:21–22, calling attention to the "metaphorization" of cultic ideas:

> Against too grave an interpretation, one can object that Eliezer's words are formulated as a petition in prayer [sc. for God to accept his blood as a purification and his life as a ransom or exchange, 4 Macc. 6:29] and not as something realized, and that in 17:21 there stands a ὥσπερ [cf. "they became, *as it were*, a ransom for the sin of the nation"], which would suggest reading the entire complex against the background of the metaphorization of cultic terminology in the prophets (cf. Isaiah 53) and in Hellenistic Judaism. But no matter how worthy this is of consideration, it cannot suppress the impression that in 4 Maccabees a considerable step has been taken beyond mere metaphorization. That we have a new creation before us is something the author already enables us to recognize through his use of two unusual terms, καθάρσιον and ἀντίψυχον, which are *hapax legomena* in the Septuagint. The transferred use of cultic terminology was certainly promoted by the author's distance from the actual temple cult, whether this was grounded in the Diaspora situation or in the fact of the destruction of the temple. An explanation for this process of interpretation, in the light of the other affinities of our author to Hellenistic culture in general and to Euripides and tragedy in particular, will not be able to bypass the theme of substitutionary death (*stellvertretendes Sterben*) among the Greeks. (Ibid., 671)

Klauck's presentation of a highly Hellenized writer of 4 Maccabees, who knew other Greek literature with its theme of vicarious or substitutionary death (see briefly Gathercole, *Defending Substitution*, 85–

107), could be used to argue that the author also knew and used the Greco-Roman sense of ἱλαστήριον, and a fuller study of the two other controversial terms, καθάρσιον and ἀντίψυχον, can support this point: they need not be as "Jewish" or "biblical" as they have been made to seem, as we shall see.

For the remainder of this section, we will examine three English-speaking authors, T. Carter, B. J. Tabb, and D. deSilva, who have interacted with my dissertation and have a good idea of the distinction between biblical and Hellenistic uses of ἱλαστήριον, and are in some cases beginning to see different ways to interpret 4 Maccabees 6:28–29 and 17:21–22 in the light of this freshly sharpened distinction.

First, it is to be welcomed that T. Carter, in his book *The Forgiveness of Sins* (2016), agrees that there is a "standard Greek usage of ἱλαστήριον" with reference to "a propitiatory votive gift" (107n2). Yet in his brief statement, unlike Tabb and deSilva, Carter categorically disagrees with my idea that this Greco-Roman votive offering could form the background for ἱλαστήριον in 4 Maccabees 17:22 Codex S because, as he rightly says, Greco-Roman ἱλαστήρια are not known to be dedicated by blood rituals. This makes a background in the Day of Atonement "unambiguous" according to Carter:

> Bailey argues that because 4 Maccabees draws on standard Greek usage of ἱλαστήριον rather than upon the Septuagint there is no reference to the mercy seat here: rather, the death of the martyrs is seen as a propitiatory votive gift. . . . However, the references to blood and cleansing in Eleazar's prayer [cf. 4 Macc. 6:28–29], when combined with those to sin and ἱλαστήριον in 17:21–22, point unambiguously to the rite of the Day of Atonement, when blood sprinkled on the mercy seat atones for the uncleanness and sins of the nation (Lev. 16:15–16).(Carter, *Forgiveness*, 107n2)

In his monograph *Suffering in Ancient Worldview: Luke, Seneca and 4 Maccabees in Dialogue* (2017), B. J. Tabb interacts with my dissertation and its published summary (93–96, 111). Like Carter, he affirms the central *linguistic* point of this essay, namely the distinction between biblical and Greco-Roman uses of ἱλαστήριον. Tabb is the first to my knowledge to explicitly note the support I found for the Greco-Roman definition in the

scholiast on Apollonius of Rhodes (4.1549), "'gifts capable of propitiating' (sc. the gods)" (Tabb, *Suffering in Ancient Worldview,* 94, citing Bailey, diss., "Jesus as the Mercy Seat," 44). Tabb also affirms the priority of Codex S over A in 4 Maccabees 17:22, based on my textual criticism (Tabb, *Suffering in Ancient Worldview,* 94n160, citing my "Jesus as the Mercy Seat," 114–23). Finally, Tabb agrees with me that the author of 4 Maccabees "would likely have been cognizant of these two uses of *ἱλαστήριον*," i.e., the "mercy seat" or "place of atonement" versus "an inanimate votive offering" (96), and that the latter sense is also plausible in 4 Maccabees: "The martyrs' consecrated life in God's presence (17:18–19) accords with the *Hellenistic* background" (96). For the potential significance of this view, Tabb cites I. Malkin (s.v. "Votive Offerings" in *OCD*[3] [Tabb, 95]), also referred to in my dissertation (134–35):

> Dedications [= votives] consisted in renunciation and long-term symbolic investment in the divine, in expectation of good things to come. Unlike sacrifice, where one destroys, by depositing a perceptible object [i.e. the votive offering] in a sanctuary one both loses it and makes it eternal. (Malkin, "Votive Offerings," 1613)

Indeed, the martyrs did not make themselves victims of sacrifice that are totally destroyed (or consumed) and exist no more; rather, in their death they deposited their lives with God, losing them in this world in order to make them eternal, or rather "immortal," in the next (cf. the use of *ἀθάνατος*, *ἀφθαρσία*, or *ἀθανασία* in 4 Macc. 7:3; 9:22; 14:5–6; 16:13; 17:12; 18:23). Because of their endurance to the point of death, "they now stand before the divine throne and live the life of eternal blessedness" (17:17–18). Their death was indeed "a long-term symbolic investment in the divine" made "in expectation of good things to come," to quote Malkin ("Votive Offerings"), for "they knew that those who die for the sake of God live to God, as do Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the patriarchs" (16:25; cf. 7:19).

Similarly drawing on the durability of a Greco-Roman *ἱλαστήριον* and the potential for such an image to go beyond the imagery and theology of animal sacrifice, D. A. deSilva writes, also in the light of Malkin's article (which he alludes to via 134–35 of my dissertation):

> The gain of the reading of ἱλαστήριον as "propitiatory offering" is the connection between the martyrs' deaths and their continuing, durable existence in the realm of God (Bailey 1999:134–135). Sacrifices are, in a sense, destroyed (though it can be understood to be transferred to God through burning), but the votive or propitiatory gift, though "lost" to the uses of this world, has an obvious, ongoing existence in the divine spaces of earthly temples, as do the martyrs in the divine spaces beyond the visible sphere (17:18 is most significant, being in close proximity). This reading is also fully consonant with the significance of the language of "consecration" in 17:19–20 and the author's interpretation of Deut. 33:3 as an indication of God's post-mortem possession and protection of the consecrated souls in God's space.

Both Tabb and deSilva value the types of insights made possible by the durability of the Greco-Roman ἱλαστήριον, but on balance, they place more emphasis on cultic or blood atonement against an essentially Levitical sacrificial background to integrate various expressions of atonement in 4 Maccabees. I will concentrate on only a very narrow part of the argument, which is the assumption that if terms like καθάρσιον and ἀντίψυχον respectively in 6:28 and in 6:29; 17:21 can be shown to be used to express a Jewish or "biblical" atonement, this should also argue for a similar milieu for ἱλαστήριον, which would supposedly greatly reduce the likelihood of a mainstream Hellenistic background for that term as used in 17:22.

In the first part of a two-part article accepted for publication in *JTS* in 2019, S. Hultgren has introduced the question much as I would wish to do (see n. 1 above). The quotation comes under his heading "The Relevance of 4 Maccabees," and does not include literature referred to in Hultgren's footnotes. Key is Hultgren's statement that "cultic" need not refer only to the *Jewish* cult, particularly in 4 Maccabees 17:21–22:

> As for cultic links, it seems clear that 4 Macc 17:21–22 uses cultic terminology. What is not certain is that the links are with the *Jewish* cult (and with the Day of Atonement in particular) rather than with Greek cultic terminology. Once again, although some scholars posit a link between the adjective ἱλαστήριος and τὸ ἱλαστήριον in the Pentateuch, the link is dubious, because we cannot assume a common meaning

> between the two uses. Some see in the purification vocabulary (καθαρίζω) an allusion to the (Israelite) priestly understanding of atonement, which includes purification. But the vocabulary may draw on Greek traditions and not be Jewish at all, as the related word καθάρσιον in 6:29 suggests. The background of the word ἀντίψυχον is also debatable. All that said, the constellation of the terms blood, purification, and ransom is striking, and a convergence between martyrdom and (Jewish) cultic conceptions cannot be ruled out. We have seen that purification and ransom are two key concepts in the priestly theology of the temple, and they are both important (in concept if not in terminology) in the interpretation of the deaths of the martyrs in 2 Maccabees. Whether in 4 Maccabees we are dealing with Greek or Jewish concepts, the book remains important evidence that the Maccabean martyr tradition not only could be interpreted in cultic terms but was so interpreted. (S. Hultgren, "*Hilastērion* [Rom 3:25] and the Union of Divine Justice and Mercy. Part I: The Convergence of Temple and Martyrdom Theologies," forthcoming *JTS*, 2019)

These considerations become especially relevant to deSilva and Tabb's argument with ἀντίψυχον, a Septuagintal *hapax legomenon* if not an outright neologism (4 Macc. 6:29, 17:21), and then also with καθάρσιον (6:29). Regarding the former, the question becomes whether ἀντίψυχον was actually formed as a neuter stubstantive directly out of a reading of the phrase ἀντὶ τῆς ψυχῆς in Leviticus 17:11, that is, supposedly indepdendently of any preexisting adjective ἀντίψυχος, which first appears in Greco-Roman sources in the second and third centuries with Lucian and Dio Cassius. Accordingly, from the phrase about the mechanism of Levitical atonement, τὸ γὰρ αἷμα αὐτοῦ ἀντὶ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐξιλάσεται, "for it is [the animal's] blood that makes atonement for the soul," there supposedly coalesces the term ἀντίψυχον. For this derivation, deSilva and, following him, Tabb have both turned to A. P. O'Hagan, "The Martyr in Fourth Maccabees" (1974). O'Hagan reasons that since the adjective ἀντίψυχος does not appear until the second century, the Jewish author must have "created" ἀντίψυχον: "The background to 4 Mac's [i.e., the author's] *creation* must be sought in the Old Testament" (italics added). In the first instance the term derives from the phrase ἀντὶ (τῆς) ψυχῆς in statements of the *lex talionis* in Exodus

21:23; Leviticus 24:18; and Deuteronomy 19:21, about repayment "life for life," "soul for soul," and so on, so that "4 Mac's word derives from these, or at least from the legal principle they all produce" (118). The cultic application in Leviticus 17:11 then deepens this idea, with the result that "the martyrs' lives are offered to God, and accepted by him, as somehow a substitute for those of the nation. This offering and acceptance are conceived of and communicated in the categories of the Jewish sacrifice of atonement" (118–19).

Tabb refers to O'Hagan's derivation from Leviticus 17:11 frequently (85, 91, 105, 106, 112, 118), and deSilva also relies on this idea (147, 250). Nevertheless, regarding the issue of historical origins and provenance, it is highly doubtful that such a specific term as ἀντίψυχος could have been formed for the first time directly from Leviticus 17:11 as late as the composition of 4 Maccabees 6:29 and 17:21, and then have been adopted or adapted almost immediately by the early Christian bishop Ignatius of Antioch (*Eph*. 21:1; *Smyrn*. 10:2; *Pol*. 2:3; 6:1) and then not long afterwards by the pagan writers Lucian (*Lexiphanes* 10) and Dio Cassius (*Hist*. 59.8.3). It is far more likey that the term ἀντίψυχος predates all these sources, and it may be noted that Muraoka (*Lexicon*, s.v.) and Hiebert ("4 Maccabees," 310) do not consider this a neologism by the author of 4 Maccabees.

More original findings can also be reported about the term καθάρσιος. Since Eleazar, the priest, prays to God in 4 Maccabees 6:29, *καθάρσιον αὐτῶν ποίησον τὸ ἐμὸν αἷμα*, "make my blood a means of purification of them," there can be no doubt that the widespread term *καθάρσιον* has specifically been employed in an extension of Levitical atonement and purity rites. Yet at the same time it also participates in a wider world of Hellenistic religion, as can be seen by a seldom-discussed text in biblical studies, a fragment from the Greek poet Callimachus, *Aetia (Causes)*, which is in turn discussed in a papyrus commentary from about 100 AD known as the Milan Diegesis (cf. *OCD*[3], 276, s.v. "Callimachus [3]," of Cyrene; cf. also Bailey, "Jesus," diss., 130–31). The fragment, §90a, reads: "There, Abdera (?), where . . . leads the scapegoat (φαρμακόν)," while the commentary, *Diegesis* II, lines 29–40 reads:

> In Abdera a bought person, who is used as a means of purification of the city (*καθάρσιον τῆς πόλεως*), stands on a piece of grey brick and enjoys an abundant meal, and when he is completely full he is brought forward to the so-called Prurian gates. After that he goes round in a circle outside the wall thereby purifying (*περικαθαίρων*) the town on all sides and then he is stoned by the king and the others, until he is driven from their territory. (Callimachus, *Aetia*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. A. Harder [2012], 268, §90a, corrected here to include a translation of *τῆς πόλεως*, "of the city")

It is notable that the term of the fragmentary text for, in this case, a human scapegoat—namely, a *φαρμακόν*, a technical term involved in elimination rituals—is interpreted in the *Diegesis* commentary as a *καθάρσιον*, a means of purification, and fortified by the verb *περικαθαίρω*. The observation made by T. Carter above (841) that Greco-Roman *ἱλαστήρια* were not normally dedicated by blood rituals is also apposite here, as a notable difference from the *Diegesis*'s use of *καθάρσιον*, without any stated blood ritual, is the request of Eleazar in 4 Maccabees 6:29 to have his blood made the means of the people's purification, *καθάρσιον*. Nevertheless, it is striking for a human to be the *καθάρσιον* in both texts, and such observations might support the hypothesis advanced by S. Hultgren above, that "cultic" need not refer only to the *Jewish* cult. *ἱλαστήριον* is the most particular of all these terms and moreover has two different meanings which are also known to be historically independent, in the sense that the biblical term *ἱλαστήριον* was first invented in a closed community of Jewish scholars translating the Septuagint. I have shown above that a close equation between "blood" and "death" can be made in the Codex S text of 4 Maccabees 17:22, which does not require a Levitical background, unlike the role of Eleazar's blood in 6:29.

In sum, the clearer definition of differences between biblical and Greco-Roman uses of *ἱλαστήριον* can be a starting point for a more nuanced debate about the tradition history and theology of different uses of this term. Moreover, Eleazar's prayer in 4 Maccabees 6:28, *ἵλεως γενοῦ τῷ ἔθνει σου*, "Become merciful to your people," can be considered answered when God accepts the death of the martyrs as a Hellenistic *ἱλαστήριον*, a means of

propitiation that he then takes into account as he saves Israel. In other words, if the origin of the Greco-Roman use of ἱλαστήριον is outside the realm of biblical Judaism and the Septuagint, then there is no need to argue that the Septuagintal developed sense of the expiation of sin (rather than the propitiation of God and his wrath) advocated by C. H. Dodd (ΙΛΑΣΚΕΣθΑΙ) should apply to 4 Maccabees 17:22 Codex S.

2. Textual Criticism of 4 Maccabees 17:22: ἱλαστήριος (Codex A) or ἱλαστήριον (Codex S)? The textual criticism of 4 Maccabees 17:22, focused on the variation between Codices Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus, is closely bound up with the lexicography of ἱλαστήριον and the distinctive Greco-Roman sense of a "propitiatory offering."

Professor Stuhlmacher applies the biblical sense of ἱλαστήριον to Jesus in Romans 3:25 and the Greco-Roman sense to the death of the martyrs in 4 Maccabees 17:22 Codex Sinaiticus. Yet he remains almost the only major German scholar to maintain this combination of texts and interpretations, largely because almost all German speakers read the alternative Alexandrinus text of 4 Maccabees 17:22; when M. Wolter, another German proponent of the mercy-seat interpretation, also sides with Stuhlmacher regarding Codex S in 4 Maccabees 17:22, he leaves the key term untranslated (i.e., "durch das ἱλαστήριον ihres Todes," "through the ἱλαστήριον of their death," *Römer*, 257).

The two text forms of 4 Maccabees 17:22 are frequently misanalyzed. Thus, for example, T. Söding cites the Greek text of S while translating and discussing the text of A (381); E. Lohse similarly pairs the S text with the A translation ("ihren sühnenden Tod," "their atoning death"; *Römer*, 135). Conversely, both J. W. van Henten and A. Hultgren provide translations of S, from NRSV and *OTP* respectively, to go with the Greek text of A (*Martyrs*, 152; *Romans*, 663 with nn. 2, 4). It may therefore be convenient to lay out the texts more explicitly.

The S text is longer than that of A by only one word, the article τοῦ before θανάτου, but this article radically changes the grammar and part of speech of ἱλαστηρίου, which may be illustrated by removing the introductory διά that casts ἱλαστηρίου in the genitive and rewriting both sentences in the nominative. The shared "death" mentioned in 4 Maccabees

17:22 was suffered by the nine Maccabean martyrs, that is, the priest Eleazar, the seven brothers, and their mother (cf. 17:13). The article in *brackets* is included in S but not in A:

> καὶ διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τῶν εὐσεβῶν ἐκείνων καὶ τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου [τοῦ] θανάτου αὐτῶν ἡ θεία πρόνοια τὸν Ισραηλ προκακωθέντα διέσωσεν. (4 Macc. 17:22, where [τοῦ] is included in Codex S)
>
> Translation of Codex S:
>
> And through the blood of those devout ones and their death as a propitiatory offering (ἱλαστήριον), divine Providence preserved Israel that previously had been afflicted. (*The English Standard Version Bible with Apocrypha* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2009]; translated from Codex S by D. A. deSilva)

Codex A

gen.	διὰ . . . τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου θανάτου αὐτῶν	
nom.	ὁ ἱλαστήριος θάνατος αὐτῶν	
trans.	their propitiatory death	(Brenton, *Septuagint*)
	durch . . . ihren sühnenden Tod	(*Septuaginta Deutsch* [Klauck, JSHRZ])
	durch . . . ihren zur Sühne dienenden Tod	(*APAT* [Deissmann])
	“[ihr] sühnender (beschwichtigender) Tod”	
	“their atoning (appeasing) death”	(cf. Kraus, *Tod Jesu*, 24)

Codex S

gen.	διὰ . . . τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου τοῦ θανάτου αὐτῶν

nom.	τὸ ἱλαστήριον τοῦ θανάτου αὐτῶν	
trans.	the propitiation of their death	(*APOT* [Townshend]; *OTP* [Anderson])
	the propitiatory offering of their death	(Bailey, *TynBul* 51:158)
	their death as a propitiatory offering	(ESV [deSilva])
	"die Weihegabe ihres Todes"	
	"the votive offering of their death"	(Kraus, *Tod Jesu*, 41)

The greatest argument in favor of the shorter text of A is that it has the better manuscript support: the uncials A and V and about twenty-seven minuscules, against the uncial S and only two minuscules (62 and 577), but more witnesses than A among the menologies (cf. Klauck, *4. Makkabäerbuch*, 678–80, 753n*a* at 4 Macc. 17:22). The forthcoming Göttingen critical edition of 4 Maccabees, edited by R. Hiebert (see below, Sources, 864), will favor the S text as original, largely because of its status as the *lectio difficilior* (personal correspondence with Dr. Hiebert). The present treatment similarly focuses on the argument for S from the internal evidence as the *lectio difficilior*.

Codex A's expression ὁ ἱλαστήριος θάνατος αὐτῶν, "their propitiatory death," is by far the easier reading, and this is the strongest reason to regard it as secondary. By the time of the production of the fifth-century Codex A, or at whatever earlier time this reading originated, a Christian scribe who encountered an article τοῦ after ἱλαστηρίου in his *Vorlage*, as witnessed by Codex S, could very easily have regarded it as a mistake by an earlier copyist of repeating after ἱλαστηρίου the article τοῦ that comes before it (i.e., the error of dittography). The copyist would then almost be forced to omit this semantically problematic second article in the Sinaiticus-type text, if his only alternative was to try to understand the noun ἱλαστήριον in its usual biblical sense with reference to the mercy seat. For the reading "through the mercy seat [τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου] of their death [τοῦ θανάτου αὐτῶν]" makes little

sense when the simple step of excluding what appears to be a duplicated article after ἱλαστηρίου yields (in the nominative) the very simple expression ὁ ἱλαστήριος θάνατος αὐτῶν, “their propitiatory death.” This is an unremarkable phrase in the light of similar uses of ἱλαστήριος such as in ἱλαστήριοι θυσίαι, “propitiatory sacrifices,” already in the second-century papyrus *P. Fayum* 337, not to mention uses of ἱλαστήριος in later Christian writings (cf. G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* [1961], s.v.).

If the S text is original, then the earliest Jewish copyists, and presumably some early Christian ones as well, will need to have understood the normal Greco-Roman use of ἱλαστήριον with the meaning “the *propitiatory offering* of their death” (Bailey, *TynBul* 51:158) or “their death as a *propitiatory offering*” (ESV) well enough to refrain from making the correction of the S-type text (as I regard it) undertaken in the Alexandrinus-type text, with its easier reading.

The Septuagint lexicon of Muraoka (2009) confirms the meaning “propitiatory offering” in 4 Maccabees 17:22 Codex S: “[ἱλαστήριον] b. *propitiatory offering:* θανάτου, ‘(martyrs’) death’ 4M 17.22.” What has not been widely noticed in international scholarship (for it is not expected that many Germans will have read BDAG) is that both Muraoka and the New Testament lexicographer F. W. Danker agree on the essential polysemy of the term ἱλαστήριον, with both distinguishing a biblical sense involving a place from a Greco-Roman sense involving a propitiatory gift or offering:

	ἱλαστήριον **Muraoka**	**ἱλαστήριον** **Danker (BDAG)**
Biblical sense	*Place where cultic rites for appeasing a divine being are performed* with an appropriate building attached [w. ref. to the mercy seat, Exod. 25:17; the ἱλαστήριον in Amos 9:1 (the altar complex?); two altar ledges, Ezek. 43:15].	**2.** ***place of propitiation*** (as Ezk 43:14, 17, 20) [ref. TManson, JTS 46, ’45, 1–10] **Note:** the use of ἱλαστήριον to refer to the mercy seat (Exod. 25:17ff.) is

		not placed with the Ezekiel references by Danker, but only at the end of the entry.
Greco-Roman sense	**b.** *propitiatory offering:* *θανάτου*, ‘(martyrs’) death’ 4M 17.22.	In Gr-Rom. lit. that which serves as an instrument for regaining the goodwill of a deity; concr. a ‘means of propitiation or expiation, gift to procure expiation’ **Sources:** IKosPH, 81, 347; ChronLind B 49; Dio Chrys. 10 [11], 121.

Danker’s reference under *ἱλαστήριον* 2 “place of propitiation” to the famous study by T. W. Manson (“ ΙΛΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ,” *JTS* 46 [1945]) is a significant departure from W. Bauer’s German entry which he is adapting, which does not even countenance Jesus being identified as a “place of atonement” and does not cite Manson (see above, 835–36).

3. Lexical Semantics and Translation Theory. The verbal nouns “propitiation” and “expiation,” often used to create parallels between English translations of *ἱλαστήριον* in Romans 3:25 and in 4 Maccabees 17:22 Codex S, are insufficient for lexicography because they are usually abstract verbal nouns, and the NRSV’s phrase “atoning sacrifice” in connection with the martyrs (“their death as an atoning sacrifice”) is misleading because the English refers to the act of self-sacrifice, a meaning *ἱλαστήριον* is not known to have.

Most major versions of the English Bible with Apocrypha not edited specifically for Roman Catholics now follow an expanded Apocrypha that includes 4 Maccabees: see RSV, NRSV, ESV, and CEB (also above, 762–

64). Since all these Bibles read the Codex S text of 4 Maccabees 17:22 that has been judged original in this study, a laboratory exists for examining lexical semantics and translation theory.

	4 Maccabees 17:22 (Codex S)	**Romans 3:25**
LXX/NT	καὶ διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τῶν εὐσεβῶν ἐκείνων καὶ τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου τοῦ θανάτου αὐτῶν	ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι
OTP/ESV	Through the blood of these righteous ones and through the *propitiation* of their death	whom God put forward as a *propitiation* by his blood
ESV	And through the blood of those devout ones and their death as a *propitiatory offering*	whom God put forward as a *propitiation* by his blood
RSV	And through the blood of those devout ones and their death as an *expiation*	whom God put forward as an *expiation* by his blood
NRSV	And through the blood of those devout ones and their death as an *atoning sacrifice*	whom God put forward as a *sacrifice of atonement* by his blood
CEB	Divine providence delivered Israel from its former abuse through the blood of those godly people. Their deaths were *a sacrifice that finds*	God displayed Jesus as the *place of sacrifice where mercy is found*

	mercy [mg. “Or *a propitiation*”] *from God*	by means of his blood

As the table above clearly shows, there is a coordinated effort to use the same or a similar term to translate ἱλαστήριον in both Romans 3:25 and 4 Maccabees 17:22 Codex S, with one important exception. With respect to the ESV translation of Romans 3:25, “whom God put forward as a *propitiation,*” the ESV Apocrypha does not provide an exact parallel for the expression “a propitiation” because the editor of 4 Maccabees, D. A. deSilva, has introduced the technical Greco-Roman meaning of ἱλαστήριον that supports the translation “their death as a *propitiatory offering*” with respect to the martyrs.

The ESV of Romans 3:25 therefore finds its more exact parallel in the *OTP* translation of 4 Maccabees with its single term “propitiation,” thus: “through the blood of these righteous ones and through the *propitiation* of their death” (trans. H. Anderson).

It may be convenient to examine what these translations mean in English before addressing more technical questions of lexicography.

Many laypeople today, especially in evangelical Protestant circles, have been made aware of Bible translation philosophies including “formal equivalence” versus “dynamic or functional equivalence,” which are sometimes introduced right from the first page of a Bible after the table of contents (so, e.g., *The Christian Standard Bible* [2017], revision of the HCSB; similarly NET Bible preface). What has not been recognized is that time-tested terms such as “propitiation” and “expiation” often meet the definition of functional equivalents, not literal translations, of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 and 4 Maccabees 17:22 Codex S.

The use of English verbal nouns prevents a mercy-seat reading of Romans 3:25. This trend to abstraction begins already with the Old Latin and Vulgate versions, which flattened the difference between ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 and ἱλασμός in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10 by using *propitiatio*, “propitiation,” in both. However, there is currently no known ancient instance in which ἱλαστήριον functions exactly as the English nouns “propitiation” and “expiation” often do, that is, as verbal nouns taking an objective genitive, as in “the propitiation of God” or “the expiation of sin.”

Abstract “expiation” and “propitiation/conciliation” can be expressed through other words, such as ἐξιλασμός and καταλλαγή. The following examples using these words illustrate linguistic functions that ἱλαστήριον is not known to perform in the ancient period.

Regarding ἐξιλασμός, on the day after the rebellion of Korah and the priests in Numbers 16, when the people also rebelled, Aaron intervened to stop the plague using a censer according to Numbers 16:47, where Aaron “put on the incense, and made atonement for the people” (καὶ ἐπέβαλεν τὸ θυμίαμα καὶ ἐξιλάσατο περὶ τοῦ λαοῦ). The author of Wisdom praises Aaron for this, using ἐξιλασμός, “propitiation,” as the headword with θυμιάμα, “incense,” as a subjective genitive. Aaron appeased God’s anger and averted disaster by bringing forward the shield of his ministry, προσευχὴν καὶ θυμιάματος ἐξιλασμόν, “prayer and propitiation by incense” (Wis. 18:21).

Another instance of an abstract verbal noun, in 2 Maccabees 5:20, speaks of the eventual “propitiation” or “conciliation” of God and his anger after his allowing the desecration of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes. The construction uses the headword καταλλαγή, normally “reconciliation,” but here “conciliation” or “appeasement,” with the Lord (ὁ δεσπότης) in an objective genitive role. In this case, *Septuaginta Deutsch* is the only major version that gives a concordant translation in that it uses a noun, *Versöhnung*, for the Greek noun καταλλαγή (cf. “in der Versöhnung des großen Herrn”). The NRSV has been accordingly modified below (2 Macc. 5:19–20): “[19]But the Lord did not choose the nation for the sake of the holy place, but the place for the sake of the nation. [20]Therefore the place itself shared in the misfortunes that befell the nation and afterward participated in its benefits; and what was forsaken in the wrath of the Almighty was restored again in all its glory *at the conciliation of the great Lord*” (ἐν τῇ τοῦ μεγάλου δεσπότου καταλλαγῇ; cf. NJB, “once the great Sovereign was *placated*”).

Abstract, generalizing dynamic equivalent translation regarding the biblical “mercy seat” begins as early as the Septuagint. In the Hebrew text of 1 Chronicles 28:11, David’s plans for Solomon’s temple include the innermost chamber, called the בֵּית הַכַּפֹּרֶת or “room for the mercy seat”

(NRSV), also translated “the shrine containing the cover of the ark” (NAB, revised). The LXX translates this not literally, as ὁ οἶκος τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου, but functionally as ὁ οἶκος τοῦ ἐξιλασμοῦ, “the house of atonement” (NETS). Yet the NEB-REB, supposedly working from the Hebrew, reproduces the LXX exactly with “the shrine of expiation” (cf. also NIV, “the place of atonement”; NET, “the room for atonement”). This obscures the importance of the mercy seat as a cultic object in its own right, independent of the shrine in which it resides or the ark on which it rests (cf. Exod. 30:6; Lev. 16:2).

Dynamic equivalent translations of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 also begin earlier in history than one might expect, with the first widely distributed translation of the koine New Testament into the *katharevousa* or “purist” form of Modern Greek by the Orthodox scholar and churchman Neophytos Vamvas in 1850 (see also above, 765–66). This is followed in the presentation below by a similar *katharevousa* Greek version (Ioannes Kolitsaras), a modern demotic Greek version (see Greek Bible Society under “Sources” in bibliography), and English translations that use the same technique as these Greek versions:

God presented Christ as . . .

μέσον ἐξιλασεως, a means of expiation	N. Vamvas, 1850 (cf. Num. 29:11)
μέσον ἐξιλαμοῦ, a means of expiation	I. Kolitsaras, 1964 (cf. Wis. 18:20)
ο ἐξιλαμός των αμαρτιών, the expiation of sins	Greek Bible Society (1997/2003)
a means of expiation	B. Byrne, *Romans* (1996)
a means of expiating sin	J. Fitzmyer, *Romans* (1993)
the means of expiating sin	NEB/REB
the means by which people’s sins are	TEV (rev. 1992)

forgiven

In the above presentation, the Greek of Neophytos Vamvas has been translated in terms of “expiation” for consistency, although, as he was working with the British and Foreign Bible Society, he would have known the term “propitiation” from the KJV and there is no reason to think he would disagree with it theologically, given the time period. But in *The Holy Bible in Today’s Greek Version* (1997), *ἐξιλαμός* must be understood as “expiation” since it takes “sin” as an objective genitive, *ὁ ἐξιλαμός τῶν ἁμαρτιών*.

The striking feature of these examples is that the term *μέσος* or “means” is needed in both Greek and English to state clearly what God’s sending Christ as a *ἱλαστήριον* has accomplished, according to these translations: *μέσος* + genitive noun is the very definition of “functional equivalence.” The ESV and RSV can easily accept this expression, “means of,” for clarification in both 4 Maccabees 17:22 and Romans 3:25 in order to maintain parallel translations:

	4 Maccabees 17:22 (Codex S)	**Romans 3:25**
ESV (mod.)	And through the blood of those devout ones and their death as a *means of propitiation*	whom God put forward as a *means of propitiation* by his blood
RSV (mod.)	And through the blood of those devout ones and their death as a *means of expiation*	whom God put forward as a *means of expiation* by his blood

However, these translations, while clearly communicating that God sent Jesus as the means to effect propitiation (of his wrath) or expiation (of sin), do not make it clear that the only type of ancient *ἱλαστήριον* that propitiates is the Greco-Roman one, a “propitiatory gift” or “offering” (LSJ), and the translations also lack an ancient cultural resonance because of their merely functional approach. The theological sense of the ESV would therefore not be greatly changed if it spoke of Jesus as the one “whom God put forward

as a *propitiatory gift*" or "*offering*" instead of simply as "a propitiation." In fact, "propitiatory gift" fits the definition of "a propitiation" in its archaic sense, as in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, s.v. "3. *archaic* a gift etc. meant to propitiate" (ed. R. E. Allen [1990[8]]). As long as the term "offering" is not understood as an animal offering such as the "sin offering" (cf. Rom. 8:3 NRSV margin), the English expression "propitiatory offering" can illustrate what 4 Maccabees 17:22 and Romans 3:25 might have in common when read against a Greco-Roman background:

	4 Maccabees 17:22 (Codex S)	**Romans 3:25**
ESV	And through the blood of those devout ones and their death as a *propitiatory offering*	whom God put forward as a *propitiatory offering* by his blood (ESV: a *propitiation*)

Nevertheless, the mentions of "blood" in these two passages do not have the same force, and "blood" constitutes a greater problem for a Greco-Roman "propitiatory offering" interpretation of Romans 3:25 than it does in the ESV translation of 4 Maccabees 17:22 (which Muraoka has already effectively affirmed, as above). If God's setting forth of Jesus in Romans 3:25 is indeed to be compared with the setting up of a propitiatory votive offering, as A. Weiss, S. Schreiber, and C. Eschner all maintain in their different ways, it would be superfluous to mention Jesus's blood, since there is no evidence that pagan dedications of ἱλαστήρια to the gods were regularly accompanied by blood sacrifices (this criticism by Kraus, "Erweis," 202, originally directed at Schreiber, *ZNW* 2006, remains equally valid for Schreiber, *ZNW* 2015, and all other proponents of a votive offering in Rom. 3:25). Thus there is no mention of blood in the Hellenistic or Greco-Roman examples of ἱλαστήρια already covered above, as when the Greeks dedicated the Trojan horse as a ἱλαστήριον to Athena of Ilium (Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 11.121), or when Telephus deposited a φιάλη or drinking bowl as a ἱλατήριον to Athena Lindia in her temple in Lindos (*Lindian Chronicle*, line B 49), or when Herod erected a monument at the entrance to David's tomb as a ἱλαστήριον (Josephus, *Ant.* 16.182). But since it is not the

martyrs, but their death, that is identified as a ἱλαστήρον in 4 Maccabees 17:22, it is a simple matter to parallel "blood" and "death" as they stand conspicuously at the beginning and the end of the relevant phrase in 4 Maccabees (compare "justified by his blood" and "reconciled by his death" in succeeding sentences in Rom. 5:9–10) and to represent the connection in English by a synonymous parallelism, "their blood . . . , *even* their death," hence:

> διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τῶν εὐσεβῶν ἐκείνων καὶ τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου τοῦ θανάτου αὐτῶν . . .
>
> through the **blood** of those devout ones and the propitiatory offering of their **death** . . .
>
> through the **blood** of those devout ones, *even* their **death** as a propitiatory offering, divine Providence preserved Israel that previously had been afflicted.

Both renderings above make the equivalence of "blood" and "death" clear.

It remains to explain the subtly misleading wording of the NRSV at 4 Maccabees 17:22 and to prove that the message it conveys about the martyrs' *act* of "atoning sacrifice" cannot possibly be communicated by the existing Greek text or by the edited version by E. Lohse, which sought to produce a reading similar to that of the NRSV by hypothetically adding θῦμα after ἱλαστήριον in the Codex S text.

Although Lohse's unproven claim that ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 should be read to mean essentially "ἱλαστήριον (sc. θῦμα)" or "atoning sacrifice" is well known (cf. *Märtyrer*, 152; also "als Sühne"; "sühendes Opfer," *Römer*, 128, 135), what is less known is that Lohse also speculated about the true meaning of the Codex S text of 4 Maccabees 17:22, which he considered text-critically secondary to Codex A but still worth interpreting. A closer analysis of Lohse's experiment in Greek composition ultimately shows that the NRSV translation of this verse is unsupportable.

Lohse translates the Codex S expression διὰ . . . τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου τοῦ θανάτου αὐτῶν by "durch das *Sühnopfer* ihres Todes" (*Märtyrer*, 71n2). But

since he says that the θῦμα or "sacrifice" element of the meaning needs to be supplied by the reader, it is best to write Lohse's German out in two words, "durch das *sühnende Opfer* ihres Todes," "through the *atoning sacrifice* of their death." Lohse suggests the proper Greek for expressing this would be *διὰ . . . τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου* [sc. *θύματος*] *τοῦ θανάτου αὐτῶν*, where *ἱλαστηρίου* becomes an attributive adjective modifying *θύματος*, "expiatory/atoning [sc. sacrifice]."

