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Jesus and Israel's Traditions of Judgement and Restoration

Steven M. Bryan

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JESUS AND ISRAEL'S TRADITIONS OF JUDGEMENT AND RESTORATION

Jesus and Israel's Traditions of Judgement and Restoration examines the eschatology of Jesus by evaluating his appropriation of sacred traditions related to Israel's restoration. It addresses the way in which Jesus' future expectations impinged upon his understanding of key features of Jewish society.

Scholars have long debated the degree to which Jesus' eschatology can be said to have been realized. This book breaks new ground by considering Jesus' expectations regarding key constitutional features of the eschaton: the shape of the people of God, purity, Land and Temple. Steven M. Bryan shows that Jesus' anticipation of coming national judgement led him to use Israel's sacred traditions in ways that differed significantly from their use by his contemporaries. This did not lead Jesus to the conviction that Israel's restoration had been delayed. Instead he employed Israel's traditions to support a different understanding of restoration and a belief that the time of restoration had arrived.

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117

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This study began as a PhD thesis submitted to the Faculty of Divinity at Cambridge University in August 1999. I came to the study as a follower of Jesus. I remain so at its end, but with immeasurably increased sympathy for Jesus' first followers, for whom he held a peculiar fascination even as much about him and his message remained a puzzle. Despite nearly three years of concentrated study, I am more aware than ever of how much about Jesus I do not understand. Still the fascination with him is with me all the more.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND CITATION CONVENTIONS

Abbreviations and citation conventions for biblical texts, Apocrypha, Qumran literature, Old Testament pseudepigrapha, Josephus, Philo, New Testament Apocrypha, Rabbinic literature, and the Church Fathers follow standard forms as specified in 'Instructions for Contributors', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 117 (1998), 555–79.

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	*Anchor Bible Dictionary*
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
BASORSup	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research Supplemental Studies
BDF	F. Blass, A. Debrunner and R. W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the NT*
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum louvaniensium
BHS	*Biblia hebraica stuttgartensia*
Bib	*Biblica*
BJRL	*Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
BZ	*Biblische Zeitschrift*
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CJA	Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity
ConB	Coniectanea biblica
ConBNT	Coniectanea biblica New Testament Series
CSHJ	Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism

CSCO	Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium
CTSRR	College Theology Society Resources in Religion
CUP	Cambridge University Press
DJG	*Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*
DSD	*Dead Sea Discoveries*
EKKNT	Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
ErIsr	*Eretz Israel*
FOTL	Forms of the Old Testament Literature
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HS	*Hebrew Studies*
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
HTKNT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IEJ	*Israel Exploration Journal*
ISBE	*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. G. W. Bromiley
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JJTP	*Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*
JPJ	*Journal of Progressive Judaism*
JPSTC	Jewish Publication Society Torah Commentaries
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSP	*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
KJV	King James Version
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LS	*Louvain Studies*
LSJ	Liddell–Scott–Jones, *Greek–English Lexicon*
LTPM	Louvain Theological and Pastoral Monographs

LXX	The Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NA^{27}	*Novum Testamentum Graece* (27th edn.)
NAC	New American Commentary
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIV	New International Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTAbh	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
NTTS	New Testament Tools and Studies
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
OTP	*Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. J. H. Charlesworth
PVTG	Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti graece
RB	*Revue biblique*
RevQ	*Revue de Qumran*
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SBB	Stuttgarter biblische Beiträge
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLEJL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and Its Literature
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLTT	Society of Biblical Literature Texts and Translations
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SJSJ	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
SJT	*Scottish Journal of Theology*
SPB	Studia postbiblica
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha
TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich
Them	*Themelios*
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TWAT	*Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, ed. G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary

WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
YJS	Yale Judaica Series
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZTK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*

NOTE ON TEXTS USED

Unless indicated otherwise, Old Testament quotations are from BHS or the NRSV; New Testament quotations are from NA^{27} or the NRSV; English quotations of the Apocrypha are from the NRSV; Greek quotations of the Septuagint including the Apocrypha are from *Septuaginta: Id Est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes*, edited by A. Rahlfs (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1935). Unless indicated otherwise, English quotations of the book of Jubilees are taken from the translation of James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, CSCO (Louvain: Aedibus E. Peeters, 1989); all other quotations of the OT pseudepigrapha are from the edition of James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983). Also, except where noted, citations of the Dead Sea Scrolls are taken from the translation of Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 4th edn (Sheffield Academic Press, 1995). All other translations of primary sources which have been quoted are listed in the bibliography.

1

INTRODUCTION

This book is an attempt to make sense of Jesus as one whose intentions were decisively shaped not only by Jewish restoration eschatology but also by his own creative reworking of restorationist expectations. This tack is neither new nor unguided by presuppositions. The attempt to relate Jesus in some way to Israel's hope of national restoration has been a key feature of much recent work on Jesus.[1] Foremost among the guiding principles of this approach to Jesus are the convictions (1) that Jesus must be understood within first-century Palestinian Judaism and (2) that Jesus' intentions are substantially accessible. Though they run counter to much Jesus-related scholarship of the twentieth century, these convictions have become foundational to the so-called 'Third Quest' for the historical Jesus and form the basis of the present study.[2]

1.1 Issues and questions

1.1.1 Present and future

All studies of history are historically positioned. This applies not least to the study of Jesus as a figure of history. The present study was initiated at the end of a century which began with the work of J. Weiss and A. Schweitzer, whose studies have served as either guide or foil for much of what has followed. Weiss' and Schweitzer's portrayal of Jesus as a prophet of the end of the world attracts few adherents today, but the perception of Jesus within the milieu of Jewish eschatological expectation

[1] The seminal works are B. F. Meyer, *The Aims of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1979); and E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM Press, 1985).

[2] To be sure, dissenting voices remain. Not all will agree that the reasons for Bultmann's scepticism that we can know 'almost nothing' about Jesus have been overturned; R. Bultmann, *Jesus and the Word* (London: Scribner's, 1934), p. 14. Also a small but vocal minority, mainly associated with the Jesus Seminar in North America, continue to produce portraits of an essentially non-Jewish Jesus.

continues to command broad adherence. Of course there are exceptions. Proponents of a Cynic Jesus tend, not unexpectedly, to conclude that Jesus was also non-eschatological.[3] But agreement that Jesus must be understood within the framework of Jewish eschatology leaves much undecided. Granted that Jesus' ministry and message were decisively shaped by eschatology, the question remains: in what way?

One of the central questions of twentieth-century scholarship on Jesus was whether, and the degree to which, Jesus could be said to have held a realized eschatology. Few today would want to follow C. H. Dodd in seeing Jesus' eschatology as fully realized. In fact, if the way Jesus' eschatology is understood changed substantially over the course of the last century, the perception that Jesus expected an imminent end of some sort seems very much the same. To be sure, most would acknowledge a certain realized dimension to Jesus' eschatology.[4] But for many scholars the realized aspect of Jesus' eschatology in no way occupies the centre of his thought. Rather it is often made subservient to his imminent expectation: Jesus proclaimed a kingdom that was so near that he could sometimes speak as if it were already present. As H. Merklein puts it, 'die Gottesherrschaft primär eine futurische, d.h. noch ausstehende Größe ist, und . . . die Aussagen über ihre Gegenwart sich von ihrer Zukunft her bestimmen und nicht umgehehrt.'[5] For this reason, G. Beasley-Murray speaks of the common tendency to subordinate the presence of the kingdom to its futurity, 'evident when, for example, the work of Jesus is regarded only as a "sign" of the coming kingdom, or an "adumbration" of it, or the "dawning" of the kingdom (an ambiguous term, apparently intended to exclude the *light* of day)'.[6]

Much of the discussion of Jesus' eschatology has naturally turned on the meaning of Jesus' proclamation of the 'kingdom'. Unfortunately, the term is far from unambiguous and fierce debates continue about the meaning and authenticity of not a few of the sayings in which it occurs. But even if one concludes that there are authentic sayings which indicate a view of

[3] See e.g. J. D. Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991). M. J. Borg also argues for a non-eschatological Jesus, though not in a Cynic framework, 'A Temperate Case for a Non-Eschatological Jesus', *Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship* (Valley Forge, PN: Trinity Press International, 1994), pp. 47–68.

[4] Exceptions include R. H. Hiers, *Jesus and the Future* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1981); and E. Gräßer, *Die Naherwartung Jesu* (SBS; Stuttgart: KBW Verlag, 1973).

[5] H. Merklein, *Die Gottesherrschaft als Handlungsprinzip: Untersuchung zur Ethik Jesu* (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1981), p. 165, cited in G. R. Beasley-Murray, 'Matthew 6:33: The Kingdom of God and the Ethic of Jesus', in *Neues Testament und Ethik* (ed. H. Merklein; Freiburg: Herder, 1989), p. 93.

[6] Beasley-Murray, 'Matthew 6:33', p. 93.

the kingdom as both present and future, it is not clear what this means in concrete terms. The fact that the term 'kingdom' is understood primarily as an abstraction contributes to the ambiguity; to say that through Jesus 'the reign of God' was already at work in the world is not to say very much in view of the *realia* of Jewish eschatological expectation. Perhaps one of the reasons that most of the emphasis has fallen on the futurity of Jesus' eschatology is that so few of the concrete expectations which characterize Jewish expectations for the eschaton seem to have come into existence through Jesus' ministry.

It is here that the exploration of specific features of the eschaton within Jewish restorationism offers a way to advance the discussion of the extent of realization in Jesus' eschatology. The harbinger of such an approach may perhaps be seen in Sanders' attempt to make the restorationist expectation of a new Temple central to his understanding of Jesus' aims.[7] But the question needs to be posed more clearly: what were Jesus' intentions in relation to key constitutional features of the eschaton as anticipated by Jewish restorationism?

1.1.2 National judgement and final judgement

Part of the century-long emphasis on imminence within Jesus' eschatology has been the insistence that Jesus proclaimed the imminence of final judgement, a grand assize at the beginning of the eschaton in which individuals would be called to account, not least for their response to Jesus' message. Consequently, a common assumption has been that texts which speak of judgement relate to Jesus' expectation of an imminent final judgement of individuals. Through much of the twentieth century, it was not possible to think of any other sort of judgement. The existentialist Jesus of Bultmann, like the end-of-the-world Jesus of Schweitzer, confronted individuals with a crisis of decision in the face of an imminent judgement of individuals; such a Jesus harboured no intentions toward the nation. Such conceptions of Jesus and final judgement remain remarkably strong. Though there is now more awareness that Jesus' aims were profoundly oriented toward the nation, Jesus' words of judgement are often construed not as an announcement of approaching national judgement but as a warning that those within the nation who refuse to respond would not escape the final judgement of individuals.[8] Thus, it is commonplace for scholars to see Jesus pronouncing judgement against the Jewish leaders

[7] E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, pp. 61–90.

[8] M. Reiser (*Jesus and Judgment: The Eschatological Proclamation in Its Jewish Context* (trans. L. M. Maloney; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), e.g. p. 312), for example, believes that

or against unresponsive individuals within the nation but not against the nation as such. For some scholars, Jesus' warning that some Jews will be judged in no way alters Jesus' full participation in expectations that 'all Israel' would be restored.[9] For others, Jesus' announcement of judgement is national only in that Jews are declared to be as lost as Gentiles in the face of the imminent final judgement of individuals.[10] The assumption seems to be that if Jesus proclaimed the imminence of the final events, including Israel's restoration and final judgement, there simply was no time for another iteration of national judgement. But however much this assumption may seem to follow necessarily from Jesus' imminent eschatology, is it correct?

In the recent work of N. T. Wright this assumption has been turned on its head. For Wright, final judgement has receded almost completely from view. Jesus announced Israel's restoration as the end of exilic national judgement but warned those who failed to heed his message of imminent national judgement.[11] Wright seems to invest this national judgement with climactic significance – he does not portray it as a return to exile – but it is decidedly not final judgement to which Jesus refers. Rather, Wright is concerned to show that Jesus' message of judgement corresponds to the nationally oriented message of the prophets. However, he does not grapple with the profound difference between the prophets' understanding of

Jesus' message of judgement is directed toward the nation as well as the individual, but this merely means that Jesus (and John) differed from their contemporaries in their belief that not all Israelites would have a share in the new age. But would any Jew have believed that every Israelite would be included? J. Gnilka (*Jesus of Nazareth: Message and History* (trans. S. S. Schatzmann; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), pp. 73, 150–8, 192–8) similarly acknowledges that 'the explicit statements focusing on Israel as a totality are utterances of judgment' but this is simply because Jesus' proclamation is directed toward Israel.

[9]E.g. E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, pp. 95–119, who, more than most, sees the significance of the fact that within Jewish restorationism generally there was little expectation of a further punishment of the nation: a belief in the imminent restoration of 'all Israel' would have been seen as incompatible with an expectation of national judgement. Thus, when Sanders allows that Jesus believed in the judgement of Israel, he simply means that Jesus shared the common belief that some Jews would be excluded from Israel's restoration. Sanders' generalization that few expected another round of national judgement prior to restoration still stands, even when qualified by the evidence assembled by C. A. Evans ('Predictions of the Destruction of the Herodian Temple in the Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Scrolls, and Related Texts', *JSP* 10 (1992), 89–147); and M. N. A. Bockmuehl ('Why Did Jesus Predict the Destruction of the Temple?', *Crux* 25 (1989), 11–18) that some Second Temple Jews expected God's judgement on the Temple establishment.

[10]J. Becker (*Jesus of Nazareth* (trans. J. E. Crouch; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1998), pp. 73–4), for instance, believes that Jesus' comparisons of Israel to the Gentile world in contexts of judgement is driven by the conviction that Israel has 'used up its election'.

[11]N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Christian Origins and the Question of God; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), pp. 182–6, 326–36.

the relationship of national judgement to restoration and that he posits for Jesus. The prophets had anticipated restoration as the end of national judgement, not as the precursor to another round of national judgement. Further, Wright does not directly address the question of how Jesus' message of national judgement impinged upon the nature of the restoration which he was proclaiming. The nature of the restoration which Wright's Jesus announces differs substantially from that of his contemporaries. However, Wright does not seem to attribute these differences to Jesus' message of national judgement. Rather, national judgement is the consequence of refusing to accept Jesus' understanding of restoration at which he arrived in some other, unspecified way. Here is a problem: Jesus pronounces national judgement on his contemporaries for holding on to a hope of restoration which in many of its particulars – the defeat of Israel's oppressors, the re-establishment of a purified Israel in the Land focused on a renewed and glorious Temple – sounds for all the world like traditions stemming from the prophets.

If certain difficulties attend Wright's assimilation of the judgement sayings of Jesus to national judgement, his intuition about a number of them is correct: if located within the OT prophetic corpus, many of Jesus' sayings would be read without hesitation as declarations of coming judgement on Israel. It is possible that those texts in which Jesus directs a message of impending judgement toward his Jewish contemporaries simply refer to particular individuals within the nation. Even the most ardent first-century proponent of Jewish restorationism would not have thought that every Jew would escape the day of judgement. But can we merely assume that Jesus could not have spoken of national judgement? Of course, if Jesus did speak of national judgement, it would raise the question of the temporal relationship between this national judgement and final judgement. Still, that is essentially a separate and subsequent question.[12] Here I limit my focus to the question of whether Jesus did in fact announce coming judgement on the nation. What I propose is to examine specific points of contact between judgement in Jesus' message and expectations related to the hope of Israel's restoration.

[12]S. McKnight (*A New Vision for Israel: The Teachings of Jesus in National Context* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), pp. 9–13, 138–49) has recently argued that Jesus viewed national judgement as a constituent part of final judgement. He asserts that Jesus, like the prophets, looked ahead to national judgement as if it were final judgement. However, while it is true that prophetic perception of the future was not finely differentiated, the judgement of Israel was generally distinguished from the judgement of the nations: Israel's judgement ends (and its restoration begins) with the judgement of the nations.

1.1.3 National judgement and national restoration

The prophets had never struggled to hold together the expectations of national judgement and national restoration. Israel would be judged, but after judgement the nation would be restored. However, if Jesus expected national judgement, the matter is not so simple. The problem is not merely the temporal one noted above, namely, how does one squeeze in another iteration of national judgement if national restoration is imminent? Rather, the more acute difficulty presents itself if Jesus' eschatology is partially realized: how can the announcement of national judgement be reconciled with the belief that Israel's restoration had already begun?

To anticipate the argument, it is my belief that Jesus did pronounce judgement over the nation as had many of the prophets before him. It need hardly be said that such an expectation had little place in the restorationism of Jesus' contemporaries. But it is also true that many of the themes and actions of Jesus' ministry seemed deliberately chosen for their power to evoke hopes of restoration: the choice of twelve disciples, the proclamation of the kingdom, the 'triumphal' entry. If Jesus participated in Jewish restorationism, how was his understanding of Israel's restoration affected by his proclamation of national judgement?

It is my intention to argue that Jesus' use of traditions of national judgement, often in terms drawn from the restorationism of his contemporaries, forced a reconception of national restoration. His revisionist understanding of Israel's restoration will be seen in his use of traditions related to certain constitutional features of the eschaton – the shape of Israel, purity, Land, and Temple – which are often merely assumed to have remained unaltered in Jesus' eschatology. What will emerge is an understanding of restoration which did not view Roman rule as the primary problem to which restoration was the answer. Though Jesus did not deny that restoration would ultimately entail the demise of Roman rule, his reformulation of restoration allowed for its realization under the conditions of Roman rule and thus made central Israel's condition and constitution in the present.

1.2 Method

1.2.1 Approach: Jesus' use of tradition

Israel's sacred traditions had never stood still. Even within the Old Testament, earlier traditions were frequently taken up and reapplied to new situations. Perhaps the most thorough investigation of this

phenomenon is that of M. Fishbane. Fishbane distinguishes between the *traditum* and the *traditio*, by which he refers to the original content of tradition and the process by which that tradition is passed on.[13] Fishbane's particular concern is to trace the dynamic between *traditum* and *traditio* in the development of inner-biblical exegesis. Such exegesis 'starts with the received Scripture and moves forward to the interpretations based on it' with a concern not 'to reproduce the *traditum*, but to reactualize it in a new setting and a new way. [The] aim is not to present the *traditum*, but rather to re[-]present it – and this is *traditio*.'[14]

The shift to a new historical context, however, is not straightforward. In the first place, there may be competing claims regarding how a tradition should be interpreted within the new situation, that is, how the *traditum* should be re-presented. For example, in the second century BCE, Theodotus and the *Testament of Levi* re-presented the story of the rape of Dinah in exactly opposite ways: in the latter, the rewritten story is unwashed anti-Samaritan propaganda; for Theodotus, the narrative is told in a way that both wards off such propaganda and legitimates Samaritan counterclaims.[15] Second, with the build-up of a body of tradition, there may be competing claims as to which part of the tradition is relevant to the new situation. J. A. Sanders has turned his attention to this latter issue in his perceptive investigation of what he calls 'prophetic criticism'. Sanders notes in particular the way in which the prophets challenged accepted use of sacred tradition, not only by setting forth alternative interpretations of the traditions held to be central by those they opposed but also by bringing alternative traditions to bear on the present moment. By thus setting forth a competing reappropriation of sacred tradition, the prophets called into question the way their contemporaries used Scripture to support a theological or ethical status quo which the prophets deemed unacceptable.[16]

[13]M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), p. 6.

[14]Ibid., pp. 416–17.

[15]See below, chapter 5, and D. Mendels, *The Land of Israel as a Political Concept in Hasmonean Literature: Recourse to History in Second Century B. C. Claims to the Holy Land* (TSAJ; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1987), pp. 104–5, 113–16.

[16]J. A. Sanders, 'From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4', *Luke and Scripture: The Function of Sacred Tradition in Luke–Acts* (C. A. Evans and J. A. Sanders; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), pp. 46–69; J. A. Sanders, 'The Ethic of Election in Luke's Great Banquet Parable', *Luke and Scripture: The Function of Sacred Tradition in Luke–Acts* (C. A. Evans and J. A. Sanders; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), pp. 106–20. A recent article by C. Evans and B. Chilton ('Jesus and Israel's Scriptures', *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research* (ed. B. Chilton and C. A. Evans; NTTS; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), p. 314) highlights Sanders' 'prophetic criticism' as a potentially fruitful line of inquiry into the aims of Jesus.

Following the lead of Fishbane and Sanders, I propose to examine the questions posed above by looking at the competing claims regarding Israel's sacred traditions that are evident within the Gospels. Of course, Jesus' claim to be the authoritative interpreter of Israel's legal traditions is widely acknowledged as a source of conflict. But what was Jesus' perception of the widely accepted re-presentation of restorationist traditions? Did he fully participate in this re-presentation of the traditions, as E. P. Sanders and others seem to suppose? Or are there indications that he reinterpreted the traditions at key points and brought alternative traditions to bear in ways which generated a quite different understanding of the promised restoration?

Approaching the Jesus materials in this way is not without complication, for it is immediately evident that we are not dealing merely with Jesus' use of *traditum* but also of *traditio* (reverting to Fishbane's distinction). The prophetic promises of national restoration had generated substantial reflection on the way in which restoration would take place, not least because of the 'cognitive dissonance' introduced by the failure of restoration hopes to materialize immediately after the return from exile as well as in subsequent generations which had reappropriated the traditions.[17] Recent scholarship has become increasingly aware of the diversity of Second Temple eschatological expectations. Perhaps there has been less awareness of the way in which the non-fulfilment of prophetic promises played a central role in the generation of quite diverse eschatological views regarding the concomitants of the eventual fulfilment. Once the promises had been removed from the framework of the historical return from exile, they had to be placed in another historical context. Scripture itself provided no clear-cut model for this relocation, but Scripture nevertheless continued to serve as the basis for such a relocation. Consequently Israel's traditions of restoration underwent substantial development in the intertestamental period and any attempt to evaluate competing claims regarding these traditions must take into account not only the traditions themselves but their continuing development, development to which both Jesus and his contemporaries were heirs.

1.2.2 Criteria of authenticity

The great undisputed fact of the first century is the emergence of Christianity from within Judaism. If the parting of the ways, or indeed partings

[17] See R. P. Carroll, 'Ancient Israelite Prophecy and Dissonance Theory', in '*The Place Is Too Small for Us': The Israelite Prophets in Recent Scholarship* (ed. R. P. Gordon; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995), pp. 377–91.

of the ways,[18] originated with Jesus, the value of the much maligned criterion of double dissimilarity must in some sense be reaffirmed. Unlike Christianity, Jesus stayed within Judaism. On the other hand, how many Jews were handed over to the Romans to be crucified under the titulus 'king of the Jews'?

But if double dissimilarity remains useful for its ability to indicate the discontinuities between Jesus and both Judaism and Christianity, it is singularly unhelpful in explaining why Jesus, whatever his own intentions, came to be a transitional figure between Judaism and Christianity. It may be anachronistic to think of Jesus as the 'founder of Christianity', but Christianity must in some sense be seen as part of his effective history. The crucial question, then, is how to understand Jesus as one who operated within the 'constraints' of Judaism and yet generated a movement which soon could no longer be accommodated within Judaism.[19]

From this it should be clear that I regard double dissimilarity as being of very little use in the evaluation of individual sayings and traditions. To the extent that it remains useful, it is to act as a check on constructions which dissolve Jesus wholly into either Judaism or Christianity. But what criteria would enable us to demonstrate the authenticity of particular traditions? Here I have adopted an *ad hoc* approach, making use of the various criteria when relevant. However, there is a growing awareness that the traditional criteria – chiefly dissimilarity, multiple attestation, consistency, embarrassment – cannot be applied in a vacuum, as if the isolation of authentic Jesus material were a purely objective and positivistic enterprise. Judgements about what is dissimilar, consistent or embarrassing depend on prior hypotheses about Jesus, Judaism and early Christianity; multiple attestation presupposes prior judgements regarding the dates and interdependence of our sources.

Of the two sorts of judgements which lie behind the various criteria, those presupposed by the criterion of multiple attestation are perhaps least significant. This is not to say they are unimportant. The energy expended on the synoptic problem suggests otherwise. I am reasonably convinced that the two-source hypothesis is correct and occasionally appeal to multiple attestation on that basis. But relatively little of the Jesus material is multiply attested, and even where multiple attestation can be shown, it only demonstrates that the tradition in question is earlier than the earliest

[18] See J. D. G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways: Between Christianity and Judaism and Their Significance for the Character of Christianity* (London: SCM Press, 1991).

[19] On this point, the quite different works of Harvey and Riches may be usefully compared: A. E. Harvey, *Jesus and the Constraints of History* (London: Duckworth, 1982); J. Riches, *Jesus and the Transformation of Judaism* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1980).

of the sources in which it is found. Its applicability and value are therefore limited, suggesting that even when it applies, it does not demonstrate but merely raises the likelihood of authenticity.

