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DAMASCUS ROAD EXPERIENCE. See CONVERSION AND CALL OF PAUL.

DAVID'S SON. See SON OF DAVID.

DAVIDIC KING. See CHRIST; SON OF DAVID.

DAY OF THE LORD. See ESCHATOLOGY II; JUDGMENT.

DEAD SEA SCROLLS

In late 1946 or early 1947 a Bedouin shepherd, Muhammed edh-Dhib, followed a stray into a cave along the shores of the Dead Sea and so chanced upon the first of a group of ancient manuscripts that have since revolutionized biblical studies and the study of ancient Judaism. Seven substantial scrolls emerged from that cave, copies of biblical and extrabiblical writings alike. They were only the beginning. Following the initial discovery, Bedouins and scholars competed to explore the caves of the region in hopes of new manuscript finds. After a search of hundreds of caves, eleven eventually yielded literary texts, now known as the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS). Approximately 875 generally fragmentary manuscripts came to light in the course of these explorations. The nearby site of Qumran, hitherto regarded as an ancient fortress, was also excavated during five campaigns between 1952 and 1956, for scholars suspected that the site was connected to the caves and the scrolls.

Publication of the discoveries was comparatively rapid at first. Six of the seven major scrolls from the site of the first discovery, now known as cave 1, were completely published within seven years. The seventh, the *Genesis Apocryphon*, appeared in a partial edition in 1956, and much more of the work has since been deciphered

and published in preliminary form. The great bulk of the discoveries were early consigned to an international editorial team of seven scholars from Europe and the United States. This team succeeded in sorting most of the fragments and published some of the DSS in a series of volumes, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* (DJD; “of Jordan” appears on some volumes). Five volumes of DJD appeared in the decade spanning the late 1950s to the late 1960s. In the decades that followed, however, even with occasional preliminary editions, the rate of publication slowed to a crawl. Volume 6 of the series appeared in 1977, nine years after volume 5; volume 7 had to wait another five years, and volume 8 seven more, only appearing in 1989. By 1991, estimates of the percentage of material that remained unpublished ranged between 40 and 60 percent. The reasons for failure to publish so much vital material after forty years were various, some legitimate (the fragmentary condition of the scrolls; deaths of original team members; the demands of academic responsibilities), but others suggesting scandalous scholarly conduct. The late 1980s, in particular, were marred by growing scholarly wrangling over the slow pace of publication and rights of access to the unpublished materials.

In December 1991, pressured by bootleg editions of the scrolls that had begun to appear and the Huntington Library’s decision to open its virtually complete collection of photographs of the unpublished texts to all qualified scholars, the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) decided to lift restrictions. Henceforth it would allow people to study the unpublished manuscripts and, within certain limits, publish the results of their research. At about the same time, the IAA and the new editor-in-chief of the publication project, E. Tov, moved to expand the number of

scholars working on the texts for official publication in the DJD series. Over sixty scholars were now assigned texts. The augmented team soon began to publish the scrolls at a pace much faster than ever before in the history of the project. Some twenty additional volumes of DJD appeared between 1994 and early 2000. As a result of these changes, what had been a stagnant field of research from 1968 to 1990 became a swirl of scholarly activity.

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1. Description of Contents.

1.1. Biblical Materials. The biblical scrolls recovered from the caves number about 225. They include copies of every book of the Hebrew Bible, with the exception of the book of Esther. The most frequently attested books are Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Isaiah and Psalms—this last book numbering some thirty-five copies.

The biblical scrolls from Qumran have had a tremendous impact on the study of the Hebrew Bible with regard to textual criticism and with regard to what was once known as higher criticism. Their importance for textual criticism is obvious when one considers that prior to their discovery the oldest complete manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible dated from the tenth century A.D. The DSS lifted the curtain to a period over a millennium earlier in the formation of the text.

With regard to matters of higher criticism, perhaps a discussion of the manuscript known as 11QPs^a can serve as a typical example of the rich applications the scrolls make possible. It contains forty-one of the biblical psalms as well as apocryphal Psalms 150, 154 and 155. 11QPs^a also embraces three hitherto unknown psalms, a portion of Ecclesiasticus 51, and a ten-line prose supplement enumerating the total of David's writings (given as 3,600). The date of composition for the three unknown psalms is disputed by scholars, but is probably the late Persian or early Hellenistic period. The scroll's text of Ecclesiasticus 51 differs markedly from the form previously familiar from the Septuagint and other early versions. Its presence in a collection attributed entirely to David is instructive, serving as a premier example of the tendency in Second Temple Judaism to ascribe poetic writings of unknown authorship to David. Concomitantly, its

inclusion in 11QPs^a appears to confirm the long-held suspicion that Jesus ben Sirach did not write the fifty-first chapter of Ecclesiasticus.

But this manuscript of the book of Psalms raises much broader issues. The order of the psalms in 11QPs^a differs significantly from the order in the traditional or Masoretic Text. At least once (Ps 145), the Qumran scroll evidences a different form of a canonical psalm. Certain groupings of psalms, such as the Songs of Ascent and the Passover Hallel—viewed as units by the Masoretic Text—appear scattered throughout the Qumran text. And 11QPs^a is not an isolated example. Half a dozen other non-Masoretic psalters are included among the DSS. These facts suggest that the Psalter as we know it was only one variant in use among the Jews at the time of Jesus. Taken together with other similar evidence, 11QPs^a tends to suggest that the third division of the canon, the Writings, was still in flux at the time. Indeed, the Qumran biblical scrolls have reopened study of the formative process of the entire canon. Variant literary editions of Exodus, Numbers, Jeremiah, Psalms and numerous other books seem to show that the writings we consider canonical grew and assumed new forms for a considerable period after the traditional time of their composition. Other writings that did not become part of the canon for later Judaism or Christianity quite likely were such for some groups of Second Temple Jews.

1.2. Nonbiblical Materials. The vast majority of manuscripts from the caves near Qumran are nonbiblical texts. Many of these writings were unknown prior to the discoveries. Others were familiar to scholars only by name or through short quotations in ancient literature. Since the diversity of the scrolls does not lend itself to a single classificatory scheme, what follows is organized according to these broad categories: major (i.e., lengthy) texts, interpretive texts, apocryphal and pseudepigraphic texts, liturgical texts, legal texts, and “magical” and calendrical texts.

1.2.1. Major Texts.

Damascus Document (CD). This work, once known as the Zadokite Fragments, first came to light long before the discovery of the Qumran texts. At the end of the nineteenth century, S. Schechter discovered two fragmentary exemplars deposited in the genizah of a Karaite synagogue in Fustat, the old city of Cairo. To these

medieval manuscripts the DSS have added extensive fragments of eight copies of the *Damascus Document* from Qumran cave 4 (4Q266-273) and tiny fragments of two other copies of the work from caves 5 and 6.

Taken as a whole, the twelve copies represent two versions, or recensions, conventionally designated A and B. Recension A is by far the better attested. When dealing with either recension, scholars usually subdivide the work into two approximate halves according to content: the Admonition and the Laws. The term *admonition* is something of a misnomer, for one can isolate at least four separate addresses or “sermons” within this section. The Admonition encompasses stylized historical summaries that prefer ciphers to actual names when designating the actors in the drama. So one finds mention of a “Teacher of Righteousness,” a “Spouter of Lies” and an “Interpreter of the Law.” An enemy group, the “Seekers After Smooth Things,” is also prominent. The thrust of the Admonition is to compare two periods of God’s wrath: the first at the time of Nebuchadnezzar (586 B.C.) and the second at the time of the Roman invasion of Palestine (63 B.C.). The point of the comparison is to proclaim a typological parallel: just as apostasy in the first instance led to destruction and exile for Israel, so too in the Roman period, disaster of an even greater magnitude lies ahead—unless the people repent and embrace the text’s legal perspectives.

These perspectives, the laws, constitute halakic regulations for a communal life lived out in “camps,” but their contents differ somewhat from manuscript to manuscript. No single “canonical” form of the *Damascus Document* ever developed. Rather, different leaders of the movement evidently modified a central core to fit their own needs. Most telling in this regard is the substantial overlap between the legal portions of the *Damascus Document* and the *Rule of the Community*. In some instances manuscripts of these two works contain identical laws, suggesting that one and the same sectarian group used both. This inference gains additional support from the fact that other Qumran writings also overlap similarly (e.g., *Halakha A* [4Q251], *Serekh-Damascus* [4Q265] and *4QMMT* [4Q394-399] all overlap one another). The oft-repeated hypothesis that a stricter branch of the sect lived at Qumran and followed the *Rule of the Community*, while a less disciplined, broader movement liv-

ing throughout Palestine was regulated by the *Damascus Document*, no longer seems viable.

The Rule of the Community (1QS). Among the initial discoveries from cave 1 was a virtually complete copy of the writing variously termed the *Rule of the Community*, *Discipline Scroll* or *Manual of Discipline*. The *Rule of the Community* (its actual, ancient Hebrew designation, found inscribed on a scroll tab) describes sundry regulations for the communal life of a group calling itself the *Yahad*. They are to share all meals, pool their property and follow a very strict regimen of ritual purity. Scholars early recognized that this is a work whose form, as with the *Damascus Document*, is the result of a process of editing and redaction. Recent publication of the fragments of eleven copies of the *Rule of the Community* from cave 4 (4Q255-264a) have confirmed this understanding and afford insight into the redactional process by which the work grew. In turn, recognition of the literary growth pattern carries historical implications. It now appears that the movement behind the text was organized at first in semidemocratic fashion. “The Many” (*hārabiʿim*), or general membership, had much of the power to make decisions about policy and finances. At a certain juncture a group called the Sons of Zadok (presumably related, whether actually or mythically, to the Zadokite priesthood) usurped this power. The Many was thereafter governed by a priestly oligarchy. Why and when this change took place is unknown. The cave 4 copies also show that, as with the *Damascus Document*, no canonical version of the *Rule of the Community* ever displaced all rivals. Instead, earlier versions continued to be recopied even after more developed ones had come on the scene. Presumably, the unavailability of developed forms at the time a copy was needed explains the scribal decision to recopy older ones. Such scarcity was common in book cultures of Greco-Roman times.

In addition to the principal text, the cave 1 manuscript included two so-called appendices. The first, known as the *Rule of the Congregation* or *Serekh ha-edah* (1QSa/1Q28a), is two columns long and deals with the “last days.” The work’s actual connection with the principal text is unclear, for although it originally belonged to the same scroll, it was written by another scribe and differs in concept and terminology. The *Rule of the Congregation* legislates for the education of children raised in the community, the stages of

progression within the movement according to age and ability, and procedures for the communal meal presided over by priests and a so-called messiah of Israel. Recently, five additional copies of the *Rule of the Congregation* have been identified, written in a cryptic script on papyrus (4Q249a-249e). The second appendix, the *Rule of Benediction* (1QSb/1Q28b), is very poorly preserved. Several blessings pronounced by the “wise leader” over the community, the priests and the prince make up its content. As with the *Rule of the Congregation*, this second appendix has a very pronounced eschatological setting.

The War Scroll (1QM). This scroll consists of nineteen badly deteriorated columns. It was originally somewhat longer, but how much is now impossible to determine. The work is ostensibly a manual to guide the self-styled “Sons of Light” in a final eschatological war, in which they are to face, and eventually vanquish, the “Sons of Darkness.” Nevertheless, the text is essentially a theological, not a military, composition.

Among the topics the *War Scroll* treats are: preliminary preparations for the war; rules for the sounding and inscription of trumpets used to guide the course of the battle; the dimensions and inscriptions of shields and standards used; the battle array, including who may and may not participate in the conflict; the role of the priests and Levites; and the ebb and flow of the final battle against the *Kittim* (probably the Romans).

Most scholars agree that the weapons and tactics that the scroll describes suggest Roman rather than Greek military strategy. If so, these descriptions enable the dating of the text in the form we have it to be narrowed to the later decades of the first century B.C. But literary analysis further suggests that the text as we now have it is considerably expanded and reworked from an earlier version or versions, perhaps utilizing as its kernel a work based on Daniel 11:40–12:3. This literary hypothesis finds some support in fragments of six exemplars of the *War Scroll* discovered in cave 4. Some of these fragments reveal a much shorter version of the work and otherwise differ markedly from the cave 1 manuscript.

A work intimately related to the *War Scroll*, even perhaps part of one recension of it, is *Sefer ha-Milhamah*. Two copies have survived, 4Q285 and 11Q14. One fragment of this writing has been interpreted to say that a messianic figure

known from several of the DSS, the “Prince of the Congregation,” will be put to death by his enemies. He would then be a sort of dying messiah. A more probable interpretation of the ambiguous Hebrew phrase in question is that the Prince of the Congregation puts an enemy king to death.

The Hymns (1QH^a). The composition known as the *Hymns*, or 1QHodayot, comprises in the *editio princeps* eighteen partial columns and sixty-six numbered fragments. Subsequent to that original edition, scholars identified two additional fragments. Because none of the columns is complete, students of the text have proposed differing divisions and, consequently, competing reckonings as to the number of hymns 1QH^a contains. Six manuscripts from cave 4 further complicate the situation. While these copies fill in lacunae in the manuscript from cave 1, they also prove that the order of hymns was somewhat variable. Indeed, the cave 4 copies tend to support literary analysis arguing that more than one version of the work existed. At the core, and originally circulating as a self-contained book, were some eight columns of hymns authored by the Teacher of Righteousness. These were the so-called *Teacher Hymns*. Subsequent leaders of the movement added hymns fore and aft, sometimes deriving these added hymns from sources that have also come down to us separately. The added hymns are conventionally known as *Community Hymns*.

Most of the hymns begin either “I thank thee, Lord,” or “Blessed art thou, O Lord.” Many scholars have tried to fit them into a model known to biblical form critics as “psalms of individual thanksgiving.” Deviations from the biblical patterns, however, are sufficient to make the genre of these compositions a moot point. Many of the hymns have nothing to do with thanksgiving, or even lament, but are more like a discourse. Also debated is the question of what function(s) the writings served within the movement(s) that produced or employed them. Another important aspect of the hymns is their midway position between the psalmic literature of the Hebrew Bible and that of later Judaism, including the NT.

One of the hymns added to the core of the *Teacher Hymns* (at 1QH^a 25:35–26:10) survived only in fragmentary form but has recently been the subject of considerable research. The cave 4 materials make it possible to reconstruct about

half of the hymn. The writer portrays a remarkable figure who asks, “Who is like me among the angels?” (Heb *’elim*, lit. “gods”), echoing in daring fashion the biblical question addressed to God, “Who is like you among the angels?” He also asks, “Who is like me for lack of evil? Does any compare to me?” and (alluding to the Servant Songs of Isaiah) “Who has been contemptuously despised like me?” Though much research remains to be done on this “Hymn of the Exalted One,” it bears obvious comparison to NT statements about Jesus and to the NT use of divine language from the OT to describe him. Moreover, the figure is, like the Jesus of Hebrews, seated on a throne at the right hand of God.

The Temple Scroll. Known in three copies from cave 11 and one or two from cave 4, the principal copy of the *Temple Scroll* (11QTemple; also 11QTorah) is the longest of the surviving DSS. Unwound, this copy of the scroll is twenty-eight feet from beginning to end. The *Temple Scroll* is a melange of biblical and extrabiblical ordinances and descriptions concerned with a temple, its services and its festivals. The first well-preserved columns describe the temple building with its key installations. From there the text proceeds to detail various festivals, sacrifices and procedures, the temple courtyards and laws of impurity, finishing with extracts from the Deuteronomic Code (Deut 12–26). Among the most striking literary features of the scroll is the change of all biblical quotations attributed to Moses from third to first person. This well-calculated change has the effect of making Moses seem at once the author and addressee of the text, thus imbuing its contents with Mosaic authority.

The New Jerusalem Text. Although not well enough preserved to be considered major, a text that is related to the *Temple Scroll* may conveniently be brought into the discussion here. This is the Aramaic writing designated the *New Jerusalem*, which is attested by copies from caves 1, 2, 4, 5 and 11. The author presents the work as a vision in which he (“Ezekiel”?) is led about a future Jerusalem by an angel and shown various buildings, streets and gates; in each case measurements in cubits and reeds are provided. The description is very schematic, and many measurements are unrealistically large. Evidently inspired by Ezekiel 48:16–17, the city described is approximately 18 by 13 miles in size. Numerous measurements for features of the city and its

temple are identical to those of the *Temple Scroll*, suggesting that the *New Jerusalem* was a source for that work.

The Copper Scroll (3Q15). Perhaps no DSS has occasioned greater difficulties in its reading and interpretation than the *Copper Scroll*. This is the only work inscribed on copper, and unlike all but a few it was composed in early Mishnaic Hebrew rather than in archaizing Late Biblical Hebrew. The twelve columns consist of a series of sixty-four or sixty-five topographic descriptions, or toponyms, often followed by the instruction to dig a given depth. Then follows a specified weight of bullion or amount of money, precious vessels or the like. The *Copper Scroll*, in other words, is a list of treasure trove and a guide to the hiding places. At first glance the amounts of treasure seem incredible; estimates in terms of modern value exceed one hundred million dollars.

Interpretations of this document include the original editor Milik’s theses that it represents either a “folkloristic treasure trove” or the work of a madman, in either case having no connection to the Qumran movement. For Milik the *Copper Scroll* was only coincidentally found along with the group’s materials in cave 3, being removed somewhat from the other deposits of that cave. His approach requires two independent deposits. The first deposit in cave 3 occurred about A.D. 70, when all the other DSS were hidden in the caves. The *Copper Scroll* belonged to a putative second deposit made around A.D. 100. Although popular in the 1950s and 1960s, Milik’s views can claim no significant support today. Most scholars now believe that the scroll was placed in the cave at the same time as all the others. They further deny that the scroll is a work of imagination; its genre is documentary, that of “list,” a common genre in Greco-Roman times. The contents described in the scroll are therefore of an actual treasure, probably associated with the Jerusalem temple. Only the connection with a major institution of Jewish society can explain the vast sum of treasure. Some argue that the treasure was taken from Herod’s temple, others that it was intended for Herod’s temple. Accordingly, the *Copper Scroll* occupies a central position in arguments about who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls.

1.2.2. Interpretive Texts.

Pesharim. Among the most fascinating of the Hebrew texts discovered in the caves are those known as the pesharim (*pēšārīm*, pl. of *pēšer*,

meaning “solution” or “interpretation”). These are usually grouped into two categories—thematic and continuous. Thematic pesharim consist of selected portions of the Bible with interpretive comments and are organized around a central theme or idea. In contrast, continuous pesharim comment *seriatim* on a portion of the Bible, usually the prophets, but sometimes so-called prophetic psalms. At least fifteen, perhaps eighteen, texts belonging to this latter category have been identified.

The pesharim purport to be mysterious explanations of divine truth from Scripture, a truth revealed only to the author and his group. None of these commentaries is concerned with the literal sense of the text; instead, they use metaphor, paronomasia and development of key words or phrases to unmask the hidden significance of a given biblical portion. The most complete of the pesharim is the commentary on Habakkuk. This pesher preserves thirteen almost complete columns, providing the text of Habakkuk along with commentary. The form of the book of Habakkuk to which it witnesses is often different from that of the Masoretic Text.

Also relatively complete is the pesher designated 4Q171, which preserves the text of Psalms 37:7-40; Psalm 45:1-2 and possibly Psalm 60:8-9. Psalm 37 is a psalm of personal tribulation, offering the righteous hope in spite of the evident prosperity of the wicked. It thus fits perfectly the literary requirements for the author of the pesher, who interprets the tribulation in terms of his community’s troubles, enemies and approaching eschatological justification.

From a historical vantagepoint, the pesher on Nahum (4Q169) is the most important of the pesharim. Eschewing ciphers at certain junctures, this author mentions a “Demetrius, King of Greece,” and refers to a Jewish ruler who crucified great numbers of his opponents. Apparent references to these same persons and events appear in the writings of Josephus, leading most scholars to identify Demetrius as Demetrius III Eucraerus (95-87 B.C.) and the Jewish ruler as Alexander Janneus (103-76 B.C.). The crucifixion mentioned equates, most think, with Janneus’s known execution of eight hundred of his opponents in the wake of a failed *coup d’état*. That event occurred in 88 B.C.

Of the thematic pesharim, none has aroused more profound interest than 11QMelchizedek. Fourteen fragments preserve the remains of

three columns of this manuscript. The author comments on isolated OT texts (in particular Lev 25:9, 10, 13; Deut 15:2; Is 61:1), but Daniel 9:24-27 structures his commentary. The events connected with these biblical texts are portrayed as taking place in “the end of days,” which is further identified as the “tenth Jubilee” and the “Day of Atonement.” Melchizedek will free those who belong to his “inheritance” and (if suggested restorations are followed) “atone for their iniquities.” He will further exact God’s vengeance upon Belial and those of his “lot.” The text presents a conception of Melchizedek that is approximately contemporary with and comparable to that of Hebrews 7: connecting him with divine judgment, a Day of Atonement and a primary role among God’s angels. A second figure in the pesher, the “Herald,” may be identified with the Teacher of Righteousness, but this point remains controversial.

Three additional thematic pesharim are important. The first of these is known as 4QOrdinances, which exists in three copies (4Q159, 513-514). This halakic pesher interprets Exodus 30:11-16 (the scriptural basis for the temple tax traditionally required of all male Jews annually) as referring not to annual taxes but instead to a one-time payment. Leviticus 25:39-46, which prohibits the purchase of fellow Israelites as slaves, is here understood to ban also the sale of a Jew to Gentiles.

The second thematic pesher is 4QFlorilegium. Here four large fragments have been joined to form two columns, leaving twenty-three extra, unjoined sections. The author combines quotations from 2 Samuel 7:10-14, Exodus 15:17-18, Amos 9:11, Psalm 1:1, Isaiah 8:11, Ezekiel 37:23 (uncertain) and Psalm 2:1 with interpretive comments. All of these verses are related to the “end of days,” when God will order that a new “temple of Adam” be built. Therein people will perform sacrifices and the “deeds of the Torah,” free from outside harassment or impurity. Prominent in the text are references to the “Shoot of David” and the “Interpreter of the Law,” eschatological figures familiar from other Qumran texts.

The third thematic pesher, 4QTestimonia, has perhaps falsely furnished many scholars with the basic substance of Qumran messianic expectation. The text is a catena of quotations from Deuteronomy 5:28-29, Deuteronomy 18:18-19, Numbers 24:15-17, Deuteronomy 33:8-11,

Joshua 6:26 and an extrabiblical work also found among the scrolls, 4QPsalms of Joshua. The body of the text arranges these quotations into four groups, each group set off by a scribal device and so, inferentially, concerning separate topics. One reason this text is important is because it furnishes explicit evidence for the existence, long posited, of *testimonia*, or *florilegia* (collections of proof-texts), in pre-Christian Judaism.

Targumim. Three Aramaic targumim (*targūmim*, plural of *targūm*, meaning “translation” or “interpretation” of the Hebrew Bible) number among the DSS. Much the longest and most complete of these is the Job targum from cave 11. This text represents the only incontestably pre-Christian targum of any appreciable length. Surviving portions include Job 17–42, with the last six chapters the least damaged. On the whole, despite slight additions, subtractions and dislocations, the Hebrew text behind the Aramaic translation seems to have been essentially the Masoretic Text. Even the supposedly disordered third cycle of debates (Job 22:1–31:40) and the Hymn to Wisdom (Job 28:1–28:28, often regarded as an interpolation) are here and in the same problematic order as in the Masoretic Text.

The other two targumim are extremely fragmentary. The first (4Q156) contains an Aramaic rendering of Leviticus 16:12–15, 18–21, but whether these fragments were part of a targum is uncertain. Equally conceivable is that they come from a liturgical work that quoted these verses. If, nevertheless, they do represent portions of a targum, then we have for the first time a pre-Christian targum to a book of the Pentateuch. The translation of the Hebrew is literal (unexpanded). Finally, 4Q157 preserves portions of Job 3:5–9 and Job 4:16–5:4, reflecting a text virtually identical to the Masoretic Text.

1.2.3. *Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphic Texts*. Included among the DSS are manuscripts of non-biblical books that were known in some form even before the discoveries at the caves. Apocryphal writings attested include Tobit (in Hebrew and Aramaic) and Ecclesiasticus, also known as Sirach. Pseudepigraphic works include the *Testament of Levi* (in Aramaic), a portion of the *Testament of Naphtali* (in Hebrew), *Enoch* and *Jubilees*. *Jubilees* was especially popular, to judge by the fourteen or fifteen manuscripts thus far identified from caves 2, 3, 4 and 11. Not surprisingly,

previously unknown texts that can now be classified as pseudepigraphic were also unearthed. Among these are testaments of Jacob, Judah, Joseph and Kohath, the *Psalms of Joshua* mentioned above, and a Daniel cycle.

I Enoch. In 1976, Milik published his long-awaited book on the fragments of *Enoch* discovered in cave 4. Milik’s book contains most but not all of the Qumran *Enoch* manuscripts, all in Aramaic, and attests parts of every subdivision of *I Enoch* except for one. Thus it includes seven fragmentary manuscripts (4QEn^{a–g}) that together preserve some of the Book of Watchers, the Book of Dreams and the Epistle of Enoch. Also included in the book are four other manuscripts (4QEnastr^{a–d}) that point to a much longer recension of what is known in *I Enoch* as the Astronomical Book. Additionally, portions of a literature clearly related to *I Enoch*, but previously unknown, are included under the title Book of Giants (4QEnGiants^{a–c}). Significant by its absence from the Qumran fragments is the so-called Book of Parables, which uses the term “son of man,” an important self-designation of Jesus. Scholars are divided on the reason for this absence. Milik thought that the Book of Parables must be a Christian writing, but most scholars today reject that view. The Book of Parables was probably, at least in an early form, pre-Christian, but was not included among the Qumran deposits either fortuitously or because some of its ideas were unacceptable.

Genesis Apocryphon. One of the pseudepigraphic texts that surfaced among the DSS was the otherwise unknown *Genesis Apocryphon* (1QapGen). Dated around the turn of the eras, this Aramaic writing presents the patriarchs of Genesis telling their stories. In so doing it adheres closely to the biblical stories but with frequent expansions derived from unknown midrashic sources, including, it seems, a Testament of Noah. Columns 1 through 5 mostly concern the birth of Noah; 6 through 17 deal with the flood and the postdiluvian division of the earth among Noah’s sons; 18 through 22 (where the text breaks off) concern Abram according to Genesis 11–15.

Most scholars, while recognizing features more akin to the known targumim, regard the *Genesis Apocryphon* as a midrashic composition. It is thus related to intertestamental works such as *Jubilees*, which are often called Rewritten Bible. Perhaps the primary importance of the text lies

in its language. Because it is one of the longest Aramaic texts from Qumran, the *Genesis Apocryphon* is of special significance in the effort to recover the varieties of Palestinian Aramaic used by the Jews at the time of Jesus. In general its language is of a form transitional between the book of Daniel and the targumim, antedating as well the materials from the Wadi Murabba'at, Wadi Seiyal and Wadi Habra.

Prayer of Nabonidus. Fragments of an Aramaic pseudepigraphon known as the *Prayer of Nabonidus* were found in cave 4. The fragments make up two incomplete columns, including the beginning of column 1. As the name suggests, the text is ostensibly a prayer delivered by the last king of Babylon, Nabonidus, telling the story of the king's seven-year period of illness—a time when he prayed to “the gods of silver and gold” for a cure. At length, a Jewish “exorcist” delivered him, and in gratitude the king wrote this prayer. The parallels with the fourth chapter of Daniel and the story of Nebuchadnezzar's madness are patent, leading many scholars to conclude that in this text we have remnants of the popular traditions from which the Aramaic portions of Daniel derived.

The Daniel Cycle. The prayer of Nabonidus is just one part of a “Daniel cycle” that apparently included at least five additional works. Three of these (4QpsDan^{a-c} [4Q243-245]) contain one or more apocalyptic overviews of Jewish history narrated by or involving Daniel. The fourth writing (4Q552-553) recounts a dream in which four trees (or their “angels”) speak to the author. Each tree represents a kingdom (cf. Dan 2; 7), the first of which is identified as Babylon and the second as Persia. This work has a bearing on the interpretation or history of interpretation of the fourth kingdom mentioned in Daniel 2 and Daniel 7. Another text from this Daniel cycle is known as 4QpsDanA^a. This fragmentary but striking work preserves the phrases “son of God” and “son of the Most High” as well as phraseology reminiscent of Luke 1:32 and Luke 1:35. One additional writing, 4Q248, the *Acts of a King*, is related to the contents of Daniel but of disputed interpretation. According to one view, it relates events from the time of Ptolemy I Soter, about 300 B.C.; according to the other, it records episodes of the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, about 170 B.C.

Words of Moses. The *Words of Moses* (1Q22) is a sort of apocryphon to Deuteronomy. God speaks

to Moses, who in turn relays the commands to the people, evidently via Eleazar and Joshua. At one point the text requires the appointment of officials (perhaps priests), “to clarify . . . all these words of the Torah.” Another example of interpretive explanation occurs in the third column (3:8-10), where the date of the Day of Atonement is explained by reason that “your fathers were wandering in the desert until the tenth day of the month.”

Book of Mysteries. Another tantalizing pseudepigraphon is the *Book of Mysteries*, known in three or four copies (1Q27, 4Q299-300; 4Q301 is disputed). The work derives its name from the recurrent and prominent term *raz*, “mystery, secret.” Some of the work is cast as poetic oracles, while the eloquent prose that follows each poetic section provides signs by which the truth of the oracles is to be proved. The most extensive run of continuous text, in 1Q27 column 1, delivers an indictment against those who neither meditate upon the “former things” nor recognize the significance of the “mystery of existence” (*raz nihyeh*, [4Q412-413, 415-421]). Of particular interest is the appearance in 1Q27 of the phrase *razê peša'*. This phrase is probably the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek *mysterion tēs anomias* of 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

Other Pseudepigraphic Writings. The cave 4 materials include a wealth of material that is difficult to classify using the scholarly categories familiar from the past. For many of these works the term now being used is *parabiblical*. They relate to the biblical corpus and to the authors of the Hebrew Bible in varied or even uncertain ways, yet the relation is incontestable. Such works include *Reworked Pentateuch* (4Q158, 364-367), a running commentary on the Pentateuch with exegetical additions and omissions. Some of the additions are of significant size. Other parabiblical writings new to scholarship include 4Q369, the *Prayer of Enosh*; 4Q382, *Parakings* (or *Paraphrase of Kings*); and 4Q422, a paraphrase of Genesis and Exodus. *Commentaries on Genesis* (or *Genesis Peshar*), including both straightforward and sectarian exegesis of the biblical text, are found in 4Q252-254a. Also parabiblical is 4Q473, *The Two Ways*, a work related to Deuteronomy but also bearing comparison with early Christian writings using this motif, such as *Didache* 1–6. Numerous additional, very fragmentary parabiblical works, most having no evident sectarian characteristics, have also come to light.

Among these are 4Q559, *Biblical Chronology*, an Aramaic chronograph whose surviving portions treat the length of the Egyptian sojourn, the time of Israel's wandering in the wilderness and the period of the early judges.

1.2.4. *Liturgical Texts.* Among the texts from Qumran, many are either clearly liturgical or plausibly so construed. Of these writings perhaps the most interesting is the *Angelic Liturgy*, or *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*. The composition is partially preserved in eight manuscripts from cave 4 (4Q400-407), as well as in fragments from cave 11 (11Q17) and Masada (Mas1k). The author portrays heaven as a complicated temple consisting of seven sanctuaries attended by seven chief prince-priests, their deputies and seven angelic priesthoods. Also detailed are the praise offerings that the angels offer up on the sabbath. Altogether the work contains thirteen separate compositions, one for each of the first thirteen sabbaths of the year. The *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* is important for the study of angelology, Second Temple liturgical song and early Jewish mysticism. A striking phrase in the first hymn avers that the angelic priests, by their heavenly cultus, "atone for those who turn from sin." One may understand this statement to mean that the earthly temple cultus is not essential. Here, then, is an important witness to a conception of Judaism that is not temple-centered, at least in a physical sense. Such ideas were starting points for Christianity and for rabbinic Judaism.