The fatal problem with Lohse's composition in 4 Maccabees 17:22 is that θῦμα generally refers narrowly to the victim of sacrifice, a "slaughtered animal" (Muraoka, s.v.; also LSJ, "victim, sacrifice"). Indeed, often the English noun "sacrifice" is not even needed in translating θῦμα, as in the command *σφάξον θύματα*, "slaughter animals" (Gen. 43:16), or the statement *ἔσφαξεν τὰ ἑαυτῆς θύματα*, "she slaughtered her own sacrificial victims" (Prov. 9:2 NETS). In the light of this, Lohse's expression *διὰ τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου θύματος τοῦ θανάτου αὐτῶν* could only mean "through the propitiatory *victim* of their death," which is nonsense.

Although his term θῦμα does not serve his purpose, Lohse obviously wished to compose Greek that can be translated "through the atoning sacrifice of their death," that is, the sacrifice that their death in fact was (epexegetic genitive). With a reversal of word order, this becomes the NRSV's "through their death as an [act of] atoning sacrifice." The phrase "act of" needs to be added since the English term "sacrifice" most commonly refers to "the *act of* giving up something valued for the sake of something else more important or worthy" (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* [1990[8]], s.v. "sacrifice 1a," italics added). Precisely this logically required sense of "sacrifice" in 4 Maccabees 17:22 Codex S, as referring to a person's act of self-giving, is seen with the noun θυσία rather than θῦμα in two biblical examples: (1) The Prayer of Azariah from the fiery furnace in Daniel 3:40 LXX, *οὕτω γενέσθω ἡμῶν ἡ θυσία ἐνώπιόν σου σήμερον*, "thus may our sacrifice be before you today" (i.e., like many burnt offerings, etc.), and (2) Hebrews 9:26 about the self-sacrifice of Jesus, who "has appeared once for all at the end of the age to remove sin *by the sacrifice of himself*," διὰ τῆς θυσίας αὐτοῦ.

Accordingly, the correct way to express in Greek what the NRSV of 4 Maccabees 17:22 expresses in English—and what Lohse attempts to

express in his interpretative German translation of Codex S involving an implied θῦμα—requires using θυσία rather than θῦμα, along with two-termination attributive adjective ἱλαστήρος, ον, and reads: διὰ τῆς ἱλαστηρίου θυσίας τοῦ θανάτου αὐτῶν, "through the propitiatory sacrifice of their death," semantically parallel to the accusative plural in P. Fayum 337, ἱλαστήριους θυσίας. Because obtaining the NRSV's sense requires a radical recomposition of the Greek using θυσία, it is not representative of either biblical or Greco-Roman uses of ἱλαστήριον, and the best translation remains that of the ESV, "their death as a propitiatory offering."

Finally, the CEB translation, "their deaths were a sacrifice that finds mercy from God," shares the same semantic issues as the NRSV, in that "sacrifice" is required to mean "act of sacrifice," that is, θυσία.

4. The Translation of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 by "Sacrifice of Atonement" and Other Theological Problems. Despite the lack of ancient Greek primary evidence for the translation of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 in terms of a "sacrifice of atonement," that is, a victim, this is the wording of the two most popular modern English versions, the NIV and NRSV, and has recently been adopted by the CSB ("atoning sacrifice").

As an additional consequence of the NRSV using the literal-style translation "sacrifice of atonement" when no known ancient ἱλαστήρια have been sacrifices, it will be shown that the phrase "atoning sacrifice" has also been allowed to infiltrate the most recent Fortress Press translation of the Augsburg Confession, where the original Latin speaks concretely of the "propitiatory" or "mercy seat."

Finally, a possibly relevant scholion on Apollonius of Rhodes 2.485b is seen to be ambiguous about whether the related term ἐξιλαστήρια on its own can refer to a victim of sacrifice.

To date, no ancient Greek primary text has been discovered in which the referent of the term ἱλαστήριον is clearly a victim that sheds its blood in a sacrificial ritual. But this fact has not stopped the phrase "sacrifice of atonement" or "atoning sacrifice" from becoming the dominant modern English translation of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 (cf. NIV, NRSV, CSB). However, a survey research unit at Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) studying Bible-reading habits in America, including

the popularity of various Bible versions, has determined that far more Americans (55 percent) still customarily read the traditional KJV, with its term "propitiation" in Romans 3:25, than any other version. This is followed by the Bible readers who will encounter "sacrifice of atonement" either in the NIV (19 percent of readers) or in the NRSV (7 percent) (see P. Goff, et al., "The Bible in American Life," esp. 12). Either way, there are not many opportunities for ordinary readers of the English Bible to be told that Jesus in Romans 3:25 should be compared not with a sacrificial animal but with the "mercy seat" (cf. NET Bible), both as a symbol of God's presence (Exod. 25:22; Lev. 16:2) and as the focal point of the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:14–16).

Yet, despite the lack of primary evidence for a *ἱλαστήριον* as an animal victim, there has long been one evidence-based way to advocate for the translation "atoning sacrifice" or "propitiatory sacrifice" as still being a literal one. The method is to argue that such victim references for *ἱλαστήριον* probably existed because several other -*τήριον* words have historically designated victims. (H. A. W. Meyer is the most important early proponent of this approach; cf. *Romans*, 172.) In fact, there are eleven other -*τήριον* words known to be capable of referring to victims according to LSJ, which analyzes them as elliptical constructions eliding the term for the victim, "(sc. *ἱερόν*)" or "(sc. *ἱερά*)." These eleven terms in LSJ are: *ἀναβατήριον*, *ἀποβατήρια*, *διαβατήρια*, *ἐμβατήρια*, *ἐπιβατήρια*, *εὐχαριστήρια*, *καθαρτήρια*, *σωτήρια*, *τελεστήρια*, *ὑπερτήρια*, and *χαριστήρια*. C. E. B. Cranfield is the last major English-speaking Romans commentator to suggest that *ἱλαστήριον* may have been used to refer to a victim prior to Paul, given the evidence of the other -*τήριον* words. Cranfield supports his translation "propitiatory sacrifice" by reference to three of LSJ's eleven words: *σωτήριον*, *χαριστήριον*, and *τελεστήριον* (*Romans*, 1:216–17). Nevertheless, the pagan Greek -*τήριον* analogies do not seem entirely necessary for Cranfield, since he says that the mention of Jesus's "blood," combined with the idea of propitiation, which he sees in the *ἱλάσοκαι* group, "would still indicate that a propitiatory sacrifice is in mind" (1:216), despite the absence of hard data.

Consequently, a serious question confronts readers of Cranfield's translation, which presents Christ Jesus as the one "whom God purposed to

be by the shedding of his blood a *propitiatory sacrifice*” (Rom. 3:25). Apparently, Jesus is a “propitiatory sacrifice” partly because he is a ἱλαστήριον and partly because he shed his blood, but Christ’s being designated as a ἱλαστήριον does not help this case because there is no known ancient primary text in which a victim that dies has been termed a ἱλαστήριον (though see below on a second scholion on Apollonius of Rhodes, 2.485b).

Cranfield would find it theologically useful for Jesus to be a “propitiatory sacrifice” (so also NASB margin), in the light of Paul having called him a ἱλαστήριον. For God cannot vent his wrath on an object such as the mercy seat, but this is thought to be possible with a victim. Hence, immediately after mentioning σωτήριον, χαριστήριον, τελεστήριον (and also καθάρσιον) as analogies for Paul’s ἱλαστήριον, Cranfield writes: “We take it that what Paul’s statement that God purposed Christ as a propitiatory victim means is that God, because in His mercy He willed to forgive sinful man and, being truly merciful, willed to forgive them righteously, that is, without in anyway condoning their sin, purposed to direct against His own very Self in the person of His Son the full weight of that righteous wrath which they deserved” (*Romans*, 1:217).

Obviously, it is easier for Cranfield to speak about God’s demonstration of his wrath against sin “in the person of his Son” when there is mention of a “propitiatory sacrifice” in the translation of Romans 3:25, and it would be harder to do so if the translation had merely mentioned “blood” and “mercy seat,” since the logic of how this also includes punishment would have to be explained. However, the specific idea of “punishment” (Cranfield’s term “overlooking” is not the same) is sometimes also reflected in Romans 3:25b, if the role of victim is to keep people from being “punished” for the sins already committed but not yet finally dealt with by God (cf. πάρεσις).

In this regard, it is interesting to note that the English NIV of 1978 and the German Zürich (Zürcher) Bible of 1931 said exactly the same thing in two different languages about three key elements of Romans 3:25, namely, God’s “justice,” the need for sin to be “punished,” and the role of an “atoning sacrifice.” However, the 2007 revision of the Zürich Bible replaced the “unpunished sins” with the “forgiven sins,” and the animal-like “sacrifice of atonement” with the less specific “making of atonement.” The following parallel presentation uses boldface for the relevant English and

German terms, adding parenthetical English glosses for the Zürich Bible of 1931 and a full English translation for the 2007 revision:

> God presented him as a **sacrifice of atonement**, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his **justice**, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand **unpunished. . . .** (NIV 1978)
>
> Ihn hat Gott hingestellt als ein **Sühnopfer** (*sacrifice of atonement*) durch den Glauben in seinem Blut zur Erweisung seiner **Gerechtigkeit** (*justice/righteousness*), weil die vorhergeschehenen Sünden unter der Langmut Gottes **ungestraft** (*unpunished*) geblieben waren. . . . (Zürcher Bibel 1931)
>
> Ihn hat Gott dazu bestellt, **Sühne zu schaffen**—die durch den Glauben wirksam wird—durch die Hingabe seines Lebens. Darin erweist er seine **Gerechtigkeit**, dass er auf diese Weise die früheren Verfehlungen **vergibt**, 26 die Gott ertragen hat in seiner Langmut. . . . (Zürcher Bibel 2007)
>
> God appointed him **to make atonement**—which is effective through faith—through the surrender of his life. Therein God demonstrates his **righteousness**, in that he thus **forgives** the earlier transgressions, which he had borne in his patience. (ET of Zürcher 2007)

In the 2007 revision, the Zürich Bible changes from “sacrifice of atonement” to “to make atonement” for *ἱλαστήριον*, and from leaving sins “unpunished” to “forgiving” sins for *πάρεσις* (the term for “righteousness” remains the same).

Some writers offer theologically driven evangelical definitions of a *ἱλαστήριον* as a wrath-bearing victim in Romans 3:25 and do not even attempt to argue, as Cranfield does, that the term *ἱλαστήριον* could represent a victim. For example, W. Grudem, whose popular textbook *Systematic Theology* has sold more than three hundred thousand copies, writes that the word in Romans 3:25 translated by “propitiation” in the NASB, that is, *ἱλαστήριον* (the Greek is not given), “means ‘a sacrifice that bears God’s wrath to the end and in so doing changes God’s wrath toward us into favor’” (575). Most readers without Greek will probably assume that

Grudem knows of other substitutionary “sacrifices” (i.e., animals) that were labeled as ἱλαστήρια because they “bore the wrath” of the God of Israel, thus enabling God to forgive sins (a sacrificial victim termed a ἱλαστήριον from outside the Israelite cultural realm, if discovered, would presumably not be as valuable an antecedent for an evangelical theologian like Grudem, or his readers). But the ἱλαστήρια of the Bible, as elsewhere in ancient sources, are inanimate objects (cf. Exod. 25:17–22; Ezek. 43:14, 17, 20; Amos 9:1). Therefore, unless new texts are discovered, Jesus will continue to remain the first and only candidate that meets Grudem’s definition of a wrath-bearing victim that is called a “ἱλαστήριον.”

A similar Anselmian or Protestant Orthodox idea of a wrath-bearing victim to Grudem’s is inserted into the New Living Translation (1996[1]), where *fourteen words* are needed to translate the single word ἱλαστήριον, “For God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins and to satisfy God’s anger against us” (Rom. 3:25).

The unsupported translation of ἱλαστήριον by “sacrifice of atonement” is not limited to modern Bible versions; it also affects professional tools of Christian ministry. Somewhat disappointingly, the editors of the current edition of *The Book of Concord* by Fortress Press (R. Kolb and T. J. Wengert [2000]) have allowed Luther’s image of Jesus as the mercy seat to be replaced by the image of an “atoning sacrifice.”

This Fortress Press edition of *The Book of Concord* has the stated policy of inserting phrases from the NRSV into the translation of the Latin, even if the editors and translators know that the NRSV sometimes “departs noticeably from the text cited in the original documents” (ix). In the Latin column of the Augsburg Confession §21, “Concerning the Cult of the Saints,” the normally accepted translation of *propitiatorium*, the Latin technical term for the mercy seat, is “the propitiatory” (cf. ASV margin at Heb. 9:5). In §21.2 the Reformers, in particular Melanchthon as the author of the Confession, say that “Scripture . . . sets before us Christ alone as *mediatorem, propitiatorium, pontificem et intercessorem*,” that is, as “mediator, *propitiatory*, high priest, and intercessor.” Parallel to this the German column reads, “the only savior, the only high priest, the *mercy seat (Gnadenstuhl)*, and intercessor before God.” This makes it clear that Melanchthon wanted Jesus to be seen as the mercy seat in both columns. However, the Fortress version presents Jesus in the Latin column as the only “mediator, *atoning sacrifice*, high priest, and intercessor.” This changes the imagery for Jesus from that of an inanimate object, the *propitiatorium/mercy seat*, into the victim of a sacrifice. The footnote for “mercy seat” in the translation of the German column reads, “*Gnadenstuhl*, referring to Exodus 25:17 and Romans 3:25, also translated as ‘sacrifice’ or ‘place of atonement.’ ” The latter two glosses represent the NRSV text and margin at Romans 3:25. The preferred solution would have been to call Jesus the “mercy seat” in the German column and the “place of atonement” in the Latin column (cf. NRSV margin at Rom. 3:25).

Above it was noted that Cranfield is one of the few recent commentators to have looked at -*τήριον* words that refer to victims in order to suggest that a similar usage may have existed for *ἱλαστήριον*, even though this is currently unattested. It is therefore appropriate to briefly mention the one potentially relevant ancient secondary source, the scholion on Apollonius of Rhodes 2.485, which contains the related term *ἐξιλατήρια*. This scholion has seldom been examined since H. A. W. Meyer's *Romans* (ET 1883, 171–72) and Deissmann's "*ἱλαστήριος* und *ἱλαστήριον*" (197n3, 198).

The background that gives rise to the scholion is that while the Argonauts were on the island of Thynias, the blind prophet Phineas, son of Agenor, told them how he had relieved his friend Paraebius of the afflictions he had suffered after his father cut down the tree that a Hamadryad nymph was living in, despite her pleas to save it, for which she took revenge. Phineas's prescription was for Paraebius to "build an altar to the Thynian nymph and *to offer propitiatory sacrifices upon it*," *λωφήια ῥέξαι ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἱερά* (Apollonius, *Argonautica* 2.485–486). This scholion is needed because *λωφήιος, α, ον* is a rare adjective, found only here. The scholion reads, *λωφήια*: *ἐξιλαστήρια, ἐφ' οἷς λωφήσει καὶ παύσεται κακούμενος*, "expiatory offerings: propitiatory offerings, upon which his suffering of ill shall abate and cease" (ed. Wendel, 167). Despite the use of "expiatory" and "propitiatory" in our translation, *λωφήιος* and *ἐξιλαστήριος* are synonyms. However, since *ἱερά*, "victims," is already in the primary text of Apollonius and is presupposed by the scholiast, the scholion does not prove that *ἐξιλαστήρια* on its own could mean "propitiatory sacrifices." On the other hand, both *λωφήια ἱερα* and *ἐξιλαστήρια ἱερα* are understandable expressions for "propitiatory sacrifices," similar to the *ἱλαστήριοι θυσίσαι* of P. Fayum 337.

On the whole, then, this scholion on Apollonius 2.485 is much less valuable that that on 4.1549, *τὰ ἐκμειλίξασθαι δυνάμενα δῶρα, τὰ ἱλαστήρια* (see above, 829–30). The latter applies not only to Apollo's tripod as a *ἱλαστήριον*, as in the original scholion, but to all the known Greco-Roman *ἱλαστήρια*, such as the Trojan horse, Telephus's drinking bowl, and all the pillars, monuments, and other gifts labeled by *ἱλαστήριον*, including the

metaphorical application claimed above regarding 4 Maccabees 17:22 Codex S.

5. The Accessibility of the Mercy-Seat Interpretation of Romans 3:25 to Students and Laypeople. The mercy-seat interpretation of Romans 3:25 is worth publicizing since the ideas of a "sacrifice of atonement" or a Greco-Roman "propitiatory gift" are still competing for readers.

More scholars today favor a reference or allusion to the mercy seat in Romans 3:25 than any other single view, though views are often combined (e.g., mercy seat and Maccabean martyr theology, or Jesus as both the place and the means of atonement, e.g., Wright, "Romans," 476). Three examples of the modern *mercy-seat interpretation* may be given.

Professor Morna D. Hooker had long been a proponent of a Cambridge tradition of atonement theology following C. H. Dodd and C. F. D. Moule, which understood Paul's use of *ἱλαστήριον* in Romans 3:25 in a general, functional way as "the means of expiating sin by his death" (REB). But in the course of working through new evidence and arguments in connection with my dissertation, which was inspired by Professor Stuhlmacher's work (see n. 1 above), Hooker came to a more specific theology of the Day of Atonement ritual at the mercy seat, well expressed in a nonspecialist book in the Short Introduction series of Oneworld Publications:

> What the ritual connected with the mercy-seat provided was a method of dealing with those sins which—in spite of all the other sacrifices offered throughout the year—remained as a barrier between God and his people. In Paul's thought, too, it would seem that what God deals with are the sins that, in his forbearance, he has passed over; they have created a barrier between God and human beings and need to be removed. Once a year the high priest entered the holy of holies and, far from any human gaze, sprinkled blood on the mercy-seat, in order to deal with the sins that had come between God and his people. It was a very private ceremony, for the mercy-seat was hidden from public gaze. But now something very public has taken place. God has "set forth" a new "mercy-seat"—Christ—sprinkled with blood in the sight of all (cf. Gal. 3:1); he is the place of reconciliation, and by his death, sins have been dealt with once and for all. (Morna D. Hooker, *Paul: A Short Introduction* [2003], 78)

The Paideia commentaries of Baker Academic are an accessible series to which F. J. Matera has contributed the volume on Romans:

> Employing a further metaphor to explain this one, Paul turns to the cultic imagery of the Day of Atonement to show how God has effected this redemption: **whom God publicly displayed as a mercy seat—appropriated through faith—by his blood** (3:25a). Applying the metaphor of the *hilastērion* (the gold-plated lid that covered the ark of the covenant) to Christ, Paul indicates that Christ's death on the cross (indicated by the phrase "by his blood") effected atonement for humanity in a manner analogous to the way in which the high priest expiated or atoned for his sins and those of the people when he entered the holy of holies on the Day of Atonement and sprinkled the "mercy seat" of the ark with the blood of goats and bulls (Lev. 16). Paul, however, employs the metaphor in another way. The subject of the metaphor is God, who "publicly displayed" (*proetheto*) Christ as a "mercy seat" (*hilastērion*) when Christ died on the cross. The significance of the metaphor is threefold: (1) God is the primary actor in the drama of salvation, the one who has effected atonement, thereby dealing with sin and reconciling humanity to himself; (2) this atonement took place on the cross in Christ's death so that, in terms of the metaphor, Christ is the new mercy seat; (3) believers appropriate the benefits of this atoning death by faith in what God has effected in Christ. Since God is the one who had displayed Christ as a new mercy seat, the emphasis is on the way in which God brings about atonement/reconciliation through the death of his Son rather than on Christ's death as a sacrifice that appeases or propitiates God's wrath. (Frank J. Matera, *Romans*, Paideia [2010], 98–99)

Particularly relevant are Matera's observations 1 and 3 above about God's initiative in effecting atonement. This aligns with Professor Stuhlmacher's view that the atonement in Romans 3:25 results from and is motivated by God's "saving" rather than his "punishing" righteousness (above, 220).

Mark Reasoner has produced a very useful history of the interpretation of Romans, including the mercy-seat interpretation. His endnote to the following discussion (159n115) reminds me that part of his content below

resulted from a productive phone conversation between us on December 17, 2004 (a slight correction is that *Versöhnung* indeed translates as "propitiation" or "conciliation" when it takes an objective genitive, e.g., *Septuaginta Deutsch* at 2 Macc. 5:20, as above [850], but otherwise it generally means "reconciliation," not "expiation" or *Sühne*, as in 2 Cor. 5:19 in Luther's translation, "Gott . . . versöhnte die Welt mit ihm selber"):

> Renewed sensitivity to Paul's use of his Scriptures and careful lexicography have brought interpreters in the late-twentieth and early-twenty-first centuries to read "mercy seat" for Paul's term *hilastērion* in 3:25. Lexically, Paul's word never refers to the actual victim on an altar. Thus "expiation" as a cultic act or legal resolution is difficult as a translation. "Propitiation" as legal satisfaction is also not strongly attested in the use of *hilastērion* in Paul's Scriptures. (Those reading German commentators must know that the German language does not distinguish between "propitiation" and "expiation"; *Versöhnung* can be translated with either word.) The background in Paul's Scriptures and in previous uses of *hilastērion* thus points strongly in the direction of "mercy seat," the place where the forgiveness of sins was effected. If this rare word in Paul's usage signals Paul's use of this material in a Day of Atonement sermon, we gain an explanation of why there are so many rare words used in this locus. (Mark Reasoner, *Romans in Full Circle: A History of Interpretation* [2005], 40)

Some fine books on the atonement have been written apparently without the benefit of modern, accessible statements of the mercy-seat interpretation, as given above. One thinks of the excellent book of Episcopal priest and preacher Fleming Rutledge, *The Crucifixion: Understanding the Death of Jesus Christ* (2015), where the author seems to know academic study of Romans 3:25 mainly through the traditional English-language propitiation-expiation debate (278–82), although she also notes the dictionary article of J. Gundry-Volf ("Expiation"), with greater coverage of German scholarship (279n92).

On the classic "propitiation" versus "expiation" debate, Rutledge has insightful comments, particularly about the most widely recognized conservative scholar of a past generation, whose works belong to the canon of evangelical secondary literature, Leon Morris (280):

> The move away from propitiation was a process that needed to happen. Even so thoroughgoing a "propitiationist" as Leon Morris, a leading evangelical scholar, admits that his predecessors should have taken more care to interpret the concept correctly. He pays tribute to C. H. Dodd, the godfather of expiation, acknowledging that there can be no turning back from many of the points Dodd has made against propitiation. Morris admits that, wrongly understood, propitiation makes the death of Jesus sound like a primitive sacrifice of appeasement. "It is a relief to know," he acknowledges, "that the God of the Bible is not a Being who can be propitiated after the fashion of a pagan deity" [cf. Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross* (1955), 148]. This misconception can, one hopes, be laid firmly to rest; it should now be generally agreed that any concept of *hilastērion* in the sense of placating, appeasing, deflecting the anger of, or satisfying the wrath of, is inadmissible.

However, when Rutledge mentions the use of the substantive ἱλαστήριον that would involve "the sense of placating, appeasing, deflecting the anger of, or satisfying the wrath of," she is unwittingly referring to the Greco-Roman technical term ἱλαστήριον alone, which is conceived as a ἱλαστήριον (sc. ἀναθήμα) or propitiatory (sc. offering) to the gods, and not to the biblical term, which is conceived differently, as the "place of atonement," analogous to the neologism θυσιαστήριον for the "place of sacrifice" (i.e., the altar). The ἱλαστήριον that is a propitiatory gift does indeed propitiate the gods, but the ἱλαστήριον that sits on top of the ark of the covenant, as the "place of atonement" in the Pentateuch or as a "symbol of the merciful power of God" in Philo, does not propitiate God (cf. Philo, *Moses* 2.96; cf. *Flight* 100). Influenced by A. Deissmann, Morris takes a completely one-sided approach in which every ἱλαστήριον in biblical and Greco-Roman sources, which I would regard as having fundamentally different meanings, acquires the unified meaning of a propitiatory instrument, including the Greek votive offerings, the golden plate above the ark, the ledge of the altar, the altar itself, Noah's ark, a church, or a monastery (cf. Deissmann, "Mercy Seat," 3033; Morris, "Meaning," 34 *passim*).

The fundamental problem with Morris is that he does not accept or even contemplate that there can be two types of lexical semantics for ἱλαστήριον,

one for the ἱλαστήριον that propitiates the gods, as with the Greeks, and another for the ἱλαστήρια of the Jewish and Christian cultural realm that do not propitiate, such as the mercy seat, Ezekiel's altar ledges, Noah's ark, or Byzantine churches (Morris's arguments against the widely accepted conclusions of Manson, "ΙΛΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ" [1945], are forced at this point).

One of the heirs of Morris's evangelical Protestant approach to the lexicography and theology of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 is Douglas J. Moo, chair of the NIV's Committee on Bible Translation and author of the well-received commentary on Romans in the NICNT series (1996). Moo is in the process of revising this commentary, but it may be noted here that in one of his more popular works from 2002, Moo has challenged readers to think through the possible implications of Gentile Christians in the church of Rome knowing the application of ἱλαστήριον both to the mercy seat and to Greco-Roman propitiatory votive offerings. Only brief quotations can be provided here, since it is not known how current they are with Moo's views today. The first two excerpts come from the main text and a text box in Moo's college textbook, *Encountering the Book of Romans* (2002[1]; cited here is the pagination of 2014[2]):

> The Greeks used the word [sc. ἱλαστήριον] to refer to *memorials* or *sacrifices* that were intended to placate the wrath of the gods, and Paul's focus on God's wrath in his description of the human dilemma (see 1:18; 2:5) makes it likely that he refers to Christ as a *means of propitiation* here. (68–69, italics added)

> Paul's readers, who, though gentile, are obviously well acquainted with the Old Testament, would recognize immediately the reference to this piece of furniture [sc. *the mercy seat*] in the tabernacle. But they also would have given it the meaning that the word ἱλαστήριον conveys: *an object that appeases God's wrath* and thereby provides atonement for the people of God. (68, italics added)

Combining Moo's two statements above, it is clear that he thinks that Gentile readers would know of the application of ἱλαστήριον to "memorials," by which he presumably means stationary "monuments" (cf. μνῆμα, Josephus, *Ant.* 16.182) and other markers like statues or pillars.

Beyond these typical referents of ἱλαστήριον in the Greek world, the Gentile Christians also know "the meaning that the word ἱλαστήριον conveys" outside the Bible, namely, "an object that appeases God's wrath and thereby provides atonement for the people of God" (68). Then, apparently on their own initiative, without for example consulting with Phoebe the letter carrier or the leaders of one of the Roman house churches such as Prisca and Aquila, these Gentiles in the church in Rome conclude that ἱλαστήριον "*means* 'propitiation,' but it *refers to* the cover of the ark" (68, italics in original). The point of this statement by Moo appears to be that the *meaning*, "propitiation," is more important theologically than the *referent*, "the cover of the ark."

However, a simpler and better approach is taken by Moo in a shorter publication around the same time, his "Romans," in the *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Romans, Galatians* (ed. C. E. Arnold [2002]). Moo again mentions how ἱλαστήριον was used in the Greek world "to refer to altars, monuments, etc. that would have the power to 'propitiate' the wrath of the gods" (23). But he seems to distance himself from this slightly, attributing the view only to Morris (23n27, with endnote, 96), and continues after a brief introduction to the Day of Atonement to explain: "There is some reason to think Paul may here be taking over an early Christian tradition that portrayed Christ's death against the background of the Old Testament sacrificial system. The allusion [sc. to the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement] would have been striking and extremely significant for believers acquainted with the Old Testament. The cross of Christ, Paul asserts, is now the place, in this new covenant age, where God deals with the sins of his people. No longer behind a veil, God's atoning work is now displayed for all to see."

The last line calls to mind the NET translation of Romans 3:25, "God publicly displayed him at his death as the mercy seat accessible through faith." More importantly, here Paul is presented as having taken over an early Christian tradition about the death of Jesus, in which Greco-Roman propitiatory votive offerings or ἱλαστήρια (sc. ἀναθήματα) will presumably have been given no consideration at all.

If there is one finding of modern biblical lexicography that students most need to know, it is that biblical ἱλαστήριον was formed as part of a family of five new -τήριον words that needed to be invented for the

translation of the Septuagint, the others being θυσιαστήριον, φυγαδευτήριον, κατοικητήριον, and ἁγιαστήριον, as already indicated above (835). None of these distinctive place-nouns ever experienced widespread borrowing by the Gentile world or took on an instrumental sense, despite the fact that θυσιαστήριον, for example, occurs more than 4,500 times in the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae database. Therefore, students can be assured that ἱλαστήριον as applied to the mercy seat is a special word, historically unrelated to the Greco-Roman use, and that non-Jews did not encounter it on the streets, but only in connection with a Jewish community and Scripture readings of the relevant passages in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, presumably beginning from the earliest days of the synagogues and proselytes in Egypt in the third century BC. The mixed Christian community of Jews and Gentiles in Antioch may have been the first to apply the term ἱλαστήριον to Jesus and the Day of Atonement (on the pre-Pauline tradition in Romans 3:25–26a, see above, 218–21, §5.3.2.1).

Sources: Bible, Classics, Papyri, Inscriptions, Scholia, Byzantine Writers

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1. This is the first major publication resulting from my 1999 University of Cambridge PhD dissertation, "Jesus as the Mercy Seat: The Semantics and Theology of Paul's Use of *Hilasterion* in Romans 3:25," which is now online (https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.17213) and is summarized in a four-page journal article by the same title (*TynBul* 51 [2000]: 155–58). A substantial amount of my research was done in the University of Tübingen when I was a visiting research student with Professor Stuhlmacher in 1991 and 1992–1994. I am grateful that I could be introduced to his biblical-theological approach, including his interpretation of Rom. 3:25, at this early stage. The dissertation was begun and completed under the careful supervision of Professor Morna Hooker in Cambridge, who has now also presented her own version of the mercy-seat interpretation of Romans 3:25 (see below, 859). My unpublished dissertation has also been distributed to colleagues. One of these, Dr. David deSilva of Ashland Seminary, ensured that Professor Stuhlmacher's Greco-Roman "propitiatory offering" understanding of *ἱλαστήριον* in 4 Macc. 17:22, as mediated through my dissertation, would be incorporated into *The English Standard Version Bible with Apocrypha* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). The ESV speaks of "the blood of those devout ones and their death as a *propitiatory offering*," with reference to the Maccabean martyrs. The author of one of the two most important recent German journal articles on *ἱλαστήριον*, Alexander Weiss, "Christus Jesus als Weihegeschenk oder Sühnemal? Anmerkungen zu einer neueren Deutung von *hilasterion* (Röm 3,25) samt einer Liste der epigraphischen Belege" (*ZNW* 105 [2014]: 294–302), is the first German scholar, to my knowledge, to quote my dissertation summary (296n6). I thank Professor Weiss for acknowledging my prior work with all five of the inscriptional texts available to scholars as of 1999, even as he added a sixth, SEG LIV no. 769 (see below, 827). This was first published in a Greek-language archeological report in 2004 and then more widely in 2008 (i.e., the actual publication date of SEG LIV 2004). I am also happy to acknowledge the benefit I received from corresponding with two biblical scholars, first Dr. Brian Tabb, in the light of his *Suffering in Ancient Worldview*, defending the widely-held thesis that *ἱλαστήριον* in 4 Maccabees 17:22 (Codex S) is part of an allusion to Levitical sacrifice or the Day of Atonement (below, 841–44), and Dr. Stephen Hultgren, who made availblable the drafts of a two-part article to appear in successive issues of *JTS* in 2019. I appreciate the careful interaction of both scholars with my dissertation, and I believe that the points where they differ (Hultgren is closer to my own view, see quotation, 843) are interesting enough to sustain ongoing discussion. After this essay was submitted to the publisher, Dr. Brian Abasciano (Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary) went beyond the call of duty by reading and commenting on it almost two months before he was to respond to my related paper in the SBL Boston 2017 Scripture and Paul Seminar, "Did the Readers of Romans 3:25 and 4 Maccabees 17:22 (Codex

Sinaiticus) Follow Moses or Josephus in the Interpretation of Hilasterion?" Brian will not be the only one to suggest that both the biblical and the Greco-Roman (cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 16.182) sense of *ἱλαστήριον* may be at play here. Professor Stefan Schreiber of the University of Augsburg, another German advocate of the Greco-Roman approach to *ἱλαστήριον* in Romans 3:25, was kind enough to correspond with me promptly and in detail about his views during my preparation for SBL Boston 2017, and I look forward to further discussions. Finally, I thank Dr. William Lane Craig for the interest he has shown in this type of lexical work from the vantage point of a philosopher of religion.