Much more important are prior hypotheses about Jesus, Judaism and early Christianity. It is at this point that scholars have been much less candid about their presuppositions. Though it continues to be the underlying premise of the most comprehensive of the recent works on Jesus,[20] it must be questioned whether it is really possible to build up a portrait of Jesus in a strictly inductive way by sifting the traditions through an ostensibly objective application of the criteria. As a result, several scholars have acknowledged the need to place Jesus research on a broader footing.

An initial move in this direction is evident in the work of G. Theissen and C. Evans who have recently articulated a criterion of 'historical coherence'[21] or 'historical plausibility'.[22] For Evans, the criterion means that material which displays a coherence with Jesus' historical circumstances and the general features of his life is likely to be authentic. This corresponds quite closely with a specific feature of Theissen's criterion of historical plausibility, namely, *Kontextplausibilität*: '*Je besser eine Überlieferung in den konkreten jüdischen Kontext paßt, um so mehr hat sie Anspruch auf Authentizität*.' Of course, it may be objected that Jesus' followers were just as Jewish as Jesus and could have easily created traditions with a plausible Jewish context. Theissen, at least, anticipates the problem and integrates two other elements into his criterion of *historischer Gesamtplausibilität*. First, authentic traditions must have a '*sinnvollen wirkungsgeschichtlichen Zusammenhang mit der Entstehung des urchristlichen, vom Judentum sich lösenden Glaubens*'.[23] Theissen regards the Christian sources as part of the *Wirkungsgeschichte Jesu* and so the historical influence of a tradition is plausible either if it corresponds with the content of other independent traditions or if it runs counter to the *Tendenz* of its source.[24] Second, whatever evinces a unique profile for Jesus within the Jewish context is likely to be authentic.[25] The first of these appears simply to be Theissen's way of reintroducing the criteria

[20] J. P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1994–).

[21] C. A. Evans, 'Recent Developments in Jesus Research: Presuppositions, Criteria, and Sources', *Jesus and His Contemporaries: Comparative Studies* (AGJU; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), pp. 13–15.

[22] G. Theissen and A. Merz, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide* (London: SCM Press, 1998), pp. 116–18.

[23] G. Theissen and D. Winter, *Die Kriterienfrage in der Jesusforschung: Vom Differenzkriterium zum Plausibilitätkriterium* (NTOA; Freiburg: Universität Verlag, 1997), p. 194.

[24] Ibid., pp. 176–83. [25] Ibid., p. 183.

of coherence and embarrassment in slightly modified forms which are vulnerable to the criticisms noted above. The second is still more problematic: it presupposes that we know in advance what the unique profile of Jesus is.[26]

But whatever weaknesses the 'historical coherence' of Evans and the 'historical plausibility' of Theissen may have *as criteria*, they have the advantage of making explicit what had previously functioned as an unstated (sometimes unconscious) assumption: that our judgements about the authenticity of particular traditions are inevitably affected by our antecedent understanding of Judaism, early Christianity and even Jesus. It is awareness of this that has led D. Allison and N. T. Wright to acknowledge up front that they apply the various criteria within the framework of a prior paradigm.[27] This is not to make their reconstructions of Jesus non-falsifiable, nor their conclusions predetermined, but only to admit that no history proceeds as an objective build-up of recovered data, innocent of any and all presuppositions. In other words, all history necessarily moves from hypothesis to verification or modification.

One further observation is necessary. Our approach to the traditions of Jesus must necessarily be at least moderately conservative. The reasons are two. First, the various criteria are unreliable as negative tests. It is quite conceivable that a particular tradition fail every test and yet still be authentic.[28] We may hesitate to base a reconstruction of Jesus on such material, but it should be worrying if very little of the material which is not demonstrably authentic agrees with our reconstruction. Second, and more important, D. Allison has recently pointed out that as we move along a continuum from the hypothetical authenticity of every tradition to the authenticity of only, say, six sayings, there is a point at which the quest for Jesus suffers a methodological meltdown. If Jesus is, in fact, the source of only six sayings, it is impossible to say which six. 'In order to solve a criminal case one must have some decent witnesses.' In other words, our sources must be generally reliable about Jesus if we are to have any idea which material does not stem from Jesus. Thus Allison points out that if we felt constrained to excise all the eschatological materials from the Jesus

[26]Cf. T. Holmén, 'Doubts About Double Dissimilarity: Restructuring the Main Criterion of Jesus-of-History Research', in *Authenticating the Words of Jesus* (ed. B. Chilton and C. A. Evans; NTTS; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), pp. 73–4 n. 106.

[27]D. C. Allison, Jr, *Jesus of Nazareth: Millenarian Prophet* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998); N. T. Wright, *Jesus*.

[28]Similarly M. de Jonge, *God's Final Envoy: Early Christology and Jesus' Own View of His Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), p. 5, affirming L. E. Keck, *A Future for the Historical Jesus: The Place of Jesus in Preaching and Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1971), pp. 32–3.

tradition, we would have to conclude that our sources are so misleading that they cannot be trusted to tell us anything.[29] I am not here attempting to resurrect the burden-of-proof debate. I am suggesting that either our sources exclude some prior paradigms out of hand or they are useless; paradigms which require the dismissal of vast amounts of the tradition are inherently unlikely. Thus, the reconstruction likely to be most accurate is that which accounts for the most material for which authenticity can be demonstrated and at the same time requires the rejection of the least amount of material for which authenticity cannot be demonstrated.

As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the paradigm with which I begin takes Jesus to be a prophet of restoration and judgement. It is within this paradigm that I now turn to an investigation of the questions posed above.

Excursus: Jesus and the end of exile

The scholar whose overall hypothesis about Jesus is perhaps most similar to that proposed here is N. T. Wright. Though disagreements at a number of points will become plain in the course of this study, one important aspect of Wright's reconstruction which differs significantly from this study must be mentioned at the outset. I refer to Wright's proposal that within Second Temple Judaism there was a broad perception that the exile was ongoing.[30] The examples Wright adduces certainly indicate an awareness that many Jews continued to live outside the Land and reflect a hope that restoration would bring about their return. But what do such texts tell us about the world-view of first-century Jews living in the Land under Roman rule? Was continuing exile simply assumed as an unquestioned part of the national psyche, as Wright suggests?

The significance of the term 'exile' for Wright does not lie primarily in the fact that many first-century Jews lived outside the Land; Wright can speak of Jews being in exile while 'in their own land'. For Wright, the term does not have the sense that its OT equivalents bear which involve literally being away from one's land (e.g. Amos 7.11, 18). Rather, Wright uses the term as a shorthand for Israel's plight and suggests that most first-century Jews who lived in the Land did so as well. It is at least ironic that he has chosen a term which connotes removal from the Land to describe the situation of Jews living in the Land.

[29] Allison, *Jesus*, pp. 33–5.

[30] The idea is found throughout his works, but see especially *The New Testament and the People of God* (New Testament; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), pp. 268–72.

Wright's choice of this metaphor is predicated on the well-substantiated fact that many first-century Jews believed themselves to be in bondage and longed for the fulfilment of prophetic promises of restoration. Within the biblical narratives, captivity to foreign powers and the hope of restoration are both closely tied to exile. Exile serves as the climax of Israel's enslavement to other nations, and the promises of restoration are firmly associated by the biblical prophets with the return of the exiles from Babylon in the sixth century BCE. These associations lead Wright to infer that Israelites generally believed themselves to be still in exile.

Inasmuch as Wright uses 'exile' to sum up this sense of bondage and hope of restoration, he often means by it little more than 'non-restoration'. Used in this way, K. Snodgrass is correct to point out that whether Jews actually believed themselves to be in exile is irrelevant: the realities to which Wright refers with the term are clearly attested.[31] That many Jews believed themselves to be in bondage and longed for Israel's restoration are not new observations. Thus, the fact that Wright sets forth his paradigm of ongoing exile as a central and innovative part of his reconstructions of Second Temple Judaism and of Jesus indicates that more is at stake. Indeed, Wright's exegesis of a number of texts explicitly depends on a specific awareness of ongoing exile in the minds of first-century Jews. His paradigmatic exegesis of the parable of the prodigal son is a case in point. Wright supposes that the text's reference to the prodigal son going into a far country would have been readily understood as a reference to the nation going into exile.[32] However, such a meaning would only be detected if Israel's literal sixth-century-BCE departure from the Land had become a metaphor in terms of which first-century Jews in the Land understood their circumstances.

If Second Temple Jews *understood* their situation as one of ongoing exile, it is clear that they did not often *describe* their situation in such terms. As I have said, Wright's case is largely an inference, for texts in which exile language occurs are rare. This is not to deny that many Second Temple texts lament the fact that many Jews continued to live outside the Land and that the regathering of these Jews was an anticipated part of restoration. But can such texts tell us anything of the way Jews in the Land thought about themselves and their circumstances? Wright cites a number of texts which refer to Jews scattered among the Gentiles – these are the

[31] K. R. Snodgrass, 'Reading and Overreading the Parables in *Jesus and the Victory of God', Jesus and the Restoration of Israel: A Critical Assessment of N. T. Wright's Jesus and the Victory of God* (ed. C. C. Newman; Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999), p. 62.

[32] N. T. Wright, *Jesus*, pp. 125–31.

only texts in which exile language sometimes does occur (Tobit 14.5–7, Baruch 3.6–8) – but does not note that they refer to the literal situation of Jews living outside the Land rather than to the way in which Jews living in the Land perceived themselves. The fact that many Jews were living 'in a kind of exile from the Land' in no way indicates that those who were not thought of themselves as being 'in exile'. Nor is it clear that even Jews of the Diaspora regularly thought of themselves as being in exile. No doubt some did. However, prior to the Bar Kochba revolt, R. Aqiba reached the conclusion that the ten tribes would not return (*m. Sanh*. 10.3), perhaps, as Klausner suggests, because he found among Jews of distant lands little enthusiasm to return.[33]

Much of the evidence for Wright's view stems from texts in which there is an awareness that Israel was in bondage. C. A. Evans, in particular, has marshalled the evidence of this widespread sense of bondage.[34] At first glance, the effort expended to prove this seems odd, since scholars have long accepted this perception as commonplace. However, unlike most scholars, Wright's and Evans' unstated equation of bondage to exile lead them to regard this evidence as manifest support for Wright's view. Three observations, however, count against the inference that such texts imply a sense of ongoing exile.

First, there were ample precedents for speaking about Israel's captivity to foreign nations while in its own Land without reference to exile. Such situations had often occurred within Israel's history and were rectified not with an end of exile but with the liberation of the people and the Land from foreign domination. I shall argue in the following chapter that despite the frequent association of the so-called 'sign prophets' of the first century with the Exodus, the promised signs which can be identified are those which relate most properly to the Conquest. In other words, some first-century Jews seem to have regarded their circumstances not so much as analogous to or an extension of the Babylonian exile but rather as comparable to the time immediately preceding the Conquest.

Second, Wright's equation of bondage to exile reflects his strong emphasis on the storyline of Israel reflected in much of the Old Testament which follows a straight-line trajectory from exile to restoration. That is why prophetic hopes for restoration are framed as hopes for the end of exile. *But that is only how Israel's story should have turned out, not how it did turn out*. The ensuing history was considerably more complex.

[33] J. Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel: From Its Beginning to the Completion of the Mishnah* (based on Hebrew 3rd edn; trans. W. F. Stinespring; London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1956), p. 474.

[34] C. A. Evans, 'Jesus and the Continuing Exile of Israel', in *Jesus and the Restoration of Israel* (ed. C. C. Newman; Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999), pp. 78–87.

And, without invalidating the promises of restoration, the sources often acknowledge this complexity, as is clear even from post-exilic biblical works like Zechariah and Haggai. Evans cites Josephus' statement in *Jewish War* 5.395–6 regarding Israel's enslavement to Rome as proof that Jews regarded themselves as 'still in exile',[35] but Josephus is explicit that he regards the beginning of Jewish slavery as having occurred because of the Jewish civil strife leading to Pompey's entrance and the subjugation of those 'who were unworthy of liberty'. Inasmuch as Josephus regards the enslavement that began under Pompey as the end of a preceding period of liberty, it is difficult to see how or why he would have connected this new situation of bondage with exile.

That Josephus regards the period preceding the entrance of Pompey as a time of liberty reflects a positive remembrance of the Hasmonean dynasty. Though, as we shall see, it was possible to regard the time between the exile and the Maccabean revolt as uniformly negative, it is difficult to imagine that in the heady days of Hasmonean success, people still widely perceived themselves to be in exile. Foreign domination had been shrugged off and national borders were expanding, so even if there was still a longing for the fulfilment of certain restoration promises such as a glorified Temple and a gathered Diaspora, Hasmonean hegemony could scarcely have *felt* like or been understood as continuing exile. Of course, this does not mean that the period of Jewish independence under the Hasmoneans could not have later been reinterpreted negatively as another manifestation of Israel's unbroken exile. Yet many Jews continued to look back on the early Hasmonean success as days of glory marked by the blessing of God, and in so far as they did, they would not have considered the centuries since the exile as an uninterrupted period of punishment.

A similar acknowledgement of the complex history following the return from exile is apparent in *Testament of Naphtali* 4 where restoration from exile is followed by a return to sin and yet another exile. Similarly, the vision recorded in *2 Baruch*, in which history is cast as twelve waters alternately dark and bright, implies that the time of the exile was simply another period of darkness to be followed by further periods of both dark and light (*2 Bar*. 53–74): the exile is the eleventh flood of dark waters followed by the twelfth period of bright waters marked by the rebuilding of Zion, the restoration of the sacrifices and priestly ministry, and the coming of the nations to honour Zion, though 'not as fully as before' (*2 Bar*. 68). This twelfth period of bright waters stands for the Hasmonean ascendancy. It brings the dark period begun by the exile to

[35] Ibid., p. 86.

an end, yet it is not the fulfilment of prophetic hopes. Indeed, after this twelfth period comes a further final cycle of dark and bright waters: the intensely dark Roman distress followed by the eschaton. This indicates that the author does not perceive the entire Second Temple period as a time of unremitting exile which continues through to the present. Rather, the period was characterized by the same oscillations in national fortune and covenant faithfulness as had marked out Israel's preceding history.[36] This does not mean that each experience of bondage might not have been understood as a metaphorical exile, but such a conclusion cannot be supported by positing a universally accepted homogenized view of Israel's post-exilic history.[37]

Third, the failure of the promises of restoration to materialize after the return of the exiles from Babylon produced a monumental theological difficulty, which could not be and was not explained as simply a continuation of the exile. The complex history which followed the return from Babylon was matched by a similarly complex theological response. One response is seen in texts, frequently cited by Wright, which stem from the period immediately following the return of the captives from Babylon and lament the fact that, despite the return from exile, the people remain slaves in their own land (Ezra 9.8–9; Neh. 9.36).[38] But recent scholarship on Ezra–Nehemiah has brought into focus the importance of seeing the way a partially realized eschatology is at work in the books. J. G. McConville, building on the work of K. Koch, has highlighted a number of echoes in Ezra and Nehemiah of prophetic restoration texts; such echoes reveal that *the return was viewed as part of the restoration* and regarded as the awaited new Exodus from Babylon. However, the restoration is viewed not as a once-and-for-all act of God but as an ongoing process in which the repentance and covenant faithfulness of the people play a part.[39] In other words, the problem of Ezra–Nehemiah is not so much one of continuing exile but of incomplete restoration; for the author(s) of Ezra–Nehemiah, to equate the two, as Wright does, would have been to deny a key moment in the outworking of God's eschatological purposes.

[36]There is no reason to think that the events of 66–70 CE substantially shaped that perception.

[37]As we shall see, some texts do assess the period from the exile to the rise of the Hasmoneans in a uniformly negative way. But even this assessment is not without exception. As J. D. G. Dunn notes, 'the one who penned the great paean in praise of the high priest, Simon son of Onias [who held office from 219–196 BCE] (Sir. 50), certainly did not think of Israel as still in exile'; 'Review of *Jesus and the Victory of God*', *JTS* 49 (1998), 730.

[38]N. T. Wright, *New Testament*, p. 269.

[39]J. G. McConville, 'Ezra–Nehemiah and the Fulfillment of Prophecy', *VT* 36 (1986), 205–24.

If one common response to the failure of restoration to accompany the return to exile was to attribute the aborted restoration and recurrent bondage to inadequate repentance on the part of the people, a number of texts also deal with the problem by flattening the significance of the seventy-year exile and the subsequent return. Such texts sustain the hope of imminent restoration not by positing an extension of exile but by dissociating restoration from exile. This phenomenon is witnessed in a wide range of texts.

In the historical survey of the Animal Apocalypse, the exile is in no way distinguished from Israel's subsequent history. At some point prior to the destruction of Solomon's Temple – either with the Assyrian or with the Babylonian onslaught – Israel is placed under the dominion of seventy shepherds. The installation of these angelic over-lords serves to explain why the affliction of Israel during this period exceeded its proper measure. This outcome, however, is merely an intensification of God's punishment of Israel through captivity to foreign powers which had characterized the whole sweep of Israel's history. A scattering of the sheep is mentioned in *1 Enoch* 89.75 after the description of the rebuilding of the Temple, but it is a scattering that occurs throughout the period. Though the author anticipates the regathering of the scattered sheep, that event is ancillary to the restoration of sight to the blinded sheep and of freedom under the leadership of Judas Maccabeus. Thus, in the Animal Apocalypse, it is not so much that Israel's experience of captivity has been subsumed under the rubric of exile as the other way round.

The texts in *Jubilees* which several scholars have taken to reflect the perception that exile was ongoing[40] in fact evince a reading of the Deuteronomic curses in which exile is simply one of the curses. In *Jubilees* 23, the curses for covenant unfaithfulness reflect the experience of Israel from the exile right down to the author's own day in the mid second century BCE. One obvious way of reading the curses of Deuteronomy 32 is to see exile as the ultimate punishment invoked only when the other curses had at last failed to bring Israel out of its recurrent recalcitrance. But in *Jubilees* 23 the significance of the exile has been reduced: the 'evil generation' in view experiences all the curses without apparent differentiation; captivity is simply one of a litany of curses (23.13; cf. 23.22) meted out over an extended period by a plurality of nations (23.23).[41]

[40]J. J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination* (New York: Crossroad, 1987), p. 60; M. A. Knibb, *Jubilees and the Origins of the Qumran Community* (an Inaugural Lecture at King's College London; King's College London, 1989), pp. 7–11; G. L. Davenport, *The Eschatology of the Book of Jubilees* (SPB; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), p. 46.

[41]Cf. 4Q504 3.7–14.

This downgrading of the exile seems to have been the author's way of dealing with the fact that the expected restoration had not accompanied the sixth-century return.

Similarly, in the eschatologically oriented review of the nation's history in *Jubilees* 1, the exile as such is not mentioned. Instead the author speaks of the nation's experience of divine punishment throughout its history,[42] manifest chiefly in God's subjection of the people 'to the control of the nations for captivity' (1.13); dispersion from the Land is simply part of this recurrent punishment. Israel's restoration is not portrayed as the end of the Babylonian exile as it appeared in the prophets. Rather, as in much Jewish literature, the hope is for the gathering of the tribes of Israel from all the nations to which they had been scattered.[43] The author shared the common belief that the Diaspora would return when Israel was restored, but to those living in Palestine the continued absence of many Jews from the Land did not so much create a pervasive sense of ongoing exile as indicate that the time was not yet.

Similar comments can be made about Daniel 9 and CD 1. Both texts – the latter in dependence on the former – turn on a reinterpretation of Jeremiah's prescribed seventy years of exile as seventy weeks of years.[44] Wright reads these texts as straightforward extensions of the time prescribed for the exile. But in neither text is the exile as such continued, rather, the seventy-year exile is presented as simply part of a much longer 'age of wrath'. Daniel 9 explicitly and positively recalls Jeremiah's prediction of seventy years, suggesting that the author regarded Jeremiah's prophecy not as incorrect but as incomplete. Similarly, CD 1 does not view the extended age of wrath as the time during which Israel experienced the climactic covenant curse – exile – but as the time in which all of the curses of the covenant remained on Israel (CD 1.17). These texts do indicate the belief that much longer than seventy years was needed 'to finish transgression', but there is no indication that the whole of this period is simply regarded as a continuation of the exile in either a literal or

[42]The broad sweep of history is suggested most immediately by reference in 1.10 to the people's abandonment of both tabernacle and temple.

[43]See E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, pp. 95–7.

[44]It seems likely that the 390 years of CD 1.5–11 is drawn in the first instance from Ezek. 4.4, although the author seems to have related this figure to Daniel's 490 years: 390 years from the captivity to the emergence of the remnant + the 20 years of groping in the wilderness until the rise of the Teacher of Righteousness (CD 1.10) + the 40 years estimated duration of the Teacher's ministry + the predicted 40 years between the Teacher's death and the beginning of the new age (CD 20.13–15). So e.g. D. C. Allison, Jr., *The End of the Ages Has Come: An Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), p. 10.

a metaphorical sense. Indeed, both of these texts respond to the problem created by the close association of exile with restoration by reducing the significance of the exile, subsuming it within a much longer period of divine punishment on Israel.

The conclusion to be drawn from these texts which reflect on Israel's state of bondage appears, then, to be exactly the opposite of that reached by Wright and Evans: not an expansion of exile to allow its use in an extended sense, but a reduction of the exile's significance in order to ameliorate the difficulty created by the prophets' close association of exile and redemption.

Finally, we have seen that because exile and restoration are inseparable for Wright, much of the evidence for his case is drawn from texts which indicate a widespread hope of restoration. Because of the connection of exile and restoration, a continued sense of exile is inferred from a continued hope of restoration. There is evidence, however, that at least some Jews did not believe that the delay in the fulfilment of restoration promises was an indication of God's continued disapprobation, whether under the rubric of exile or otherwise. One of the primary ways in which Jewish writers dealt with the problem of delay was to attribute the time of the End to the sovereign mystery of the divine counsel: the End will come at the appointed time. Such a view was not fully compatible with the belief that the End was contingent on Israel's repentance, though repentance could itself be regarded as a divinely ordained precursor to restoration.[45] But at various times, some came to believe that Israel had repented. For these, suffering was no longer simply God's chastisement of the rebellious nation but rather the unjust affliction of the righteous, and the delay of restoration was ascribed to God's inscrutable decree. So, for instance, writing as part of the penitent, yet still-afflicted community of the new covenant, the author of 1QpHab 7.6–13 asserts that 'the final age shall be prolonged, and shall exceed all that the Prophets have said; for the mysteries of God are astounding . . . For all the ages of God reach their appointed end as he determines for them in the mysteries of his wisdom.' Of course, the experience of foreign bondage or other calamities could be simultaneously perceived as both the just punishment of the wicked as well as the unjust affliction of the righteous. Nevertheless, to the extent that a group came to regard itself as true Israel, there would have been a correspondingly decreased sense that Israel was experiencing divine punishment. The length of the delay might still be explained as an

[45]On these themes, see the examples and discussion of R. J. Bauckham, 'The Delay of the Parousia', *TynBul* 31 (1980), 3–31.

expression of God's patience in allowing others to join in the repentance,[46] but the delay of the promises of restoration did not therefore generate a self-awareness by the penitent righteous that they were yet experiencing the judgement of God.

We see an example of this complex set of ideas in the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch. In the consignment of the sheep to the seventy shepherds there is a strong sense that the time of Israel's punishment is under divine control. The suffering of the sheep under the shepherds is just punishment for their waywardness. At the same time, the shepherds are held accountable for ravaging the sheep beyond the measure ordered by God (89.59–66). Thus, when some of the sheep open their eyes and begin to see prior to the end of the appointed time, their afflictions are anything but just, as the response of the Lord of the sheep indicates. Rather, their distress reflects the particularly excessive brutality of the final twelve shepherds (*1 Enoch* 90.17).

This way of viewing things suggests the likelihood that those who regarded the emergence of righteous Israel as having occurred prior to the end of the appointed evil age did not always view their continued suffering as punishment from God. Rather, they explained their continued affliction in different categories. Thus, at Qumran, the community's afflictions were understood, for instance, as part of the eschatological distress (1QH 3.7–10)[47] or as atonement for the defiled Land which they looked to inherit (1QS 8.3–10). Inasmuch as those who perceived themselves as the penitent righteous adopted such alternative explanations for their suffering, it is illegitimate to infer from their continued hope of restoration the belief that they were still in exile. Admittedly, this tells us very little about whether such groups regarded Israel's experience prior to their formation in terms of exile, but it does indicate the possibility that restoration hopes could be cherished without an awareness of still being in exile.

The exile, then, should not be thought an invariable aspect of Israel's ongoing self-awareness. Wright is certainly correct to perceive a widespread awareness of bondage and belief that the promises of restoration had not yet been fulfilled, but to extrapolate from this a corresponding belief that exile was ongoing serves only to distort the complex history of Israel and its interpretation within Second Temple Judaism, as well as key elements of the Jesus tradition.