A second noteworthy liturgical opus is the *Words of the Luminaries* (4Q504-506). Fragmentary remaining headings show that the compositions contained in this manuscript were meant to be recited on given days of the week. With one exception, the mood of these compositions is penitential; hence, they may appropriately be classed as *taḥēnūnīm*, confessional prayers reflecting such biblical passages as Daniel 9:4-19. The instructions evidence that these *taḥēnūnīm* were used liturgically, as in later Judaism. The single evident exception to the somber tone of the *Words of the Luminaries* is a composition for the sabbath. This prayer is full of praise rather than contrition, reflecting the traditional Jewish understanding of the sabbath as a time of joy.

Among many that might be singled out, two further liturgically oriented works can be mentioned here. One is 4QApocryphal Lamentations A (4Q179). The text is made up of five

fragments, the order of which is still uncertain. As the name implies, it is a lament or series of laments over the city of Jerusalem, whose imagery is achieved chiefly by allusion to Lamentations, Isaiah and Jeremiah. Possibly the work was occasioned by a destruction of Jerusalem at the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (cf. 1 Macc 1:29-32), or by another destruction at Roman hands in 63 B.C. Alternatively, 4Q179 may be no more than a poetic reminiscence of the famous razing by the forces of Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C.

The second text contains vocabulary strikingly similar to that of the *Rule of the Community* and the *Rule of Benediction*, and is known as *Berachot* (4Q286-290 [4Q280, 286-290]). The writing depicts a covenant ceremony incorporating numerous blessings and curses. The blessings are recited by all heavenly and earthly creatures faithful to the laws of creation and by the members of the movement who are faithful to the Law. The curses descend upon Belial and the evil angels who are his lot.

Another group of manuscripts from Qumran that are broadly related to liturgy and worship are the phylacteries, or *tēpillin*. A number have surfaced from caves 1, 4, 5, 8 and an unidentified cave, cave X. They are instructive regarding the content and order of the portions of Scripture they contain and also witness to noteworthy textual variants. Four *tēpillin* were discovered in their capsules, enabling scholars to investigate technical points that are treated extensively in rabbinic literature—such matters as the shape of the capsule, the nature of the leather for scriptural portions and the type of thread with which the capsules are tied.

Moreover, the order of the scriptural portions in the *tēpillin* has been a matter of heated controversy in the history of Judaism. The most famous controversy on this subject occurred in the early medieval period between Rashi and Rabbenu Tam. As a whole, the Qumran *tēpillin* are not strictly in the order for which either man argued. The fact that some from cave 8 are arranged according to Rashi's system, while others from the approximately contemporary finds at Murabba'at accord with the position of Rabbenu Tam, suggests that first-century Jews used both systems concurrently. The contents of the *tēpillin* published so far often add verses to the classical portion of Scripture, but the verses added differ among the various examples. No clear rationale has been adduced to explain this fact.

Notably, 1Q13, 4Qa (4Q128) and XQPhyl. 3 all contain the Decalogue (Deut 5:1-21), which is never included in rabbinic phylacteries. Thus the phylacteries from Qumran raise many questions about the laws governing their production and do not seem to fall into a single “sectarian” categorization.

1.2.5. *Legal Texts.* Many of the writings already discussed have a significant legal component, especially the *Rule of the Community*, the *Rule of the Congregation*, *Damascus Document*, *Temple Scroll* and 4QOrdinances. Another writing of great importance for understanding the types and functions of religious law in Second Temple Judaism is 4QMMT, short for *Miqsat Ma‘asey ha-Torah*, “some rulings concerning the Law.” Published in the DJD series in 1994, 4QMMT includes a list of twenty-three legal controversies concerning which the authors find fault with current practice in the Jerusalem temple. The work appears to be addressed to someone in position to change those practices, presumably the reigning high priest, although some scholars have argued that the work is intrasectarian. In at least two instances, the laws of 4QMMT are identical to those of opponents to the Pharisees in rabbinic writings, making clear once again (for there are many other indicators) that the Qumran movement was in its essence antipharisaic. The laws of 4QMMT also demonstrate, if further demonstration were needed, the priestly character of the movement: the laws favor the priests when compared with rabbinic legislation. Such is true of the entire Qumran legal corpus. 4QMMT seems to prove that the Qumran movement split with greater Judaism primarily over legal issues, not matters of philosophy or the legitimacy of the high priest, as often suggested. Indeed, the publication of this writing has spurred—and coincided with—a much greater attention to the importance of religious law for an understanding not only of the culture but also of the history of the NT period. Different movements in Second Temple Judaism, including Christianity, were different in large part because of different ideas about the law.

A variety of other legal works among the scrolls have added impetus to this research. These writings include *Halakhah A* (4Q251), which tabulates a variety of laws on subjects such as the sabbath, firstfruits, the selling of ancestral lands and the slaughter of pregnant animals. *Torohot A* (4Q274) legislates for the type of impu-

rity produced by leprosy. *Torohot B^b* and *Torohot B^c* (4Q276-277) deal with the ritual preparation of the red heifer—the only means for purification from impurity of the dead—as stipulated by Numbers 19. 4QLeqet (4Q284a) provides laws to regulate gleanings; unlike the Bible, it requires gleaners to be ritually pure. The work entitled *Rebukes by the Overseer* (4Q477) lists by name several members of the Qumran movement whom the Overseer has publicly rebuked for breach of the group’s laws. The movement required the overseer to record all such rebukes in writing. Several of the legal causes for rebuke are unknown from other Qumran writings. *Serekh Damascus* (4Q265) regulates the paschal sacrifice, procedures for the novitiate, group life (with a penal code largely but not entirely identical to that known from the *Damascus Document* and the *Rule of the Community*), and the parturient.

1.2.6. *“Magical” and Calendrical Texts.* Calendar and “magic” were not entirely separate concerns in the ancient world, for magic often—and the calendar always—involved study of the heavenly bodies. Thus one magical work from Qumran combines a peculiar calendar (see below), the earliest known Jewish naming of the signs of the zodiac and divination by thunder (4Q318). 4QHoroscope (4Q186) is an encoded series of horoscopes whose scribe mixes the ordinary Jewish script with the alphabets of Paleo-Hebrew, Greek and Cryptic Script A (one of three secret alphabets found among the scrolls); he further inscribes his text, *à la* Leonardo da Vinci’s notebooks, in mirror writing. The surviving fragments describe three people in reference to their astrological birth signs, deriving therefrom each person’s physical and spiritual qualities. 4QHoroscope possesses notable terminological parallels with the *Rule of the Community*. These writings show that astrological ideas had been assimilated deeply by the Jews, in spite of the apparent biblical condemnations (e.g., Is 47:13-14; Jer 10:1-3). Interest in such matters may be related to the story of the magi in Matthew’s Gospel. An Aramaic work similar in method to 4QHoroscope, but lacking the sectarian terminology, is 4Q561.

Another scroll, known as the *Elect of God* (4Q534), has been termed a “messianic horoscope.” This very poorly preserved Aramaic text contains the phrase *bhyr ʾlh*, the equivalent of the Greek *ho eklektos tou theou* (“the elect of God”) witnessed by some manuscripts of John

1:34. It is uncertain, however, that the Aramaic phrase carries a messianic connotation. The words occur as part of the description of an unborn child who will possess wisdom and precocious intellect. He is to have a long life, and the success of his plans is assured by his position as the “elect of God.” Since the text lacks astrological terminology, it might better be considered an example of physiognomic literature rather than as a horoscope. Moreover, as some scholars maintain, the *Elect of God* may describe the birth of Noah, not a messiah (cf. *1 Enoch* 106).

A work hesitantly identified by the original team as a collection of proverbs, 4Q560, has now been shown to be an apotropaic incantation or exorcism, the earliest ever known from Palestine. The preserved portions of the formula adjure various spirits by name, evidently employing the sacred name of Yahweh. The concerns are those of similar texts elsewhere in the ancient Near East: childbirth, diseases, sleep or dreams, and (perhaps) safety of possessions. One of the demons, the Fever-demon, may illuminate the Synoptic story of Peter’s sick mother-in-law. Matthew 8:15 and Mark 1:31 report the event as a simple healing by Jesus, but Luke 4:39 can be translated, “Then he stood over her and rebuked the Fever-demon, and it left her.”

Perhaps the one element that more than any other binds the DSS into an ideological unity is the type of calendar they insist upon. Unlike the 354-day lunisolar calendar of the Pharisees and rabbinic Judaism (which is essentially the modern Jewish calendar), the calendar of the scrolls is a solar device. Each year has 364 days, and each quarter of the year has 91 days; months are either 30 or 31 days long. The regularity of this system is such that all festivals occur on the same day from year to year, and never on the sabbath. Avoiding having a festival fall on the sabbath solved all sorts of halakic problems. This Qumran calendar was actually a very old priestly mechanism antedating the rise of the Qumran movement. Forms of this calendar date to at least the third century B.C. Evidence of its use is clear from the Septuagint—even, some scholars believe, from the Hebrew Bible. And its later advocacy was not limited to Qumran circles. The texts found at Masada include at least two writings embracing, or probably embracing, the solar calendar (Mas1j, 1k), and Josephus’s narrative describing the *sicarii* at Masada (Josephus *J.W.* 4.7.2 §§402-5) further suggests that this

priestly group followed a calendar different from their contemporaries at En Gedi. In fact, for at least three centuries a kind of calendar war raged among the Jews of Palestine, finally being settled only by the destruction of one party to the dispute in the first revolt against Rome (A.D. 66-73/74). The DSS are a strong witness to the views of the losing priestly party.

The 364-day calendar underlies or is explicit in all of the major Qumran writings: the *Rule of the Community*, the *Damascus Document*, the *War Scroll*, the *Temple Scroll*, the *Hymns*, the *pesharim*, 4QMMT. Likewise, it underlies or is explicit in many of the lesser works. Hundreds of the DSS attest to this calendar. (Not a single Qumran writing favors the pharisaic version.) A significant number of calendrical works—that is, writings whose sole purpose is to explain certain details of the calendar—have also emerged from the caves. Such works include 4Q320-321a, synchronistic calendars that tabulate a form of the lunisolar calendar over against the 364-day instrument. Other calendar writings explain the timing of priestly service in the temple by sabbaths, months and seasons, according to a six-year cycle: 4Q325, 4Q326, 4Q328, 4Q329, 4Q329a and 4Q334. An especially interesting calendrical writing, sometimes called the *Annalistic Calendar*, is extant in six fragmentary copies (4Q322-324c). Similar to certain modern calendars that mention Presidents’ Day or Independence Day on the appropriate day of the year, the *Annalistic Calendar* refers to historical events on given days and uses actual names of the Hasmonean period. The names of John Hyrcanus I, John Hyrcanus II, Aristobulus II and Shelamzion or Alexandra all appear in the work. These were rulers of the Jews between 134-63 B.C. The name Aemilius also appears, doubtless a reference to M. Aemilius Scaurus, one of Pompey’s leading generals when the Romans invaded Palestine and ended Jewish independence in 63 B.C. This writing, in particular, is very important in the attempt to discover who wrote the scrolls and when.

2. Interpretation of the Finds.

The majority of scholars identify the DSS as the products of the ancient Jewish sect known as the Essenes. For this identification scholars rely on a combination of external and internal evidence.

The external evidence combines a passage

from Pliny the Elder with the archaeology of the site of Qumran. In the course of a late first-century travelogue, Pliny describes the Essenes as living along the shores of the Dead Sea, with En Gedi “below” or “south” of them (the Latin preposition *infra* is ambiguous; “below” means topometrically lower, as the bottom of a hill is below the top). This description could fit Qumran. Archaeology further indicates that the site was in use during the time Pliny describes. Structures found at Qumran have been identified as functional for such a community and include what have been understood as a potter’s shop and a communal dining hall. Three inkwells and other materials construed as evidence of scribal activity suggest to some scholars that the scrolls found in the nearby caves were written on the site. Recent analysis of the graveyard near Qumran by J. Zias indicates that only men were buried there in ancient times; the few graves of women seem to be much later, early-modern Bedouin intrusions. If so, then the graveyard suggests a celibate male community, just what Pliny describes for the Essenes.

Internal evidence consists of a comparison between passages describing the Essenes in Philo and Josephus with the contents of texts such as 1QS and CD. All these sources agree in describing or presupposing a communal organization. Similarities include novitiate periods, communal regulations, strict observance of the sabbath vis-à-vis rabbinic law and certain legal positions such as the transmission of ritual impurity by oil.

Neither the external nor the internal evidence is without problems. N. Golb in postulating his “Jerusalem hypothesis” has pointed out many of them. As the name suggests, Golb argues that the DSS derive from Jerusalem and various libraries there. To date, however, Golb and his fellow advocates remain a minority in scholarship on the scrolls. One point on which he has persuaded many scholars is that of provenance. While most would reject his view that the DSS are not, as a whole, Essene products, the modified notion that many of the scrolls were produced by Essenes elsewhere than at the site, perhaps in Jerusalem, has proved attractive.

If such a view were correct, then the potential significance of the scrolls for an understanding of Judaism at the time of Jesus is substantially greater than the 1950s view of

provenance would imply. For on this interpretation, the DSS represent the product of a wider portion of society than the hypothesis of their production at Qumran stipulates. The ancillary question of how much wider remains to be addressed by further research.

3. The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament.

On the whole, NT scholarship in relation to the DSS is best described as outdated. For example, no book is more often quoted in this regard than the volume edited by K. Stendahl in 1957, *The Scrolls and the New Testament*. It is paradigmatic that rather than produce a new series of essays on relations between Qumran studies and the NT, the book simply continues to be reprinted. Similarly, the excellent two-volume work by H. Braun, *Qumran und das Neue Testament*, is now outdated. Both of these works still contain useful material, but because so much has happened in DSS studies since they were written, one must use them very cautiously.

An illustration of the potential for new understandings may be found in the work alluded to above, 4QMMT. As noted, this text lists over twenty legal topics upon which the text’s authors and the temple authorities disagree. In this fact alone its significance for NT studies is enormous, for previously we had no factual statement about what was going on in the temple just before Jesus’ day. Josephus’s descriptions of the temple cultus are difficult to use with confidence, because he often describes things the way they ought to have been (that is, as he understood the relevant OT texts) rather than the way they were. This fact becomes apparent when comparing the theoretical descriptions of his *Antiquities* with the historical narratives of his *War* and *Vita*; not infrequently they disagree. The tannaitic legal discussions are likewise often idealizing (see *Rabbinic Traditions and Writings*). With 4QMMT, we can discover what was really happening, at least with regard to the topics upon which it touches. For example, the authors oppose allowing Gentiles to make offerings on the grounds that such promotes idolatry. The assumption was that regardless of outward procedures, in their hearts Gentiles would be honoring their gods, not the God of Israel. It will be recalled that the first revolt with Rome was partly fueled by just such sentiments, as Eleazar bar Ananias seized control of the temple and re-

fused to allow any more sacrifices on behalf of Gentiles.

Another insight from 4QMMT consists in the manner of its halakic argument. Repeatedly its authors precede their legal positions with the phrases *ʾānahñū hōsbim ʾānahñū ʾōmrīm*, “we believe, we say.” The formal identity with Matthew’s depiction of Jesus’ legal arguments in the Sermon on the Mount (“You have heard . . . but I say”) is patent. Presumably, therefore, Matthew has preserved a common first-century rhetorical structure heretofore unparalleled in early Jewish materials.

Moving to more general considerations, perhaps the most interesting relationship between the DSS and the NT concerns their principal personages. The NT focuses, of course, on Jesus of Nazareth; correspondingly, a group of the DSS focus on the enigmatic figure of the Teacher of Righteousness (*mōrēh haššedeq*). One can examine the Teacher’s writings, the *Teacher Hymns*, to extract his ideas about himself. To do so fully, one must in every case compare what he writes with the hundreds of OT portions that he cites or to which he alludes. Understanding the original literary context of his quotations is essential. Also, the Hebrew words his hymns do not actually quote, but that surround those quotes in the original OT context, are assumed to be in the minds of his audience. Analyzing the implied ideas these portions might communicate is very important too. By this method of “deep reading” one can reconstruct aspects of the Teacher’s theology or ideology and then compare other DSS to round out the picture. It emerges that, like Jesus, the Teacher considered himself a prophet, and more than a prophet. Like Jesus, the Teacher proclaimed a completed law of Moses, perfected by his own direct revelation from God. Like Jesus, the Teacher spoke of charity, the poor and love of one’s fellows; forbade divorce; and proclaimed the imminent coming of the kingdom of God. And, like Jesus, the Teacher was received as a messiah by his followers and founded an apocalyptic Jewish movement that within a century numbered in the thousands. Many other parallels exist, inviting much further research, just as is true of the DSS and the NT generally.

It has been said that Christianity is an apocalyptic Judaism that survived. The DSS are in many regards our best analogy, for this movement, too, was an apocalyptic Judaism. It did not survive, but thanks to the discovery of many of

its writings in the Judean Desert, it lives again.

See also APOCRYPHA AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHA, OLD TESTAMENT; JUDAISM AND THE NEW TESTAMENT.

DNTB: QUMRAN: PLACE AND HISTORY; (ALSO NUMEROUS ARTICLES ON THE SCROLLS).

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DEATH OF CHRIST I: GOSPELS

The crucifixion of Jesus under Pontius Pilate is among the most historically certain and theologically pregnant events of Jesus’ life.

1. Crucifixion in the Ancient World
2. The Crucifixion of Jesus
3. Why Was Jesus Crucified?
4. The Death of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew
5. The Death of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark
6. The Death of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke
7. The Death of Jesus in the Gospel of John

1. Crucifixion in the Ancient World.

In spite of its cruelty as a form of punishment, crucifixion was practiced throughout the ancient world. It was employed as a method of execution or, in some cases, impalement after death among the Persians, Indians, Assyrians and others, and later among the Greeks and Romans. Some evidence suggests crucifixion was used as a mode of execution by Jews before the time of Herod the Great (Josephus *J.W.* 1.4.6 §§97-98; *Ant.* 13.14.2 §§379-83; 11QTemple 64:6-13).

1.1. Crucifixion: A Cruel Practice. Among the torturous penalties noted in the literature of antiquity, crucifixion was particularly heinous. The act damaged no vital organs, nor did it result in excessive bleeding. Hence, death came slowly, sometimes after several days, through shock or a painful process of asphyxiation as the muscles used in breathing suffered increasing fatigue. Often, as a further disgrace, the person was denied burial and the body was left on the cross to serve as carrion for the birds or to rot.

Crucifixion was quintessentially a public affair. Naked and affixed to a stake, cross or tree, the victim was subjected to savage ridicule by frequent passers-by, while the general populace was given a grim reminder of the fate of those who assert themselves against the authority of the state.

Descriptions of the act of crucifixion are rare in the extant literature of antiquity. This is not due to the infrequency of the practice, but rather to literary-aesthetic considerations. Members of the cultured literary elite were hesitant to dwell on this horrific, brutal act. Indeed, even the passion narratives of our Gospels, which M. Hengel regards as the most detailed descriptions of their kind (Hengel 1977, 25), are remarkably brief in their recounting of the actual act of crucifixion. Eschewing all details, they simply report, "They crucified him" (Mt 27:35; Mk 15:25; Lk 23:33; Jn 19:18).

Even where we find descriptions it is obvious that no standard form of crucifixion was uni-

formly practiced. In fact, the accounts are not always clear even on whether the crucifixion took place before or after the victim's death. Nor is it evident in each case whether the victim was bound or nailed to the stake, or whether a crossbeam was always used. In the Roman world, however, the form of crucifixion was apparently more uniform: it included a flogging beforehand, and victims often carried the crossbeam to the place of crucifixion, where they were nailed or bound to the cross with arms extended, raised up, and perhaps seated on a *sedecula*, or small wooden peg (Hengel 1977, 22-32).

Even in the Roman world the procedure was subject to variation, depending on the whims of the executioners. For example, in his eyewitness account of the Roman siege of Jerusalem, Josephus observes how hundreds of Jewish prisoners were "scourged and subjected to torture of every description . . . , and then crucified opposite the city walls." Hoping that the gruesome sight might induce the Jews to surrender the city, Titus, the Roman commander, gave his soldiers freedom to continue the crucifixions as they pleased. "The soldiers out of rage and hatred amused themselves by nailing their prisoners in different positions" (Josephus *J.W.* 5.11.1 §§449-51).

Archeological evidence related to the practice of crucifixion in first-century Palestine is even more sparse. In 1968 an ossuary was discovered in a buried cave at Giv'at ha-Mivtar in northern Jerusalem. It contained the bones of an adult male who had died by crucifixion during the period between the onset of the first century A.D. and the mid-60s. Initial study of the skeletal remains indicated that a nail had been driven through each of his forearms, and his heel bones had been pierced by a single iron nail. The latter nail was found still embedded in what investigators took to be the heel bones of both feet. Wood fragments found at both ends of the nail indicated that the nail first passed through a small wooden plaque, then through the victim's feet, and then into a vertical, olive-wood beam. Apparently as a *coup de grâce*, his shins had been broken intentionally.

J. Zias and E. Sekeles recently reevaluated the skeletal remains of the ossuary, together with related photographs, casts and radiographs. On this basis they proposed a number of amendments to earlier findings. Most importantly, they determined that the still-intact iron

nail had passed from the right side to the left of the right heel bone (calcaneum) only. A different picture of the crucified man results, for on this reconstruction the feet were not anchored with one nail, but the victim apparently straddled the upright beam. Moreover, finding no clear evidence of traumatic injury to the bones of the forearm or hands, they propose the victim was tied to the crossbeam, not nailed. Finally, they questioned whether the bones of the lower limbs had been broken prior to death.

Although this discovery adds archeological evidence to literary descriptions of crucifixion, it is nevertheless clear that the paucity of direct anthropological evidence of this nature restricts the certainty one might attach to its interpretation.

1.2. Crucifixion: A Military and Political Punishment. As a rule, Roman citizens were spared from this form of execution, though in extreme occasions (e.g., high treason) death by crucifixion might be imposed. More generally among the Romans, crucifixion was a penalty reserved for those of lower status—namely, dangerous criminals, slaves and the populace of foreign provinces. Among these people, crucifixion served as a means of asserting Roman authority and maintaining law and order. Thus, in the province of Judea, it proved to be a generally effective weapon against resistance to Roman occupation.

1.3. Crucifixion: Interpretive Stigma. In his important survey of the treatment of crucifixion in ancient literature, Hengel queries whether, outside early Christianity, death by crucifixion was ever interpreted in a positive manner. Within the Gentile world, he finds in Stoicism the use of crucifixion as a metaphor “for the suffering from which the wise man can free himself only by death, which delivers the soul from the body to which it is tied” (Hengel 1977, 88; cf. 64-68). However, beyond this the cruelty of the cross seems to have forbidden any positive interpretation or metaphorical use of death by crucifixion.

If this was true for the Gentile world, it was even more so for the Jewish. Inasmuch as the use of crucifixion by the Romans as a deterrent against Jewish nationalism was widespread, we might have anticipated that the cross would come to serve as a symbol for martyrdom. However, in addition to the humiliation and brutality associated with this form of execution, for Jews an additional, profoundly religious, obstacle existed.

Already by the time of the first century A.D.,

the victim of crucifixion was understood in terms of Deuteronomy 21:22-23—specifically, “anyone who is hung on a tree is under the curse of God.” In its context, this passage refers to the public display of the corpse of an executed criminal. But the NT gives evidence that this meaning was expanded considerably within the early church to include persons who had been crucified. This is seen in the verbal allusions to Deuteronomy 21:22-23 (e.g., Acts 5:30; 13:29; 1 Pet 2:24) and Paul’s explicit citation of Deuteronomy 21:23 in Galatians 3:13. Apart from and prior to Christianity, evidence from the Qumran literature (4QpNah 3—4.1.7-8; 11QTemple 64:6-13) as well as from the writings of the first-century Alexandrian Jew Philo (*Spec. Leg.* 3.152; *Post C.* 61; *Somn.* 2.213) attests that victims of crucifixion could be understood this way within Judaism. Thus the cross could not be interpreted positively as a symbol of the Jewish resistance.

2. The Crucifixion of Jesus.

The crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth under Pontius Pilate is well attested in Christian and non-Christian sources. It is reported in the four canonical Gospels in the midst of remarkably full passion accounts and referred to as a historical event throughout the NT, especially in Paul. The Latin historian Tacitus mentions Jesus’ death in *The Annals*: “Christus . . . had undergone the death penalty in the reign of Tiberius, by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilate” (15.44). In a text whose authenticity is under suspicion, Josephus recalls that Pilate condemned Jesus to be crucified (Josephus *Ant.* 18.3.3 §§63-64). For these and other reasons, the historicity of the death of Jesus on the cross is beyond doubt (Green 1988, 1). However, numerous problems revolve around our ability to date the crucifixion, the historicity of some details recorded in the crucifixion accounts and the interpretation of Jesus’ death by Jesus and his first followers.

2.1. The Date of Jesus’ Crucifixion. All four Gospels narrate the execution of Jesus on a Friday—that is, on the day before the sabbath (Mt 27:57, 62; Mk 15:42; Lk 23:54; Jn 19:31, 42). The major chronological issue, therefore, revolves around the relation of this Friday to Passover. Assuming the Jewish reckoning of the day from sunset to sunset, the Passover feast would have been eaten on the evening of 15 Nisan. The Synoptic Gospels (e.g., Mk 14:12-16) recount the Last Supper as a Passover meal on Thursday

evening, 15 Nisan. Hence, in their reckoning, the day of Jesus' arrest, trial and death was 15 Nisan, the day of Passover. John's Gospel, however, dates the death of Jesus on 14 Nisan, the day of preparation for Passover (13:1-4; 18:28; 19:14, 31).

If we take these conclusions to the relevant astronomical data and assume Jesus was crucified around A.D. 30, we come up with the following options: According to the Johannine reckoning, Jesus was executed on April 3, A.D. 33 or April 7, A.D. 30; according to the Synoptic reckoning, A.D. 27 and 34 would be the probable years. Should we adopt the Johannine reckoning or the Synoptic?

Three avenues for solving this dilemma have been proposed. Some scholars argue that the Synoptics have preserved the correct chronology and that John has revised the tradition in order to portray Jesus more fully as the Passover Lamb. It is true that John has a theological concern of this nature (cf. Jn 1:29, 36; 18:28; 19:14, 31, 36-37); however, recent redaction-critical study has determined the high probability that the Johannine chronology came to him in his passion tradition (Dauer, 133-36, 140-42). Others have argued that the Synoptic account is tendentious, resulting from Mark's creative attempt to portray the Last Supper as a Passover meal. This argument fails to consider the tightly integrated character of the Passover elements in the Synoptic tradition, as well as the degree to which even John's narrative of the Last Supper is paschal in character (Green 1988, 113-16).

Third, many interpreters have attempted to harmonize the Synoptic and Johannine chronologies. Two of these theories are particularly noteworthy. First, some have championed the view that Galileans (like Jesus and his disciples) and Pharisees reckoned the day from sunrise to sunrise, unlike the Judeans and Sadducees, who reckoned the day from sunset to sunset. Hence, the Passover meal (Last Supper) was celebrated on Thursday evening 14 Nisan by Jesus, his disciples and other Galileans. The Judeans shared the Passover meal on Friday evening 15 Nisan. Others have found more plausible the theory that the Passover was celebrated on two different days in the year of the crucifixion, due to the disparity between the Pharisaic and Sadducean calendars. Both views require two consecutive days of Passover sacrifices, a possibility for which we have no clear evidence. At the same

time, we can imagine this being allowed in order to maintain peace among the different groups within first-century Judaism (see the review in Marshall, 57-75, 184-85).

In the end, we are left with the conclusion that Jesus was crucified on 14 Nisan—that is, April 7, A.D. 30 or April 3, A.D. 33. The later date is corroborated by Pilate's need to appease the Jews in order to be "Caesar's friend" (Jn 19:12) and his new friendship with Herod (cf. Lk 23:12)—both of which are best understood in connection with Pilate's changing policies toward the Jews after A.D. 32 (Hoehner, 71-114). However, a date in A.D. 33 raises other problems inasmuch as it compresses the available time for the subsequent Christian movement and the Pauline mission.

2.2. The Crucifixion Accounts. Like the rest of the passion story, the crucifixion of Jesus is not recounted merely to chronicle what happened. This event, Jesus' execution on a cross, was of such a scandalous nature that it cried out for interpretation and legitimization. The result is a tightly woven tapestry combining both elements—event and interpretation—with the latter largely dependent on references to the OT. Thus Jesus' garments are divided (Ps 22:18). He is crucified with two criminals (Is 53:12). He is mocked (Ps 22:7; 70:3) and taunted (Ps 42:10). He is offered wine (Ps 69:21; Prov 31:6). He cries out from the cross (Ps 22:1; 31:5). He is acclaimed as God's Son (cf. Wis 2, 4-5) or as the Righteous One (Is 53:11) and is thus vindicated after maltreatment (Is 52:13-15; 53:10-12). The crucifixion narratives demonstrate in story form that Christ died "according to the Scriptures."

Some scholars continue the now outdated practice of trying to peel back the layers of theological interpretation in order to arrive at the story's historical kernel. Reported events, however, by virtue of their being reported, are always interpreted events. Hence, although the task of determining the historical plausibility of these narrated events remains an important one, attempts to sunder theology from history are misguided.

2.2.1. Crucifixion Traditions. Most scholars assume that Matthew's only narrative source for the crucifixion was Mark. In all likelihood, the Fourth Evangelist used his own, non-Markan source (Dauer; Green 1988, 105-34). In the past commentators largely worked with the hypothesis that Luke's account was for the most part also

independent of the Markan narrative (e.g., Taylor). More recently, however, greater emphasis has been placed on Luke's creative shaping of the Markan story (e.g., Matera, 150-220; Neyrey).

Several lines of evidence point to Luke's use of early, non-Markan tradition for his account of Jesus' crucifixion, however, though scholars disagree on the nature of that traditional material (Green 1988, 86-101). First, Luke includes significant material not found in Mark which, under close literary analysis, does not appear to have come from Luke's creative pen. This material includes Jesus' warning to Jerusalem in Luke 23:27-31, Jesus' intercessory prayer from the cross in Luke 23:34, Jesus' interaction with the crucified criminals in Luke 23:39-43 and Luke's description of the repentance of the multitudes in Luke 23:48.

Second, in some cases Luke narrates actions also reported in Mark, but in ways sufficiently different so as to suggest his use of alternative traditional material. One example of this phenomenon appears in the use of Psalm 22:7 in the record of the mockery of Jesus by the passers-by. Interestingly, Mark 15:29-30 betrays the influence of the latter half of Psalm 22:7 ("shaking their heads"), while Luke 23:35 has been influenced by the first half of Psalm 22:7 ("seeing . . . they mocked"). This suggests the significance of Psalm 22:7 in the early passion tradition and indicates that this tradition came to Mark and Luke independently. Other noteworthy examples include the reports of Jesus' last words from the cross (see below) and the confession of the centurion.