Index of Subjects

Aaron, 156, 160–61, 350, 549, 582, 850; house of, 130, 150

Aaronic priesthood, 531

Abba, 101, 103–4, 117, 124, 210, 323–24, 342, 390, 418. *See also* Yahweh: as Father

Abihu, 582

Abraham, 197, 260, 296, 373, 531, 593–94, 678, 811; children of, 74; faith of, 229, 364, 376–80, 498, 500, 537–38; God's covenant with, 242, 783; and Isaac, 328, 498

Adam, 289, 291, 294–98, 304, 315, 327, 332, 382; and Eve, 393, 424, 461, 480–81, 585. *See also* fall, the

adoption of believers by God, 323–24, 390, 418

Agrippa I, 233, 241, 598, 625, 650

Agrippa II, 524

Alexander the Great, 11, 287, 563

allegorical interpretation, 92, 214, 292, 527, 833–34

already / not yet, 25, 476

anamnesis. *See* remembrance

Andrew, 78, 238, 649–50, 654

Andronicus, 238–39, 397

angelic powers, 322, 437–41, 444, 463, 530

angels: appearance at Jesus's tomb, 202; of darkness, 713; in early Judaism, 713; fallen, 341, 513, 549, 780; and the giving of the old law/Torah, 296, 535; as God's emissary, 197; interest in the gospel, 463, 510; Jesus's acknowledgment/confession before, 112; at the last judgment, 341, 548, 750; marriages of, 549; worship of, 441–43, 530. *See also* demon(s); Gabriel; Michael (archangel)

Annas, 174, 625, 650, 691

anointed one, 78, 94, 106, 130–31, 210, 321, 579, 674, 725, 817

Anselm, 150, 857

antichrist, 489, 491–92, 648, 660, 669

antidocetism, 666, 694, 731. *See also* docetism; docetists

Antiochene tradition, 20, 218, 245, 257, 338, 388–89, 425, 620, 632–33, 635

Antipas, 64, 72–73, 75, 128, 147, 168, 573, 625

Apocrypha, 3, 7–8, 10, 549–51, 556–57, 743, 745–50, 759–64, 801

Apollos, 431, 524–25, 527, 754, 795

Apostles' Creed, 464, 513

apostolic council, 255–57, 259, 496–97, 499, 634, 636–37, 775–76; and the Gentile mission, 233, 240–43, 259–61, 385, 392, 491–92, 598, 610; and the Jewish mission, 242–43, 598

Aquila, 397, 420, 425, 432, 495, 862

Archelaus, 64, 624

ark of the covenant, 160, 217, 826, 833–39, 851, 861–62. *See also* mercy seat

"as it is written," 560–61, 575, 750–52

assurance of salvation, 342, 373, 536, 589, 697, 703, 722–23, 797; false, 534; Jewish, 290, 366
Athanasius, 4, 6, 748, 758–60
Augsburg Confession, 313, 501, 854, 857–58
Augustine, 264, 312–13, 501, 565, 799
authentic biblical material, 173, 239, 544, 610–11; apostolic tradition, 547; Jesus material, 18, 54–55, 92; letters of Paul, 251, 261, 333, 461, 470–71, 475, 488, 564; sayings and teachings of Jesus, 55, 132, 139, 141, 148, 150, 579, 582, 613; tradition, 3, 57, 754, 756

Babylon, 136, 150, 190; Rome as, 506–7, 509
Babylonian exile, 190–91, 286, 359, 839
baptism, 243–47, 702; in Hebrews, 525, 539–40; Jesus's by John, 75–78, 213, 578, 628; in the Johannine school, 702, 724–30; in Paul and the Pauline school, 385–90, 398–405, 410–12, 444–45, 453, 459–60, 486
Barabbas, 153, 172, 175
Barnabas, 206, 232, 245, 523–27, 613, 634, 795; as coworker of Paul, 242, 256–57, 259, 385, 392, 635, 637–38, 775; as Jewish Christian, 238, 241, 259, 261, 421, 431, 496, 501, 637, 795
beatitude, 86, 92–93, 105, 599, 629, 695
Beliar (Belial), 492
Bethesda, pool of, 673, 705
biblical criticism, 793, 796
biblical-theological perspective, 65
body of Christ, 327, 389–400, 412–13, 461–62; in the Johannine school, 689, 719

Caesar Augustus, 64, 349, 558, 624–25, 828
Caiaphas, 64, 70, 133, 174–75, 625, 687, 691
Calvin, John, 761, 783–84, 799–800, 813
catechesis, 193, 207, 329, 336–37, 449, 631, 756; ethical, 408, 753; Gospels used for, 556, 564, 587, 596, 616–18, 623
chosen one, the, 75, 137, 321, 506, 548, 674
Christ formula, 195, 211–12, 328–30, 351, 355
Christ hymn, 211, 321, 326, 418, 450–52, 459, 529
christological hymns, 207, 512, 525, 775
church offices: apostle, 279, 396, 469–70, 717; bishop/overseer, 396, 401, 468–72, 482–84, 515, 654, 718, 763, 831; deacon, 395, 401, 469, 471, 483; deaconess, 471, 518; evangelist, 469–70; pastor, 469–71; presbyter, 395–97, 471–72; prophet, 395–96, 469–70, 717; shepherd, 507, 515, 654, 718; teacher, 395–97, 469–70, 779, 797–98
circumcision, 379, 636–38; whether necessary for Gentile converts, 242, 256, 259, 261, 496, 610, 612, 634, 786; as a sign of Israel's election, 119, 270, 375
citation formula, 193–94, 750–51
Claudius, 425, 446, 523
Colossians hymn, 305, 434–41, 775
composition criticism, 54
connection between the Son of Man and the Suffering Servant: in the biblical tradition, 130, 137, 343, 579, 602, 677; in Jesus, 139–40, 143–44, 148–50, 169, 181–82, 192, 221, 321, 601

content criticism, 40

Council of Trent, 760, 783

Crispus, 420

criterion of coherence, 55

criterion of dissimilarity (*Differenzkriterium*), 54–55

criterion of historical plausibility, 55

criterion of multiple attestation, 55

criterion of nonderivability (*Unableitbarkeitskriterium*), 54

cult, Jewish, 79, 96, 149, 287, 525–28, 531, 832, 842–44; abolished, 330, 525, 528, 534–35; atoning, 159–60, 174, 217–20, 240, 286, 330, 436–37, 440, 539, 810; earthly, 83; heavenly, 83, 437; sacrificial, 97, 174, 231, 235, 240, 298, 364; temple, 83, 103, 130, 217, 276, 286–87, 531, 840

cult etiology, 337, 399

David, line of, 65–66, 210–11, 674

David, tomb of, 202, 828–29, 833, 837, 853

Davidic descent of Jesus, 66, 69–70, 131, 211–14, 308, 454, 594, 601. *See also* Davidide

Davidic Messiah, 97, 129–30, 135–36, 141, 143, 182, 211, 324, 538, 601, 674; versus Son of Man, 94, 182. *See also* Davidide; David, line of

Davidide, 129–30, 211, 213, 601, 634–35. *See also* Davidic descent of Jesus; Davidic Messiah; David, line of

Day of Atonement, 160, 217; New Testament interpretation of, 171, 218, 231, 330, 531, 533, 863

Decalogue, 231, 286, 289, 294, 313, 415–16, 503, 535, 723, 754, 795

demon(s), 56, 95–96, 106, 437, 441, 499, 585–86, 628–29

demythologizing criticism, 266

deuterocanonical writings, 746–47, 760, 762–64

devil, the, 460, 513, 519, 549, 581, 628

Diaspora Judaism, 119, 289, 442, 820; and Christians, 497, 574; and Hellenism, 11, 20, 200, 292; Hellenized Jewish converts to Christianity, 205–6, 238–39, 241; Paul as Diaspora Pharisee, 259–60; synagogues of, 421, 425, 443, 471, 478, 523, 525

Dionysius (bishop of Alexandria), 656

discourses of Jesus, 55, 595, 611, 645, 652, 705; Bread of Life, 151–52, 707, 728, 730–31; ecclesial, 595, 606–7; eschatological, 574, 595; farewell, 140, 660, 694, 711; mission, 237, 595; Nicodemus, 702; revelatory, 645. *See also* sayings of Jesus

disputed books of the canon, 4, 42, 522, 757–58; authorship of Jude, 544; authorship of 2 Peter, 545; Pauline, 35, 254, 395–96, 461, 471, 475, 488–89. *See also* recognized books of the canon; rejected books of the canon; spurious books of the canon

docetism, 544, 666, 692, 728; docetically minded false teachers, 701; naive, 666, 689, 692. *See also* docetists; antidocetism

docetists, 543, 656, 669, 722, 731. *See also* antidocetism; docetism

dogmatics, 4–5, 11, 13–16, 19, 37–38, 43, 53, 60–61, 741; and exegesis, 26, 158, 772, 789, 804, 821–22

Domitian, 66, 507, 544, 658–59

double command of love for God and neighbor, 114–19, 167, 182–83, 231, 416, 588, 605, 775, 778. *See also* love commandment

early Catholicism, 433, 477, 551, 621, 784
Easter appearances, 188–89, 193, 202, 228, 234, 237–38, 349, 366, 558, 632; to James the Lord's brother, 225, 496; in the Johannine school, 660, 673, 686, 692–95, 705, 711; in Paul and the Pauline school, 193–98, 237, 278, 337; to Peter, 194–98, 202, 225–26, 238, 558–59, 584; in the Synoptics, 575, 587, 619, 660
Eastern Orthodoxy: Bibles and canon of, 747, 762–68; theology of, 797–98, 800
Eleazar, 838–39, 841, 844–46
election: of Christians/by faith, 373, 378–79, 453, 491, 684, 702–3, 717–20, 736–37; of Gentiles, 306, 340, 612; Israel's, 101–2, 115, 117, 119, 189, 285, 290, 305–6, 463, 612–13; Judas's, 588, 703
Elijah, 73–74, 76, 111, 128, 130, 190, 213, 582, 632. *See also* John the Baptist: as Elijah
Elijah tradition, the, 73–74, 76, 200
empty tomb, the, 187–203, 207, 577, 584, 594, 649, 654, 694
end-time feast, the, 153, 156, 158, 163, 181–82, 706
Enoch, 137, 190, 200, 548
Enoch tradition, the, 8, 83, 182, 200, 321, 543, 579, 602, 817
epiphany, 452, 454, 482, 580–82
Essenes, 79, 83, 91, 105, 107, 116, 135, 167, 232–33, 713
Eve, 393, 424, 461, 481, 485
evil one, the, 110, 714, 720, 725–27, 735. *See also* devil, the; Satan
exalted Christ, the, 59, 632; in the early church, 184, 188–89, 199, 203, 209–10; Jesus's view of himself as, 142–44; in the Johannine school, 664–66, 688–89; in Paul and the Pauline school, 318–20, 327, 338–39, 447, 451, 476
expiation. *See* mercy seat
eyewitnesses, 56–57, 188, 523, 547, 550, 569, 597, 617–18, 622, 632, 649

fall, the, 294–96, 303, 306, 308, 311–13, 326–27, 368, 370, 374, 481. *See also* Adam
false prophets, 230, 543, 563, 588, 605, 659, 675
false teachers, 432, 465, 543–46, 588, 606, 648, 701, 703, 724–25
false teaching, 436, 465, 486, 540–41, 545. *See also* heresy
Feast of Tabernacles, 39, 83, 582, 609, 821
Feast of Weeks, 39, 185, 228, 610, 821
flood, the, 309, 312, 509, 513, 516, 548
foot washing, 152, 709, 730–31
form criticism, 18, 20, 22, 25, 54–58, 563, 567, 586, 676, 679, 819
formulaic texts, 65, 189, 193, 211–12, 218, 319, 331, 346, 351, 418

Gabriel, 213
Gaius, 420, 656, 722
Gamaliel I, 251, 258–59, 276, 281
garden of Eden, 289, 294–95, 297–99, 312, 370, 531
Gethsemane, garden of, 108, 117, 127, 163, 171, 532, 583, 585; in the Gospels, 174, 210; in the Johannine school, 649, 654, 690
glossolalia. *See* speaking in tongues

Gnosticism, 19–21, 433, 435, 455, 472; Christian, 448, 465, 546, 724, 755. *See also* gnostic(s)

gnostic(s), 3, 397–98, 483, 485–86, 525–26, 538, 546, 551, 798; redeemer myth, 19–21, 435, 445. *See also* Gnosticism; *Gospel of Thomas*

Godfearers, 11, 206, 240, 244, 247, 278, 376, 409, 447, 531, 621

gospel criticism, 793

Gospel of Thomas, 556–57, 566. *See also* Gnosticism; gnostic(s)

Greco-Roman imperial cult, 210, 347, 349, 558–59

heresy, 3, 397, 442, 464–65, 472, 543–51, 555, 636, 755, 770. *See also* false teaching; Gnosticism; heretics

heretics, 276, 448, 483, 543–51, 664, 724–26, 757–59, 798. *See also* heresy

hermeneutics, 199, 551, 653, 769, 801, 816; biblical, 749, 792, 798, 803–5, 812, 821–22; church, 544, 550–51, 798

Herodias, 72–73

Herod the Great, 64–65, 69, 74, 525, 594, 624–25, 828–29; monument at David's tomb, 828–29, 833, 835, 837, 853

Hillel, 117, 259, 290

historical-critical method, 12, 23, 27–28, 31, 37, 42–43, 61, 793, 809, 815–16

historical criticism, 12, 37, 43, 61, 169, 198, 621–22, 793, 795–96, 818; of the canon, 785, 803. *See also* historical-critical method

history of religions school, 4, 16, 269, 773, 793–94, 810

holy of holies, 130–31, 160, 171, 217, 219, 526, 531–32, 577, 583, 630, 824

Holy Spirit, the: blasphemy / unforgiveable sin against, 87, 539, 589, 726, 787; and the church, 24, 227–29, 245, 339; importance for biblical interpretation, 13, 281, 550, 599, 751–52, 778(?), 796–800, 802–3; and Jesus, 30, 94, 244; in the Johannine school, 660, 702, 710–15, 724–32; in Paul and the Pauline school, 280, 297–98, 310, 315–16, 350–51, 378, 381–82, 389–91, 413–19, 453(?), 482(?), 499; in the Synoptics, 628, 632–34. *See also* Paraclete

household codes, 477–80, 483, 508, 517, 722

hymnic texts, 189, 194, 788

ideological criticism, 622

imitation of God, 109, 480

Innocent I (pope), 4, 6, 747, 759

inspiration of Scripture. *See* Scriptures, inspiration of

Isaac, 65, 197, 214, 328, 379, 498, 500, 537

Jairus's daughter, 96, 585, 587, 649

Jerusalem apostles, the, 230, 237, 247, 278, 337, 563, 567, 569, 610, 635, 775. *See also* pillar apostles, the

Jewish legends, 8, 148, 274, 535, 543, 549

Johannine Christ hymn, the, 679–83

John the Baptist, 72–80; as Elijah, 74, 76, 78, 128, 244, 578, 626, 634

Joseph (Jesus's earthly father), 65–66, 213–14, 594, 601, 624

Joseph of Arimathea, 177, 200–201, 692, 720

Judas Iscariot, 97, 163, 174, 585, 588, 628, 678, 703

judgment seat, 294, 329, 332, 339, 341–42, 360, 374
Junia(s), 238–39, 397
Justinian II, 747

kerygma, 11–12, 43–44, 59; Bultmann's view of, 17–21, 23–34, 639; early Christianity's, 61, 70, 96, 161, 164, 180, 567, 616, 619; and the Gospels, 54, 170–72, 563, 589
kingdom of priests, 696, 721

Last Supper, 151–55, 234–35, 293. *See also* Lord's Supper, the
laying on of hands, 468, 635
Lazarus, 96, 172, 673, 693, 705–8
literary criticism, 156, 434, 652
Lord's Prayer, the, 84–85, 100–104, 108–10, 117–18, 124, 599, 603
Lord's Supper, the, 151–54, 157, 163–64, 209, 233–37, 801–2; in the Johannine school, 707, 727–31; in Paul and the Pauline school, 298–99, 337, 373, 385–90, 393–94, 398–405, 533–34. *See also* words of institution
love commandment, 114–18, 120, 168, 298, 415–16, 420–22, 497, 503, 605. *See also* double command of love for God and neighbor
Luke's special material, 147, 565, 567–68, 619, 629
Luther, Martin, 26, 314–15, 356, 359, 501, 515, 726, 780, 824; canon decisions of, 760–62, 780–82; translation of the Bible of, 379, 517, 535–36, 656, 712–13, 799–800, 860

Maccabean martyrs, 535, 820, 825–26, 837, 842, 845–46, 848–49, 853; theology of, 824, 859
manna, 400, 677, 707
Maranatha, the, 208–9, 226, 233, 339, 402, 698, 730
Marcion, 5–6, 755–57, 768
martyr: Jewish tradition of, 147–48, 171, 191–92, 200, 371–72, 535, 820; Maccabean, 191, 535, 688, 820, 824–25, 842, 845, 853, 859; views of Jesus's death as, 200, 202, 584, 777, 820. *See also* Stephen, as martyr
Mary, the mother of Jesus, 65–66, 177, 213–15, 225, 601, 624, 628, 634, 649, 654, 691
Mary Magdalene, 177, 187, 198–99, 694
Matthew's special material, 120, 133, 565, 594–95, 598
Melanchthon, Philip, 501, 857–58
Melchizedek, 130, 525–28, 531–32, 534
mercy seat, 160, 183, 217–20, 688, 824–63; Jesus as, 240, 330–31, 366, 533, 820, 855, 857–58. *See also* ark of the covenant
mercy-seat interpretation, 825, 827, 845, 858–63
Michael (archangel), 549, 713
Montanism, 540, 756, 758
Moses, 582; and the blood of the covenant, 158, 533; as Israel's covenant mediator, 217, 350, 684; Jesus as greater than, 95, 122, 296, 359, 582, 629, 677, 683, 707; in Paul and the Pauline school, 298, 347, 350–51, 353, 503–4
Muratorian Canon, 656, 756
mystery cults/religions, 19, 388–90, 795

Nadab, 582
Nero, 253, 258, 260, 431, 507, 574, 638, 650; as antichrist, 491; persecution of Christians, 523–25
new covenant/obligation, 123–24, 156, 162–63, 234–35, 288, 298–99, 349–51, 359, 399–400, 405, 533–35
New Perspective on Paul, 33, 270–72, 295, 375
Noachian laws/commandments, 497, 634
Noah, 228, 550, 593
Noah's ark, 830, 833, 861

Old Roman Creed, 464
Orthodox Churches. *See* Eastern Orthodoxy

parables: and God's kingdom, 85–87, 90, 167–68; Jesus's use of, 90–94, 104–5, 111–12, 141–44, 585–86; Old Testament tradition, 90–91
Paraclete, 58, 660, 697, 710–15, 734–35
Passover: feast of, 39, 705, 821; in the Gospels, 67–69, 152–58, 173–75, 730; hallel, 154, 155, 163, 209, 234, 801–2; in the Old Testament, 402. *See also* Last Supper; Lord's Supper, the
Passover lamb, 67, 154, 668, 672, 692; Jesus as, 68, 153, 156, 511
Patmos, 657
Pauline hymns, 319, 321–22, 342–43. *See also* Colossians hymn; Philippian hymn
Pelagius, 312
Pentateuch, 7–9, 119, 191, 287, 293, 658, 746–47, 800; terms in, 160, 835, 838–40, 843, 861
Pharisee(s): heavy burden of, 88, 93, 122, 124, 603; as opponents of Jesus, 105, 118, 122, 167, 292–93, 600; Paul as, 251, 259–60, 273, 289, 293, 295, 298, 311, 416, 737, 786; understanding of the law, 288, 293
Philip, 206, 239–40, 244–45, 630, 634, 650, 705
Philippian hymn, 280, 325–26, 338–39, 418
Phoebe, 397, 420, 503, 837, 862
Pilate, 64, 135, 168, 175–77, 296, 326, 454, 625, 672–73, 691, 697; Jesus accused before, 20, 67, 70, 171–72, 175, 583
pillar apostles, the, 242, 259, 392, 496, 556, 590, 592, 598–600, 610–11, 619, 637. *See also* Jerusalem apostles, the
Pliny the Younger, 507, 518, 525
Prisca, 397, 420, 425, 432, 495, 862
Prophets, the (division of canon), 7–9, 122, 293, 548, 596, 658, 743–46, 749–50
propitiation/propitiatory. *See* mercy seat
Protestantism: Bibles and canon of, 760–64, 767–68; biblical scholarship of, 793; and Catholicism, 784–85, 797; evangelical, 32, 766, 768, 849, 857, 861–62; exegesis of, 17, 37–38, 801; Old Protestantism, 16, 28, 797; theology of, 16–17, 157, 267, 346, 369, 613, 784–85, 797, 800, 802, 804
Pseudepigrapha, 7–9, 494, 544, 550–51, 598, 658, 750, 759

Q, 120, 565–68, 574, 594, 597–600, 602, 612. *See also* sayings source; *Vorlage*
Quirinius, 64–65, 624–25
Qumran, 7, 79, 83, 107, 116, 526, 658, 713, 745–46, 750

recognized books of the canon, 4, 745, 757–58. *See also* disputed books of the canon; rejected books of the canon; spurious books of the canon

redaction criticism, 21, 33, 54–55

regula fidei. *See* rule of faith

rejected books of the canon, 749, 755, 757–58. *See also* disputed books of the canon; recognized books of the canon; spurious books of the canon

remembrance: Gospels as, 575, 584, 587, 653, 664, 667; in the Johannine school, 653, 664, 667–68, 696, 698; Lord's Supper as, 163–64, 234, 236, 401–2, 667, 698, 801–2; Old Testament–Jewish concept of, 38, 154, 164, 228, 236, 401–2, 801

resurrection appearances. *See* Easter appearances

resurrection of Christians, 310, 340–42, 380–81, 584, 697, 707–8

resurrection of Jesus, 187–203, 584, 587, 632, 778–79, 788; in the early church, 208–16, 228; in the Johannine school, 677, 682, 686–96; in Paul and the Pauline school, 338, 439–44. *See also* Easter appearances

Roman Catholicism, 379, 677, 784–85, 797, 799–800; Bibles and canon of, 759–68, 783, 848; exegesis, 17, 25, 127, 379; and Protestantism, 784–85, 797; teaching of, 16–17, 157, 797. *See also* early Catholicism

rule of faith, 248, 741, 756, 770, 772, 778–80, 784, 800, 803, 821

Sadducees, 67, 94, 122, 168–69, 174, 191, 200, 497

Samaritans, 7, 154, 206, 227, 239–40, 245, 610, 629, 634, 649, 674

Sarah, 214, 379, 537

Satan, 110, 305, 440, 549, 581, 686, 696, 703, 715; power of, 257, 482, 492, 636. *See also* angels; demon(s); devil, the; evil one, the

sayings of Jesus, 54–57, 92–95, 105–7, 111–12, 121–22, 333–35, 337, 598, 623; bread, 155–57, 161–63, 236, 730–31, 776; cup, 151–52, 156–58, 161–63, 218, 236, 329, 603, 776; "I am," 675–79, 698, 735; ransom, 138–40, 146–48, 161, 164, 449, 603, 631; Son of Man, 129, 137–39, 141, 143, 630–31, 674–75, 713; temple, 97–98, 110, 122, 168, 173, 719. *See also* discourses of Jesus

sayings source, 106, 120, 237–38, 565–67, 594, 598, 602, 618. *See also* Q

Scriptures, inspiration of, 4–6, 467–68, 550–51, 596, 752, 796–800; Jewish tradition of, 4–6, 281, 551; translation as, 8, 747

Sermon on the Mount, 94–95, 104, 114, 117, 119–21, 292, 594–95, 599, 603–5, 723, 754, 795

Sermon on the Plain, 114, 629, 754

Shema, 83, 104, 464, 499, 602, 709, 750; Christian expansion of, 449, 454, 671, 735, 775

Silas/Silvanus, 206, 261, 432, 506–7

Sinai Torah, 95, 118–19, 122–24, 182, 228, 240, 260, 279, 285–90, 294–98, 359–60. *See also* Torah; Zion Torah

Song of Miriam, 746

Song of Moses, 746

Song of the Suffering Servant, 149, 326

Son of Man, 126–44; versus the Davidic Messiah, 94, 182; in the Jewish tradition, 75, 78, 112, 130, 135–37, 140, 181–82, 208, 321, 393, 578–79, 602–3; in the Johannine school, 674–75; and Son of God, 577, 579, 601; in the Synoptics, 137–41, 337, 576–79, 602–3, 611, 630–31, 713. *See also* connection between the Son of Man and the Suffering Servant; sayings of Jesus: Son of Man

Sosthenes, 420

source criticism, 53, 171, 652

speaking in tongues, 228, 394, 396, 419

spiritualists. *See* docetists

spurious books of the canon, 492, 757–58. *See also* disputed books of the canon; recognized books of the canon; rejected books of the canon

Stephen, 137, 239, 633–34; as martyr, 171, 220–21, 240

Stephen circle, 206, 276; influence on Paul, 218, 221, 370, 375; missionary work of, 185, 239–40, 610; teaching of, 216–17, 221, 240, 318, 330, 399, 533

stylistic criticism, 679

Suffering Servant: in Isaiah, 149–50, 159, 171, 671; Jesus as, 59, 68, 161, 171, 177, 213, 366, 714–15; in the New Testament, 149–50, 508, 512, 550, 630, 776; in Paul and the Pauline school, 195, 319, 326, 328–29, 348, 362–63, 368. *See also* connection between the Son of Man and the Suffering Servant

table fellowship, 85–86, 109, 152–53, 632; Lord's Supper as, 234–36, 399–404

temple action, of Jesus, 168–69, 172–74, 217, 511, 669, 820; in the Johannine school, 58, 172–73, 686, 690, 735; in Mark, 67, 122, 172–73; as messianic demonstration, 20, 97–98, 122, 131, 134–35, 168–69, 173

temple curtain, 171, 220, 526, 577, 583, 630

Ten Commandments. *See* Decalogue

textual criticism, 291, 841, 845–48

Theodotion, 131, 516, 725, 734, 747

Theophilus, 617–18, 620, 623, 638

Third Council of Carthage, 747, 759–60

Thomas, 650, 694–95

Timothy, 432–33, 467–69, 523–25, 636–37, 753, 797–98

Titus, 432, 433, 468–69, 525

Torah: and the canon, 7, 9, 743, 746, 750; and the gospel, 351, 358–59, 374–76, 535; and Jesus's teaching, 114–24, 603, 605, 614; in the Johannine school, 723; messianic, 95, 182, 240, 297–99, 497; Mosaic, 120, 123; in Paul and the Pauline school, 260–61, 273, 277–80, 285–99, 311–14, 318, 332, 427; as written on hearts, 123, 287, 359, 415, 533. *See also* Sinai Torah; Zion Torah

tradition-historical connections: in the Johannine school, 643, 656, 663, 685, 720–21; in the New Testament, 163, 234, 334, 359, 652, 787, 809–10; between Old Testament and New Testament, 9, 37–38, 43, 212, 359, 720–21, 769, 809–10, 814–15, 818

Trajan, 507, 518, 650, 658

transfiguration, 128, 132, 213–14, 547, 550, 578–79, 582, 585–86, 628, 649

Trinity, 611, 671, 712, 728, 735, 767

Tychicus, 423, 433

Tyndale, William, 712–13, 781

virgin: church as, 462; in Isaiah, 65, 77, 214, 594, 747; as young woman, 65, 214, 747

virgin birth of Jesus, 65–66, 213–15, 323, 594, 601, 628, 630

Vorlage: for 4 Maccabees, 847; for John's prologue, 679–80; for Matthew, 593–94, 597, 600; for 2 Peter, 544, 549; for Synoptic Gospels, 565. *See also* Q

“we” passages (in Acts), 257, 622, 636

wisdom in the New Testament, 10, 91–92, 528, 547–48, 671, 683, 714; in James, 495, 500, 503–4, 541; Jesus as teacher of, 88, 91–92, 94, 108, 128–29, 212, 321, 355; in the Johannine school, 676–78, 680, 683–85, 704, 718, 724, 733; in Paul and the Pauline school, 302–3, 309, 313–15, 322, 336, 355, 369, 436–38, 797–98; the relation of Old Testament and New Testament, 44, 93, 159, 751, 801, 822

wisdom of God, the, 447, 462–63, 468, 530, 602–3; creative, 118, 288–89, 303, 321, 343

wisdom tradition, 56, 88, 91, 102, 159, 212, 287, 648, 713, 751

woes, 86, 93, 106, 111, 168, 588–89, 599, 612, 629

women: in the circle of apostles, 239; included in and excluded from ministry, 385, 396–98, 432, 470–72, 485–86; at Jesus’s crucifixion, death, and empty tomb, 177, 187–88, 193, 198–99, 201–2, 577, 584

words of institution, 151–53, 156–58, 162–63, 177, 236, 399–401, 599, 727, 730–31, 802

Writings, the (division of canon), 9, 293, 743–46, 749

Yahweh: as Father, 58–59, 87, 102–4, 106, 124, 135, 181; and Israel, 81–83, 101–2, 106, 115, 117, 159–60, 190–92, 199, 285–86, 481; Jesus as, 95–96, 209; as name of God, 58–59, 104, 208, 215, 218, 678–79, 773, 795

Yahweh hymns, 82–83, 374, 451

Zealots, 167–68, 183, 536

Zeus, 101, 389, 492, 827

Zion Torah, 123–24, 287–88, 293, 298. *See also* Sinai Torah; Torah

Zwingli, Ulrich, 157, 783

Index of Modern Authors

Abasciano, B., 826
Ådna, J., 20, 150, 174, 511, 669
Aland, K., 244, 575, 584, 729
Alexander, L., 257, 617, 622
Allison, D. C., 494
Althaus, P., 726, 814
Anderson, H., 846
Archer, G. L., 751
Arnold, C. E., 441

Bailey, D. P., 130, 150, 178, 220, 315, 688, 824–26, 828–29, 836, 841–42, 844, 846–47, 859
Balz, H. R., 231
Barclay, J. M. G., 744–45
Barrett, C. K., 621–22, 646, 679
Barth, G., 516, 600, 606, 729
Barth, K., 260, 783, 796, 801, 804, 813–15, 822
Barton, J., 32
Batalden, S. K., 766
Bauckham, R., 495, 569, 574, 654
Bauer, G. L., 37
Bauer, W., 835–36, 840, 848
Bauernfeind, O., 228
Baur, F. C., 793
Bayer, O., 315
Beale, G. K., 36
Becker, J., 246, 255, 258, 267, 307, 323, 367, 666, 819–20
Behm, J., 573
Belezos, C., 765–66
Bell, R. H., 281, 324, 340
Berger, K., 4, 141, 630–31, 654, 713, 774
Betz, O., 126, 147, 227
Beyerlin, W., 101
Beyschlag, K., 422, 779–80
Bieler, L., 580
Bittner, W. J., 705
Black, M., 343, 836–37
Blatz, B., 557

Blinzler, J., 169–70
Blomberg, C. L., 495
Böcher, O., 76, 658, 663
Bock, D. L., 622
Bockmuehl, M. N. A., 281, 443
Böhlig, G., 831–32
Bonhoeffer, D., 386
Bornkamm, G., 30, 90, 127, 129, 146, 168, 266–67, 306, 358, 401, 410–11, 441, 443, 447, 471, 600, 606, 666, 801–2
Bovon, F., 622, 628
Bowker, J., 289
Braun, H., 126, 522
Brenz, J., 388, 405, 731
Breytenbach, C., 352–54
Brooten, B., 239
Brosend, W. F., 495
Brown, R., 214
Brox, N., 448–49, 516
Bruce, F. F., 469
Brunner, H., 451, 578
Bühner, J.-A., 666
Bullinger, H., 761
Bultmann, R., 15, 17–22, 25, 27, 29–30, 32, 36, 43, 54–55, 85, 121, 126, 134, 138, 141, 146, 169, 176, 201, 264–68, 284, 306–8, 334, 358, 369, 371, 387, 411, 500, 586, 621, 639, 652–53, 665–66, 676, 687, 693, 727, 811, 819
Burchard, C., 375, 401, 636
Byrne, B., 851
Byrskog, S., 602

Caird, G. B., 32–34
Campbell, R. A., 471
Campenhausen, H. von, 6, 743, 755
Cancik, H., 563
Carter, T., 841, 844
Charlesworth, J. H., 206, 763
Childs, B. S., 7, 14, 38, 40, 749, 772–74, 789, 808, 812–15, 817–18
Chilton, B. D., 371
Chirichigno, G., 751
Collins, J. J., 745
Colpe, C., 20, 138, 141
Conzelmann, H., 17, 21–22, 25, 27, 29, 32, 127, 134–35, 169–70, 266, 284–85, 484, 586, 621, 626, 655, 666
Cooley, A. E., 624

Cosby, M. R., 536
Costache, D., 765
Craig, W. L., 826
Cranfield, C. E. B., 855–58
Cullmann, O., 24–25, 55–56, 621, 819
Culpepper, R. A., 647

Dahl, N. A., 443
Danker, F. W., 847–48
Dauer, A., 690
Davids, P. H., 494
Deichgräber, R., 460
Deines, R., 121–22, 705, 707
Deissmann, A., 219, 826, 830, 832–33, 846, 858, 861
Delling, G., 441–42, 631
deSilva, D. A., 825, 841–44, 846, 849
Dibelius, M., 20, 54, 409, 478, 484–85, 560, 586, 617, 620, 819
Dickey, E., 830
Diem, H., 15, 804
Dietzfelbinger, C., 274, 694
Dihle, A., 116, 199, 563
Dimant, D., 291
Dinkler, E., 132
Dodd, C. H., 36, 560, 845, 859, 861
Dohmen, C., 37, 808–9, 812
Droysen, J. G., 11
Dschulnigg, P., 646–47, 653
Dubis, M., 517
Dunn, J. D. G., 33, 270–73, 295, 315, 375, 432, 442

Ebeling, G., 107, 811
Eco, U., 569
Edgar, C. C., 446
Egan, P. A., 784
Eichholz, G., 91, 266–67, 319
Eichhorn, J. G., 37
Ellis, E. E., 622
Eltester, W., 679
Elze, M., 752
Ennulat, A., 566
Eschner, C., 826, 852

Fahlgren, K. H., 369, 390

Farmer, W. R., 565
Feldman, L. H., 442
Feldmeier, R., 41
Fichtner, J., 362
Fischer, K. M., 508
Fitzmyer, J., 851
Fotiou, A., 831
France, R. T., 33
Franco, K. M., 768
Frendo, D., 831
Freudenberger, R., 507
Frey, J., 657–59, 666, 675, 696, 698
Friedrich, G., 451, 558, 578
Friedrich, J., 605, 608
Fuchs, E., 146, 191
Fulford, H. W., 491
Fuller, R., 746–47

Gabler, J. P., 37
Gadamer, H.-G., 679, 795, 806
Galaction, G., 765
Gärtner, B. E., 799
Gathercole, S., 272, 840
Gebauer, R., 418
Gehring, R., 470, 478
Gerhardsson, B., 20, 56, 58, 93, 598, 601, 819
Gese, H., 10, 12, 14, 38, 65, 76, 101, 109, 123–24, 160, 235, 286–88, 293, 321, 325, 435–37, 439–40, 582, 594, 598, 601, 609–10, 628, 683, 772–74, 792, 804, 810, 815, 818
Gese, M., 433, 444, 462, 481–82
Giesen, H., 656, 720
Gillquist, P. E., 766
Gnilka, J., 17, 170, 201, 445, 578, 589, 594
Goff, P., 855
Goppelt, L., 17, 27–28, 32, 37, 39, 126, 141, 147, 267, 335, 477, 515, 769
Grässer, E., 111, 525, 538
Grenfell, B. P., 219
Griesbach, J. J., 565
Grimm, W., 140
Grosvenor, M., 467
Grudem, W., 857
Grundmann, W., 131, 398
Guelich, R., 560–61, 585

Gundry-Volf, J., 861
Guthrie, D., 33

Haenchen, E., 258, 573, 621, 666, 722
Hagner, D. A., 33, 593, 596, 598, 600, 609, 612
Hahn, F., 14, 17, 29–30, 34–35, 127, 132, 226
Hanhart, R., 596
Harnack, A. von, 465, 532, 559, 620, 623, 656–57, 802
Hartin, P. J., 495
Hasel, G. F., 32
Haubeck, W., 323
Hayes, J. H., 761
Hegermann, H., 522, 526, 532, 539
Heine, S., 247
Held, H. J., 600, 606
Hengel, M., 20, 56, 69, 92, 96, 119, 126, 130, 147, 150, 172, 205–6, 210, 222, 257, 289, 299, 321, 434, 465, 494–95, 562, 572–74, 586, 602, 612, 617, 621–23, 637, 649–52, 657–58, 664–66, 673, 687, 690–91, 705–7, 722, 733–34, 819
Henten, J. W. van, 845
Herder, J. G., 565
Herzer, J., 508, 514
Hicks, E. L., 219
Hiebert, R., 844, 847
Hirschberg, P., 719
Hofius, O., 236, 280, 326, 330, 332, 335, 338, 349–50, 376, 402–4, 427, 434, 437, 525–26, 663–65, 667–68, 679, 681–82, 693, 702–3, 786
Hofmann, J. C. K. von, 27
Hollander, H. W., 117
Holmes, M. W., 516, 599
Holtz, T., 168, 305, 664, 668
Holtzmann, H. J., 565
Hooker, M. D., 378, 825, 859
Horbury, W., 276
Horn, F. W., 28
Hübner, H., 36, 41–43, 280, 284, 293, 367, 445, 751, 808–12
Hultgren, A., 845
Hultgren, S., 825, 829, 842–44
Hunt, A. S., 219, 446

Jackson, H. L., 599
Jacobsen, D. M., 829
Janowski, B., 148, 325, 329, 437, 440, 604, 810
Jenni, E., 116

Jenson, R., 752
Jeremias, G., 178
Jeremias, J., 17, 22–24, 27–28, 32, 53, 55–56, 58, 84–86, 97, 101, 105–6, 114, 121, 126, 138–39, 141, 147, 152, 154, 172–73, 192, 195, 200–201, 226, 228, 365, 403, 446, 451, 567–68, 584, 608, 620, 631, 635, 668, 672, 702, 730, 819–20
Jervell, J., 621–22
Jewett, R., 837
Joest, W., 726, 785–86
Johnson, L. T., 494
Jonge, M. de, 117
Jülicher, A., 585
Jüngel, E., 87, 127
Jurgens, W. A., 759

Kähler, M., 24, 60–61, 563, 814
Kamell, M. J., 495
Kammler, H.-C., 679, 693, 702–3
Karrer, M., 130–31
Käsemann, E., 22–23, 27, 54, 60, 127–28, 141, 264–68, 270–71, 284, 306–8, 326, 358, 369, 394, 400, 411–12, 419, 434–35, 436, 440, 461, 468, 502, 525, 621, 661, 666, 676, 689, 692, 705, 722, 779, 810, 819
Kittel, G., 27, 40–41, 494, 814
Klaiber, W., 391
Klauck, H.-J., 315, 545, 717, 724, 839–40, 846–47
Klein, G., 238, 284, 296, 298, 375
Klein, H., 40–41
Kleinknecht, H., 499
Kleinknecht, K.-T., 153, 380, 730
Knierim, R., 149
Knöppler, T., 666, 687, 689
Koch, D.-A., 281, 751
Koch, K., 123, 136, 159, 286–88, 330, 360, 810
Koester, H., 334, 537, 562, 567
Köhler, L., 159
Kolb, R., 857
Kolitsaras, I., 851
Kollmann, B., 234
Kopp, C., 203
Kraus, W., 824, 838, 846, 852
Kümmel, W. G., 12, 15, 17, 25–27, 32, 36, 141, 180, 201, 255, 267, 621, 626, 649–50, 785–86, 792
Kürzinger, J., 597
Kuss, O., 266–67, 379
Kutsch, E., 285

Kvalbein, H., 611

Lachmann, C., 565
Ladd, G. E., 33
Lampe, G. W. H., 847
Lampe, P., 423, 495
Lang, F., 75, 334, 373, 389, 392–94, 397, 419, 423, 702
Lang, F. G., 573
Lange, A., 526, 746
Lauterbach, J. Z., 148
Lee, J. A. L., 835
Lichtenberger, A., 829
Lichtenberger, H., 293, 297, 471, 746
Liddell, H. G., 839
Lietzmann, H., 234
Lindemann, A., 134–35, 448
Lips, H. von, 479
Loewenich, W. von, 356
Loffreda, S., 206
Lohfink, G., 412, 577, 626, 633
Lohmeyer, E., 326, 439
Lohse, E., 17, 26–27, 95, 127, 129, 134–35, 444, 845, 853–54
Longenecker, B. W., 315
Longenecker, R. N., 837
Lüdemann, G., 198, 793
Lührmann, D., 443, 478
Luz, U., 110, 120–21, 445, 463, 470, 566, 592–93, 595, 597, 602–3, 611, 613