[46] See below, chapter 4, for examples. [47] Allison, *End of the Ages*, pp. 8–10.

2

JESUS AND SIGNS OF NATIONAL RESTORATION

In this chapter and the next, I focus on negative elements in Jesus' response to Jewish national restorationism. I will attempt to show that certain constituent features, themes, and assumptions of this restorationism which had been generated by eschatological reflection on Israel's sacred traditions were challenged or reworked by Jesus in the light of alternative traditions. Moreover, in doing so, he not only rejected certain elements of Jewish restorationism but altered them in such a way as to make them serve a message of national judgement.

The particular concern of the present chapter is to trace the role and meaning of signs within Jewish expectations of restoration and to assess Jesus' response to and use of this feature of national restorationism.

2.1 Jesus' assertions of obvious but unrecognized fulfilment

2.1.1 Jesus' critique of the rejection of his message of eschatological fulfilment

Unless we reject large swaths of the Jesus tradition, the following propositions are firm: (1) Jesus preached the arrival or imminent arrival of the time of fulfilment; (2) Jesus' ministry stirred broad interest but his message did not finally gain wide acceptance; (3) Jesus believed that the rejection of his message was morally culpable.

Inasmuch as Jesus believed that the rejection of his message of eschatological fulfilment was blameworthy, it is clear that he took the reality which he announced to be obvious and discernible. Such a perspective lies behind a number of parables (e.g. the parable of the wedding feast) and much of Jesus' interaction with the Jewish leaders. But in several texts the criticism rises to the surface and, whether or not their authenticity can be demonstrated, they illustrate Jesus' belief that the arrival of the time of fulfilment was obvious and that failure to recognize it could only mean judgement.

One instance of such criticism comes in Jesus' lament over Jerusalem in Luke 19.41–4: Jesus weeps over the city's failure to recognize 'on this day (ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ταύτῃ) the things that make for peace' and the time of their visitation (τὸν καιρὸν τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς σου). In Luke's placement of the saying after the triumphal entry, the phrase ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ταύτῃ may in the first instance refer to Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem. But εἰρήνη is probably eschatological and τὸν καιρὸν τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς σου in verse 44 certainly is. Thus, Jesus laments the failure of Jerusalem, the very centre of the nation, to recognize the time of the divine eschatological visitation and announces consequent coming judgement.

The criticism appears again in Luke 12.54–7 where Jesus castigates the crowds for failing to match their meteorological acumen with a corresponding level of eschatological insight. They can judge the appearance of earth and sky but do not grasp the significance of τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον. Much less textually certain is the conceptual parallel in Matthew 16.2–3. But though at least one of the evangelists has reworked the tradition, the point at which the parallel is most precise is in the closing condemnation for failure to perceive the obvious – the arrival of the time of eschatological fulfilment.

2.1.2 The problem of the obvious

Jesus deemed the dawn of the eschaton a plainly evident reality. But a fair question might be: if the arrival of the time of fulfilment was as patently conspicuous as Jesus claimed, why did so relatively few find the evidence for its presence compelling? Often the assumed answer to this question posits a difference between popular expectations and the nature of the kingdom Jesus actually announced: the broad expectation was of a nationalistic kingdom in which Israel's Gentile oppressors would be defeated and her political fortunes restored by a conquering Messiah. However, Jesus, it is said, came as the Messiah of a spiritual, other-worldly, non-political kingdom.

Recent scholarship has reacted against such a conception. Though Jesus' aims and claims differed from others within Israel, it is not clear that the difference lay in Jesus' other-worldly intentions which could not be perceived by those who thought only in this-worldly categories. Jesus' actions and teachings would scarcely have been perceived as non-political. A number of scholars have set forth the salutary reminder that politics and religion were not the separable entities they are in modern Western societies. However much the portrait of a violent revolutionary seriously miscasts the Jesus of history, to the extent that he addressed the structures

and institutions of society and commented on national aspirations, he would have been seen as intensely political.[1]

2.2 Factors leading to Jewish belief that restoration had arrived

That so relatively few agreed with Jesus' claim that he was ushering in the time of fulfilment suggests a substantial disagreement between Jesus and many of his contemporaries over the concomitants of restoration. What then would have obviously indicated fulfilment to his contemporaries? To answer this question we turn to an examination of factors within Second Temple Judaism which at various times led some Jews to the conviction that the time of fulfilment had arrived. Common to these factors was a reliance on Scripture as a guide to eschatological perception. But the role of Scripture was not straightforward. No one doubted that the promises of restoration would be fulfilled. Not even a delay of several centuries rattled that certainty. But the delay did incubate quite diffuse views regarding the eventual fulfilment. The Second Temple period witnessed repeated reappropriations of the traditions of restoration. Naturally, Scripture itself provided the raw materials for this relocation of the traditions. Such Scripture-inspired deductions could turn on a variety of factors which, working apart or together, could suggest that the time had come.

The development of predictive schemes and the apparent fulfilment of prophetic promises were two factors which heightened expectations of an imminent denouement at various times during the Second Temple. But neither of these seems to have been widely regarded as definitive indicators that the time of restoration had certainly arrived. The multiplicity and stylized nature of predictive schemes probably indicate that even the most sophisticated scheme would not have commanded anything approaching common assent. Moreover, fulfilment of prophecy was more easily perceived than proved. Many Jews probably did keep their eyes open for the fulfilment of prophecy, but even the most compelling case for fulfilled prophecy would have been accepted only by those with eyes to see. So, if in the first century there was broad agreement shared even by Jesus that eschatological fulfilment could and should be perceived, on what basis was this perception to be made? I turn now to a consideration of two additional possibilities.

[1] E.g. M. J. Borg, *Conflict, Holiness and Politics in the Teachings of Jesus* (Lampeter: Edwin Mellen, 1984).

2.2.1 Miracles as signs of restoration

The issue of whether or not miracles were taken by Second Temple Jews as signs of the eschaton has been brought to the fore by recent discussion of the meaning of Jesus' miracles. Virtually all agree that even during his life Jesus was regarded as a miracle worker by friend and foe alike. A common approach to Jesus' miracles has been to see them as signs of the in-breaking kingdom. The case has perhaps been made best by A. E. Harvey who suggests that Jesus chose miracles which had previously been unknown among Jewish miracle workers; the types of miracles performed by Jesus pressed 'an attack on the limitations of the human condition which seemed most intractable, most inexplicable, and most stubbornly to prevent mankind from moving into that better world which is surely intended for us in the future purposes of God'.[2] Confirmation of this general approach to Jesus' miracles could perhaps be seen in the recently published 4Q521 which evinces an expectation of a new age characterized by divine works, including healing and raising of the dead.[3] This understanding of Jesus' miracles, and Harvey's case in particular, has been sharply critiqued by E. P. Sanders who thinks it unlikely that Jesus had an inventory of miracles at his disposal from which he merely chose those most likely to signal the coming new age. Rather, Jesus simply performed the miracles which came to hand. Further, Sanders doubts that Jews habitually looked for miracles as a sign of the end and sees 'nothing about miracles which would trigger, in their first-century world, the expectation that the end was at hand'.[4]

There is a point to Sanders' criticisms, but he has overstated his case. The belief that a miracle or miracles had occurred did at times heighten eschatological expectations in the first century and not for Jesus' miracles alone. This is evident in Josephus' discussions of a number of unusual phenomena around the time of the outbreak of the Jewish War. The rebels, reports Josephus, interpreted the phenomena in light of Scripture and concluded that they were signs of God's immediate intervention. Among

[2]Harvey, *Constraints*, p. 118.

[3]C. A. Evans, 'Jesus and the Messianic Texts from Qumran: A Preliminary Assessment of the Recently Published Materials', *Jesus and His Contemporaries: Comparative Studies* (AGJU; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), pp. 128–9; J. J. Collins, 'The Works of Messiah', *DSD* 1 (1994), 98–112. It is still possible to see 4Q521 as confirmation that particular kinds of miraculous works were expected as part of the new age, even if one rejects the idea that 4Q521 specifically envisions the performance of such works by a messianic figure, as does K. W. Niebuhr, 'Die Werke des eschatologischen Freudenboten (4Q521 und die Jesusüberlieferung)', in *The Scriptures in the Gospels* (ed. C. M. Tuckett; BETL; Leuven: Peeters, 1997), pp. 638–9.

[4]E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, pp. 157–63, 170.

these Josephus mentions the appearance of a sword-shaped star[5] and of a comet; a light which shone around the altar for half an hour during Passover; a heifer which, while being led to sacrifice, gave birth to a lamb; the opening of the heavy eastern gate of the Temple's inner court of its own accord; the appearance in the clouds of a commotion of chariots and soldiers; and the experience by a number of priests serving in the Temple during Pentecost of a great quake accompanied by a loud noise and followed by the voice of a multitude saying, 'We are departing hence' (*J.W.* 6.289–300). According to Josephus these were all taken as positive signs by the ignorant, but the men learned in the Scriptures took them as negative portents of the events which ensued (6.291, 295). Josephus disputes only the interpretation of the phenomena not their authenticity and claims that the correct interpretation of the phenomena turned on a right understanding of Scripture, though it is impossible to say which Scriptures were at issue.

Of particular interest is the fact that for the rebels, and apparently for Jesus also, it was not simply the miraculous phenomena but the association between the phenomena and an eschatological reading of Scripture which provided confirmation that the time of fulfilment had arrived. Matthew 11.5–6, usually thought to have a dominical origin, indicates that Jesus, at least, cited his own miracles as confirming the arrival of the new age. Sanders is loath to allow that Jesus held any such thing; he argues, 'In order to maintain that the kingdom was "somehow" present in Jesus' words and deeds, especially the exorcisms, and that these supposedly eschatological miracles set Jesus apart from others, the case has to be made, implicitly or explicitly, that Jesus was unique.'[6] This is false, or at least it is false in regard to Jesus' claim, which is what Sanders is talking about. Of course, it is true that to maintain that 'eschatological miracles set Jesus apart from others' (i.e. made him unique) the case has to be made that Jesus was unique. It is also meaningless. But it is entirely possible, indeed necessary, to maintain that Jesus believed the kingdom to be present in his miraculous deeds without establishing that in this regard Jesus was unique. Sanders is quite probably correct in his argument that others who claimed to do miracles invested them with eschatological significance. But the question of whether or not Jesus *uniquely* made such a claim is irrelevant to the question of whether or not Jesus made the claim.

[5] *Sib. Or.* 3.798 indicates that swords will be seen in the night in the 'starry heaven' just prior to the end.

[6] E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, p. 137.

It is likely, then, that Jesus, like the rebels whom Josephus describes, understood miraculous phenomena, when viewed in the light of a particular reading of Scripture, as confirmation of incipient restoration. But this is far from saying that miracles *intrinsically* confirmed eschatological claims. It is commonplace to observe that in Matthew 11.5–6 Jesus cites two texts from Isaiah but omits the references to judgement within these texts. But it needs also to be said that in doing so Jesus ties the capacity to see his miracles as confirmation of eschatological fulfilment to a particular reading of Scripture. This is true whether or not one grants the historicity of the setting.[7] But the point emerges all the more clearly if the setting is authentic, for John would hardly have been ignorant of the miracles which Jesus instructs John's disciples to report. Rather, John is asked to view the miracles in the light of a distinctive understanding of Scripture.

Josephus' report, like that of the Gospels, suggests that, for those who were inclined to believe that the eschatological intervention of God was about to begin or had already begun, miraculous phenomena read in connection with Scripture could provide very powerful confirmation of that belief. And Sanders' argument does nothing to challenge the view that Jesus himself intended his miracles to function in this way. Still, even if miraculous phenomena as such *could* heighten belief that the time of restoration had arrived, Sanders' general point still stands: miraculous phenomena did not *necessitate* such belief.

2.2.2 Repetition of scriptural patterns

Repetition of scriptural patterns within Scripture

Perhaps the most important factor which led to the conclusion that a denouement was imminent arose out of the biblical prophets' prominent use of paradigmatic events and persons from antecedent Scripture in their development of eschatology. The use of Exodus motifs in this way to speak of Israel's restoration has been much observed. Important as this is, however, it must be qualified by two further observations.

First, different circumstances could yield quite different applications of even so paradigmatic an event as the Exodus. If the Exodus was the signal divine act by which God's love for his elect people was manifest

[7] The authenticity of the setting is strenuously argued by W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, Jr, *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew* (ICC; 3 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988–97), vol. II, pp. 244–6.

(e.g. Deut. 7.8), it could easily serve as a warrant for misplaced notions of national inviolability. In a jarring repudiation of such ideas, Amos queries the people:

> Are you not like the Ethiopians to me,
> O people of Israel? says the Lord.
> Did I not bring Israel up from the land of Egypt
> and the Philistines from Caphtor
> and the Arameans from Kir? (9.7)

Certainly God had acted on Israel's behalf in redeeming them from Egypt. But, says Amos, '[t]his same God has [also] wrought exoduses for the Philistines and for the Arameans, Israel's most persistent enemies'.[8] Of course, Amos is not here thinking of Israel's restoration. But the text reveals a point that will assume a growing importance as our study proceeds inasmuch as it shows the way in which scriptural paradigms could be taken up in service of conflicting perspectives on the nation.

Second, within Scripture it was not the Exodus alone which served as a prototype for God's eschatological action on Israel's behalf. Though it has not received the attention it deserves from contemporary scholars, there is evidence that even within Scripture the Conquest of the Land also informed the prophetic imagination in relation to Israel's restoration. It is of considerable significance to note the link between the common hope that the twelve tribes would once more be re-established in the Land and the Conquest-related settlement in the Land; reconstitution of the tribal league requires reconquest of the Land. A few biblical texts take up the Conquest explicitly as a pattern for future divine action. Psalm 44 begins with a recollection of the mighty acts of God in the Conquest on behalf of the Israelites:

> you with your own hand drove out the nations,
> but them you planted . . .
> for not by their own sword did they win the land,
> nor did their own arm give them victory . . .
> (44.3–4 (Hebrew)).

The psalm proceeds with a lament over the lot of the nation whom God has made like sheep for slaughter and scattered among the nations (44.12 (Hebrew)) and then concludes with a plea for deliverance: 'Redeem us

[8] W. Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), p. 178; cf. p. 640.

for the sake of your steadfast love.' It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the redemption in view was conceived at least in part in terms of a new Conquest.[9] Worth noting is the close association in verse 3 between the experience of liberty and the dispossession of the peoples of the Land; it was not only the Exodus but also the Conquest which could stimulate aspirations of freedom. As we shall see, this observation will assume considerable significance in our discussion of first-century liberation movements.

In Nehemiah 9, after a review of Israel's history in which the Conquest features prominently, Ezra laments the fact that, despite their having experienced a new Exodus, they remain slaves to kings not their own, in the Land which rightfully is their own (9.36–7). Particularly interesting is the recollection of God's having given into their ancestors' hands 'the peoples of the Land' (9.24), an expression which appears frequently in Ezra–Nehemiah to describe the inhabitants of Palestine who now harass them. Implicit is the hope that Israel's subjection to 'the peoples of the *lands*' (9.30) and oppression by 'the peoples of the *Land*' would end in a new Conquest of the Land.[10]

Repetition of patterns in Second Temple eschatology

I turn now to Jewish texts of the Second Temple period which took up biblical events and employed them in eschatologically significant ways. I take examples from Qumran and the writings of Josephus.

Qumran and Josephus. As in Scripture itself, a typological pattern of expectation based on the Exodus served as a primary ideological motivation for the Qumran community. Consciously drawing on Isaiah 40, they perceived their flight into the wilderness as preparing the way for eschatological deliverance (see esp. 1QS 8.12–15). The proximate causes for withdrawal into the desert are obscure, but the hope of the sectarians

[9]In light of the centrality of reconquest to the Hasmonean agenda, the report of *b. Sot.* 48a that the psalm was used extensively in the Maccabean period is of particular interest. See H.-J. Kraus, *Psalms 1–59: A Commentary* (based on the 5th German edn; trans. H. C. Oswald; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988), pp. 445–6. Kraus notes that a number of Church Fathers argue that the psalm was written at this time.

[10]H. G. M. Williamson (*Ezra, Nehemiah* (WBC; Waco: Word, 1985), p. 42 n. 3c) may be correct in his claim that 'peoples of the lands' is simply a stylistic variant for 'peoples of the Land'. But it may be that the occasional use of the latter expression stresses the presence of these foreign peoples (i.e. 'peoples of the lands') on the Land that is properly Israel's.

for a re-enactment of divine deliverance in the wilderness is clear.[11] But if the withdrawal into the desert is a self-conscious re-enactment of a new Exodus, a new Conquest lies on the horizon of their immediate future. Their present experience in the wilderness is thus conceived of as a time of affliction prior to their inheritance of the Land and their possession of it by means of the final eschatological war.[12] Descriptions of the community both in the present and at the time of the final war are striking for the way community organization self-consciously reflects that of the wilderness-era war camp with corresponding tribal divisions and purity regulations.[13] Even the Damascus Document seems to take up the Conquest as a paradigm for the future action of God: 'And as for that which Moses said, *You enter to possess these nations . . . because God loved your fathers and kept the oath*, thus shall it be with the converts of Israel who depart from the way of the people' (CD A 8.14–16/CD B 19.26b–29a).

The pervasiveness of such use of Scripture in the first century is suggested by the *ad hoc* way in which Josephus draws such a parallel by claiming that the destruction of the Temple by Titus occurred on the same day of the year as that by Nebuchadnezzar (*J.W.* 6.250, 258). He thus implies the existence of a pattern which could be detected in Scripture and which indicated that the events were appointed by God and entirely in keeping with God's action in the past.

Thus, it was not only the Exodus and Conquest which could be drawn on for patterns which when matched to current events led to heightened expectations. Josephus implies that, during the final siege of Jerusalem, the account of the city's deliverance from Sennacherib (2 Kings 18–19)

[11] See F. M. Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran* ([1958]; 3rd edn; Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), pp. 69–70; and R. A. Horsley, 'Popular Prophetic Movements at the Time of Jesus: Their Principal Features and Social Origins', *JSNT* 26 (1986), 15–17.

[12] Cf. S. Talmon, 'The "Desert Motif" in the Bible and in Qumran Literature', in *Biblical Motifs: Origins and Transformations* (ed. A. Altmann; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 58; and F. F. Bruce, *Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts* (London: Tyndale Press, 1959), p. 30. Note especially the intriguing *pesher* of Ps. 37.9b–10 (4Q171 1.5–7) which applies the psalmist's assertion that 'those who wait for the Lord will possess the land' to the community to be realized with the destruction of the wicked from the land 'at the end of forty years'. Cf. CD 20.14–20: as Israel prior to Conquest had to wait forty years for the death of the apostates, so too does the community await the death of apostates from the sect prior to their own experience of deliverance. Cf. M. A. Knibb, *The Qumran Community* (Cambridge Commentaries on Writings of the Jewish and Christian World 200 BC to AD 200; Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 73–4.

[13] Y. Yadin, *The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness* (trans. B. Rabin and C. Rabin; Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 38–61; L. H. Schiffman, *The Eschatological Community of the Dead Sea Scrolls: A Study of the Rule of the Congregation* (SBLMS; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), pp. 14, 37–52, 70.

provided a narrative for understanding the nature of the expected imminent deliverance.[14] In his attempt to dissuade his countrymen from persisting with their rebellion, Josephus attempts to deconstruct their eschatological use of the Sennacherib story by pointing out the differences between the current siege of the Romans and the situation that obtained during the Assyrian siege. He says, in effect, 'The Assyrians were far more wicked than the Romans and the people of Hezekiah's day were far more righteous than you' (*J.W.* 5.387–8, 404–9). Josephus then proceeds to explain how the story of the destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar in fact provided a much more fitting pattern for what was about to befall the city at the hands of Titus (*J.W.* 5.389–93). Josephus' rejection of the rebel use of the Sennacherib story probably explains why he omits Isaiah's promise of divine deliverance for Jerusalem from the Assyrians (2 Kings 20.6) in *Antiquities* 10.27.[15] It is difficult to know how much of this exchange actually took place; the speech is crafted after the event. But it is important to note what Josephus assumes, namely, that both sides of the exchange approached the matter with the same presupposition that patterns of God's dealing with the nation in the past provided a basis for determining his future action. Thus any indication that a past action of God was about to be repeated could heighten expectations of an imminent end and function as a proximate cause of eschatologically shaped movements or revolts.

The particular case of the 'sign prophets'. In several general recollections by Josephus, we gain glimpses of scriptural foundations behind the general phenomena of 'impostors' and 'deceivers' who led 'multitudes' into the wilderness promising 'signs of freedom' (*J.W.* 2.259; *Ant.* 20.167). The reliance on Scripture which helped to generate these movements becomes unmistakable in a sprinkling of specific examples.

In *Ant.* 20.97, Josephus recalls a 'magician' named Theudas, who, purporting to be a prophet, led 'many' into the wilderness in 45 or 46 CE, promising to part the Jordan.[16] The movement was violently quashed by the procurator Fadus.

[14] So M. de Jonge, 'Josephus und die Zukunftserwartungen seines Volkes' [1974], *Jewish Eschatology, Early Christian Christology and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (trans. P. G. R. de Villiers; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991), p. 56.

[15] C. T. Begg, 'The "Classical Prophets" in Josephus' *Antiquities*', reprinted from *LS* 13 (1988), 341–57, in *The Place Is Too Small for Us: The Israelite Prophets in Recent Scholarship* (ed. R. P. Gordon; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1955), p. 554. Begg can think of no other reason for the omission than that the promise appears 'somewhat extraneous in its immediate context'.

[16] Luke puts the number who followed Theudas at around four hundred men (Acts 5.36).

Another figure, known only as the Egyptian, also claiming to be a prophet, led 'a multitude of common people' – Josephus puts the number at thirty thousand – through the wilderness up to the Mount of Olives to witness a repetition of the conquest of Jericho as he commanded the collapse of the walls of Jerusalem. This movement too collapsed in a paroxysm of violence (*Ant.* 20.169–72; *J.W.* 2.261–3).[17]

In a similar way, Josephus takes brief note of 'an impostor' who under Festus (c. 61 CE) enticed a number of people into the wilderness with the promise of freedom and rest (παῦλα). They too were destroyed by a military force (*Ant.* 20.188).

In the throes of defeat by the forces of Titus, six thousand people fled to the roof of the Temple at the behest of a 'false prophet' to await the 'signs of their deliverance'. The action was taken after the outer defences of the Temple had already been penetrated in the belief that God would effect a dramatic last-minute rescue. It too ended in the deaths of those who believed (*J.W.* 6.284–6).

Finally, Josephus reports that after the war had ended, one of the *sicarii*, Jonathan the weaver, persuaded many of the poorer Jews from the cities around Cyrene to follow him into the desert with the promise that there they would see 'signs and apparitions'. Predictably, the Roman governor Catullus dispatched troops who killed two thousand of Jonathan's followers and captured others, including eventually Jonathan himself (*J.W.* 7.437–42; *Life* 424–5).

For present purposes, three observations which have been inadequately made are of particular importance. First, the revival of scholarly interest in these figures has made the perception of Exodus echoes in these episodes commonplace. The promise of signs and wonders – a characteristic way of referring to the Exodus miracles in the LXX – as well as the frequent promises of freedom make a connection with the Exodus event entirely plausible. What has not received sufficient attention is that in the three episodes in which allusions to specific events can be detected, it is not the Exodus as such that is in view but the Conquest. Of course, Scripture itself describes the beginning of the Conquest with an eye on the Exodus: in Joshua 4.23, Joshua tells the Israelites that the monument of twelve

[17] R. Gray (*Prophetic Figures in Late Second Temple Jewish Palestine: The Evidence from Josephus* (Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 132) suggests that a distinction be made between the approaches of these figures: Theudas and the Egyptian promised to bring the liberation itself, whereas the others simply promise signs announcing liberation. As we shall see, however, it is more likely that for Theudas and the Egyptian the nature of the promised sign is specified and for the others it is not, that is, all promised a sign that would effect or begin to effect Israel's liberation.

stones is to remind them that 'the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you crossed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea which he dried up for us until we crossed over. . .' Still, it is important to note that the signs promised by Theudas and the Egyptian relate most properly to the Conquest.[18]

Concerning the 'impostor' under Festus, C. Evans has recently argued that Josephus' use of the term παῦλα derives from Psalm 95 which recounts the failure of the Exodus generation to enter into rest due to the failures at Meribah and Massah.[19] As for Theudas and the Egyptian, Evans sees here aspirations by 'the impostor' to be a prophet like Moses and implicitly ties each of these figures to the Exodus. But the promise of rest, like the promises to part the Jordan and to bring down the walls of Jerusalem, connects more immediately to the Conquest and the rest Israel enjoyed once settled in the Land (Josh. 21.44). Moreover, though 'the wilderness' has a variety of associations, not least as the place to which God brought the Israelites after their deliverance from Egypt, it could as easily connote the place where God prepared Israel for the Conquest.