Third, some aspects of the Lukan narrative that depart from Mark are paralleled in other sources. Thus, for example, the reaction of the crowds in Luke 23:48 is similar to that found in Gospel of Peter 7:25 ("Then the Jews and the elders and the priests, perceiving what great evil they had done to themselves, began to lament and to say, 'Woe on our sins, the judgment and the end of Israel is drawn nigh.'"). Finally, the linguistic and syntactic deviations from Mark's account in Luke are not easily explained on the basis of Luke's creativity alone.

Evidence of this character has suggested to some scholars that Luke knew a second, connected passion narrative; to others, that he was familiar with a series of disparate non-Markan traditions, whether oral or written. It is plausible that three roughly parallel early crucifixion ac-

counts are represented in our canonical Gospels. This speaks in favor of the antiquity of the tradition, which may have been a part of a larger, early passion narrative.

2.2.2. History and Interpretation in the Crucifixion. Turning to the accounts, we see that they all agree in having Jesus led away to the place of crucifixion. The mention of the name of Simon of Cyrene serves no theological purpose, though his being drafted to carry the cross is reminiscent of Jesus' words about discipleship ("taking up the cross," Mk 8:34). Simon is missing from the Johannine narrative, probably as a result of John's overall attempt to indicate how, even in his passion, Jesus is master of his own fate. Others, however, see in Jesus' carrying "his own cross" (Jn 19:17) a reference to the Akedah—that is, the attempt by John to develop a parallel between Jesus' passion and the binding of Isaac (see Gen 22:6, where the wood was placed on Isaac by his father).

A number of other aspects of Jesus' crucifixion deserve brief discussion.

The Location of Golgotha. All of the Gospels mention that Golgotha was the place of Jesus' execution. Matthew, Mark and John translate the Aramaic *gūlgaltā* (Heb *gulgōlāt*) as "Place of the Skull." Luke, who avoids Aramaic place names, has "Skull," a more accurate translation. Many attempts have been made to explain the meaning of this place reference: a hill in the shape of a skull? a rocky mound on which no vegetation could grow?

The precise location of Golgotha is disputed, though our knowledge of crucifixion in the Roman world and the Gospel accounts suggest its location outside the walls of Jerusalem (Jn 19:20; cf. Heb 13:12) in a public place, perhaps near a busy road (e.g., Mk 15:29, 40). According to John 19:41, the site of Jesus' crucifixion was in proximity to his borrowed tomb.

Strong circumstantial evidence supports the location of Golgotha in the area on which now stands the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, located within the Old City of Jerusalem. According to archeological findings in the 1960s, interpreted in tandem with Josephus's description of the city's fortifications, this site would have been well outside the city walls. Before the expansion of the city it was a quarry into which a number of tombs had been cut.

Before modern investigators realized the more narrow perimeter of the city walls as it was

in the first third of the first century A.D., they focused their searches on the area to the north of the Old City. There they located a rocky hill whose stony face appeared to resemble a skull. K. M. Kenyon notes that the present shape of the hill is due largely to subsequent quarrying, however.

Jesus' Prayer. Only Luke records that following his crucifixion, Jesus prayed on behalf of those responsible for his death (Lk 23:34). This prayer is missing from a number of important manuscripts, presumably because some later copyists were uncomfortable with this portrait of Jesus extending mercy to his Jewish opponents. The major themes of the prayer—forgiveness and ignorance—are important in Luke-Acts (cf. Lk 1:77; 7:47-50; Acts 2:38; 3:17; 5:31; 10:43; 13:27, 38; 14:16); furthermore, its presence is important to the structure of the passion story, which narrates a saying of Jesus in each major section. Some scholars regard the prayer as having been created by Luke on the basis of the similar request of Stephen in Acts 7:60. But why should Stephen provide the model for Jesus, and not vice versa? Moreover, Jesus' request for the exoneration of his persecutors accords well with what we otherwise know of Jesus' teaching on one's attitude to hostility (e.g., Mt 5:44; see Lohse, 129-30).

The Division of Jesus' Clothing. The Evangelists agree in their narration of the division of Jesus' clothing among the soldiers. Some evidence suggests this distribution of the victim's clothing happened as a matter of course in antiquity, but the language of Psalm 22:18 has clearly influenced the way this event has been reported.

The Inscription on the Cross. The inscription on the cross is reported by all the Gospels with remarkable consistency, each noting that it was "The King of the Jews" that Jesus was executed. Historically, this notice would have marked Jesus as a messianic pretender to the throne. No doubt Jesus' first followers saw in this charge an ironic proclamation of the true identity of Jesus, and this has been further emphasized in the Johannine elaboration of this report (Jn 19:19-22).

In the past it was common to assert that an inscription of this kind was normally affixed to the cross in a Roman crucifixion. Recent reexamination of the available evidence reveals the opposite. Prior to their execution, condemned persons might be required to display publicly the charge under which they had been sen-

tenced to death, but the inscription reported by the Gospels is without parallel. For this reason the historical veracity of this measure should not be questioned. As A. E. Harvey has observed, "The first historians of Jesus' death can therefore have been under no compulsion to invent [such a notice]" (Harvey, 13).

The Mocking. Mark, Matthew and Luke agree that the Jewish leaders mocked Jesus on the cross, though Luke goes on to add that the soldiers joined in the derision (cf. Mk 15:16-20). In short, they insist, if Jesus were who he said he was, he would not be in this shameful, awful predicament. The historicity of the general contours of this account is almost certain for three reasons. First, it is consistent with what we know of Roman custom, which locates the act of crucifixion in the public arena precisely in order to foster this sort of derision. Second, it dovetails well with what we know of attitudes toward death in late Judaism, as suggested by a text like Psalm 22:7-8 or Wisdom 2:18, 20. Those who have a special relationship with God will not undergo shameful death. Third, the content of the mockery parodies the charges leading to Jesus' execution.

Jesus' Last Words. A more difficult issue is raised by Jesus' last words on the cross, reported variously as follows:

Mark 15:34, citing Psalm 22:1: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Luke 23:46, citing Psalm 31:5: "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."

John 19:30: "It is finished."

The case for the historicity of the Markan version (followed by Mt 27:46) is strongest, though a number of modern interpreters argue that the quotation of Psalm 22:1 in Mark 15:34 is Mark's way of providing the content of the wordless shout in Mark 15:37. Aside from the fact that this would require Mark's narration of only one cry instead of two, the most prominent obstacle to this thesis is the offensiveness of Psalm 22:1 on the lips of Jesus. This is also the strongest argument favoring its authenticity. Assuming Luke had Mark's Gospel as a source for Jesus' passion, he clearly bypassed this cry of dereliction in his account. Also, in some manuscripts of Mark 15:34, "forsaken" has been replaced by "reproached," with the result that the force of the psalmic citation has been weakened dramatically. These provide literary evidence for the offensiveness of this citation in the early church.

Some interpreters have suggested that the use of Psalm 22:1 here was intended to call to mind the vindication of the Righteous One, promised in the psalm when read as a whole. In first-century Judaism, was the citation of the opening of a psalm designed to recall the psalm in its entirety? Evidence for this phenomenon is very late. We are left with the starkness of Jesus' cry from the cross, a starkness that speaks pointedly for its historicity. Who would invent for Jesus so scandalous an outburst?

What, then, of the quotation of Psalm 31:5 in the Lukan account? Has Luke simply substituted one psalmic citation for another? Three lines of evidence converge to suggest that Luke is not independently responsible for the use of Psalm 31:5 in this context (Green 1988, 97-98). First, we see an interesting coincidence of language when moving from Luke 23:46 to the way in which Matthew and John report Jesus' death. Luke, in the words of the psalm, reports that Jesus "commits his spirit," while Matthew 27:50 records that Jesus "yielded up his spirit" and John 19:30 has it that Jesus "delivered up his spirit." Luke is the only writer who cites Psalm 31:5 here, but these parallels suggest the common use of a very old tradition rooted in the psalm.

Second, even though Luke elsewhere consistently employs the Greek Old Testament (LXX), here his citation is drawn from the Hebrew text (MT). Luke, who gives no indication that he knew Hebrew, seems to have borrowed this material from a source that had already translated the Hebrew text into Greek.

Finally, some scholars have suggested that the allusions to Psalm 31:5 in Acts 7:59 and 1 Peter 4:19 indicate the general use of the psalm in dangerous settings. It may even have been used as an evening benediction in late Judaism. This speaks to the appropriateness of Psalm 31:5 in the final moments of Jesus' passion and leaves open the possibility of the saying's authenticity.

2.3. Jesus' Crucifixion as Interpretive Problem. "The chief priests and our rulers delivered him up to the death sentence. They crucified him, but we had hoped he was about to redeem Israel" (Lk 24:20-21). By not explicitly identifying the "they" responsible for the crucifixion in this text, Luke continues his strategy of exonerating the Roman authorities while inculpating the Jewish leadership. The dashed hopes of Jesus' followers are the real point at issue here, howev-

er. With these words, Cleopas and his friend voice their shock and discouragement over Jesus' death. They also strike at the root of the interpretive problem raised by a crucified Messiah (*see* Christ I: Gospels).

It is true that Christian apologetic found in Isaiah 52:13—53:12 is a prophecy of the suffering Messiah (e.g., Acts 3:13-18; 1 Pet 2:21-24; see later, Athanasius, "On the Incarnation"). But first-century Jewish messianic expectation focused preeminently on a royal, glorious Son of David. The Isaianic passage never mentions the Messiah, and late Judaism did not turn to this passage to fill in its portrait of the expected deliverer.

If the notion of a suffering Messiah runs counter to what we know of messianic speculation in the first century, how much more an oxymoron a crucified Messiah must have seemed. After all, according to current interpretation of Deuteronomy 21:22-23, a victim of crucifixion was cursed of God. Yet, the "Messiah" is literally "God's Anointed." Clearly the cross of Christ presented a conspicuous enigma—it cried out for reinterpretation.

Some interpreters regard the resurrection of Jesus as the crucial key to overturning the ignominy of the cross. Its role in authenticating Jesus' mission in spite of the cross should not be downplayed. At the same time, we would be gravely mistaken were we to assume the cross of Christ carried no significance apart from the resurrection. In fact, one might better say that the resurrection authenticated the mission and message of Jesus, including the message of his death on a cross. As we shall see, the Gospels present the cross as the culmination of his mission (cf., e.g., Mk 10:45; Lk 24:25-27; Jn 12:23-28). At this point, it will be worthwhile to reflect briefly on two closely related questions—namely, how Jesus understood his death and how it was interpreted by the earliest churches.

Combining his creative reflection on the development of atonement theology in earliest Christianity with his synthesis of traditional scholarship on the subject, Hengel has argued that the interpretation of Jesus' death as a vicarious, atoning sacrifice stems from Jesus' understanding of his death. His point of departure is the Pauline material and pre-Pauline traditions that ensure that the interpretation of Jesus' death as saving event can be traced back at least as far back as the earliest Greek-speaking Chris-

tian communities (e.g., Rom 4:25; 1 Cor 15:3-5; Gal 2:20-21).

Pushing further, Hengel insists that in order to understand the crucifixion of Jesus as the execution of the Messiah, Jewish Christians would have had to attribute to that death overwhelmingly positive significance. The interpretive categories offered by major currents of modern scholarship, Jesus as “righteous sufferer” and “prophet-martyr,” are rejected by Hengel as inadequate for this purpose. The only satisfactory answer is that the first disciples, too, understood Jesus’ death as an atoning sacrifice.

Pushing still further, Hengel traces this interpretation back to the ransom saying and Jesus’ words at the Last Supper (Mk 10:45; 14:24). Thus Jesus anticipated his death and understood himself in his death as fulfilling the role of the Suffering Servant of the Lord (Is 52:13–53:12). Hengel concludes, “It was not primarily their own theological reflections, but above all the interpretive sayings of Jesus at the Last Supper which showed them how to understand his death properly” (Hengel 1981, 73; cf. Lohse).

Against this reconstruction, some scholars will take issue with Hengel’s acceptance of the authenticity of the ransom sayings attributed to Jesus in Mark 10:45 and Mark 14:24. At the same time, it is worth noting that a growing number of scholars are admitting the probability that Jesus anticipated his execution by Roman authorities. He could scarcely have done otherwise given the content of his message (see below). To admit this, however, is to admit its corollary—namely, the probability that Jesus reflected on the relation of his mission and his death. For example, why did Jesus inquire of his disciples, “Who do you say that I am” (Mt 16:13-26; Mk 8:27-38; Lk 9:18-26)? Did his interest lie solely in soliciting from them a confession of his identity? Understood in its context, Jesus’ inquiry and subsequent teaching on the suffering of the Son of man can be taken only as his attempt to relate in the most intimate way his execution and mission. Jesus thus regarded his imminent death as somehow integral to his mission, to bring redemption to Israel and the nations (see Meyer, 216-19).

A more pressing concern to be raised against Hengel’s study is its claim to have recovered the one, earliest interpretation of Jesus’ death. He is not alone in this pitfall, however. In spite of the rich variety of imagery employed in the NT for

coming to terms with Jesus’ death, the history of reflection on the cross is littered with attempts to discern its significance in narrow terms. In reality, just as the crucifixion of Jesus is the most historically certain of the events of Jesus’ life, it is also the most widely interpreted.

Another perspective on Jesus’ death with a claim to having been rooted in Jesus’ understanding has been outlined by D. C. Allison. He undertakes an interesting survey of the expectation of a final, great tribulation in Jewish literature. From this he is able to show that the notion of a great tribulation was often associated with the coming of the eschatological era of salvation, but not according to any fixed model. Working backward from the passion accounts of our Gospels, he discovers that Jesus’ death marked the beginning of the fulfillment of eschatological expectation, that the death of Jesus belongs to the messianic woes that mark the birth of the new era.

This crisis-oriented interpretation is suggested by several events of the passion—including darkness at noon (Mk 15:33), the rending of the temple curtain (Mk 15:38) and the resurrection of the holy ones (Mt 27:51-53). Allison also sifts through the Gospels to discover evidence that Jesus understood his ministry in terms of the eschatological distress (e.g., Mt 11:12-13; Lk 12:49-53). Accordingly, “Jesus foresaw for himself suffering, death, and vindication in the eschatological drama, which he took to be already unfolding” (Allison, 142). In short, Jesus’ death and resurrection marked the dawning of the great Day of the Lord (*see* Eschatology I).

These are only two more focused interpretations of Jesus’ execution that lay good claim to having arisen out of Jesus’ understanding of his mission and death. Even more fundamental than these is the overarching reality that Jesus’ suffering and death were recognized and proclaimed for their centrality to God’s redemptive plan. The enigma of a crucified Messiah begged for interpretation. Taking their cues from Jesus’ understanding, those first disciples saw in the cross the fulfillment of God’s purpose.

3. Why Was Jesus Crucified?

For the most recent chapter in the quest of the historical Jesus a central question is, Why was Jesus crucified? On one level this query is answered easily enough. Historical data outside

the Gospels points clearly to the reality that in a Roman province like Judea, an execution of this kind could be carried out only under the orders of the Roman procurator. Moreover, as we have seen, crucifixion was used in the Roman provinces above all as a deterrent against sedition. By inference, then, we might conclude that Jesus was crucified under Pontius Pilate as an insurrectionist. This inference is supported by the Gospels, for there the issue put before Pilate is clearly one of sedition.

In the only explicit record of the charges brought against Jesus, Luke 23:2, 5 reads, "We have found this man subverting our nation, opposing the payment of taxes to Caesar, and saying of himself that he is the Christ. . . . He stirs up the people throughout Judea by his teaching." Pilate's question to Jesus, reported in all four Gospels, is equally unambiguous in its political edge: "Are you the king of the Jews?" (Mt 27:11; Mk 15:2; Lk 23:3; Jn 18:33). Finally, Jesus is executed alongside two insurrectionists, and the inscription on the cross declares this to have been his crime as well.

Jesus, then, was executed for sedition. But rather than answering our initial question, this conclusion only sharpens it. We are left puzzled by the possible nexus between what we know of Jesus' life and the rationale for this death sentence. "The portrait of Jesus, as it is presented to us not only in the gospels but throughout the New Testament, is utterly irreconcilable with this explanation of his death" (Harvey, 14; see 11-35; Sanders, 294-318).

Indeed, at his arrest Jesus protests that he is not leading a rebellion against the state (Mt 26:55; Mk 14:48; Lk 22:52). Moreover, Jesus' followers were not rounded up and summarily executed, as one would have expected had Jesus been leading an insurrectionist movement (cf., e.g., Josephus *Ant.* 20.5.1—20.8.10 §§97-188; *J.W.* §§2.12.3—2.14.1 §§232-72). Furthermore, after Jesus' death his disciples were allowed to form a community in Jerusalem, an unthinkable development had they been known as a seditious party. Finally, had Jesus taught political resistance against Rome, we might imagine that his followers would have involved themselves in aggressive opposition against the state subsequent to his death. We are left, therefore, with a most enigmatic set of circumstances.

One scholar who has taken this problem seriously is E. P. Sanders. He tries to solve this puzzle

with special reference to Jesus' physical demonstration against the temple (Mt 21:12-13; Mk 11:15-17; Lk 19:45-46). This act, Sanders insists, was not intended as a cleansing of the temple but as a portent of its destruction (*see* Temple Cleansing). This, he argues, was Jesus' last public act, after which was put in motion the decisive plot against his life. Set within the context of Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God and his capacity to excite the hopes of the people, this act against the temple was sufficient to bring Jesus to the attention of the Romans as a political threat. He was executed, then, at the behest of the Jewish leadership as a dangerous man but not as an actual leader of an insurgent party.

Although plausible in its way, Sanders's reconstruction of the rationale for Jesus' execution overlooks important aspects of the Gospel accounts. He is unable to come to terms with the role of the Jewish leaders in the process of Jesus' passion. In fact, his hypothesis leaves little room for the contribution of the Jews to this action, since, in his mind, the Jesus-Jewish (Pharisaic) conflict recorded in the Gospels is anachronistic. Moreover, his attempt to discount the material recorded in the Gospels that intervenes between the temple action and the onset of the passion story fails to convince. Although we can believe the temple action was a significant causal factor in Jesus' arrest and condemnation, it seems unlikely that it was the immediate cause.

Harvey, by contrast, argues that the Jewish leaders did hand Jesus over to Roman authority, but only after their failure to cope effectively with this Jew whom they regarded as a threat to general peace and security. In this regard, Harvey is drawn to the Lukan account, according to which Jesus was not found guilty or condemned as deserving death by the Jewish leaders (Lk 22:66-71; Acts 13:27-28; cf. Jn 18:19-23). Harvey therefore concludes that the Sanhedrin held an informal hearing, the purpose of which was to decide whether, and on what grounds, to hand Jesus over to Pilate. What is lacking from Harvey's account is any discussion of why the Sanhedrin might have regarded Jesus as a threat.

A hint in this direction is provided by John 11:45-53. Here the Sanhedrin, meeting informally, initiates a plot against Jesus because they fear reprisals from Rome: "If we allow Jesus to go on like this, everyone will believe in him and the Romans will come and destroy both our Temple and our nation" (Jn 11:48). In fact, in

the decades before the Jewish war, Palestine was the scene of repeated liberation movements, and Rome's repeated response was to kill the leaders of such movements and their followers.

At this point, Sanders is correct: Jesus would have posed no immediate threat had it not been for his following. At the same time, we need not follow Sanders in aborting completely the record of Jesus-Jewish hostility recorded in the Gospels. First-century Judaism was marked by conflict—internally among the various forms of Judaism existing at the time and externally with Rome. Jesus' mission, construed in broad terms as the restoration of Israel in the context of the coming of God's universal rule, must have posed a threat within the social and power matrix of first-century Judaism. No less, of course, Jesus' proclamation of the eschatological kingdom would have posed a political threat to those most supportive of the present order, including the Roman authorities. Even though Jesus presented no threat of a violent, military takeover, his message of liberation and his growing popularity nevertheless made him a dangerous political risk. This threat, heightened by Jesus' activity subsequent to his arrival in Jerusalem for Passover, led to his execution.

4. The Death of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew.

Any treatment of Jesus' death in the First Gospel must move beyond the boundaries of Matthew's passion narrative. Regardless of the tradition history of the passion story, it is now carefully integrated into the Gospel as a whole. We will discuss Matthew's portrayal of Jesus' death under four headings: the rejection of Jesus and the gospel, the death of Jesus and Matthew's christology, the way of the cross, and the death of Jesus and the new era of salvation.

4.1. *The Rejection of Jesus and the Gospel.* Matthew's tragic account of Israel's rejection of God's Messiah provides the central drama of his Gospel. This theme reaches its climax in Matthew 27:25, where the Jews accept full responsibility for Jesus' execution: "His blood be on us and our children!" Its roots lie deep in Matthew's narrative of Jesus' life and ministry, and can be traced back to the story of Herod and the magi from the East (*see* Birth of Jesus).

Matthew 2:1-12 is framed in such a way as to spotlight the character of the various responses to the birth of Jesus. The importance of this story and the reactions it describes lies in its posi-

tion as the first story wherein the birth of Jesus is made public and in the reader's awareness of Jesus' identity as "Immanuel," the one who would save his people from their sins (Mt 1:21-23). How would Herod, king of the Jews, respond to the news of the birth of this king of the Jews?

Having discovered the place of Messiah's birth, the magi go to Bethlehem to worship him. Herod, however, and with him the chief priests and teachers of the Law, knew the town of the Messiah's birth but did not go to welcome him or pay him homage. Quite the contrary, Herod's troubled spirit gives way to malice, and he orders the deaths of the male children in the area of Bethlehem. Against Herod's plans for Jesus' premature death, God repeatedly intervenes to protect the child (Mt 2:12-13, 22). But the die is cast; Jesus' rejection and violent death are clearly foreshadowed.

Although with the onset of Jesus' mission the crowds respond favorably to his message (e.g., Mt 7:28-29), contained in that message are portents of the coming crisis: "Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness" (Mt 5:10; cf. Mt 5:44). No doubt for Matthew, Jesus, who was committed to the way of righteousness, was the ultimate exemplar of these words. Jesus did not seek death, but he recognized that a life of righteousness was a life lived contrary to the conventions of his world. Only persecution could result.

The seemingly inevitable change in attitude toward Jesus is prefigured by the introduction of John the Baptist in Matthew 11:1-19. Jesus compares his fate with that of the imprisoned John: just as they rejected John, so will they reject Jesus. This motif is consummated in Matthew 14:1-12, where Matthew narrates the decapitation of John. The parallels between the executions of John and Jesus are striking. In each story, the plot against the protagonist is foreshadowed by his popularity (Mt 14:3-5; 21:45-46; 26:3-5). Both indicate that the Roman ruler in each case is reluctant to carry out the execution but gives in to external pressure (Mt 14:9-10; 27:11-26). After his death, disciples of John come, take his body and bury it (Mt 14:12); likewise, after Jesus' death a disciple of Jesus comes, takes his body and buries it (Mt 27:57-60). These verbal and conceptual similarities mark the execution of John as an anticipatory allusion to the similar fate of Jesus.

Between the introduction of John in Matthew 11:1 and his reappearance in Matthew 14:1 lie additional portrayals of hostility and rejection. In Matthew 12:1-13 a conflict arises between Jesus and the Pharisees over appropriate behavior on the sabbath. This leads to the first mention of a Jewish plot against Jesus in Matthew 12:14. Additional records of conflict follow: in Matthew 12:24-32, where Jesus is accused by the Pharisees of casting out demons by Beelzebul; in Matthew 12:38-42, where the Pharisees and teachers of the Law, compared to an evil and adulterous generation, ask for a miraculous sign; and in Matthew 13:53-58, where Jesus is rejected even by his townspeople.

In the midst of this section marked by hostility and the anticipation of Israel's final rejection of Jesus, Matthew introduces a counterpoint: Jesus is the Spirit-anointed Servant chosen by God (Mt 12:17-21, citing Is 42:1-4). If he is rejected by Israel, it is as a result of his obedience to his divine mission. During Jesus' public ministry the Pharisees and teachers of the Law appear routinely as his opponents. With the opening of the passion narrative in Matthew 26:1-5, the chief priests and the elders assume this role. They in turn enter into a contract with one of Jesus' disciples (Mt 26:14-16), then incite the crowds against Jesus. Finally, this progressive circle of hostility reaches its climax: they "all" (*pas*) call for his death (Mt 27:25).

Thus the cross casts its shadow across the entirety of Matthew's Gospel. Its cruel reality is present by way of anticipation and threat in the motifs of hostility and rejection. Jesus' death is Israel's ultimate rejection of God's Messiah.

4.2. The Death of Jesus and Matthew's Christology. Matthew's christological interests are manifest already in his introduction of Jesus as Messiah, Son of David and Son of Abraham (*see* Abraham) in Matthew 1:1. The subsequent record of Jesus' genealogy (Mt 1:2-18) accentuates his identity as the Messiah.

Also evident early on, and of central importance to Matthew's christology, is his portrayal of Jesus' solidarity with God's people and God's purpose. As the genealogical record shows, Jesus' coming is rooted deeply in the history of God's dealings with Israel (Mt 1:1-18). The story of Jesus' birth, with its parallels to Israel's past, adds to this theme. He is born in the midst of hostility, forced into exile and brought out of Egypt into the land of Israel (Mt 2:1-23). Mat-

thew's employment of OT quotations to signify Jesus as the consummation of OT promise (e.g., Mt 1:22-23; 2:15-18) also fits into this scheme, rooting Jesus solidly in the history of Israel and divine promise. Jesus' mission thus reveals God's will and is inexorably intertwined with the pain and hope of Israel.

Jesus was crucified as a messianic pretender, but this would not have kept Matthew's readers from perceiving a deeper significance in the repeated recital of this charge (Mt 26:63; 27:11, 17, 22, 27-31, 37). Unwittingly and ironically, the high priest, Pilate and the soldiers all proclaim the true identity of Jesus. Yet, for this interpretive twist to occur, titles like "Messiah" and "king of the Jews" must have been filled with new content, for somehow, in this context, they must be correlated with the death of Jesus.

Not surprisingly, then, "Christ" is interpreted alongside other christological images in the passion story. Chief among these are "Son of God" and "Servant." The association of Christ and Son of God in the passion account is clearest in the request of the high priest, "Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God" (Mt 26:63). Also pertinent is the mockery of Jesus on the cross, where "Son of God" and "King of the Jews" are set in apposition (Mt 27:40, 42-43). The crucial question, then, concerns what significance we should attach to this usage. For the first clue to this riddle, we turn to the Gethsemane episode, for here Jesus addresses God in prayer as "my Father" (Mt 26:39, 42). This prayer is above all an act of submission to God. As Son of God, Jesus responds to the will of God with complete, unreserved obedience.

Likewise, in the arrest scene, Jesus makes reference to "my Father" (Mt 26:53). In this context Jesus' authority as God's Son occupies center stage, but he does not exercise this power as a means of escape. To have done so would have been to depart from his own teaching (Mt 5:44) and from God's will (Mt 26:54, 56).

A similar motif appears in the Son of God reference in Matthew 27:40. In their mockery of Jesus, the passers-by say, "Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God," and in doing so model the form of the temptations presented Jesus by the devil in Matthew 4:3, 6: "If you are the Son of God." The inference in each case is that, as the Son of God, Jesus could do what his tempters request of him. To do so, however, would be to deny the character of obedience to

God inherent in his sonship (*see* Temptation of Jesus).

In short, to refer to Jesus as Son of God is to speak pointedly of his fidelity to his mission, of his total obedience to God. This motif is also highlighted by Matthew's portrayal of Jesus as Servant in the passion account. The repeated references to Jesus' silence (Mt 26:63; 27:14) and innocence (Mt 27:4, 18-19, 23-24) indicate Jesus' passion is the fulfillment of his role as God's Servant in ways that underscore his faithfulness to the divine mission (cf. Is 53:7, 11).

With the Servant motif, Matthew expands the theological field of his portrayal of the passion. This is evident in Jesus' interpretive words at the Last Supper, where terminology such as "on behalf of" and "poured out for many" are reminiscent of the work of the Servant in Isaiah 52:13—53:12. These sayings interpret Jesus' death as efficacious, thus showing how Jesus would "save his people from their sins" (Mt 1:21). And this helps us appreciate the significance of the taunt in Matthew 27:42: "He saved others, but he cannot save himself." Jesus' mission is salvific, but he can open the way of salvation only by the sacrifice of his life (cf. Mt 16:25).

Commentators have often noted the heightened christology of Matthew's passion account when compared with Mark's. At the outset, Jesus announces his imminent execution (Mt 26:1-2). He declares the arrival of the appointed time (Mt 26:18). He prophesies his betrayal and identifies his betrayer (Mt 26:21, 25). He opens the way for Judas to perform his act of betrayal (Mt 26:50). He declares his capacity to escape his fate miraculously (Mt 26:53). Jesus is presented as one who has power and is in control of the events of his passion. And this is where Matthew's christological portrait comes into focus. Jesus does not exercise his power as Messiah, Son of God, to escape from death, but not because he lacks royal status or authority. Rather, Jesus exercises that power in unexpected ways: in obedience to God and in pouring out his life for others.

The story of Jesus' death in Matthew is thus the story of his fidelity to God, his faithfulness to his mission and his willing solidarity with the pain and hope of his people.

4.3. *The Way of the Cross.* The degree to which the cross is understood by Matthew as the ultimate expression of Jesus' mission is nowhere better seen than in the series of passion predic-

tions in Matthew 16:21-27, Matthew 17:22-23 and Matthew 20:17-28. In these Jesus characterizes his mission as a journey to Jerusalem and thus to Golgotha.

The first is framed by Peter's confession of Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the Living God" (Mt 16:16) and Peter's rebuke of Jesus following his announcement of imminent suffering. Clearly, Jesus' self-understanding, embracing the "divine must" (*dei*) of his passion, departs from more common messianic expectations, even among his disciples. Jesus, however, is convinced that suffering lies at the heart of his mission as Christ, Son of God, and even extends this definition to his view of discipleship. Like him, Jesus' disciples are faced with the challenge to lose their lives.

Even though Jesus' disciples have "little faith" (e.g., Mt 14:31; 17:20), they are unable to comprehend the way of the cross. After the second passion prediction they are "filled with grief" (Mt 17:23). And in the context of the third they seem to miss Jesus' whole point by concerning themselves with positions of eminence and authority. In the passion story their failure is sealed by their fearful abandonment of Jesus at his arrest (Mt 26:56). Their faithless behavior is accentuated by the actions of less well-known characters. The woman who anoints Jesus at Bethany (Mt 26:6-13), Joseph of Arimathea (Mt 27:57-60) and the faithful women at the cross and tomb (Mt 27:55-56, 61)—these are examples of persons in the passion narrative who are set in bold relief by their authentic responses to the good news (*see* Gospel [Genre]).

For apprehending the way of the cross, the importance of the final passion prediction cannot be overestimated. Here Jesus' ministry of service and redemption is cast in the language of sacrificial death: "the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt 20:28). With this terminology, building on Matthew's earlier presentation of Jesus as the Suffering Servant (cf. Mt 8:17; 12:17-21), the cross is set squarely at the center of Jesus' life and work.

4.4. *The Death of Jesus and the New Era of Salvation.* Israel's rejection of Jesus and his message does not signify the end of the story for Matthew. Even in his predictions of suffering and death, Jesus' eyes focus also on resurrection (Mt 16:21; 17:23; 20:19). Likewise, his interpretive words at the Last Supper, so centered on his

passion, anticipate his future in the kingdom of God (Mt 26:29). And in Matthew 26:32 he predicts his resurrection and future role in reconstituting the scattered band of disciples. Even without turning to the resurrection narrative itself, in the tearing of the temple curtain, the earthquake and the confession by the centurion, we have testimony of Jesus' vindication in spite of his rejection by Israel (Mt 27:51-54).