MacDonald, M. Y., 472
Maier, J., 121, 291, 717
Malkin, I., 841–42
Manson, T. W., 830, 848, 862
Manson, W., 147
Marshak, A. M., 829
Marshall, I. H., 34, 622
Martitz, W. von, 210, 214
Martyn, J. L., 655
Matera, F. J., 32, 35, 859–60
McCartney, D. G., 495
McGrath, A. E., 356
McKnight, S., 495
Mell, U., 246–47

Merk, O., 15, 17, 793, 808, 818–20
Merkel, H., 467
Merklein, H., 85, 127, 129, 470
Merz, A., 55, 557
Metzger, B. M., 239, 241, 617, 754, 757–58, 762–64, 785
Meyer, B. F., 12, 55
Meyer, H. A. W., 855, 858
Michel, O., 228, 442, 507, 525
Mildenberger, F., 789
Milgrom, J., 217
Moessner, D., 618
Mollaun, R. A., 832–33, 839
Moo, D. J., 495, 862–63
Mooney, G. W., 830
Morgan, R., 4, 17, 32
Morris, L., 33, 832, 861–63
Moule, C. F. D., 467, 859
Müller, E. F. K., 761, 782–83
Müller, P.-G., 538
Müller, U. B., 666
Muraoka, T., 516, 844, 847–48, 852–53
Muratori, L. A., 756
Mussner, F., 494, 666

Nauck, W., 528
Neil, W., 622
Neirynck, F., 338, 560
Neuer, W., 796
Neugebauer, F., 78, 127, 583
Niebuhr, K.-W., 410
Niederwimmer, K., 100, 573
Nissen, A., 115, 117
Noetzel, H., 707
Norden, E., 444, 451, 578
Noth, M., 285

Obermann, A., 734
Oeming, M., 813
Oepke, A., 390
O'Hagan, A. P., 843–44
Ollrog, W.-H., 254, 432
Overbeck, F., 621, 639

Panagopoulos, J., 798–99
Park, H.-W., 481
Paton, W. R., 219
Pentiuc, E. J., 764–67
Pesch, R., 147, 560, 573, 586, 622
Peters, A., 783
Pöhlmann, W., 92, 438
Pokorný, P., 445, 478
Pola, T., 690
Polag, A., 566
Popkes, W., 494
Popper, K., 198
Potter, D. S., 624
Preuss, J., 708
Prieur, A., 627

Rad, G. von, 21–22, 25, 30, 361, 364, 604, 704, 772–73, 805, 814–15
Radu, V., 765
Rahlfs, A., 9, 764
Räisänen, H., 4, 124, 256, 270, 273, 284, 288, 294, 296, 586
Reasoner, M., 860
Reicke, B., 507, 565, 623–24, 691
Reinhardt, W., 228
Rengstorf, K. H., 600
Reventlow, H. G., 772, 774
Reynolds, J., 442
Riesenfeld, H., 20, 329, 560
Riesner, R., 20, 56, 58, 93, 258, 276, 278, 619, 819
Robinson, J. A. T., 654
Röhser, G., 314
Roloff, J., 27, 219–20, 231, 237, 395–96, 401, 446, 462, 465–66, 468, 470–71, 515, 606, 612, 622, 629, 633, 635, 656, 718, 720–21
Rose, C., 536–37
Ruckstuhl, E., 645–47, 653
Rüger, H. P., 91, 208, 606, 748
Rutledge, F., 860–61

Sanders, E. P., 173, 256, 268–73, 285, 319, 332, 367
Sato, M., 566
Schäfer, P., 122
Schaff, P., 761
Schelkle, K. H., 16

Schenke, H.-M., 508
Schenke, L., 237
Schlatter, A., 5, 27–28, 77, 126, 180, 262, 267, 304, 369, 375, 415, 607, 796
Schleiermacher, D. F. E., 793, 802
Schlier, H., 17, 256, 296, 463, 704
Schmauch, W., 439
Schmid, H. H., 360
Schmidt, K. L., 21, 54, 819
Schmidt, W. H., 285, 772–73, 786
Schmithals, W., 334, 336, 567
Schmitz, P. C., 624
Schnackenburg, R., 445, 463, 678
Schneemelcher, W., 188, 566, 656
Schneider, G., 622
Schneider, J., 209
Schnelle, U., 31–32, 39, 43, 367, 494, 517, 545, 558–59, 563–64, 566–67, 573–74, 601, 620, 636, 647, 653, 656, 666, 675, 705, 708, 719
Schniewind, J., 27, 595
Schoedel, W. R., 597
Schottroff, W., 401–2
Schrage, W., 120, 409, 416, 420, 484, 517
Schreiber, S., 826, 829, 836–37, 852
Schreiner, T. R., 35–36
Schröger, F., 527
Schulz, S., 477–78, 567, 580, 723
Schürmann, H., 20, 56, 433, 801, 819
Schweitzer, A., 60, 110–11, 269, 273, 332
Schweizer, E., 77–78, 87, 127, 133, 138, 182, 212, 254, 307, 432, 435–36, 439, 441–42, 461, 573, 576, 645
Schwemer, A. M., 83, 98, 126, 442–43, 622–23, 637, 697
Scobie, C. H. H., 7, 14, 40, 808, 815–18
Scott, J. M., 323
Scott, R., 839
Scouteris, C., 765–66
Seebass, H., 40
Segal, A. F., 273, 315
Seifrid, M. A., 272
Sellin, G., 545
Semler, J. S., 793, 802
Shipley, F. W., 624
Siegert, F., 8
Smith, C. R., 719

Söding, T., 37, 801, 808–9, 845
Sokolowski, F., 389
Sparks, J. N., 766
Spicq, C., 451
Spieckermann, H., 41
Stalder, K., 414
Stanton, G., 560
Stemberger, G., 289, 292
Stendahl, K., 256, 268, 270–71, 273, 332, 367, 596
Stettler, C., 436–37, 439–40
Stettler, H., 449, 451–52, 456, 468
Stökl ben Ezra, D., 824
Strecker, G., 17, 28–29, 31–32, 39, 108, 367, 558, 598, 601, 818
Streeter, B. H., 566–67
Strobel, A., 134–35, 170–71, 175, 526, 532, 625, 691
Stuckenbruck, L. T., 717
Stuhlmacher, P., 40, 42, 220, 253, 272, 370, 536, 560, 625, 792, 818–19, 821, 824–26, 837, 845, 859–60
Styloanopoulos, T. G., 764

Tabb, B. J., 825, 829, 841–44
Tannenbaum, R., 442
Taylor, V., 572
Theissen, G., 4, 55, 237, 557, 566–67, 692
Theobald, M., 375, 481
Thielman, F., 34–35
Thoma, C., 612
Thornton, C.-J., 257, 622
Thüsing, W., 343
Thyen, H., 705–6
Tiede, C. P., 507
Tobin, T. H., 838
Tov, E., 746
Townshend, R. B., 846
Trebolle Barrera, J., 748, 756, 815
Trilling, W., 601
Troeltsch, E., 12, 793

Unnik, W. C. van, 259

Vamvas, N., 765–66, 851
Vielhauer, P., 141, 578, 598, 621, 656
Vischer, L., 421

Vögtle, A., 17, 24, 188
Vollenweider, S., 414

Wagener, U., 478
Walter, N., 304, 375
Ware, K., 767
Weder, H., 295
Weidinger, K., 478
Weiser, A., 567, 576–77, 579–80, 592, 606, 631
Weismann, C., 388
Weiss, A., 370, 825–26, 828–29, 836, 852
Weiss, H.-F., 526, 529, 532, 538
Wellhausen, J., 18, 141, 793
Wendel, K., 830
Wengert, T. J., 857
Wengst, K., 445
Wenham, D., 33, 490
Westermann, C., 21
Wevers, J. W., 830
Wilckens, U., 14, 17, 30–31, 34, 42, 238, 245, 560, 621, 649, 653, 656, 795–96, 838
Wilkinson, J., 203
Windisch, H., 350, 448, 547, 654
Wolff, C., 350
Wolff, H.-W., 21, 147, 306, 309
Wolter, M., 350, 456, 837, 845
Woude, A. S. van der, 602
Wrede, W., 4, 18, 126, 269, 332, 584–86
Wright, N. T., 436, 442–43, 859
Wülfing von Martitz, P., 580

Yamauchi, E. M., 745

Zerwick, M., 467
Zimmerli, W., 21, 30, 772–73

Index of Scripture and Other Ancient Sources

OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis

1 683
1–2 690
1–3 327
1–11 755
1:26–27 306, 436, 438, 480–81
1:27 424, 485–86
1:27–28 461
2:2 172
2:2 LXX 690
2:2–3 734
2:4 593
2:7 306, 327
2:15–17 289, 294, 313
2:21 462
2:21–22 393
2:21–23 424, 462
2:21–24 327, 393, 462
2:22 462
2:22–24 394, 461, 480–81
2:23 462
2:24 424–25, 486
3 370, 683
3:1–24 311
3:4–6 485–86
3:5 219
3:14–18 312
3:16 327, 461, 480
3:17–19 303–4
3:22 313
4:1–16 549
4:8 734
4:24 608
5:1 593–94
5:22–24 137

5:24 190, 200
5:29 593
6–9 309, 375
6:1–2 341
6:1–4 513, 549
6:2 210
6:9 593
6:15 830
7 509
9:1–17 497
9:6 161
12:1–3 373
12:1–9 379
12:3 498, 594, 734
12:7 197
14:17–20 527, 531
14:18 526
15:1–6 229, 379
15:6 229, 291, 363–64, 376, 378–79, 498, 500
16:11 213
17:1 197
17:5 498
17:9–14 242, 379
17:10–14 364
18:9–14 65
18:18 594
19:1–29 549
21:1 214
22:1–19 364
22:2 213, 379, 498, 576
22:9 379, 498
22:9–18 498, 500
22:16 328
22:18 594
25:21 214
25:25 438
25:31–32 438
26:2 197
26:2–5 364, 377, 379
26:5 107
26:24 197

29:31 214
30:1–13 719
34:3 65
42:23 LXX 573
43:16 854
49:3 438
49:9 668
49:10 75
49:11 706

Exodus

1:11 323
3:1–12 609
3:2 197
3:2–4 197
3:2–6 242
3:3 197
3:4a 197
3:4b 197
3:5–6 197
3:6 94
3:7ff. 197
3:10 242
3:11 242
3:12 242, 609
3:13–14 104
3:14 280, 580, 678, 795
3:14–15 215, 773
3:14–16 678
3:15 678
4:10 242
4:22 210
8:19 96
12:1–14 154
12:5 511
12:8 155
12:10 672
12:10 LXX 672
12:14 164, 236, 401–2, 801
12:40 LXX 296
12:43–46 154
12:46 68, 672, 691

12:46 LXX 672
13:3 164
13:3–10 154, 236, 401
13:8 154, 164, 801
13:9 600
13:21–22 466
14 658
15:1–18 746
15:13 440
15:17 98, 291, 531, 577, 719
15:17–18 98, 173
15:18 98
15:21 746
15:26 708
16 581, 677
16:4 400
16:35 400
17:6 400
19:5 285, 323
19:6 696, 721
20:1–21 795
20:2 189, 783
20:2–3 102
20:2–17 286
20:5–6 362
20:8–11 287
20:12 66, 478–79
20:13 119
20:14 119–20
20:17 313
20:22–23:23 115
21:2 423
21:12 834
21:12–14 834
21:23 843
21:23–25 119, 121
21:29–30 148
23:4–9 115
23:7 364
23:14–17 185, 228
23:20 77, 561, 576, 578

24 154, 158, 162
24:1 582
24:1–8 156
24:7–8 285
24:8 158, 162, 527, 533, 576, 583
24:8–11 163
24:9–11 156, 161–62
24:11 162
24:12 123
24:15–18 582
24:16–18 582
25:8–9 684
25:9 526
25:16ff. 836
25:17 160, 217, 833, 836, 848, 858
25:17ff. 220, 848
25:17–22 160, 217, 857
25:18–19 217
25:22 160, 217, 855
29:14 221
29:23 220
29:36 221
29:38–42 160, 511, 668
29:41 668
29:42–44 689
29:43–46 437, 439
30:6 851
32 353, 405
32:30 160
33:18–23 684
33:20 159
34 773
34:1 123
34:4 123
34:5–7 370
34:6 31
34:22 185, 228
34:28 286, 632
34:29–35 350, 582
34:34 390
35:1–3 287

37:6 217
40:23 220
40:35 214

Leviticus

1:4 217
4 539–40
4:1–35 839
4:2 539
4:3 130
4:5 130
4:8 221
4:13 539
4:16 130
4:20 221
4:21 221, 325
4:22 539
4:24 221, 325
4:25 221
4:27 539
4:29 221
4:32 221
5:6 221, 324–25
5:7 221, 324–25, 330
5:8 221
5:10 221
5:11 221, 324–25
5:12 221, 325
5:14–16 149
6:17 221
7:7 149, 221
7:11–12 235
7:26–27 731
7:37 149
9:7 221
10:17 160, 286, 533
11:44–45 514
13 364
14 585
16 160, 217, 222, 511, 531, 540, 810, 824, 836, 859
16:1–34 837–38
16:2 217, 851, 855

16:2ff. 220
16:2–15 171
16:10 218
16:12–15 577
16:13 217
16:13–17 217
16:14 160
16:14–15 217, 840
16:14–16 835, 855
16:15–16 824, 841
16:16 217
16:20–22 218
16:27 524, 533
17–18 421, 497
17–26 115, 286
17:10 160, 731
17:10–11 163
17:11 160, 217, 286, 324, 533, 810, 843–44
18:5 291
18:8 424
18:16 73
19:2 114, 411, 514
19:12 121
19:17–18 115
19:18 94, 117, 119–20, 415, 503, 709, 723, 775
19:28 307
19:31 189
19:33–34 115
20:6 189
20:11 424
20:21 73
20:27 189
21:17–23 79
23:5 69
23:16 185
24:8 220
24:16 670
24:18 843
25:5 142
25:11 142
25:39–43 423

26:29 309
27:32 677

Numbers
5:2 79
7:89 217, 220
8:7 307
8:19 160
9:12 68
11 677
12:7 527
14:22 706
15:37–41 83
16 549, 850
16:46–47 160
16:47 850
23:19 136
23:21 81
24:17 73, 550, 668, 675
25:1–18 549
25:7–8 364
27:15–23 468
27:17 227
28:3 511
28:3–8 160, 511, 668
28:8 668
29:11 851
31:8 549
31:16 549
35:6 834
35:12 834
35:31 352
35:33 161

Deuteronomy
4:2 121, 659
4:7–8 102, 605
4:7–18 285
4:8 288
4:13 285
4:32–37 288
4:32–40 285

5:1–21 286
5:2 313
5:6–7 102
5:6–21 286
5:6–22 795
5:12–15 287
5:16 66, 478–79
5:18 120
5:22 227
5:26 309
5:33 678
6:4 104, 280, 449, 464, 499, 671, 709, 723, 735
6:4f. 773
6:4–5 10, 94, 117, 775
6:4–9 83
6:5 750, 775
6:8 600
6:13 601
7:4 362
7:6 323
9:5 453
9:7–8 362
9:9 632
9:10 227
10:4 227
10:12 118
10:17–19 115
10:21 811
11:2 228
11:13–21 83
11:18 600
12:32 121
13 170, 174
13:1–5 170
13:1–11 59, 170, 175
13:5a 170
13:5b 170
13:6 170
13:6–11 122, 170
13:11 176
14:1 288

14:2 323
16:1–8 154
16:3 156, 164, 236, 401
16:5–6 154
16:5–7 163, 168
16:7 154
16:9 185
16:16 228
17:2–7 59
17:6 728
17:8–13 122
17:12 170, 175, 691
17:12–13 170
17:14–20 82
18:9–22 122
18:10–12 86
18:11 189
18:15 128, 582, 629, 674
18:20 59, 170, 175
19:21 843
21:7 161
21:18–21 66
21:20 86
21:22 560
21:22–23 62, 70, 144, 167, 177–78, 187, 216, 277, 332, 354, 689, 692
21:23 59, 177–78, 183, 334
22:23–24 601
23:1 240
23:2ff. 227
24:1 120, 424
24:3 120
24:14 750
25:3 291
25:4 467
25:5–6 94
28:58 339
29:12 285
30:11–14 279
30:12–14 347
30:14 348
30:15 286

30:15–18 285
32 281
32:3–7 102
32:4 734
32:5 395
32:20–21 340
32:21 400
32:36 340
32:39 190, 340, 677, 679
32:43 241, 340
33:2 LXX 296
33:3 842
34:5–6 582
34:9 468

Joshua
2:1–21 498
3 74
3–4 76
22:16 227

Judges
5:11 361
5:15 538
5:31 608
6:11–16 609
6:12 197, 242
6:14 242
6:15 242
6:16 242, 609
11:8 461
13:3 197, 213
13:5 213
20:2 227

1 Samuel
1:20 65
2:1–10 190
2:6 677
2:6–8 190–91
2:8 466
3:15 202
3:15–17 584

3:15b 201
6:3–5 149
12:7 361
17:47 227

2 Samuel
1:16 612
5:2 596
7 635
7:10–14 129
7:11–14 211
7:12 212, 337
7:12–14 102
7:12–16 211–12, 583
7:13 465
7:14 88, 129, 134, 181, 210–11, 323–24, 337, 527, 670
12:1–7 90
14:3 350
14:19 350
17:13 623
24:1–17 625

1 Kings
1:38–40 583
3:5 197
8:32 362–63
13:1 280, 335
19:8 632
19:10 634
19:14 634
19:16 130
19:19–21 111, 128
20:35 280, 335

2 Kings
1:8 74, 578
1:10 659
1:12 659
2:8 74, 76, 578
2:11 190, 200
2:11–12 582
2:14 76
22:8 285

22:11 285
23:2–3 285
24:8–16 594
25:27–29 594
25:27–30 86

1 Chronicles
12:21 538
15:15 LXX 280, 335
17:11–14 583
28:11 850
29:11 343
29:11–13 100
29:12 343
29:14 343
29:16 343

2 Chronicles
6:23 362–63
16:14 201
24:17–22 148
36:14–16 148
36:16 634

Ezra
4:6 745
8:17 350

Nehemiah
7:7 213
8 118
8–10 290
8:1–10:40 743
9:1–37 290
9:6 343
9:8 361
9:17 361
9:26 148, 629
9:29 291
9:33 361
9:33–35 365

Esther
1:1 745

1:1ff. 745

Job

1:6–12 476, 713
5:8 LXX 546
7:5 307
7:20–21 110
9:5 107
9:8 581, 708
10:8–9 110
10:14 110
10:18 110
14:1 65
19:25–27 190
25:6 136
28:28 805
31:1–32 604
34:11 360
34:14–15 309
35:8 136
42:2–5 280

Psalms

1:1 92, 129
1:1–2 285
2 77, 525
2:1–2 129
2:6–7 212, 214
2:7 65, 77, 88, 102, 129, 135, 181, 210, 213, 527, 550, 561, 576, 578, 601, 670
2:7–8 550
2:7–9 82
2:8 550
2:8–9 734
2:9 685
7:1 695
7:3 695
7:6 362
7:9 675
7:12–16 313
8 143
8:4 136
8:4–5 144

8:4–6 137, 339
8:4–8 461
8:6 94, 143, 339, 341, 444, 447
8:7 143
10:16 82
13:3 695
15 364
15:2–5 604
16:9 233
16:10 212
18:28 695
18:43 438, 461
18:49 241
19 287
19:1–10 108, 680
19:8 285
19:11–14 108, 680
22 171, 177, 235, 576, 583
22:1 176, 577
22:2 176
22:3 476
22:11 577
22:11–15 176
22:22–31 176
22:27–28 583
22:28 81
23 677
24 364
24:4–5 604
25:5 714
27:1 734
29:1 210
30:5 362
31:5 171
31:5a 630
31:5b 630
31:19 453
33:1–18 680–81
33:9 107
33:14 476
33:20–22 681

35:23 735
35:23–24 361
35:28 361
36:9 475, 677, 734
37:20 314
38:4 313
40:12 313
41:9 731
41:10 731
43:3 677
45:6 579
45:7 673
47 82–83, 451, 609
48 83
48:11–12 361
49:7–8 149
49:14–15 190
50 287–88
50:2 340
50:2–3 123
50:6 361
50:14 412
50:23 235, 412
51 287, 290, 306, 311, 315
51:1–5 365
51:4 290, 363
51:14 105
56:4 309
62:12 360, 675
63:1 690
65:2–5 361
65:6 107
67:12 LXX 560
68:11 469, 510
68:16 436–37, 439
68:18 444, 469
68:19 469
68:21 149, 314
69 171, 177, 235, 576, 583
69:9 686
69:21 690

69:28 703
71:5 475
71:15–18 402
71:19 228, 811
72 82, 129, 361, 604
72:10 720
73:24–25 190
73:26 190
74:2 227, 437, 439–40
74:9 706
74:18 314
77:5 LXX 350
77:5–6 402
77:11–12 402
77:17–20 581
78:3–7 350
78:10 285
78:22 376
78:32 376
78:38–39 309
80:1–2 243, 577, 609, 695, 721
80:8 718
80:8–9 576
80:8–11 678
80:8–19 655
80:17 84, 136–37, 243
82:1 526
82:1–4 361
84:4–5 92
84:8–9 84
86:17 706
87 83, 610
87:4–7 610
87:5 610
88:5 336
88:9 LXX 678
88:10–12 189
88:20 LXX 688–89
89:6 210
89:8 678
89:14 476

89:19–27 674
89:20 212
89:26 102, 129, 210
89:26–27 88, 135, 181, 211–12, 226, 323–24
89:27 241, 438, 584, 668, 674, 693
90:4 548
90:9 313
90:11 313
92:9 314
93 82, 451
95:7 721
96 82, 374, 451
96:3 609
96:7–13 610
96:10 243
97 82, 451
97:1–6 84
97:2 361, 476
97:9 689
98 82
98:9 75
99 82, 451
99:1–5 84
99:2–3 339
99:4 361
103:1–22 84
103:3 96, 581
103:4 LXX 527
103:6 361
103:8–17 362
103:19–22 442
104:2 734
104:6–7 581
104:12 92
104:27–28 581
105:1–5 402
105:5 402
105:27 350
106:12 376
106:24 376
106:31 291, 364

107:20 61, 70, 80, 88, 180, 560, 628

109:1 143

110 82, 141, 143, 192, 525, 534

110:1 59, 75, 94, 130, 134–35, 137, 143–44, 189, 195, 203, 208–9, 211–12, 216, 226, 240–41, 276, 321, 339, 341, 444, 451, 475, 530, 665, 689

110:1–2 513

110:2 241, 340

110:3 65, 214

110:4 525, 531, 534

111:9 LXX 689

111:10 805

113–14 155

113–18 154–55, 801

115–18 163

115:3 96, 106

115:17–18 189

116:13 156, 158, 162

117:1 241

118 75, 209, 677

118:20 677

118:22 210, 509, 514, 576

118:22–23 576, 683

118:22a 576

118:22b–23 576

118:25–26 209, 576, 583

118:26 75, 209

119:7 118

119:14 118, 285, 605

119:24 285

119:52 402

119:77 285

119:86 678

119:92 285

130:4 217

130:8 450

132:18 594

134:8–12 LXX 436

135:6 96, 106

136:2–3 693

139:21–22 116

143:2 271, 295, 363, 369, 375

143:5 402

145:4–7 402
146:7–8 79, 580
148:1 576
148:5 107
150 763

Proverbs

1:7 805
3:12 373
4:2 288
6:6–10 90
8 438
8:20 604
8:22 322, 668, 674
8:22ff. 10, 65
8:22–23 438
8:22–31 212, 287, 321
8:23–29 322
8:30 322
9:1 805
9:2 854
9:3–5 93
9:10 805
12:28 604
14:9 149
14:31 116
15:33 805
17:15 364
21:22 309, 413
24:12 360
24:17 115
24:28–29 115
25:21 115
26:11 646
26:27 313
28:5 805
30:7–9 109

Ecclesiastes

1:2 LXX 304
10:16 93
10:20 LXX 310

Isaiah

1:27–28 361
2:2ff. 340
2:2–3 97
2:2–4 84, 123, 182, 185, 225, 239, 719
2:2–5 287–88
2:6–21 362
3:6–7 538
4:3 227
5:1–2 92, 576
5:1–7 90
5:5 92
5:8–13 93
5:16 361
5:18–23 93
5:23 364
6:1–8 476
6:3 103, 343, 439, 734, 795
6:5 81, 159
6:9–10 576, 585
6:10 702
6:13 227
7:4–9 229
7:8–9 461
7:9 107, 376
7:10–17 65
7:14 65, 77, 144, 213–15, 323, 594, 596, 601, 611, 628, 747
7:14 LXX 213
8:14 340
8:23 LXX 609
8:23–9:1 596
9:1 609, 628
9:1–2 751
9:1–7 240, 674
9:2–7 84, 129
9:6 579, 673
9:6–7 10, 65, 213, 445
9:7 361, 628
10:22 227, 361
11 75
11–12 221

11:1 668, 675
11:1–5 130, 321, 579, 604
11:1–8 129, 181
11:1–9 84, 304
11:1–10 10
11:1–16 674
11:2 75, 456
11:2–3 212
11:2–4 602
11:2–5 321
11:3–4 560
11:4 482, 685
11:5 482, 685
11:6–9 561, 576, 578
11:10 241, 340, 668
11:34 751
13:10 576
14:12–15 96
22:13 309
24–27 162, 190
24:23 82, 156, 162–63
25:6 706, 730
25:6–8 153, 156, 158, 162–63, 181–82, 226, 234, 304, 405
25:6–9 85–86, 360
25:6–26:6 185
25:7 339
25:8 190, 212
25:9 233, 235
26:1ff. 162
26:17–19 76
26:19 79, 191–92, 310, 580
26:20 362
26:20–27:5 360
27:9 340
28:16 107, 229, 340, 376, 446, 514, 519
28:23–26 142
28:23–29 90, 92
28:24 142
29:3 623
29:13 576
29:16 79

29:18 79
29:18–19 79
30:15 107, 229, 376
33:6 456
33:24 560
34:4 576
35:1–6 580
35:5 79
35:5–6 79
35:6 79
38:10–12 189
40:3 77, 561, 576, 578
40:3–5 74
40:9 349
40:11 719
40:21 734
41:4 679
41:8 321, 498
41:9 321, 751
41:26 361, 734
42:1 75, 77, 213, 321, 550, 561, 576, 578–79
42:1–4 596, 602, 751
42:5–9 437
42:6 75, 677
42:6–7 79
42:7 256–57
42:8 215, 339
42:16 256–57
43:1–5 161, 365
43:1–7 181
43:3 148, 450, 576
43:3–4 140, 143–44, 148–49, 164, 171, 216, 329, 349, 576, 776–77
43:3–4 LXX 140
43:3–5 139–40, 149, 177
43:4 139, 148, 576
43:6 210
43:10 560, 580, 679
43:12 560
43:12–13 LXX 734
43:13 679
43:16–25 280

43:18–19 305, 818
43:21 514
43:22–25 149, 243, 365
43:23 148
43:25 148
44:2 77, 213, 561, 576
44:6 668, 674–75
44:24 LXX 438
44:26–27 683
45:1 130
45:7–8 361, 437
45:8 361
45:11 210
45:11–13 437
45:14–17 148
45:17 340
45:22–24 326
45:23 209, 338
45:23–24 108
45:23–25 370
45:25 340
46:4 679
46:12–13 361
48:12 674, 679
49:1 637
49:1–6 356
49:2 530
49:3 150
49:6 73, 243, 256, 609–10, 636–37, 677
50:4–9 362
50:6 576
50:7–9 362–63
50:8 363
51:1–2 133
51:1–3 243
51:6 370
51:8 361, 370
51:9–11 76, 437
51:12 136
52:7 61, 70, 77, 79–80, 88, 130, 180, 348–49, 445–46, 482, 510, 526, 559–61, 576, 578, 624, 627–29
52:7–9 82

52:13 149, 579, 672, 675, 689
52:13–15 338
52:13–53:12 149, 164, 171, 177, 181, 192, 210, 216, 326, 365–66
52:14–15 161
52:15 75, 130
53 34, 130, 140, 147–50, 195, 328, 372, 508–9, 511–12, 540, 630, 672, 817, 840
53 LXX 329
53:1 348, 351, 559–60, 702
53:4 596, 602
53:4ff. 147
53:4–6 688
53:5 216, 221–22, 776
53:6 147, 149, 328–30, 576, 671, 688, 776
53:6 LXX 328
53:6–8 776
53:7 147, 511, 672
53:7 LXX 672
53:7–8 630
53:9 147, 196, 577
53:10 147, 149, 159, 368
53:10–11 LXX 195
53:10–12 161, 216, 222, 368, 400, 576, 583, 630, 671, 675, 688
53:11 149–50, 161, 329, 363, 451, 630, 672, 776
53:11 LXX 451, 686
53:11–12 139–40, 143–44, 148–49, 169, 195–96, 216, 222, 329–30, 349, 363, 366–67, 450, 576, 630, 714–15, 777
53:11b–12 338
53:12 116, 139, 150, 171, 195, 328–29, 368, 576, 776
53:12 LXX 139, 195, 328, 672
54:7–10 362
54:13 667
54:17 369
55:1–2 93
55:3 211–12, 243, 324
55:6–7 110
55:10–11 356–57, 683
55:11 107, 172, 690, 734
56:2 136
56:3–8 240–41, 719
56:7 174, 182
56:8 721, 734
57:19 445–46

58:11 61, 628
59:17 482
59:20 340
60 241
60:1 677
60:1–3 73
60:3 720
60:5 720
60:11 720
61:1 61, 79, 106, 130, 512, 559–61
61:1ff. 180
61:1–2 77, 79, 85, 94, 105, 124, 130–31, 181, 349, 576, 578, 580, 624, 628–29
61:1–3 128, 349
61:2 130
61:10 130
62:4–5 481
62:11 596
62:11–12 214
63:2–3 685
63:7–64:12 102
63:11 350
63:15–16 102
63:16 103
64:4 751
64:7–9 102
64:8 103
65:13–14 629
65:17 547
66:1–2 240
66:15–16 362, 372
66:15–17 313
66:18–20 280
66:18–21 240–41, 492, 610
66:18–24 225
66:19 240, 706
66:22 547
66:24 754

Jeremiah
1:4–8 609
1:5 242, 356
1:6 242

1:8 242, 257, 609
1:10 107
1:19 257
2:2 424, 481
3:1–5 138
3:16 839
6:16 122
7:11 174, 465
8:4–7 138
8:13 107
11:3–4 285
11:20 675
12:1 361
13:17 719
14:10 631
17:10 675
20:14–18 110
23:5 LXX 633
23:5–6 84, 370
23:6 604
23:18 213
23:24 439
26:15 612
29:7 425
30:18 288
30:18–24 287
31:3 703, 709
31:9 210
31:10 243
31:15 596
31:20 365
31:23 288
31:31–34 123, 156, 163, 228, 235, 285, 287–88, 293, 297–99, 349–50, 359, 400, 405, 414–15, 527, 533, 535, 734
31:33–34 359, 535, 709, 723
31:34 110
31:38–40 288, 631
32:7–9 596
49:18 136
49:33 136
50:40 136
51:5 149

51:25 107
51:33 142
51:35 612
51:43 136
52:13 LXX 600

Ezekiel

1:3–28 476, 795
2:1 136
2:3 136
2:6 136
2:8 136
3:1 136
3:3 136
3:4 136
3:10 136
3:17 136
3:17–19 321
3:25 136
4:1 136
4:16 136
5:1 136
6:2 136
9:4 389
9:6 389
11:19–20 415
12:3 LXX 506
16 481
18:5–9 364, 604
18:23 87
20:11 291
20:25 535
20:25–26 123, 286–87
20:37 677
22:31 362
33:1–9 138
33:7–9 321
34:11–16 677
34:23 677, 719
34:23–24 677
36:22–32 103
36:23 103

36:24–27 76
36:24–28 228, 244, 286–87
36:25–27 702, 713
36:25–32 110
36:26–27 415
37:1–14 190
37:5–6 297
37:15–28 665, 674
37:21–28 286–87
37:24 677, 719
37:26 350
37:26–27 182
39:26–29 103
40–48 286
43:4–5 689–90
43:7 182
43:9 182
43:14 832, 837, 848, 857
43:15 848
43:17 832, 837, 848, 857
43:20 832, 837, 848, 857
44:2 631, 713
44:5 631, 713
44:27 688
46:13 511
46:13–15 511

Daniel

1:15 307
2 817
2:44 83
2:47 668, 693
3:39–40 LXX 820
3:40 LXX 854
4:12 92
4:14 LXX 107
4:17 516
4:21 92
4:34 83
7 34, 75, 136–37, 321, 393, 578, 817
7:1–8 136
7:2–8 578

7:9 664, 674
7:9–14 136, 360, 476
7:10–14 112
7:13 75, 134–37, 142–43, 181, 209, 211, 226, 321, 579, 599, 668, 674, 734
7:13–14 136–37, 140–41, 181, 242–43, 393, 451, 630, 673
7:14 83, 137, 214, 360, 603, 610, 634
7:18 97, 181
7:22 393, 411
7:22–27 665
7:24–26 492
7:26 112
7:26–27 313, 360
7:27 83, 97, 112, 137, 141, 181, 243, 393, 603, 634, 673
7:28 LXX 584
8:9–12 492
8:23–25 492
9:2 744
9:4–19 290, 306
9:5–9 365
9:7 361
9:15–19 LXX 546
9:16 361
9:26 130
9:26 LXX 131, 725
9:26a LXX 725
9:26b LXX 130
9:27 491
10:13 713
10:21 713
11:21–39 492
11:31 491
12:1 703, 713
12:1–3 191–92
12:2 310, 412, 697
12:2–3 200, 313
12:3 148, 198, 368, 412, 608
12:5–13 510
12:7–12 110
12:11 491

Hosea

1:6 514

1:9 514
1:11 438, 461
2:2 481
2:14ff. 74
2:14–15 424
2:19–20 361
2:23 514
6:2 62, 70, 187, 196, 212, 560, 576–77
6:2 LXX 196
6:6 593
8:5 362
10:8 734
10:14 623
11:1 189
11:1–9 102
11:1–11 280
11:3–4 189
11:8–9 181, 364–65
13:14 339
14:1–8 364

Joel
2:28 389
2:28–32 228
2:32 209, 245, 347–48, 560
3:1–21 360
3:13 92, 141–42
3:14–17 341
3:15–17 112
3:15–21 360
4:13 142

Amos
4:4–5 119
4:11 372
5:4–12 141, 631, 713
5:15 227
5:21ff. 119
9:1 832, 848, 857
9:11 635
9:11–12 241, 634, 635
9:12 635

Obadiah
21 81

Micah
2:12–13 82, 609, 695, 721
2:13 577
4:1ff. 340
4:1–3 84, 97, 123
4:1–4 182, 185, 225, 239, 719
4:1–5 287–88
4:6–8 82, 677
5:2 75, 129, 211–12, 321, 594, 596, 751
5:2–5 10
5:3 65
5:4 594, 751
5:5 445
6:5 361
6:8 119
7:6 113

Nahum
1:15 61, 70, 79, 88, 180, 349, 510, 560, 628–29

Habakkuk
2:1–4 510
2:2–4 229
2:3–4 537
2:4 107, 356–57, 376–77, 537–38
2:6–20 93

Zephaniah
1:14–18 360, 362
3:12 227
3:14–15 82

Zechariah
2:10–11 182
3:1–7 526, 713
3:1–9 476
3:2 372
3:8 73–74, 633
4:1–14 579
4:8–10a 583
6:9–15 583

6:12 633
6:12 LXX 74
6:12–13 173
9:9 135, 596
9:9–10 130, 583
11:13 596
12–14 82
12:2–13:6 83
12:10 130, 133, 210, 657, 691, 734
12:12 734
13:7 210, 576, 583, 677
13:7–9 609, 677
14:6–11 82–83
14:16–17 82, 720
14:16–19 610
14:20–21 173, 583
14:21 174

Malachi
1:11 485
2:10–11 424
2:14–15 424
2:16 120, 424
3:1 73, 77, 561, 576, 578
3:1–3 225
3:5 75
3:16 703
4:1 372
4:2 361, 374, 604–5
4:5 73, 126, 578, 626, 631
4:5–6 73
4:6 73