The close association between the signs promised by various 'sign prophets' and the Conquest is potentially quite significant, for it underscores the importance of reconquest of the Land in first-century restorationism and correlates with the prominent expectation that the twelve tribes would be re-established in the Land.[20]

Second, against recent trends, Hengel has emphasized that even when all the social and political stresses of the period are taken into account the ultimate cause of each of the various revolts which took place was ideological and religious, and, in particular, a religious ideology focused by eschatology.[21] To what degree this applies to the revolts is not at issue here, but Hengel's argument certainly holds for the various prophetic

[18] S. G. F. Brandon (*Jesus and the Zealots: A Study in the Political Factor in Primitive Christianity* (Manchester University Press, 1967), p. 100) is among those who narrow the focus of these figures to the Exodus; Brandon assumed that Theudas and his followers hoped to cross the river eastward with the Romans in pursuit as Moses had crossed the Red Sea ahead of the Egyptians. But as D. R. Schwartz ('Temple and Desert: On Religion and State in Second Temple Period Judaea', in *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity* (WUNT; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1992), p. 30 n. 3) notes, the concern on the part of the Romans and the book of Joshua suffice to show that a westward Conquest-like crossing of the Jordan was more probably the intent.

[19] C. A. Evans, 'Messianic Claimants of the First and Second Centuries', *Jesus and His Contemporaries: Comparative Studies* (AGJU; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), p. 53.

[20] On this expectation, see especially E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, pp. 95–8.

[21] See especially the foreword to the English translation of M. Hengel, *The Zealots: Investigation into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod I until 70 A.D.* (based on 1976 German 2nd edn; trans. D. Smith; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1989), pp. xiii–xvii.

movements surveyed above: the summons into the wilderness and the promise of signs and deliverance recall scriptural motifs with demonstrable links to Second Temple hopes for restoration.[22] If the proximate causes of these movements remain obscure – Josephus does not seem to attach them to specific social or political crises – it is evident that each of these movements was motivated ultimately by a restoration eschatology frequently patterned on the Conquest.[23]

Third, the expectation that Israel's restoration would involve a repetition of key paradigmatic events from Israel's biblical past was likely to have been very widely held. I have noted that the 'sign prophets' were able to generate large followings, apparently quite quickly, and this by virtue merely of a promise of a sign, not actually the performance of a sign. It is precisely the making of such a promise which makes these 'sign prophets' distinctive within Second Temple Judaism. But if the mere promise of a sign was not universally credited, that Scripture itself describes Israel's restoration in such terms suggests that such a sign was widely anticipated. This is not to say that Scripture indicated precisely what sort of sign this would be; as I have noted, the relocation of the biblical promises of restoration from their historical context in the return from exile produced quite varied notions about the concomitants of restoration.

2.2.3 Summary

It appears that a variety of factors could prompt the belief that the time of Israel's restoration had arrived. Miraculous phenomena, predictive schemes, apparent fulfilment of predictive prophecy and the perceived recurrence of biblical events could alike lead Second Temple Jews to harbour heightened expectations of restoration. Each of these factors betrays extended eschatological reflection on Scripture. None, however, could compel widespread belief that the restoration had begun or was about

[22] Gray (*Prophetic Figures*, pp. 137–42) doubts whether the term 'eschatological' can be properly applied to these prophetic figures at all. In her view, the term is used too hastily because we know so little about how they thought about the event or events which would lead to freedom. While she may be correct to question whether the hope of a new Exodus is really the motivation for all of these figures, her reluctance to say anything at all about their motivations ignores the way that Scripture served as a paradigm for eschatological expectations of restoration in Scripture itself and in the Second Temple period generally.

[23] We should probably credit Josephus' portrayal of these movements as attracting the allegiance of sizable groups, even where the figures he gives are suspect. Since his apologetic stance is to show that the disturbances in first-century Palestine were idiosyncratic – the instigation of a rogueish few and not of the contented general populace – the portrayal of these movements as large runs counter to his interests.

to begin. But a particular form of the expectation that important biblical events would be repeated does appear to have been more widely held: when God again acted as he had in the Exodus and especially in the Conquest, then all Israel would know that the restoration had begun.

In this respect, at least, it would appear that Jesus was entirely in agreement with his contemporaries, for, as we have seen, he too believed that the beginning of restoration would be obvious. But there was also substantial disagreement as to *how* it would be obvious. It is to this disagreement that I now turn.

2.3 The request of a sign from Jesus

All four Gospels indicate that a sign was requested from Jesus. On more than one occasion, the crowds or the Pharisees demand a sign, a demand that Jesus either flatly refuses or enigmatically evades (Mark 8.11–12; Matt. 12.38; 16.1; Luke 11.16; John 6.30; cf. 1 Cor. 1.22). The episodes suggest that in the first century the manifestation of a sign or signs was an expectation placed on prophetic claimants. None of the episodes necessarily indicate that the expectation had a definite place within *messianic* hope, though this is not impossible.[24] For present purposes it is sufficient to note the existence of an expectation in first-century Judaism that figures heralding restoration should be able to produce some sort of sign. I have discussed the nature of the signs promised by the various figures mentioned by Josephus. What sort of sign was sought from Jesus?

2.3.1 An authenticating miracle?

It is commonly assumed that the sign demanded of Jesus was an authenticating miracle by which he would definitively establish his messianic or prophetic status. Several considerations play against this. First, the synoptics do not use the term σημεῖον as a way of referring to Jesus' miracles. Second and more important, the Gospel writers portray the demand

[24] But see below on the possibility that such a connection is witnessed in John 6. Some later traditions may reflect such an expectation of Messiah. So K. H. Rengstorf ('σημεῖον κ.τ.λ.', in *TDNT* (ed. G. Kittel; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), vol. VII, p. 227) who states that in a discussion which dates to around the time of the Bar Kochba revolt, R. Jose b. Kisma says that the Messiah must yield to the demand to give a sign (*b. Sanh.* 98a/b). But it may be that the sign in view is not one that Messiah will perform but rather one Jose himself would perform as confirmation of his prediction of when Messiah would come. Cf. the contention of E. Schürer (*The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (173 B.C.–A.D. 135)* (3 vols.; revised and edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar and M. Black; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973–86), vol. II, p. 525 n. 42) that the belief that Messiah would confirm his identity by working a miracle is absent from rabbinic texts.

for a sign as being made by people who had just witnessed the performance of a miraculous feat by Jesus.[25] In this context, if all that had been meant by the request for a sign was some miracle to authenticate his status, Jesus could merely have referred to the miracle just performed. One could perhaps argue that the Evangelists have poorly edited their sources at this point. But the same problem obtains within the context of Jesus' ministry: if he was being asked to perform a miracle, Jesus could have pointed to the many miracles already performed, for Jesus was regarded as a miracle worker even by his opponents. Third, as indicated above, in the context of first-century Palestine, the performance of miracles itself would not necessarily have been regarded as proof of anything more than that the person in question was a miracle worker. These considerations indicate that the demand for a sign could not have been met by the performance of just any miracle.

Sensing this difficulty, some have attempted to maintain that the requested sign was some kind of authenticating miracle by proposing a somewhat more narrow understanding of σημεῖον. So, for instance, Landes has recently indicated that what was demanded was not simply a miracle but rather a miracle that would put his claim to be sent from God beyond dispute[26] – a 'sign' that clearly was ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (Mark 8.12).[27] Landes, however, does not indicate what such a sign might have been.[28] What miraculous act, different somehow from the miracles already done by Jesus, would have functioned as the sort of indisputable sign sought by Jesus' opponents?

The foregoing criticisms notwithstanding, the view that the requested sign was some kind of authenticating miracle has recently been given weighty support by M. Hooker. In her book on the prophetic actions of Jesus, Hooker helpfully distinguishes prophetic actions from oracles and

[25] In Luke and in the first instance of the demand for a sign in Matthew (ch. 12), the demand is placed immediately following the exorcism which produced the Beelzebul controversy. In Mark 8 and Matt. 16, the demand comes after the feeding of the four thousand. Mark is followed by Matthew at this point and may reflect a separate incident. John similarly places the demand after his account of a feeding miracle.

[26] G. M. Landes, 'Jonah in Luke: The Hebrew Bible Background to the Interpretation of the "Sign of Jonah" Pericope in Luke 11.29–32', in *A Gift of God in Due Season: Essays on Scripture and Community in Honor of James A. Sanders* (ed. R. D. Weis and D. M. Carr; JSOTSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), p. 139.

[27] G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Last Days: The Interpretation of the Olivet Discourse* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993), p. 372. Cf. Gnilka, *Jesus*, pp. 124–5.

[28] Nor does M. D. Hooker (*The Signs of a Prophet: The Prophetic Actions of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1997), p. 18) who in a way similar to Landes suggests that what was demanded of Jesus was some authenticating sign, without specifying what sort of miracle would have functioned in this way.

isolates three particular types of actions by OT prophets: (1) actions which manifest the epiphanic power of God, bringing with them salvation or judgement; (2) actions which as 'dramatic presentations of truth' manifest the divine will to do something not presently observable; (3) actions which as authenticating miracles or proofs neither effect deliverance or judgement nor symbolize the intended will of God but rather authenticate the prophet and his message.[29]

In the LXX, each of these types of action could be designated by the term σημεῖον and though Hooker's threefold distinction does not fully map the semantic range of the term, these actions do reflect the most likely possibilities for what was meant in the demand of a sign from a prophetic figure such as Jesus.[30] But which of the three possibilities best suits the expectation reflected in the demand put to Jesus?

Though Jesus did perform symbolic actions,[31] the second type of sign can be ruled out immediately; the crowds or Pharisees can scarcely have wanted merely to see some symbolic action. As noted above, most scholars, without considering the range of possibilities, merely assume that the demanded sign was of the third type, some kind of authenticating miracle or proof. However, even with her more considered approach, Professor Hooker takes the same view without ever seriously entertaining the first possibility, namely, that Jesus was being asked for a manifestation of epiphanic power to effect some kind of deliverance or judgement.

She seems to have done so largely on the strength of R. Gray's discussion of Josephus' use of the term σημεῖον and its implications for his descriptions of the so-called 'sign prophets'. Against the view of these figures sketched above, Gray argues that the various figures have been grouped together too hastily, that the promised acts which have clear associations with the Exodus are not to be regarded as 'signs', and that the figures have been regarded as eschatologically motivated with insufficient substantiation. Crucial to Gray's case is her conclusion that Josephus employs the term σημεῖον to refer specifically to authenticating miracles. Unlike the LXX, he does not use the term to recount divine epiphanies which effect deliverance and judgement such as those of the Exodus. Thus, in his retelling of the Exodus story, Josephus employs the

[29] Ibid., pp. 2–6.

[30] One of the many values of Hooker's book is its repeated emphasis, in opposition to some members of the Jesus Seminar, on Jesus' status as a prophet. Particularly important is her observation that the evangelists continued to see the words and actions of Jesus in the tradition of the prophets even though they came to believe that he was more than a prophet, ibid., p. 79.

[31] Ibid., pp. 35–54.

term σημεῖον only of the three authenticating miracles shown to Moses at the burning bush. For Gray, this observation demands that a distinction be made among the various figures which are usually treated collectively as 'sign prophets': she distinguishes Theudas and the Egyptian – to neither of whose promises does Josephus apply the term σημεῖον – from the various, mostly unnamed figures whose promises Josephus does describe with the word σημεῖον. Josephus' use of the term indicates that these latter figures promised authenticating signs. By contrast, Theudas and the Egyptian promised miracles which closely mirrored the epiphanies of the Exodus, but these promised miracles were not regarded as signs.[32]

Gray's analysis is potentially very important not only for understanding the 'sign prophets' in Josephus but perhaps also for understanding the background of the demand for a sign that was put to Jesus. But does the evidence bear it out? Several factors suggest that it does not. First, to deduce because σημεῖον does not occur in relation to Theudas and the Egyptian that these two figures did not promise signs as such is an argument from silence – a silence that is better explained by the fact that for Theudas and the Egyptian the substance of the promised miracle is explicated, whereas for the other figures the descriptions of the promises are generalized simply as σημεῖα. This, rather than a studied avoidance of the term by Josephus in descriptions of epiphanic, Exodus/Conquest-type miracles, may better account for its absence.

Second, though the use of σημεῖον in Josephus' retelling of the Exodus miracles is certainly much less pronounced than in the LXX, this is not without exception, as Gray herself admits. The relevant passage is *Ant.* 2.327 where, pressed between the water and the approaching Egyptian army, the Israelites 'accused Moses, forgetting all the signs that God had done to bring about their freedom'.[33] In so far as the signs mentioned in *Ant.* 2.327 are specifically tied to the nation's liberation they can hardly be limited to the three authenticating miracles given to Moses, which seem to have had the more limited purpose of convincing others that he was God's agent and that his message should be believed.[34] Admittedly, Josephus assigns broader import than does the Old Testament to the three authenticating miracles taught to Moses at Sinai, but it is doubtful that he views them as the signs exclusively used by God to effect the freedom of Israel.

[32] Gray, *Prophetic Figures*, pp. 123–33.

[33] The translation is mine. The Greek text is: καὶ τὸν Μωυσῆν ᾐτιῶντο πάντων ἐπιλελησμένοι τῶν ἐκ θεοῦ πρὸς τὴν ἐλευθερίαν αὐτοῖς σημείων γεγονότων.

[34] The description of the purpose of the three miracles is Gray's, *Prophetic Figures*, p. 128.

Third, it is not clear from Josephus' descriptions that he distinguishes Theudas and the Egyptian from the other figures whom Josephus reports to have promised 'signs of freedom' or 'signs of deliverance'. On the contrary, he seems rather to regard them as part of the same phenomenon. In both *Jewish War* and *Jewish Antiquities*, Josephus places his narrative about the Egyptian immediately following a generalized description of 'impostors and deceivers' who, during the governance of Felix, summoned mobs of people into the desert on the promise of signs only to be met with the punishing wrath of Felix. To this description, Josephus closely joins his discussion of the Egyptian by saying that it was 'at this time' that a man from Egypt who claimed to be a prophet arrived in Jerusalem (*Ant.* 20.169). Further, the sketch of the Egyptian which follows contains several parallels to the preceding general description of 'impostors and deceivers'. Like them, the Egyptian led a large group through the desert;[35] like them, he promised to show them some remarkable action from God; and like them he saw his movement punitively crushed by Felix. In short, Gray's observation that 'Josephus introduces the Egyptian without indicating his relationship, if any, to these other figures'[36] appears to be incorrect.

Still, there does seem to be some distinction between the Egyptian and the others, though not that supposed by Gray. This is indicated in *J.W.* 2.261 where Josephus connects his account of the Egyptian to that of the 'impostors and deceivers' by asserting that the Egyptian dealt a 'still worse blow' to the Jews. The impression thus given is not that Josephus regarded the Egyptian as essentially different from the other unnamed figures who promised signs but that he considered him more damaging.[37]

Finally, and perhaps most telling, is the fact that in at least one instance the expression 'signs of deliverance' manifestly cannot refer merely to

[35]Gray notes several discrepancies between the two accounts of the Egyptian's actions, among which is the fact that the account in *Antiquities* can be taken to imply that the Egyptian appeared first in Jerusalem where he raised a following to march out to the Mount of Olives whereas the *Jewish War* account indicates that he raised a following in the countryside (εἰς τὴν χώραν) and led them on a circuitous route from the desert (ἐκ τῆς ἐρημίας) to the Mount of Olives. But as Gray herself notes, the two accounts can at this point at least be reconciled reasonably: 'the Egyptian showed up in Jerusalem, gathered a crowd there, led them out into the wilderness, where he gathered still more followers, and proceeded to the Mount of Olives', *Prophetic Figures*, pp. 116–17.

[36]Gray, *Prophetic Figures*, p. 116.

[37]This conclusion receives incidental substantiation from the fact that of the many prophet-like figures to whom Josephus alludes, Luke specifically recalls Theudas and the Egyptian – two of the relatively few such persons mentioned explicitly by Josephus (Acts 5.36; 21.38). This may serve as further evidence that Theudas and the Egyptian were widely considered among the most significant of the first-century 'false prophets'.

signs of authentication. In the last days of the Jewish War, a prophet proclaimed to the city that God commanded them to go up to the Temple courts to receive τὰ σημεῖα τῆς σωτηρίας, *even though the Temple had apparently already fallen to the Romans* (*J.W.* 6.284–6). The expected signs cannot have been mere confirmation of the prophet's authenticity; rather, they were signs which would effect deliverance in the manner of the theophanic miracles of the Exodus/Conquest.[38]

2.3.2 A sign of a certain sort

It is my contention that the 'sign prophets' provide firm evidence for the expectation in the first century of a belief that the arrival of the time of fulfilment would be accompanied by a particular sort of sign, a sign which did not merely authenticate the prophetic claim but actually began to effect eschatological deliverance and judgement.[39] In other words, *the demand for a sign emerged from a specific expectation*. If viewed in this light the sign requested by the Pharisees and/or the crowds need not be one of messianic or even prophetic authentication. Rather, they sought a sign which by close analogy with one of God's great redemptive acts in the time of the Exodus and Conquest unmistakably demonstrated the truth of Jesus' claim that the time of fulfilment had come.

This view receives confirmation from two considerations. First, in John 6, a demand for a sign comes *after* the feeding miracle, though John portrays those who make the demand as precisely those who had witnessed the miracle. Absurdly, however, in verses 30–1 they request the sign that in John's view they had just seen: bread from heaven. Thus, John attributes the request for a sign after the miracle to their failure to see the sign in the miracle.[40] But, beyond this, the apparent absurdity reveals that the crowds expected a particular type of sign – a miraculous act which

[38]Cf. J. B. Gibson, *The Temptations of Jesus in Early Christianity* (JSNTSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), p. 193 n. 109.

[39]This conclusion might be held to be at variance with the recent recognition that prophecy had not after all ceased with the last of the writing prophets as most scholars had previously assumed. If prophets were active and recognized as prophets, surely not all of them were faced with the demand to produce a sign which would effect eschatological deliverance. But as Hooker (*Signs*, pp. 6–8) argues, the denial that prophecy had ceased needs to be put more precisely; for, although there continued to be prophets, none apparently attained the stature of the prophets of old. Written prophecy after the writing prophets could gain acceptance only if promulgated in the name of an older figure. Moreover, it must be said that the prophets who were active in the period were of such slight significance that there could emerge a narrow belief in *the* coming prophet as reflected in the Qumran literature (e.g. 1 QS 9.11) and in John's Gospel (1.21; 6.14; 7.20).

[40]Cf. Hooker, *Signs*, p. 33.

by manifest correspondence with God's action for Israel during the time of the Exodus provided clear attestation that God was again at work in effecting the deliverance of his people.[41]

Second, approaching the matter from a somewhat different angle, J. Gibson has recently argued that Mark understands the requested sign in terms similar to those in which I have argued that Jesus understood it. Particularly important for Gibson is his reading of the reference to the ψευδόχριστοι καὶ ψευδοπροφῆται in Mark 13.22. Others have noted the possible link between these figures and the sign prophets in Josephus,[42] but Gibson draws out the full implications of this connection for Mark's understanding of the demand for a sign. Gibson suggests that for Mark the signs of the false prophets and messiahs in 13.22 are phenomena which, like the signs promised by Josephus' sign prophets, would replicate the miracles of deliverance in the Exodus and Conquest.[43] He then reasons that Mark must have viewed the demand for a sign put to Jesus as similar to those of the false prophets and messiahs in 13.22. I am less certain than Gibson that Mark understands the signs and wonders of the false prophets and messiahs as miracles in terms similar to the signs promised by the 'sign-prophets'. The 'sign-prophets' *promised* signs which would effect deliverance and conquest as in the days of Moses and Joshua, but Mark 13.22 indicates that the false prophets and messiahs will actually *perform* signs and wonders. Are we to think that Mark envisions figures who will succeed in setting Israel's deliverance into motion? Though the link between the sign demand and the signs and wonders of the false prophets and messiahs is tenuous, Gibson may be correct in suggesting that Mark's portrayal of the demand as a test or temptation reflects Jesus' own experience of the demand. If so, Mark may believe that the demand confronted Jesus with the temptation to veer from his divinely ordained messianic destiny in favour of a triumphalistic course to Israel's restoration.[44]

[41] Understood in this way, the request for a sign corresponds with the attempt to make Jesus king (John 6.15), for the feeding miracle had created the expectation that Jesus might well be capable of a still greater sign to effect the deliverance of Israel.

[42] E.g. C. A. Evans, 'Jesus and Jewish Miracle Stories', *Jesus and His Contemporaries: Comparative Studies* (AGJU; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), p. 221.

[43] Gibson, *Temptations*, pp. 183–93. Of particular importance in establishing this connection is Mark's use of the phrase σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα which in the LXX is virtually a technical term for the liberating acts of God in the Exodus and Conquest – a fact which is demonstrated by Rengstorf ('σημεῖον κ.τ.λ.', in *TDNT*, vol. VII, pp. 200–69) and S. V. McCasland ('Signs and Wonders', *JBL* 76 (1957), pp. 149–52).

[44] Gibson (*Temptations*, p. 169) does not frame the nature of the temptation in precisely this way. He oddly holds that in Mark's view the Pharisees were demanding proof for his

Whatever one makes of Mark's presentation of the sign demand, in the context of Jesus' ministry, the demand for a sign seems to have been a request that Jesus replicate one of the theophanic acts of the Exodus/Conquest era as a manifestation that God was acting in the present to effect the restoration of Israel.

2.4 The sign expected by Jesus: the sign of Jonah

Against the expectation of a sign of national restoration, Jesus draws on a quite different strand of tradition to suggest that the only sign to be expected was a sign of national judgement – the sign of Jonah.[45] The sign of which he speaks is yet future, but what is it? Luke 11.30 suggests that the sign of Jonah is to be understood as Jonah himself.[46] Naturally, the sense in which Jonah confronted the Ninevites as a sign cannot be abstracted from his proclamation.[47] But what exactly was the proclamation? Many assume that Jesus here thinks of Jonah as a preacher of repentance.[48] But though the book of Jonah indicates that repentance was the outcome of Jonah's proclamation, a careful examination of the book confirms that this was not the outcome intended or desired by the prophet. This stands against the common assumption that a fuller account of Jonah's proclamation would have revealed Jonah's message to be a conditional announcement of judgement which could be averted through repentance. But the more natural way of reading Jonah 3.4 is as an absolute declaration

stance against national and religious exclusivism but that Jesus responds as if the demand is for an Exodus-type miracle of deliverance.

[45]Though not all agree, it seems likely that the reference to Jonah was dropped by Mark or by the pre-Marcan tradition rather than added in the Q tradition. Those who argue that the absence of the exception is original do so on the basis of a supposed Semitism in the absolute refusal of Mark's version. This, however, is questionable, and the cryptic nature of the exception readily accounts for the deletion. See especially Gibson, *Temptations*, pp. 147–51. In addition Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, vol. II, p. 352) note that in traditions which appear in both Mark and Q, the shorter form is often that of Mark. It is also possible that both traditions are authentic, reflecting different occasions; so R. H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church Under Persecution* (2nd edn; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), p. 243. U. Luz (*Das Evangelium nach Matthäus: 2 Teilband Mt 8–17* (EKKNT; Zürich: Benziger, 1990), p. 275) similarly considers it possible that there were two independent, parallel traditions.

[46]As recently P. Grelot, *Jésus de Nazareth: Christ et Seigneur* (Paris: Cerf, 1997), p. 292. Gibson's argument that the sign of Jonah was the gourd which temporarily shaded Jonah is far-fetched; *Temptations*, p. 202.

[47]The choice set by Luz (*Matthäus: 2 Teilband*, pp. 278–90) between taking the sign either as Jonah's proclamation or as Jonah himself is artificial.

[48]See e.g. Grelot, *Jésus*, p. 292; J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke* (AB; 2 vols.; Garden City: Doubleday, 1983–85), vol. II, p. 933.

of inevitable destruction.[49] This would suggest that the 'sign of Jonah' is not the appearance of a figure announcing the necessity of repentance but of a prophet predicting impending, irrevocable judgement.