With mention of the centurion's confession, we open a further arena of discussion. In both subtle and transparent ways, Matthew proclaims the passing of the kingdom of God from Israel to "a people who will produce its fruit" (Mt 21:43). In his mind this reorientation of the kingdom is related directly to the crisis of rejection, Israel's delivering the Messiah over to be crucified. For example, we may observe the shift in Jesus' role as Savior. In Matthew 1:21, "he will save his people from their sins," but in Matthew 26:28 his blood "is poured out for many [i.e., "all"] for the forgiveness of sins." The time of Israel's ultimate rejection of Jesus is a time of death, but death leads to life, a new era of salvation for "the nations" (Mt 28:18-20).

The newness of this era is marked in a different way by the interpretive sayings of Jesus at the Last Supper. By his use of the words "covenant" and "forgiveness of sins" in the same breath (Mt 26:28), Jesus interprets his mission against the backdrop of Jeremiah 31:31-34. "The time is coming," Jeremiah proclaims, when the Lord will make a "new covenant." That time has come, according to Jesus. In his death he inaugurates the new order of salvation.

Here again is evidence that for Jesus, death was no unexpected event unrelated to his life and work. In his death Jesus' obedience to God is manifest, and in this the cross is comprehended as the heart of his mission to open the way of salvation to all.

5. The Death of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark.

The oft-cited judgment of a century ago that Mark's Gospel is a passion narrative with an extended introduction highlights the prominence of Jesus' death for Mark. It fails, however, to come to terms with the theological and literary nexus between Jesus' life and death. In fact, Mark represents Jesus' ministry as a relentless progression of events whose climax is Golgotha. In the cross Jesus is revealed as the Son of God who obtains salvation for the new community of

faith—a community called to follow him in sacrificial discipleship.

5.1. *The Death of Jesus and Mark's Christology.* Who is Jesus? This query constitutes an important leitmotif for the Second Gospel. Although we are informed at the outset that Jesus is Messiah and Son of God (Mk 1:1-15), the characters of Mark's account do not share this insight (e.g., Mk 5:41), and in any case we are well into the narrative before it becomes clear what these christological titles mean. Mark wants to instruct his audience about the true nature of Jesus, and he does so by means of a narrative oriented around the cross.

Anticipatory allusions to Jesus' passion dot the landscape of the Gospel of Mark, demonstrating the intimate relation between Jesus' identity and his suffering. Already in Mark 2:19-20 Jesus intimates his sudden, unexpected, puzzling death. Elsewhere, religious and political authorities plot his death (Mk 3:6; 11:18; 12:12), and Jesus prophetically announces his rejection and death (Mk 8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:32-34, 38-39, 45). As in Matthew's parallel (see 4.1 above), so in Mark 6:14-29 the story of John's passion prefigures Jesus' suffering and death.

The link between Jesus' death and his identity is nowhere better seen than in the crucifixion account, for Mark understands the moment of Jesus' death as the moment of divine revelation. Only in his death can Jesus be fully appreciated. This is the significance of the confession of the centurion, the only human throughout the Gospel to recognize Jesus as God's Son (Mk 15:39). In the crucifixion story Mark expressly notes that it is only as the centurion sees Jesus' dying breath that he makes his confession. That is, in the cross Jesus is recognized rightly as the Son of God. In the body of the Gospel, God acclaims Jesus as God's Son at the inauguration of his mission at his baptism (Mk 1:9-11) and in the brief revelation of Jesus' glory at the transfiguration (Mk 9:2-8). The relationship between these three events in Jesus' career emphasizes the centrality of Jesus' death to the mission for which he was ordained by God.

This understanding, focused on Jesus' status as Son of God, is paralleled in Mark's portrait of Jesus, Son of man. Indeed, it is precisely as Son of man that Jesus will suffer rejection and death (e.g., Mk 8:31; 14:21). As Son of man, Jesus' divine mission is consummated as he gives his life in service to humanity as a ransom for many

(Mk 10:45). As Son of man, he also anticipates his vindication and glory (e.g., Mk 8:38; 14:62).

What is the significance of the crucified Son of God for Mark? Of the aforementioned anticipatory references, the most consequential for interpreting the meaning of Jesus' death are the three passion predictions (Mk 8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34) and the ransom saying (Mk 10:45). These underscore the centrality of the cross to God's redemptive plan, Jesus' obedience in taking up the cross (cf. Mk 14:32-49) and so place Jesus' crucifixion at the heart of his divine mission. This interpretation is manifest not only in the "divine must" theme of the predictions (*dei*), but also in the later, repeated association of passion events with OT promise. The cross of Christ brings to consummation God's revealed will, as in Mark 14:21 where we should probably not think of any one text or set of texts but of OT promise as a whole. Yet, specific OT texts are fulfilled in Jesus' passion (e.g., Zech 13:7, cited in Mk 14:27). More prominent are the numerous ways in which Jesus is presented typologically as the Suffering Servant and Suffering Righteous One.

How Jesus' death functions as the center of God's redemptive plan comes to light in two Markan texts: Mark 10:45 and Mark 14:24. The significance of the former is indicated by its position at the close of the central section of Mark's Gospel, Mark 8:22—10:52, just before the triumphal entry. In this section, which boldly outlines the correlation between the way of the Christ and that of his disciples, the ransom saying is hardly ancillary to Mark's message, as some scholars have argued. The latter text serves as the climax of the Last Supper scene. In both cases Jesus' death is interpreted as salvific. In this ultimate act of service, Jesus lays down his life as an atoning sacrifice for the salvation of humanity. The irony of the scene of mockery at the cross may be understood along these lines: It is by refusing to save himself that he is able to save others (Mk 15:31; cf. Mk 8:35).

The irony of Mark's passion story is even more pervasive, extending through the appearance of Jesus before the Sanhedrin (e.g., even as Jesus is being mocked as a false prophet, his prophecy concerning Peter's denial is fulfilled [Mk 14:65-72]) and on to the crucifixion account. Paramount in this regard is the sixfold use of "king" with reference to Jesus (Mk 15:2, 9, 12, 18, 26, 32) combined with the threefold

mockery of Jesus on the cross (Mk 15:29-32). Condemned as a pretender to the throne, Jesus ironically does have royal status, but not as one might have anticipated. His obedience to the divine mission expressed preeminently in the cross—this is a portent of his royal status that will be evident to all following his vindication and coming as the glorious Son of man.

5.2. *The Way of the Cross.* Golgotha is not only the ultimate expression of the Christ's mission for Mark. For disciples, too, there is a *via dolorosa*, a way of the cross.

5.2.1. *"Take up the Cross."* Mark 8:22—10:52 renders transparent the meeting of christology and discipleship around the cross. This section is framed by two healing miracles. The first (Mk 8:22-26) serves as a parable: The disciples understand Jesus only vaguely; they need a fuller, sharper vision of Christ's identity. Heretofore they have become cognizant of his power, his victory over evil forces of all kinds. Though Peter confesses him as Christ, he is unprepared for subsequent talk of suffering and death (Mk 8:27-33). Yet for Jesus, messiahship can be understood fully only within the matrix of the suffering Son of man. What is more, according to Jesus, if the way of the Christ is the way of suffering, so is the way of discipleship (Mk 8:34).

Prior to the second healing story (Mk 10:46-52), Jesus for the third time (Mk 10:32-45) announces his upcoming passion: Jesus and his disciples are on the way (*hodos*) to Jerusalem, the place of betrayal and death. Apparently still believing that "Christ" signifies "glorious king," James and John express their desire for seats of honor in the coming kingdom. Jesus redirects their thoughts to suffering and calamity, intimating that they would share his fate. Discipleship signifies a service best exemplified in the death of Jesus. Interestingly, like the healing account in Mark 8:22-26, the subsequent story of Bartimaeus can be read as a parable. Faithful, persistent Bartimaeus, first found sitting by the way (*hodos*), having been healed by Jesus, now sees clearly and follows Jesus on the way (*hodos*). The invitation to follow Jesus is an invitation to take the way of the cross.

5.2.2. *The Suffering of the Community.* This motif is continued and deepened in the relationship Mark draws between the suffering of the community (Mk 13) and the suffering of the Messiah (Mk 14—15). The signs of tribulation are paralleled in Jesus' passion as follows:

Death of Christ I: Gospels

13:2	destruction of the temple	14:58; 15:38
13:9, 11-12	“delivered up”	14:10-11, 18, passim
13:12-13	Betrayal	14:10, 21, 43
13:24	Darkness	15:33
13:26	Son of man: tribulation, parousia	14:62
13:32-33	The “Hour”	14:32-42
13:5, 9, 23, 33, 35, 37	Eschatological watching	14:34, 37-38
13:25	provides the chronology for	14:17—15:1
13:36	“Come,” “find,” “sleep”	14:37, 40

On a literary level, these parallels tie together the fate of Jesus and his disciples; they are of profound theological importance too. On the one hand, they signify that the suffering of the disciples is a participation in the suffering of the Christ. On the other, they indicate the cosmic ramifications of this suffering. The cross of Christ is the turning point in history, the birthing of a new age, the coming of the kingdom of God into the world. This gives added gravity to the sufferings of Jesus’ disciples. Like him, they will suffer rejection. Indeed, Mark’s intended audience seems already to have found itself in a situation of persecution. This juxtaposition of images in Mark 13—15 affirms that their suffering, too, is a part of the divine plan; that their pain is a part of the process by which the kingdom of God is breaking into the world.

5.2.3. Discipleship Failure and the New Community. Mark’s Gospel repeatedly intimates the failure of the hardhearted disciples (Mk 6:52) to understand the significance of Jesus’ mission. Their failure reaches its acme in Mark 14:50-52 where they abandon Jesus to the arresting party in Gethsemane. It is true that Jesus anticipates their rehabilitation (Mk 14:27-28), but the intervening narrative provides unexpected tableaux of faithfulness. In a deliberate contrast with the actions of the Jewish leaders and Judas (“one of the Twelve”), the anonymous woman anoints Jesus for burial (Mk 14:1-11). Simon of Cyrene becomes a model disciple who “takes up the cross” (Mk 15:21; cf. Mk 8:34), and a group of women disciples stand by faithfully at Jesus’ death (Mk 15:40-41).

Even more important for their role in Mark’s theology of Jesus’ passion are the rending of the temple veil (Mk 15:38) and the confession of the centurion. Together, these narrated events reveal Jesus’ identity, as we have seen, but they

also speak to the theme of discipleship. The first, drawing on the temple material found earlier in the Second Gospel, demonstrates that Jesus is the Messiah who destroys the temple and reconstitutes it as the community of the faithful. The importance of the latter in this context lies in the fact that it is precisely a Gentile centurion who makes the confession of Jesus as Son of God. A more emphatic word about the universal implications of Jesus’ death could hardly be found.

6. The Death of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke.

The Third Evangelist leaves his readers in no doubt as to the centrality of Jesus’ death for his Gospel. He sets the stage for Jesus’ passion above all by highlighting his narrative of Jesus’ life as a tale of conflict. In addition, throughout Luke-Acts he sounds the cadence: “the Christ must suffer!” What is less transparent is the meaning of Jesus’ death for Luke.

6.1. The Rejection of the Messiah. Luke characterizes Jesus’ life as a story of conflict and rejection—ominously predicted by Simeon (Lk 2:34-35), paradigmatically represented by Jesus’ opposition at Nazareth (Lk 4:16-30), tragically fulfilled in Pilate’s handing Jesus over to the will of the chief priests and Jewish public (Lk 23:25). On one level this portrait is nothing more than what one would have expected. For Luke, Jesus is a prophet (cf. e.g., Lk 4:24; 7:16, 39; 24:19; Acts 3:17-26; 7:37), and rejection and death are the lot of all the prophets (cf. Neh 9:26; Lk 4:24; 6:23; 11:47-51; 13:33-34; Acts 7:52). In Luke, Jesus the prophet attracted opposition especially by his concern for a brand of justice at odds with that practiced by the religious leadership and by his concomitant openness to outcasts through table fellowship (Karris). In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus’ primary opponents appear to be the religious leadership in Jerusalem, and among them the chief priests are singled out for special development. Contrasting with their malevolence is the relatively benign political leadership. In each of the canonical Gospels we find that the major share of blame for the death of Jesus is attributed to the Jews, especially the Jewish leaders, rather than to the Romans. This is especially clear in Luke’s Gospel, where Jesus’ innocence is declared by Pilate three times and confirmed by Herod (Lk 23:4, 14-15, 22).

The Lukan motif of conflict is not limited to Jesus’ interaction with the human characters of

the Gospel, however. The divine anointing of Jesus for his mission is set within the immediate context of temptation by the devil (Lk 3:21—4:13), and the subsequent narrative demonstrates the continual cosmic dimensions of opposition against Jesus (e.g., Lk 13:10-17). With the onset of the passion story, supernatural conflict moves again to center court: Satan enters Judas (Lk 22:3; cf. 22:31), and Jesus' struggle on the Mount of Olives as throughout his mission is colored in eschatological, cosmic hues (Lk 22:53; cf. *peirasmos*, "struggle," in Lk 4:13; 8:13; 22:28, 40, 46).

Against this backdrop it is surely significant that Luke does not set the disciples over against Jesus as they are in the other Synoptics. Although Judas does betray Jesus, he does so under the power of Satan (Lk 22:3). Likewise, Peter's denial is related to Satan's influence (Lk 22:31-34). In recounting Jesus' arrest, Luke is conspicuously silent about the disciples, with the result that their fate is left open; they do not abandon Jesus, as in Matthew and Mark. Indeed, the disciples are "with" Jesus in a way not paralleled in the other Synoptic Gospels (Lk 22:28). This has important repercussions for our reading of the link between Jesus' crucifixion and discipleship, a theme to which we will return shortly.

6.2. "The Christ Must Suffer!" It is true that Luke inherited from Mark an emphasis on the necessity of Jesus' passion (e.g., Mk 8:31). But in Luke, Jesus evinces a purposefulness about the cross that is without parallel in the Synoptic Gospels. Not only does he "set his face to go up to Jerusalem" (Lk 9:51), the place of rejection and death (Lk 18:31-32), but also, with the onset of his passion, he exercises a surprising prescience regarding the details of his betrayal, arrest and death. More so than in the other Synoptics, here Jesus is in control of the events of his passion.

When Jesus foretells his suffering and rejection, he notes their necessity in salvation-historical terms (*dei*). This characterization is continued even after the passion account by means of showing how the crucified Jesus could be the Messiah of God. "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory?" (Lk 24:25-27). Phrases of this kind appear again and again in Luke-Acts.

Students of Luke-Acts have long been aware of the gravity of Jesus' death for Luke. Noting that the weight of Luke's theological interest

falls on Jesus' resurrection and exaltation, however, they have puzzled over the meaning of the cross. In what way is the death of Jesus crucial to God's redemptive purpose? On this theological problem Luke has seemed less than clear. Indeed, according to many interpreters, to the question Why did Jesus have to die? Luke seems only to answer, Because God willed it!

6.2.1. The Death of Jesus and Lukan Soteriology. In the past, many commentators have assumed Luke attributed to Jesus' death the salvific meaning found elsewhere in the NT. Thus Luke, like the other NT writers, affirmed that "Jesus died for our sins." More recent scholarship has reacted against this reading, insisting that Luke must be read on his own terms and not within the theological categories of the Pauline theology of the cross. Accordingly, students of Luke have pointed out that Luke neglects to recount the ransom logion in his parallel to Mark 10:41-45 (Lk 22:24-27); the sermons in Acts do not draw a direct line between the cross and forgiveness of sins; and material in Luke-Acts borrowed from Isaiah 52:13—53:12 fails to mention the vicarious, atoning significance of the Servant's death (e.g., Lk 22:37; Acts 8:32-33).

Of course, the eucharistic words of Jesus (Lk 22:19-20) do root human salvation in the death of Jesus (see Last Supper). However, noting their absence in some textual witnesses, a number of scholars have postulated that they were missing from Luke's original text (cf. RSV [some editions], NEB). Others, who accept their originality to the Lukan narrative, are nevertheless impressed with how non-Lukan these verses appear linguistically. As in Acts 20:28 (the only other passage in the Lukan corpus that clearly bases human salvation in the death of Jesus), Luke appears to be repeating ancient terminology without making its theology his own.

A conclusion of this sort is confirmed by those passages in which Luke makes transparent his understanding of the means of salvation. In Acts 2:33, Acts 5:30-31 and Acts 10:43 we discern Luke's concern to show that the means of salvation is the exaltation of Jesus. Of these three passages, Acts 5:30-31 is of particular interest for two reasons. First, it is here that the logic is most clear: as a result of his exaltation Jesus is enthroned as Prince and Savior and in these capacities is able to offer salvation. Second, this text underscores again the necessity of Jesus' death for salvation history.

Clearly the death of Jesus has positive significance for Luke, but just as clearly that significance is not centered on an interpretation of the cross as a vicarious sacrifice. How then might this significance be understood?

6.2.2. *The Death of Jesus: A Martyrdom?* The interpretation of Jesus' death as a martyrdom has enjoyed widespread support in this century (see Beck). This view exploits the connections between the Lukan passion and the literature of martyrdom in late Judaism. Common themes include the presence of supernatural conflict and divine help, the innocence and endurance of the victim and the portrait of the martyr's death as exemplary for the faithful.

Although this interpretation attributes positive significance to the death of Jesus in Luke and makes good on a number of important aspects of the Lukan portrayal, it has come under serious scrutiny in recent years. First, it has been questioned how far Luke anticipated Jesus' disciples would be asked to follow in Jesus' steps. Thus, the call to take up the cross (Mk 8:34) has become in Luke a call to a lifestyle marked by the cross ("day by day," Lk 9:23), not a reference to impending persecution. Second, a number of details integral to martyr tales are missing from Luke, most notably the horrific detail in descriptions of the means of death. Moreover, in Luke, Jesus, unlike the martyrs of Jewish literature, appears as one who struggles with the prospect of death (Lk 22:39-46). Third, as has become clear from continued study of the religious background of the first century, the themes of the martyrological literature are not in every case unique to that corpus. Thus one might postulate that Luke and the literature of martyrdom drew from a common world of thought. Finally, it has become evident that the notion of Jesus as martyr fails to do justice to the richness of Luke's mural of Jesus' passion. Although it may be one among other Lukan concerns, by itself it falls short as a summary of Luke's theology of Jesus' death.

6.3. *From the Suffering Righteous One to the Suffering Servant.* Other students of Luke have noted the repeated evidences of Jesus' innocence in Luke 23 and the many parallels between Jesus and the suffering Righteous One in the Psalms and book of Wisdom. On this basis they have postulated for Luke an interpretation of Jesus' passion as the suffering and death of God's Righteous Sufferer who goes to his death

in spite of his innocence but is subsequently vindicated by God. This view makes sense of the innocence motif in the passion story, dovetails well with the "contrast formulae" in the speeches in Acts (e.g., "you put Jesus to death, but God raised him from the dead," Acts 2:23-24) and demonstrates in Jesus' life how God overturns injustice—an important theme in Luke-Acts.

At the same time, it is clear that even this interpretation is insufficient to grasp the heart of Luke's understanding of Jesus' death, for it fails to explain the divine necessity of the cross in salvation-historical terms. A more successful interpretive model focuses on the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, which is a clearer embodiment of the OT Righteous Sufferer (Green 1990).

That Luke is interested more pointedly in the Suffering Servant is manifest in the passion story and elsewhere in his two-part work. In the passion story, Jesus cites Isaiah 53:12 as a general allusion to his suffering and death, thus communicating that in his passion he fulfills the role of the Suffering Servant. Jesus is repeatedly declared innocent and acclaimed by the centurion as a "righteous man," an allusion to Isaiah 53:11 (cf. the conjunction of *dikaïos* ["righteous"] and Jesus' suffering in Acts 3:13-14, where Jesus' passion is described in words borrowed from Is 52:13—53:12). Jesus refuses to speak in his own defense (Lk 23:9; Is 53:7). And in his mockery, Jesus is called "the Chosen One," a designation for God's Servant (Lk 23:35; Is 42:1). Outside the passion story, numerous references to Jesus' role as the Servant appear, the most explicit in the citation of Isaiah 53:7-8 in Acts 8:32-33 and the prophetic reference to Jesus' mission by Simeon in words borrowed from Isaiah 49:6 (Lk 2:32).

The significance of the identification of Jesus' passion as that of the Suffering Servant for Luke is threefold. First, it indicates how Luke can emphasize the salvation-historical necessity of the cross and spotlight Jesus' exaltation or vindication as the salvific event. The Isaianic portrayal of the Suffering Servant holds together these twin motifs, particularly in Isaiah 53:11, where, following his suffering, God's Righteous One will justify many. In other words, Luke's characterization of Jesus as the Servant indicates the necessity of his death and the salvific import of his vindication.

Second, Luke's emphasis on the Servant provides a framework for drawing out the universal

implications of Jesus' mission. That Jesus would be "a light for revelation to the Gentiles" was predicted by Simeon (Lk 2:32; Is 49:6), so it is noteworthy that at Jesus' death he was acclaimed as the Righteous One by a Gentile. However, the importance of Jesus' death is not only for the Gentile but also for the Jew (e.g., Lk 23:34, 48) and the criminal (Lk 23:43). That is, in Jesus' death one finds the culmination of a life lived for others, including outsiders.

Third, by portraying Jesus' career, and especially his death and exaltation, as that of the Suffering Servant, Luke demonstrates in the ultimate manner his understanding of the way of salvation. Already in the lives of Elizabeth and Zechariah, Luke shows that God's salvation comes through a pattern of reversal, (Lk 1). For Luke the inbreaking of the kingdom of God marks a transposition of roles as the God who is faithful vindicates the faithful. The career of Jesus illustrates this theme of reversal, for he is the innocent Servant who suffers unto death but is raised up and designated Prince and Savior. By putting aside thoughts of self-glorification and obediently adopting the role of the servant (cf. Lk 12:37; 22:25-27), Jesus embodies the righteousness, humiliation and lowliness of the Servant. The cross is the consequence, but God overturned this humiliation, vindicating his Servant, exalting him and in so doing opened the way of repentance and forgiveness. For Luke this is the way of salvation, and this is the way of discipleship.

7. The Death of Jesus in the Gospel of John.

Until relatively recent years, students of the Fourth Gospel downplayed the importance of the passion for John's presentation of Jesus. Some interpreters even posited a theological chasm between John 17 and John 18, suggesting that Jesus' trial and execution had no place in the portrayal of the glorious Jesus found elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel. This view has begun to fall into disfavor among Johannine scholars, as studies have recognized the numerous allusions to the passion in the earlier sections of the Gospel (cf. Jn 2:12-22; 3:14) and the fact that eight chapters of the Gospel are related to the passion (Jn 12—19), and begun to demonstrate anew the integration of the cross into the totality of John's christology. We will discuss the meaning of Jesus' death for John first by mentioning two subsidiary themes—the sovereignty

of Jesus in the passion account and Jesus' death as sacrifice—then by noting how the cross relates to the journey of the Son of God from incarnation to exaltation.

7.1. Jesus, Sovereign King. When turning from the Synoptic versions to the Johannine account of Jesus' suffering and death, one is immediately struck with the majesty of Jesus in John. He has long known his betrayer (Jn 6:70) and sets in motion the act of betrayal (Jn 13:27). In the arrest scene it is neither Judas nor the arresting party that is in charge, but Jesus, revealing himself as the "I Am" (*egō eimi*) and negotiating the release of his disciples (Jn 18:1-11). In his hearing before Pilate he is presented as king and even takes the role of judge (Jn 18:28—19:16). Requiring no assistance, he bears his own cross (Jn 19:17). He cares for his mother from the cross (Jn 19:25-27), and before the soldiers can perform the coup de grâce, breaking his legs to speed his death, he dies of his own accord (Jn 19:20-33).

In this manner John demonstrates the truth of Jesus' words, "No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of my own volition" (Jn 10:18). Clearly John is concerned to relate Jesus' passion to his larger representation of Jesus' glorious sojourn on earth (cf. Jn 1:14b) as a self-giving act.

7.2. Jesus' Death: Life for the World. Though it is not the linchpin for John's understanding of the death of Jesus, the sacrificial significance of the cross is nevertheless important to his Gospel. This motif initially appears in John 1:29, 36, where the forgiveness of sins is related to the appellation "Lamb of God." Though Lamb of God is capable of other nuances as well, it is at least associated with the theological world of the Passover lamb. This is suggested not only by the atonement theology resident in John 1:29, but also by John's clear attempts to portray Jesus' death as a Passover sacrifice in the passion story. In this regard the following details may be noted: the time of Jesus' death coincided with the time of the paschal sacrifice (Jn 19:14; cf. 18:28); the hyssop and basin are present at the cross (Jn 19:29; Ex 12:22); seeing the blood flow from the side of Jesus is emphasized (Jn 19:35; Ex 12:13); and the soldiers do not break Jesus' legs (Jn 19:31-37; Ex 12:46). This emphasis on Passover is probably related to the extended discourse on Jesus as the bread of life (Jn 6:25-59): Whoever partakes of Jesus' flesh and blood will have life.

Similarly, John 3:16 links the incarnation of God's Son to the offer of life. The language of atonement found more pervasively in Paul also has a place in the Johannine narrative. Thus *hyper* ("on behalf of") is used in John to underscore the redemptive nature of the cross in John 6:51; John 10:11, 15; John 11:50-52; and John 18:14. Finally, John understands the foot washing at Jesus' final meal with his disciples not only as a demonstration of exemplary behavior but also as a symbol of Jesus' salvific death (Jn 13:8-11).

7.3. Crucifixion and Exaltation. In terms of the integration of Jesus' death with the Johannine christology as a whole, the most pervasive motif is that of "raising up" or "exaltation." This, we are repeatedly informed, is the fate of Jesus the Son of Man (Jn 3:14-15; 8:28; 12:32-33). Clearly this "being lifted up" (*hypsōō*, Jn 3:14; 8:28; 12:32) has a double meaning. On the one hand, it is associated in John's schema with the terminology of glorification. On the other, in John 8:28 we read that the Jews will be the agents of Jesus' "lifting up," and in John 12:32-33 John notes that "lifting up" is a metaphor for the way Jesus will be put to death (cf. Jn 18:32).

John therefore sees some intimate connection between Jesus' crucifixion and his exaltation, and this suggests that Jesus' death must be set within the larger Johannine portrait of Jesus' earthly career. For the Fourth Evangelist, the life of the Son of God is best understood as a journey: He comes from his preexistent state in heaven, dwells among women and men, then returns to heaven. He who descended from glory must ascend to glory (e.g., Jn 3:13, 31; 6:38; 8:23; 13:1-3).

How is his passion related to this christological movement? It is the means by which he returns to the Father. That is, John overcomes the scandal of the cross by interpreting it in terms of Jesus' exaltation. This reading is encouraged by the fact that in those places where the reference to the "lifting up" of Jesus is clearest—John 3:14, John 8:28 and John 12:32-34—John has developed the larger theme of the Son's journey from and return to God. In this way the cross is interpreted by the journey motif as the means by which the Son of man left the world below to return to the world above (Nicholson).

What is more, Jesus' death, understood as a lifting up (Jn 3:14), appears as the ultimate expression of love, the gift of God (Jn 3:16). In-

deed, Jesus' love for his followers reaches its acme in his sacrificial service and death (Jn 13:1; 15:13).

See also LAST SUPPER; RESURRECTION; SERVANT OF YAHWEH; TRIAL OF JESUS.

DJG: BURIAL OF JESUS; GETHSEMANE; PASSION NARRATIVE; PREDICTIONS OF JESUS' PASSION AND RESURRECTION; RANSOM SAYING.

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J. B. Green

DEATH OF CHRIST II: PAUL

The death of Christ, often mentioned in tandem with his *resurrection, occupies the central position in Paul's representation of the gospel. Paul is aware of, employs and develops its redemptive significance through creedal formulae and hymnic traditions; he probably has some familiarity with and reminds his readers of the story of Jesus' suffering and death; and he develops the importance of Christ's passion in contexts related to all aspects of his apostolic message—especially his soteriology and *christology, *eschatology and *ethics. This article is concerned not exclusively but especially with Paul's attribution of atoning significance to the suffering and death of Christ.

1. The Centrality of Christ's Death
2. The Significance of the Cross: A Plurality of Images
3. The Death of Christ and the Purpose of God
4. The Death of Christ and the Human Condition

5. The Crucified Messiah and the Christian Life

1. The Centrality of Christ's Death.

For Paul the cross of Christ was critical for Christian reflection and life, especially as the means by which God has provided for salvation and as the instrument and measure of new life in Christ.

It is of great consequence that the letters of Paul, themselves the earliest extant literary productions of Christianity, already document the central importance of the cross of Christ. This is true for our understanding of very early Christianity, for it evidences how quickly the followers of Jesus were compelled to grapple with the theological problem of his crucifixion. It is also true for our understanding of Paul, for it reveals the degree to which Paul struggled with and valued the cross of Christ and the degree to which his thought was at home in Christian reflection understood more broadly in the dawning years of the Jesus movement.

Leaving aside for the moment the variety of traditional materials concerned with Jesus' death that Paul incorporated into his correspondence, one can point to the example of 1 Corinthians. Some twenty-five years after Jesus' crucifixion Paul writes of the pivotal scandal and folly of the cross (1 Cor 1:18, 23), suggesting the harsh realities encountered in early missionary activity. Historically, Jesus' execution on a cross encouraged an understanding of his death as that of a common criminal, humiliated among his people—indeed, even cursed by God (cf. Deut 21:22-23). How could this Jesus also be the "Anointed One" (i.e., Messiah)? Despite this problem, Paul asserts that, while among the Corinthians, he had "resolved to know nothing . . . other than Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor 2:2). It is not too much to say that the early church had to come to terms with the cross of Christ precisely because it was this crucified-and-dead Jesus who was being proclaimed as Messiah (Green, 157-74). As a theologian of the cross, Paul played a key role in the exploration of the meaning of the crucified *Christ.

It is evident that Paul borrowed from preexisting Christian tradition regarding Jesus' passion and that such traditional materials are incorporated into his correspondence (cf., e.g., the language of the traditioning process in 1 Cor 11:23-25; 15:3-5; cf. Kertelge, 116-24). It is equal-

ly transparent that he exercised his own creativity in shaping the tradition. This is not surprising, since one of the primary motivations for his spirited opposition to the Christian movement prior to his encounter with the risen Lord must have been the contradiction offered by the Christian kerygma as it featured the divine exaltation of the “cursed one.” Paul’s embracing “the gospel of Christ” (Gal 1:6-17) entailed a theological conversion that enabled him to move beyond his initial negative interpretation of the cross; it also suggests one of the influences behind his subsequent reflection on the cross. It is noteworthy that Paul was able to come to terms with the seeming contradiction of a crucified Christ not by denying its perplexing character but by showing how God vindicated his Christ and filled his apparently ignominious demise with unexpected, positive significance.

By contrast, Paul’s apostolic experience underscored the degree to which *suffering and powerlessness were integral to the Christian life, this in spite of Jesus’ resurrection. In the Pauline perspective, apostolic weakness found its significance in light of the suffering of Christ. Thus, having reminded the Corinthians that among them he had sought only to present Christ and him crucified, Paul goes on to call to their attention his manner of life while with them: “I came to you in weakness, fear and much trembling” (1 Cor 2:2-3; cf. Col 1:24). Consequently, we see that a further inspiration for Paul’s ongoing translation of the meaning of the cross was his and the church’s life in Christ—life that was no stranger to weakness, opposition and suffering. The importance of the cross for Paul is thus grounded in his encounter with the risen Lord and in the demands of his apostolic ministry.