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew

1 64
1:1 593–94, 601, 612
1:1–16 66
1:1–2:23 66
1:1–4:22 592
1:2–2:23 594
1:18–23 214
1:18–25 65, 213–14, 601
1:20–21 601
1:21 213, 594
1:21–23 214, 612
1:22 121
1:22–23 59, 594–96, 603
1:23 59, 242, 593–94, 611
2:1 64
2:1–12 594
2:2 64
2:5–6 596
2:6 525, 751
2:7 64
2:9–10 64
2:13–23 594
2:15 121, 593, 595, 601
2:15–17 95
2:17 121
2:17–18 595–96
2:23 121
2:23b 595
3:2 78
3:3 595
3:7–9 74
3:7–10 612
3:10 74
3:13–17 244
3:14–15 603
3:15 121, 244, 604
3:17 593, 601
4:1–11 78, 117, 601

4:3 601
4:10 181, 601
4:12–17 609
4:14 121
4:14–16 595–96
4:15 609, 611
4:15–16 751
4:17 592
4:23 84, 349, 592, 595–96, 600, 612
4:23–11:30 592
5–7 595
5:1–2 595
5:1–7:29 594–95, 795
5:3 86, 105
5:3–12 92, 629
5:6 592, 604–5
5:7 754
5:9 422
5:10 592, 604
5:10–11 605
5:10–12 608
5:11 110, 503, 518, 607
5:13 114
5:13–16 413
5:14 114, 395, 412
5:14–16 778
5:15 93
5:17 121–22, 167, 182, 292, 593
5:17–19 121–22, 600, 605, 612–13
5:17–20 503, 602
5:18 94, 122
5:18–19 121, 262, 611
5:19 122
5:20 592–93, 603–5
5:21 95, 119
5:21–26 120
5:21–32 425
5:21–48 94, 119, 121
5:22 600
5:23–24 539
5:23–26 604, 820

5:27 95, 119
5:27–30 120
5:31 95
5:31–32 120
5:32 600, 767
5:33–37 120–21
5:34–35 87
5:34–37 496
5:37 110, 335
5:38 95, 119
5:38–42 120–21, 599
5:38–48 182, 231
5:39 110, 421
5:39–40 335
5:41 168
5:43 119
5:43–45 109
5:43–48 116, 120, 168, 335, 599, 605, 709
5:44 118, 299, 335, 422
5:45 104
5:48 114, 480
6:1 592, 604–5
6:2 94
6:5 94
6:6 799
6:9 10, 100, 104, 108, 775
6:9–10 181, 183
6:9–13 100, 210, 599
6:10 81, 85, 100, 209
6:11 100–101, 108–9
6:12 100–101, 109, 114, 118, 820
6:13 100–101, 110
6:14 754, 820
6:14–15 109, 114, 604
6:25–34 104, 109, 233
6:30 607
6:32 611
6:33 369, 592, 604–5
7:1 335
7:1–2 754
7:6 219–20

7:7 496
7:9 108
7:12 117, 593, 605
7:12–14 605
7:15–23 600
7:21 208
7:21–23 238, 504, 545, 603–4
7:23 605
7:28 595
7:29 595
8–9 592, 595
8:1–9:34 595, 602–3
8:5–10 106
8:5–13 181, 230, 239
8:10 607
8:11 86
8:11f. 153
8:11–12 85, 97, 181, 239, 612, 719
8:11–13 226
8:17 121, 595–96, 602
8:18–22 238, 607
8:20 93, 128, 137–38
8:21 208
8:21–22 111, 114, 128
8:23 607
8:23–27 606
8:24 607
8:25 607
8:26 607
9:4 110
9:9 597
9:9–13 597
9:13 593, 754
9:18–26 595
9:35 84, 349, 592, 595–96, 600, 612
10:1 97, 112
10:1–4 606
10:1–5a 595
10:1–42 595
10:2 112
10:3 597

10:5 239
10:5–6 181, 239, 608
10:5–10 567
10:5–16 237
10:6 97, 243
10:6–7 112
10:6–8 56
10:7 81
10:7–8 237
10:7–11 97
10:9–10 109
10:10 335, 450
10:11 112
10:14 97
10:15 549
10:16 754
10:17 600, 612
10:17–22 229
10:18 608
10:20 599
10:21–22 518
10:22 608
10:22–23 110
10:23 112, 239, 612
10:32–33 141, 608, 613
10:34–36 113
10:37 111
10:37–39 607
10:38 111
10:40–42 238
10:41 567
10:42 605
11:1 595
11:2–3 126
11:2–6 79, 85, 95, 100, 106, 111, 128, 180–81, 580, 594, 602–3, 736, 815
11:3 58, 75
11:5 94, 96, 559, 623
11:5–6 79
11:6 92
11:7–19 74, 78, 128
11:10 77

11:11 65–66, 78, 87
11:12–13 85
11:14 74, 128
11:16–19 111
11:18–19 78–79, 138, 144, 209
11:19 66, 86, 137, 167
11:20–24 106
11:23–24 612
11:25 10
11:25–26 103
11:25–27 87–88, 91–92, 118, 182, 210, 321, 603, 645, 653, 673, 733, 774, 788
11:25–30 128, 355
11:27 355, 528, 601, 611, 670
11:28–30 88, 93, 114, 122, 595, 603, 723, 736
11:29–30 754
11:30 122, 124, 603
12:1 593
12:1–16:20 592
12:6 122
12:7 593
12:9 600, 612
12:17–21 595, 602
12:18 611
12:18–21 596, 751
12:26 238
12:28 81, 85, 87
12:32 137
12:41 128, 148
12:41–42 122
12:42 92, 95, 128
12:48–50 605
12:50 754
13:1–3a 595
13:1–52 595
13:10–15 612
13:11 566
13:14–15 595
13:19 110
13:24–30 112, 595, 608
13:33 85
13:35 595

13:36–43 92, 112, 595, 608
13:38 110, 608
13:40–43 603
13:41 605
13:43 608
13:44 90, 111
13:44–46 238
13:47–50 112, 595, 603, 608
13:52 599
13:53 595
13:54 600, 612
13:55 66, 544
14:31 607
14:33 601
15:1 600
15:24 181, 239, 608
16:1 516
16:8 607
16:11–12 606
16:12 613
16:13–19 230
16:13–20 133, 602
16:16 133, 135, 226, 595, 601
16:16–17 673
16:16–19 226
16:17 602
16:17–18 133
16:17–19 133, 595, 606
16:18 133, 196, 226–27, 606
16:18–19 633
16:19 229, 606, 711
16:21 592
16:21–23 602
16:21–20:34 592
16:24–27 607
16:26 754
16:27 603
16:28 599
17:1–9 243, 550
17:5 547–48, 550
17:17 335

17:19–20 106
17:20 106–7, 229, 335, 607
17:22–23 602
18:1 595
18:1–14 607
18:1–35 595, 606–7
18:3 702
18:5 607
18:6 605
18:6–7 607
18:8–9 608
18:10 593, 605
18:12–14 603, 607
18:14 593
18:15–18 466, 608, 721
18:15–35 607
18:16 335
18:17 606–7
18:18 107, 229, 606, 694
18:18–19 226
18:21–22 118, 608
18:22 422, 603
18:23–35 91, 109–10, 114, 595, 604, 608
18:35 604
19:1 595
19:7 95, 120
19:9 600
19:10–12 423
19:11–12 111
19:12 238
19:16–22 605
19:28 97, 153, 181, 196, 226, 606, 610, 689
20:1–16 91–92, 104, 366, 604
20:17–19 602
20:19 611
20:20–23 599
20:20–28 607
20:28 139–40, 147, 151, 449, 509, 602–3, 631, 775, 820
21:1–11 602
21:1–25:46 592
21:4–5 595–96

21:12 173
21:28–32 87
21:28–22:14 592
21:32 112, 122, 547, 604
21:37 601
21:41 612
21:43 612
22:1–14 91, 111, 153, 600, 604
22:7 574, 599, 600
22:8–10 612
22:11–14 604
22:12 608
22:14 612, 754
22:34–40 94, 117, 292, 299, 605
22:37–40 335, 605
22:39–40 496, 503
23:1–33 600
23:1–36 599, 612
23:2–3 613
23:3 600, 611–12
23:4 93, 114, 603
23:5 600
23:8–10 602
23:8–12 607
23:10 94, 595
23:13 106
23:15–24 613
23:23 119, 122, 600
23:23–24 167
23:27–28 605
23:29–30 148
23:37 67, 144, 147, 182, 612
23:37–39 169, 174
23:38 612
23:39 613
24 490
24:1–4a 595
24:1–25:46 595
24:3 226, 453
24:4–6 491
24:5 675–76

24:6 491
24:7 607
24:9 608, 611
24:9–12 608
24:9–14 229
24:10–28 491
24:11–12 600, 605
24:12 491
24:14 242–43, 349, 451, 491, 513, 536, 548, 559, 593, 596, 608–11, 633
24:15 492
24:26–28 594
24:27 226, 453, 777
24:29–31 491, 610
24:30 209, 599
24:30–31 335, 338
24:31 491
24:36 335, 338, 548
24:37 453
24:37–39 226, 509
24:37–41 594
24:39 453
24:42–44 340
24:42–51 608
24:43 335
24:43–44 338
24:43–51 594
24:45–51 603
25:1–13 603
25:14–30 91, 594, 603
25:24–30 604
25:31 209
25:31–46 112, 116, 141, 143, 239, 341, 360, 595, 603–5, 613
25:32 243, 611
25:35–36 118
25:35–40 603
25:40 116, 167, 605
25:45 167, 605
25:45–46 604
26:1 595
26:1–28:20 592
26:13 243, 596

26:26 156
26:26–28 399
26:26–29 124, 151, 599, 730
26:28 156–58, 162, 603, 730, 776
26:29 152
26:31–32 609
26:32 609, 611, 695
26:42 108
26:68 566
27:6 600
27:9–10 595–96
27:25 612
27:34 754
27:43 110
27:51 630
27:54 607
27:62–66 188–89, 202, 594
27:63 170, 354
27:64 189
28:1–8 201
28:2 607
28:7 185, 609, 611, 695
28:8–10 632
28:10 185, 243, 609, 611
28:15 612
28:16 243, 609
28:16–17 242
28:16–20 42, 185, 188–89, 206, 225, 237, 242–43, 496, 560, 577, 584, 594, 609–10, 613, 619, 632, 635, 695, 737, 788, 809
28:17 188, 451
28:17b 242
28:18 242, 611
28:18–20 239, 632, 720
28:19 243–44, 451, 548, 606, 608, 611, 670
28:19–20 5, 242, 244–47, 596, 633, 753
28:19–20a 242
28:19b 611
28:20 59, 564, 593–94, 596, 609–10, 778
28:20a 611
28:20b 611

Mark

1:1 12, 59, 77, 561, 566, 575–78, 593
1:1–2 77, 560, 562
1:1–2a 575, 577
1:2 77, 561
1:2–3 77, 561
1:2a 575–76
1:2b 576
1:2b–3 577–78
1:2b–15 575
1:3 576
1:3–6 74
1:4 76, 561, 578
1:4–5 76
1:4–6 244
1:6 74
1:7 75, 578
1:7–8 75, 77, 574
1:9–11 77, 212–13, 244, 576, 578–79, 796
1:10 87, 589
1:11 77, 88, 182, 213, 525, 561, 576
1:12–13 78, 117, 574, 576, 578
1:13 561
1:14 575
1:14–15 59, 78–79, 84, 111, 180–81, 349, 575–76, 596
1:15 41, 60, 81, 114, 561, 575, 588
1:16ff. 573
1:16–20 111, 128
1:16–8:26 575, 581
1:17 238
1:19–20 649
1:21–34 576
1:21–39 568
1:23–28 579
1:25 585
1:27 589
1:29ff. 573
1:29–31 563, 579
1:32 579
1:32–34 579
1:34 585–86
1:36 573

1:40–45 579–80
1:40–3:19 568
1:44 585
1:45 587
2:1–12 95, 579–81
2:1–3:6 574
2:5 106, 230, 561, 588
2:10 79, 137–38, 578
2:14 597
2:15 132
2:15ff. 97
2:15–17 86, 366, 581
2:16 86, 132
2:17 86, 105, 754
2:18 574
2:18–20 110
2:19 706
2:19–20 462
2:20 587
2:21–22 93
2:23 132
2:27 566, 593
2:28 78, 119, 137–38, 578
3:1–6 86, 579
3:6 167–68
3:7 132
3:9 132
3:10 579
3:10–11 579
3:11 577
3:11–12 586
3:12 132, 585, 587
3:13–19 97, 181
3:14 97
3:14–15 95, 238
3:16 196, 573
3:17 649, 659
3:19 588
3:20–21 187, 563, 566, 593
3:21 66, 111, 167, 198, 225
3:21–22 144

3:22 86, 96, 167
3:22–30 574
3:28 94
3:28–29 87, 539, 787
3:28–30 589, 726
3:31 66
3:31–35 66, 97, 111, 563, 568
3:33–35 472, 588
3:35 754
4:1 132
4:1–25 568
4:1–34 574
4:3–9 85, 91, 92
4:10–12 92, 585
4:10–20 92
4:11 566
4:12 576, 612
4:13 585
4:17 587
4:26–29 85, 92, 141–42, 168, 496, 566, 593
4:28 85
4:29 142
4:30–32 85, 92, 574
4:33–34 587
4:35–41 96, 579
4:35–6:44 568
4:35–6:52 574
4:37 607
4:39 132
4:39–40 607
4:40 585, 588
4:41 581
5:1–20 579
5:7 577
5:8–10 95
5:21–43 96, 579, 581, 595
5:34 106, 230, 588
5:35–43 649
5:36 588
5:37 573
5:40 95

5:43 585, 587
6:1–6 144
6:2 132, 706
6:3 65–66, 544
6:4 66
6:4–6 167
6:5 579, 706
6:6–11 237
6:7 95, 237, 638
6:7–11 97, 574
6:7–12 226, 514
6:12–13 237
6:14 706
6:17–29 72, 73
6:18 75
6:30–31 593
6:30–44 579
6:32–44 96, 109, 579, 581, 705
6:34 132
6:34–44 164
6:41 108
6:45–52 96, 579, 705
6:49–50 581
6:50 675
6:52 585, 587
6:53–56 579
7:1–4 600
7:2 108
7:3–4 566, 574
7:6–7 576
7:6–13 119
7:11 574
7:15 119, 167, 293, 335
7:18 585
7:20 335
7:24–30 181, 239, 579
7:26 574
7:28 208
7:31 573
7:31–37 566, 579, 581
7:33–34 95

7:36 585, 587
8:1–8 164
8:1–9 579, 581
8:1–10 96, 579
8:3 509
8:12 94
8:15 168
8:21 606
8:22–26 566, 579–80, 593
8:23 708
8:26 585
8:27–28 58
8:27–30 126, 128, 132–33, 230, 581
8:27–33 132–33, 135, 143
8:27–9:40 568
8:27–10:52 575, 581
8:28 78
8:29 128–29, 132, 573, 581
8:29–30 181
8:29–33 602
8:30 132, 585–86
8:30–32 132
8:31 132, 138, 576, 584
8:31–32a 132
8:31–33 168, 579
8:32 132, 585
8:32f. 573
8:32–33 132, 144
8:32b–33 132
8:33 132, 581
8:34 128
8:34–35 538
8:34–38 112
8:35 93, 575, 710
8:36–37 149
8:36–38 169
8:37 149
8:38 141–42, 578, 603
9:1 81, 110, 588, 599
9:2ff. 573
9:2–8 578–79

9:2–10 213, 582, 649
9:5 94
9:6 582
9:7 88, 128, 182, 213–14, 576–77, 582
9:8–10 582
9:9 132, 181, 578, 582, 584–86
9:9–10 144, 582, 586–87
9:12 578, 585
9:14–29 96, 106, 579
9:23 106, 588
9:23–24 106
9:24 106
9:24–27 96
9:25 95, 132
9:29 566, 589
9:31 132, 138–40, 147–50, 161, 164, 169, 328, 349, 576, 578, 584, 777
9:31–32 579, 582
9:32 144
9:42 607
9:43–48 112
9:48 593, 754
9:48–49 566
10:2–12 424–25, 588
10:3–4 120
10:9 423
10:11–12 335
10:13–16 588
10:13–52 568
10:15 112, 183, 735
10:17–22 111, 778
10:17–27 588
10:18 104
10:19 8, 750
10:23 168
10:23–27 111–12
10:23–31 238
10:25 168
10:27 736
10:28 573
10:28–31 97
10:29 575

10:30 587–88
10:32 585
10:32–34 579, 582
10:33–34 138, 576
10:34 584
10:35–40 599
10:35–45 588, 649
10:37 689
10:38 168, 244
10:38–39 649
10:41–45 412, 588
10:42–44 93, 231, 515
10:42–45 140
10:45 40, 78, 138–40, 146–51, 161, 164, 181–82, 306, 327–29, 335, 349, 366, 396, 449–50, 509, 540, 575–76, 582, 589, 603, 631, 775, 777, 820
10:46–52 579–80
10:51 94, 574
10:52 588
11:1 573
11:1–10 131, 172, 568
11:1–16:8 128, 138, 575, 581, 583
11:9 75
11:9–10 209, 576, 583
11:11 174
11:11b 163
11:12–14 579
11:15 173
11:15ff. 119
11:15–17 67, 97, 122, 168, 172–73, 182, 583, 669, 686
11:15–13:31 568
11:16 173–74
11:17 174, 181, 240, 465
11:18 174
11:21 94
11:22 107–8, 230
11:22–24 107, 229, 589
11:23 377
11:24 107
11:25 118
11:27–30 77
11:27–33 67, 126, 172–74, 244
11:29–30 168

11:49–52 687
12:1–9 91
12:1–11 92, 210, 503, 576, 583
12:1–12 91, 110, 174, 243, 683
12:6 577
12:6–9 327
12:9 588
12:10 509
12:10–11 91, 576
12:13 168
12:13–17 168, 588
12:17 93
12:18 191
12:18–27 94, 192
12:26–27 104
12:27 199
12:28–34 94, 104, 115, 117, 183, 231, 416, 588, 709, 775, 788
12:32–34 566
12:35–37 94, 135, 141, 143, 212, 578
12:36 143, 208, 551, 575, 752
12:36–37 339
12:38–40 174, 574
13 588, 603
13:1–2 174
13:1–37 574
13:3 573, 659
13:3–37 649
13:5–6 230, 543
13:6 57, 675–76
13:8 607
13:9 608
13:9–11 714
13:9–13 588
13:10 255, 373, 491, 513, 536, 559, 575, 588–89, 593, 596, 627, 738
13:11 518, 589, 778
13:12 424
13:13 588
13:14 492, 564, 572, 669
13:14–20 623
13:17–20 424
13:19–20 518

13:21–22 110, 543
13:21–23 57, 230
13:22 563, 659, 669
13:24 659
13:24–25 576
13:24–27 491
13:26 599, 659
13:26–27 584, 596, 603
13:27 491
13:31 588
13:32 110, 588, 670
13:33–37 588
14 730
14:1 170, 574
14:1–2 172, 174, 568
14:1–16:8 574, 576
14:2 170
14:9 575
14:10 588
14:10–11 172, 174
14:10–16 568
14:12 574
14:12–16 154
14:12–31 172
14:17 155
14:17–25 67, 155
14:18 731
14:18–21 172
14:22 151, 155–56, 164
14:22–24 153, 181, 335, 399, 575, 583
14:22–25 40, 124, 147, 151, 182, 366, 589, 788
14:24 147, 151, 156–58, 161–62, 164, 181, 195, 218, 293, 329, 349, 366, 576, 730, 776
14:24–25 163
14:25 85–86, 109–10, 152–53, 156, 162, 181–82, 226, 234
14:26 163, 209
14:27 576, 583
14:27–28 609
14:28 201, 225, 575, 584, 695
14:29 573
14:30–31 581
14:32ff. 163

14:32–42 117, 172, 525, 528, 649, 654, 660, 690
14:33 573
14:36 10, 87, 96, 103, 106, 181, 210, 335, 418, 574, 589
14:43 588
14:43–47 172
14:43–52 174
14:49 575–76
14:50 177, 585
14:51 593
14:51–52 56, 566
14:53–54 177
14:53–65 172, 175, 225
14:54 201, 573
14:58 97, 110, 122, 168, 173, 531, 576, 719
14:60–64 170
14:61 88, 579
14:61ff. 134
14:61–62 129, 133–35, 143–44, 162, 175, 181, 210, 321, 327, 577–79, 583, 673, 689
14:62 110, 112, 134, 141, 208–9, 226, 530, 584, 603, 665, 675
14:64 67
14:65 566
14:66ff. 573
14:66–72 172, 177, 581, 585
15:1 172
15:1–5 175
15:2–5 172
15:6 175
15:6–14 172
15:6–15 175
15:7 175
15:15 172
15:16 255
15:16–20a 172
15:20–27 525
15:20b–21 172, 654, 660
15:21 56, 691
15:22 574
15:22–37 172
15:24ff. 127
15:26 131, 135, 176, 210
15:29 577

15:33–37 176
15:34 176, 574, 690
15:34–35 577
15:34–36 176
15:38 131, 220, 577, 583, 630
15:38–39 171
15:39 196, 577–78, 583
15:40 201
15:40–41 177, 584
15:42–47 172, 177, 196, 200–201
15:43 56
15:44 593
15:44–45 566
15:46 201, 577
15:47 201
16:1 201
16:1–2 201
16:1–4 201
16:1–8 172, 187–89, 196, 198, 201–2, 577, 584
16:2 201
16:5–7 201
16:6 202, 584
16:6c 201
16:7 201–2, 225, 573, 575, 584, 619, 695
16:8 201, 575, 584
16:9 575, 694
16:9–20 189
16:12 451
16:14 451
16:14–18 237, 244
16:15–16 243
16:16 589

Luke
1 64
1–2 802
1:1 618
1:1–2 564
1:1–4 3, 54, 59, 257, 564, 616–18, 622
1:1–4:30 568
1:2–3 618
1:3 619

1:3–4 618
1:4 470
1:5 64
1:5–25 73, 74
1:5–80 628
1:5–2:52 66, 567, 619, 625
1:5–4:13 616
1:13–17 214, 634
1:17 626
1:19 623
1:26ff. 64
1:26–38 213–14, 601
1:30–33 213
1:30–34 59
1:31 214
1:32 628
1:32–33 213, 628
1:33 626
1:34 214
1:35 214
1:36 66, 74
1:40 74
1:42 323
1:46–55 59, 190, 233, 628, 788
1:47 233
1:49 811
1:57 66
1:57–80 73
1:68 630
1:68–79 59, 73, 233, 626, 628
1:74 110
1:75 604
1:76–78 634
1:76–79 74
1:78 550, 633
1:78–79 628
1:79 452, 631
2:1–2 64
2:1–5 624
2:1–7 601
2:2 624

2:4 525
2:4–5 754
2:10 623
2:10–11 59, 631
2:11 628, 631
2:14 59, 628
2:21 66
2:29–32 59, 233, 628
2:38 630, 634
2:41 66
2:48–49 214
2:51 691
3:1–2 625
3:1–3 67, 74
3:1–20 634
3:3 78
3:7–8 74
3:7–9 612
3:9 74
3:10–14 74
3:18 623
3:22 628
3:23 66
3:23–38 66
4:1–2 632
4:1–13 78, 117
4:8 181, 628
4:12 628
4:13 628
4:14–9:50 616
4:16ff. 66
4:16–21 94, 180, 349, 559, 624, 626, 629
4:16–30 79, 128
4:18 623
4:19 335
4:21 335
4:22 66
4:28–30 66
4:31–44 568
4:43 623–24, 627
5:1–11 568

5:12–6:19 568
5:27 597
5:27–32 629
6:13–16 257
6:20 86
6:20–21 495, 503
6:20–22 559
6:20–23 86, 92, 629
6:20–26 629
6:20–49 631
6:20–8:3 568
6:20b 105
6:22 503, 518
6:22–23 509
6:24–25 106, 168, 495
6:24–26 86, 93, 629
6:27 599
6:27–28 120, 299, 337
6:27–36 116, 182, 231, 394, 416
6:28 118, 335, 422, 509
6:29–30 120, 599
6:31 117, 754
6:32–36 120, 599
6:35–36 109
6:36 114, 118, 480
6:36–38 754
6:37 335
6:46 208
6:46–49 111
7:1–10 181, 230, 239, 705
7:2–10 106
7:11–17 96, 619, 629
7:18–19 126
7:18–23 79, 95, 100, 106, 111, 128, 180–81, 349, 559, 580, 629, 736, 788, 815
7:19 58, 75
7:22 94, 96, 503, 559, 623
7:22–23 79
7:23 92
7:24–35 74, 78, 128
7:27 77
7:28 66, 78, 87, 212

7:31–35 111
7:33–34 78–79, 138, 144, 209
7:34 66, 86, 137, 167
7:36–50 629
8:1 623–24, 627
8:4–9:50 568
8:10 566
8:16 93
8:21 754
9:1–2 95
9:1–6 97, 349, 634
9:2 56, 627
9:3 109
9:6 623
9:11 627
9:26 141
9:27 627
9:35 628–29
9:41 335
9:44 139, 148–50
9:44b 139–40, 147
9:51 629
9:51–56 167
9:51–18:14 568
9:51–19:27 616, 629
9:52–56 649
9:54 659
9:55–56 629
9:57–62 238, 629
9:58 93, 128, 137–38, 567
9:59 208
9:59–60 111, 114
9:59–62 128
9:60 627
10:1–12 238, 566, 634, 722
10:2–12 237
10:3 754
10:5–7 567
10:7 335, 450, 467
10:9 237
10:12–15 612

10:13 706
10:13–15 106, 111
10:18 78, 96, 476, 715
10:20 703
10:21 10, 103, 628
10:21–22 87–88, 92, 118, 182, 210, 321, 602, 645, 653, 733, 796
10:22 528
10:25–28 91, 94, 167, 629
10:25–37 117, 619, 709
10:27 628
10:29–37 91, 94, 167, 629
10:30–37 90, 116, 118
10:36 560
10:38–42 708
11:1–2 103
11:2 10, 85, 87, 100–101, 103–4, 108, 181, 183, 209, 418, 775
11:2–4 100, 210, 599, 619
11:3 100, 108–9
11:3–8 109
11:4 100, 109, 114, 118
11:20 81, 85, 87, 96, 100, 111, 114, 626, 629
11:31 92, 95, 128
11:41 335, 338
11:42 119
11:42–52 612
11:52 106
12:8 142
12:8–9 112, 141–42, 226, 476, 630, 713
12:10 137
12:13–15 629
12:13–21 619
12:22–32 104, 233
12:32 97, 112, 226, 335, 411, 634, 665
12:33 503
12:33–34 629
12:35 509
12:35–38 730
12:39–40 567
12:42 509
12:49–51 112
12:50 244

12:51 613
12:51–53 113
13:1–5 111
13:3 87
13:6–9 110–11
13:10–17 629
13:18–21 567
13:20–21 85
13:22 629
13:28 97, 612
13:28–29 85, 181, 719
13:29 86, 153, 226
13:31–33 128, 144, 147, 164, 168–69, 629
13:31–35 167
13:33 128, 630, 820
13:34 67, 144, 147, 182, 634
13:34–35 169, 174, 630
14:12–14 629
14:15 108–9
14:15–24 111, 153, 599, 600
14:21 629
14:25–35 629
14:26 111
14:27 111
15:1–2 97
15:1–7 111
15:2 79, 86, 104, 114, 167, 335, 366
15:3–7 86, 629
15:4–7 91
15:8–10 86, 619, 629
15:11–32 86, 90–92, 104, 111, 366, 619, 629
15:31–32 104
15:32 96
16:1–8 111
16:10–12 754
16:13 754
16:16 59, 74, 78, 85, 559, 623, 626–27
16:18 120, 424
16:19–31 91, 495, 503, 619, 629, 708
16:22 196
16:23–24 512

17:6 107, 229
17:11 629
17:11–19 629
17:16 239
17:20 81
17:20–21 85, 110
17:21 81, 114, 569, 626, 628–29, 673, 775
17:22–37 110
17:26–27 509
18:1–8 91
18:8 141
18:9–14 104, 333, 366, 619
18:11–12 105
18:14 104, 366
18:15–43 568
18:18–23 629
18:24–30 629
18:31 629
18:31–34 630
19:1–10 86, 97, 111, 619, 629
19:1–28 568
19:2–10 366
19:10 105, 111, 629
19:11–27 627
19:28–21:38 616
19:29–38 568
19:39–44 568
19:41–44 630
19:43–44 574, 623
19:45–46 173
19:45–21:33 568
20:1 624
20:19–23 694
20:20–26 337
20:22 337, 425
20:25 335
21:6 627
21:8 675
21:11 607
21:12–19 229
21:20 258

21:20–24 623
21:24 258
21:27 209, 631
21:34–38 568
22 153, 730
22:1–13 568
22:1–24:53 616
22:3 628
22:14–20 151, 155, 533
22:14–24:53 568
22:15 154, 509
22:15–16 156
22:15–18 730
22:15–20 124, 399
22:16 152, 156, 162, 402
22:18 152, 156
22:19 157, 164, 234, 236, 401, 618, 664, 672, 698, 730, 776, 802
22:19–20 195, 335, 337, 399, 509, 630–31
22:19b–20 151
22:20 155–57, 162–63, 329, 776
22:21–38 157, 163
22:24–27 140, 631
22:26 515, 523, 631
22:26–27 140
22:27 396, 709, 730
22:28–30 109, 112, 153, 181, 257, 335, 665
22:29–30 196, 226, 476, 634
22:30 97, 235
22:31–32 169, 630
22:31–34 144
22:32 23, 110, 632
22:35–38 150, 171
22:37 150, 630
22:39–40 619
22:39–46 628
22:42 418
22:43–44 171
22:50 619
22:64 566
22:66 176
22:69 631

23:4 198
23:6–12 168
23:13 337
23:14 171
23:33–34 631
23:33–46 169
23:34 116, 171, 619, 630, 709
23:35 337
23:39–43 171
23:43 619, 630
23:44–45 630
23:45–47 631
23:46 171, 619, 630–31
23:47 171, 196, 630
23:50–54 201
23:53 201
24 337, 619, 632
24:1–11 694
24:5–6 202
24:9–53 567
24:12 694
24:13–35 188, 235, 632
24:13–52 632
24:20 337
24:21 132, 177, 609
24:23 202
24:25ff. 229
24:25–27 230, 281, 630, 632, 797
24:26 509
24:26–27 59, 207
24:27 8, 752
24:30–31 207
24:33–35 187
24:33–53 188–89, 257
24:34 188–89, 192, 194–96, 225, 632, 788
24:36ff. 188
24:36–43 188, 197, 619, 632, 694
24:44 8, 121, 281, 744
24:44ff. 229
24:44–45 171, 207, 230
24:44–46 630

24:44–47 59, 632
24:44–48 797
24:44–49 627
24:44–53 617
24:46 509
24:47 626, 633, 635
24:47–48 624, 626, 694
24:47–49 632, 634
24:48 515
24:49 229, 453, 632
24:50–51 633
24:52 628

John

1:1 172, 454, 529–30, 646, 655–57, 670, 680–81, 684–86, 704
1:1–3 680
1:1–5 679, 683, 690
1:1–15 683
1:1–18 9, 215, 321, 438, 679–83, 738, 751–52, 788, 795
1:1c 682
1:2 681
1:3 681
1:4 656, 681
1:4–5 680
1:5 681, 683, 686, 690
1:6 681
1:6–8 74, 679–80, 683–84
1:7 681, 702
1:8 647, 681
1:9 656, 680–81, 683
1:9–12 683
1:9–12c 679
1:10 681
1:10–12c 680
1:11 681, 684, 686
1:12 682, 689, 702
1:12–13 382, 684, 710
1:12d 682
1:12d–13 679–80, 683
1:13 682
1:14 65, 215, 323–24, 439, 646, 657, 665, 671, 679–80, 682, 684–86, 689, 693, 704, 775
1:14–16 680

1:14–18 683
1:15 74, 679–80, 684
1:16 679–80, 682–84
1:17 10, 605, 667, 674, 680, 682
1:17–18 438, 679, 683–84, 704
1:18 454, 530, 647, 649, 655, 667, 670–71, 680, 682, 684–85, 690, 695, 726, 775
1:18–28 153
1:19–28 74, 684
1:19–36 153
1:19–51 674
1:20 673–74
1:21 674
1:22 647
1:25 673–74
1:29 40, 68, 153, 156, 511, 657, 672, 686, 688, 738
1:29–34 77
1:31–34 728
1:32–34 77, 244
1:33 647, 711
1:34 670, 674
1:35 649–50
1:35–40 78, 244
1:36 153, 156, 657, 672, 686, 688, 738
1:38 94
1:40 649, 654
1:41 673–74, 706, 719, 774
1:41–42 647, 706
1:42 654
1:44–45 647
1:45 66, 706
1:46–47 647
1:49 670, 674, 706
1:50 702
1:51 674
2 58
2–11 693
2:1–11 673, 705
2:1–12 96
2:4 688
2:6 705
2:8 674

2:11 673, 702, 705–6
2:13 67
2:13–17 97, 172–73
2:13–22 168, 690, 719
2:14–15 173
2:14–22 686, 735
2:16–17 647
2:17 173, 577, 587, 666, 686, 694, 714
2:18 647
2:18–22 131, 173
2:19 168, 173, 687
2:20 647, 661
2:20–22 719
2:21 173, 439, 577, 647, 689, 719
2:22 173, 281, 587, 652, 666, 694, 714, 734, 752
2:23 673, 702, 705
3:1 720
3:3 673, 702
3:5 453, 697, 702, 710, 724–25, 727–28, 735, 738
3:5–6 778, 795
3:10 720
3:12 702
3:13 674–75
3:14 172, 666, 674–75, 687–88, 734–35, 797
3:14–15 673
3:14–16 710
3:14–18 738
3:15 702
3:15–16 664
3:16 172, 667, 670–71, 680, 686–88, 702–3, 708, 710, 738, 751, 777, 788
3:16–17 319, 327, 677
3:16–18 737
3:17 322, 670–71
3:18 664, 670, 680, 702
3:18–21 697
3:19 647
3:19–21 686
3:22 244, 727
3:22–24 729
3:23 661
3:24 652

3:27 719
3:28 674
3:29 647, 706
3:34 704, 711, 795–97
3:35 671
3:35–36 670
3:36 710
4 674
4:1–2 244, 727, 729
4:1–3 78
4:2 652, 729
4:5 647
4:5–6 661
4:6 647, 666
4:6–7 647
4:7–42 239
4:9 647
4:10 657
4:13–14 657
4:14 647, 710
4:19 674
4:22–26 689
4:23 795
4:24 711, 719, 778
4:25 673–74, 706
4:25–26 674
4:26 675
4:29 674
4:34 118, 666, 690
4:41–42 702
4:42 674
4:45 404, 673, 705
4:46–54 239, 673, 705
4:48 702, 706
4:50 708
4:50–53 705
4:53 702
4:54 673, 705–6
5 652
5:1–16 673, 705
5:2 661

5:5–7 705
5:8 708
5:17–18 670
5:18 655–56, 670
5:19 671
5:19–23 670
5:21 670–71
5:23 666
5:24 664, 702–3, 710, 731
5:24–25 490
5:24–27 697
5:24–29 360, 686, 737
5:25 670
5:26 670–71, 693
5:26–27 670
5:26–29 673, 677
5:27 674–75
5:28–29 310, 664, 686, 693, 697, 707
5:29 677
5:30 647, 671
5:36 671
5:37 666
5:39 281, 734–35, 752, 774
5:44 702
5:45 734, 738
5:45–47 684
6 652, 677, 728, 730
6:1–13 705
6:1–15 673, 705, 707
6:2 673, 705
6:4 67, 647
6:5–6 705
6:9 646
6:11 646
6:14 673
6:14–15 706
6:16–21 673, 705, 708
6:19 705
6:20 675
6:22–59 152, 707
6:24–25 731

6:26 673
6:26–58 730
6:27 674, 710
6:29 647
6:32–35 677
6:35 645–46, 657, 676–77
6:36 702
6:37 702–3, 719
6:37–39 736
6:38 647
6:39 647, 691, 693, 707, 719, 734, 797
6:39–40 697
6:40 647
6:41 676, 731
6:42 65–66, 215
6:44 655, 693, 697, 702–3, 707, 709, 719
6:44–46 752
6:45 667
6:46 671, 680
6:47 702, 710
6:48 646, 676–77, 707
6:48–58 687
6:50 647
6:51 216, 676–77, 707
6:51–58 707, 728, 730–31, 738
6:51–66 731
6:51a 657
6:51b 152
6:51b–58 727
6:51c 687, 730
6:52 731
6:52–58 67, 151–53, 157
6:53 674, 730, 778
6:53–56 707, 727, 731
6:54 697, 731
6:56 719
6:56–57 731
6:57 671
6:59–61 731
6:60 703
6:62 674–75