Confirmation of this understanding of the 'sign of Jonah' is suggested both by non-biblical Jewish traditions concerning Jonah and by the context in which the saying is placed. First, a number of post-OT traditions suggest that this was precisely how Jonah was read by many Jews. Not all of the Jewish traditions which consider Jonah pre-date Jesus, but there is a remarkable agreement among a number of quite diverse traditions on one point: Jonah prophesied not conditional judgement but impending and unavoidable judgement. In one of the two main text forms of Tobit 14.4, 8, Tobit warns his son Tobias to flee Nineveh 'for I believe the word of God that Jonah spoke about Nineveh'.[50] Here the judgement prophesied by Jonah was not understood as conditional. So too in Josephus where Jonah's prediction is understood as fulfilled prophecy by reading it in terms of Nahum.[51] If Tobit and Josephus view Jonah's prophecy as true even if delayed, several texts which regard the prophecy as false nevertheless share the perception that Jonah predicted unavoidable judgement: Jonah is tagged 'the lying prophet' for predicting a destruction which did not occur. In *Lives of the Prophets* 10, after Jonah has returned from Nineveh, he is too ashamed to settle in his home district and lives instead outside Israel: 'So shall I remove my reproach, for I spoke falsely in prophesying against the great city of Nineveh.' In *Pirqe R. El.* 10, (largely reproduced in *Midrash Jonah*) Jonah refuses to go to Nineveh because Israel already regards him as a lying prophet on account of a failed prediction of Jerusalem's destruction; he fears this reputation will grow if the repentance of the Ninevites once again falsifies his prediction of destruction.

Other texts likewise indicate that Jonah's message was wholly negative. Josephus recounts Jonah's attempted flight to Tarshish in considerable detail but completely omits the book's most striking feature – the repentance of the Ninevites. The omission is all the more remarkable for Josephus' disingenuous assurance that he has 'recounted [Jonah's] story as I found it written down'. Granted, Josephus has politicized the overthrow of Nineveh; he interprets it as Nineveh's loss of dominion over

[49]The king's uncertainty about the effect of repentance ('Who knows?', Jonah 3.9) and Jonah's own unconcealed desire for Nineveh to be destroyed (4.1–9) support this reading.

[50]The other text form refers to Nahum's prophecy concerning Nineveh rather than that of Jonah, but it is easy to see why a scribe might have replaced Jonah with Nahum since in Jonah the prophesied destruction is apparently rescinded by God.

[51]L. H. Feldman, *Studies in Josephus' Rewritten Bible* (SJSJ; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998), pp. 400–2.

Asia. Nevertheless, this overthrow is the sole element in Jonah's message (*Ant.* 9.208–14). Similarly, *Pirqe R. El.* 43 indicates that destruction was the only element of Jonah's message: the Ninevites repent but Jonah's prediction is vindicated for the Ninevites soon return to their evil and are swallowed up in Sheol. Finally, we turn to an intriguing rabbinic debate in *b. Sanh* 89b concerning whether or not it is possible for a prophet to suppress a prophecy with Jonah as the case in point. The assertion is made that the penalty for suppressing a prophecy should be flogging. R. Ḥisda asserts that this is nonsense, reasoning that no one would know that he had suppressed the prophecy. Against this, R. Abaye argues on the basis of Amos 3.7 that the other prophets would know (since God reveals his plans to the prophets, i.e. not just one prophet). The possibility is then raised that a prophet could suppress a prophecy if, as in the case of Jonah, after it was revealed to the prophets, God repented of it. Two attempts are then made to exonerate Jonah: (1) God told Jonah to prophesy Nineveh's destruction but did not inform him when he decided not to destroy Nineveh; (2) sensing that this first solution means that God led Jonah to prophesy falsely, it is then fancifully suggested that God had told Jonah that Nineveh would be turned but not whether the 'turned' meant 'turned to repentance' or 'overturned'. Throughout the debate, the supposition is that Jonah predicted only judgement; the only point at issue is whether the possibility of repentance was (1) suppressed by Jonah; (2) never revealed to Jonah; or (3) revealed to Jonah but misunderstood because of the ambiguity of שׁוב. Thus with remarkable uniformity the Jewish traditions across several centuries agree that Jonah appeared to the Ninevites with a message of impending and unavoidable judgement.

Second, the context in which the reference to the sign of Jonah occurs provides added confirmation that the sign is a sign of unavoidable judgement. Though Matthew (12.40) and Luke (11.30) part ways in their explanation of the sign of Jonah, it is clear that both regard the sign of Jonah as something to be experienced by 'this generation', an expression which occurs in both the refusal to give a sign and the variant explanations for the sign. As I will argue in the following chapter, the phrase is universally employed by Jesus as it was in its original context in Deuteronomy, namely, as a description of a rebellious nation poised for judgement. The association of the 'sign of Jonah' with the polemic against 'this generation' thus provides further evidence that the saying belongs to a group of texts which portray Jesus pronouncing the certainty of national judgement (e.g. Mark 4.11–12; Luke 19.42).

This understanding of the sign receives added confirmation from Luke's explanation of the sign: καθὼς γὰρ ἐγένετο Ἰωνᾶς τοῖς Νινευίταις

σημεῖον, οὕτως ἔσται καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ (11.30). It is widely agreed that the explanation of Luke rather than that of Matthew better reflects the original form of Q.[52] Not all agree, however, that this original Q form is authentic and those who do are not unanimous that it was originally attached to the saying about the sign of Jonah.[53] Still, it is likely that the saying of 11.30 was Jesus' own explanation for the sign: if it was added as an explication of the enigmatic sign of Jonah, it is surprising that the sense in which Jonah was a sign remains unexplained; only the fact that Jonah was the sign as the Son of man would one day be a sign is clarified.[54] If, then, Luke's version of the explanation is authentic, in what sense 'will the Son of man be to this generation' what Jonah was to the Ninevites? It is not usually noted that the parallelism of the saying could be made formally complete thus: 'Just as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also shall the Son of man be a sign to this generation.' This may suggest a parallel with 'the sign of the Son of man' in Matthew 24.30[55] which, however difficult in its own right, is nevertheless clearly associated with judgement: its appearance provokes mourning among αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς. If, as many have argued, the genitive construct τὸ σημεῖον τοῦ υἱοῦ is epexegetic, the sign of Matthew 24.30, like the sign of Jonah, is the Son of man himself, bringing irrevocable judgement.

So the Q saying preserved in Luke does indeed recall Jonah as a sign of judgement, as many have argued, but not merely as a sign of *threatened* judgement. For he appeared in Nineveh as a sign of apparently unavoidable judgement. By analogy, the Son of man will confront 'this generation' with inevitable judgement. The sign expected by many was an Exodus/Conquest-type demonstration of the power of God to effect the restoration of Israel; the sign predicted by Jesus was a manifestation of the Son of man in judgement against Israel.

[52]One of the two texts is surely a development of the other as indicated by the presence in both of οὕτως ἔσται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

[53]To my knowledge, only Gibson, *Temptations*, p. 135, has argued that 11.30 was a separate logion which was brought together with the 'sign of Jonah' saying by the editor of Q. He contends that 11.16, 29 'from a form-critical perspective, is complete in and of itself' and that the editor of Q has brought together two sayings which emphasize different elements of Jesus' polemic against 'this generation'. But there is nothing form-critically objectionable to a pronouncement followed by an explanation, and it is easier to see 11.30 as an explanation of the 'sign of Jonah' than as a free-floating logion.

[54]I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Exeter: Paternoster, 1978), p. 486. Cf. Luz, *Matthäus: 2 Teilband*, p. 274.

[55]Cf. R. Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition* (rev. edn; trans. J. Marsh; Oxford: Blackwell, 1972), p. 118. J. A. Draper ('The Development of "the Sign of the Son of Man" in the Jesus Tradition', *NTS* 39 (1993), 1–21) has shown that the saying is at least pre-Matthean.

2.5 Conclusion

Like his contemporaries, Jesus believed the beginning of restoration to be an obvious reality, a reality already clearly in view. But he rejected the apparently widespread belief that the restoration would begin with another iteration of one of the definitive theophanic events which led to Israel's original conquest of the Land. No such sign would be given. Jesus did not merely reject the notion of a sign; rather, using alternative traditions from Israel's Scriptures, he invested it with drastically altered significance. The sign which 'this generation' should expect was to be a sign not of national restoration but of national judgement. Jesus used language which deliberately evoked Israel's awaited restoration, but when asked to support such language with a manifestation of divine power modelled after the wondrous epiphanies of the Exodus and Conquest, he flatly refused, offering instead the sign of the Son of man – the sign of approaching and unavoidable judgement.

3

JESUS AND THE SCRIPTURES OF ISRAEL

In the previous chapter, I examined the way in which a particular element within Jewish hopes for restoration – the expectation of a sign – was subverted by Jesus' declaration that the coming sign would be one of national judgement. I have argued that in doing so Jesus countered a particular stream of Jewish reflection on Israel's sacred traditions with a quite different understanding of those traditions. In this chapter, I continue to develop the idea that sacred traditions which had been developed in service of an expectation of national restoration were taken up by Jesus in his proclamation of impending national judgement and a new understanding of the meaning of Israel's election. The particular motifs to be examined are the vineyard, the eschatological banquet, and Jesus' polemic against 'this generation'.

3.1 Prophetic criticism in the parables

A recent emphasis in parable studies has been to highlight the way in which Jesus' parables subvert conventional wisdom.[1] My intent in this section is to show that in some parables, at least, the subversion takes a particular shape. I have referred above to J. A. Sanders' description of 'prophetic criticism', that is, the prophets' use of Scripture to subvert accepted use of sacred tradition. Of particular importance is the fact that in their critique of views substantiated from Scripture the prophets often appealed to alternative sacred traditions. My contention is that the subversive element in a number of Jesus' parables is precisely this sort of prophetic criticism cast in narrative form. I consider here two scriptural motifs which Jesus incorporated into parables in ways that undermined influential readings of Israel's sacred traditions by his contemporaries.

[1] See, for example, the work of W. R. Herzog, II, *Parables as Subversive Speech: Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994); and J. D. Crossan, *The Dark Interval: Towards a Theology of Story* (Niles, IL: Argus, 1975).

3.1.1 Vineyard parables

The first motif is that of a vineyard. The image of a vineyard appears in four of Jesus' parables. One of the parables – the parable of the tenants – has clear links with the song of the vineyard in Isaiah 5 where the vineyard is explicitly identified with the house of Israel. Of course, in the context of a parable such an identification would push the parable toward allegory, and, as I shall have occasion to note, a long-running assumption of scholarship on the parables has been that allegory is a sure indication of redactional development. But the willingness of more recent scholarship to admit limited allegorical elements in the parables of Jesus suggests the possibility that the explicit ties between the parable of the tenants and the song of the vineyard in Isaiah 5 are authentic and that references to a vineyard in other parables of Jesus may also refer to Israel.

Referential confusion as a rhetorical strategy in parables

What I propose, then, is that for all their differences, these four parables are linked by their use of the vineyard motif and can be read together as part of Jesus' assessment of the nation's situation. It must be stressed that this does not mean that the vineyard motif is used in a uniform way in the parables or even within a single parable. This diversity has perhaps stood behind the reticence of some scholars to read the vineyard parables together or even to see a reference to Israel in any of them, including the parable of the tenants where the connections with Isaiah 5 are most clear. This reticence is illustrated in K. Snodgrass' work on the parable of the tenants which rejects an identification of the vineyard with Israel in all vineyard parables. Snodgrass, it must be noted, does not arrive at this position as others have by supposing that the vineyard cannot have metaphorical significance. Rather, Snodgrass' concern is that the identification of the vineyard as Israel cannot be consistently made within each parable. So, for instance, if the vineyard is Israel in the parable of the tenants, how can Israel be taken away and given to others? He thus faults those who, having identified the vineyard as Israel in this parable, 'surreptitiously allow the image to slide so that later it is Jerusalem out of which Jesus is cast and then at the end of the parable it is the privileges of election that are taken away from Israel'. It must be said that it is not easy to see how Snodgrass' own identification of the vineyard as God's chosen possession or people differs from an identification of the vineyard as Israel. Nor is it clear quite how his identification of the vineyard as God's chosen people avoids the inconsistencies which he says result from

an identification of the vineyard as Israel. It is thus telling that Snodgrass identifies the vineyard both as the elect people and as election itself and suggests that the allusion to Isaiah 5 is merely introductory: it 'conveys to the hearer that the parable is about the relation of God to his chosen people'.[2]

Clearly Snodgrass allows the vineyard to undergo the same sort of surreptitious 'slide' as he decries in the work of those who identify the vineyard in the parable as Israel. But it seems to me that this is endemic to the way parables play and constitutes not a small portion of their power.[3] Precisely through their use of images in surprising ways do parables penetrate and explode certain perceptions from within, even as they lend their narrative power to the creation of new ones. My contention is that the subtle shift in referent of apparently familiar images is one of the ways a hearer is caught off guard.[4] Any hearer of Jesus would have known that the OT writers employed vineyard imagery as a stock image for Israel. And to know this is to know that a parable set in a vineyard is a parable about Israel. This is especially obvious when the vineyard setting is established and then left unexploited as in the parable of the barren fig tree (Luke 13.6–9). Though the parable initially sets the scene in a vineyard, all of the action in this parable occurs in relation to a fig tree. Further, the placement of the fig tree in a vineyard is incongruous. This is not to say that fig trees never grew in the vineyards of first-century Palestine, only that *it is odd to place a fig tree over which one has narrative control in a vineyard when its placement there is irrelevant to the parable's plot.* This observation renders quite unlikely the contention of some that the vineyard of this parable has no metaphorical significance.[5] It seems to me that the reference to the vineyard is crucial despite the fact that the image is exploited not at all, for its import within Israel's sacred

[2]K. R. Snodgrass, *The Parable of the Wicked Tenants: An Inquiry Into Parable Interpretation* (WUNT; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1983), pp. 73–7.

[3]There is a point to the contention of those who advocate a radical reader-response hermeneutic that 'in metaphor, meanings refuse to stand still', even if the hermeneutic's openness to any and all meanings must be severely qualified. For the citation, along with its necessary qualification, see K. J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Leicester: Apollos, 1998), pp. 126–40. For a similar approach applied specifically to parables, see A. C. Thiselton, 'Reader-Response Hermeneutics, Action-Models, and the Parables of Jesus', *The Responsibility of Hermeneutics* (R. Lundin, A. C. Thiselton and C. Walhout; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), pp. 79–113.

[4]See Brooke's criticism that Snodgrass presses the metaphor in an over-literal way, G. J. Brooke, '4Q500 1 and the Use of Scripture in the Parable of the Vineyard', *DSD* 2 (1995), 283.

[5]Against e.g. H.-J. Klauck, *Allegorie und Allegorese in synoptischen Gleichnistexten* (NTAbh; Münster: Aschendorff, 1978), pp. 300, 308.

traditions alerts the hearer to what the parable is *about*: it is a parable about Israel.

It is also possible to see why a parable about Israel, in which Israel is metaphorically represented by a vineyard, is nevertheless not a parable about a vineyard. The particular point of the parable is best made in relation not to the upkeep of a vine but of a fig tree. So at the level of the parable's internal coherence it is entirely clear why the action relates to the fig tree and not the vineyard. But at the level of metaphorical reference, the fig tree's location within a vineyard signals to the hearer that the fig tree refers to Israel. Thus, in order to clarify, one must sometimes confuse; unravelling a parable's meaning may *require* referential inconsistency: both the vineyard and the fig tree are Israel but the hearer knows that the fig tree *is* Israel only after mention of the vineyard indicates that the parable is *about* Israel. The parable of the tenants is only a more complex instance of this phenomenon, for in it the vineyard not only functions to alert the hearer to what the parable is about but is itself caught up in the action of the parable's plot; the vineyard is both the setting of the parable as well as a vital part of its narrative development. This is why the fact that the vineyard is given to others at the end of the parable in no way threatens the identification of the vineyard as Israel at the beginning of the parable.[6] Referentially confusing? Obviously. Rhetorically powerful? Undeniably.

The use of the vineyard image in the Old Testament and Jewish tradition

It is not then in principle unlikely or impossible that the image of a vineyard in each of the four vineyard parables was intended as part of Jesus' assessment of the nation. These considerations suggest that the use

[6]Viewed in this way, it is clear that the parable itself governs the movement in the referential values of its metaphors but not without regard to pre-existing values. I am not saying that the vineyard can mean anything at all. This it seems to me is the fundamental error within a recent trend in the interpretation of the parable of the tenants which equates the vineyard not with Israel but with Israel's Land and construes the parable as spoken against wealthy landowners and the exploitative system of land tenancy. So recently E. H. Horne, 'The Parable of the Tenants as Indictment', *JSNT* 71 (1998), pp. 111–16; and J. D. Hester, 'Socio-Rhetorical Criticism and the Parable of the Tenants', *JSNT* 45 (1992), 27–57. This, however, is to deny not only the identification of the vineyard with Israel in Isa. 5 with which the parable is linked but the use of the image within Jewish tradition more widely (see below). The material amassed (e.g. by Hester) concerning the inequalities of land ownership and tenancy in first-century Palestine is of interest, but how methodologically can such material tell us that the vineyard is to be identified as the Land? Its real use is not to evoke connections between the parable and biblical mandates concerning land distribution which are foreign to the parable itself but to demonstrate the shock of seeing God in the position of an offended and threatening land owner.

of the motif of a vineyard in the Old Testament generally, and in Isaiah 5 particularly, emerges as a potentially important key to understanding these parables. And to this I now turn.

The song of the vineyard in Isaiah 5 is an extended metaphor employed to indict the nation for its fruitlessness, that is, covenant unfaithfulness, and to project impending disaster in the form of divine judgement. The vineyard is identified as the house of Israel (Isa. 5.6). But even within its Isaianic context the metaphor is flexible. It expresses God's anger first against the elders and leaders of the people for ruining the vineyard (3.14) and then against the nation as a whole (5.1–7). It is evident in the verses which follow the song of the vineyard that the prophet targets a particular attitude within Israel: in 5.19 woe is pronounced against those who yearn to see God's plan 'hasten to fulfilment'. The sentiment is similar to that reflected in Amos 5.18, where the prophet castigates those 'who long for the day of the Lord'. In Amos, such mistaken longing anticipated God's judgement on Israel's national enemies and assumed that Israel itself would be exempt. Against this monumental miscalculation it is not difficult to see how the metaphor of the vineyard suggested itself as particularly appropriate. An initial clue is provided in the identification of the vineyard as 'the planting of his delight' (Isa. 5.7). Israel's election and placement in the Land is elsewhere regarded as a planting by God. The song of Moses in Exodus 15 speaks of the mighty acts of God before which the nations had melted away as God 'planted them on the mountain'.[7]

Quite significantly, it is an image taken up in the Davidic covenant in 2 Samuel 7 where the planting of the nation appears to be guarded from its national enemies by the promise of God's everlasting protection: 'I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more . . .' (v. 10). Such sacred traditions were readily susceptible to interpretations which claimed God's protection of Israel as an inviolable guarantee. But in Isaiah 5 the prophet insists that such promises did not apply to the present situation. Rather, the sacred traditions which apply to 'the planting of his delight' are the Deuteronomic curses threatened for covenant faithlessness. In a striking wordplay the central image of the song of the vineyard is taken up in curse language

[7]Cf. Isa. 5.1: 'My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.' Cf. also the association of God's planting of Israel in the land with vineyard imagery in the Psalms: 'You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it' (Ps. 80.8); 'Turn again, O God of hosts; look down from heaven, and see; have regard for this vine, the stock that your right hand planted' (Ps. 80.14–15).

reminiscent of Deuteronomy 28: 'ten acres of vineyard shall yield but one bath . . . ' (5.10; cf. Deut. 28.28, 30, 39) and 'my people will go into exile . . . ' (5.13; cf. Deut. 28.36, 48–68).

Even so, Isaiah 27 reapplies the traditions which promise God's protection of his planting, his vineyard, to Israel's future restoration. The prophet invokes a new song of the vineyard:

> On that day:
> A pleasant vineyard, sing about it!
> I, the Lord, am its keeper;
> every moment I watch over it.
> I guard it night and day
> so that no one can harm it . . .
> In days to come Jacob shall take root,
> Israel shall blossom and put forth shoots,
> and fill the whole world with fruit.
> (27.2–3, 6)

In the restored vineyard, the briers and thorns are no longer the worthless produce of a despised vineyard as in Isaiah 5 but the enemies of God's protected vineyard. The protection is jealous and fierce: 'Just let there be a brier or thorn!' All who threaten God's restored vineyard will be consumed in battle unless they sue for peace (27.5).[8] Seitz points out a number of echoes of chapter 27 in chapters 34–5 and argues that chapter 34 depicts the harsh judgement of Edom as representative of any nation which violates God's restored vineyard.[9] Here the motif of a vineyard is reinterpreted so that the promises of God's inviolable protection of Israel and destruction of all Gentile nations which threaten Israel are placed in an eschatological context and applied to restored Israel.[10]

[8]The NRSV takes it as a renewed threat against Israel, but this strikes a remarkably discordant note in this context. So also M. A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39* (FOTL; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), p. 347. In the rendering of the RSV, reflected also in the KJV and NIV, the thorns and briers are regarded as the enemies of Israel. So e.g. J. N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39* (NIC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), pp. 494–5; cf. C. R. Seitz, *Isaiah 1–39* (Interpretation; Louisville: John Knox, 1993), p. 198.

[9]Seitz, *Isaiah 1–39*, p. 238.

[10]Note also the way the inviolability of restored Israel is emphasized by means of the metaphor of planting in Isa. 60.21; 61.3. The global significance and fruitfulness of the vine in Isa. 27.6 is taken up in the related metaphor of the global tree of righteousness which is incorporated into Isa. 61.3. These texts are probably behind such phrases as 'eternal planting' which recur in a number of important Second Temple texts. The expression is used to describe Israel or some group which sees itself as true Israel, not infrequently in eschatological contexts. See especially *1 Enoch* 93.2, 5, 10; *Jub.* 1.16; 1QS 8.5; 11.8; CD 1.7; 1QH^{a} 6(14).15; 8(16).6, 10. On this motif, see now especially P. A. Tiller, 'The "Eternal Planting" in the Dead Sea Scrolls', *DSD* 4 (1997), 312–35.

The motif of a vineyard as a metaphor for Israel was used within the Old Testament to describe quite different perspectives on the nation: it was employed negatively to describe a nation ready for judgement but also positively to speak of God's eternal commitment to elect Israel as manifest in the nation's restoration. The post-OT Jewish material is likewise mixed. The volume of analysis generated by the possible allusion to Isaiah 5 in 4Q500 is out of all proportion to the number of words actually preserved, though there is perhaps enough to conclude that the text makes positive use of the vineyard's association with Israel's election.[11] When we turn to Pseudo-Philo, however, the vineyard evokes not only Israel's election but also its failure (see e.g. *Bib. Ant.* 28.4). Of particular but little-noted significance, in view of the frequent attempts to attribute the replacement theme of the parable of the tenants to the early church, is Moses' argument before God after the incident with the golden calf: 'Therefore, if you do not have mercy on your vine, all things, LORD, have been done in vain, and you will not have anyone to glorify you. For even if you plant another vine, this one will not trust you, because you have destroyed the former one (*Bib. Ant.* 12.9).' Of possible importance also for the parable of the tenants are several passages which refer to Israel as the vineyard and designate it as the inheritance of God (12.9; 30.4; 39.7).[12] Though, in part, the vineyard is employed negatively in Pseudo-Philo, it should be noted that such usage relates only to the nation's distant past. In the Rabbinic literature, the negative associations which attend the vineyard image in Isaiah 5 and Pseudo-Philo wholly recede; election and promise predominate.[13] By contrast, in the vineyard parables told by Jesus, though the positive dimension of the image is not altogether lost, it is the metaphor's negative aspect which comes to the fore and in a noticeably intensified way.

The parable of the tenants

I consider first the parable of the tenants (Mark 12.1–9/Matt. 21.33–41/Luke 20.9–16) in which Jesus' use of the vineyard metaphor depends most explicitly on Isaiah 5. Here Jesus' critique of contemporary assumptions concerning the relevance of certain sacred traditions appears to correspond quite closely with prophetic criticism which had already been employed within Isaiah 5 itself.

[11] Brooke, '4Q500 1'.

[12] See also *Ps. Sol.* 14.3–5. Such references should engender caution in considering the increasingly frequent assertion that κληρονομία in Mark 12.7 is a transparent reference to the Land.

[13] See Klauck, *Allegorie*, p. 300 and references cited there.