1.1. *The Cross and Kerygma.* How is the centrality of the cross manifest for Paul? It is implied by the phrases he uses to denote the kerygma. Thus in 1 Corinthians 1:18 “the message of the cross” is virtually a synonym for *gospel.” In 2 Corinthians 5:19 “the message of reconciliation” is employed similarly, in a context wherein the salvific event is presented in the parallelism “And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who on their behalf died and was raised” (cf. Phil 2:16: “word of life”; Acts 13:26: “word of salvation”; Kertelge, 124-27).

1.2. *Formulaic Expressions.* A close reading of the Pauline letters also reveals two stereotypical

expressions for the atoning significance of the cross (Hengel, 34-39). The first presents the “giving up” of Jesus for the salvation of humankind—either as a divine act (e.g., Rom 4:25: “who was given up on account of our trespasses”; Rom 8:32: “who did not spare his own son, but gave him up on behalf of us all”) or as a self-giving (e.g., Gal 1:4: “who gave himself up for our sins”; Gal 2:20: “gave himself up for me”). The second expression, the “dying formula,” is found repeatedly—for example, in the celebrated tradition represented in 1 Corinthians 15:3: “Christ died for our sins” (see further Rom 5:6, 8; 14:9; 1 Cor 8:11; 2 Cor 5:14, 15; Gal 2:21; 1 Thess 5:10). Paul’s phrase “Christ died for us,” according to M. Hengel, “is the most frequent and most important confessional statement in the Pauline epistles and at the same time in the primitive Christian tradition in the Greek language which underlies them” (Hengel, 37).

This traditional basis is important for showing the degree to which Paul aligns himself with the common faith of the early church. That is, his letters draw on the common vocabulary of the Christian communities; his innovations in theological expression build on the foundation of the shared faith. More particularly, in the face of such antagonism as Paul faced at Corinth and Galatia, his repetition of traditional materials related to the cross serves to indicate how Paul legitimized his authority in the face of opposition (see *Adversaries*).

1.3. *The Story of Jesus.* This is not to suggest that Paul was indebted only to the formulaic tradition he shared with early Christianity. There are also hints that he was aware of the story of Jesus’ suffering and death, which would also have been handed down to him. Such a reference may lie behind Galatians 3:1, where Paul’s language (“Before your eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified”) suggests the graphic quality of his proclamation, opening the possibility that his missionary preaching made use of a passion story. Similarly, his introduction to the tradition of the Last Supper, “in the night when he was delivered up” (1 Cor 11:23-25), presumes a shared knowledge of a narrative context for the eucharistic tradition (see *Last Supper*). Also suggestive are the themes with which Paul describes his own suffering in 2 Corinthians; for example, in 2 Corinthians 6:3-10 he lists the sufferings, grace and paradoxical aspects of his service in a way that echoes the story

of the passion of Christ. Not unlike what one finds in the Gospel of Mark, then, Paul has his own understanding of the “way of the cross,” the way of suffering through which one identifies with the manner of Christ’s suffering. Finally, while Pauline only in the broad sense, 1 Timothy 6:13 alludes to Jesus’ *trial before Pontius Pilate in a way that presupposes at least rudimentary knowledge of the passion story. In these and other texts, we recognize that Paul’s theology has about it a narrative quality—that is, that he understands Christian experience within the larger mural of God’s activity ranging from the formation of God’s people to the parousia, and within this greater narrative and as its centerpiece is the narrative of Jesus’ crucifixion. Even though Paul shows little interest in the historical details of Jesus’ passion as historical data, it appears that he was aware of them and was concerned with their significance for Christian faith and life (*see* Jesus and Paul).

1.4. The Pattern of Christ. This again points to the degree to which Paul is ready to posit the cross of Christ as the basis of Christian faith and life. Indeed, Paul’s reference to the Last Supper tradition is set contextually within his discussion of the community meal in order to attack the problem of divisions at Corinth (1 Cor 11:17-34; cf. 1 Cor 1:10-17); here a reminder of Jesus’ sacrificial self-giving is the basis for Paul’s call for a life modeled on the way of Jesus’ passion, diaconal in orientation, cruciform in shape (*see* Lord’s Supper).

At Corinth, as at Colossae, Paul reflects on the meaning of the crucified Christ in large part so as to counter competing ideas. In the case of his correspondence with the Corinthians, the word of the cross opposes wrong-headed thinking about the nature of present existence, as though this were the time for triumphalism following the consummation of the new age. Against the “wisdom of the world” and the status-seeking orientation of his Greco-Roman audience at Corinth, Paul posits the scandalous cross of Christ as the “power of God” “to us who are being saved.” Social, philosophical, even soteriological norms are uprooted as Paul brings to the foreground “what is weak in the world,” “what is low and despised in the world”—that is, “Christ crucified” and the community oriented around the crucified Christ (1 Cor 1:18-31).

For the Colossians Paul grounds his presentation of the cosmic Christ—who reconciled the

whole cosmos, including the astral powers, to God—in the flesh-and-blood life and death of Christ: “through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things . . . by making peace through the blood of his cross” (Col 1:20; cf. Col 1:14; 2:13-14; 3:13). Thus Paul counters a lifestyle oriented around appeasing astral powers as though they were the means of human access to God and, against a quasi-gnostic spiritualizing of the way of discipleship, affirms in an impassioned way the importance of ethical behavior in this material world.

Elsewhere Paul presents Jesus’ death as the culmination of his life. In Philippians 2:6-11 Paul has apparently added to an early hymn to Christ the words “even death on a cross.” Here, Jesus’ life as God’s obedient Son is at center stage, and this obedience is seen most profoundly in his willingness to embrace rejection, human suffering and a heinous death by crucifixion. In this way, Paul contends that Christ’s death “is the fullest expression of [his] life and establishes [for us] the pattern of a life of love and obedience” (Tambasco, 72). In these and many other ways, Paul shows how Christian thought and life build on the foundational event of the cross of Christ.

2. The Significance of the Cross: A Plurality of Images.

Just as Jesus’ death lies at the foundation of Pauline theology, so Paul seems never to tire of adding new images to his interpretive vocabulary by way of explicating its significance.

It is true that Paul is much more concerned with laying out the significance of the death of Christ than with its historical circumstances, and he communicates this significance above all in terms of its benefits for humankind. In subsequent theological reflection, these benefits have been developed under the nomenclature of “atonement,” and this presents the modern interpreter with two problems.

First, the word *atonement* is open to diverse definition. On the one hand, today many trace the meaning of the term back to its roots in Middle English—“at-one-ment”—and so understand the term above all as a synonym for *reconciliation* (e.g., Fitzmyer). As a consequence, a cleavage is drawn between atonement and notions of expiation, propitiation and other ideas related to doctrines of substitution or satisfaction; more to the point, the atoning significance

of Jesus' death is thus divorced from any consideration on Paul's part regarding the means by which this at-one-ment or reconciliation is achieved.

After centuries of debate it is now difficult to read Paul without the overlay of one or more of the so-called classical theories of the atonement (see Driver, 37-67)—especially the “dramatic theory,” which portrays the saving work of Christ as a cosmic drama of conflict and victory; the “satisfaction theory,” which presents the cross of Christ as the means by which the barrier between God and humanity is removed, so that through Christ's death “satisfaction” is rendered to God; or the “moral influence theory,” which concentrates on the cross as a demonstration to humanity of God's boundless love that is to be emulated. The ascendancy of the “satisfaction theory,” with its often-held corollary, penal or forensic satisfaction (i.e., since human beings have been found guilty before God the judge, they must be punished, but Christ is made to suffer the penalty) as the way to understand Paul's theology of the cross has proven especially problematic in contemporary theological discussion. For some, Paul seems to portray God as a sadist who inflicts punishment and Jesus as the masochist who willingly endures it. Any attempt to sunder the interests and activity of God and Christ—as though the cross is the manifestation of God's wrath but of Christ's mercy—would be problematic on Pauline grounds (see below). And, in fact, it seems highly unlikely that those who formulated the substitutionary interpretation of the death of Christ would recognize this contemporary characterization of their view. This is true even if this classical theory of the atonement has subsequently proven itself susceptible to this problematic reading in some hymnody and popular interpretation (see the helpful discussion in Houts; Beker, 208-11).

The bulk of this article is given over to an examination of Paul's theology of atonement. First, however, it is important that we come to terms with the more fundamental reality that Paul has no one way of explicating the meaning of the cross. Although the crucified Christ lies at the center of his theology, this central truth is capable of multiple interpretations. In fact, Paul seems capable of tailoring his representation of the significance of the death of Jesus to the needs of his audience in particular, contextualized circumstances (see Driver; Boff, 78-84;

Cousar, 82-87). This fact has serious ramifications for the ongoing crosscultural mission of the church, for it suggests that interpreters, in drawing out the significance of Jesus' crucifixion, must continuously seek out metaphors that speak specifically to culture and/or circumstance. In their openness to shaping context-specific ways to communicate the meaning of the death of Christ, contemporary interpreters who would be faithful to Paul will be guided by apostolic testimony to the cross, grounded in the Scriptures and cognizant of the way Paul draws on them in his own hermeneutical enterprise, fully sensitive to the contemporary images and metaphors that carry redemptive meaning, and vitally concerned with the interplay between these three (see Green and Baker).

Of the several dozen metaphors Paul employs to lay bare the benefits of the death of Christ, only a handful can be mentioned here. These are conveniently brought together in two Pauline texts—2 Corinthians 5:14—6:2 and Galatians 3:10-14.

An examination of the presentation of the effects of Jesus' death in 2 Corinthians 5:14—6:2 underscores the degree to which the manifold categories by which Paul drew out the significance of the cross overlap with one another. Even though reconciliation stands at the center of this passage (2 Cor 5:18, 19, 20), other categories are in the foreground: vicarious substitution (“for us,” 2 Cor 5:14, 15), representation (2 Cor 5:14, 21) or interchange (Hooker's term [1974, 1978]), sacrifice (2 Cor 5:21; cf. Dunn, 42-43), *justification (implicitly, 2 Cor 5:19, 21), forgiveness (2 Cor 5:19) and new creation (2 Cor 5:16-17; see Creation, New Creation). Moreover, the cross and resurrection of Christ appear in tandem as salvific events (2 Cor 5:15).

Reconciliation as a term is not found very often in the Pauline corpus. Apart from this passage it appears in Romans 5:10-11 with reference to the reconciliation of humanity to God; Colossians 1:20 with reference to the reconciliation of the cosmos to God; and in Ephesians 2:16 with reference to the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile to God and one another. Whether Ephesians is judged to be Pauline or not, its message at this juncture is clearly Pauline, for this notion of restored relationship in Paul consistently embraces the dynamic presence of divine love active to restore the divine-human relationship and extending a call for

and an enablement of persons to exhibit toward one another this same social restoration. Moreover, especially in 2 Corinthians and Colossians, the work of reconciliation is extended to the entire creation.

In 2 Corinthians 5 Paul's choice of terminology and logic of argumentation is tailored to its context, for here Paul not only needs to counter the triumphalistic boasting of his opponents at Corinth but also to overcome the disharmony between himself and his "children" at Corinth. Rooting the message of reconciliation fundamentally in the sacrificial death of Jesus and asserting that reconciliation entails living no longer for oneself but for Christ and thus for others, he addresses his first aim. His impassioned appeal to the Corinthians to be reconciled to God (2 Cor 5:20; 6:1-2), followed by an affirmation of his own open-heartedness to the Corinthians (2 Cor 6:11-13; 7:2) will, he hopes, accomplish the second goal of restoring his relationship with the Corinthians.

Similarly, Galatians 3:10-14 consists of a convergence of images or theological categories by which Paul expounds the salvific character of the cross of Christ. The larger unit, Galatians 3:1-14, contends that the experience of the Galatians of receiving the Spirit by faith signified the fulfillment of God's promise to bless the Gentiles through Abraham and that this fulfillment was made possible through the death of Christ. The benefits of the death of Christ are presented in Galatians 3:10-14 through a combination of images: Christ as the *representative* of Israel in whose death the *covenant* reaches its climax (Wright, 137-56; cf. the notion of interchange [Hooker]); *justification* (Gal 3:11); *redemption* (Gal 3:13), evoking exodus and exilic themes (cf. the corollary of *adoption* in Gal 3:26-29); *substitution* ("for us," Gal 3:13); *sacrifice* (implicitly, Gal 3:13; cf. Wright, 153); the *promise of the Spirit* (Gal 3:14); and the *triumph over the powers*.

This last motif emerges in a similar way in Ephesians 2:14-15, where the law appears as a barrier separating Jew and Gentile; there the death of Christ abolishes this "dividing wall." In Galatians, however, the law is characterized more as a force, like the elemental spirits of this world, holding the Jewish people captive (Gal 4:1, 3). In a context-specific way, then, Paul insists that the death of Christ has triumphed not by denying the law but by demonstrating its validity and executing the blessing of the covenant.

Taken together, the message of the cross in 2 Corinthians and Galatians (but also elsewhere in the Pauline corpus) raises two issues requiring more explicit elucidation. On the one hand, attention must be drawn to the apocalyptic significance of the cross: set within apocalyptic horizons, the cross has cosmic repercussions. This is the importance of the use of such language as "new creation" in 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Galatians 6:15, for these texts must be understood not as in some modern translations as individual-focused (e.g., NIV, NASB), but as signifying the role of Jesus' death in the termination of the old epoch and the presentation of the new. The death of Christ marks the end of the rule of the apocalyptic powers (cf. Beker, 189-92; Col 2:15) and deliverance "from the present evil age" (Gal 1:4; *see* Eschatology). This intrusion of the new world into contemporary life has for Paul far-reaching consequences for those who would follow the crucified Christ and embody in their lives together the new creation revealed in the cross. Old ways of relating to one another (e.g., boasting in a continuous game of one-upmanship in the service of status seeking) and of drawing lines between Jew and Gentile, slave and free, male and female, are shown to be just that—old, out of date, and judged as such (cf., e.g., Gal 3:26-29; Philem).

On the other hand, we see in Paul's understanding of the cross his ongoing reflection on *Israel, and particularly his inclusion of believing Gentiles in the "Israel of God" (Gal 6:10). For Paul, believers, because of their inclusion in the salvific work of Christ, share in the benefits of the new creation and thus in their identity as the people of God. As Paul acknowledges, "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:19-20). Even if the question of the eschatological role of Israel in Pauline thought is not thus settled, it is nonetheless apparent that the death of Christ marks the new aeon in which Gentiles may be embraced, in Christ, as children of Abraham.

Many other interpretive categories or images might be mentioned from within the Pauline letters, for he makes use of a rich variety of metaphors by way of comprehending the cross and encouraging both understanding and response among his varied audiences. This multiplicity raises a caution against moving too quickly to posit for Paul a single (or any one as the central) theory of the atonement. For him the depths of

the significance of the death of Christ can scarcely be plumbed.

3. The Death of Christ and the Purpose of God.

For Paul the question of the meaning of the cross is first a question about God—theology—and only then a question about anthropology and soteriology. His theology of the cross is rooted in his understanding of the divine purpose, and of God as the primary actor in the drama of salvation. Although he affirms that Christ “gave himself for our sins in order to set us free from the present evil age,” he goes on to affirm that Christ did so “according to the will of our God and Father” (Gal 1:4). That is, Christ’s self-giving signifies his identification and solidarity with God’s salvific aim. By this affirmation, any attribution to Paul of a view of the atonement that segregates the activity of God from that of God’s Son is disallowed. Nevertheless, at center stage stands God’s initiative (e.g.): “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself” (2 Cor 5:19); “God . . . sent his own Son” (Rom 8:3). Paul’s atonement theology is thus rooted in his understanding of *God, and especially of God’s righteousness, wrath and love.

3.1. The Righteousness of God. The precedence Paul gives to the question about God in his atonement theology is perhaps underscored best in the central but tightly packed passage, Romans 3:21-26. Two questions related to the character of God are raised in the verses preceding this passage (see Cousar, 37-41). (1) What are we to make of God’s faithfulness vis-à-vis his covenant promises to the Jewish people? If, as Paul has earlier argued, Jew and Gentile stand side by side before God as implicated in sin, what are we to make of God’s covenantal history with Israel? “Will their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God?” (Rom 3:3). (2) If salvation is available outside the law, should we not engage in evil so that God’s goodness may abound all the more (Rom 3:8)? Or, to raise the question in a way more oriented around the character of God, if God’s goodness is available to sinners, how can God judge the world? The first is a question about the reliability of God, the second about the moral integrity of God.

These questions place the *righteousness of God in the dock, for in the OT the righteousness of God is a central affirmation, affirming God’s faithful orientation toward the covenant

and setting the pattern for the character of Israel’s comportment and behavior before God. Paul is not unaware of this. First, he grounds his treatment of these two questions in the prior disclosure of the righteousness of God (“attested by the law and the Prophets,” Rom 3:21). Then he develops his present perspective on God’s faithfulness, with clear echoes of occasions of covenant making and covenant keeping in Israel’s past (cf. *redemption*, Rom 3:24; *sacrifice of atonement*, Rom 3:25 NRSV). Moreover, he does so via a traditional Jewish-Christian formula, demonstrating even more the rootedness of this representation of God’s character in the history of God’s interaction with the community of God’s people.

In this context, Christ’s salvific death, as it were, proves the reliability and integrity of God. To put it differently, the righteousness of God is manifest in his intervention to bring salvation to a humanity mired in sin. And it is manifest precisely in the revelation of God in the cross as one who keeps his promises. God does not wink at sin but, through the faithful obedience and sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, redeems all who believe, whether Jew or Gentile; and thus does not introduce a way of salvation that nullifies the law but upholds it (cf. Rom 3:31). Consequently, Paul affirms that the righteousness of God is revealed in Christ not merely as a description of God in his role as judge but also and more so as the activity of God oriented around covenant making and covenant keeping. In the death of Christ the righteousness of God is exhibited in God’s delivering people from sin.

3.2. The Wrath of God. In some ways God’s wrath stands as a corollary to God’s righteousness: “since God’s fidelity to covenant demands human response and responsibility, wrath is what one experiences when one rejects God’s offer of justice” (Tambasco, 33; cf. Travis). It is imperative to recognize, however, that for Paul divine wrath is not a divine property, or essential attribute, but the active presence of God’s *judgment toward “all ungodliness and wickedness” (Rom 1:18). The wrath of God is not vindictive indignation or the anger of divine retribution but the divine response to human unfaithfulness. For Paul God’s wrath is future, *eschatological (Rom 2:5, 8; 1 Thess 1:10; 5:9; Col 3:6). It is also already present, for God is now handing people over to experience the consequences of

the sin they choose (Rom 1:18, 24, 26, 28; cf. Wis 11:15-16; 12:23).

In any attempt to come to terms with Paul's theology of atonement, then, it is vital to keep in mind Paul's understanding of divine wrath. Paul does not portray an angry God requiring mollification. For him divine wrath is a means of underscoring how seriously God takes sin, but it is not an affective quality or feeling on God's part. The righteousness of God is effective in the present to save, but as men and women resist it they experience God's righteousness as condemnation.

3.3. The Love of God. According to Romans 5:6-8, the death of Christ is the ultimate expression of the boundless love of God: "But God demonstrates his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8). This affirmation follows on the heels of the claim that the human experience of divine love guarantees that suffering will lead to a hope that will not disappoint (Rom 5:3-5). Three declarations are critical here. First, the love of God for humanity cannot be measured, for there are no anthropomorphic analogues on which to base such a measurement; even though someone might dare to die on behalf of a righteous person (Rom 5:7), Christ died for "the ungodly" (Rom 5:6), for "sinners" (Rom 5:8), for "enemies" of God (Rom 5:10).

Second, Paul's audience can be certain that their suffering has significance because the suffering of Christ has proven to be so meaningful. Through his death "we have been *justified*," "saved from the wrath of God," "reconciled to God" (Rom 5:9-11). In the midst of our impotence, Christ took on the measure of our powerlessness and died in our place; as a result of his death, we share in his life, and we find that our suffering has significance.

Third, in an unusual turn of phrase (Rom 5:8), we are told that God demonstrates his love by means of what Christ did. We might have anticipated that God's love would be manifest best in God's deed. This way of putting things certifies that "Christ's death does not merely express his own sentiment, . . . but God's; or to put it another way, God's stance toward the world is quintessentially demonstrated in the action of Christ" (Cousar, 45). Once more, then, we find in Paul the unrelenting affirmation of the oneness of purpose and activity of God and God's Son in the cross.

4. The Death of Christ and the Human Condition.

To affirm that Paul's understanding of the death of Christ is profoundly theocentric is not to downplay his interest in the need for atonement from the human side of the equation. Quite the contrary, it is to introduce the sharp contrast Paul sees between God and humanity—that is, between the faithfulness of God and human unfaithfulness (see, e.g., the wordplay in Rom 1:17-18: God's righteousness [*dikaioσynē*] versus human unrighteousness [*adikia*]). Paul's portrait of humanity "before Christ" is that of persons, collectively and individually, ensnared in sin, enslaved to powers from which they are impotent to escape. As with atonement, so with sin Paul is able to draw from a full linguistic arsenal to fill out his description of humankind apart from God.

Of special interest in this brief review of Paul's anthropology is Romans 1:18-32. Here *sin* (in the broad sense; the language Paul uses in Rom 1:18 is *ungodliness* and *unrighteousness*) is identified not with individual acts of wickedness but with a general disposition to refuse to honor God as God and to render him thanks, to substitute things created for the Creator—that is, to turn away from authentic human existence by turning away from God.

Four aspects of Paul's reflections in this passage are of particular significance here. First, Paul is not giving the autobiography of individual persons; he is not bent on outlining how each person in his or her own experience comes to be implicated in sin. Instead, his is a universalistic presentation, a diagnosis of the condition of the human family taken as a whole (cf. Rom 3:9).

Second, the acts of wickedness that Paul goes on to enumerate by way of illustration are not themselves the problem. Lust, gossip, envy, deceit, homosexual activity, rebelliousness toward parents and the rest—these are expressions of sin.

Third, within the fabric of Paul's argument, these activities are themselves expressions of the wrath of God. They evidence the moral integrity of a God who takes sin seriously. It is this, God's moral character, that Paul is defending here, and he does so by showing the progression from the human refusal to honor God with its consequent denial of the human vocation to live in relation to God; to God's giving humanity over to

its own desires—giving humanity, as it were, the life apart from him it sought; and from this to human acts of wickedness—which then do not arouse the wrath of God but are themselves already the consequences of its active presence.

Finally, it is remarkable that for Paul, sin marks a rupture in the divine-human relationship but also manifests itself in human relations and in relations between humanity and the material creation. Sin, in this broad sense, then, can never be understood as something private or individualistic, for it always manifests itself in relation to others and to the cosmos (see Rom 1:26-32). What is more, Paul recognizes that *un-godliness* and *unrighteousness* have as their object their own self-legitimation: humanity embraces a lie (Rom 1:25) and receives a corrupt mind (Rom 1:28), with the consequence that it defines its unjust ways as just.

As a result, it is no wonder that Paul's preaching of and identification with the cross would excite opposition and misunderstanding. A humanity that has turned against itself as it turned against God will not easily sanction so revolutionary a re-ordering of the world as would be required by this accentuation of the crucified Christ. This would call for an apparently topsy-turvy way of understanding what it means to be human, for an inversion of the social system. Power rooted in powerlessness? This emphasizes the profound role the word of the cross would have in Paul's conception and experience of the Christian life (see 5 below), but also the severity of the predicament to which God's saving activity would have to address itself.

5. The Crucified Messiah and the Christian Life.

We come finally to explore more directly the question How is the death of Christ efficacious? It is clear that for Paul the cross is the means by which God has provided salvation and that it is the instrument and measure of the new life in Christ. How is the cross operative in this way? Paul provides no single answer to this question, though we can ascertain in the Pauline letters certain parameters for this discussion.

5.1. The Atoning Death of Christ. For Paul, Jesus' death is not interpreted by metaphors drawn from the law court but from within the history of God's covenant with Israel. Thus Paul does not think of Christ's having been punished by execution on the cross so as to satisfy the justice of God (Travis; Tambasco). The cross of

Christ can be understood as substitutionary, but within the matrix of the OT conception of sacrifice.

Although the rationale for the sacrificial system is not worked out fully in the OT, J. D. G. Dunn believes that the notion of "identification" or "representation" is basic to our understanding of it. That is, the sin offering in some way came to represent the sinners in their sin. Thus, by laying hands on the beast's head in the ritual of sacrifice, sinners identified themselves with the beast, indicating that the beast now represented the sinner in his or her sin (i.e., *qua* sinner). As a consequence, the sinner's sin was identified with the beast, and its life became forfeit—"just as Christ, taking the initiative from the other side, identified himself with [human beings] in their fallenness (Rom 8:3), and was made sin (2 Cor. 5:21)" (Dunn, 44).

This logic introduces Christ's dual role in his death—his substitution for humanity before God and in the face of God's justice, but also his substitution for God in the face of human sin.

This use of the language of representation to assist our understanding of substitution is not designed to deny the sense of Christ's having achieved something objective in his death. Indeed, according to Paul, Christ gave himself up for us so that we might live in him (cf. 1 Thess 5:9-10; Rom 8:3-4; 14:9; 2 Cor 5:15, 21; Travis). As significant as the theme of participation in Christ's death and resurrection is for Paul (cf., e.g., Phil 3:10), the possibility of such participation is grounded in his first dying "for us."

From where does Paul obtain this mode of interpretation? Attempts have been made in recent decades to find a Greco-Roman background for Paul's thought on the atoning death of Christ—either quite apart from the OT and Second Temple Judaism (Seeley) or mediated through Hellenistic Judaism (Williams). It is not clear, however, why one must draw such strict boundaries between OT influence and Greco-Roman philosophy, particularly given the degree to which Hellenism and Judaism had coalesced by the beginning of the first century A.D.

It is more probable that the redemptive interpretations of death in Hellenistic Judaism and in Paul are drawn from the common quarry of Israel's Scriptures and sacrificial practices. The sacrificial system of the OT provides a ready source for speculation concerning the relation of innocent death and forgiveness of sins, par-

ticularly since during the Second Temple period sacrifices in general were interpreted along redemptive lines. Of course, this is not to suggest that Paul would have been unaware of such martyrological interpretations of death as one finds in texts such as 2 Maccabees 7:37-38 and 4 Maccabees 6:28-29. But these texts themselves develop OT sacrificial and Servant themes, particularly making use of Isaianic material concerning the Suffering Servant of the Lord (Is 52:13—53:12)—just as did the early church and Paul (*see* Servant of Yahweh). Moreover, the degree to which Paul might have been directly indebted to Hellenistic Judaism via the martyr tales of the Maccabean literature is modulated by the strong influence of retributive ideas in those texts. Paul places a more profound stress on God's initiative in providing the sacrifice, and his evident concern is to establish the universality of Christ's atoning benefits, which are not limited to Israelite cultic and memorial rites needing repetition and reenactment (Hengel, 51). In addition to the sacrificial system of the OT, with its concern for maintaining the relationship between God and his covenant people, the Isaianic Suffering Servant and Jewish martyrology, scholars have also found reflections of the Jewish notion of the binding of Isaac in the background of Paul's thought (cf. Tambasco, Dunn, Hengel, Brown, et al.).

As Hengel has argued, it is not enough to peruse the OT and later Jewish texts for precursors to Paul's salvific interpretation of Jesus' death. An influence of significant proportions lies much closer to hand—namely, the interpretation of the cross of Christ mediated through the repetition of the Last Supper in the early Christian communities. Paul knows and repeats the eucharistic words of Jesus (1 Cor 11:23-25), words that interpret Jesus' self-giving as redemptive.

5.2. *The Death of Christ and Following Christ.* According to Paul, the death and resurrection of Christ mark the beginning of a new epoch that reaches forward to the time of Christ's parousia (cf. Hanson). This fundamentally changes the way one understands life in the present. First, awareness that Christ's death and resurrection has instituted a new epoch allows one to envision new life in contrast to old ways of living and to embrace the power of God requisite for new life. Moreover, considering the present in light of the past motivates believers to act in gratitude for deliverance from slavery to sin. Fi-

nally, recognition of this new time encourages believers' further recognition that life in the present is determined by the cross. This means that one effect of the cross is the possibility of restored humanity, restored in its relationships to God, to itself and to all creation. It also means that the definition of existence put forward by sinful humanity has been radically altered, so that those who follow Christ must look to Christ for the expression of restored humanity. "The church whose theology is shaped by the message of the cross must itself take on a cruciform life if its theology is to carry credibility" (Cousar, 186).

What this means practically is related above all to believers taking on themselves the form of obedience to God represented in Christ's life, expressed ultimately in his death. This thought lies behind Paul's use of the hymn to Christ in Philippians 2:6-11. It also lies behind his defense of his apostolic ministry, his sense that in his weakness and suffering he is engaged in the imitation of Christ and participating in the suffering of the Messiah (cf. Pobee, Hanson, Bloomquist).

5.3. *The Death of Christ and the Life of God's People.* The cross of Christ has as its effect the restoration of humanity in another sense too. The cross is understood by Paul as a boundary-shattering event (cf. Driver, esp. chap. 13). Thus Paul can assert in 1 Corinthians that those who follow the example of Christ in his selfless death will not nurture their status-based divisions within the Christian community but will gain a fuller understanding and appreciation of the body of Christ (1 Cor 11:17—12:31; *see* Body of Christ). This, after all, is a manifestation of the new covenant in Christ's blood (1 Cor 11:25). But Paul can also assert that faithful identification with Christ in his salvific work opposes even more fundamental ethnic, social and sexual boundaries, "for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith" (Gal 3:26; cf. 3:27-29; Eph 2:11-22). In this way too, then, the cross not only enables new life, it also points beyond itself to disclose the norms of that life, and thus it inaugurates the new era wherein the salvific will of God will be realized.

Clearly the death of Christ occupies center stage in Paul's theology. He draws on an abundance of images by which he explicates its meaning, both by way of excavating the rich resources available to him in Israel's Scriptures

and in the common faith of the early church, and by way of relating the message of the cross more directly to his audiences in their diverse backgrounds and with their diverse circumstances. The cross of Christ lies at the intersection of the major avenues of his theology and of his understanding of faithful living before Christ returns. For Paul, believers here and now manifest their obedience to Christ by proclaiming his death until he comes.

See also CHRISTOLOGY; ESCHATOLOGY; JUSTIFICATION; LORD'S SUPPER; RESURRECTION; SALVATION; SERVANT OF YAHWEH.

DPL: CENTER OF PAUL'S THEOLOGY; CROSS, THEOLOGY OF THE; CRUCIFIXION; CURSE, ACCURSED, ANATHEMA; DYING AND RISING WITH CHRIST; EXPIATION, PROPITIATION, MERCY SEAT; FORGIVENESS; PEACE, RECONCILIATION; REDEMPTION; SACRIFICE, OFFERING; TRIUMPH.

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DEATH OF CHRIST III: ACTS, HEBREWS, GENERAL EPISTLES, REVELATION

The writings of the NT under consideration here (Acts, Hebrews, 1 Peter, 1 John and Revelation) interpret the death of *Christ fundamentally in sacrificial terms. This is not to say that this understanding of the cross or the death of Christ itself always receives emphasis. Yet in the writings where it does appear, *salvation (in its various dimensions) is presented as having been accomplished in the forgiveness secured by the death of Christ on behalf of sinners. This category of thought clearly does not exclude others. The cross is also viewed as a divine victory, a deliverance of humanity from sin and evil, a revelation of *God and his love and a pattern of obedience. No one form of description is exhaustive. The innermost aspects of God's working in the cross necessarily lie beyond human language, as the metaphorical language of the NT and the multiplicity of its images indicate.