6:62–63 738
6:63 707, 711, 731, 736, 795
6:64 702–3
6:65 702, 719
6:66 703, 731
6:66–71 656
6:67–68 707
6:68 654, 731, 738
6:68–69 704
6:69 704
7:1 656
7:2 661
7:3 706
7:5 187, 198, 225
7:7 686
7:12 170
7:15 94
7:16–17 5, 789
7:17 704
7:26 674
7:27 674
7:29 671
7:30 688
7:31 674
7:37–38 703
7:37–39 657, 702
7:41 674
7:42 674
8:6 66
8:8 66
8:12 645, 657, 676–77, 686
8:16 666
8:20 688
8:22–30 686
8:24 645, 657, 676, 678–79
8:28 172, 645, 657, 666, 671, 673–76, 678–79, 687–88, 735
8:29 666
8:31 702, 708, 738
8:31–32 704
8:35–36 670
8:38 680

8:41 720
8:42 671
8:44 656, 720
8:46 702
8:47 703
8:48–59 686
8:51 647
8:52 647
8:56–58 321
8:58 212, 215, 645, 676, 678–79
9:1 705
9:1–7 673, 705
9:3 706
9:5 676, 686
9:6 708
9:6–7 647
9:8–41 673, 705
9:16 673, 706
9:22 655, 720
9:30 647
9:33 671
9:35 674
9:38 702
10 677
10:3 703, 718–19
10:3–4 609, 721
10:4 686, 695
10:6 587, 645–46
10:7 676–78
10:9 657, 676–78
10:11 645–46, 657, 676–77, 687–88, 719, 777
10:14 646, 657, 676–77, 704
10:14–15 718
10:15 216, 687–88, 719, 777
10:16 655, 686, 703, 717–20, 737
10:17 686–87, 688, 692–93
10:17–18 671, 693
10:18 646, 672, 687–88
10:23 661
10:24 674
10:25–26 702

10:27 703, 718
10:27–29 703
10:28 647, 710
10:30 664, 671, 678–79, 694, 709, 735, 738, 775
10:31 656
10:31–39 686
10:33 670
10:34–36 734
10:36 670–71
10:38 671, 719
11 708
11:1 661
11:1–44 96, 673, 705, 707
11:4 670
11:4–6 707
11:8 656
11:13 647
11:15 702
11:16 695
11:17 707
11:20–27 707
11:25 645, 671, 676–77, 694
11:25–26 698, 707–8, 788
11:26 702
11:27 670, 674, 702, 704, 708
11:32–35 666
11:38–44 708
11:39 705, 707
11:40 702, 704, 706
11:40–44 673, 693
11:42 671, 702
11:45–48 706
11:45–53 172
11:47–48 706
11:50 40
11:52 689, 720–21, 734, 737
11:55 67
12:1 661
12:16 173, 666, 714, 734, 752
12:17–18 693
12:18 673

12:23 528, 674–75, 688
12:24 687
12:25 710
12:27 666, 688
12:27–28 672
12:27–33 654, 690, 735
12:27–36 660
12:28 688–89
12:31 686, 689
12:31–32 687, 715
12:32 172, 673, 687–88, 703, 709, 720, 734–35, 738
12:32–33 666
12:33 687
12:34 172, 674–75, 687–88, 734
12:37–40 702, 706
12:38–41 734, 752
12:39 702
12:41 510
12:42 655, 720
12:45 666, 671
12:46 686
12:49–50 672
13 152–53, 728, 730
13:1 647, 688, 708–9
13:1–17 709, 735
13:1–30 67, 151
13:2–11 709
13:7 666
13:10 153, 173, 707, 709, 730
13:12–17 709
13:15 709
13:16 666
13:17 695
13:18 731
13:19 645, 657, 676, 678–79, 702
13:21 666
13:23 58, 648–49, 685
13:23f. 69
13:23–24 652
13:23–26 654
13:26 153, 173, 730

13:31 674, 688–89
13:31–32 675
13:33 721
13:34 709
13:34–35 416, 605, 723
14:1 702
14:2 664, 697, 710
14:2–3 695, 697, 721, 738
14:6 10, 645, 660, 664, 676–78, 719, 788
14:7 680
14:9 671, 680, 704
14:9–10 704, 719
14:10–11 671
14:11 702
14:13 670
14:15 709
14:15–17 58, 778
14:16 646, 694, 712, 714
14:16–17 660, 711–12
14:17 713, 795
14:18 712
14:18–21 694
14:19 738
14:20 671, 719
14:21 775
14:23 712, 775
14:23–24 703
14:25–26 58, 587, 653, 711, 778
14:26 5, 23, 58, 153, 173, 281, 582, 599, 646, 653, 660, 664, 667, 694, 696, 712–14, 731, 752, 778, 795, 797
14:29 702
14:31 652, 672, 708
15 718
15:1 645–46, 676, 678, 718
15:1–6 717
15:1–8 633, 655, 684, 718
15:1–16:33 652
15:4–5 718
15:5 676, 678, 718
15:8 647
15:9 687, 718
15:9–10 709

15:12 416
15:12–13 709
15:13 40, 216, 687, 708, 777
15:13–15 172
15:15 717–18, 733
15:17 416
15:18 686
15:19 667
15:20 656
15:24 680
15:26 58, 646, 712–14, 728, 795
15:26–27 711–12, 714, 778
15:27 714
16:1–2 710
16:2 518, 655–56, 671, 710, 712, 720
16:4b–15 711
16:5–11 58, 720
16:6–11 660
16:7 453, 646, 712
16:7–11 714
16:7–15 778
16:8 713–14
16:8–11 536, 608, 712, 714, 738
16:9 714
16:10 451, 686, 688, 714–15
16:11 686, 689, 715
16:12ff. 587
16:12–13 712
16:12–15 58
16:13 58, 653, 660, 664, 697, 712–14, 733, 795, 797
16:14–15 712
16:16–22 694
16:20 694
16:22 694
16:25 645–46
16:25ff. 587
16:27 702
16:29 645–46
16:33 667, 695, 704, 712, 714, 723
17 687
17:1 670, 686, 688–89

17:1–5 692
17:1–26 652, 733
17:2 702
17:2–3 664
17:2–7 719
17:3 671, 710
17:4 690
17:5 451, 686, 688
17:6 655, 667, 702
17:6–8 704
17:8 671, 703–4
17:9 712
17:11 671, 775
17:12 121, 734
17:15–21 710
17:17 704
17:18 671, 694, 714, 720
17:18–20 655
17:19 687, 689, 721, 777
17:20 702, 712, 720, 737
17:20–23 502, 718, 720
17:20–24 695
17:21 664, 671
17:22 775
17:22–23 708
17:23 671, 718–19
17:24 664, 686, 698, 708, 710, 738
17:25 671
18:1 652, 661, 686, 690
18:1–2 619
18:3 691
18:4 697
18:5–6 675, 691
18:8 691, 712
18:8–9 734
18:9 121, 652, 691, 703, 719, 797
18:10 619
18:11 672
18:12 691
18:12–13 691
18:12–18 692

18:13 661
18:13–24 175
18:14 40
18:15 56, 649
18:15–16 649, 651–52
18:15–18 654, 661
18:19–23 170, 691
18:24 691
18:27 69
18:28 67, 672
18:28–38 691
18:30 686
18:31 175, 734
18:32 652, 734
18:36 172, 697
18:36–37 450, 673
18:37 452, 661, 702
18:40 175
19:5 691
19:7 670, 686
19:13 661, 692
19:14 67, 175, 672, 691
19:16b–37 686
19:17 654, 661, 691, 735
19:19–20 673, 691
19:21–22 691
19:24 121
19:25–27 56, 177, 651–52, 654, 691
19:26 58, 69, 649
19:26–27 66, 648
19:28 666
19:28–30 690–91
19:30 40, 172, 619, 631, 689–90, 734
19:31 67, 175
19:31–37 661, 691–92
19:34 666, 727
19:34–35 691, 707, 728, 738
19:34–37 691
19:34b–35 727
19:35 54, 652, 661, 702, 714
19:36 40, 68, 156, 511, 672

19:37 657
19:38 720
19:38–42 686, 690, 692
19:39 720
19:41 661, 692
19:42 67, 692
20 692–93, 695, 706
20:1–13 188
20:1–18 187–89, 694
20:1–29 188, 694, 705
20:1–21:23 632
20:2 58, 660
20:2ff. 652
20:2–10 648
20:3–10 654, 694
20:4 69
20:6–7 189
20:8 69, 649, 660, 695, 702
20:9 281, 666, 714, 734
20:11–18 198
20:11–29 632
20:11–21:14 187
20:13 189
20:15 203
20:15–17 189
20:17 198–99
20:19 207, 660
20:19–23 188, 197, 225, 237, 242, 619, 694
20:19–29 738
20:20 685, 693–94
20:21 207, 655, 671, 714, 720
20:21–23 710, 737, 778
20:22 653, 660, 729
20:22–23 711
20:23 606
20:24 695
20:24ff. 188
20:24–29 188–89, 197, 694–95
20:25 702
20:26 207
20:27 694

20:27–29 189
20:28 454, 655, 695, 735
20:29 695, 702, 704, 738
20:30 3, 673, 705
20:30–31 5, 60, 596, 693, 704–6
20:31 652, 670, 702, 734, 738
21 197, 225, 235, 693, 695
21:1 451, 661
21:1–14 188, 207
21:1–23 206
21:2 649, 651, 695
21:2ff. 652
21:6 674
21:7 58, 649, 651, 654
21:9 646
21:10 646
21:13 646
21:14 451
21:15 668
21:15–17 507, 654, 718
21:15–19 545
21:18 650
21:18–19 507, 654
21:20 58, 648
21:20–23 648
21:20–24 654
21:20–25 714
21:21–22 69
21:22–23 650
21:23 650, 721, 733
21:23–25 655
21:24 648–49, 660–61, 714
21:24–25 5, 54, 596, 652, 659, 722, 733–34
21:25 3
22:8 656
22:13 674

Acts

1 632
1:1 617, 620
1:1–5 620
1:1–8 627

1:1–11 189, 632
1:1–14 617
1:1–26 206
1:2 257, 451, 454, 638
1:3 627, 632
1:3–8 624, 694
1:3–11 188
1:4 632
1:4–5 634
1:5 632
1:6 243, 609–10, 625, 635
1:6–7 620, 632
1:6–8 753
1:6–8:1a 620
1:7 548, 627–28
1:7–8 778
1:8 229, 515, 560, 626–27, 632–34, 782
1:9 633
1:11 451, 454, 633
1:12–26 225
1:13 154, 257
1:13–14 231
1:14 225
1:15 225, 231
1:15–26 97, 395, 610, 634
1:21–26 238, 257
1:23 760
1:26 638, 760
2 227
2–5 634
2:1–4 231, 627
2:1–13 228, 242
2:1–21 229
2:2 225
2:9–11 523
2:10 185
2:11 228, 682, 811
2:14–36 229, 243
2:14–39 620
2:17 389
2:18 389

2:21 215, 245
2:22–36 229
2:29 829
2:31ff. 188
2:32–36 189
2:33 144, 389, 453, 632–33, 689, 778
2:34–35 208, 665
2:34–36 195
2:36 14, 59, 126, 144, 184–85, 199, 203, 206, 209–10, 212, 216, 225, 230, 329, 628, 633
2:36–40 626
2:37–41 245
2:37–47 246
2:38 210, 215, 243–46, 631–32
2:38–39 229
2:38–41 243
2:41 228, 246
2:41–47 247
2:42 56, 129, 186, 230–31, 233, 236–37, 399
2:42ff. 232
2:42–47 231
2:43 237
2:44 229, 377
2:45 231
2:46 225, 231, 233–36, 399
2:46–47 235
3:1 231
3:1–10 229, 237
3:6 210, 215, 631
3:12 456
3:12–26 620
3:12–4:31 229
3:13 512, 630
3:15 538, 629
3:16 215, 229–30
3:17 326, 337
3:17–26 752
3:21 342, 551, 625–26, 633
3:22 582
3:26 512, 630
4:1–22 168
4:4 228

4:7 215
4:8 627
4:8–12 620
4:10–12 59
4:11–12 626
4:12 215, 613, 631, 774
4:13 573
4:25 752
4:27 630
4:30 630
4:32 229, 377
4:32ff. 232
4:32–35 231
4:32–5:11 412
4:36 206, 238, 525
4:36–37 232, 524, 820
5:1–11 229
5:6 140, 631
5:9 229
5:10 515
5:11 226
5:12 229, 237
5:12–16 231
5:14 229–30
5:29 426
5:29–32 620
5:30 178, 216, 332
5:30–31 188
5:31 538, 629, 631–33, 689
5:32 229, 778
5:35–37 178
5:36 72
5:37 64, 72, 624–25
5:41 518
5:42 624
6:1 8, 185, 241, 598
6:1ff. 232
6:1–2 140, 396
6:1–4 514
6:1–7 205
6:5 206, 239, 241

6:7 820
6:8 627
6:8–15 276
6:8–7:60 168, 239, 276
6:9 8, 523
6:11 240
6:11–14 240, 318
6:13 240
6:13–14 206, 221
7:1–53 240
7:2–53 633
7:26 108
7:37 128, 582
7:48–50 240
7:51–53 634
7:53 296, 535
7:54–60 171, 779
7:54–8:3 185
7:55–56 240
7:56 137, 276
7:58 259
7:59–60 171, 631
8:1 226
8:1–3 274
8:1b–9:43 620
8:3 226, 258, 276
8:4 624
8:4–8 206, 240
8:4–13 239, 634
8:12 229, 244, 246, 624, 627
8:12–17 246
8:14 276
8:14–17 206, 239, 241, 635
8:16 246
8:25 624
8:26–39 240, 246
8:26–40 239
8:29 229
8:30–35 59
8:32–35 630
8:34 150

8:35 624
8:36 245–46
8:36–38 244
8:37 245
8:38 246
8:38–39 245
8:39 229, 245
8:40 240, 624
9:1–2 274, 276
9:1–22 257
9:1–29 194, 258, 274, 636
9:2 276
9:3 197, 277
9:3ff. 188, 197
9:4–5 57
9:17–18 244
9:18 246
9:19–22 278
9:23–25 278
9:26–31 276
9:27 206, 238, 497, 524
9:29 241
9:30 259
9:31 226
9:42 230
10 180, 634
10:1–48 239, 244, 246
10:1–11:18 241
10:1–12:25 620
10:2 11, 456
10:7 456
10:19 229
10:22 11
10:34–43 59, 61–62, 69–70, 126, 180, 187, 560, 620
10:36 70, 80, 88, 180, 529, 560, 624, 628–29, 685
10:36–38 572
10:36–43 79, 96, 167, 560–62, 574–75, 581, 626, 628
10:37 80
10:37–38 628
10:37–39 560–61
10:37–40 70

10:38 560–61, 579, 628
10:39 167, 178, 332
10:39ff. 188
10:39–40 216, 329
10:39–42 638
10:39–43 187, 515
10:40 451
10:41 198, 207, 510, 632, 634
10:41–42 560
10:42 560, 631
10:43 229–30, 281, 560–61, 631
10:44 245
10:44–48 245
10:45 389
10:47 246
10:48 244–46, 729
11:17 230, 245
11:18 632
11:19 240–41
11:19–20 239
11:19–21 240, 619, 634
11:19–26 206
11:20 206, 240–41, 245, 624
11:21 230
11:22 206
11:22–26 206, 241, 259, 635
11:22–30 238
11:24 527
11:25–26 247, 279, 634
11:26 185, 206, 215, 299, 334, 432
11:27–28 206
11:27–30 206, 233, 242
11:28 57, 229, 622
11:30 395, 471
12:1–3 625
12:1–17 241, 395
12:1–19 233, 598
12:2 650, 779
12:12 154, 231, 233, 572
12:12–17 231, 509
12:17 496, 506

12:25 206, 572
13:1 336, 470
13:1–2 395
13:1–14:27 256
13:1–14:28 259
13:1–15:35 620
13:2–3 257, 638
13:2–14:28 634
13:3 635
13:5 510, 572
13:9 627
13:13 572
13:14–52 256
13:15 523, 525
13:16 11
13:16–41 257, 620, 636
13:22–23 212
13:23 631
13:23ff. 337
13:26 11
13:27 326
13:27–28 337
13:29 178, 201
13:29ff. 188
13:29–30 201
13:31 194
13:32 624
13:32ff. 337
13:32–37 212
13:38 631
13:38–39 626, 631, 638
13:43 11
13:47 256, 636–38
14:1–6 256
14:4 257, 638
14:6 256
14:6–20 256
14:7 624
14:8–10 638
14:12 140
14:14 257, 638

14:15 624
14:20–21 256
14:21 624
14:23 395, 469, 471, 495, 515, 635
15 634, 650
15:1 496
15:1ff. 206
15:1–2 242, 256, 496
15:1–29 242, 636
15:1–35 257, 637
15:2 233
15:2–6 395, 471
15:4 233
15:5 496
15:6 233
15:6–12 508
15:6–29 635
15:7 559, 575, 623
15:13 66
15:13–21 497
15:14 634
15:15–18 514
15:16–17 241, 634
15:19–20 256
15:19–21 634
15:20 259, 421, 497
15:22 140, 395, 432, 507, 631
15:22–23 471
15:22–40 206
15:24 496
15:27 432, 507
15:28 229
15:28–29 256
15:29 259, 421, 497
15:32 432
15:35 334, 624
15:36ff. 256
15:36–39 524
15:36–40 259
15:36–41 336, 385
15:36–18:20 255

15:36–19:20 620
15:37 572
15:39 572
15:40 432, 507
16:1–3 432, 523
16:2–3 637–38
16:3 636
16:4 395, 471
16:6 255
16:7 229
16:10 622, 624
16:10–17 257, 622, 636
16:11 108
16:14 11
16:14–15 245–46
16:15 246
16:18 638
16:25 432, 507
16:30–34 245–46
16:33 246
17:4 11
17:14 432
17:17 11
17:18 624
17:22–31 303, 621
17:23 456
17:30–31 626
17:31 631
18:1–3 425, 495
18:2 432, 523
18:3 260, 638
18:5 432
18:7 11, 193
18:7–11 321, 334, 399, 432
18:8 245–46, 420
18:11 193
18:12 625
18:12–17 258
18:17 420
18:18–19 420, 495
18:23 255

18:24 524, 527
18:24–26 495
18:25 618
19:1 524
19:1–4 78
19:1–7 74, 244, 729
19:3 246
19:5 246
19:8 627
19:8–10 432
19:9 648
19:9–10 321, 334
19:11–12 638
19:13–17 499
19:21–21:14 620
19:22 140
20:4 423
20:5–15 257, 622, 636
20:7 233–34, 236
20:7ff. 401
20:7–12 247
20:11 233, 236
20:15 108
20:17 471
20:17–38 395, 636
20:18–35 636
20:21 451, 632
20:22–23 627
20:22–25 623
20:24 559, 575, 623
20:25 627
20:27–28 469
20:28 470–71, 515, 631, 635
20:28–31 636
20:34 638
20:35 335, 618, 753
21:1–18 257, 622, 636
21:8 239, 470
21:10–11 57
21:15ff. 258
21:15–26:32 620

21:18 66, 108, 395, 471
21:18–25 497
21:18–26 502
21:21 497, 618
21:23–24 638
21:23–25 497
21:24 618
21:26 497
21:27–28:31 392, 502
21:38 72
21:39 425
22:3 20, 251, 258–59, 281, 334, 425
22:3–21 194, 258, 274, 636
22:4–16 257
22:6 197, 277
22:6ff. 188, 197
22:7 57
22:14 198
22:15 636
22:24–29 425
23:23–26:32 494
23:24–26 625
23:31–26:32 432
24:14 636
24:22 625
25:8 636
25:9–12 425
26:3ff. 197
26:9–18 257
26:9–20 194, 258, 274
26:9–23 636
26:10–11 276
26:11 276
26:12ff. 188
26:13 197, 277
26:14–15 57
26:16 194, 636
26:16–18 256, 636, 638
26:17–18 638
26:18 257, 631, 636
26:20 632

26:26 624
27:1–28:16 257, 622, 636
27:1–28:31 620
28:16–31 432, 494
28:17 636
28:23 627
28:23–28 626
28:26–27 585
28:28 635
28:30–31 623
28:31 627

Romans

1–11 408
1:1 12, 210, 261, 279–80, 282, 347, 638, 718
1:1–2 61, 281, 356
1:1–4 357, 510, 558, 738, 774, 776, 788
1:1–5 325, 346–47, 351, 489, 492
1:1–6 280, 320, 343–44, 752
1:1–7 257–58, 261, 273–74, 278–79
1:2 207, 281, 347, 753
1:3 308–9
1:3–4 66, 77, 143, 189, 207, 211–12, 219, 319, 323–24, 337–38, 347, 351, 452, 528, 584, 632
1:4 59, 188, 196, 210–12, 277, 304, 318, 338
1:4–5 277
1:5 320, 346–48, 379, 385
1:7 411
1:8 302, 451
1:9 310, 495
1:10 647
1:13 219
1:16 12, 279, 377, 575, 776
1:16–17 243, 280, 344, 351, 356–57, 359, 362, 369, 373, 410, 452, 559, 738, 795
1:17 265, 271, 357, 368–70, 376 538
1:18 362, 862
1:18–20 289
1:18–23 355
1:18–32 9, 313–14, 336, 453
1:18–3:20 314
1:18–3:31 257
1:19–25 303–4
1:20 302, 304

1:21 311
1:24 307, 311, 313
1:24–31 303
1:25 302, 304
1:26 313
1:28 303–4, 311, 313, 409, 413
1:28–31 413
1:29–32 754
2 358
2:1–11 342
2:1–16 341–42, 360, 416
2:4 290, 331, 548
2:5 311, 362, 862
2:8 362
2:9 311
2:9–10 305
2:12–13 292–93, 311
2:12–16 289, 614
2:13 295
2:14 119
2:14–15 289, 306, 412
2:14b 293
2:15 310
2:16 210, 313, 341, 358–59, 372, 410, 417, 786–87
2:17–18 285
2:17–20 288–89
2:17–24 305–6
2:18 413
2:20 261
2:21–22 289
2:23 312, 314
2:25 638
3:1–2 305
3:2 288, 825
3:3 368, 455
3:4 290, 311, 315, 363
3:5 265, 368, 370
3:5–8 787
3:8 314, 325, 358, 382, 386, 417, 496, 545, 786
3:9–18 272
3:19 293, 302

3:19–20 441
3:20 270–71, 292, 294–95, 309, 360, 363, 369, 375, 381, 499
3:20–31 298
3:21 26, 281, 293, 331, 368–70, 781, 837
3:21–22 369
3:21–26 40, 265, 320, 344, 351, 359, 369–70, 738, 788
3:21–28 452
3:22 210, 331, 368, 370, 373, 378
3:23 331, 370
3:23–26 368, 540
3:24 323, 363, 398, 440, 453, 800
3:24–25 810
3:24–26 323, 328–30, 332, 402, 455, 811
3:25 131, 183, 219–21, 311, 330–31, 368–69, 533, 688, 810, 824–27, 836–37, 840, 845, 848–63
3:25–26 218–20, 222, 240, 261, 265, 279, 298, 319, 366, 369–70, 440, 777
3:25–26a 330–31, 370, 810, 820, 863
3:25a 859
3:25b 856
3:26 331, 363, 369, 378, 781
3:26b 331–32
3:26c 370
3:27 314, 415
3:28 271, 360, 363, 366, 374–75, 379, 498–500, 703, 738
3:30 280, 331, 363, 373, 392
3:31 638
4 10, 376, 378
4:1 811
4:1–25 498, 500
4:2 314
4:3 364
4:3–5 364, 378–79, 538
4:4 374, 381
4:5 251, 260–61, 267, 277, 320, 344, 359, 363–64, 368, 376, 417, 501, 519, 613, 638, 703, 737, 786, 788, 800, 811
4:9 364
4:9–12 379
4:11 364, 498
4:15 293, 312
4:17 10, 192, 199, 344, 368, 498, 777, 788
4:18 379–80
4:20–22 379
4:22–24 364

4:23–24 281
4:24 10, 192, 199, 280, 379, 694, 777
4:24–25 195, 329, 344
4:25 59, 139, 151, 164, 188, 194–96, 207, 216–17, 221–22, 261, 279, 311, 319–20, 328–29, 332, 338, 343, 366, 368, 381, 508, 776
5:1 272, 353–54, 357, 371–72, 463
5:1–2 177, 508
5:1–5 380
5:1–11 352–53, 371
5:2 171, 314, 446, 824
5:3 314, 380
5:5 311, 373, 381, 390, 416, 795
5:6 149, 260–61, 267, 277, 320, 359, 364, 417, 444, 519, 613, 638, 800, 811
5:6–8 5, 59, 126, 329, 347, 371, 563, 778, 788
5:6–10 333
5:6–11 344, 353
5:8 149, 216, 388, 777
5:8–9 319, 738
5:8–10 372
5:9 329, 362, 368
5:9–10 853
5:9–11 777
5:10 314, 352–53, 371, 446
5:11 177, 314, 352–53, 371
5:12 312, 327
5:12–13 302
5:12–21 303, 306, 312–13, 326–27, 337, 393, 486
5:12–8:10 312
5:13 289, 293, 295–96, 311–12
5:14 303, 312
5:15 306, 450
5:15–21 313
5:17 324, 327, 339, 342, 411
5:18 368, 450
5:18–21 312
5:19 304, 450
5:20 289, 293–94, 311
5:20–21 295–96
5:21 304, 313, 327, 339
6 386–88
6–8 269, 379
6:1 386, 496, 543, 787

6:1–10 386
6:1–14 387, 456, 738
6:1–23 308, 386
6:2–4 405
6:2–7 387
6:2–8 387
6:3 246, 336
6:3–4 459
6:3–7 246
6:3–10 246
6:4 199, 387, 410, 453, 708
6:5 325
6:5–8 308
6:6 325–26
6:6–14 388
6:7 518
6:8 381
6:9 315
6:10 194
6:10–11 410
6:11 398
6:12–14 306, 308
6:12–19 307
6:12–23 339
6:14 315, 387
6:15 386, 496, 543, 787
6:15–18 387
6:15–23 359, 387, 410, 415, 444, 456, 718, 787
6:16 313
6:16–18 409
6:17 246, 261, 311, 319, 336, 379, 386–87, 389, 415, 418, 516, 738, 753, 775
6:17–18 246, 387, 405, 411, 564, 778, 786
6:17a 387
6:18 381, 387, 414, 512
6:18–23 415
6:19–23 411
6:20 313
6:20–22 414
6:20–23 314
6:22 787
6:23 314, 398, 411

7 315
7:1–3 336
7:5 309, 314–15, 446
7:5–6 315
7:6 281, 315
7:7 313, 375
7:7–12 289
7:7–13 486
7:7–24 315
7:7–25 294, 297, 306, 312–15
7:7–8:2 324
7:7–8:11 297–99
7:7–8:14 614
7:7–8:17 315
7:9 312
7:10 291, 375
7:12 261, 297
7:13–25 290, 295
7:14 261, 293, 297, 299, 313, 336, 415
7:14–25 315
7:18 309
7:18–24 305
7:18–25 289
7:21 293
7:22 285, 413
7:23 293, 297, 311
7:24 307
7:25 293, 309, 311, 418
7:25–8:2 315
8 306, 315
8:1 315, 398
8:1–2 359, 414
8:1–17 314–15
8:2 122, 293, 297–99, 359, 391, 405, 415
8:2–4 297
8:2–7 415
8:2–11 605
8:2–39 344
8:3 149, 215, 220, 295, 324–26, 330, 332, 352, 535, 738, 777, 852
8:3–4 296, 298, 313, 315, 319, 322, 324–25, 327, 333, 358, 671
8:3–11 394

8:3–17 315, 333
8:4 121, 272, 297, 316, 324–25, 540, 638, 712
8:4–5 309, 391
8:4–6 310
8:4–11 339, 413–14
8:4–14 375, 390–91
8:4–17 327
8:5–8 325
8:5–9 297
8:6–8 310
8:7 282, 297, 309, 314, 446, 638
8:8–9 309
8:9 390, 778
8:9–10 297, 309, 390, 424
8:9–11 712
8:9–13 315
8:9–14 299
8:9–16 778
8:9–17 795
8:11 192, 199, 280–81, 307, 694, 777
8:14–16 324, 405
8:14–17 380
8:15 103, 310, 319, 323, 325, 335, 381, 391, 418, 564
8:15–16 310, 342, 390, 416, 419
8:16 711–12
8:18–21 440
8:18–25 305
8:18–30 304
8:18–39 320
8:19 443
8:19–21 304
8:19–22 302, 304
8:19–23 304
8:20 303–4, 312–13
8:21 304, 374, 380, 414, 443
8:22–25 380
8:23 308, 402
8:23–25 380
8:26 390, 419, 711
8:26–27 342, 419, 712
8:26–30 416

8:27 311
8:28–30 368, 373–74
8:28–39 342
8:29 340
8:29–30 368, 475
8:31–34 272, 332, 534
8:31–39 294, 315, 331, 333, 342, 363, 372–73, 501, 738
8:32 149, 216, 304, 328, 777
8:32–34 332
8:33 363
8:33–34 314, 320, 341
8:34 112, 143, 195, 208, 216, 271, 329, 368, 372, 419, 476, 519, 525, 711–13, 726, 738
8:34–35 319
8:34–39 787
8:35–37 380
8:35–39 355–56, 587
8:38–39 341, 441, 476, 738
8:39 302, 304, 380, 416
9–11 256, 281, 304, 734
9:1 310
9:2 311
9:3–5 305
9:4 261, 288
9:5 309, 323, 325
9:6 305, 373
9:12 95
9:24–26 514
9:25 282, 508
9:25–26 392, 811
9:26 95
9:30–10:17 344
9:30–10:21 347
9:31 299
9:32–33 325
9:33 282, 340, 376, 508
10:1–4 333
10:2 311
10:3 265, 366, 369–70, 375, 381
10:4 278, 318, 332–33, 343, 346, 369, 503, 605, 636
10:5 347
10:5–17 279

10:7 512
10:8 347–48
10:9 188, 192–93, 199, 278, 378, 389, 391, 418, 452, 499, 788
10:9–10 245, 311, 319, 387, 418, 525, 753, 777
10:9–13 347
10:10 373
10:13 209, 347–48
10:14–17 237, 242, 347–49, 470
10:15 348, 510
10:15–17 559
10:16 348, 351, 379
10:16–17 351, 415, 738
10:17 279, 348, 376, 378, 385, 500, 560, 703, 708
10:19–21 282, 752
11 463, 635
11:1–2 305, 811
11:1–5 340
11:1–32 243, 613
11:1–36 266
11:4 282
11:8 585
11:13 396
11:13ff. 446
11:13–14 385, 489
11:13–15 373, 491
11:13–32 261, 266, 368, 392
11:14 373
11:15 352
11:22 548
11:25 261, 340–41
11:25–27 612
11:25–28 738
11:25–31 255, 491
11:25–32 306, 320, 340, 373, 380, 480, 721, 737
11:26 110, 261
11:26–27 392
11:26–28 342
11:28 305
11:28–29 305, 373
11:28–32 373
11:29 340

11:32 243, 320, 340, 372–73
11:36 302, 343, 418
12 396
12–15 379, 408
12:1 307, 381, 408, 410, 412, 796
12:1–2 305, 308, 316, 391, 409–10, 412–13, 417, 419, 508, 778, 788
12:2 311, 409, 413
12:3 416
12:3–8 469
12:4 719
12:4ff. 437
12:4–5 307, 461, 481
12:4–8 392–93
12:5 398
12:6 28, 57, 281, 551, 776, 798, 800
12:6–7 469
12:6–8 391, 396
12:7 336, 470
12:7–8 471
12:8 395
12:9–21 709
12:14 299, 319, 335, 337, 394, 409, 564
12:14–21 416, 422
12:17 409, 509
12:18 394, 422, 484
12:19 281
12:19–21 426
13:1 311, 412, 517
13:1–7 337, 408–9, 425–26, 484, 508, 517
13:3–4 517
13:5 310
13:6 396
13:7 335, 337, 425, 518
13:8 121
13:8–10 289, 294, 298, 335, 409, 415–16, 419, 498, 709
13:11 482
13:11–14 294, 339–40, 416, 426
14:1–15:13 298, 409, 420
14:5–6 381
14:6 418
14:9 512

14:10 313, 335, 341–42, 360
14:10–12 292, 294, 341
14:11 282, 336
14:14 319, 335, 398, 564
14:15 216, 319
14:17 334
14:19 420
14:20 335, 337
15:1–3 416, 509
15:1–13 607
15:2 381
15:2–3 299
15:3 319, 326, 334, 337, 409
15:3–4 564
15:4 281, 467, 508, 510, 527, 752–53, 797
15:5–6 418
15:6 10, 381, 417, 420
15:7 277, 299, 320, 335, 366, 416, 564
15:7–12 392
15:8 305, 319, 323, 347, 351
15:8–12 325, 357, 774
15:9–12 241
15:10 811
15:12 340
15:14–24 266
15:14–33 258
15:15–16 278
15:15–21 344, 489, 492
15:15–24 261, 373, 385
15:15–29 738
15:16 261, 279, 347, 350, 396, 417, 426, 451, 491, 610, 637
15:16–19 351
15:16–21 492
15:17 314, 316
15:18 379
15:19 20, 385, 392, 610, 633, 637–38
15:23–24 266, 492
15:24 506
15:25 776
15:25–27 637
15:25–28 392, 502

15:26 259, 413, 497, 638
15:26–27 233, 610
15:30–32 418
16:1–2 396, 503, 837
16:2 397, 420
16:3 432
16:3–5 396–97, 495
16:4 311
16:5 231, 471
16:7 185, 194, 238, 397
16:11 398
16:11–13 398
16:14–15 396
16:17–18 495, 786
16:23 420, 503
16:25 12, 347
16:25–26 347, 443
16:26 347

1 Corinthians

1:1 420, 432
1:2 289, 392, 411
1:4 398
1:4–5 398
1:5–9 391
1:8 416
1:8–9 342
1:9 342
1:10 754
1:10–17 403
1:11–16 390
1:12 241, 508, 754
1:13 245–46, 354
1:13–15 386
1:14 420
1:14–17 729
1:15 245–46
1:16 245
1:17 351, 386
1:17–25 347
1:18 354, 356, 513
1:18–19 314

1:18–25 351, 354, 356, 587
1:18–30 343, 355
1:18–31 322, 796
1:18–2:5 665
1:19 355
1:20 355
1:20–21 303
1:21 12, 302–3, 304, 336, 355, 377
1:21–25 9
1:23 327, 351
1:23–24 334, 338, 354
1:23–25 328
1:23–30 355
1:24 356
1:26 309
1:26–29 368, 403, 420
1:26–30 378
1:27 314
1:28–30 305
1:29 309, 314
1:30 9, 319, 323, 343, 354, 367, 370, 388, 410–11, 438
1:30–31 314
2:2 26, 210, 328, 334, 351, 354, 781
2:4 753
2:6 296, 302
2:6ff. 337
2:6–8 347
2:6–12 683
2:6–16 5, 9, 281, 391, 551, 704, 795, 799
2:7 347
2:7–8 354
2:8 319, 326, 328, 334, 337–38, 347, 692
2:9 8, 750–51, 754
2:9–10 347
2:10 305
2:10–16 797
2:11 390
2:12 310, 354
2:14 390, 545
2:16 210, 305, 778
3:4–5 524

3:4–4:5 341
3:6 754
3:8 787
3:10–15 372, 417
3:11 446, 508
3:11–15 294
3:12–15 341
3:14 381, 417
3:14–15 417, 787
3:15 315, 372–73, 519
3:16 310, 372, 390, 719
3:16–17 392, 465
3:21–23 314, 415
3:22 302, 508, 754
4:3–4 316
4:4 268
4:4–5 342, 358
4:5 311, 381, 417
4:6 754
4:9–13 355
4:12 638
4:15 408
4:16 316
4:17 334, 385, 408–9, 420, 432, 523, 753
4:20 334
5:1–5 372–73, 543, 787
5:1–8 395
5:1–13 314, 423–24, 608
5:1–6:11 412, 608
5:2 491
5:5 315, 341–42, 372–73, 405, 416, 466, 519
5:6 314
5:6–8 316
5:7 68, 156, 511
5:9 3, 254, 743
5:11 502
6:1–2 341
6:1–8 314, 395
6:1–11 411, 421, 425–26, 453, 462, 721
6:2 302, 304, 324, 335, 411
6:2–3 336, 339, 341–42, 665