In Isaiah 5 the prophet had used the metaphor of a vineyard to criticize mistaken conceptions of election according to which the nation was regarded as an inviolable, eternal planting of God. It is precisely this criticism which Jesus levels against the nation and its leaders in the parable of the tenants. However, it must be noted that the authenticity of certain elements of the parable has been questioned including those which connect the parable to Isaiah 5. The parable certainly goes back to Jesus in some form. It appears not only in each of the Synoptics but also in the *Gospel of Thomas* (65).[14] Further, though the message of the parable (essentially the same in all three Synoptics) coheres with post-Easter perspectives,[15] there is nothing in the parable which is incompatible with a *Sitz im Leben Jesu*.[16] Nevertheless, the original form of the parable is not immediately obvious. It has been heavily redacted, at least by Matthew and Luke, and many take the obvious presence of extensive allegory as evidence of a

[14]A few have argued that Matthew and/or Luke rely on a Q version of the parable; see, for example, Snodgrass, *Parable*, p. 56. Most scholars agree, however, that the parable belongs to the triple tradition. Its presence in the *Gospel of Thomas* does not necessarily indicate multiple attestation, for there are textual and theological reasons to think that the *Thomas* form of the parable may derive from that represented in the Synoptics. For these see Snodgrass, *Parable*, pp. 52–4; and U. Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus: 3 Teilband Mt 18–25* (EKKNT; Zürich: Benziger, 1997), p. 218. These arguments also weigh against the contention of J. D. Crossan (*In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 86–96), followed recently by J. Marcus ('The Intertextual Polemic of the Markan Vineyard Parable', in *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity* (ed. G. N. Stanton and G. S. Stroumsa; Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 211), that the *Thomas* form is closest to the original. This view depends heavily on the belief that the destruction motif of Mark 12.9 (which is absent in the *Thomas* version) is conceivable for the early church or Mark but not for Jesus. The specific case of Marcus that 12.9 is Marcan redaction is especially vulnerable. He offers two arguments: (1) the coherence of 12.9 with Mark's emphasis on Jesus' concern for Gentiles and with the theme of destruction in this section (citing 11.18; 12.12; 13.1–2); (2) the combination of δίδωμι and ἀπόλλυμι which also occur in the redactional 3.6. Against (1) the eschatological displacement of Israel by Gentiles is attributed to Jesus not just in Mark but in Q (Matt. 8.11–12/Luke 7.28–9). Further, 12.12 says nothing about destruction and 11.18 and 13.1–2 speak of the attempt to destroy Jesus and the predicted destruction of the Temple, quite different ideas from that of 12.9. Against (2), the two supposedly redactional terms are very common and are in any case used quite differently in 12.9 from in 3.6. Even if the two terms are redactional, this does not in itself call into question 12.9's authenticity.

[15]Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, vol. II, p. 178) find strong reasons to accept the parable's dominical origin but worry about what they regard as insufficient discontinuity between the parable and their understanding of perspectives held by the early church.

[16]For a summary of arguments for the parable's essential authenticity, see especially Snodgrass, *Parable*, pp. 106–12. Luz (*Matthäus: 3 Teilband*, p. 220) is sympathetic to arguments for authenticity but is troubled that only in this parable does Jesus himself serve as a referent for one of the characters. But Luz's concern is counterbalanced by the lack of evidence that the early church created parables and by the existence of analogous and well-substantiated self-claims by Jesus outside the parables. See especially J. H. Charlesworth, *Jesus Within Judaism* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1988), pp. 139–52.

heavy redactional hand in Mark as well. But there is good reason to believe that Mark's version of the parable reflects very closely the parable as spoken by Jesus. First, as indicated above, it is increasingly recognized that the line between parable and allegory is much less clear than had been thought by Jülicher, Jeremias and Dodd.[17] Second, inasmuch as Jesus drew heavily upon OT language and imagery in his preaching, there is no reason why he could not have used the vineyard metaphor of Isaiah 5 which itself contains allegorical elements.[18] Third, even where the reader suspects Marcan redactional interests, the elimination of these elements leaves the basic integrity of the parable intact.[19]

The connection with Isaiah 5 suggests that an indictment of Israel's fruitlessness provides the backdrop for the more specific indictment of Israel's leaders which is central to the parable. This comports well with the preceding context in Mark 11 in which the account of the withered fig tree (11.12–14; 20–3) gives way to conflict with the Jewish leaders (11.27–33). The conclusion of the parable strikes an ominous note with the declaration that the tenants will be destroyed and the vineyard given to others. M. Hooker rightly notes that in its present form the 'others' to whom the vineyard will be given ought logically to be new leaders.[20] Gundry suggests a reference to a transfer of leadership from the Sanhedrin

[17] See C. L. Blomberg, 'The Parables of Jesus: Current Trends and Needs in Research', in *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research* (ed. B. Chilton and C. A. Evans; NTTS; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), pp. 238–40 and the literature cited there.

[18] So also M. D. Hooker, *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St Mark* (BNTC; London: A. & C. Black, 1991), p. 274. The ongoing attempts to dissociate the dominical form of the parable from all contact with Isa. 5 (e.g. by Hester, 'Socio-Rhetorical Criticism') appear increasingly unlikely in the face of growing evidence of an extensive Jewish tradition of interpretation of Isa. 5. This tradition is deeply enough embedded in the parable to make it safe to 'assume that the parable was to a large extent constructed on the basis of that ancient song'. W. J. C. Weren, 'The Use of Isaiah 5,1–7 in the Parable of the Tenants (Mark 12,1–12; Matthew 21.33–46)', *Bib* 79 (1998), 1–26.

[19] J. Lambrecht (*Out of the Treasure: The Parables in the Gospel of Matthew* (LTPM; Louvain: Peeters Press, 1991), pp. 109–15) detects Marcan redaction in the framing of vv. 1a, 12; in the free citation of Isa. 5.2 in v. 1b; vv. 5–6a; and in the scriptural citation of Ps. 118 in vv. 10–11. VV. 1a, 12 are certainly redactional. Though unimportant for the case I wish to make, others have argued strongly for the authenticity of vv. 10–11. See R. H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), pp. 689–91; C. A. Evans, 'God's Vineyard and Its Caretakers', *Jesus and His Contemporaries: Comparative Studies* (AGJU; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), pp. 381–406; and M. Black, 'The Christological Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament', *NTS* 18 (1971), 13. As noted above, the allusion to Isa. 5 in v. 1b is probably original. Lambrecht's case against vv. 5–6a rests mainly on the observation that v. 5 contains no Semitisms. The verses do not necessarily alter the parable's meaning – Matthew omits them and adds generalizations of his own – but Lambrecht's argument from silence does not substantially strengthen the case against their authenticity.

[20] Hooker, *Mark*, p. 276.

to Jesus and his disciples.[21] This, of course, is true, but the harsh language of the preceding assertion that the tenants will be destroyed overtakes a mere change of leadership. In view of the fact that maltreatment of the messengers of God up to and including Jesus by Israel's leaders merely reflected the rejection of the messengers by the nation as a whole,[22] it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the parable implicates the whole nation in the coming judgement of the leaders.[23] *Precisely at the point when the referent of the vineyard shifts from Israel to the privileges of election, the tenants can no longer be the leaders entrusted with Israel's care but must instead be the whole nation from whom the privileges of election are taken*. Just as in Isaiah where the indictment of the leaders for their poor stewardship of God's vineyard (3.14) gives way to the divine determination to destroy the vineyard itself in chapter 5, so too here it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the destruction of the tenants represents God's judgement on the whole nation. This entails a referential shift. In this respect the parable of the tenants is similar to the parable of the barren fig tree. Just as the vineyard in that parable signalled to the hearer that the fig tree represents Israel, so too in this parable the vineyard signals to the reader that the tenants stand ultimately for the nation.

If correct, this analysis reveals a Jesus who, like the eighth-century prophets before him, spoke of a nation whose obduracy made it ripe for judgement – an obduracy for which the nation's leaders bore particular responsibility. Sacred traditions marshalled in support of the inviolability of Israel as God's elect planting did not apply; rather, the pertinent traditions relate to God's judgement of the nation. But Jesus has nuanced the prophetic critique of the pre-exilic period in light of the new situation. First, in a way not possible for the pre-exilic prophets, Jesus' parable places the coming judgement of the nation at the salvation-historical climax of Israel's rejection of God's messengers to the nation.[24] Second, the

[21] Gundry, *Mark*, p. 663.

[22] Note the observation of J. Marcus ('Intertextual', p. 213) that virtually all of the NT passages and about half of the OT passages which deal with the theme of rejection of the prophets place the blame on the people as a whole not just the leaders.

[23] So also C. E. Carlston, *The Parables of the Triple Tradition* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), p. 185, against Gundry, *Mark*, p. 689.

[24] Lambrecht (*Out of the Treasure*, pp. 113–15) suggests that the main difficulty raised against the authenticity of the parable 'has been the question of how Jesus' listeners could have grasped a salvation-historical survey with its reference to the prophets and the hidden announcement of Jesus' death'. But would a reference to salvation history really have been incomprehensible to his listeners? Lambrecht himself notes that the parable announces Jesus' impending ruin and vindication by God. It surely underestimates Jesus' audience to suggest that they could not have perceived a claim by Jesus that his ruin would be the culmination of the nation's rejection of God's messengers.

probably authentic assertion that the vineyard would be given to others points toward a constitutional shift in the nature of God's people which goes beyond the criticism of a faulty theology of national election implicit in the song of the vineyard in Isaiah 5. I have noted that the language of 12.9 outstrips mere transfer of leadership. This may indicate that even for Jesus the reference to 'others' envisions a quite different make-up for the eschatological people of God. This likelihood is enhanced when it is recalled that in Isaiah the vineyard, though destroyed (chap. 5), is ultimately restored (chap. 27). The sense of continuity is established in the preservation of the vineyard's univocal significance. In the parable, however, the vineyard hands its referential load to the tenants: the tenants are Israel. But in contrast to the decimated vineyard of Isaiah 5, destroyed tenants cannot be restored. This is not to say that all continuity is lost. Rather, the parable's subtle transfer of Israel's metaphorical identity from the vineyard to the tenants suggests that the continuity is conceived of quite differently. This allows the parable to depict simultaneously both Israel's destruction (through the fate of the tenants) as well as the preservation of all that it meant to be Israel (through the giving of the vineyard to others). The point must be stressed: it is the *vineyard* which is given to others; the power of the vineyard's opening association with Israel now reasserts itself; quiescent through the bulk of the parable, the vineyard again comes to the fore at the climax! Like a carnival shell game, just when one is sure Israel has dropped off the table, it appears again under the cup marked 'vineyard'. Thus through the deft movement of metaphorical meaning, the parable affirms the continuity of God's commitment to the vineyard even if the nature of that continuity is markedly different from that suggested by Isaiah 27.[25]

The parable of the workers in the vineyard

In relation to the parable of the tenants, I have noted the flexible way in which the metaphor of the vineyard is deployed in both the parable and its Isaianic precursor: on the one hand, the vineyard represents the nation; on the other hand, individuals from within the nation (i.e. the leaders) are said to be the workers in the vineyard. This observation raises the possibility that Jesus' perspective on the nation is also in view in the other two

[25] J. Marcus ('Intertextual', p. 216) asserts that the parable has 'twisted' Scripture and represents a 'distortion' and 'parody' of Isa. 5. This language, however, is highly tendentious and fails to do justice to the parable's own explication of the vineyard image which suggests simultaneous rather than sequential fulfilment of both the negative as well as the positive dimensions of the Isaianic vineyard.

parables which employ the vineyard as part of their imagery: the parable of the workers in the vineyard (Matt. 20.1–16) and the parable of the two sons (Matt. 21.28–32). In each of these parables the vineyard remains in the background and the plots develop by means of the interaction between the owner of the vineyard and those he sends to work in the vineyard. Is it possible that in a way similar to the parable of the tenants, the workers in the vineyard correspond to individuals or types of individuals or groups within the nation?[26]

The parable of the workers in the vineyard is notoriously difficult.[27] But in light of the two vineyard parables already considered it is worth considering the possibility that this parable was also told by Jesus to criticize a use of Israel's sacred traditions which had resulted in a drastically mistaken understanding of the significance of Israel's election. To consider this possibility, we must first develop a sketch of first-century views of repentance and election.

Election, repentance and sinners in Second Temple eschatology. Convictions about who did and did not belong to Israel within Second Temple Judaism were closely tied to the belief that repentance was a prerequisite for Israel's restoration. E. P. Sanders has marshalled a broad sweep of evidence for the expectation of national repentance prior to Israel's restoration. Unfortunately, particularly among those working with the Jesus tradition, the understanding of repentance has often turned on excessive reliance on the occurrence of repentance terminology.[28] This word-concept fallacy is evident in several recent discussions of Jesus and repentance.[29] But even texts which employ repentance terms infrequently or not at all may nevertheless fundamentally be about repentance. In several Second Temple texts in which repentance language is explicit, the nature of Israel's eschatological repentance was conceived of in quite

[26]Unlike the parable of the tenants, neither parable seems to focus on the roles of the individuals as leaders.

[27]For a review of interpretive approaches, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. III, pp. 67–8.

[28]The problem is endemic to discussions of repentance in the standard theological dictionaries. See e.g. J. Behm and E. Würthwein, 'μετανοέω κ.τ.λ.', *TDNT*, vol. IV (ed. G. Kittel; 1967), pp. 975–1008. It is evident also in the recent survey by R. H. Bell, 'Teshuba: The Idea of Repentance in Ancient Judaism', *JPJ* 5 (1995), 22–52.

[29]So, for instance, E. P. Sanders (*Jesus*) who thinks that by arguing for the inauthenticity of texts which attribute repentance language to Jesus he has shown that repentance was not part of Jesus' proclamation. Cf. also H. Merklein ('Die Umkehrpredigt bei Johannes dem Täufer und Jesus von Nazaret', *BZ* 25 (1982), 29–46) who eliminates most of the texts that speak explicitly of repentance and then bases his understanding of Jesus' view of repentance almost exclusively on the texts that remain.

specific terms: it was a return to Torah,[30] not infrequently a particular understanding of Torah. Such a notion can be easily set forth without explicit use of repentance language. With this in mind I turn to several texts to examine, first, the nature of the pre-restoration repentance and, second, the way this repentance functioned to define the shape of true Israel.

The concept of an eschatologically shaped repentance is perhaps most pronounced in the sectarian literature from Qumran. The writings reveal a community whose identity is fundamentally that of a group which has repented: they are 'the penitents of Israel' (שבי ישראל – CD 4.2; 6.5; 8.16; 19.29); 'the multitude of Israel who have turned back to the covenant' (1QS 5.22). But the repentance is not simply related to initial formation of the community or entrance into the community;[31] rather, repentance also characterizes the nature of one's participation in the community. Members of the community are those who freely devote themselves to turning away from evil precisely by committing themselves to a pattern of life (1QS 5.1).[32] They both enter into and live within 'a covenant of repentance' (CD 19.16). Thus the substance of the repentance is worked out not in extended reflection on the meaning of specific terms but in a pattern of detailed *halakhah*. In this durative sense, the 'turning away from evil' does not suggest that the member is returning to obedience after engaging in sin; rather, it expresses a positive orientation toward Torah which precludes the practice of sin.

Not only so: the penitent pattern of life adopted in the community manifests convictions about the nature of life in the eschaton. The idea is especially clear in the recent work of L. Schiffman on the *Rule of the Congregation* (1QSa). Schiffman attends in particular to the remarkable correspondences between the way of life anticipated by 1QSa for the messianic age and that dictated by the *Community Rule* (1QS) and other writings for the present. So, for instance, the purity requirements and codes of conduct for the messianic assembly in 1QSa are closely

[30] A return to Torah had after all been closely identified with the Torah's description of the repentance which would lead to the restoration of Israel to blessing (Deut. 30; Lev. 26). Such an understanding of Israel's eschatological repentance is quite removed from N. T. Wright's equation of Jesus' call to repentance with the abandonment of revolutionary zeal; *Jesus*, p. 58.

[31] Against E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63 BCE–66 CE* (London: SCM Press, 1992), p. 378; and M. Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous: A Comparative Study of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's Letters* (ConBNT; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1995), p. 197.

[32] On this twofold understanding of repentance at Qumran, see especially H.-J. Fabry, 'Die Wurzel שוב in der Qumrânliteratur', in *Qumrân: sa piété, sa théologie et son milieu* (ed. M. Delcor; Paris: Leuven University Press, 1978), pp. 285–93.

paralleled by those deemed essential for the time before the denouement in 1QS.[33] Thus, the practices of the eschatological society, anticipated in texts like 1QSa, were to be reflected in the daily life of the community. These correspondences suggest that the eschatological *halakhah* 'constitute[s] a kind of messianic mirror image of the society described in the *Manual of Discipline*'.[34]

A similar perspective appears in *Jubilees*. Certainly repentance language as such is far from pervasive, but its infrequency belies its centrality.[35] In *Jubilees* 23.26, we are told that in the last days, in the midst of an evil generation (23.14, 15, 16, 22), children will begin to search the law and the commandments and to return to the way of righteousness. The balance of the book leaves little doubt as to the nature of this 'return to the way of righteousness': it is the adoption of the programme of Torah obedience set forth in the book. Equally significant is the fact that both 23.26 and 1.15–16a, the other key statement which deals with this repentance, are tied into the book's two eschatological sections. The contexts of both statements imbue Israel's repentance with eschatological import: repentance not only serves as the presupposition for restoration but initiates and constitutes a way of life appropriate to the eschaton. When Israel turns back to the Lord, they will do so in a righteousness from which they will never turn back (1.23); the onset of the eschaton which issues from Israel's repentance may effect a change in the quality of faithfulness to Torah, but the demands of Torah, to which Israel's repentance will bring it into conformity prior to the eschaton, continue unchanged into the eschaton. The 'children' who 'return to the right way' (23.26) are those who already practise the way of life which will characterize Israel in the eschaton.

Psalms of Solomon provide a third example. Again, explicit references to repentance are far from pervasive. Where they do occur, they often refer to the repentance by the righteous of their unwitting sins (3.7–8; 13.7; cf. 18.4). Nevertheless, in 5.7 there is a clear link between Israel's restoration and repentance: 'Even if you do not restore us, we will not stay away, but will come to you.' Written after the collapse of Hasmonean efforts to effect Israel's restoration, the text might seem to indicate despair that such a restoration would ever take place. But in light of the persistent yearning for restoration which recurs in subsequent psalms (cf. 7.8–10; 8.27–8;

[33]Schiffman, *The Eschatological Community*, pp. 11–71. [34]Ibid., p. 9.

[35]The most notable instances of repentance language fall within *Jubilees*' two main eschatological sections in chaps. 1 and 23 which provide a framework for the book's broader agenda. Cf. Davenport, *Eschatology*, p. 2.

9.10; 11.2–9; 12.5–6; 17.26–46), it appears that in 5.7 the author clings to repentance as the only possible path toward restoration. The ethical programme associated with repentance in the *Psalms of Solomon* is not complex; generalized descriptions of righteousness, justice and obedience to the Law are typical. Several texts may betray differences with other strands of Judaism, particularly in matters related to the cult (cf. 1.8; 8.11–12; 21–2). But such differences do not give rise to a manifestly distinct *halakhah*. Nevertheless, the ethical way of life laid down for the righteous throughout the book does not differ from that anticipated under the reign of the Davidic messiah described in chapters 17–18. The only discernible difference between present and eschatological righteousness is qualitative: under the righteous king 'there will be no unrighteousness . . . for all will be holy' (17.32). Even so, this qualitative advance will come by means of Messiah's discipline (17.42; 18.7), a concept which crops up throughout the book to describe the Lord's correction of the righteous when they sin (8.29; 10.1–3; 13.7–11; 14.1; 16.11, 13). There is thus a substantial ethical continuity between the present and the eschaton; the righteous of the present will be directed in the eschaton by Messiah's rod of righteousness and discipline into acts of righteousness (18.7–8). None of this is to say that the *Psalms* were composed by a single author whose clear-eyed vision of the eschaton shaped his ethical expectations of the righteous in the present.[36] But it seems clear that those responsible for the work, particularly in its final form, anticipate a righteousness in the eschaton which could in large measure be practised by the righteous even in the present. Thus when Messiah comes the righteous will simply go on being righteous but without the afflictions and oppression of the wicked.

Further examples could be adduced, but these suffice to show that repentance was often understood as Israel's turning to God in preparation for the eschaton and that the content of this turning was the adoption in the present of a Torah-compliant ethical existence appropriate to the eschaton. If there is any difference in these texts, it is that in the Qumran writings and *Jubilees*, as opposed to the *Psalms of Solomon*, there is a strong sense that the eschatological *halakhah* is not merely a return to the Torah faithfulness of the past, but rather a turning to a distinctive understanding of Torah, revealed in the last days as the way of life that will characterize the righteous in the eschaton.

[36]The useful survey of scholarship on the *Psalms of Solomon* by J. L. Trafton ('The *Psalms of Solomon* in Recent Research', *JSP* 12 (1994), 3–19) highlights the consensus that the *Psalms* were written by more than one author, although the *Psalms* as a whole reflect the same general point of view.

If repentance was conceived of both as a return to Torah and as a precondition of Israel's restoration, it is easy to see how conceptions of this repentance might shape perceptions of the shape of Israel in the eschaton and, by implication, in the present as well. The point becomes clear by considering the relationship between individual and national repentance. Unfortunately we run into difficulty at this point, for the relationship between national and individual repentance in early Jewish writings has not been sufficiently explicated. In particular, there has been little awareness that affirmations about national repentance and individual repentance stand in considerable tension. On the one hand, it is common in the Jewish literature to read of the nation forsaking the covenant, falling into wickedness and rebellion, and coming under the punishment of God. With this there is also the expectation that the nation will return to the Lord or even that in some sense the nation has already begun to turn away from covenant faithlessness through the adoption of a Torah-compliant way of life. Individuals participate in Israel's return to God as they adopt that pattern of life. On the other hand, in many texts it appears that individuals who forsake the covenant will never be forgiven; all possibility of pardon is lost. Thus, it seems, the apostate nation may repent, indeed *will* repent, but apostate individuals may not.

This is not to say that this tension is ever explicitly acknowledged.[37] Nevertheless, it is possible to see varying degrees of sophistication in handling the problem. Perhaps least substantial of the three cases considered above is the treatment of the *Psalms of Solomon*. In contrast to the canonical Psalms in which individual and collective poems may often be distinguished, 'I' and 'we' alternate so unpredictably throughout the *Psalms of Solomon* that the variation seems merely stylistic. These psalms do not primarily have to do with personal relations but with the righteous and pious on the one hand and the godless and unrighteous on the other. The frequent references to Israel bear out this collective concern, even if in some texts those to whom 'Israel' applies must be examined as well.[38] This rather ambiguous relationship between individual and collective perspectives does not foster notable clarity on the origins of the righteous. The strong dichotomy in the *Psalms* between the righteous and the 'sinners' seems to imply that the boundary between the two groups was stark and impermeable. To be sure, the *Psalms* acknowledge that the

[37] See, however, the statement of R. Eliezer in *Sifre* Num. 111:III.2.C where it appears that the deliberate sin of Israel is more easily dealt with than the deliberate sin of the individual: corporate deliberate sin is simply regarded as inadvertent.

[38] S. Holm-Nielsen, 'Die Psalmen Salomos', in *Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit: Poetische Schriften* (ed. W. G. Kümmel; Gütersloher, 1977), p. 56.

righteous sin, but the sins of the righteous are almost always said to be committed in ignorance and thus do not breach the categorical distinction between the righteous and the sinners who sin in knowing wilfulness (3.7; 13.7; 18.4).[39] Even in chapter 16 where the psalmist describes himself as having been 'far away from the Lord', evidently through grievous sin, his situation of distance from God, though similar to, remained nevertheless distinct from that of the sinner: for a moment his soul was 'near the gates of Hades with the sinner' (16.3) but he gives thanks to God 'who did not count me with the sinners for (my) destruction' (16.5). Incredibly, Sanders, though aware of the work's strong dichotomy between the righteous and the sinners, reads this text as if the psalmist is saying that he had 'not been securely within the fold of the "pious" all his life'.[40] This is tantamount to saying that the psalmist regards himself as having once been a sinner. But this is precisely what the psalmist takes utmost care *not* to say. On the contrary, *there is never a clear indication that the righteous are former sinners*. The righteous repent but not evidently because they have forsaken the covenant. Rather, the righteous repent of discrete violations of the covenant which seem only to be of the unintentional variety. Unlike the sins of the righteous, the sins of sinners amount to covenant repudiation and, as such, are not met with the offer of repentance and forgiveness. The righteous do not hope for the repentance of sinners as a harbinger of national restoration; rather, the righteous themselves live penitent lives in the hope of a restoration which will bring with it the destruction of the sinners from their midst (17.22–7).[41]

[39]Only in 9.6–7 is the thought of God's forgiveness of sins entertained without specific qualification of those sins as unintentional. Even E. P. Sanders (*Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (London: SCM Press, 1977), p. 398) seems to allow that the unqualified sins of this text are in fact the unintentional sins of the righteous, as elsewhere in the book.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Other texts, for example the *Epistle of Enoch* and Sirach, evince the same stark and impermeable boundary between the righteous and the sinners. Sanders seems aware of this, but resists working out its implications. Thus, for instance, in relation to the *Epistle of Enoch*, Sanders (*Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, p. 357) comments, 'Yet in keeping with the general apocalyptic view, we are not told how an individual might *transfer* from the group of the unrighteous to the righteous.' But the rigid division between the righteous and sinners suggests that it is not simply an infelicitous omission but rather a reflection of the author's conviction that *no such transfer is possible*. The sole passage which Sanders cites as evidence that such a transfer is thought possible (*1 Enoch* 104.8–9) in reality serves as a warning to the wicked who think that God does not record their sins for the day of judgement and is immediately followed by Pseudo-Enoch's prediction that sinners will sin in precisely the way that he has just warned them not to (104.10). See G. W. E. Nickelsburg, Jr, 'The Epistle of Enoch and the Qumran Literature', *JJS* 33 (1982), 341–3. Bell ('Teshuba', 28) cites Wis. 12.10 as a text which speaks of an opportunity for the wicked to repent, but this

In *Jubilees*, there is a much stronger sense of individual participation in national repentance. In 1.15–16a a national perspective predominates. The author asserts that after God has scattered Israel for their disobedience, the nation will turn back to him with all their heart and soul (1.15–16a). But then in 23.26, the participation of individuals in this eschatological repentance appears to be more prominent; we are told that in the last days, in the midst of an 'evil generation' (23.14, 15, 16, 22), 'children will begin to search the law, and to search the commandments and to return to the way of righteousness', a turning that will effect the beginning of the eschaton (23.27). Even here, there is no definite sense in which 'the children' are regarded as those who were once part of the evil generation. On the other hand, it does seem that the turning of the children has a definite starting point, but it is impossible to tell precisely what marked that starting point other than the vague allusion to the time when the children began to search the law (23.26). What *is* clear is that there are certain sins – sins which constitute a renunciation of the covenant – for which repentance and forgiveness are not possible. Concerning Israelites who reject circumcision, the author is adamant: 'They will no longer have forgiveness or pardon so that they should be pardoned and forgiven for every sin, for (their) violation of this eternal (ordinance)' (15.34). Repentance is likewise ruled out for certain other sins which the author equates with rejection of the covenant. For those who sin in such a way as to defile the holy people of Israel as written on the heavenly tablets, 'there is no remission or any forgiveness' (30.10). The particular case in point in this text is incest, but other sins are likewise regarded as sins against 'eternal' commandments. If Reuben was forgiven after repenting for sleeping with his father's concubine, it was only because the 'eternal law' against such acts had not been completely revealed in his day (33.16). Now that it has been revealed, there is no expiation to atone for such sin and no possibility of forgiveness (33.13, 17). Similarly 'eternal' sins specified by the author include failure to keep the Sabbath and Passover, intermarriage with Gentiles, and eating blood. All such sin amounts to forsaking the covenant, for which no repentance is possible.