Yet it is obviously not the case that nothing can be known or said about the saving effects of Christ's death. Characteristically the NT writers

place objective guilt and radical, eschatological forgiveness at the center of the structure of salvation, deriving all other aspects of the cross from it. The victory at the cross is victory because it secures the forgiveness of sins. Deliverance from sin's power issues from the release from objective guilt. The cross reveals God's love in that God gave his Son for our sins. This conception of salvation as full forgiveness distinguishes the NT writings from those of the postapostolic period. The various images of salvation and the OT texts used to derive them are taken up in early Christianity of the second century. But the framework of thought shifts, so that salvation is conceived as the attainment of incorruption and becomes contingent upon the obedience of the believer.

1. Acts
2. Hebrews
3. 1 Peter
4. 1 John
5. Revelation

1. Acts.

The understanding of the death of Christ in Luke-Acts has been a center of scholarly interest in recent years. Early redaction-critical studies, particularly those by P. Vielhauer, H. Conzelmann and E. Haenchen, regarded the author of Luke-Acts as lacking any interest in Jesus' death as an atonement and concomitantly charged him with embracing a theology of glory that measured divine favor by the outward success of the *church. Newer studies have moved in various directions. A number have called for an appreciation for a distinctively Lukan understanding of the death of Christ primarily as a pattern for Christian obedience (e.g., Green, Carroll, Garrett). A few have argued that the understanding of Jesus' death as an atonement holds a larger place in Lukan thought than is generally recognized (Moessner), and still others have reasserted the claim that Luke rejects such an understanding of Jesus' death (Ehrman).

When all the evidence has been taken into account, it becomes clear that Luke does understand Jesus' death as a vicarious atonement and that this understanding is foundational to the message of Luke-Acts. Luke obviously emphasizes the salvific nature of Jesus' *resurrection, yet in doing so he undergirds rather than diminishes the atoning significance of Jesus' death. Jesus' death is also paradigmatic and exemplary for

Luke. Yet despite its current attractiveness as a category for understanding the death of Jesus in Luke-Acts, it is no more prominent than Luke's interpretation of the cross as an atonement. Finally, the Lukan emphasis on the divine purpose behind Jesus' death does not reduce the human responsibility for it.

1.1. Jesus' Death as an Atonement.

1.1.1. *Text-Critical Considerations in Luke 22:19-20.* Although twentieth-century textual criticism increasingly inclined to regard the longer version of the words of institution in Luke as original, B. D. Ehrman (198-209) has argued forcefully in favor of the judgment of Westcott and Hort that the shorter version is more likely authentic. The shorter text, one of Westcott and Hort's so-called Western noninterpolations, is preserved in Codex Bezae and various Old Latin manuscripts and omits the italicized material: "And taking bread, having given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body *which is given for you. Do this in memory of me. And the cup likewise, after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."*'" But the hand of my betrayer is on the table."

Ehrman argues as follows: The external evidence for both readings runs back to the second century and cannot resolve the question. In cases such as this, in which the Western witness is shorter, it must be taken seriously. The usual explanations for an omission are inadequate (viz., that scribes were motivated by the desire either to harmonize Luke's account with Matthew and Mark or to keep the eucharistic words a secret). The vocabulary and more importantly the theology of the additional material are contrary to Lukan usage and thought.

Despite Ehrman's appeal to the significance of the shorter Western reading, its restriction to some Western witnesses at the very least raises some question about its originality, even if it does not decide the matter. And while Ehrman has rightly pointed out the inadequacy of the usual explanations for a scribal abbreviation of the text, an additional, persuasive possibility suggests itself. Although Luke undoubtedly intends the reader to understand Jesus to say that after this supper he will no longer eat and drink with his disciples, the tradition represented in Codex Bezae seems to have taken Jesus' words to mean that he would not participate in that very Passover. The Greek column of Bezae at Luke 22:15

divides *touto* to read *epethymēsa [tou to] to pascha phagein*; the genitive and accusative articles thereby created suggesting that Jesus' desire to eat the Passover with the apostles remained unfulfilled (cf. the genitive following *epithymēō* in 1 Tim 3:1; Ex 34:24 LXX; Prov 23:3, 6 LXX; Sir 16:1). Moreover, Bezae at Luke 22:16 reads: "I certainly will no longer eat (*ouketi mē phagomai; iam non manducabo*) of it until it is eaten (*brōthē; edatur*) new in the *kingdom of God." The scribal omission of Luke 22:19-20 removes the troublesome reference to Jesus' eating (Lk 22:20) and the words of institution. Given the parallels in the other Synoptics and Paul, these words of institution nearly require the subsequent mention of the second cup, which in Luke is necessarily distinguished from the first by the reference to Jesus' having eaten. Once emended in this way, the passage also harmonizes nicely with the Matthean and Markan wording concerning the bread, breaking off precisely where they do and leaving Luke with one cup, even if it is out of the usual order (see, however, *Did.* 9.1-5). The only problem that the emendation failed to overcome is the adversative *plen* that begins Luke 22:21. In the shorter version the statement "the hand of my betrayer on the table" stands in contrast to Jesus' words "this is my body," an impossible juxtaposition, since the hand of the betrayer is not opposed to but is precisely the means of Jesus' death (i.e., his "body"). It appears then that the shorter version in Bezae and probably in the Western tradition in general represents an attempt to smooth out a perceived difficulty in the Lukan text and to remove Jesus' participation in the Passover.

The intrinsic probabilities of vocabulary do not weaken and may strengthen this judgment. Words otherwise absent in Luke-Acts appear in the longer text, in particular the references to the "remembrance" of Jesus and the new covenant. Yet this phenomenon is not different from the speeches of Acts, each of which contains distinctive vocabulary. Moreover, a number of vocabulary items link the longer text to the surrounding material. The second person language ("on behalf of you" [twice]) corresponds to the Lukan context quite closely, including Jesus' desire to eat the Passover "with you" and his instruction regarding the first cup: to "take this and divide it among yourselves" (Lk 22:17-18). "Blood poured out on behalf of you" (Lk 22:20) varies from the Markan and Matthean

"poured out on behalf of many" and corresponds to references to martyrdom elsewhere in Luke-Acts (Lk 11:50; Acts 22:20). Furthermore, like Mark, Luke indicates that Jesus gave the bread to his disciples (Lk 22:19; Mk 14:22). And in distinction to the Pauline version (1 Cor 11:24), Jesus indicates (Lk 22:19) that his body is "given for you." It is conceivable that a copyist artistically interwove the Markan ("giving") and Pauline ("for you"), but it is more likely that it is a Lukan composition, linking Luke 22:19 with its context (see also Green 1988, 28-42).

Intrinsic theological probabilities, because of the room they allow for subjective judgments, must be accorded the least weight in assessing the authenticity of any reading. The validity of Ehrman's claim that Luke nowhere else in the Gospel or Acts portrays Jesus' death as an atonement depends on three considerations: the interpretation of Acts 20:28, to which we will turn shortly; the absence of explicit development of the theme of Jesus' death as an atonement for *sin, despite numerous allusions to the Isaianic Servant that suggest such an understanding (see 1.1.4.1 below); Luke's decision not to include the ransom saying from Mark 10:45. The last two observations provide only arguments from silence, which are fragile, particularly in this case.

It is of considerable importance that Luke transposes the disciples' dispute over greatness from the Markan position immediately following the third passion prediction (Mk 10:41-45) to its place in his Gospel following the *Last Supper (Lk 22:24-27). The distinctively Lukan material in the longer version of the words of institution ("given for you," "new covenant in my blood") may serve as Luke's replacement for the saying he chose to omit. Luke's shifting of the material (or use of an alternative tradition; Green 1988, 44-46) adds considerable pathos and irony to the narrative. As Jesus speaks of his affection and self-giving, the disciples are caught up in self-seeking and quarrels. While in Mark greatness is described in terms of doing, in Luke it consists in what one is. The greatest is to be as the youngest and as one who serves, just as Jesus is one who serves. This emphasis corresponds to Luke's presentation of Jesus as the obedient Servant of God (see 1.1.3.1 below) and may therefore explain why Luke left out the ransom saying. He prefers to focus on Jesus' humility and submission to the divine will rather than

on Jesus' own intent. The story line of Jesus' self-giving is inextricably linked to the story line of God's sending him (see 1.1.4.3. below).

1.1.2. *Summary of Luke 22:19-20.* We may safely say that the weight of external and internal evidence favors the originality of Luke 22:19-20 (for further discussion see Green 1988, 35-42). In this case, Luke clearly attaches atoning significance to Jesus' death, especially in his allusion to Jeremiah 31:31-34. Jesus' body is given and his blood is poured out "on behalf of you," securing the new *covenant in which sins and transgressions are forgiven. This passage is pivotal to Luke-Acts, supplying for the reader the reason John's *baptism of repentance for forgiveness is inadequate and faith in Jesus is necessary (cf. Lk 3:3; 24:47; Acts 19:4). Luke does not want the reader to forget these words and intends the entire subsequent narrative of Acts to be read in light of them, as Acts 20:28 makes clear.

1.1.3. *Acts 20:28.* The second explicit reference to Christ's death as an atoning sacrifice appears in Acts 20:28, where text-critical and interpretive issues are again intertwined. Although the external evidence is evenly balanced, it is probable that the original text referred to "the church of God" rather than the variant "the church of the Lord." The latter reading most likely represents a scribal amelioration of the difficult wording, "the church of God that he acquired with his own blood," which suggests patripassianism (i.e., the Father is said to suffer) to modern ears, as it probably did to scribes of the third century and onward. As is the case with the NRSV, most commentators opt for reading the passage as speaking of "the church of God, which he obtained with the blood of his own [Son]," for which the word *Son* is supplied. This is grammatically possible but unlikely. Luke frequently places adjectival modifiers in the form in question. Had he intended to speak of "God's own Son," he most likely would have included the final noun (cf. Rom 8:32). We are left with his striking language to describe the death of Christ. But how are we to understand it?

Ehrman's claim (202-3) that Luke regards Jesus' blood not as an atonement but as saving because it brings a recognition of guilt is unconvincing. The charge of guilt for Jesus' death is present only within the Jerusalem speeches and disappears after Acts 7. Moreover, in Acts it is

not Jesus' death but the proclamation of his resurrection that brings repentance.

Statements that speak of the "suffering of God," "the crucified God" or even "the blood of God" are common in Christian writers until the end of the second century, when (monarchialist) conceptions of God existing in sequential modes forced further definition to avoid connotations of patripassianism (e.g., Ign. *Eph.* 1.1; see Ehrman, 87-88). We therefore should not be surprised to find such forms of expression in NT writers. The antecedent reference to Jesus' blood (Lk 22:19-20) makes it clear that when Luke uses the expression "God's own blood," he is thinking of Christ's blood and that as with the Christian writers of the second century, this statement represents a bold ascription of deity to Christ. The directness of Luke's statement is not unanticipated, since elsewhere he stresses that Jesus is *Lord with overtones of deity (e.g., Acts 2:21). And Paul, in whose mouth these words appear, is quite capable of making such a statement (Rom 9:5; 1 Cor 8:6).

We should not overlook the biblical allusions conveyed by Luke's language. The word that the NRSV renders "obtained" (*peripoiēō*; cf. *peripoiēsis*) carries salvific overtones and might better be rendered "spared for himself" or "delivered for himself" (see Lk 17:33; Mal 3:17 LXX; Num 22:33 LXX; Ps 78:11 LXX; Jdt 11:9). Yet the word also conveys the sense of possession and therefore recalls the exodus in which God savingly acquired a people for himself. They are his "special possession" (*sēgullâ*; LXX *periousias*; Ex 19:5; Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; cf. 1 Pet 2:9; Ps 73:2 LXX). Likewise, the description of the people of God as a flock has its basis in the exodus (Ps 78:52; cf. Num 27:15-17). The reference to "God's own blood" therefore likely recalls the Passover and suggests a typology in which Christ transcends the original Passover. The striking Lukan wording then signals a contrast between the original Passover and the cross. If this reading of the text is correct, we have in Paul's speech at Miletus a powerful recollection of the words of institution in Luke 22:19-20, where Luke reports Jesus' interpretation of his death (precisely, his blood) as a new covenant. Notions of fulfillment are present in both passages. And the striking ascription of deity to Christ marks Acts 20:28 as a pivotal text.

In narrative, as opposed to direct theological discourse, the character of the speaker and the

placement of speech count a great deal. The frequency of appearance of a thought or an expression is far less important than who says it and when it is said. It therefore must not escape our notice that this single explicit reference in Acts to the death of Jesus as an atonement appears at a crucial point, in the mouth of the one whom Luke presents as Christ's chosen vessel, the apostolic witness in whom the promise of Acts 1:8 is fulfilled. Without diminishing the continuing witness of Paul, Luke presents his speech at Miletus as the closure of his ministry to the churches. That is apparent everywhere in the discourse, from Paul's prediction that he would not see the Ephesian elders again (Acts 20:25) to the potent *christology that we have noticed. The elders are in a sense responsible not merely for the Ephesian church but also for the "church of God." Therefore when Paul says that God has "delivered the church for himself with his own blood," Luke is indicating that Jesus' atoning death stands behind all that he has worked among Jews and Gentiles since the cross (Lk 22:19-20). Rather than serving an insignificant role, the two explicit references to Jesus' atoning death bracket and inform the entire intervening narrative.

1.1.4. Allusions to Jesus' Death as an Atonement. How is it that Luke employs numerous biblical allusions to Jesus' death as a substitutionary atonement yet does not develop them? The answer lies partly in his emphasis on Jesus' resurrection and partly in the bracketing we have just observed. The words of institution and the subsequent statement of Paul provide the interpretation of Jesus' death as an atonement, which Luke reinforces by repeated allusions to the Isaianic Servant, the breaking of bread and the divine necessity of Jesus' death.

1.1.4.1. Jesus as the Isaianic Servant. The most prominent of these allusions is the section of Isaiah 53 that Philip finds the Ethiopian eunuch reading (Acts 8:32-33; Is 53:7-8). Luke focuses on the unjust death of the Servant of God, yet notions of atonement lie tantalizingly close (Is 53:6) and come to mind for anyone who knows Jesus' words at the Last Supper and the larger Isaianic context.

This citation of Isaiah 53:7-8 does not stand alone in Luke-Acts. References to Jesus' identity as the Isaianic Servant extend back to Jesus' definition of his ministry (Lk 4:18-19; Is 61:1-2) and into his passion (Lk 22:37; Is 53:12). As J. B.

Green observes, the latter is the only instance of the Servant material found on Jesus' lips in the NT (Green 1990, 22). And only in Luke's account of Jesus' death is there a suggestion that the watching centurion unwittingly acknowledges Jesus as the "Righteous One," the Servant (Lk 23:47; Is 53:11, see Karris). Indeed, Luke regards the Servant passages of Isaiah as reflecting a larger biblical understanding of the role of the Messiah (Lk 24:25-27, 44-49), including his mission to the Gentiles (Acts 13:47).

Jesus' role as the Servant clearly informs the speeches of Acts, where the running theme of reversal draws upon the biblical motif of the vindication of the suffering righteous, which is central to the Servant passage of Isaiah 52:13—53:12. When Peter proclaims that God has "glorified his servant (*pais*), Jesus" and that the people rejected the "holy and righteous one," he uses the language of Isaiah 52:13 and Isaiah 53:11. The distinctive element of the Servant image that distinguishes it from the larger category of the righteous sufferer is the idea that forgiveness is given through him (Is 53:4-6, 10-11). This theme characterizes Luke's narrative. The offer of salvation to the thief on the cross and the omission of the words of dereliction tilt the Lukan passion narrative away from the Markan presentation of Jesus as a righteous sufferer and toward the Isaianic background (cf. Green 1990, 23). Likewise, the offer of forgiveness is central to the proclamation of the Christ in Acts (Acts 2:38-39; 3:18-20; 10:43; 13:38-39).

Luke therefore does not regard Jesus' death as that of a martyr or a hero, or even that of a biblical, righteous sufferer, but as that of the suffering Servant-Messiah through whom God offers the forgiveness of sins. This conception of Jesus and the Isaianic background that serves as its source reinforce the two Lukan references to Jesus' atoning death, and these references inform the entire presentation. Given Luke's abundant allusions to the Isaianic Servant, it is overwhelmingly likely that he intends his readers to draw this connection.

1.1.4.2. The Breaking of Bread. Luke also intends his readers to understand the believing community's "breaking bread" as an expression of faith and obedience to Jesus' injunction to "do this in remembrance of me" (Lk 22:19). As D. P. Moessner (182) observes, the misunderstanding and disappointment of the disciples on the way to Emmaus is reversed not simply by in-

struction from the unrecognized Jesus but in Jesus' breaking of the bread, suggesting that Jesus' words at the Last Supper represent the culmination of the biblical witness and the focal point of revelation (Lk 24:30-32). Moreover, as is the case with Luke's references to Jesus' atoning death, his references to the communal "breaking bread" bracket his presentation of the spread of the gospel. He includes it in his sketch of the piety of the infant church (Acts 2:42, 46) and mentions it again in Paul's closing meeting with the church at Troas (Acts 20:7, 11). Believers "break bread" along with instruction, fellowship and prayer (Acts 2:42) and gather together for it on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). Given their placement in the narrative, these descriptions are intended to show that the practices were typical of the churches. Luke thus indicates that the first disciples have followed Jesus' command to remember his atoning death. He expects his readers to do so as well.

1.1.4.3. Jesus' Death as a Divine Necessity. As with Matthew, Mark and John, in Luke-Acts Jesus' death is not simply the result of human ignorance and wrongdoing that God subsequently corrects by the resurrection. Rather, the suffering of the Messiah is the will and plan of God, which must come to fulfillment. This theme appears not only in the passion predictions (Lk 9:22, 43; 18:31) and in the prediction of betrayal (Lk 22:21) but also in Jesus' reference to his role as the Isaianic Servant (Lk 22:37; Is 53:12). The divine necessity of Jesus' death consists in that which is written about him (Lk 24:26-27, 44-47; Acts 3:18; 10:43; 13:27; 17:3; 26:23). As the Messiah, Jesus is destined to fulfill the role prescribed for him as the Suffering Servant. This recurring motif subtly underscores Jesus' interpretation of his death as an atonement (Lk 22:19-20), since in it we have the one point in Luke-Acts at which the divine purpose for the cross is disclosed. Luke does not merely assert that the Messiah died because God willed it but supplies Jesus' interpretation of that death.

Yet the theme of the necessity of the suffering of the Messiah also serves a larger, apologetic end in Acts. Far from disqualifying Jesus as the promised Messiah, his unjust death fulfills the words of the prophets (e.g., Acts 13:27). This apology for the cross and Luke's interpretation of Jesus' death as an atonement are bound up with one another, as is his emphasis on the resurrection.

1.1.5. Jesus' Atoning Death and His Saving Resurrection. Luke presents the resurrection of Jesus as the central saving event in Acts in order to undergird the exclusive claims of the gospel. The resurrection not only confirms Jesus as the Servant Messiah but also elevates him into the role of risen Lord. The saving promises of God for Israel and the nations have now been fulfilled in him. Having poured out the Spirit (*see* Holy Spirit), he is now at work in the world sending the message of salvation to the ends of the earth (*see* Creation, New Creation). He therefore is the sole mediator of salvation for humanity. He is not only the prophet like Moses, whom all *Israel must obey (Acts 3:22-26), but also the one who will judge the living and the dead and to whom all the world is accountable (Acts 10:42; 17:31). Salvation is given in his name alone (Acts 4:12).

As the fulfillment of promise, the resurrection also serves as an apology for the cross, vindicating Jesus as Messiah and Lord. This concern is especially apparent in Luke's references to Jesus' death "on the tree" (Acts 5:30; 10:39-40; 13:28-30), which reflect an early Jewish interpretation of Deuteronomy 21:22-23 as speaking of crucifixion as a punishment to be inflicted on those guilty of serious offenses (Wilcox; cf. 11QTemple 64:7-9). Questions of guilt and innocence are present in all three occurrences of this description of Jesus' death. In each case the speaker points to the resurrection as the exculpation of Jesus and confirmation of the divine favor resting on him. Luke's emphasis upon God's action suggests that he is aware of the divine curse that Deuteronomy 21:22-23 was regarded as pronouncing on the guilty, yet he does not develop the idea of Jesus' bearing a curse for others (cf. Gal 3:13). His focus is fixed on removing any doubts about God's vindication of Jesus.

Here we are brought back to one of the most pressing current questions about Luke's understanding of salvation. The tendency has been to suppose that since Luke leaves the theme of Jesus' death as an atonement undeveloped and places his main emphasis on the resurrection, he lacks such an understanding of Jesus' death (Vielhauer, Conzelmann) or rejects it, or, although he is aware of it, he has not appropriated it himself (*see* Marshall 1970, 169-75).

But these judgments overlook the character of Acts as a narrative and the function of Luke's

emphasis on the resurrection. As we noted, the infrequency of reference to Jesus' death as an atonement is not important. In narrative the character of the speaker and the occasion of the utterance counts far more. Moreover, Luke wishes to provide assurance to a circle of readers who already have received basic Christian instruction (Lk 1:1-4), assurance that necessarily entails a confirmation of the events on which such instruction was based. In focusing on Jesus' resurrection and exaltation, Luke provides an apology for the claims of the gospel, supporting rather than diminishing the understanding of Jesus' death as a vicarious atonement. Furthermore, the central role of Jesus' exaltation in Acts is indicative of a salvation-historical perspective that is essential for understanding Jesus' death as an atonement. From Luke's point of view, unless the crucified Jesus was raised from the dead it makes no sense to speak of his death in this way. And unless there is a judgment to come, it makes no sense to speak of the forgiveness of sins. Luke does not confront a diminution of the atoning work of the cross, as do Paul and the author of Hebrews, but he does defend it in his circumstances by providing at length the framework and basis for its acceptance.

Two final observations help to confirm this conclusion. First, while it is true that the resurrection receives primary attention in Acts and that Luke does not directly connect forgiveness to the death of Jesus, it is nevertheless also true that Jesus' exaltation and the forgiveness of sins are not independent of the cross. The resurrection and exaltation are not viewed in the abstract but as God's act upon the crucified Servant of God (e.g., Acts 2:33; 5:30-31). Forgiveness is not proclaimed apart from Jesus' death (Acts 2:38; 3:18-21; 5:30-31; 10:40-43; 13:38-39; 26:18, 23). Second, and more importantly, NT writers characteristically attach saving significance to both the cross and the resurrection without suggesting that the significance of one eclipses the other (e.g., Rom 4:25). Both are essential elements of the saving work of God in Christ. If that is true elsewhere, we should not be surprised to find it in Luke-Acts.

1.2. *Jesus' Suffering as a Pattern for Believers.* Luke also provides indications that he regards Jesus' suffering and death as a paradigm for those who believe in him. The call to discipleship in Luke's Gospel includes a general appli-

cation. Those who follow Jesus must take up their cross "daily" (Lk 9:23). The one who does not bear a cross cannot be Jesus' disciple (Lk 14:27). Moreover, the apostles are those who have stood with Jesus in his trials and on whom he confers a kingdom just as the Father has on him (Lk 22:28-30; *see* Kingdom of God). Something more than following Jesus' example is operative. Just as it is necessary for the Messiah to suffer, it is necessary for those who believe in him to "enter the kingdom through many tribulations" (Acts 14:22). This instruction by Paul to the churches of Lystra, Iconium and Pisidian Antioch amounts to the only explicit statement of the matter in Acts. Yet Luke signals his expectation of suffering to his readers through his description of the experiences of the early church (Acts 8:1-3) and its leaders (Acts 5:41), the first martyr, Stephen (Acts 6-7), and Paul, "the chosen vessel" of the Lord, to whom Jesus promises to reveal "all that he must suffer on account of my name" (Acts 9:16).

The parallelism to Luke's treatment of Jesus' death as an atonement is striking. Again we have numerous allusions alongside a single clarifying pronouncement, which is to be understood as typical. And in this case Luke provides even less information as to the workings of this experience. He obviously regards the people of God as identified with the Messiah. That is clear from the dying Stephen's vision of the Son of man standing at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55) and from the words of the risen Jesus to the thunderstruck Saul ("Why are you persecuting me?" Acts 9:4 et al.). And just as Christ is identified with them, Luke implies that they are identified with him. The will of God was accomplished in the case of his Servant (*pais*), and his servants (*douloi*) pray that it will be worked out in them as well (Acts 4:23-31). Yet Luke does not spell out the nature and basis of this relation. From one perspective the persecution of believers is due to the witness they bear to the name of Jesus (Acts 5:41; 9:16; 15:17; 26:9). Luke also gently hints at the Messiah's role as a second Adam (Acts 26:13). Whatever its basis in Luke-Acts, this theme of conformation to Christ's death, which is quite different from the idea of imitation, reappears in the Pauline letters, Hebrews, 1 Peter, 1 John and Revelation (*see* Revelation, Book of) alongside the interpretation of Jesus' death as an atonement for sin.

1.3. *Human Responsibility for Jesus' Death.* De-

spite Luke's considerable emphasis on the divine purpose behind the death of the Messiah, he does not diminish human responsibility for Jesus' crucifixion. Indeed, here the biblical tension between divine sovereignty and human responsibility reaches its peak. The cross is not a tragedy from which God somehow retrieves some good but is part of his plan foretold by the prophets. Yet those who perpetrated the deed are not relieved of responsibility but are called to repent.

Unlike Christian writers of the second century, Luke also finely differentiates the guilt for Jesus' death. He regards as responsible for Jesus' death all who participated in his trials and execution: Herod and Pilate, the Gentiles and the people of Israel (Acts 4:23-28; cf. 7:51-53). Yet the Jews of Jerusalem especially are charged with guilt, since Luke understands Pilate to have decided to release Jesus, only to be opposed by the crowd (Lk 23:13-25; Acts 2:23; 3:13; 10:39; 13:27-28). Within Jerusalem the leaders are singled out as being especially culpable (Lk 22:66—23:5; Acts 3:17; 5:30-31).

Nevertheless, this guilt does not exclude any from salvation. Leaders and people acted in ignorance and are called to repent, believe and be baptized, so that they may receive the promises God made to Israel (Acts 2:38-39; 3:17-21; 5:31). Luke regards the door to salvation as remaining open to Israel. Paul's concluding words in the book of Acts do not indicate otherwise (Acts 28:25-28). The hardening of Israel's heart does not mean that no Jews have believed or yet will do so but that the time at which the whole nation will turn to the Messiah is still to come (Acts 3:19-21).

2. Hebrews.

Coupled with his exaltation, the death of Christ is the focal point and basis of the sermonic exhortation of Hebrews. The author derives his framework for interpreting the cross primarily from the OT cult, in particular from the high-priestly service on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16). Christ's death works purification from sin and enables approach to a gracious God (Heb 4:14-16). The levitical priesthood, the wilderness tabernacle and its sacrifices anticipated the saving significance of Christ's death, providing an earthly pattern or type of the heavenly benefits that Christ secured (Heb 8:5; 9:23). Christ's sacrifice is superior to those enjoined by the *Law,

since they are mere copies and shadows of the eternal realities achieved in the cross (Heb 8:5; 9:23; 10:1). While the OT cult has been superseded, its conceptual world is firmly retained as the basis for understanding the death of Christ (contra Tuckett, 1:521). This is evident in the concise, introductory description of the saving work of the Son as his "making purification for sins" (Heb 1:3), which interprets the cross in sacrificial terms and anticipates the subsequent theme of forgiveness as the surpassing effect of the cross. Other ways of interpreting Christ's death supplement and expand this idea. By death Christ divested the devil of the power of death. Moreover, he blazed a trail to the divine presence for all the children of God (Heb 2:10, 14-16).

2.1. The Great High Priest. The author introduces the motif of Christ as high priest as a summary of the purpose of the incarnation, a theme that figures prominently in the first part of the material (Heb 2:1-18; 4:14—5:10). Jesus had to share in "flesh and blood," including the suffering of death, so that he might become "a merciful and faithful high priest." This thought recurs and reaches a dramatic closure in Hebrews 5:7-9, where the author, recalling early Christian tradition of the prayer in Gethsemane, describes Jesus' fully human experience in facing the ordeal of the cross: "He offered up supplications and petitions with loud crying and tears to the one able to save him from death." Even the Son learned obedience in suffering and was "perfected" in his role as high priest. This attribute sets him apart from the earthly priesthood and qualifies him for an eternal one (Heb 4:15; 5:2-3; 7:26-28; Peterson, 104-25). His suffering enables him to have compassion toward our moral weakness (*astheneia*; cf. Heb 5:2; 7:28) and to help us (Heb 4:16). The Son became not only a merciful and faithful high priest (Heb 2:17) but also the great high priest who has passed through the heavens (Heb 4:14). This becomes the dominating theme of Hebrews 7—10, where the author presents Christ's superiority in both the effectual character of the sacrifice he made "once for all" and in his eternal status as high priest, a juxtaposition that raises the question as to what Christ's eternal ministry might be.

2.2. The Sacrifice.

2.2.1. Blood. Central to the author's argument is his claim that Christ's blood provides cleansing from sin (Heb 9:14, 22-23; 10:22). In such

contexts “blood” signifies a sacrificial death and not, as has sometimes been argued, the life of the victim (see especially Heb 9:15-22; cf. Heb 10:5, 10, where the parallel term *body* appears). The author does not make use of every aspect of the atoning ritual in explicating Christ’s work and in particular makes no mention of a presentation of blood in the heavenly sanctuary (cf. Lev 16:15-19). Christ enters into heaven not with his blood but through his blood; that is, through his death on the cross (Heb 9:12). Moreover, the finality of Christ’s offering distinguishes his ministry from that of earthly priests (Heb 7:26-28). Christ’s entrance into heaven, which is associated with his cross (Heb 9:12), is followed by his session at the right hand of God, as the author stresses (Heb 1:3; 8:1; 10:11-13). These considerations weigh heavily against interpreting Christ’s ministry in Hebrews as including an application of his blood in the heavenly sanctuary subsequent to his death. Rather, the whole of Christ’s work is accomplished at the cross, once for all (Heb 7:27; 9:28; 10:10). His ministry as high priest entails not a perpetual offering but his presence before God on our behalf (Heb 4:14-16; 6:19-20; 7:26-28; 9:23-28).

This heavenly ministry has two interrelated aspects. First, Christ serves as mediator, eternally interceding for those drawing near to God through him, providing grace and mercy (Heb 2:18; 4:16; 7:25). Second, his entrance into the presence of God for *us* is an entrance before us. By his struggles, suffering and death, he has established the pilgrimage of his brothers and sisters into the presence of God (Heb 6:19-20). In Jesus’ humanity, humanity has been “perfected,” having passed obediently through suffering and into heaven. By virtue of God’s saving purpose for the human race (and not some material conception as in Ignatius or Irenaeus), the high-priestly language flows over into the imagery of progress and conquest. Christ is the “clan-leader” (*archēgos*; cf. Ex 6:14; Num 10:4; Deut 33:21) of salvation (Heb 2:10; 12:2) and its perfecter (Heb 12:2). He has entered into the presence of God as a forerunner for us (Heb 6:20). Yet Christ’s unique high-priestly role is not set aside by these additional conceptions. He alone is the sinless mediator who deals mercifully with sinners (Heb 2:17; 7:26-28). The way into God’s presence has its basis in the forgiveness secured at the cross, not in a divinization of humanity. And the forgiveness once and for all secured

has its application in the essential help it provides to “the children” on the difficult path to glory.

2.2.2. *Offering.* In expounding the relation between the sacrifices of the old covenant and the death of Christ, the author generally employs the familiar language of “offering.” Significantly, however, at the outset and the conclusion of the main argument, interpretive theological terms appear.