6:3 380, 440, 545
6:5 421
6:7 335, 421
6:9 376
6:9–10 292, 314, 334, 341–42, 502
6:9–11 314, 376, 410
6:9–20 339
6:10 380
6:11 245–46, 315, 386, 388–89, 390, 411, 414, 444, 475, 738
6:12 416, 545
6:12–16 307
6:12–17 308
6:12–20 423–24
6:13 327, 393, 462
6:14 199
6:15 306
6:15–17 307
6:16–17 327, 393, 424–25, 462
6:18–20 308, 316
6:19 719
6:19–20 412
6:20 323, 417, 424, 508
7:1–40 409, 423
7:2 424
7:2–5 423
7:4 308
7:7 423
7:7–8 423
7:8 316
7:9 424
7:10 57, 409, 423, 753, 797
7:10–11 319, 334–37, 424
7:11 352, 423
7:12 57
7:13–15 424
7:15–16 424
7:17–24 420, 422
7:19 293, 381, 388, 409, 417, 422
7:21 423
7:21–23 479
7:22 398

7:22–24 422
7:23 323, 423, 486
7:25 57
7:26 423
7:27 423
7:28 424
7:29–31 305, 322, 339, 380, 416
7:29–32 316
7:31 305
7:32 423
7:34 310, 390
7:35 423
7:36 424
7:37 423
7:38–39 424
7:39 336, 398
7:40 414, 423, 753, 797
8 420
8:1–2 420
8:1–13 607
8:4 302
8:5 418, 530
8:5–6 322
8:6 9, 280, 302, 304–5, 319–22, 339, 343, 418, 438, 449, 464, 500, 545, 671, 683, 735, 738, 751, 775, 788
8:7–12 310
9:1 188, 197, 199, 278, 318, 638
9:1–2 257
9:1–18 238
9:5 66, 241, 472, 544
9:5–6 508
9:6 238, 260, 524, 638
9:8 293
9:9 304
9:12 786
9:14 319, 334–37
9:15–18 316
9:15–23 279
9:16 260, 274, 279–80, 316, 346–47, 738
9:16–18 786
9:17–18 787
9:19–23 414

9:20 638
9:20–21 297, 299
9:21 122, 124, 240, 293, 298–99, 359, 415
9:22 342
9:24–26 787
9:24–27 308, 380
9:27 359, 786
10:1 402
10:1–13 389–90, 402, 405
10:1–22 534
10:2 509
10:3–4 400, 404, 414
10:4 389
10:8 549
10:11 281, 305, 527, 752
10:14–17 394
10:14–22 399
10:15–16 237
10:16 156, 162, 233, 236, 401
10:16–17 157, 163, 335, 337, 367, 391, 393, 398–99, 459, 461, 738
10:17 400, 404
10:18 309
10:21 400
10:21–22 400, 502
10:23 545
10:23–11:1 298, 413
10:25–29 310
10:31 381, 417, 426
10:32 395, 409
10:33 342–43
11:1 316
11:3 305, 481
11:5 397, 472, 486
11:7 481
11:8–9 485
11:11 398
11:13 397, 472, 486
11:16 392
11:17–34 399–400, 403
11:18 400, 754
11:18–34 247

11:19 403
11:20 163, 233, 235–36, 399
11:21 403
11:22 403–4
11:23 151, 164, 173, 319, 334, 753
11:23ff. 319
11:23–25 151, 233–34, 236, 319, 334–38, 399, 450, 631
11:23–26 151, 236–37, 261, 298, 367, 399, 533, 738
11:24 157, 195, 236, 329, 393, 730
11:24–25 164, 399, 401, 698, 776, 802
11:25 155–58, 162–63, 389
11:26 151, 164, 209, 401–2, 730
11:27 400
11:27–29 404
11:27–31 314
11:27–32 405
11:29–30 314
11:30–31 404
11:30–32 373
11:32 404
11:33 403
11:34 403
12 396
12:3 246, 319, 339, 378, 389–90, 418, 778, 795
12:4 390
12:4–6 390
12:4–11 310, 391, 469
12:5 396
12:6 390
12:7 280, 390
12:10 57
12:11 390
12:12ff. 437
12:12–13 388–89, 393, 400, 412, 422, 425, 481, 719
12:12–26 462
12:12–27 307, 461
12:12–31 392–94
12:13 244–46, 315, 386, 389–90, 393, 414, 459, 462–64
12:21 754
12:27 306
12:27–31 469

12:28 57, 336, 392, 395–96, 469–70
12:28–31 391
12:31 420
12:31–13:13 421
13 299, 391, 409, 416, 419, 788, 795
13:2 107, 335, 377, 498
13:4 754
13:4–13 381
13:12 704
13:13 378
14 394, 397, 419, 472
14:1–40 795
14:4 419, 470
14:4–5 391
14:12 391
14:13–18 381
14:14–19 311
14:16 419
14:18 419
14:19 419
14:21 281–82, 293
14:22 377
14:23 419
14:26 391, 418
14:27 419
14:28 419
14:29–31 470
14:34–35 397–98, 472, 486
14:40 397
15 327
15:1 12, 351
15:1ff. 319
15:1–2 334, 775
15:1–3 261
15:1–3a 193–94
15:1–5 60, 246, 351, 386, 738
15:1–8 455
15:1–10 638
15:1–11 194, 279, 336–38, 343, 347, 349, 378, 408, 589, 619, 753, 775–76
15:3 130, 193–94, 209–10, 216, 311, 366, 776–77, 820
15:3–4 230, 281, 334, 753

15:3–5 40, 59, 188–89, 192, 207, 216, 245, 319, 329, 336, 351, 367, 388
15:3–8 187, 197–98, 261, 337
15:3a 194, 246
15:3b 195
15:3b–5 59, 164, 193–96, 202, 205, 217, 222, 230, 279, 387, 508, 512, 559, 631–32, 753, 770, 775–77, 786, 788
15:3b–8 193–94, 198
15:4 194, 196, 199, 212, 337–38
15:4–5 207
15:4b 196
15:5 97, 133, 188, 194, 196, 202, 225, 395
15:5–7 194, 238, 277, 337
15:5–8 189, 194, 196–99, 257, 775
15:5b 632
15:6 193–94, 198, 228–29, 237–38
15:6–8 189, 193–94, 205
15:6a 193–94
15:6b 193
15:7 66, 188, 193–94, 225, 238, 496
15:7–8 470
15:8 188, 193–94, 197, 277–78
15:8–10 238, 257, 260, 274–75, 366, 638
15:8–11 278
15:9 226, 452, 737
15:9–10 314
15:10 277, 316, 320, 637
15:11 194, 196, 508, 559, 775, 779
15:12 351, 490, 543
15:12–19 490
15:14 12
15:15 196, 515
15:20 211, 338, 340, 476, 584, 738, 777
15:20–22 196, 308, 393
15:20–28 266, 455
15:21 327
15:22 306, 327, 398
15:22–23 327
15:22–24 327
15:22–28 337
15:23 453, 665, 777
15:23–24 341–42
15:23–26 738

15:23–27 440
15:23–28 143, 282, 304, 319–20, 339, 343, 360, 374, 454, 491, 787
15:24 334, 454
15:24–25 482
15:24–28 341
15:25 476, 530
15:25–26 304–5
15:25–27 444
15:25–28 341–42
15:25b 195
15:26 303, 313, 339
15:27 143, 461
15:28 304, 320, 339, 342–43, 374, 417, 670
15:29 390, 405
15:32–33 417
15:35 490
15:35–49 307–8
15:35–57 200
15:39 309
15:39–49 307
15:42 452
15:44–45 512
15:44–49 327, 393
15:45 306, 327, 390
15:45–49 337
15:47 327
15:48–49 327
15:49 327
15:50 309, 334
15:50–51 310
15:50–57 304–5, 340
15:51 280
15:51–52 335–36
15:53 452
15:53–57 374
15:54–57 339, 341
15:56 308, 313
15:57 418
15:58 398
16:1 392
16:2 247, 400, 647

16:10–11 385, 432
16:11 403
16:12 525
16:19 397, 420, 471
16:20–24 401
16:21–22 401
16:22 164, 208–9, 339, 401, 698, 727, 730

2 Corinthians

1:1 411, 432
1:3 10, 418
1:9 199
1:14 341, 372, 416
1:17 335
1:19 432, 507
1:19–20 357
1:20 210, 319, 325, 347, 351, 774
1:21–22 727
1:22 310–11, 389, 727, 795
1:23 311, 495
2:4 254, 311, 743
2:12 398
2:13 432
2:14 277, 320
2:14–16 274, 280, 316, 320, 366
2:14–17 260
2:14–4:6 350
2:14–6:10 258
2:14–7:4 353
2:15–16 536
2:17 398
3:3 647
3:4–18 256, 298, 322, 349–50, 405
3:7–11 278
3:7–18 318
3:8–9 279, 396
3:9 298, 350, 367
3:10 351
3:12–18 391
3:14 341, 351, 398
3:16 778
3:16–17 752

3:16–18 281
3:17 297, 351, 752
3:17–18 390
3:18 351
4:1 396
4:1–6 188, 346, 357, 460
4:2 357
4:3–4 417
4:3–6 274–75, 278, 280, 357
4:4 302, 305, 311, 322
4:4–6 197, 279, 322, 334, 347, 351
4:5–6 189, 197, 257, 318, 320, 778
4:6 198, 277, 294
4:7–12 308, 355
4:11 309
4:14 280, 777
5 350
5:1–10 310
5:6–10 294
5:7 380
5:10 272, 313, 339, 341–42, 358, 360, 372, 416
5:14 319, 335, 450
5:14–15 216, 329
5:14–21 40, 320, 367
5:16 274–75, 277, 334
5:17 247, 302, 304–5, 315, 330, 368, 398, 453, 508, 738, 818
5:18 279, 350, 353, 371, 396
5:18–19 352
5:18–20 352, 371, 738
5:18–21 320, 343, 349–53, 371
5:18–6:2 353
5:19 164, 280, 302, 311, 320, 349–52, 371, 439, 689–90, 777, 860
5:19–21 329
5:19–6:2 267
5:20 347, 353, 356, 410
5:20–21 329, 332, 455
5:21 216, 221–22, 265, 279, 319, 324–25, 328–30, 343, 352, 366, 368–70, 398, 540, 777
6:2 282, 322, 331, 335, 372, 737
6:3 396
6:4–10 355
6:11 311

6:14 358
6:14–7:1 395, 411–12, 425, 462, 608, 721, 787
6:15 492
6:16 281–82, 392, 465, 508, 514, 811
6:16–18 633
6:18 282
7:1 310, 390
7:6–7 385, 432
7:13 373
7:13–15 385, 432
8 432
8:1–4 392
8:6 432
8:9 326, 334, 337
8:16 311
8:16–24 432
8:23 257, 385, 638, 717
9:2 392
9:11–15 413
9:12 392
9:13 418
10:1–12:21 258
10:2 309
10:2–6 309–10
10:3 309
10:3–5 482
10:3–6 305, 322, 796
10:4–5 314
10:5 311, 413
10:6 513
10:10 259, 737, 797
10:17 314
11:1–4 376
11:1–6 495 11:2 462, 481, 717
11:2–3 393, 424–25
11:2–4 347
11:3–4 786
11:4 279
11:5–10 238
11:5–11 496
11:7 260

11:12–15 376
11:13–15 314, 347
11:17 310
11:18 314
11:22 260
11:23–27 638
11:23–29 355
11:24 278, 291, 496
11:24–25 261, 276
11:24–28 367
11:25 425
11:28 408
11:28–29 385
11:31 10
11:32–33 259, 261, 278
12:1 280
12:1–5 198
12:2 258, 476
12:2–5 138
12:4 419
12:5–9 314
12:7 309, 495
12:8 418
12:8–9 280
12:9 57, 356, 380, 476
12:12 237, 638
12:13 260
12:15 311
12:19 398
13:1 335
13:3–4 328
13:4 319, 326, 337–38, 356
13:7 418
13:9 418

Galatians

1–4 408
1:1 280, 322, 638
1:2 255
1:4 216, 302, 304, 311, 319, 328–29, 410, 413–14, 450, 452, 512, 533, 777
1:5 418
1:6–9 347, 376

1:7 786
1:8 314
1:8–9 417, 501, 786
1:10 280, 417, 496, 545
1:10–2:21 258
1:11 786
1:11–17 318
1:11–23 346
1:11–24 274–75
1:12 188–89, 197, 277–79, 328
1:13 226, 392
1:13–14 259, 787
1:14 260, 291, 295, 311, 417
1:15–16 188, 194, 237, 257, 320, 356, 489, 492, 637
1:15–2:1 258
1:16 189, 197–98, 277–80, 309, 351, 451
1:16–17 278
1:17 259
1:18 508
1:18–24 279
1:19 497
1:20 495
1:21–2:1 259
1:22 226–27, 259, 398
1:22–23 258
1:23 194, 378
2:1 524
2:1–5 432
2:1–10 242, 257, 636–37
2:2 637
2:3 497, 636
2:3–5 242
2:4 256, 496
2:5 357
2:6 497
2:6–9 242
2:6–10 256, 259, 508
2:7 775
2:7–8 241, 567
2:7–9 489, 492
2:7–10 385

2:8 451
2:9 496, 524, 598, 610, 650, 737, 775
2:9–10 497, 637
2:10 233, 259, 392, 610, 637, 776
2:11ff. 256
2:11–21 241, 259, 298, 336, 385, 421, 496, 501, 508, 637, 776, 778
2:12–13 497
2:13 524
2:14 357, 548
2:15 305, 314
2:15–16 305
2:16 270–71, 292, 294–95, 298, 309, 360, 363, 366, 374–75, 378, 381, 499, 703
2:17 325, 398, 787
2:19 326
2:19–20 390
2:19–21 316
2:20 216, 280, 299, 328–29, 378, 380, 424, 450, 452
3 376, 378
3:1 319, 328, 334, 337–38, 355, 859
3:1–5 246
3:1–4:11 257
3:2 271, 279–80, 376, 378, 385, 389–90, 414, 500, 703, 738, 778
3:2–3 390
3:5 271, 279, 795
3:6 363, 538
3:6–9 498, 500
3:8 498
3:10 271
3:10–12 295
3:10–22 294
3:11 538
3:13 178, 296, 323, 328–29, 332, 636, 777
3:17 289, 296
3:17–18 293, 636
3:19 289, 296, 312, 535
3:19–20 298
3:19–22 294
3:20 296, 684
3:21 291, 535
3:21–22 295
3:22 295, 302, 312–13, 377–78

3:22–24 323
3:23 378, 500, 703
3:23–24 295
3:23–25 376
3:23–28 269, 378
3:25 378, 500
3:25–28 380
3:26 247, 398
3:26–28 245–46, 315, 386, 388, 398, 422, 425, 459, 475, 477, 485–86
3:26–29 388
3:27 246
3:27–28 327, 393
3:28 389, 398, 446, 462–63, 481
4:2 323
4:3 302
4:4 65, 215, 296, 320, 322, 324, 331, 751
4:4–5 65, 319, 322–25, 347, 671, 738
4:4–6 315
4:5 296, 323, 327, 333, 380
4:5–6 390
4:6 103, 245, 310–11, 319, 324, 335, 380, 391, 418, 795
4:9 704
4:21–31 636
4:21–5:12 298
4:25–26 392, 610
4:26 380, 476
4:29 309
5–6 408
5:1 380, 414
5:1–13 636
5:5 372, 380
5:5–6 498
5:6 381, 398, 416–17, 455, 499
5:10 398
5:11 260, 496
5:12 495
5:13 309, 380, 414, 502
5:13–14 415
5:13–15 414
5:14 121, 270, 294, 297–98, 409, 415, 419, 498
5:15–26 391

5:16–25 310
5:16–26 411, 413
5:16–6:10 414
5:19–21 292, 502
5:21 334
5:22 381, 391, 455
5:22–23 499
5:22–24 298
5:22–25 417
5:23 381
5:25 390–91, 410, 414
6:2 122, 124, 240, 293, 297–99, 326, 335, 337, 359, 381, 391, 409, 414–15, 419–20, 498
6:6 336, 469, 618
6:7–8 309, 314, 341
6:8 310
6:10 419, 421, 709
6:11–16 636
6:12–13 495–96
6:12–16 328
6:14 326
6:14–16 412
6:15 302, 304, 388
6:16 392, 633, 811
6:17 308

Ephesians

1:1 254, 433
1:3 10
1:3–14 444
1:4 444, 480, 508
1:7 444
1:10 322, 444, 447, 799
1:12 445, 461
1:13 389, 455, 559, 727
1:13–14 245, 386, 480
1:14 444, 461, 482
1:15 455
1:15–23 444
1:18 444, 446, 460, 463–64
1:20 208, 476, 777
1:20–21 476, 482
1:20–22 444, 447

1:20–23 462
1:21 302, 441, 461, 463–64
1:22 447, 461
1:22–23 461
1:23 392, 461
2 463
2:1–3 444
2:1–10 444, 455
2:1–22 444
2:2 441, 463
2:4–7 444
2:4–9 452, 480
2:4–10 455
2:5 445, 460
2:5–6 460
2:6 490
2:8 455
2:8–9 638, 800
2:10 445, 480, 499, 502, 778
2:11 480
2:11–13 444
2:11–18 455
2:11–22 445–46, 461, 463–64
2:12 445, 463, 480
2:13 445
2:13–18 480, 777
2:14 445, 526
2:14–15 445–46
2:14–16 482
2:14–18 444–45
2:15 438, 446, 504, 600
2:15–16 445
2:16 352, 371, 446
2:17 445
2:18 463
2:19 446, 463, 480, 482
2:20 433, 446, 508
2:20–22 446, 461, 465
2:21 719
2:21–22 464
2:22 463

3:1–7 455
3:2 444, 489
3:4–5 443, 450
3:5 433, 470, 489
3:5–7 468
3:6 446, 455
3:6–12 444
3:8 446
3:8–9 463
3:8–12 468
3:9 444, 799
3:9–10 443
3:10 461–63, 476, 480
3:10–11 447
3:11 462
3:13 443, 489
3:14–15 478
3:16–17 455
3:17 455
3:18 446
4 396
4:1 432, 480, 787
4:1–6 464
4:1–6:20 463, 480
4:2–6 502
4:3 464
4:3–6 461
4:4 460, 463, 719
4:4–6 245–46, 464, 633
4:4–16 392
4:5 445, 455
4:7–10 444
4:7–11 559
4:7–16 469
4:8 441, 444, 469, 510
4:8–10 461
4:9–10 512
4:10 447
4:11 470, 510, 654, 718
4:11–12 396, 469–70
4:11–15 468

4:12 446
4:13 455, 461, 463–64
4:15 343, 447, 461
4:15–16 461, 481
4:16 464
4:17–18 463
4:20–24 460
4:24 460
4:30 444, 447, 464, 479, 727
5:1–2 480
5:2 328, 391, 444, 450, 533, 777
5:3 446
5:5 454, 463, 480, 482, 502
5:14 460
5:16 475, 482
5:17–20 462
5:19 418, 476
5:19–20 460
5:21 480
5:21–28 393
5:21–33 327
5:21–6:9 477, 480
5:22–23 425
5:22–24 480–81
5:22–6:9 477–78
5:23 392, 447, 461, 485, 754
5:25 328, 450, 462, 481
5:25–27 462
5:26 462
5:27 462
5:28–29 481
5:29–32 424, 481
5:29–33 393
5:32 461–62, 717
6 482
6:1 722
6:2 478
6:4 722
6:8–9 480
6:9 518
6:10–17 460, 482

6:12 440–41, 447, 476, 479, 482
6:13 479, 482
6:17 482, 794
6:18 446
6:18–20 482
6:19 455
6:20 432
6:21 423, 433

Philippians

1:1 395, 401, 432, 469, 471
1:5 410
1:6 341, 372
1:7 311, 410
1:9–11 418
1:10 341, 372
1:12 410
1:12–18 638
1:15–18 494, 779
1:18 502
1:19 390
1:21–26 255
1:22 309
1:22–24 309
1:23 342
1:27 359, 787
1:27–30 410, 508
1:28–30 518
2:1 398
2:3 409
2:5 319, 326, 334, 398, 416
2:5–11 299
2:6–8 325–26
2:6–11 41, 189, 215, 280, 319, 321, 327–28, 338–39, 343, 410, 418, 434, 450, 529, 628, 682, 738, 788
2:7 65, 323–24
2:8 296, 689
2:8c 326
2:9 338, 476, 530, 689
2:9–11 294, 320, 326, 338, 613, 689
2:10 336
2:10–11 209

2:11 342–43, 417–18, 426
2:12–13 315, 380, 410, 417
2:12–16 316, 412, 519
2:13 414
2:15 335, 410, 412
2:15–16 395, 413
2:16 341, 372, 416–17, 685
2:19–20 432
2:19–23 432, 523
2:25 396, 638
3 256
3:2 495
3:2–3 636
3:2–11 258
3:3 412
3:3–4 314
3:4–6 259, 285, 314
3:4–11 274–75, 501
3:4b–11 275
3:5 260
3:5–6 314–15
3:6 268, 288, 292, 295, 332
3:6–7 289
3:7 295
3:7–8 636
3:7–10 277
3:7–11 277, 366
3:8 277, 334
3:9 265, 369–70, 375, 378, 381
3:10–11 515
3:12–15 359
3:12–16 316, 380
3:12–21 316
3:14 441
3:17 316
3:18–19 314, 786
3:20 380, 463
3:20–21 200, 304, 308, 319, 339–40, 380, 392, 476
3:21 307
4:2 398
4:2–3 385, 397

4:3 432, 703
4:5 412–13, 478
4:8 409
4:8–9 412
4:13 316
4:20 418

Colossians

1:1 432
1:3 10
1:4 455
1:4–5 455
1:5 380, 455, 475
1:10 359, 787
1:11–14 440
1:11–20 476
1:12 446
1:12–14 418
1:13 441, 475
1:13–14 459
1:14 323, 438, 440, 444
1:14–23 455
1:15 305, 322, 435–38, 460
1:15–16 436
1:15–17 302, 322, 436–38
1:15–20 9, 42, 305, 319, 321–22, 354, 371, 418, 434–37, 440, 443, 447, 450, 452, 459, 529–30, 682–83, 690, 751, 775, 788, 809
1:16 302, 304, 322, 436, 476
1:17–18 462
1:17–18a 436
1:18 188, 212, 304–5, 327, 340, 392–93, 435, 444, 447, 461–62, 584, 668, 693, 719, 777
1:18–20 436–38, 440, 445
1:18a 436–37, 439
1:18b 435–37
1:18b–20 436
1:18c 436
1:19 65, 436–37, 439, 684
1:19–20 343, 440, 777
1:20 304, 352, 371, 435–37, 439, 475
1:22 352, 441, 459, 526
1:23 302, 304, 380, 443, 455
1:23b 451

1:24 392, 489
1:24ff. 443
1:25–28 455
1:26–27 450, 452
1:27 380, 443, 461, 475
1:28 455
2 442
2:1 441
2:2 443
2:3 822
2:6–23 322, 455
2:7 455
2:8 434, 441–42
2:8–23 441
2:9 436–37, 439, 461
2:10 436, 476, 545
2:11–13 460
2:11–15 441
2:12 387, 490, 708
2:12–13 453, 459, 475
2:12–15 440
2:13 246
2:14 438, 491, 504, 600
2:15 436, 439–41, 476, 530
2:16 441–42
2:16–19 392, 461
2:16–23 442
2:18 441–42, 530, 545
2:19 393, 439, 444, 461
3:1 208, 220, 342, 387, 475, 490
3:1–4 476
3:3–4 440, 460, 476
3:4 443, 475
3:5–11 394
3:6 475
3:9–10 389
3:9–11 246–47, 388–89, 459, 477
3:10 446, 453, 460
3:10–11 425, 440
3:11 461, 463
3:14 4813:15 392, 445, 461, 481

3:16 418, 434, 439, 462, 476
3:16–17 391, 795
3:17 381, 417, 426
3:18–4:1 477–80
3:20–21 722
3:22–25 479
3:24 480
4:1 480, 518
4:4 622
4:5 475
4:5–6 477
4:7–9 423
4:10 572
4:14 257, 622–23, 636
4:15–16 441
4:16 254, 743, 753
4:18 254, 432

1 Thessalonians

1:1 432, 507
1:3 381
1:6 524
1:7 377
1:8 451
1:9 450
1:9–10 59, 229, 385, 408, 524, 621, 777
1:10 110, 188, 255, 319, 340–42, 362, 367, 528
2:2 356
2:3–4 410
2:4 311
2:8 311
2:9 638
2:9–13 359
2:12 334, 410, 488, 787
2:13 5, 280, 347, 377, 587
2:13–14 356
2:14 227, 398, 524
2:14–16 256, 491, 613
2:16 311, 367
2:19 453, 777
3:2 432, 523
3:2–3 385

3:6 455
3:13 340, 342, 453, 488
4:1 410
4:1–2 334, 336, 359, 778
4:1–3 408
4:1–11 753
4:1–12 498
4:2 336
4:3–5 423
4:3–8 410–11
4:4 423
4:4–5 424
4:5 445
4:7 424
4:9 498
4:10–12 416
4:12 478
4:13–14 513
4:13–18 310
4:13–5:11 255, 294, 336, 340, 342, 488, 490, 544
4:14 255, 319, 381, 476
4:14–18 304
4:14–5:11 340, 342
4:15 280, 335, 453, 488, 490
4:15ff. 200
4:15–17 226, 335, 337, 340
4:15–18 336
4:15–5:11 490
4:16–17 335, 337–38, 340, 491
4:16–5:2 337
4:17 342, 482, 490
5:1–2 335, 338
5:1–11 416
5:2 336, 340–41, 372, 416, 548
5:3 491
5:4–10 339
5:5 490
5:8 482
5:9 256, 341, 362, 381, 492
5:9–10 255, 367
5:10 216, 319, 777

5:12 395, 398, 471
5:12–13 469
5:12–15 498
5:14 490
5:16–22 414
5:17–18 418
5:18 398
5:19–20 490
5:20–21 470
5:23 310, 340, 453

2 Thessalonians

1:1 432, 507
1:3–12 488
1:5–10 491
1:7–8 548
1:9 314
1:10 451
2:1 453, 491
2:1–2 491
2:1–3 490
2:1–12 254–55, 488–89, 492
2:2 3, 255, 490, 492
2:3 490, 492
2:3ff. 544
2:3–4 492
2:3–12 111, 255, 337, 490–91, 669
2:5–7 738
2:6–7 489, 491
2:7 491
2:8 372, 452–53, 482
2:8–9 492
2:10–12 491
2:12–13 455
2:13–16 492
2:15 490, 767
3:6 490
3:6–13 490, 498
3:8 638
3:10 416
3:11 490
3:11–12 543

3:14 490
3:17 488

1 Timothy

1:1 454
1:4 465
1:6–7 448
1:7 465
1:8–11 502
1:9–10 483
1:10 467
1:11 467
1:12 456, 468
1:12–17 277
1:14 455
1:15 454, 456
1:16 452
1:17 454
1:19 455
1:19–20 490
1:20 448, 608
2:1–2 425, 484
2:2 456, 483
2:3 454
2:4 449, 548
2:4–6 465
2:5 183, 327, 454
2:5–6 139–40, 449–50, 454, 500, 671, 735, 738, 775, 777
2:6 454–55
2:7 455, 468
2:8 485
2:8–15 477, 485
2:9–10 485
2:11–12 397–98, 472
2:11–15 472, 483, 485–86
2:12 397, 486
2:13–14 485–86
2:14 486
2:15 455, 485–86
3:1 471
3:1–2 468
3:2–6 470

3:2–7 483
3:8 483
3:8–13 471
3:9 455
3:10 140
3:11 456, 518
3:12 483
3:13 140, 455
3:15 464–66, 471, 483–84, 514
3:15–16 466
3:16 194–95, 197, 211, 321, 324, 434, 451–52, 454, 456, 463, 482, 511–12, 632–33, 682, 686, 715
3:16a 452
3:16b 450–51, 454
4:1 455, 465
4:1–5 483
4:3 465, 485
4:6 455, 618
4:7 456
4:8 456
4:10 454
4:12 455
4:14 468, 472, 635
5:1 140, 631
5:3–5 483
5:4 456
5:8 455
5:9–10 471, 483
5:13 448, 485
5:17 468, 470
5:17–18 471
5:18 467
5:18b 450
5:22 397, 468
6:1–2 477, 518
6:3 450, 456, 467, 470
6:5 456
6:6 456
6:11 455–56
6:11–16 397, 468
6:13 450, 452, 454, 691
6:14 452, 454

6:14–15 482
6:15 88, 454, 482, 504
6:17–19 503
6:20 397, 433–34, 448, 465–67, 485, 526, 543, 754
6:20–21 483

2 Timothy

1:6 397, 468, 472, 635
1:8–10 455
1:8–11 452
1:9 452
1:9–10 443, 454
1:10 452, 454
1:10–11 455
1:11 468
1:12 448, 466
1:12–14 467, 471
1:13 455, 467
1:14 448, 467
1:15 448
2:1–13 471
2:2 467–68
2:8 66, 194, 452, 454
2:10 489
2:10–13 485
2:11–13 454
2:16–18 397
2:17 608
2:17–18 490
2:18 448, 465, 490, 543
2:20–21 466
2:21 465–66
2:22 455
2:25–26 466
3:1 544
3:1–9 448
3:1–17 483
3:2–5 483
3:5 456, 465
3:6 397–98, 465, 485
3:10 455, 618
3:12 456

3:14–17 551
3:15 455, 467
3:15–16 467
3:16 281, 467, 527, 752, 796–97
4:1 452–54
4:1–5 482
4:2 455, 797
4:3 467
4:3–18 448
4:5 470
4:6–8 489
4:8 452–54, 514
4:9 524
4:11 257, 572, 623, 636
4:12 423
4:14 454
4:15 465
4:16 638
4:18 454, 546
4:19 471

Titus

1:1 455–56
1:2 454
1:3 12, 454, 468
1:4 454
1:5–9 469, 471
1:6 470
1:7 465, 471, 484
1:9 467–68, 471
1:10 465
1:11 397, 465
1:14 465
2:1 467
2:1–10 477
2:1–15 483
2:2 455
2:3–5 472
2:6 140, 631
2:9–10 518
2:10 454
2:11–13 466, 482

2:12 456
2:13 452, 454, 482
2:14 323, 450, 452–54, 499, 502, 514, 777
3:1 453
3:1–2 484
3:1–3 483
3:1–7 452
3:3 453
3:3–7 453, 455
3:3–8 482
3:4 453–54
3:5 453, 508, 638, 702, 711, 724
3:6 453–54
3:7 453
3:8 453
3:9 465
3:10 608
3:10–11 466
3:13 525

Philemon
1–2 396
2 471
5 455
13 423
13–14 423
17 423
18–19 423
24 257, 572, 623, 636

Hebrews
1:1–2 10, 94, 527, 529, 541, 751, 773–74, 818
1:1–4 9, 321, 529–31, 632, 775
1:1–4:13 528
1:2 528, 531, 534, 541, 670
1:3 208, 322, 528–29, 530, 537, 665, 682–83
1:3–4 319, 525
1:3–5 754
1:3–12 523
1:3a–b 529
1:3c 530
1:3d 530

1:4 530
1:5 212, 525, 527
1:6 530
1:7 527, 754
1:8 528, 530, 670
1:10 530
1:13 208, 444, 665, 754
2:1–4 535, 538
2:2 296, 541
2:3 523
2:5–7 444
2:5–8 530
2:6 137
2:8 143, 541
2:9 216
2:10 532
2:10–13 527
2:14 528
2:17 531
3:1 522, 525, 531
3:6 527–28, 530, 536, 670
3:7 527
3:7–11 281, 752
3:7–4:11 541
3:11 526
3:18 526
4:1 526
4:2–3 534
4:3 526, 530
4:3–5 527
4:5–6 526
4:7 530, 752
4:9 514
4:11 530
4:12–13 530
4:14 525, 528, 531–32, 534
4:14–10:31 528
4:15 532
4:16 530, 536
5:1 221, 777
5:5–6 532

5:6 525, 531, 534
5:7 532, 535
5:7–8 525, 690
5:7–9 564, 654
5:7–10 532
5:8 528, 670
5:10 525
5:11 524
5:12 442, 470
5:14–6:1 527
6 782
6:1 524, 528, 778
6:1–2 408, 621
6:2 524
6:4 778
6:4–5 533
6:4–6 539–40, 782, 787
6:4–8 522, 535, 538
6:5 302
6:6 524, 528, 539–40
6:6–8 758
6:9 777
6:10 524, 535
6:11–12 541
6:12 524
6:17 220
6:19–20 526
6:20 525
7:3 527–28
7:11 525
7:11–12 535
7:11–19 535
7:13 525
7:17 525, 531, 534
7:18–19 527, 535, 600
7:20–25 531
7:21 534
7:23–25 534
7:24–25 540
7:25 112, 143, 711, 713
7:27 194, 577, 777

7:28 528, 670
8:1 529–30
8:5 526
8:6 535
8:7–13 533, 535
8:8–12 527
8:13 527, 534, 600
9 533
9:1–15 218
9:1–28 131
9:5 217, 220, 826, 830, 836, 857
9:6–7 524
9:11 531
9:11–14 40, 532, 777
9:12 194, 536, 577
9:13–14 527
9:14 408, 533
9:15 536
9:20 527
9:22 160
9:22–28 777
9:23 526
9:24 112, 143, 216, 531, 534, 711, 713
9:24–26 533
9:26 305, 322, 533, 541, 854
9:28 532–33
10:1 526
10:1–3 524
10:1–4 527
10:5–7 527
10:10 194, 577
10:11–18 40, 535
10:12 216, 777
10:12–14 777
10:13 541
10:15 527, 551
10:15–17 527, 752
10:15–18 281, 533
10:19 530, 536
10:19–20 526, 677
10:19–25 534–35

10:19–13:25 535
10:22 524, 533
10:23 524–25
10:25 524, 541
10:26 539
10:26–27 540, 782, 787
10:26–31 522, 535, 538–39
10:29 528
10:29–31 531
10:30 514
10:31 531
10:32 524
10:32–34 523
10:32–36 523
10:32–12:29 528
10:33 524
10:35 524, 530, 536, 541
10:36–39 537
10:37 531, 534
10:37–39 541
10:38 531, 534
10:39 537
11 375, 535–36
11:1 535–37
11:1–2 536
11:1–40 382
11:2 535, 537
11:3 537
11:4 537
11:4ff. 537
11:6 537
11:8–10 537
11:8–12 364
11:11–12 537
11:16 541
11:17 379, 537
11:17–19 364, 500, 537
11:19 199, 538, 777
11:26 541, 689
11:31 500
11:37 523, 535

11:39–40 537
12:1 535
12:1–2 522
12:1–4 538
12:2 326, 525, 532, 538, 564
12:4 523
12:4–11 541
12:5–10 373
12:14 778
12:15 535
12:15–17 522, 535, 538
12:17 540, 782
12:18–24 533
12:22 437, 531, 541
12:23 703
12:28 532, 541
12:28–29 535
13:1–2 535
13:1–25 528
13:3–5 535
13:7 140, 524, 631
13:9 535, 541
13:10 514, 533
13:11 533
13:12 524
13:12–13 525
13:12–14 533
13:13 538, 689
13:14 541
13:15 235, 531, 534
13:17 140, 631
13:20 719
13:22 5, 522, 528
13:22–25 523
13:23 524
13:24 140, 523, 631
15:4 538
16:13 538

James

1:1 496, 500, 718
1:9–10 495

1:12 514
1:13–14 417
1:17 496
1:18 496–97
1:19 750
1:19–20 495
1:20 369, 495
1:21 495–97
1:25 122, 124, 497, 503–4, 603
2:1 496, 500
2:1–9 503
2:1–13 495, 503
2:1–26 787
2:3 503
2:5 503
2:6 503
2:6–7 503
2:7 497, 503
2:8 496, 504
2:8–11 503
2:10 503
2:12 503
2:13 501
2:14–16 498
2:14–26 262, 495–98, 500–502, 600
2:17 498
2:17–18 498
2:18 499
2:18–26 382, 499, 500
2:19 499
2:20 496
2:20–26 375, 541
2:21 379
2:21–23 364, 500
2:21–24 498
2:22–24 365
2:23 121, 364
2:24 498, 500
2:25 500
3:1–2 495
3:13–18 9

3:17 504
4:3 496
4:13–16 495
4:13–5:6 495
5:1–6 503
5:7 453, 777
5:7–8 496
5:8 340
5:12 121, 495–96
5:13–16 495

1 Peter

1:1 506, 509
1:1–2 510
1:2 514
1:3 10, 508
1:3–9 510–11
1:3–12 508
1:4–9 518
1:5 519
1:5–7 507
1:6–7 508, 518–19
1:8 516
1:8–9 512
1:9 510
1:10 508, 514
1:10–12 510–11, 753
1:11 752
1:11–12 515
1:12 443, 463, 508, 510–11
1:13 508–9, 513–14
1:13–17 508
1:14 509
1:15–16 514
1:16 411
1:17 509, 513
1:18 508, 514
1:18–19 508, 511
1:18–21 40, 509
1:18–25 508
1:19 156, 511
1:20 508