The tension between belief in the restoration of the apostate nation and the conviction that repentance and forgiveness are excluded is sharp. Sanders notes the apparent contradiction and comments: 'It thus appears that the author's view that there is no atonement for forsaking the

is merely a rhetorical demonstration of God's mercy not a real possibility; the opportunity is granted, though God knew 'that their way of thinking would never change'.

covenant, when it conflicts with the *historical reality of the continuation of Israel and with his conviction that Israel is elect and will ultimately be cleansed and saved*, yields.'[42] But Sanders has failed to distinguish what *Jubilees* says about national apostasy from what it says about individual apostasy. This is not to say there is no tension in what the author says; the fact remains that the author does not clarify the relationship between the apostate nation and the 'children' who turn back to Torah and embody the nation's repentance prior to restoration. But the author displays no awareness of a conflict between the exclusion of repentance for individuals who forsake the covenant and the continuation and restoration of the nation despite its apostasy. These are two different things altogether. It has to be said that Sanders' analysis of *Jubilees* merely illustrates a problem that pervades the whole of his study of repentance in Second Temple texts: *he reads texts that are talking about the apostasy and repentance of the nation as if they were talking about the apostasy and repentance of individuals*.

It seems, then, that in the *Psalms of Solomon* and *Jubilees*, Israel returns to God after having forsaken the covenant and suffered the curses for covenant disloyalty. But Israel returns from its covenant unfaithfulness as individuals who have remained faithful to the covenant throughout turn to God by adopting a pattern of covenant obedience appropriate to the end time. This tension is palpable in the penitential prayers that come from the Second Temple period. As R. Werline's important study of these prayers shows, the confession of corporate sin came to be seen as a means of deliverance for the righteous. In other words, Israel's restoration was viewed as the deliverance of the righteous and turned on the confession of sin by the righteous. Many of these prayers are constructed in transparent reliance on Deuteronomy 32 and Leviticus 26 and the prayer of Solomon in 1 Kings 8, texts which lay out the required procedure for Israel's restoration after apostasy. Werline notes numerous instances of tension between the correlation of righteousness and blessing, sin and punishment, on the one hand, and the acknowledgment that those who follow the law strictly nevertheless suffer, on the other.[43] Thus, the righteous acknowledge the justness of God's punishment of the apostate nation and confess Israel's rejection of the covenant but do so as those who have remained loyal to the covenant but suffer Job-like as the nation is punished. For Werline, the prayers provide no resolution of this tension, except for the role they

[42]E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, p. 378.

[43]R. A. Werline, *Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism: The Development of a Religious Institution* (SBLEJL; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), p. 189.

play as a turning point leading to the deliverance of the righteous. Nevertheless, the true tension is not the one Werline detects, that is, a tension between apparently contradictory theologies. Rather, the tension is that between national and individual perspectives: the apostate nation has received what it deserves, but the righteous individuals within the nation suffer at the hands of the godless agents of the nation's punishment. Thus, *it is the confession by the righteous of sins not their own which constitutes the repentance that leads to Israel's restoration*. The appeal to God to effect the awaited restoration is based both on the confession of Israel's sins as well as on the assertion that the righteous ones are suffering unjustly.[44]

Some of these ideas are evident also in the Qumran writings. Indeed, in such texts as 4Q504 (*Words of the Heavenly Lights*) this kind of corporate penitential prayer was part of the community's daily life.[45] Nevertheless, in some Qumran literature, there appears to be more sophistication in dealing with this tension than in either *Jubilees* or the *Psalms of Solomon*. As in these latter two works, there is in the Qumran writings a sharp disjunction between the righteous and the wicked, the sons of light and the sons of darkness. Nevertheless, entrance into the community is occasionally conceived of as a turning away from the way of 'the people' (CD 8.16; 19.29). This implicitly becomes a way of dealing with the problem of the origins of the righteous. Inasmuch as 'the wicked' are a category of people irrevocably destined for judgement, there is no indication that community members formerly belonged to 'the wicked'. Instead, there are a few texts in which it appears that 'the people' serve as a kind of ambiguous third category whose destiny remains unclear. Sometimes, 'the people' are closely associated with 'the wicked' as in CD 19.16–21 where the author castigates those who had once entered into the community but did not depart from 'the way of traitors' and did

[44] A somewhat different solution to the problem is evident in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. As in *Jubilees*, the grievous sins of revered forefathers like Reuben pose a dilemma. But the sins of the twelve eponymous fathers are particularly difficult in a work oriented toward the restoration of the twelve tribes who are represented by the patriarchs. A number of the *Testaments* betray a studied attempt to portray the sins of the patriarchs as other than the wilful transgressions of the wicked. Reuben sinned with Bilhah because he was led astray by the spirits of deceit and error (*T. Reub.* 2–3); the mind of Simeon, who bears much of the blame for the sin against Joseph, was blinded by the prince of error (*T. Sim.* 2.7; cf. *T. Gad* 6.2); Judah was similarly deceived by drunkenness and youthful impulses when he married a Canaanite as well as when he slept with Tamar (*T. Jud.* 11–14). Crucially, Judah asserts that God 'pardoned me because I acted in ignorance. The prince of error blinded me, and I was ignorant . . .' (*T. Jud.* 19.3). This then becomes a way of dealing with the sin of Israel as a whole. The nation is led astray by spirits of deceit, so repentance and pardon are possible, evidently because the nation has not acted wilfully but in ignorant deception (*T. Zeb.* 9.7; cf. *T. Dan* 5.5–6).

[45] See Werline, *Penitential Prayer*, pp. 126–57.

not remove themselves from 'the people and their sin'. And yet in the following column, these apostates from the new covenant who have broken through the border of the Torah and are counted among 'the wicked' are distinguished from 'the house of Peleg' who 'depended upon God during the time of Israel's trespass. But although they considered the sanctuary impure, they returned to the way of the people in some few ways. Each of them shall be judged according to his spirit in the holy council' (CD 20.22–5).[46] It is impossible to identify this 'house of Peleg', but despite their return 'in some few ways' to the way of the people they are not regarded as clearly apostate. Rather their fate is uncertain. Perhaps then it would not be too far amiss to suggest that 'the people' are those whose destiny is yet to be determined; they have not yet entered into the 'new covenant', the 'covenant of repentance', but neither have they so rejected the covenant as they know it that they must be regarded among 'the wicked'.[47]

There appears, then, to have been a kind of tension in Jewish attitudes toward those Jews who fell outside the parameters of a group's understanding of Torah. On the one hand, in principle, there was an openness which allowed for the possibility that other Jews would join the group whether now or at the dawn of the eschaton. There remained the possibility that true Israel was not yet all Israel. Even if the matter of who was in was clear, in principle, it was not yet certain who would stay in or, more to the point, who would stay out. This was true even at Qumran.

On the other hand, there was consciousness that many Jews would exclude themselves from the covenant and hence from participation in eschatological blessing because of their refusal to join true Israel in the present. Other Jews might still convert to the programme of Torah obedience laid out by the group, but who could say when the return to Torah was complete? Clearly many felt it very nearly was. Jews outside the group would have no share in the eschaton, barring some opportunity for other Jews to rally around the group in conjunction with God's eschatological action. Consequently, true Israel in the present might already

[46]Charlesworth translation.

[47]These perspectives must be allowed to temper the way the sharp dualism between 'the sons of light' and 'the sons of darkness' actually functioned socially in generating attitudes of intolerance toward those outside the community in the present. The Qumranites doubtless did think that history was quickly moving toward an absolute differentiation of the righteous and the wicked, but this was not so absolute as to make the boundaries of the community impermeable in the present nor render all Jews outside the community definitely apostate. Such tempering perspectives do not adequately qualify the otherwise helpful discussion of M. Mach, 'Conservative Revolution? The Intolerant Innovation of Qumran', in *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity* (ed. G. N. Stanton and G. G. Strousma; Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 67–8.

be all Israel. Thus, at any given moment it would have been possible to draw fairly clear lines around true Israel – to say who was in and who was out – on the basis of conformity to the group's understanding of Torah. In other words, even if in principle it was impossible to say who would stay out, there was a very powerful basis upon which to declare certain individuals cut off from the covenant and destined for judgement (e.g. *Jub.* 15.33–4; *1 Enoch* 90.26–7).

It is this latter impulse which stands behind the designation of some Jews as 'sinners' or 'wicked'. Here we must point out a conflict within E. P. Sanders' portrayal of Second Temple Judaism. On the one hand his work stresses the 'covenantal nomism' of 'common Judaism' according to which there was widespread belief that a basic loyalty to the covenant assured one's place as a member of true Israel. Only 'sinners' – those who lived in transgression of the law – were regarded as outside true Israel. On the other hand, Sanders emphasizes the restorationist impulse within Judaism according to which the nation needed to return to Torah in anticipation of the eschatological action of God. But the necessity of repentance necessarily introduced a variety of views as to what constituted basic loyalty to the covenant. If, for instance, basic loyalty included observance of the solar calendar in order to ensure that the feasts were kept on the proper days, one might easily conclude that those who kept another calendar were like the Gentiles, that is, outside the covenant and subject to judgement (*Jub.* 6.32–5; *1 Enoch* 82.4–7).[48] The diversity within Judaism largely turned on differences concerning what constituted basic loyalty to the covenant. Theoretically, 'sinners' and 'the wicked' could be broad designations of anyone outside one's own party, that is, those who rejected the proper conception of covenant loyalty and were therefore clearly outside true Israel. But, as the examples above indicate, that was not how such terms were actually used. The openness of various parties and sects to new adherents meant that such terms were reserved for those whose actions showed that they had overtly rejected the covenant.[49] Nevertheless,

[48] J. D. G. Dunn, 'Jesus, Table Fellowship, and Qumran', in *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. J. H. Charlesworth; ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1992), pp. 259–60.

[49] The position here is thus somewhere between that of Sanders and Dunn. Sanders (*Jesus*, p. 187) wants to restrict the epithet 'sinners' to those who were considered transgressors of the law (as opposed to the *'am ha'aretz*) and therefore wicked by the normal standards of Judaism. By contrast, Dunn ('Table Fellowship', pp. 259–60) argues that in factional contexts it could be applied to anyone outside one's own party. In Dunn's favour it is unlikely that Pharisees, for instance, distinguished between practices which applied to adherents to 'normal standards of Judaism' and distinctly Pharisaic practices, and referred only to the former in the determination of who was righteous. Nevertheless, it is likely that in their rhetoric, terms such as 'sinners' would have been applied more narrowly to those perceived to have rejected the covenant. This appears to be the perspective reflected in the Synoptics.

from the perspective of any particular understanding of what constitutes covenant faithfulness, outsiders would have been viewed as having departed from that understanding in widely varying degrees. Those most distant would naturally have been most readily tagged with terms of disapprobation such as 'sinners' or 'the wicked' and regarded as cut off from the elect people of God.

Precisely these issues arise in the Jesus tradition as a result of his association with 'sinners'. Opposition to Jesus' consorting with 'the wicked' was not prompted by pugnacious self-righteousness. Rather, Jesus' declaration that 'sinners' were among those already enjoying the blessings of the kingdom would have been seen as a hindrance to Israel's preparation for eschatological restoration, not least for its inclusion of those who on some understandings of Torah were definitely out.

Eschatological election in the parable of the workers in the vineyard. The parable of the workers in the vineyard speaks to this point by emphasizing the absolute freedom of God in the giving of the eschatological blessings of the kingdom even to those within Israel who by all accounts do not deserve it and who by the accounts of some at least had already cut themselves off from elect Israel. In view of God's sovereignty in the granting of these blessings, no one can claim to be the proper recipients of God's royal benevolence. Moreover, resentment of God's prerogative to mete out the blessings of the kingdom is completely out of place. The parable thus calls into question the capacity of anyone but God to determine the shape of true Israel. The workers who complain about the generosity of the vineyard owner to those who came late in the day most naturally correspond to the Pharisees and teachers of the law in the Jesus traditions.[50] If the workers hired at various intermediate times of the day have any significance, could it be that they represent those who are relatively less distant from the Pharisees' programme of Torah observance than the sinners but nonetheless viewed by them as 'outside'?

If this analysis is correct it suggests that the point of Jesus' disagreement with those who disparaged Jesus' association with 'sinners' had to do with a difference in understandings of God's eschatological act of forgiveness. I have shown above that there was a widespread belief that Israel would repent prior to restoration. This strongly suggests that Israel's

The comment of M. J. Wilkins ('Sinner', in *DJG* (J. B. Green, S. McKnight and I. H. Marshall; Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1992), p. 760) strikes the right chord: 'the more members of the Jewish community moved away from Pharisaic standards, the more likely the Pharisees would dub them sinners'.

[50]Cf. G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), pp. 117–19.

restoration was conceived of as God's eschatological act of national forgiveness, an idea evident in a number of OT texts, not least those which anticipate a new covenant.[51] The association of God's eschatological forgiveness of the nation with a new covenant seems at times to bespeak a new, eschatological act of election. Such a notion emerges in a number of Second Temple texts. At Qumran, the concept is closely bound to the remnant motif. If, in one sense, the remnant of CD 1.5 is the group of survivors who escaped the hand of Nebuchadnezzar at the time of the exile, the remnant on which the author's focus falls is the 'plant root' which God caused to spring up from Israel and Aaron three hundred and ninety years later at the end of the age of wrath (1.6–9). This eschatological act of God stands behind the community's frequent description of itself as 'the elect'. Similarly, in the *Apocalypse of Weeks*, the seventh week concludes with the choosing of the elect who are given sevenfold wisdom and knowledge (93.9–10). Like the *Apocalypse of Weeks*, the *Epistle of Enoch* presents this eschatological act of election in terms of a gift of wisdom which enables those who receive it to observe Torah in a way that brings salvation in the coming judgement (99.10). This special wisdom is not unrelated to Torah but neither is it equated with Torah. Instead it is revelatory insight into the proper exegesis of Torah, insight which alone enables a person to live righteously.[52] In each of these cases, Israel's apostasy ends with a national restoration which begins with a new act of election by God.

But despite the obvious emphasis on divine grace that stands behind such conceptions of eschatological election, there are very few texts which indicate that this new act of election could embrace even apostate individuals. To my knowledge it appears as a possibility only in the *Animal Apocalypse*.[53] Here God's eschatological act of election corresponds roughly to the birth of the lambs from the sheep (Israel), lambs whose eyes begin to see. Of interest is the fact that one of these lambs opens the eyes of some of the formerly blinded sheep (90.9–10). If the birth of the lambs from the sheep suggests an end-time election of a group within Israel who are untainted by Israel's sin, the fact that some of the sheep join these lambs appears to broaden the scope of this eschatological election to include some who had belonged in an undifferentiated way to the

[51] See Jer. 31.31–4: 'I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more'; Ezek. 36.22–7: 'I will sprinkle clean water upon you . . . On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the land to be inhabited . . . '

[52] On the soteriological import of special wisdom in the *Epistle of Enoch*, see Nickelsburg, 'The Epistle of Enoch', 333–48.

[53] In a non-eschatological context, the *Prayer of Manasseh* suggests that God granted repentance to the apparently apostate Manasseh.

apostate nation. If indeed the idea is that even some apostate individuals from within the apostate nation participate in the end-time election, the text is exceptional. To be sure, Israel's restoration was widely understood as an act of national forgiveness of an apostate nation consequent upon national repentance. But as we have seen, this was not commonly taken to imply the forgiveness of apostate individuals consequent upon individual repentance and many did not think that this was possible.

Jesus' assertion of the absolute freedom of God to determine the shape of true Israel indicates that, for Jesus, even individuals who were regarded as apostate were not beyond the scope of God's end-time act of grace. Jesus' acceptance of sinners thus betrays a substantially different resolution of the problem which God's promise to restore and forgive an apostate nation created because of Scripture's declaration that repentance and forgiveness were impossible for apostate individuals. The resolution to this problem implied by much Second Temple literature was that the restored people would be made up of those individuals who had in some sense remained faithful to the covenant in the midst of a covenant-forsaking nation, the 'righteous' who confessed or (as at Qumran) even atoned for the sins of the apostate nation. Jesus, however, insisted that the restored people would include even individuals who had participated fully in the nation's apostasy. Such a conflict of resolutions makes reasonable the hostility generated by Jesus' association with 'sinners', for such association would not only have been regarded as contradicting his message that the time of restoration had arrived but also as compromising the integrity of the national repentance which restoration presupposed.

Such an accounting of the opposition provoked by Jesus' association with sinners is far more satisfactory than that of either Sanders or Wright. Sanders has performed a valuable service in pointing out that the common identification of 'sinners' with the *ʿam haʾaretz* is mistaken. As I have noted, Sanders rightly asserts that 'sinners' were those who had deliberately betrayed God, forsaken the covenant. But since Sanders also believes that no one regarded apostasy as a necessarily permanent condition, the opposition to Jesus' acceptance of sinners could not have been generated by his offer of repentance to sinners for the simple reason that the Pharisees would have likewise encouraged 'sinners' to repent. This then leads him to conclude that the opposition to Jesus' association with 'sinners' was generated by his acceptance of 'sinners' apart from any demand that they repent. This is perhaps too simplistic a sketch of Sanders' argument: Sanders also sets forth extended arguments against the authenticity of texts which attribute a call to repentance to Jesus and against the notion that opposition to Jesus' association with sinners had to do

with purity concerns.[54] But it at least shows the importance to Sanders' reconstruction that 'there was a universal view that forgiveness is *always* available to those who return to the way of the Lord', even to those who had forsaken the covenant.[55] I take this to be mistaken. The texts surveyed above indicate that repentance from apostasy was a possibility held out for the *nation*. But repentance for *individual* apostasy was another matter altogether; for individuals whose sins constituted a rejection of the covenant, repentance is excluded.

Like Sanders, Wright agrees that sinners were those who, like prostitutes and tax-collectors, had blatantly flouted Torah. Also like Sanders, Wright assumes that repentance for such people was entirely possible. For Wright, the scandal of Jesus' welcome to sinners had little to do with the fact that they were sinners; it was not to whom he offered repentance but how: 'The question was not about the sinners', it was about Jesus' declaration that 'anyone who trusted in him and his kingdom-announcement was within the kingdom'.[56] But the Gospels strongly emphasize that there *was* a question about sinners. It is not simply *what* he offered sinners which generated conflict, but that he offered it specifically to sinners. Wright's suppression of Jesus' association with sinners appears to derive in part from his understanding of repentance.[57] For Wright, repentance is primarily the call 'to abandon revolutionary zeal'.[58] But on this understanding the sinners with whom Jesus associated were least in need of repentance. Tax-collectors, for instance, far from being opposed to Roman oppression were deeply implicated in the structure of Roman rule; sinners, more generally, were hardly those for whom the hope of restoration was likely to stimulate nationalist violence. Wright includes within his understanding of national repentance both a (very attenuated) note of 'moral repentance' and a positive turn toward a 'different way

[54]I have suggested above that the element of repentance in Jesus' message can scarcely be eliminated by simply dismissing texts which explicitly refer to repentance. For a discussion of some of the purity issues involved, see below, chapter 5.

[55]E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, p. 202. Though few have followed Sanders' view that Jesus accepted sinners apart from repentance, to my knowledge, this central tenet regarding the possibility of repentance after apostasy within Jewish theology has yet to be challenged.

[56]N. T. Wright, *Jesus*, p. 274.

[57]There is a similar suppression in Wright's treatment of the parable of the prodigal son. Wright accepts the context set by Luke – resentment of Jesus' table fellowship with sinners - but in equating the prodigal to Israel, the role of the parable in defending Jesus' association with outcasts from the covenant is lost. Cf. the comment of Dunn, 'Review', 731: 'Luke sets the parable in a much more plausible context within Jesus' ministry (Luke 15.2, the complaint that Jesus ate with sinners), a major aspect of Jesus' ministry which Wright observes but which he makes little of (pp. 264–69), precisely because it does not fit very neatly into his large hypothesis.'

[58]N. T. Wright, *Jesus*, p. 250.

of being Israel',[59] but this in no way accounts for why Jesus' welcome to sinners proved so scandalous. If, however, sinners were regarded as apostates, permanently excluded from the covenant, the offence of Jesus' association with them lay in his offer of repentance to those who had no right to it and the belief that their inclusion compromised the integrity of purified and penitent Israel's preparation for the eschaton. Perhaps more offensive still was the insistence that this same repentance was necessary for all, even for those who believed themselves to have repented already.

Returning to the parable, the begrudging attitude of the workers who began early in the day coincides with that of the older brother in the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15. The parable of the prodigal son seems to leave the question of the status of the older son open but clearly deems his response unacceptable: though he has not openly repudiated his father, he too has rebelled against him and stands in need of repentance.[60] So also in the parable of the workers in the vineyard the response of the grumbling workers is rejected even if the parable does not make explicit the status of those whom the dissatisfied workers represent. They are like those who Jesus says 'have no need of a physician' (Mark 2.17 pars.): does Jesus, in fact, regard their need as very great? In the same way, the fact that those who worked all day in the vineyard received their agreed wage may have no significance whatsoever.[61] But their tasting nothing of the owner's generosity may be highly significant.[62]

The parable of the two sons

The parable of the two sons (Matt. 21.28–32) can be shown to make a similar point.[63] As in the parable of the workers, the vineyard remains

[59] Ibid., p. 258.

[60] K. E. Bailey, *Poet and Peasant: A Literary and Cultural Approach to the Parables in Luke* (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1976), pp. 195, 203.

[61] Against the increasingly accepted view that Jesus simply assumed the inclusion of the 'righteous' and directed his ministry to others. See the comment of D. C. Allison, Jr, 'Jesus and the Covenant: A Response to E. P. Sanders', *JSNT* 29 (1987), 76: 'Jesus did not assume the salvation of pious Israelites and then go on to add the "wicked" to the redemption rolls.'

[62] Could the dismissive remark of the vineyard owner – 'Take what belongs to you, and go' – perhaps signal that they are not in fact included? Cf. D. O. Via, Jr, *The Parables: Their Literary and Existential Dimension* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), p. 154; followed by Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom*, p. 119.