The author introduces Jesus’ high-priestly role by describing its purpose as “making propitiation with respect to the sins of the people” (*eis to hilaskesthai tas hamartias tou laou*, Heb 2:17). There has been extensive discussion as to whether the biblical usage of the Greek verb *hilaskesthai* signifies the propitiation of divine wrath, as in secular Greek, or the expiation of sin. Yet once it is acknowledged that the removal of sin averts divine wrath, as is the case here (see 2.2.2. below), one arrives at the idea of “propitiation.” To exclude the idea of aversion of punitive divine action is to remove biblical sacrifice from its covenantal context, where the means of atonement are gracious gifts of God (e.g., Lev 17:11). In the biblical writings the personal, covenantal understanding of the divine-human relation remains decisive—no matter how significant the cultic “space” and implementations might be—as is evidenced by the close association between sacrifice and forgiveness (e.g., Ex 30:30-32; Lev 4:20, 26, 31, 35; and especially, 16:15-22).

In the passage at hand it is clear that the author understands Jesus’ death to avert the wrath of God. It is of the greatest significance that he shifts without discussion from speaking of the forgiveness of the sins to the removal of sin and back again, all in the context of sacrificial language (Heb 9:22, 26; 10:4, 18). If covenantal provisions are rejected, divine wrath will be directed against the disobedient and unbelieving (Heb 2:1-4; 3:7-19; 4:7-8; 12:25-29). The syntax of this clause is paralleled in the Septuagint by only a few passages in Sirach, where atonement is closely connected to the avoidance of God’s anger (see especially Sir 3:30; 28:5). Moreover, the author stresses that the capacity for mercy is a central duty of a high priest (Heb 2:17: 5:2), implying that strict judgment is the alternative to mediation.

The second passage in which the author interprets the language of “offering” corroborates

this reading of Hebrews 2:17. As the author brings to a close his presentation of the death of Christ as a superior sacrifice, he describes the cross as Christ's "being offered up in order to bear the sins of many" (Heb 9:28). Here he obviously recalls the substitutionary suffering of the Isaianic Servant (Is 53:4-12). Bearing the sins "of many," the Christ bore their punishment. It is not simply that at the cross he represented them but that the punishment that was theirs became his, so that they now await salvation rather than condemning judgment (contra Hooker). As he does with the entire sacrificial structure, the author here assumes the reality and validity of this substitutionary act (on this topic see Hill, Morris 1965).

2.2.3. Atonement. As is the case with other NT contexts in which Christ's death is interpreted as an atonement, God is not only the object of Christ's sacrifice (Heb 2:17) but also its subject (Heb 9:28), as is apparent from the covenantal framework of Hebrews (e.g., Heb 8:6-13). It is God who ordains all high-priestly ministry and who chose Christ as an eternal high priest (Heb 5:1-6). He offered Christ up to bear sin (Heb 9:28), and by God's will Christ offered up his body for the sanctification of the people of God (Heb 10:10). God not only required a death for the forgiveness of sins but also provided it in the Son.

2.3. The Effect of Christ's Death. Like the sacrifices of the Law, Christ's death "atones," "cleanses" and "sanctifies," as do the sacrifices of the Law. Yet the cross alone, not the former sacrifices, secures forgiveness (Heb 10:4, 11). And once sins have been removed and forgiven, no need for sacrifice remains (Heb 8:12; 9:26; 10:18). Likewise, Christ's sacrifice and priesthood bring "perfection," in distinction from the sacrifices of the Law.

2.3.1. Forgiveness. "To sanctify," in Hebrews, generally signifies not the effecting of progressive moral improvement but forgiveness (Heb 2:11; 9:13; 10:10, 29; cf., however, Heb 12:14). Those who believe have been sanctified "once for all" through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ (Heb 10:10). This sanctification is nothing other than the forgiveness of sins (see Heb 10:2, 18). As James Denney (126) comments, "In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the word ἀγιάζειν, corresponds as nearly as possible to the Pauline δικαιοῦν. The sanctification of the one writer is the justification of the other; and

the προσάγωγή or access to God, which Paul emphasizes as the primary blessing of *justification, appears everywhere in Hebrews as the primary religious act of 'drawing near' to God through the great High Priest."

2.3.2. Perfection. The "perfection" of believers signifies their participation in the saving blessings of the age to come through the forgiveness won at the cross. "Perfection" could not be achieved through the levitical priesthood, since the law made nothing "perfect" and was not able "to perfect" those who offered sacrifices (Heb 7:11, 19; 10:1). In contrast, with one sacrifice Christ "perfected forever" those being sanctified (Heb 10:14). The provisions of the law were temporary and had only outward effects, cleansing "the flesh" and the copies of the heavenly things. Christ by his death, in contrast, achieved redemption and cleanses the conscience. Now exalted, he appears before God "for us" (Heb 9:1-15, 23-28).

As an eschatological term, "perfection" involves a fundamental distinction between material and spiritual orders but not an unconditioned dualism. It is misleading, therefore, to interpret Hebrews on the basis of Platonism or *Gnosticism, as was once common, despite its obvious coloring with Hellenistic religious terminology. The "vertical" opposition is not absolute, but appears as an element, albeit a pivotal one, in a salvation-historical framework.

In Hebrews, hope is not fixed on a disembodied eternity but on a transformation of the creation that has been subverted by sin and death into an eternal dwelling place for God and his people. The author speaks of the tent through which Christ entered as high priest as being not of this creation (Heb 9:11), implying that Christ entered into a new creation. Heavenly realities, then, are eschatological realities. Similarly, in a striking figure, he symbolically equates Jesus' material flesh with the veil before the holy place, making it plain that the "undecayed" (*prosphatos*) and "living way" into the divine presence is none other than the once crucified and now resurrected Jesus (Heb 9:11; cf. Heb 6:19-20). The world to come is a physical one, as is evidenced by the hope for a "better" resurrection of the dead (Heb 11:35). God will "yet once shake" the structure of the present creation, heaven and earth (Heb 12:26). Created things will then be subjected not to "removal" (wrongly NRSV, NIV) but to a radical "transposi-

tion” (*metathesis*, Heb 7:12; 11:5, cf. Heb 1:10-12). Salvation in Hebrews therefore does not involve a journey from the material into the immaterial but from the present world into the age to come.

Correspondingly, although it is varied in nuance, the language of “perfection” bears an eschatological thrust. The contrast between the earthly tent and the “more perfect” heavenly tent through which Christ entered in offering his sacrifice is strictly eschatological (Heb 9:11). The author’s language of perfection therefore is essentially salvation-historical, underscoring the completion of the divine saving purposes. By virtue of the plan of God, eternal and complete salvation comes only in these last days through the Son (Heb 11:40; Heb 1:2; cf. Heb 9:10).

The perfection of believers is won at the expense of the perfection of the Son through suffering (Heb 2:10; 5:9; 7:28). Here too the eschatological sense is primary. Christ’s sinlessness is never in question in Hebrews and in fact receives emphasis (Heb 4:15; 7:26-28; 9:14). His “perfection” represents his progress into his full role as mediator of salvation (Heb 7:26-28). In being perfected, the Son reaches his eschatological station and awaits the subjection of all things under his feet (Heb 1:13; 10:13).

Above all else, the perfection of believers signifies their access to God and participation in the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb 7:19; 12:22-24). Perfection also takes a cognitive sense in Hebrews 5:11—6:3, where maturity involves the capacity to comprehend “the word of *righteousness.” Yet this perfection of the mind and heart is also obviously bound up with *eschatology, since it represents, among other things, “tasting” the heavenly gift and the powers of the age to come (Heb 6:4-8).

As with the language of sanctification in Hebrews, the “perfection” of believers that Christ wrought by his sacrifice entails in the first place the remission of sins (Heb 7:11, 19; 9:9; 11:40; and especially Heb 10:14-18). This corresponds to our earlier observation that the author’s fundamental category for interpreting Christ’s death lies in its effecting forgiveness. The “perfection” of believers implies the surpassing eschatological cleansing accomplished at the cross (Heb 10:14). In this way the difference between the perfection of the Son and the perfection of believers becomes understandable. He was perfected through suffering; they are perfected by his suffering. They are not thereby spared the

difficult path to glory (Heb 2:10; 12:1-13), but through Jesus they participate in their destination already. He is the perfecter of faith, since his arrival at his eschatological station ensures their arrival as well (Heb 12:2).

2.3.3. Human Transformation. This eternal redemption effected by Christ is reflected in the experience of the believer. In contrast to the sacrifices offered under the Law, Christ’s death cleanses the conscience and not merely the “flesh” from sin and guilt (Heb 9:9, 14; 10:2, 22). There is to be a subjective appreciation of the objective and external reality. The sense of forgiveness does not come about automatically, however. The access to God that Christ’s death has achieved must be grasped and held by faith. Indeed, the path of testing on which believers walk requires that they avail themselves of divine assistance. Unbelief, not faith, is passive and sluggish. The primary exhortation of the letter is the call to maintain confidence in the forgiveness that the cross has won (Heb 3:6; 4:16; 10:35).

In a pattern similar to Paul’s letters, in Hebrews the forgiveness of sins is not an isolated gift but issues in service to God. The indicative of forgiveness forms the basis of the imperative. This is apparent in the author’s understanding of suffering. Believers endure adversity not in order to become “sons” but because they are “sons” already. If they do not receive “discipline,” they are not “sons.” As a loving father, God works righteousness within them, which will bear peaceful fruit (Heb 12:4-11). Likewise, believers are pilgrims and wanderers because they have their true home already in the heavenly city (Heb 3:6; 12:18-24). Their progress is assured by virtue of Christ alone, who as a great high priest supplies the gracious help that they need (Heb 2:16-18; 4:16; 7:25).

In Hebrews, then, the transformation of the human heart has its basis in the forgiveness of sins. This is especially apparent in the repeated references to the promise of a new covenant from the book of Jeremiah (Jer 31:31-34). In Hebrews 8:7-12 the author cites the passage in order to establish the inadequacy of the Law, “the first, antiquated covenant.” The inscription of the Law of God on the heart is summarized in Jeremiah as “knowing God,” and this knowledge of God in turn is based on the forgiveness of sins (Jer 31:34; Heb 8:12). In his second recollection of the Jeremianic text (Heb 10:15-18) the

author underscores the finality of Christ's sacrifice, which, by providing forgiveness of sins, sets aside the provisions of the Law. The author's inclusion in his citation of God's promise to implant his laws in the hearts of his people serves as a reminder of the inability of the Law to do so and implicitly presents inward renewal as the result of the forgiveness of sins.

It is important to observe, too, that for Hebrews the church, "the communion of the saints," derives from the forgiveness that each person individually has received, since forgiveness means common access to the throne of grace, participation in the heavenly city and a common sojourn (Heb 3:12-14; 10:24-25; 12:22-23).

2.3.4. Deliverance. Just as Christ's high-priestly role overflows into that of champion, the author portrays his work on the cross as deliverance from the devil, who held the power of death (Heb 2:14-15). Although he leaves the source of the devil's power unexplained, he no doubt assumes a biblical background, in which the devil incites human beings to sin (Gen 3; 1 Chron 21:1) and accuses them before God (Zech 3:1-5). The immediate context suggests that the devil's power derives from his accusations too, since the help that Christ extends to his brothers and sisters consists in his making propitiation for their sins (Heb 2:17-18; cf. Rev 12:9-10). It is likewise highly probable that the author assumes an inner connection between a guilty conscience and the fear of death, which subjected human beings all their lives to slavery (Heb 2:14-15). The "fear of death" in Hebrews has in view the judgment of God that follows (Heb 9:27; 10:27, 31; cf. Heb 12:21). Christ's sacrifice cleanses the conscience from "dead works," that is, from "works that bring the *judgment of death," so that believers may serve the living God (Heb 9:14). Just as forgiveness, as an objective reality and subjectively grasped, brings the freedom to serve, guilt in both respects makes one a slave.

2.3.5. Covenant Ratification. J. J. Hughes (27-66) has persuasively argued that in Hebrews 9:16-17 *diathēkē* retains the usual biblical sense of "covenant" (rather than the usual rendering as "testament") and that the proper background for the imagery is the sacrificial covenant ritual reflected in the OT (e.g., Gen 15:9-21). The verses then would be rendered: "For where there is a covenant, it is necessary for the death of the one who ratifies it to be attested [or represent-

ed], for a covenant is confirmed over dead animals, since it is not valid while the ratifier still lives [i.e., has not undergone representative death]." Christ's death provides the ratifying sacrifice prerequisite to the establishment of the new, eternal covenant (Heb 9:15-22), as well as redeeming from the transgressions committed under the "first covenant," the law.

But why would the author characterize Christ's death in this way? The ritual splitting of the carcasses of animals signified the fate that awaited the ratifying party should he or she violate the terms of the covenant. Therefore the mention of Christ's blood as a ratification almost certainly anticipates the warnings of the terrifying judgment that will come upon those who knowingly reject the new covenant, to which the author turns in Hebrews 10 (cf. Jer 34:18). In doing so he takes up the formula for covenant ratification he has used in Hebrews 9:20—the one who regards "the blood of the covenant by which he was cleansed as will receive the severest of punishments" (Heb 10:26-30). There is therefore an implicit reference to divine wrath in Hebrews 9:16-17, which corresponds to the author's usual method of presentation: he introduces an idea prior to developing it (cf. the description of Jesus as high priest in Heb 2:17-18, which is then followed by his exposition beginning Heb 5).

3. 1 Peter.

Viewed from the perspective of its supreme moral beauty and inestimable value, the death of Christ, or in the language of the letter, Christ's "suffering," serves as the leitmotif of 1 Peter. Elsewhere Christ's death is often described as his suffering (particularly in the Gospels, Acts and Hebrews; see Ign. *Eph.* 7.2; Ign. *Trall.* presc.; Ign. *Phld.* 9.2; 2 *Clem.* 1.2), but 1 Peter does so exclusively, even altering traditional formulas (see 1 Pet 2:21; 3:18, where variant readings attest scribal tendencies to "correct" the wording).

Peter develops the theme of the excellence of Christ's innocence and humility in three ways. In language suggestive of a common confession, he reminds his readers of the undeserved favor that has come to them by Christ's suffering on their behalf. The sinless Christ accomplished redemption through his meek endurance of injustice, a redemption that therefore is worthy of highest esteem. A second

prominent theme is regularly attached to this idea: in his suffering and death Christ freed believers from their empty past for conduct like his, thereby pleasing God. Finally, Peter points to the eschatological “glories” that follow the cross. Christ, although rejected by the disobedient, is precious to God who has now raised him from the dead and exalted him. Believers wait in faith and hope for the revelation of Christ’s glory in which they shall be delivered and vindicated. The letter therefore serves as an encouragement to Gentile Christians under pressure and the threat of persecution to persevere in faith and in excellence of conduct.

These three themes characterize each of the three confessions of Christ’s cross that appear in the letter (1 Pet 1:18-21; 2:21-25; 3:18). The cross is simultaneously the source of forgiveness, the basis for conduct and the ground of eschatological hope. Moreover, in the course of the letter a certain progression unfolds. In 1 Peter 1:18-21 emphasis falls on the contrast between the vanity of the past conduct of the readers and the exceeding value of Christ’s redeeming death. In 1 Peter 2:21-25, while the same elements are retained, the focus shifts to the pattern of life that Christ’s meekness set for believers to follow. And in the third passage (1 Pet 3:18 and its context) Peter stresses Christ’s vindicating resurrection and the eschatological salvation of those who believe in him.

These passages may represent hymns or confessions of which the author made use (*see* Worship). Nevertheless, in each case the phrasing bears the distinct vocabulary of the author, reflects his particular interests and (as we are arguing) contains material integral to his argument in the letter, so that while the passages reflect early Christian traditions, they do not lend themselves to the reconstruction of underlying strata of thought. They are confessional in nature and form as they stand in the letter and may well have been constructed with catechesis in mind.

It is necessary to mention briefly the debate as to whether 1 Peter 3:18-22 includes a description of a postmortem or postresurrection descent of Christ to the dead. Despite its current disfavor, some form of the Augustinian interpretation of the passage is the most satisfactory interpretation (Feinberg, Grudem, cf. Dalton), since it best accounts for the particularity of reference to Noah and the evangelization of the

dead in 1 Peter 4:6. This interpretation also receives considerable support from the mention of the presence of the Spirit of Christ in the prophets (1 Pet 1:11), which among the NT writings is unique. In this reading Christ did not descend into hell or the underworld but was present by the Spirit in the preaching of Noah. The “spirits in prison” are those of persons who were then disobedient (1 Pet 3:20; cf. Heb 12:23).

3.1. The Suffering of Christ as an Atonement. In contrast to Hebrews, the theme of forgiveness remains undeveloped in 1 Peter. Yet it is clearly foundational, an essential element of the confession of Christ that Peter and his readers share and upon which he builds. This significance of the cross as a means of forgiveness is apparent in the opening greeting, which describes the ultimate saving aim of God for his people as “obedience and sprinkling with the blood of Jesus Christ.”

The first element of the divine aim, “obedience,” serves as a pregnant description of faith (*see* 1 Pet 1:22), which is thereby represented as the primary act of obedience (1 Pet 1:7-9; *contra* Garlington), with the underlying suggestion that faith is to issue in holy conduct (1 Pet 1:14). This language may represent Pauline influence, since the term *obedience* is infrequent apart from his letters. And the usage of “obedience” in the sense of “faith” is unmistakably Paul’s. At the outset of the letter a pattern appears, which is prominent in letters of Paul and common to the NT generally. The forgiveness given by the cross is not an isolated gift but is joined to the new obedience. The focus of the letter is upon the new obedience, but its basis lies in the forgiveness worked by Christ’s death.

The second phrase, which bears overtones of the covenantal ceremony described in Exodus 24 (cf. Heb 9:13; 10:22; 12:24), conveys assurance to the Gentile readers that they have now become the people of God and that they are so on the basis of the death of Christ. Notions of cleansing and forgiveness are also implicit (cf. *Barn.* 5.1), since the sprinkling of blood recalls the Day of Atonement as well (Lev 16; *see* too the red heifer ceremony, Num 19).

In the first christological confession (1 Pet 1:18-21) the reference to the blood of Christ as that of a “lamb unblemished and spotless” (1 Pet 1:19) recalls the sacrificial system (e.g., Lev 9:3), and in its personal and moral aspect it bears as-

sociations with the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. The understanding of Christ's death as a substitutionary atonement lies just under the surface in the biblical imagery that the passage evokes. The focal point of the confession is found in the contrast between the worthless conduct of the pagan world and the "precious blood of Christ."

The soteriology is profound. As L. Goppelt (117) observes, the "ancestral inheritance of empty conduct" (1 Pet 1:18) describes sociologically what the Adam-Christ typology (Rom 5:12-21) says theologically. There is something more here than a bad example that might be either followed or disregarded. Humanity is entrapped in an empty and reprehensible pattern of life. Yet God's redeeming work in Christ has overcome the fallen human condition. Before the foundation of the world, Christ and his saving work were determined (*proginōskein*), and this inestimable sacrifice was made for those whose deeds were worthless. Since God's impartial judgment yet stands before Christians, they are to conduct themselves in reverential fear, knowing the incalculable cost of redemption and the efficacy which that cost implies. The imperative springs from the indicative here in the same paradoxical manner that it does for Paul. The exhortation has faith, not mere gratitude, as its sustaining force (1 Pet 1:21), just as faith, which rightly treasures and loves Christ, is introduced in the letter as the prime virtue of Christians (1 Pet 1:5-9).

The theme of Christ's death as a substitutionary atonement appears again, explicitly, in the second, lengthier confession (1 Pet 2:21-25). "Christ suffered on behalf of you," the readers are told (1 Pet 2:21), a thought that is then expanded in the following confession. This confession is built around Isaiah 53 and represents the most extensive use of that passage in the NT. Thematically it is similar to the citation of Isaiah 53:7-8 in Acts 8:32-33 but goes beyond it precisely in its reference to the substitutionary nature of Christ's death and its saving benefits: "[Christ] who bore our sins in his body on the tree" (1 Pet 2:24; Is 53:12). The phrase "on the tree" reflects the biblical terminology used by early Christians for the shame associated with the cross, reflecting in particular the curse of Deuteronomy 21:23 (see Acts 5:30; 10:39; Gal 3:13; cf. Josh 8:29 LXX, Esther 7:9 LXX).

The underlying thought of 1 Peter 1:2 and

1 Peter 1:19 now becomes explicit. Christ, the sinless Servant of Isaiah 53, has borne the sins of believers upon the cross. Even more than in the earlier confession, attention is concentrated on the new pattern of conduct that Christ's cross has secured for his people. Yet, as before, the substitutionary and unique character of Christ's death provides the basis for exhortation, so that Christ's suffering is not merely exemplary. The indicative of forgiveness that appears in 1 Peter 2:21, 24 is extended to transformed life and gathered up together with the imperative in the summary statements. He bore our sins, that "having [by death] departed from sin, we might live to righteousness" (1 Pet 2:24). With remarkable similarity to Paul, Peter understands Christ's death for sin to include the death of believers to sin, which issues in a new life. In the words of N. Dahl, this is not imitation but conformation. Goppelt's claim (206-7) that the interpretation of Christ's death in terms of mere *imitatio* does not emerge until the second century is substantiated here.

A third succinct description of Christ's death as a vicarious atonement appears in the brief confession found in 1 Peter 3:18. The phrasing "Christ suffered concerning sins [*perihamartion*]" again reflects sacrificial language (e.g., Lev 16:3, 5, 9 LXX). The following reference to "the righteous one on behalf of the unrighteous" (cf. Is 53:11) completes the substitutionary idea. As in the previous confessions, Peter interprets the cross in sacrificial terms, as an atoning act that brings grace and forgiveness. The stark moral contrast between Christ and those he redeemed reinforces the continuing theme of the virtue of Christ's suffering.

3.2. The Suffering of Christ as a Pattern for Christian Conduct. We have already observed that in 1 Peter Christ's death is interpreted as an atonement for sin in connection with and as the basis for the new obedience of believers and that the interest of the letter lies primarily in exhortation, as is indicated by the frequency of reference to "conduct" (the noun and verb appear seven times).

In the first confession this idea appears in a straightforward but undeveloped way. Christ's death has provided redemption (1 Pet 1:18) and release from slavery, which in context recalls not only contemporary practices of securing manumission but more particularly the exodus from

Egypt. Associations not only of the sacrificial system (and the Suffering Servant of Is 53) but also of the Passover lamb (Ex 12) are present. Bondage is bondage to sinful conduct, from which the “blood” of Christ secures release.

As we have noted, in the progression of emphases the second confession (1 Pet 2:21-25) makes the pattern of Christ’s suffering its primary theme. With perhaps a backward glance to the corrupt ancestral inheritance (1 Pet 1:18), Peter indicates that in his patient suffering Christ left behind a model that believers are to follow, tracing his steps (1 Pet 2:21). The following description of Christ’s meekness in the face of suffering makes it clear that discipleship consists in conformity to Christ’s character. Peter does not suppose that all Christians will suffer crucifixion or even that they all will face persecution (1 Pet 1:6; 3:14; 4:14-16). He expects them to avoid it if possible and does not encourage them to seek abuse or martyrdom as, for example, Ignatius did. He assumes, however, that they cannot escape all suffering, and what they are called to endure they are called to face in the same manner as Christ did. The extensive reference to the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 53 has its basis here and is expanded with Christ’s refusing verbal retaliation: “being railed at, he did not rail in return; while suffering, he did not threaten.” Instead he entrusted himself to God the righteous judge (1 Pet 2:23).

In this extraordinary virtue Christ provided an example for believers (cf. 1 Pet 3:9-10; 4:19). Yet, as we observed, Peter does not call for mere imitation. Rather, salvation is understood as conformation to Christ’s character: “the wounding of Christ has brought our healing” (1 Pet 2:24). Christ remains active in guarding and guiding his people, “for as wandering sheep you have now returned to your Shepherd and Guardian” (1 Pet 2:25). Christ by his cross has secured the wholeness of his people, and that wholeness consists in conformity to his character as righteous (see 1 Pet 2:20).

3.3. The Suffering of Christ and Eschatological Glory. In a manner reminiscent of Luke-Acts, (see, e.g., Lk 24:26, 46) Peter describes the interest of the prophets in the “sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories” (1 Pet 1:11). Christ’s rejection by human beings was overruled by God’s delight in him and his virtue (1 Pet 2:4, 19; 3:4, 12). Although put to death in the flesh, he was made alive by the Spirit (1 Pet 3:18) and ex-

alted to the right hand of God (1 Pet 3:22). Christians who share in his sufferings therefore are to rejoice, since such hardship portends eschatological blessing for them at the revelation of Christ’s glory (1 Pet 4:13; 1:7). Just as Christ’s moral excellence was met with divine reward, so too those who share in his suffering will share in his glory.

4. 1 John.

The death of Christ in its sacrificial, atoning significance is again basic to the message of this letter. The author writes to a confused and battered believing community, which has been fractured by some form of docetism. The claims of the wayward group and the status of the remaining community are to be tested against the apostolic witness to the incarnation and atoning death of the Christ. The cross constitutes the eschatological revelation of God’s love, which is to determine the confession and the conduct of those who belong to him. Faith and obedience are inherently bound up with one another, not merely by an ethic of obligation to Jesus’ pattern of behavior but more fundamentally in the divine “begetting” of believers and the gift of the Spirit (1 Jn 2:29; 3:24). The world and the works of the devil have been overcome in the cross of Jesus (1 Jn 3:8; 5:4).

4.1. The Death of Christ as a Propitiatory Sacrifice. The opponents deny that “the Christ is Jesus” (1 Jn 2:22; 5:1, 5) and that “Jesus Christ has come in the flesh” (1 Jn 4:2). This implicit denial of the need for the cross is coupled with the errant group’s claim that they were without guilt or sin (1 Jn 1:8-10). The author in response insists not only on the confession that Jesus is the Christ but also on the fundamental role Christ’s death plays in securing salvation. Particularly the initial and final references to the cross in 1 John address this error, specifying the “blood” of Jesus the Christ as essential to the Christian confession (1 Jn 1:7; 5:6, 8). This language includes a certain stress upon the physical reality of the death of Christ and highlights its saving effect by presenting it in terms of an atoning sacrifice.

The placement of the first of these references to Christ’s atoning death at the beginning of the letter (in 1 Jn 1:7–2:2) signals the importance of this topic to the whole discourse. Cultic language appears immediately, which carries associations of the violent death of Christ. “The

blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin” (cf. Lev 8:15; 16:30). Here the author has in view restoration of our persons, affected by the forgiveness of sins, as is suggested in his elaboration of the thought in 1 John 1:9, and the further development of the understanding that the work of Christ frees us from sin (1 John 2:1-2; 3:1-10).

The sacrificial interpretation of Christ’s death concludes by the description of it as a *hilasmos* for sin, around which there has been considerable debate (as with the related term *hilaskesthai* in Heb 2:17, see 2.2.2 above). Does the expression merely convey the idea of expiation of sin or also that of propitiation of divine wrath? Although notions of wrath remain in the background, in this letter death is not an impersonal effect but the result of divine judgment (1 Jn 2:28; 4:17-18), the consequence of disobedience and unbelief (1 Jn 2:17; 3:14). Christ is our advocate (*paraklētos*) with the Father (1 Jn 2:1), and this advocacy implicitly derives from his being the *hilasmos* for sin (1 Jn 2:2). Consequently, it is best to understand the term as including the sense of propitiation along with the idea of cleansing, which is obviously present (1 Jn 1:7, 9).

Again, as with all other NT writings, God is both subject and object of Christ’s atoning death. He is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and cleanse us, even as Christ is our advocate before him (1 Jn 1:9; 2:1). He sent his Son as a propitiation (*hilasmos*) for our sins (1 Jn 4:10).

The concluding reference to Christ’s death again uses the term *blood*, recalling the initial interpretation of his death as an atoning sacrifice and thus carrying salvific associations. These implicitly reinforce the author’s assertion that Jesus Christ came not “through water only but through water and blood” (1 Jn 5:6), which here and in 1 John 5:8 most likely refer to Jesus’ baptism and death on the cross (see Smalley). Jesus was attested as the Christ not only at his baptism but also in his crucifixion. His death, far from disqualifying him as the Christ, is essential to the divine witness to him.

Christ’s death is an atoning sacrifice not only for believers but also for “the world.” The “world” is not a neutral usage but has in view the hostility of fallen humanity to God and his purposes (e.g., 1 Jn 2:15-17; 3:1, 13; 4:4). The scope of the atonement stands in contrast to the apparent exclusiveness of the group that had de-

parted from the church. Yet 1 John is decidedly exclusive in its insistence on faith in Jesus and the belief that the entire world lies in the power of the evil one (1 Jn 5:19). Coupled with this belief are clear statements of divine ultimacy in salvation (e.g., 1 Jn 3:9; 4:4). The author shows no embarrassment at this juxtaposition. The God revealed in the offer of forgiveness in the cross is nevertheless the God who freely and sovereignly gives new birth.

4.2. The Death of Christ as Eschatological Revelation. The cross is centrally and predominantly interpreted as a revelation in 1 John, as is apparent from the emphasis of the prescript (1 Jn 1:1-4) and the running themes of truth, knowledge and revelation. This perspective does not diminish its status as an atoning event. As a sacrifice for sins, Jesus’ death on the cross is the decisive revelatory event, the eschatological manifestation of God and his love and of eternal life.

A historical dimension is attached to this interpretation of the cross as revelation. The author is distinct from the audience. He has seen the “eternal life” (1 Jn 1:2-3), but they have not. They have only heard from him (1 Jn 1:5). Even his vision is only proleptic. He has seen neither God nor Christ “as he is” in his eschatological glory (1 Jn 3:2; 4:12). Yet he has seen and has borne witness that the Father sent the Son as Savior of the world (1 Jn 4:14). And in sending his only Son that “the world” might live, God has manifested his love (1 Jn 4:9). Revelation in 1 John, therefore, is objective in character rather than a matter of inner illumination. “Seeing” comes about only insofar as the testimony is heard, believed and obeyed (1 Jn 2:7-11, 24; 4:6; 5:5-12). The reception of this revelation is not ultimately a matter of human capacities but a divine work: a being begotten of God (1 Jn 5:1), anointed by him (1 Jn 2:20, 27), given the Spirit (1 Jn 4:13).

The cross is the revelation of the love of God and of love itself. And it reveals this love specifically as a death in our place, for our sins. We know love only through Christ’s yielding his life for us on the cross (1 Jn 3:16; cf. Mk 10:45; Is 53:10). God manifest his love in sending his only (*monogenēs*) Son as a propitiation sacrifice (*hilasmos*) for our sins (1 Jn 4:9-10). The radical nature of this claim derives on the one hand from the author’s view that “the world” is filled with hatred (1 Jn 3:11-12) and on the other that Christ gave his life for that world, which hates

him (1 Jn 2:2). Love as a reality among believers derives not from our love for God but his love for us manifest in Christ's atoning death for our sins (1 Jn 4:10). Apart from the cross, love of this nature would remain unknown. Through the cross, it has dawned on the world as an eschatological reality (1 Jn 2:8-11).

The love of God revealed in the cross places believers under a moral obligation. "If God so loved us, we ought to love one another" (1 Jn 4:11). Yet the ethic of 1 John derives ultimately from the eschatological realities that the cross has introduced. Conduct reveals whether one knows God, whether one is "in him." God is active in the revelation of his love, so that love has its perfection in the re-creation of the human being (1 Jn 2:5; 4:17-18).

The eschatological character of the cross is apparent in other references (1 Jn 3:14; 5:4) and provides the essential structure for the seemingly conflicting statements regarding the relation of believers to sin. As we have seen, the opening declaration of the letter makes continuing confession of sins the mark of true spirituality (1 Jn 1:9-10). Yet the author claims that it is not possible for believers to sin (1 Jn 3:6, 9) and derives this assertion in part from the cross: "That one appeared that he might take away sins, and 'in him' there is no sin" (1 Jn 3:5). The following reference to "abiding in him" (1 Jn 3:6) suggests that the expression "in him there is no sin" refers to the eschatological state that Christ has brought.