1:20–21 511
1:21 192, 199, 513, 777
1:25 508, 512
2:1–2 508
2:1–10 508, 788
2:2 515, 778
2:4 509, 514
2:4–7 508
2:5 408, 412, 465, 508, 514, 517, 721
2:6 446, 508, 514, 519
2:6–10 752
2:7 509
2:9 397, 412, 514–15, 721
2:10 508, 514
2:11 509
2:11–12 517
2:11–3:7 508
2:11–5:11 517
2:12 413, 509, 778
2:13 517
2:13–14 517
2:13–17 408, 425, 508, 517
2:13–3:7 477
2:14 517
2:15–16 517
2:16 502, 508, 718
2:17 517
2:18–20 509
2:18–25 517–18
2:19 514, 517–18
2:19–21 508
2:20 514, 518
2:21 509, 564, 777
2:21–24 512
2:21–25 40, 508–9, 532, 777
2:23 509, 513
2:24 512, 517, 519
3:1–6 517
3:2 509, 514
3:3–4 485
3:7 508, 514, 517

3:8–12 517
3:9 509
3:13–4:19 517
3:14 509, 518, 605
3:15–16 58, 60
3:16 508, 517
3:16–17 509
3:17 508, 518
3:17–18 509
3:18 508–9, 512, 518, 777
3:18–19 509, 777
3:18b 451
3:19 512–13
3:19–20 549
3:20 513
3:20–21 509
3:20–22 516
3:21 516
3:22 511, 513, 519
4:1 518
4:3 509, 514
4:4 509
4:5 513
4:5–7 519
4:6 512–13
4:7 507, 513
4:8 754
4:10 508–9, 514–15
4:11 514
4:12 519
4:12–14 518
4:13 513, 515, 519
4:14 509, 518, 778
4:15 509, 518
4:16 507, 512
4:17 12, 465, 510, 513–14, 517, 519
4:18 519
4:19 508, 518
5:1 507, 515, 718
5:1–4 471
5:1–5 515, 517

5:2 515
5:2–4 515
5:4 513, 519, 719
5:5 140, 514–15
5:6–11 517
5:8–9 513, 519
5:10 507–8, 514, 518
5:12 432, 506–8, 514
5:13 506, 509, 572–73
5:14 508

2 Peter

1:1 546–47
1:1–2 546
1:2–8 547
1:3 456, 547
1:4 547
1:5–11 547
1:6 456
1:9 547
1:11 546–47
1:13–14 545
1:13–15 543
1:14–15 547
1:16 546–47, 549, 777
1:16–17 336
1:16–18 547–48
1:16–21 548, 550, 797–98
1:17 547, 550, 752
1:19 548, 550
1:20 550, 798
1:20–21 281, 550, 752
2:1 546–47
2:1–3 545–46
2:3 547
2:4 341, 549–50
2:5 550
2:6 550
2:7–8 550
2:9 456
2:10–11 546
2:10b–11 549

2:11 550
2:15ff. 550
2:15–16 550
2:20 546
2:20–21 547
2:21 546–47
2:22 646
3:1 545, 548, 753
3:2 546–47, 550, 798
3:2–7 543
3:3 798
3:3–13 798
3:4 476, 545–48
3:5–6 548
3:5–15 548
3:7 547–48
3:8 548
3:9 548
3:10–12 547–48
3:11 456
3:11–12 549
3:13 547
3:14–16 798
3:15–16 252, 545, 547–48, 551, 737, 797
3:16 264, 546–47, 753, 798
3:17–18 547
3:18 546–47

1 John

1:1 529, 655, 657, 669–70, 685, 693, 738
1:1–2 734
1:1–3 663, 704
1:1–4 685, 733
1:2 669, 720
1:3 10, 647, 669, 720
1:5 647, 734
1:7 669, 687, 709, 720, 729, 738
1:8 724–25
1:8–9 314
1:8–10 724–25
1:9 725, 734
1:10 724

2:1 112, 519, 646, 648, 663, 669, 672, 712–13, 715, 721
2:1–2 40, 143, 525, 534, 648, 669, 693, 697, 711–12, 725–26, 738, 788
2:2 540, 672, 686–88, 719, 777, 850
2:3–5 723
2:4 724
2:5–6 709
2:6 647
2:9 724
2:12 648, 721
2:12–14 722
2:13 685
2:14 738
2:18 489, 492, 659–60, 669, 697
2:18ff. 544
2:18–19 648, 709
2:18–25 710
2:18–26 722
2:18–27 719–20
2:18–29 648
2:19 656, 664, 703
2:20 660, 725, 727–28
2:22 489, 492, 660, 669, 674
2:23 648, 669
2:24 669, 685, 708
2:27 660, 725, 727–28, 734
2:28 453, 648, 659, 663, 693, 695, 697, 721, 738, 777
2:29 727, 729
3:2 663, 693, 697, 710, 738
3:3 647
3:4 723
3:5 647
3:6 719, 723
3:7 648, 721
3:7–10 648
3:8 669
3:9 724–25, 726–27, 729, 738
3:11 416, 709
3:12 734
3:13 712
3:13–14 721
3:13–16 710

3:16 216, 647, 687, 709–10, 777
3:17 710
3:18 648, 721
3:19 702
3:19–20 314, 697, 725
3:22–24 723
3:23 416, 669, 701, 723
3:24 711, 714, 719
4:1 659, 701, 709
4:1–3 648, 656, 722
4:2 324, 648, 660, 663, 669, 711
4:3 489, 492, 660, 669, 709
4:4 648, 721
4:4–10 648
4:4–11 648
4:6 659–60, 711, 713, 795
4:7 710, 727, 729
4:7–10 416, 738
4:7–16 788
4:7–21 718, 723
4:8 721
4:9 319, 647, 669–71, 680, 738, 751
4:9–10 40, 322, 671, 686, 708, 788
4:10 40, 540, 669, 671, 688, 709, 719, 738, 777, 850
4:11 709
4:11–12 778
4:12–13 660
4:13 714
4:14 669, 671
4:15 669
4:16 701, 708
4:17 647
4:17–18 723, 738
4:19 709, 723
4:20 721, 724
4:21 723
5:1 674, 701, 710, 727, 729
5:2–3 723
5:3 709, 723
5:4 701, 704, 727, 729, 738
5:4–5 723

5:5 669, 701
5:5–8 714
5:5–10 703
5:6 660, 664, 669, 714, 727–28, 797
5:6–8 648, 687, 691, 727
5:7–8 710, 728
5:8 727
5:9–12 660
5:9–13 669
5:10 701
5:10–12 720
5:10–13 685
5:11–13 710
5:12 669
5:13 701
5:16 709, 721
5:16–17 314, 544, 725
5:18 710, 723, 725–27, 729, 738
5:19 714, 720, 735
5:20 669
5:21 648, 709, 721

2 John

1 647, 717
3 646–47, 669
4 647
4–6 709, 723
7 489, 492, 648, 656, 664, 669, 693, 695–96, 711, 725
7–9 722
7–11 725
9 669, 674
10 237, 709
12 647, 737

3 John

2 647
3 647
4 647
5–8 237, 567, 709, 718, 720, 722
6 717
9 647, 655
9–10 710, 717, 722

10 722
11 647
13 647, 737
14 722

Jude

1 66, 544, 546, 718
3 547
4 544–46, 548
6 549
6–7 341
7 549
8–9 549
8–10 545
9 549
11 549
12 544–45
14 137
14–15 546, 548–50, 750
14–16 545
16 545
17 544, 547
17–19 543
18 544–45
19 545
20 547
21 546, 548
24 546, 548

Revelation

1:1 658, 669, 718
1:1–3 659
1:1–3:22 659
1:2 669, 711, 720
1:3 721
1:4 658, 669, 678, 698
1:5 188, 212, 305, 340, 435, 438, 452, 584, 663, 668–69, 674, 687, 693, 708, 777
1:5–6 40, 514, 738, 775, 777
1:6 397, 546, 664, 670, 696, 721
1:7 657, 674, 691, 734
1:8 438, 675, 685, 698, 775
1:9 657–58, 720

1:9–11 675
1:13 137, 674
1:13–14 674
1:14 664
1:16 531
1:17 438, 657, 675, 738
1:17–18 665, 695
1:17b 664
1:18 663, 693, 775
1:18a 664
2:1 525, 717
2:1–3:22 710, 787
2:2 717
2:3 507
2:4 524, 722
2:6 543
2:7 589, 659, 693, 710–11, 721, 723, 795, 797
2:8 717
2:8b 664
2:9 525, 656, 720
2:10 514, 518, 696, 701, 710
2:11 659, 711, 721, 723, 795, 797
2:12 717
2:13 701, 710
2:14 543, 549
2:14–15 722
2:17 659, 711, 721, 723, 795
2:18 669
2:19 701, 708, 722
2:20 398, 718, 722
2:23 657, 675, 703
2:26 721–23
2:26–28 696
2:27 734
2:28 670
2:29 659, 711
3:3 722
3:5 670, 696, 703, 710, 721, 723
3:6 589, 659, 711
3:7 669
3:9 656, 708, 720

3:10 110
3:11 525
3:12 721, 723
3:13 659, 711
3:14 438, 584, 668, 674
3:15 722
3:18 727
3:20 57, 235, 675–76, 727, 730, 738
3:21 663, 665, 670, 693, 721, 723
3:22 659, 711
4:1–5:14 437
4:1–22:5 658, 675
4:2–8 531
4:2–11 476
4:8 343, 669, 685, 734
4:11 698
5:5 668, 674
5:5–6 693, 696
5:6 156, 657, 663, 665, 671, 775
5:6–13 440, 451
5:8–9 511
5:8–14 476, 664
5:9 508, 663, 687
5:9–10 40, 321, 514, 698
5:11–13 439, 511
5:12 156, 657
6:1 698
6:3 698
6:5 698
6:7 698
6:9 148, 192, 720
6:9–11 200, 584
6:10 476
6:10–11 665
6:12–13 659
6:16 734
6:17 362, 698
7:3 389, 718
7:3–8 727
7:4–8 495, 514, 633, 655, 717–18, 721
7:5–8 719

7:9 719, 738
7:13–14 727
7:14 663, 687, 707, 729, 738
7:16–17 657
7:17 665
8:3–4 419
10:7 717
11:7 669, 720
11:7–8 710
11:15 454, 669
11:15–19 343, 476, 697
11:17 685
11:18 362, 698, 717
12:7–9 437, 440, 713
12:7–12 697
12:10 669, 715
12:10–12 476, 698
12:11 663, 687, 710, 720
12:12 437
12:18–13:10 492
13 426, 489, 491
13:1ff. 669
13:8 156, 657
13:10 701
13:11 668
13:11–18 492
14:1 655, 670
14:1–5 633, 665, 686, 717, 719, 721
14:3 655
14:3–4 511
14:6 559
14:8 506
14:12 701
14:13 659, 703, 711
14:14 137, 668, 674
14:14–16 142
14:15 142
15:2 723
15:3 685
16:3 710
16:6 717

16:7 685
16:13 659
16:15 57, 698
16:19 506
17:5 506
17:8–10 492
17:10 698
17:14 668, 701
18:10 698
18:20 717
18:24 717
19:6 685
19:7 462, 673, 698, 706
19:10 659, 711
19:11–16 531, 659, 685
19:11–21 685
19:13 529, 657, 668–69, 685, 738
19:15 482
19:16 668, 693
19:19–20:10 342
19:20 659
20:1–3 440
20:1–6 665, 674, 697, 710
20:1–15 342
20:1–22:5 304, 738, 787
20:4 663, 669, 697
20:5 697
20:5–6 677
20:6 669, 693, 707, 721
20:7–15 440, 665
20:9 659
20:10 659
20:11–15 200, 342, 360, 665, 686, 696–97
20:11–21:8 360
20:12–13 697, 703, 707
20:12–14 310
20:14–15 314
20:15 703, 710
21:1–22:5 304, 665, 710
21:2 340, 393, 462, 673, 697, 717
21:3–4 663

21:6 657, 675–76, 710, 775
21:7 723
21:9 393, 462, 673
21:9–10 717
21:9–14 686, 697
21:9–27 721
21:9–22:5 706
21:14 659, 717
21:22 685, 696
21:22–23 738
21:22–27 686, 698
21:24–26 720
22:1 665, 710
22:1–2 657
22:2 710
22:6 717
22:6–21 659, 721
22:8 658
22:8–9 675
22:9 717
22:12 703
22:13 657, 664–65, 668, 675, 690, 696, 738, 775
22:14 710, 729, 738
22:16 668, 674–75
22:17 589, 657, 698, 710–11, 727, 730
22:18–19 5, 659, 722
22:19 710
22:20 208, 339, 401, 698, 727, 730
22:21 659

DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS

Tobit

2:1 228
3:7–9 94
3:11 339
4:9 503
4:15 117

Wisdom

1:4–10 713
1:6 453
1:6–7 438
1:7 439
2:10–20 355
2:12–20 150, 171
2:16 102–3
2:18 210
2:21–3:12 191
3:1 192
4:7–5:23 191
5:1–7 150, 171
5:17–18 482
7 438
7:14 713, 718
7:17 442
7:22–24 530
7:22–8:1 321, 713
7:25–26 322
7:26 438, 530, 677
7:27 322, 438, 713, 718
7:29 322
8:11 713
8:18 718
9:1ff. 10
9:1–2 212, 321–22, 530, 683
9:1–4 685
9:1–18 287
9:4 530
9:8 526
9:9–10 212

9:9–12 713
9:9–19 678
9:10 322, 530, 671
9:10–11 714
9:17 713
10:1 313
10:3 734
10:10 714
11:10 290
13–15 336
13:1–9 119
13:1–14:31 303
14:22–27 424
15:1–3 290
16:12–13 685
16:13 677
16:20–29 677
16:26 707
17:10 119
17:11 310
18:14–16 685
18:15 668
18:15–17 530
18:20 851
18:21 850
19:18 442

Sirach

prologue 1–2 744
1:22 495
2:15ff. 119
3:1–16 478
4:1 LXX 750
5:11 750
6:24–31 603
6:35–37 504
7:29ff. 119
7:30 LXX 750
10:23–24 425
13:1 745
14:18 309
15:11–15 365–66, 417

15:11–17 365
15:14–15 287, 313
15:15 289
16:14 360
17:11 291
17:24–26 290
17:31 309
23:1 102, 546
23:4 102
24 10, 118, 287, 436, 438
24:1ff. 438
24:1–22 321
24:3–6 322, 683
24:7–12 182, 683
24:8 671–72
24:8ff. 65
24:9 674
24:9–11 322
24:10 683
24:12 678
24:17 678
24:19–22 93
24:19–29 504
24:23–29 88
24:23–34 321
25 547
25:7–11 92
25:24 485
28:1–2 109
28:2 118
32:1 140
32:24 107
32:24–33:3 376–77
42:18 310
43:31 684
44–49 743–44
44–50 535
44:1–49:16 377
44:16 137
44:19–21 229, 289, 377
44:20 364

45:15 130
45:15–17 526
48:8 130
48:9–11 200
48:10–11 73
48:22 744
49:7 744
49:8 744
49:10 744
49:14 137
50:1–21 526
50:20 218
50:20–21 160
51:10 102
51:23 93
51:23–27 603
51:26 93

Baruch
2:31 704
3:9–4:4 287
3:32–4:4 321
3:36–4:4 678
3:37 LXX 678
4:1 297, 678
4:4 288
5:7–9 74

1 Maccabees
2:50 371
2:52 364, 377

2 Maccabees
1:1–2:18 495
1:8 220
1:15 220
2:5 839
2:19–32 617
3 274
3:1 456
4:26 355
5:19–20 850
5:20 820, 850, 860

7 191, 535
7:1–41 371
7:2 537
7:14 677
7:22–23 200
7:28 537
7:30–38 171
7:33 352, 820
7:37–38 820
8:5 820
8:14–15 339
8:21 371
10:1–8 609
12:32 228
12:43 677
13:4 504

1 Esdras
8:24 LXX 504

Psalm 151
151 746, 763–64
151 LXX 760

3 Maccabees
1:23 371
2:19 453
2:32 456
3:4 446
5:51 453
6:9 453

4 Maccabees
5:18 456
5:20–21 292
5:22 442
5:31 456
6:1 839
6:27–29 820
6:28 842, 845
6:28–29 839–41
6:29 838, 840, 842–45
7:3 842

7:9–10 442
7:19 842
7:24–14:10 371
7:24–16:6 535
8:1 839
8:12 839
8:19 839
9:22 842
9:23–24 820
12:13 442
12:15–19 820
14:5–6 842
16:13 842
16:25 842
17:12 842
17:13 846
17:17–18 842
17:18 842
17:18–19 841
17:19–20 842
17:20–22 820, 839
17:21 839–40, 842–44
17:21–22 840–43
17:22 220, 688, 824–27, 835, 837–39, 841–42, 845–48, 850–54, 858
18:4 820
18:10 370
18:23 200, 842

OLD TESTAMENT PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

Apocalypse of Elijah

3:1–13 492

Apocalypse of Moses

20–21 368, 370

Aristobulus

frag. 3 746

2 Baruch (Syriac Apocalypse)

4:2–6 717
6:7 839
11:1 506

29 665
29:1–30:5 342
38:2 291
39:7 492
40:1–3 492
48:23–24 464
48:27 291
48:38–40 291
48:46–47 291
49:1–51:10 200
50–51 310
54:14 377
54:15–19 327
54:16 377
54:21 377
57:2 289, 291, 312, 360, 374
67:7 506
85:3–4 313
85:14 464

1 Enoch

1:9 546, 549–50, 750
1:50 137
5:8–9 724
6–11 549
6–36 476
7:1–6 513
9:1–10:22 437
9:5 343
9:5–6 343
9:8–10 513
9:10 512
12:4 549
16:1–4 513
18:11–19:1 549
20:1–7 437
22 200
22:1–14 513
22:3 200
22:14 692
27 225
37–71 137

39:6 321
40:9 453
42 683
45–50 134
45:3ff. 137
45:3–4 75, 130, 321
46:1ff. 137
46:1–4 321
46:2–3 75
46:4 75, 130, 140
47:3 703
48 579
48:2 75, 321
48:2ff. 137
48:2–6 321
48:2–10 673
48:3 212
48:3–6 75, 579
48:4 677
48:6 137, 212
48:10 75, 130, 137, 321
49:1ff. 137
49:1–3 602
49:1–4 212
49:2 75, 130, 321
49:2–5 321
49:3 75
49:4 603
51:1–5 192, 200
51:3 602
52:4 75, 130, 137, 321
57 239
58:2 92
60:11–22 437
61–62 630
61–63 75, 83, 112
61–64 134
61:1–62:12 360
61:5 75, 130
61:5–62:16 137
61:7 297

61:8 75, 130, 135, 208, 321, 341
61:8–9 603
61:11ff. 297
62:2 75, 130, 135, 208, 321, 341, 603
62:3 75, 130, 140
62:5 75
62:5–6 321
62:7 75, 212
62:8 360
62:13–15 360
62:13–16 321
62:14 75, 86, 137
63:2 692
63:11 75, 130
70:1–2 200
71:5–17 137
71:13ff. 137
71:14 137, 321
90:33 239
91:7 362
91:11–14 313
91:13 750
94:103 93
98:10 149
99:16 362
100:7 360
103:2 703
108:3 703

2 Enoch
42:6–14 92

3 Enoch
11:1 504

4 Ezra
3:1 506
3:7 289, 303, 312
3:28 506
3:31 506
6:54 327, 393
6:54ff. 481
7:11 289

7:11–12 303
7:26 717
7:26–33 200
7:26–36 342
7:26–44 360
7:28 665
7:36 526
7:37 291
7:46 65
7:65ff. 65
7:65–66 304
7:66 303
7:70–73 291
7:72 360
7:116ff. 481
7:118 327
7:119–126 327
7:121–124 526
8:6 142
8:20–36 306
8:31–36 290, 365
8:34–36 361–62
8:41–44 90
8:46–61 303
8:52 445, 480, 526, 717
8:55–60 365
8:56–60 360
8:56–61 289
9:5–6 358
9:7 313, 375, 377
9:7–8 365
9:7–13 303
9:31 142
9:36 142
9:37 318
13 130, 134
13:13 239
13:22–24 303
13:23 303, 365, 377
13:35–36 340
13:36 717

14:1–48 8
14:18–47 744
14:45 8
16:42–45 416

Joseph and Aseneth
8:5 401
11:18 352
15:5 401

Jubilees
1:15ff. 297
1:23ff. 297
1:23–25 324
1:29 296, 440
2 287, 438
2:2 437
2:18 437
2:21 437
2:30 437
4:26 439–40
5:10 512
5:12 724
5:15 360
6 228
6:2 440
6:11–14 289
6:14 160, 511
7:20 421
11:23–24 92
12:16–18 442
14:6 364, 377
16:20–31 609
21:1–25 289
23:31 200
24:30 362
36:6–7 339
49:15 401
50:11 160, 511, 668

Letter of Aristeas
42 456
139 446

142 446
207 117
232 142

Liber antiquitatum biblicarum (Pseudo-Philo)
11:1 292
32:15 327, 393, 424, 481
44:6 292
53:12 201–2, 584

Life of Adam and Eve
4–8 290
27–28 290
32 289
37 289

Lives of the Prophets
1:1 535
12:13 148
42:14 148
71:9 148

Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah
2:9–10 535
4:1–18 492
5:1–14 535
11:34 751

Psalms of Solomon
8:22–34 290
9:4–5 313, 365–66, 417
9:4–7 289
9:6–11 290
14:2 291
14:10 453
16:1–5 460
17 129
17–18 84
17:3 81
17:26–38 82
17:27 210
17:30 97
17:32–35 239
17:43 602

18 129

Sibylline Oracles
3:20–23 438
4:158–169 74
5:414–433 97

Testament of Abraham
3:8 130
8:2 724
Recension A 11:9 393
Recension B 8:13 393

Testament of Benjamin
3:8 133
10:11 340

Testament of Dan
6:2 713

Testament of Gad
6:3 115

Testament of Isaac
6:13 665
8:6 665

Testament of Issachar
7:5 456

Testament of Job
39:12–13 200
48:2–3 419
48:2–3 419
52:1–53:8 200

Testament of Joseph
17:1–8 115

Testament of Levi
3:6 412
3:8 437
5:6 713
14:1 305
14:3–4 412
18 130

18:9 724
18:10 630
18:11–14 297

Testament of Moses
8:1–5 492

Testament of Naphtali
1:6 117

Testament of Solomon
15:5 442
18 437
18:1–42 442
21:2 836

Testament of Zebulun
9:4 461

DEAD SEA SCROLLS AND RELATED TEXTS

CD (Damascus Document)
1:4–5 227
1:19 364
2:6 227
2:12 130
4:20–5:2 424
4:21 424
13:11–16 232
20:1 130

1QapGen^{ar}
2:4 208
2:9 208
2:13 208
2:24 208
19:14–17 90
20:12–13 208
20:15–16 208
21:2 208
22:18 208

1QH
3:22 446

6:8 227
11:19 460
11:21–23 460
13:14 65
14:25–27 133
17:34–36 161
17:35–36 103
18:12–16 65

1QM
1:10–12 479
2:1 538
4:10 227, 393
5:1 538
6:6 81, 83
12:7 81, 83
13:8 227
17:5–8 713

1QpHab
7:16–8:3 107
7:17–8:3 229
8:1–3 377, 537

1QS
1:9–11 116
1:11–12 232
2:15 362
3:6–9 702, 713
3:6–12 365
3:13–4:26 713
3:17–26 660, 711
4:11–14 362
4:12 362
4:20ff. 228
4:20–23 76, 103
4:21 713
5:1–10 365
5:1–6:23 232
5:5 466
8:13 74
9:10–11 579
9:11 130, 150

9:19–20 74
9:21–22 116
10:25 369
11:4–17 460
11:7–8 446
11:9–11 306
11:9–12 365
11:11–15 222, 361–62
11:12 369
11:13–15 161

1Q27
1:6–7 604
1:6–8 361, 374

1Q28a
1:25 227
2:4–9 79
2:12 129–30
2:14 129
2:20 129–30

1Q28b
5:20 538

1Q34+1Q34bis
frag. 3 I, lines 5–6 148

4Q160
frags. 3–5 II, 3 133

4Q171
3:16 133, 227

4Q174
23–24 492
frag. 1 I, 21, 2, lines 1–13 97
frag. 1 I, 21, 2, lines 6–7, cf. DSSSE 352–53 291
frag. 1 I, 21, 2, lines 10–11 (DSSSE 353) 211
frag. 1 I, 21, 2, line 11, DSSSE 353 129

4Q175
23–30 135

4Q246

2:1 135, 211, 213, 579, 628, 670
2:5 213

4Q252
5:1–4 75

4Q365
frags. 6a II + 6c:1–7 746

4Q397
frags. 14–21, lines 10–11 7
frags. 14–21:10 744

4Q398
frags. 14–17 II, 1–8 360
frags. 14–17 II, 3 360, 374
frags. 14–17 II, 7 360, 364, 375
frags. 14–17 II, 7–8 291

4Q403
frag. 1 I, 30–II, 16 442
frag. 1 I, 31–33 442
frag. 1 I, 35 437

4Q405
frag. 15 II, 2–5 526

4Q521
frag. 1 559
frag. 2 II 559
frag. 2 II, 4–13 706
frag. 2 II, 8 79
frag. 2 II, 11 706
frag. 2 II, 12 191, 349
frag. 2 II, 12–14 79
frag. 2.1–2 602
frag. 7+5 II, 6 815f

4Q540
frag. 24 II, 5 130

5Q15
frag. 1 II, 6–7 721
frag. 1 II, 6–8 697

11Q10

24:7 208

11Q13
2:4 130, 559
2:6 130, 349
2:15ff. 349
2:15–16 130
2:15–17 559
2:18 130
2:18–19 130
2:19–20 130
2:23 130

11Q19
45:11–18 79
48:10–17 79
54:8–56:11 170
57:15–19 424
64:6–13 178
64:12 178, 332

PHILO

Against Flaccus
84 201

Allegorical Interpretation
1.90–97 289

Every Good Man Is Free
84–87 232

On Dreams
1.140–143 296
1.199 142

On Flight and Finding
53 834
100 160, 834, 836, 861
100–101 220
114 445

On Planting
43 833

On the Cherubim

25 220, 836
43–47 214

On the Confusion of Tongues
105 833

On the Contemplative Life
25 744

On the Creation of the World
119 461
167 142
170 445

On the Decalogue
165–167 478

On the Embassy to Gaius
140 425

On the Life of Abraham
203 453
262 364
270–271 371

On the Life of Moses
2 836
2.37ff. 281
2.51 293
2.94 833
2.95 160, 220, 838
2.95–96 834
2.96 160, 861
2.97 160, 220
2.106 834
2.166 352–53
95 836
187ff. 281
290f. 281

On the Special Laws
1.69 228
1.272 412
1.277 412
3.29 142

Questions and Answers on Exodus
2.49 353

Questions and Answers on Genesis
1.43 485
4.15 485

That God Is Unchangeable
69 293

That the Worse Attacks the Better
170 833

Who Is the Heir?
57 309
166 220

JOSEPHUS

Against Apion
1.1–4 617
1.37 744
1.37–41 744
1.38 744–45
1.38–41 8
1.39–41 744
1.42 744
1.50 573
1.218 618
2.1 617
2.190–219 410, 485
2.201 485
2.206 478
2.277 297

Jewish Antiquities
1.41–47 289
1.46 142
1.77 833
1.78 833
1.90 833
1.92 833
1.93 833
1.95 833

2.339 453
3.134 833
3.135 160
3.137 160
3.286 297
3.310 453
3.315 352–53
6.80 425
8.100 609
8.214 453
9.153 425
11.184 745
11.184–296 745
11.296 745
11.327 687
12.37–38 297
13.299–300 687
14.21 574
14.235 421
15.136 296
15.343 404
16.6 404
16.131 404
16.140 404
16.182 826, 828, 833, 835, 838, 853, 862
17.355 624
18.1 624
18.2 624
18.3 624
18.4 624
18.4–10 625
18.23–25 625
18.24 536
18.26 624
18.109–115 72
18.116 76
18.116–117 244
18.116–119 72–73
18.117 76
18.261ff. 492
20.97–98 72

20.169ff. 72
20.181 174
20.200 66, 233, 497, 598, 779
20.206–207 174
20.208 175

Jewish War
1.17 618
1.68–69 687
2.152 839
2.457ff. 612
3.356 293
3.506 705
4.317 177
4.494 409
5.147ff. 524
6.300ff. 72
6.384–386 623
6.425–426 730
7.203 175
7.253 624

RABBINIC WORKS

b. Baba Batra
14b 8
14b–15a 745
17a 200

b. Baba Qamma
92b 105

b. Berakot
28b 105

b. Megillah
8b–9b 747

b. Nedarim
64b 96

b. Pesahim
54a 290
57a 174
91a 175

b. Qiddushin
30b 291, 364

b. Sanhedrin
48a 135
56b 421
98b 75

b. Shabbat
31a 117, 416
116b 121

b. Ta‘anit
23a–23b 103

b. Yoma
86b 549

Eighteen Benedictions
2 677

m. Abot
1:1 290, 446
1:2 466
3:14 288
3:14–15 313
3:15 289, 291
3:16 292

m. Berakot
2:2 83
5:5 666

m. Keritot
5:1 731

m. Makkot
3:1–9 276
3:10 291

m. Megillah
1:8 747

m. Menahot
3:6 235
6:5 235

7:1–6 235

m. Pesahim
1:5 235
2:5 235
8:5 730
8:6 175
8:8 730
9:1 730
10:5 154, 164, 236, 801

m. Sanhedrin
4:1 176
6:5 201
7:4 276
7:10 170
10:1 281, 340
10:3 513
11:4 170, 176

m. Yoma
4:1–3 83, 218
6:2 83, 218
8:9 539

Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael
Exodus 12:6 285
Exodus 14:5 323
Exodus 21:30 148–49

Pesiqta Rabbati
34 [159b] 438

Pesiqta of Rab Kahana
12:1 119

Sefer Torah
62a 747

Sifre
Deuteronomy 32:43 148
Leviticus 19:18 [89b] 115

Soferim
35a 747

t. Berakot
7:18 247

t. Menahot
13:2 174

t. Sanhedrin
10:11 170

t. Sotah
13:3 745

Targum Isaiah
7:3 332, 374
10:21–22 332, 374
26:2 332, 374
26:2–3 292
42:1 602
53 150
53:1 561
53:5 583, 602
53:5–6 97
53:8 580–81, 602, 673, 706
53:11–12 602
53:12 171, 329
54:17 370–71

Targum Neofiti
1 289

Targum Onqelos
Exodus 24:8 158

Targum Pseudo-Jonathan
Genesis 1:27 289
Genesis 2:15 289
Genesis 31:35 323

Targum Yerushalmi I
Genesis 1:27 118
Leviticus 22:28 114

APOSTOLIC FATHERS

Barnabas
2:6 299, 547, 754

4:14 754
5:9 754
7:3 754
16:6 750
19:2 750
19:5–7 477

1 Clement

1:3 471
5:2–6:1 253
5:4 507, 574
5:4–7 507, 779
5:5–7 638
5:5–6:1 253
5:7 260, 392
6:1 260
6:1–2 507
13:2 754
16:7 776
17:1 523
21:6–9 477
23:3 545, 548, 550
34:8 751
35:5–6 754
36:2–5 523, 754
37:5–6 754
42:1–4 469
42:4 471
44:5 471
47:3 754
49:5 754
55:2 709

2 Clement

2:4 754
4:5 754
5:2–4 754
6:1 754
6:2 754
7:6 754
8:5 754
9:11 754

11:2 550
11:7 751, 754
13:2 754
14:2 393, 754
20:5 538

Didache
1:1–6:3 754
4:9–11 477
7:1 243, 611
7:1–4 246
8:2 100, 108, 562
8:2–3 402, 754
9:5 401
10:1–6 209
10:5–6 209
10:6 208, 247, 339, 401, 727, 730
11:3–12 237, 567
11:3–13:7 722
11:9 545
11:12 545
14:2 247
15:3–4 562
16:3–4 669
16:4 135

Hermas

Commandment
11:2 516

Vision
2:4 617
2.4.8.2–3 471
3.1.9.8 471

Ignatius

To Polycarp
2:3 547
6:1 844

To the Ephesians
5:3 471
6:1 471

20:2 405, 547
21:1 844

To the Magnesians
2:1 471
3:1–2 471

To the Philadelphians
9:2 547

To the Romans
6:2 547

To the Smyrnaeans
2 656
3:3 451
5:2 656
6:1 463
10:2 844

To the Trallians
2:1–2 471
9–10 656

Martyrdom of Polycarp
2:3 751

Papias

Fragments
3 597, 650

NEW TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA

Gospel of Peter
28–49 188

Gospel of Thomas
1 557

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITINGS

Athanasius

Against the Arians
1.54 798

Augustine

Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum
4.4.7 312

De diversis quaestionibus LXXXIII 501

Clement of Alexandria

Excerpts from Theodotus
80 724

Stromata
3.6.53.2 472
3.6.53.3 472

Stromateis
Books 1–3 472

Eusebius

Historia ecclesiastica
2.23.4–18 497
3.5.3 598
3.18.4–3.20.7 544
3.19.1 66
3.20 66
3.25.1–7 757
3.25.3 757
3.25.4 757
3.25.6 758
3.25.7 757
3.39.3–4 69
3.39.4 555, 650
3.39.7 650
3.39.15 509, 564, 572
3.39.16 597, 618
6.14.7 653
6.25.3–14 757
6.25.8 545, 757
6.25.13–14 523

Hippolytus

Refutation of All Heresies
5.21.6 724

Irenaeus

Adversus haereses
1.10.1 779–80
1.21.2 724
1.24.2 485
2.22.5 648, 650, 654
3.1.1 574, 598, 648, 654, 649
3.3.4 654
5.30.3 659

Jerome

Commentary on Matthew
6:11 109

Justin Martyr

1 Apology
31.6 276
61.1ff. 702
61.3 453
61.10 453
65.5 401
66.1 453, 702
66.2 401
66.3 562, 564
67 564
67.3 564, 754–55

Dialogue with Trypho
32.1 178
35.3 403
36.1 210
39.7 210
45.1 516
47.1–3 611
66.1–4 747
69.7 170
80.5 310
89.2 178, 210, 332, 692
90.1 210
108.2 170
138.2 453

Origen

Commentary on Matthew
27.9 751

First Principles
preface, 1 752

Philip of Side
5 599
12.2 599, 649–50

Pseudo-Clementine

Recognitions
1.54 74
1.60 74

Tertullian

Modesty
20.2 524

OTHER ANCIENT WRITERS AND SOURCES

Apollonius of Rhodes

Argonautica
2.485 858
2.485–486 858
2.485b 688, 855–56
3.594 830
4.1547 829
4.1547–1550 829
4.1549 827, 829–30, 858

Aristotle

Metaphysics
1.2.11, 982b 409

Nicomachean Ethics
5.3, p. 1129b 362
5.7, p. 1132a 362

Calendar Inscription of Priene
col. 105.40 558

Callimachus

Aetia (Causes)
frag. 90a 844

Diegesis II
lines 29–40 844

Cicero

In Verrem
2.5.165 175, 354

Cornutus

Theologiae Graecae Compendium
20 461

Corpus Hermeticum
13.18 412
13.21 412

Dio Cassius

Roman History
59.8.3 844

Dio Chrysostom

Oration
10 [11] 836, 848
10.121 219
10.123 219
11 829
11.121 828, 835, 852
11.123 828
36.35 101

Eustathius

Commentary on Homer
Odyssey 8.509 831

Greek Magical Papyri
PGM IV. 3007–3086 499

Homer

Odyssey

8.509 828, 831

Horace

Odes
3.2.13 222

Inscriptions of Cos
81 826–28, 833, 836, 848
347 826–27, 833, 836, 848

John Kaminiates

The Capture of Thessaloniki
11.1 831

Laurentianus
no. 32.9 830

Lindian Chronicle
line B 49 836, 848, 853

Livy

Ab urbe condita
2.32.8ff. 393

Lucian

Lexiphanes
10 844

De saltatione
81 478

Onosander

De imperatoris officio
1.18–21 478

p. Fayum
337 219–20, 835, 847, 854, 858

p. London
1912 446

Plato

Apology
32a–c 222

Cratylus
400c 199

Politics
II 364bce 390
II 365a 390

Timaeus
28c 101
frag. 537 line 34 101

Pliny

Epistulae
10.96–97 518
10.96.6 525
10.96.8 518

Polybius

Histories
4.50.10 536
6.55.2 536

Pseudo-Phocylides
195–197 478
200–209 478
223–226 478

Suetonius

Claudius
25 523

Nero
16.2 507

Tacitus

Annals
13.50–51 425
15.44.2–5 507

Historiae
5.9 839

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