"Taking away" sins most likely signifies both forgiveness and restorative, re-creation of life (especially 1 John 3:5). With the forgiveness won at the cross the eschatological state has arrived, in which the power of sin has been abolished by the forgiveness that has been granted. This corresponds to 1 John 3:8, where the purpose of the incarnation is said to be the "destruction of the works of the devil." Believers are now said to have the seed of God abiding within them (1 Jn 3:9), just as they abide in him (1 Jn 3:6). From the eschatological perspective, the perspective of the effects of the cross, the "inability to sin" has been granted. Yet this state of affairs is clearly proleptic. Believers live between the times. They therefore must continue to confess their sins. But they also must live in the light of the eschaton and purify themselves, as Christ is pure (1 Jn 3:3). As the reference to the divine seed implies, eschatological realities have entered the

present and indelibly mark the conduct of the believer.

As an eschatological reality, the death of Christ represents a triumph over the devil and destruction of his works (1 Jn 3:8), a triumph in which believers share (1 Jn 2:12, 14; 4:5). Moreover, victory consists in the confession of Jesus as the Son of God, including his "coming through water and blood," so that the forgiveness worked through the cross stands behind the triumph, a connection that is suggested by the parallel between 1 John 3:5 and 1 John 3:8 as well.

5. Revelation.

Paradoxically in the Revelation to John, the cross of Christ is the path to his lordship and the reign of those who belong to him. Moreover, as we have seen in the other NT writings, it is as an atoning sacrifice that the death of Christ achieves the divine triumph. Not only death and life, apparent defeat and overwhelming victory are juxtaposed in the letter, but also the deity and humanity of Christ. The paradox therefore is deeper than a mere reversal of fortune. Christ died as both God and human.

5.1. Christ's Death as the Death of God. Although Christ's deity and his death are not paired elsewhere in Revelation, the appearance of this juxtaposition in the opening vision and in the message to the church in Smyrna (Rev 2:8) significantly informs the unfolding drama, particularly the adoration of the Lamb (Rev 5:8-14). The worthiness of the Lamb to receive worship derives not only from his redeeming death but also, subtly and implicitly, from his very being. Christ is "the first and the last" (Rev 1:17; 2:8; 22:13), an ascription of divine self-sufficiency and uniqueness (cf. Is 43:10; 44:6; 48:12). He is "the Living One," the expression used to describe the one sitting on the throne (Rev 4:9-10; cf. Rev 10:6; Sir 18:1). Nevertheless, this very one died and lived again (Rev 1:18; 2:8) and now lives forever with authority over death (Rev 1:18), with which he grants encouragement to the suffering church (Rev 2:9-11). The paradoxical relation focuses attention on his death, which is explicable only as a redemptive act.

5.2. Christ's Death as Redemption and Triumph. Most often in Revelation, Christ's death is presented in its saving significance and in sacrificial language. As elsewhere, Christ's death is his "blood" that redeems from sin (Rev 1:5; 7:14)

and purchases a people for God (Rev 5:9; cf. Rev 14:3, 4). This language of purchase, drawn from the field of slavery, expresses God's claim on the redeemed. The cross frees them for their divinely appointed role as rulers and as priests (Rev 1:6; 5:10). The image of Christ as "the Lamb who was slain" further links the language of redemption and purchase with the Passover and exodus (Ex 12–13; cf. 1 Cor 5:7) and with the Suffering Servant of Isaiah (Is 53:7; cf. Acts 8:32; 1 Pet 1:19; Jn 1:29).

The frequent depiction of Christ as the Lamb underscores the centrality of his saving death in Revelation (Rev 5:6; *passim*). In an ironic juxtaposition, this Lamb is first introduced as the conquering Lion of the tribe of Judah (Rev 5:5). God has achieved victory not through force but through weakness in the death of Christ. The violence and oppression of the world and the devil have only caused his purposes to succeed.

These purposes consist in the working of the forgiveness of sins. This idea is inherent to the sacrificial language of Revelation and appears strikingly in the proleptic announcement of triumph in Revelation 12:10-12. The kingdom of God has come, because the "accuser of the brothers and sisters" has been thrown down from heaven (Rev 12:10; cf. Job 1:9-11). The devil, who opposes the divine saving purpose by bringing charges against the people of God for their sins, has been overcome by "the blood of the Lamb" and by faithful testimony to this Lamb. Those who do not believe will be subject to the wrath of God and of the Lamb (Rev 6:16-17; 14:9-11).

The Lamb is supremely worthy of praise because of his sacrificial death (Rev 5:9-12). The moral excellence of his act distinguishes it from the beast's cheap imitation of it in a mortal wound (Rev 13:3, 12).

5.3. Christ's Death as the Destiny of Believers. A stark division between belief and unbelief emerges in Revelation. One is either a follower of the beast (Rev 13:3-4) or a follower of the Lamb (Rev 14:4), subject to the hostility he faced (Rev 12:17). The churches stand in the relation to the risen Lord that he stood to the Father in his earthly ministry (Rev 2:26-28; 3:21-22). They are martyred for their witness (Rev 6:9-11; 12:10), just as he was for his (Rev 1:5). And they likewise share in his triumph (Rev 7:17; 15:3-5; 19:1–20:15).

See also JUSTIFICATION; LORD'S SUPPER; RES-

URRECTION; SERVANT OF YAHWEH.

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DEITY OF CHRIST. See CHRISTOLOGY II.

DELIVERANCE. See SALVATION.

DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE. See JUDA-

ISM AND THE NEW TESTAMENT; TEMPLE CLEANSING.

DIATRIBE. See ROMANS, LETTER TO THE.

DISCIPLES: GOSPELS

The first-century Greco-Roman world displayed a variety of religious, philosophical and political leaders, each of whom had followers committed to their cause, teaching and beliefs. While several different terms designated these followers, *disciple* was one of the most commonly used. It also became the most commonly used term to designate the followers of Jesus, to the extent that in Jesus' so-called Great Commission the objective of the worldwide mission was to "make disciples" of all nations (Mt 28:19).

1. Terminology and Concept.
2. Disciples of Jesus
3. The Twelve
4. The Early Church

1. Terminology and Concept.

The English word *disciple* normally designates a "follower," "adherent" or "student" of a great master, religious leader or teacher. "Disciple" is the word used most commonly to translate the Greek word *mathētēs* and the Hebrew words *talmid* and *limmūd*.

1.1. OT Background. Disciple terminology is strikingly scarce in the OT, but other evidence points to master-disciple relationships within the national life of Israel. The single occurrence of *talmid* in the OT (*mathētēs* does not occur in the LXX) indicates a student or apprentice in musical instruction (1 Chron 25:8). The prophet Isaiah refers to the group gathered around him as "my disciples" (Is 8:16; *limmūday*), and their relationship is characterized by an educational process accentuating speaking and listening (Is 50:4; *limmūd'im*). The term *limmūd'im* was used to specify the "disciples" of Yahweh (Is 54:13), indicating that *limmūd'im* could be disciples of both Yahweh and a human master.

In spite of the relative absence of disciple terminology and explicit teaching on discipleship, the nature of the prophetic ministry (the prophets associated with Samuel, 1 Sam 19:20-24; the sons of the prophets associated with Elisha, 2 Kings 4:1, 38; 9:1), the writing prophets (Jeremiah and Baruch, Jer 36:32), the scribes (Ezra, Ezra 7:6, 11) and the wisdom tradition (Prov 22:17; 25:1; wise counselors, Jer 18:18)

provide compelling evidence for the existence of master-disciple relationships within the social structure of Israel. Each of these institutions was involved in the process of communicating the revelation of Yahweh (prophecy, law, wisdom) and the suggested intimacy of the relationship indicates mutual support in the task of revealing the word of the Lord to the nation.

1.2. Greek-Speaking World. In the earliest classical Greek literature, *mathētēs* was used in three ways: in a general sense (in morphological relation to the verb *manthanein*, “to learn”) of “learner” (Isocrates *Panath.* 16.7); with a technical sense of “adherent” to a great teacher, teaching or master (Xenophon *Mem.* 1.6.3.4); and with a more restricted sense of an “institutional pupil” of the Sophists (Demosthenes *Lacrit.* 35.41.7). Socrates and those opposed to the Sophists resisted using *mathētēs* for his followers in order to avoid Sophistic misassociations (Plato *Soph.* 233.B.6-C.6), but he used the term freely to refer to “learners” (Plato *Crat.* 428.B.4) and “adherents” (Plato *Symp.* 197.B.1) where there was no danger of misunderstanding. In the Hellenistic period at the time of Jesus, *mathētēs* continued to be used with general connotations of a “learner” (Diodorus *Bib. Hist.* 23.2.1.13, 26), but it was used more regularly to refer to an “adherent” (Dio Chrysostom *Regno* 1.38.6). The type of adherence was determined by the master, ranging from being the follower of a great thinker and master of the past like Socrates (Dio Chrysostom *De Homero.* 1.2), to being the pupil of a philosopher like Pythagoras (Diodorus *Bib. Hist.* 12.20.1.3), to being the devotee of a religious master like Epicurus (Plutarch *Non Posse Suav.* 1100.A.6).

1.3. Judaism at the Time of Jesus. Within Judaism of the first century, several different types of individuals were called “disciples,” using the essentially equivalent terms *mathētēs* and *talmid*. The terms designated adherents or followers who were committed to a recognized leader, teacher or movement; relationships running the spectrum from philosophical (Philo *Sacr.* 7.4; 64.10; 79.10) to technical (rabbinical scribes; *m. ’Abot* 1:1; *b. Sabb.* 31a) to sectarian (Pharisees in Josephus *Ant.* 13.289; 15.3, 370) to revolutionary (Zealot-like nationalists in *Midr Šir Haširim Zuta*). Apart from the disciples of Jesus, the Gospels present us with “disciples of the Pharisees” (Mt 22:15-16; Mk 2:18) who possibly belonged to one of the academic institutions;

“disciples of John the Baptist” (Mk 2:18), the courageous men and women who had left the status quo of Jewish society to follow the eschatological prophet John the Baptist; and the “disciples of Moses” (Jn 9:24-29), who were Jews focused on their privileged position as those to whom God had revealed himself through Moses.

2. Disciples of Jesus.

2.1. First Followers. From the beginning of his public ministry, Jesus had followers. His first followers, according to the Johannine tradition, were originally disciples of John the Baptist. Since the Baptist’s ministry prepared the way for Jesus, it is natural that some of John’s disciples would make the transition to following Jesus. The first followers were Andrew and another unnamed disciple (likely the apostle John). Andrew, convinced that Jesus was the Messiah (*see* Christ I), brought his brother, Simon Peter, to Jesus. Philip, another person from the same hometown as Andrew and Peter, was next called by Jesus, and he in turn brought Nathanael to Jesus (cf. Jn 1:35-49). These first followers were likely the “disciples” (Jn 2:2) who next traveled with Jesus to the wedding celebration at Cana, experienced the first miraculous sign and believed in Jesus.

This early movement to follow Jesus gained momentum as the news of Jesus traveled through social relationships in a relatively localized area. Since Jesus focused his ministry in the Galilee region, the early disciples were drawn from an existing network of relatives (e.g., the brothers: Andrew and Simon Peter; John and James), business partners (e.g., Peter and Andrew were partners in the fishing industry with James and John, Lk 5:10), neighbors and acquaintances (most of the twelve disciples were from Capernaum and Bethsaida).

The Jesus movement accelerated rapidly. In the early stages of his ministry a great company of disciples attached themselves to Jesus (Lk 6:17; 10:1; Jn 6:60). Jesus appealed to the multitude of people, and a groundswell of followers came after him to become his disciples. But the early company of disciples was apparently a mixed sort. In John’s Gospel there is a unique record of disciples who had followed Jesus for some period of time, but after a discourse by Jesus which they found particularly hard to accept (*see* Jn 6:60), John writes, “As a result of this many of his disciples were going away to the

things they left behind, and were no longer walking with him” (Jn 6:66). The expressions “going away to the things left behind” and “no longer walking with him” mark the return of these disciples to their old lives before they had begun to follow Jesus. In John’s usage the expressions indicate that these disciples were following Jesus because he was an exciting new miracle worker and teacher (cf. Jn 2:23-25). They had made some kind of a commitment to Jesus, but when his teaching did not conform to their expectations, they left him. They were only loosely attached to the movement.

2.2. The Disciples and the Crowds. Two groups were in attendance for much of Jesus’ ministry: the disciples and the “crowds,” or “multitudes” (*hoi ochloi*). The disciples were those who obeyed Jesus’ call to follow him. The crowds were those to whom Jesus continued to offer a call. The crowds were a neutral though curious group who were not attached in any serious way to Jesus. Although they followed Jesus (Mt 4:25), the crowds did not exhibit the twin prerequisites of discipleship: paying the cost and committing themselves to the cause. They followed only in a physical sense, never in the truest sense of devoting themselves to following Jesus. They were the people of Israel of Jesus’ day who were the object of Jesus’ evangelistic ministry. They flocked to him for healing (Mt 15:29-31) and teaching (Mt 5:28-29) but could not understand (Mt 13:10-17) because they were not true believers. At different times they were either positively or negatively oriented toward him. They were amazed at his teaching (Mt 7:28; 21:9-10) and shouted “Hosanna!” at his entry into Jerusalem, but at other times they laughed at him (Mt 9:23-25), came to arrest him (Mt 26:47), were led astray by the chief priests and elders (Mt 27:20) and in the end accepted responsibility for his death (Mt 27:24; *see* Death of Christ I).

The objective of Jesus’ ministry among the crowd was to make them disciples. As he taught and preached to them, individuals were moved to faith and began to serve Jesus as Lord (Mt 8:18-21; 17:14-15; 19:16-22). Out of this neutral group referred to as the “crowd” came both disciples and opponents of Jesus. Making disciples from among the crowd was the object of Jesus’ ministry in Israel (Mt 9:35-38), and the worldwide commission he gave to his disciples before he ascended was for them to make disciples of the nations (Mt 28:18).

2.3. The Twelve Disciples and Other Disciples.

The four Evangelists witness that in the midst of the ebb and flow of the popularity of the Jesus movement, a core of twelve disciples were called by Jesus. Modern scholarship is widely agreed that Matthew and Mark (at least Mk 3:13 par. Mt 10:1) generally identify the terms *disciple* and *the Twelve* with one another (e.g., Meye, Luz), though not to the extent of implying that the term “disciple” should be limited to the Twelve. Mark gives evidence of disciples outside the circle of the Twelve (Hengel), and Matthew specifically speaks of them (Mt 8:19, 21) and alludes to a wider circle of disciples (Mt 10:24-25, 42), even acknowledging through the verb *mathēteuō* the discipleship of Joseph of Arimathea (Mt 27:57; Przybylski, 109). Matthew and Mark have literary and theological purposes for generally identifying the disciples and the Twelve, but they are in agreement with Luke and John, who more clearly speak of other disciples of Jesus. Luke seems to indicate that Jesus chose the Twelve from among a much larger number of disciples (cf. Lk 6:13, 17).

“Following Jesus” is a technical expression for going after him as his disciple. Some disciples physically followed Jesus in his itinerant ministry (e.g., the Twelve), while a wider group of disciples followed Jesus in a more figurative sense (e.g., Joseph of Arimathea, Jn 19:38). Following Jesus meant togetherness with him while traveling on the Way, but that following could be manifested in either a physical or figurative sense. The difference between the Twelve and the broader group of disciples is the role to which they were called. The Twelve were called to be coworkers with Jesus, and leaving all to follow Jesus was a necessary sacrifice in order to join with him in the proclamation of the kingdom (cf. Mt 10:1-15) and to train for their future role in the church (cf. Mt 19:23-30).

2.4. The Women Who Followed Jesus. The Gospels and Acts give prominent place to various women who were disciples of Jesus. These women were part of the wider group of disciples around Jesus, but some of them physically accompanied Jesus during his itinerancy. Luke tells of a preaching tour through Galilee during which Jesus and the Twelve “with him” were accompanied by several women who had been healed by Jesus and were now contributing to the support of Jesus and the Twelve (Lk 8:1-3). While parallels can be found for women sup-

porting rabbis and their disciples out of their own money, property or foodstuffs, the wording in Luke 8 indicates that these women were themselves disciples of Jesus (e.g., “with him” [*syn autō*] expresses discipleship in Luke’s Gospel and seems in this case to apply to the women; cf. Lk 8:38; 9:18; 22:56). A great master with female disciples was an unusual occurrence in Palestine of the first century, as even the early disciples’ reaction to Jesus’ interaction with the Samaritan woman reveals (Jn 4:27), yet these women exhibited the twin characteristics of Jesus’ disciples—they had paid the cost and were committed to him. This same group of women followed Jesus up to Jerusalem, attended the crucifixion and were the first ones to arrive at the empty tomb (Lk 23:49, 55; 24:9; see Resurrection I).

Later, in the book of Acts, we find many women who had significant roles in the early church. Luke uses the feminine form of the word for “disciple” (*mathētria*, Acts 9:36) in a casual way, so indicating that women believers were commonly called “disciples.”

3. The Twelve.

The four Gospels unanimously testify to the core of Twelve who were called by Jesus into a special relationship with him. Although the Twelve are disciples, examples of what it means to be a believer in Jesus, they also are designated as “apostles.” In the introduction to the list of the Twelve, Luke states that Jesus “called his disciples to him, and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles” (Lk 6:13). This

is a clue to the role of the Twelve: not only are they Jesus’ disciples (committed followers), but they are also in training to be his apostles (commissioned representatives). Although Acts and the Pauline letters evidence more specific uses of the term *apostle*, both “apostle” and “disciple” are applied to the Twelve in the Gospels. As “disciples” the Twelve are set aside as the examples of what Jesus accomplishes in his followers; as apostles the Twelve are set aside as the leaders within the new movement to come, the church. The chart below lists the Twelve as they are found in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts.

The Twelve displayed a remarkable diversity in background, including businessmen (Peter, Andrew, James and John), a tax collector (Matthew) and a zealous revolutionary (Simon the Zealot).

Within the Twelve is a recognizable division of groups of four. The first name of each of the groups remains the same in all of the lists (the first, fifth and ninth place is occupied, respectively, by Peter, Philip and James of Alphaeus).

The order of the names within the groups varies, except for the first name. The sequence of the groups is the same in each list. This grouping suggests that the Twelve were organized into smaller units, each with a leader.

The first group is composed of those two pairs of brothers who were the first called—Peter, Andrew, James and John (Mt 4:18-22 par.), commonly called the “inner circle.” This inner circle accompanied Jesus on special occasions

Matthew 10:2-4	Mark 3:16-19	Luke 6:13-16	Acts 1:13
<i>Simon, called Peter, first</i>	<i>Simon, named Peter</i>	<i>Simon, named Peter</i>	<i>Peter</i>
Andrew, brother of Peter	James son of Zebedee	Andrew, brother of Peter	John
James son of Zebedee	John, brother of James	James	James
John, brother of James	Andrew	John	Andrew
<i>Philip</i>	<i>Philip</i>	<i>Philip</i>	<i>Philip</i>
Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Thomas
Thomas	Matthew	Matthew	Bartholomew
Matthew the tax collector	Thomas	Thomas	Matthew
<i>James son of Alphaeus</i>	<i>James son of Alphaeus</i>	<i>James son of Alphaeus</i>	<i>James son of Alphaeus</i>
Thaddaeus (or Lebbaeus)	Thaddaeus	Simon, called the Zealot	Simon the Zealot
Simon the Cananean	Simon the Cananean	Judas son of James	Judas son of James
Judas Iscariot the betrayer	Judas Iscariot the betrayer	Judas Iscariot the betrayer	

The Twelve as they are found in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts

such as the healing of Jairus' daughter (Mk 5:37 par.) and the transfiguration (Mk 9:2 par.); they were the audience of the Olivet Discourse (Mk 13:3) and were with Jesus during his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mt 26:37 par.).

The Twelve are normally mentioned as a group, with only occasional focus on individuals. Peter is the most familiar of the apostles to NT readers, with his name mentioned 210 times in the NT. The name of Paul is mentioned 162 times. The combined appearances of the names of all the other apostles totals only 142 times. Not much is known about the individual lives of the Twelve except what can be gathered from the scant biblical data and from some statements of the early church fathers.

3.1. Simon Peter. Simon, later called Peter, was a native of Galilee, where he grew up making his living as a fisherman along with his father and his brother, Andrew. After being called to follow Jesus, Peter soon became the most prominent of the disciples. Peter occurs first in all of the lists, indicating his place of leadership within the Twelve. In the Gospels he regularly functions as the spokesman for the Twelve (e.g., Mt 14:28; 15:15; 18:21; 26:35, 40; Mk 8:29; 9:5; 10:28; Jn 6:68), and during the days of the early church Peter fulfilled Jesus' prediction that he would play a foundational role as the rock of the church and holder of the keys of the kingdom of heaven (Mt 16:17-19; cf. Acts 1:8; 2:14-41; 8:14-25; 10:34-48). Peter is called "first" (e.g., Mt 10:2) in the sense that he was first among equals (*primus inter pares*) as the leader of the Twelve.

3.2. Andrew. Andrew is best known as the brother of Simon Peter. Originally a disciple of John the Baptist, Andrew is the first follower of Jesus to be identified by name. He immediately went to tell his brother Peter about Jesus (cf. Jn 1:35-42). Later he and Peter left their fishing business to follow Jesus in his earthly ministry, and he became part of the inner circle around Jesus (Mk 1:16 and par.; 1:29; 13:3). It was Andrew who brought to Jesus the boy with the loaves and fishes in John's account of the feeding of the five thousand (Jn 6:8; see Miracles, Miracle Stories I), and, again in John, Andrew with Philip brought the inquisitive Greeks to Jesus (Jn 12:22).

3.3. James and John (Sons of Zebedee). James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were also from Bethsaida. They were from a family of some wealth and influence, probably derived from a

profitable fishing trade (cf. Mk 1:20; Lk 5:10; Jn 18:15). They were called "the sons of thunder" (Mk 3:17), quite likely because of their fiery temperament (Mk 9:38-41; Lk 9:51-54), which may explain their aggressive ambition (Mk 10:35-45; as well as their mother's, Mt 20:20-21). James and John, along with Peter and Andrew (all fishing partners, cf. Lk 5:10), were called to follow Jesus in his earthly ministry (Mk 1:19-20 par.) and became part of the inner circle around Jesus. James is distinguished as the first apostolic martyr, a victim of the sword during the persecution undertaken by Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:2).

An unnamed disciple of Jesus, known as "one of the disciples, whom Jesus loved," is referred to only in John's Gospel (Jn 13:23; 19:26-27; 20:2; 21:7, 20; 21:4 [possibly Jn 1:40; 18:15; 19:35]), and is also said to be connected with the authorship of the Fourth Gospel (Jn 21:20-24). Proposals for the identity of the beloved disciple include: he was not a real person but a symbolic figure; Lazarus; John Mark; an unknown Jerusalem disciple of Jesus connected with the high priest; the apostle John, the son of Zebedee; disciples of the apostle John; and an unnamed woman disciple of Jesus. Notwithstanding vigorous scholarly support for the competing proposals, the internal evidence from the Fourth Gospel, particularly those disciples close to Jesus in the scenes in which he appears, plus the external evidence from early church fathers such as Irenaeus (*Haer.* 3.1.1) and Polycrates (cited in Eusebius *Hist. Eccl.* 3.31.3; also 5.24.2-3) weigh most heavily in favor of the apostle John, the son of Zebedee, as being the "beloved disciple."

"The Beloved Disciple" is the only one of the Twelve recorded to have witnessed the crucifixion, along with several women disciples. After the crucifixion he took Jesus' mother into his own home (Jn 19:25-27). He was the first of the Twelve to see the empty tomb and was one of the early leaders of the church, one of those recognized by Paul as a "pillar of the church" (Gal 2:9).

3.4. Philip. Philip was also from Bethsaida. He appears to have been a disciple of John the Baptist before Jesus called him (Jn 1:43-44). Philip and Andrew often occur together in the listings of the Twelve (Mk 3:18; Acts 1:13—the only two Greek names) and in the rare incidents in which they are mentioned by name (Jn 6:8; 12:22). In John he is depicted as having a clear

understanding of OT expectations concerning Messiah as well as a missionary heart (Jn 1:43-46; 12:21-22), yet he also exhibited defective spiritual insight (Jn 6:5-7; 14:7-9).

3.5. Bartholomew. Bartholomew appears in all four lists of the twelve disciples, but he is otherwise unmentioned in the NT. From the ninth century onward Bartholomew has been frequently identified with Nathanael. This is based on the conjecture that Nathanael's surname was Bartholomew, so that his full name would have been Nathanael Bar-Tholami. Since the Synoptic Gospels never mention Nathanael, while John never mentions Bartholomew, the juxtaposition of the names Philip and Bartholomew in the Synoptic lists of the Twelve (not in the list in Acts) suggests the close relationship between Philip and Nathanael depicted in John 1:43-51. All of Nathanael's companions are apostles (Jn 1:35-51), he appears as a member of a group of apostles (Jn 21:1-2), and Christ's promise to him suggests an apostolic function (Jn 1:50-51).

If the identification of Bartholomew with Nathanael is correct, Philip brought Bartholomew (Nathanael), a native of Cana of Galilee (Jn 21:2), to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah (Jn 1:45-46). A true Israelite, without guile, Nathanael gave a profound declaration of the messianic identity of Jesus. Jesus in turn stated that Nathanael would see even greater demonstrations of messianism (Jn 1:47-51).

If the identification of Bartholomew with Nathanael is incorrect, then we have no other NT information about Bartholomew other than the four lists.

3.6. Thomas. Thomas the "twin" (*didymus*, Jn 11:16; 20:24; 21:2), known popularly as "doubting Thomas" because of his misgivings concerning Jesus' resurrection (Jn 20:24) and his imperception of Jesus' destiny (Jn 14:5), is otherwise portrayed in the Gospels as a strong figure. His courage stands out when he urges the other disciples to travel with Jesus to Judea so that they might die with him (Jn 11:16). His faithfulness is revealed when he gathers with some of the other disciples in Galilee after the resurrection (Jn 21:2), and his spiritual insight is demonstrated in his confession of Jesus as Lord and God (Jn 20:28), one of the most profound declarations of Jesus' deity in the NT.

3.7. Matthew. Matthew, while employed as a tax collector, was called to follow Jesus (Mt 9:9). When recounting the call, Mark and Luke refer

to him as Levi, suggesting that this tax collector had two names, Matthew Levi, originating either from birth or from the time of his conversion. His tax collector's booth was probably located on one of the main trade highways near Capernaum, where he collected tolls for Herod Antipas from the commercial traffic traveling through this area. After his call, Matthew immediately followed Jesus and arranged a banquet for him at his home (*see* Table Fellowship), to which were invited a large crowd of tax collectors and sinners (Lk 5:29-30). Little else is known of Matthew Levi, except for the widely attested tradition from the second century on that he was the author of the Gospel according to Matthew (*see* Matthew, Gospel of).

3.8. James (Son of Alphaeus). Apart from his name appearing in the four NT lists, James the son of Alphaeus is otherwise unmentioned. He is usually identified with "James the younger," the son of Mary and the brother of Josés (Mk 15:40; cf. Mt 27:56). If so, the designation "younger or less" (Gk *ho mikros*) distinguishes him from James the brother of Jesus and James the son of Zebedee, referring to his younger age, smaller stature or lesser renown. His mother, Mary, was in attendance at the crucifixion and the discovery of the empty tomb (Mt 27:56; Mk 15:40; 16:1; Lk 24:10).

3.9. Thaddaeus/Judas of James. Thaddaeus (some texts have Lebbaeus, or conflation) is mentioned in the third group of disciples by Matthew (Mt 10:3) and Mark (Mk 3:18), while Luke refers to "Judas the son of James" (lit. Judas of James) in his two lists (Lk 6:16; Acts 1:13). The uniformity of the rest of the names from list to list assures us that these names refer to the same person. Judas is probably the given name and Thaddaeus is a nickname or place name. The NT records only one incident about this person: his question to Jesus during the message to the disciples after the Last Supper (Jn 14:22).

3.10. Simon the Zealot. In addition to Simon Peter there was a disciple known as Simon the Cananaean (Mt 10:4; Mk 3:18; a Greek transliteration of the Aramaic word for "zeal" or "zealot" [*qan'ānā'*]) or Simon the Zealot (Lk 6:15; Acts 1:13). The expression indicates that this Simon was a zealous nationalist prior to his call to follow Jesus, and may indicate some of his ongoing temperament. Later, the term *zealot* was used to designate the religiously motivated Jewish

revolutionaries who were active in guerilla-type warfare in the period leading up to A.D. 70 and the destruction of Jerusalem.

3.11. Judas Iscariot. “Iscariot” most likely identifies this Judas’s place of origin, especially since his father is described as “Simon Iscariot” (Jn 6:71; 13:2, 26). Judas Iscariot was the treasurer for the apostolic band (Jn 12:4-6; 13:29). Since this office was not usually given to one known to be greedy and irresponsible, we may assume that he displayed positive characteristics recognizable by the others. However, John tells us that during his time as treasurer Judas had become a thief, pilfering from the treasury funds (Jn 12:6).

The event for which Judas is best known is his betrayal of Jesus. Luke and John portray him as under the direction of Satan (Lk 22:3; Jn 13:2). His greed, which prompted him to steal (Jn 12:4-6), may have motivated him to betray Jesus for the paltry amount of thirty pieces of silver, possibly only a partial payment of the agreed-on sum (Mt 26:14-16; Mk 14:10-11; Lk 22:3-6). The treacherous act, which took place at the Last Supper, apparently came as a surprise to all except Jesus (Mt 26:20-25; Mk 14:17-21). Securing a band of soldiers from the chief priests and Pharisees (Jn 18:3), Judas led them to where Jesus was alone with the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, away from the crowds, and kissed Jesus to identify him for the soldiers (Mt 26:47-56; Mk 14:43-52; Lk 22:47-53; Jn 18:2-12).

When Jesus was officially condemned to death, Judas was filled with remorse and returned the pieces of silver to the priests, who used the blood money to purchase a burial plot for strangers. Then Judas went and committed suicide (cf. Mt 27:3-10; Acts 1:18-19). After Jesus’ ascension Judas was replaced in the circle of the Twelve by Matthias, about whom nothing else is known (Acts 1:26).

4. The Early Church.

The term *mathētēs* is used regularly in Luke-Acts to designate the person who has placed his faith in Jesus Christ. In Luke 6:13, 17 reference is made to a great multitude of disciples. These disciples of Jesus were convinced believers in Jesus’ messiahship and are set in contrast with the “great throng of people” (Lk 6:17) who could be termed “the curious.” This can be compared with Luke’s usage of *mathētēs* in Acts, where he speaks of the multitude of believers (Acts 4:32) and the multitude of “disciples” (Acts 6:2). In Luke’s writings the expressions “those who be-

lieve” and “the disciples” signify the same group of people (cf. Acts 6:7; 9:26; 11:26; 14:21-22). As Acts records, by the time of the early church the term *disciple* had become synonymous with the true believer—all those who confessed Jesus as Messiah—or, as they were first called at Antioch, “Christians” (Acts 11:26).

See also APOSTLE.

DJG: DISCIPLESHIP; JUDAS ISCARIOT.

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DIVINE MAN. See MIRACLES, MIRACLE STORIES.

DIVORCE COMMANDMENT. See ETHICS I; LAW I.

DOCETISM. See JOHN, LETTERS OF.

DUALISM. See APOCALYPTICISM.

DYING AND RISING WITH CHRIST. See BAPTISM II.