[63] The text of this parable is very uncertain; the following analysis follows the reading of NA^{27} though most of the variants do not call it into question. The parable is usually regarded as dominical. Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, vol. III, p. 165) ultimately agree but point out the presence of Matthean vocabulary, style and interests, especially the theme of avoiding discrepancy in what is said and done. But, as we shall see, this theme is hardly central to the parable's message.

in the background of the parable, signalling to the hearer that the parable's message has to do with Israel. The owner of the vineyard again corresponds to God, but now the workers are his sons. This latter identification perhaps more clearly than the parable of the workers reveals the correspondence of those commissioned to work in the vineyard with types of individuals within the nation. Whether or not the saying which immediately follows (21.30–2) was originally attached to the parable,[64] it makes explicit a point very close to that which emerged from the preceding analysis of the parable of the workers in the vineyard. Here it is the chief priests and elders of the people (21.23) whom Jesus places in the role of the second son: they espouse obedience but reject the way of righteousness announced by John (21.32). Quite significantly, their response to John is introduced as evidence of their disobedience and, in the context of the parable, suggests the reason for their rejection of John's call to repentance: in a first-century context, *they probably viewed their obedience to Torah as constitutive of the repentance demanded by Moses as the condition of Israel's restoration*. Since they had already repented, already had settled views on the sort of obedience which constituted repentance, the only possible conclusion was that John's call to repentance and baptism was unnecessary and spurious. Thus, Jesus says, when the true repentance of restoration was announced by John they refused it. By contrast, like the first son, tax collectors and prostitutes, who had not claimed obedience to Torah, embraced the end-time repentance preached by John and were already enjoying the blessings of the kingdom brought by Jesus. Once more the question of whether the chief priests and elders were entering or ever would enter the kingdom is left ominously open. Tax collectors and prostitutes are entering before them; will they also follow?

The parable of the barren fig tree

I consider now the function of the vineyard motif in the parable of the barren fig tree in Luke 13.6–9. Though the parable is found only in Luke, it has been accepted as probably authentic even by the Jesus Seminar.[65] Certainly the images and themes employed comport well with what is known from secure Jesus tradition. Less certain is whether or not the parable was originally joined to the preceding material in which Jesus responds to two incidents involving the grisly deaths of a number of Jews

[64]On the saying, see further chapter 4.

[65]R. W. Funk, R. W. Hoover and The Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (New York: Polebridge, 1993), p. 345.

from Galilee and Siloam. It is possible, however, to show that the parable itself forms a crucial part of Jesus' answer to the questions raised in 13.1–5 and that the themes of 13.6–9 coordinate closely with those of 13.1–5.

Of the two incidents described in verses 1–5, it is the massacre of a number of Galileans by Pilate which is reported to Jesus by an unnamed group. It is often suggested that the report was intended to provoke a political statement.[66] Instead, Jesus responds by placing the incident within the framework of impending judgement and reinforces the point by relating the first incident to a second, a natural disaster completely lacking in political significance.[67] Jesus formulates his response to the report against what he implies was a common way of thinking about disastrous events. It is commonplace to attribute the exchange to the connection which was frequently made between calamity and sin. Certainly that is a part of what is happening here. What has not been adequately recognized is that the perspective which Jesus attributes to those who brought the report may well have arisen from a particular understanding of election based on certain elements within Israel's sacred traditions. A number of related assumptions can be detected in Jesus' brief description of what he apparently assumes to have been a common perspective. First, the deaths of the Galileans and those on whom the tower in Siloam fell were an indication of the judgement of God.[68] Second, God's election of Israel meant that those who are faithful to the covenant are not subject to God's judgement.[69] Third, the deaths of the Galileans were consequent upon

[66] J. Nolland, *Luke 9:21–18:34* (WBC; Dallas: Word, 1993), p. 718; and K. E. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes: More Lucan Parables, Their Culture and Style* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), pp. 75–6.

[67] Such an explanation is far more natural than that of N. T. Wright (*Jesus*, pp. 331–4) who sees in Jesus' reference to the second disaster an attempt to evoke scenes of 'falling masonry' as the sort of judgement that will befall the nation if it fails to repent.

[68] In general, reward and punishment within Second Temple Judaism were regarded as taking place in this life. So E. P. Sanders, *Judaism*, pp. 273–4. It is possible that the deaths of the Galileans could have been given an alternative explanation: they were martyrs whose deaths vicariously atoned for the sins of the nation (e.g. 2 Macc. 7.38; *As. Mos.* 9–10). But such would not have been possible for the deaths of those in Siloam. This may be part of the reason why Jesus introduced the second incident.

[69] It is true that at times the suffering of the righteous could be regarded as punishment for sin. But it is possible to distinguish between suffering as chastisement and suffering as judgement. The chastisement of the righteous might sometimes have been thought to include death though the evidence for this is slim. Instead, the righteous are corrected 'little by little' (Wis. 12.2) while their enemies are scourged 'ten thousand times more' (12.22; cf. *Bib. Ant.* 19.9). As noted, in the unusual circumstance that the suffering of the righteous does include death, an additional explanation beyond their own sin is required (e.g. to atone for the nation (2 Macc. 7.38)). More usually, however, 'the discipline of the righteous (for things done) in ignorance is not the same as the destruction of the sinners' (*Ps. Sol.* 13.6).

their unusual sinfulness. More precisely, the sins of Israelites as members of God's elect nation do not incur God's judgement because of the covenant's provisions for atonement,[70] therefore the sinfulness of those killed must have been extreme, that is, it must have cut them off from God's covenant with Israel and the protection from judgement which the covenant provided. In short, those killed must have been 'sinners', apostates from Israel, and their deaths interpreted as divinely imposed *kārēt*.

Jesus' response is notable for two things. First, he accepts the legitimacy of the first assumption: the untimely deaths of the Galileans *were* indicative of God's judgement. It is not the possibility of sudden and unexpected death for some[71] but the prospect of a sudden and impending judgement for all which underscores the urgency of repentance. But the more important point is that Jesus rejects the second and third assumptions. He declares that in the situation created by the nearness of the kingdom, no one may lay claim to the covenant as a shield against coming judgement: all must repent. It is not that some have forfeited the protection of the covenant which most continue to enjoy: all are subject to judgement. This point is then reiterated and fleshed out in narrative form in the parable of the barren fig tree.

The parable is formulated using imagery employed by the prophets in countering a similar theology of election. By bringing this language into play, Jesus, in effect, criticizes his contemporaries' use of Scripture by appealing to a different segment of the same sacred tradition. Understood in this context, the intent of the parable readily emerges. The vineyard owner, understood as God, comes seeking fruit from the nation. Neither the presence of a vineyard keeper nor the fact that it is the fruit only of a particular fig tree within the vineyard has referents outside the parable. That the vineyard owner seeks fruit only from the fig tree facilitates the portrayal of divine judgement as a cutting off of the nation. The interaction of the owner and the keeper of the vineyard provides a narrative means for demonstrating God's patience, albeit limited, in delaying the judgement of the nation for a short while.[72] Jesus declares that the fruitless and unrepentant nation was dangerously exposed to God's impending judgement, indeed that they would already have been consumed were it not for the patience of God. Israel's election must not be seen as the basis for an iron-clad guarantee of God's protection and favour. The

[70] That is, sacrifice and repentance, or, less usually, suffering. See E. P. Sanders, *Judaism*, pp. 252–3.

[71] So Fitzmyer, *Luke*, vol. II, pp. 1004–5.

[72] Cf. R. H. Stein, *Luke* (NAC; Nashville: Broadman, 1992), pp. 279–371.

sacred traditions which matter in the present situation are not those which promise protection and blessing for God's elect nation but rather those taken up in the prophetic traditions, those which threaten judgement and demand repentance and fruit.

3.1.2 The parable of the great banquet

The four parables just considered employed the image of a vineyard informed by OT sacred traditions. We turn now to another parable whose central metaphor, though quite different, nevertheless has strong biblical antecedents – the parable of the great banquet (Matt. 22.1–14/Luke 14.16–24).

Versions of the parable appear in Matthew, Luke and the *Gospel of Thomas*, and its authenticity in some form is rarely questioned.[73] Unfortunately, the versions do not allow us to reconstruct the original form of the parable with any confidence nor even to rule out the possibility that the itinerant Jesus told the same basic parable in more than one way. Scholars are even divided as to whether the canonical evangelists shared a common source.[74] Nevertheless, though the verbal similarities are too scanty to establish the parable's presence in Q with absolute certainty, on the basis of shared plot characteristics and the verbal similarities which do exist, it is possible to grasp the general thrust of Jesus' parable without a lengthy process of redaction-critical reconstruction.

A figure (whether a householder or a king) who stands for God prepared a feast (whether a banquet as in Luke or, more specifically, a marriage supper, as in Matthew) and sent out a servant (or servants – Matthew) to summon those who had been previously invited. But the invited guests would not come, begging off with various excuses. The host of the banquet

[73] This is true of both those who do and those who do not hold to the independence of the version in *Gos. Thom.* 64. See Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. III, p. 195, n. 10 and the literature cited there.

[74] Many hold that Luke is closer to the original parable, but this has most often been argued on the basis of Matthew's alleged allegorization of the parable. Allegory is most often posited at points where the parable's narrative coherence has been compromised. Against such readings, R. J. Bauckham ('The Parable of the Royal Wedding Feast (Matthew 22:1–14) and the Parable of the Lame Man and the Blind Man (*Apocryphon of Ezekiel*)', *JBL* 115 (1996), 471–88), in particular, has strongly argued for the narrative integrity of the parable in Matthew, raising the possibility that more of Matthew's version of the parable goes back to Jesus than is commonly thought. However, narrative integrity is not a necessary indication of authenticity: a parable can remain unified even through a process of heavy redaction. The fact that several features which are unique to Matthew's version of the parable coincide with his redactional interests raises the likelihood that Matthew is responsible for them. But it would also be possible to account for at least some of the differences between the parables by pointing out the pluriformity of Jesus' polemical interests in different contexts.

became angry and sent his servant (or servants) into the streets to summon others without qualification to the feast.

Two other plot features may also be detected behind quite different presenting details. Both Matthew and Luke make explicit the consequences of the host's anger and his decision to summon others to take the place of the invited guests. Matthew is more elaborate by far with his inclusion of an extended plot development in which troops are sent out to destroy those who had killed the servants sent to summon them to the feast and to burn their city. But even if this enhancement is attributed to Matthean redaction, it is not at variance with the basic unity of the plot that some minimal statement such as that in Luke would have been included: 'For I tell you, none of those who were invited will taste of my dinner.' In a similar vein, Matthew and Luke include quite different descriptions of those who are 'compelled' to come to the feast in the place of the invited guests: Matthew's servants gather 'all whom they found, whether good or bad'; Luke's servant brings in the 'poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame', and, when there is still room, others from the roads and lanes. Thus, in both Matthew and Luke, outsiders who either lack qualification or possess some negative trait are summoned to the lavish meal in the place of the originally invited guests who had refused to come.

With the basic plot in mind we turn to the OT antecedents. One very strong possibility is that Jesus here speaks with reference to the expectation of a festive meal which would symbolize the joy of God's eschatological salvation of his people. Though it has been recently questioned,[75] the connection of the banquet to the eschatological feast is commonplace in the interpretation of the parable in both Matthew and Luke. Still the origins and development of the motif bear further exploration.

Relatively few OT texts take up the motif in an explicit way. Nevertheless, it appears that the traditions reflect a tension in their understanding of who will be included in a coming banquet. Several texts correlate descriptions of a coming banquet with the anticipation of divine judgement on Israel's enemies. Perhaps because festive meals frequently included meat which had been sacrificed, some texts associate a coming feast with

[75]The fact that in Luke's version of the parable the invitation is not to a wedding feast but simply to a dinner in no way indicates that the original parable lacked eschatological overtones, against Funk, Hoover and The Jesus Seminar, *Five Gospels*, pp. 352–3. Luke may be responsible for the change since he places the parable immediately following a discussion of table fellowship more generally (14.12–14). If, as I shall argue below, Jesus viewed table fellowship as a proleptic enactment of the eschatological banquet, a 'great dinner' could suggest the eschatological banquet as easily as a wedding feast. See the framing statement before Luke's version of the parable: 'Blessed is anyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!'

sacrificial language. Thus can God's slaughter of Israel's enemies be portrayed as a sacrificial feast (Jer. 46.10; cf. Isa. 34.6);[76] hence, the connection between feast and holy war, a connection underscored by texts in which the image of a banquet is inverted as God lays before the animals a great feast of his slaughtered enemies.[77]

It is all the more striking, then, when the sacrifice on the coming day of the Lord is made to be Israel:

> I will stretch out my hand against Judah,
> and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem . . .
> Be silent before the Lord God!
> For the day of the Lord is at hand;
> the Lord has prepared a sacrifice (זֶבַח)
> he has consecrated his guests.
>
> (Zeph. 1.4a, 7)

Here the sacrifice is clearly the people of Judah and the imminence of the day of judgement is stressed by the declaration that the sacrifice is already prepared and those who will participate in it, perhaps even consume it, have already been brought into a state of purity.[78] Furthermore, even in texts which anticipate divine judgement on the nations and restoration of Israel, the eschatological feast is more inclusive. Thus, for instance, Isaiah 25.6–8, the clearest OT reference to the feast, follows hard on the heels of a lengthy description of God's judgement of the nations and deliverance of Israel, and yet depicts the banquet as 'a feast of rich food' which 'the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples'.[79]

The expectation of an eschatological feast is picked up in various Jewish texts but is nowhere as developed as in the Qumran literature. Of particular significance is the fact that communal meals at Qumran seem to have

[76] See especially W. McKane, *Jeremiah* (ICC; 2 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986–96), pp. 1118–19. In both Jer. 46 and Isa. 34 the term employed is זֶבַח, often used of sacrifices of which part is consumed by the one who brings it.

[77] See Ezek. 39.17–20; Rev. 19.17–21. Cf. such texts with *2 Bar.* 29.1–4 where the participants in the eschaton will feed on the primordial monsters, Behemoth and Leviathan.

[78] See A. Berlin, *Zephaniah: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1994), p. 79. Cf. R. L. Smith, *Micah–Malachi* (WBC; Waco: Word, 1984), p. 130.

[79] It is quite possible that a more inclusive depiction of the eschatological banquet is to be seen in Isa. 54.5–55.5 where a lavish feast is joined to the theme of a divine marriage (54.5–8) and characterized by the establishment of Israel in righteousness (54.7–17) and the participation of the nations (55.4–5). So D. E. Smith, 'Messianic Banquet', in *ABD* (ed. D. N. Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992), vol. IV, p. 790. This would provide an interesting piece of background for Matthew's depiction of the feast as a *wedding* feast. Contrast the comment of Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. III, p. 199, n. 27: 'we are not aware of Jewish sources which make the messianic feast a wedding feast'.

been connected to the expectation of an eschatological banquet.[80] As such, the meals implicitly served as a representation of the group's views on election. Admission to the meals was restricted to those who were appropriately pure, a purity only possible among those who had entered the covenant by returning to the community's understanding of Torah.

J. A. Sanders has recently called attention to the links between the messianic banquet and the final holy war in the Qumran materials. Both banquet and war are governed by the same exclusions, that is, the same sorts of people are not allowed to participate.[81] But the work of L. Schiffman in particular has shown that the connection is much more fundamental: expectations concerning the messianic feast and those which related to the eschatological war alike shaped the social structure of the community in the present.[82] As we have seen, there is a precedent for this connection in some biblical traditions concerning the eschatological feast, for it was possible to conceive of the banquet as a celebration of the victory of the divine warrior against his enemies. As a result the joy of God's final salvation was to be experienced in conjunction with his destruction of Israel's enemies.

A number of Jesus scholars have recently placed emphasis on Jesus' practice of table fellowship as a deliberate, proleptic enactment of the eschatological banquet.[83] The connection of the eschatological banquet with table fellowship is suggested by the function of table fellowship in cultures where it is given socio-religious significance. Just as discussions of the eschatological banquet functioned implicitly or explicitly to distinguish the elect from those who would be judged, so too in such cultures table fellowship functions as socio-religious commentary on who is in

[80]With e.g. L. H. Schiffman, 'Communal Meals at Qumran', *Revue de Qumran* 10 (1979), 45–56; J. Priest, 'A Note on the Messianic Banquet', in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity* (ed. J. H. Charlesworth; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), pp. 222–38; and K. G. Kuhn, 'The Lord's Supper and the Communal Meal at Qumran', in *The Scrolls and the New Testament* (ed. K. Stendahl; London: SCM Press, 1958), pp. 65–93. Against D. E. Smith, 'The Messianic Banquet Reconsidered', in *The Future of Early Christianity* (ed. B. A. Pearson; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), pp. 64–73. The close parallels between 1QSa 2.11–22 and the descriptions of communal meals in 1QS and CD suggest that these meals were understood as a proleptic enactment of the messianic feast and undermine Smith's depiction of the messianic banquet in 1QSa as a literary idealization of community meals.

[81]J. A. Sanders, 'Ethic', pp. 115–18. Because of the close association of eschatological holy war and feast, Priest ('Note', p. 229) finds it surprising that the feast is not mentioned in 1QM.

[82]Schiffman, *The Eschatological Community*; Schiffman, 'Communal Meals', 45–56.

[83]E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, pp. 208–9; M. Trautmann, *Zeichenhafte Handlungen Jesu: Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach dem geschichtlichen Jesus* (Würzburg: Echter, 1980), pp. 160–4; Dunn, 'Table Fellowship'.

and who is out.[84] The best explanation for the fact that table fellowship emerges as a point of conflict in the Jesus tradition is that his opponents viewed table fellowship in the same way.[85] This is not to say that the Pharisees actually thought about the eschatological feast every time they ate with others; only that they very probably viewed their eating with others as an expression of election, an idea which also easily could be and clearly was expressed with the image of the eschatological feast. Jesus' table fellowship rankled precisely because it called into question accepted identifications of those who by their activity had shown themselves to be clearly out, cut off from the covenant of grace and the eschatological table.[86] By engaging in table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners, Jesus implied that those who were regarded as certainly among those to be judged with the enemies of Israel in conjunction with the eschatological feast would in fact be the ones who enjoyed the feast.

Viewed against this background, Jesus' table fellowship may be regarded as an enacted parable whose meaning is captured in the parable of the great banquet. Jesus' parable implies that the eschatological banquet will not be enjoyed by those widely regarded as the elect in celebration of God's destruction of their enemies. Rather, the banquet will be enjoyed by outsiders while those thought to be the elect are excluded as the objects of God's anger. In the context of Jesus' ministry, the equation of the elect with putative Israel is difficult to avoid.[87] Furthermore, behind the differences between Matthew and Luke in the descriptions of those called from the streets and lanes surely lies a common reference to the marginal characters – the tax collectors, prostitutes and the like – whom Jesus engaged in table fellowship and who he claimed were entering the kingdom before the leaders of Israel (Matt. 21.31).

[84]On the socio-religious significance of table fellowship, see D. E. Smith, 'Table Fellowship', in *ABD* (ed. D. N. Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992), vol. VI, p. 303.

[85]One need not suppose with E. P. Sanders (*Jesus*, pp. 186–8) that conflict over table fellowship between Jesus and the Pharisees would have had to stem from conflict over food purity. This mistaken supposition leads Sanders to discount the Synoptics' report of disputes over table fellowship with 'sinners'. On the purity issues involved, see below, chapter 5.

[86]E. P. Sanders (*Jesus*, p. 392 n. 121) is thus perhaps right to urge caution in regard to M. Trautman's understanding of table fellowship according to which 'eating' virtually means 'eschaton'. Still, if table fellowship always had significance as socio-religious commentary on the question of true Israel, then, even when eschatology was not consciously 'on the table', the way table fellowship was practised would always have had eschatological implications, capable of being expressed with the image of an eschatological feast.

[87]Cf. Bauckham ('Parable', 488) who, after deriving a rather bland religious point from the parable, allows that 'a case can still be made for the view that those first invited represent the Jewish people or, more plausibly, the Jewish leaders'.

The eschatological feast was an image used within Second Temple Judaism to express an idea which could be supported by appeal to a certain stream of Israel's sacred traditions – traditions which anticipated a joyous banquet for restored Israel when God judged the nation's enemies. But the traditions also sometimes spoke of Israel's judgement using the metaphor of a feast and could anticipate a banquet which was broadly inclusive. These latter traditions apparently informed Jesus' practice of table fellowship, the significance of which is encapsulated in the parable of the great banquet as a prophetic critique of accepted notions of Israel's election and future restoration.

3.2 'This generation'

I turn now to yet another way in which Jesus' eschatological expectations were shaped by Scripture in a way which radically differed from that of his contemporaries. By most accounts Jesus' rhetoric against 'this generation' forms part of the bedrock of Jesus tradition. Though it is widely acknowledged that Jesus' use of the phrase is uniformly pejorative and serves his rhetoric of moral denunciation, quite frequently it is the nature of the expression's temporal connotations in a single text – Mark 13.30 – that commands the spotlight of scholarly attention. But the maelstrom surrounding this overtly eschatological text has often obscured the more subtle eschatological expectation which lies behind Jesus' wider polemic against 'this generation'.

3.2.1 'This generation' as a moral and salvation-historical designation

What for present purposes may be regarded as a kind of path-clearing operation has recently been provided in the work of E. Lövestam. He argues that 'this generation' is shorthand for a group of people who are treated homogeneously with reference to their eschatological situation: they are a class of people within salvation history who because of their spiritual affinity of rebellion against God are destined to experience the judgement of God. Thus, the expression 'this generation' links with 'the generation of the flood' and 'the generation of the wilderness' to suggest not a temporal but a qualitative classification. Used in this sense, there can be temporal contemporaries of a generation who do not belong to the generation. The flood and wilderness typologies inform the use of 'this generation' and suggest that the reference is to a group whose

salvation-historical situation is one of impending judgement rather than a group of people born at about the same time whose lifetimes are of a typical length.[88]

Lövestam's point appears to be borne out by several texts in addition to the ones he cites. A non-temporal sense crops up in 1QS 3.13–14. The translation is difficult, but the idea seems to be that the sons of light and the sons of darkness may be distinguished by the works of their 'generations'. It is not chronology but moral character which sets the sons of light in their generation apart from the sons of darkness in their generation.[89] 1QS 3.13–14 finds a close parallel in *1 Enoch* 108.11: 'And now I will summon the spirits of the good who belong to the generation of light . . .'[90]

Within the synoptic tradition but outside the polemic against 'this generation', γενεά also occurs without obvious temporal significance in Luke 16.8b: 'for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light'. The focus again falls entirely on a moral type or group; temporal reference is lost altogether. Elsewhere in the New Testament similar comments could be made in relation to Philippians 2.15 and Acts 2.40.

3.2.2 'This generation' as a national designation

The scriptural tradition which stands most immediately behind Jesus' use of the phrase comes from the song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32, where

[88]E. Lövestam, 'The ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη Eschatology in Mk 13, 30 Parr', in *L'Apocalypse johannique et l'Apocalypse dans le Nouveau Testament* (BETL; ed. J. Lambrecht; Leuven Unversity Press, 1980), 403–13.

[89]The text reads:

למשיל להבין וללמד את כול בני אור בתולדות כול בני איש לכול מיני רוחותם באותותם למעשיהם בדורותם

The translations of García Martínez and Vermes both take בדורותם in a temporal sense. But inasmuch as the text seems to concern instruction in the differentiation of types of people by their works, the translation of W. H. Brownlee (*The Dead Sea Manual of Discipline* (BASORSup; New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1951), p. 13 n. 24) may best capture the sense: 'For the wise man'[s use], that he may instruct and teach all the sons of light in the [succeeding] generations of all mankind with regard to all the varieties of their spirits with their traits, with regard to their works in their respective societies . . . ' Brownlee then comments that '*bedorotham* cannot mean here "in their generations" for that idea has already been expressed by *betholedoth* of line 13. The distinction between the *doroth* is one of character, rather than chronology. There are basically two so-called "generations" (really societies), the righteous and the wicked.' Cited also by M. Meinertz; ' "Dieses Geschlecht" im Neuen Testament', *BZ* 1 (1957), 286.

[90]Black's translation; similarly Knibb.

the expression serves the denunciation of Israel's obduracy:

> yet his degenerate children have dealt falsely with him,
> a perverse and crooked generation
> do you thus repay the LORD, O foolish and senseless people?
> (vv. 5–6a)

Here 'generation' is parallel with 'people' indicating that, though the contemporaries of Moses are naturally the ones addressed, they represent Israel in its sinfulness more generally.[91] Similarly, when the expression recurs in verse 20, it is in parallel with 'children in whom there is no faithfulness'. In its narrative setting, Deuteronomy 32 thus stresses that despite the severe warnings against covenant unfaithfulness set out in the form of threatened curses in chapters 28–31, after it has entered the Land, the nation will fall into obduracy and rebellion. The song considers a vast sweep of the nation's history which will be characterized by unbelief and perversity that mark the nation as a crooked generation destined for judgement. Thus, the moral and national dimensions of the polemic clearly swamp whatever temporal connotations remain; the harsh words of Deuteronomy 32 against the 'perverse generation' are directed against Israel as a nation whose unfaithfulness will bring on Israel the curses of the covenant.

Against this analysis, C. Tuckett has attempted to accentuate the presence of temporal overtones in γενεὰ αὕτη in order to claim that Jesus' polemic contains no national dimension. He believes that if 'this generation' is temporally isolated from Israel in the past and shown to encompass only some Jews in the present then the motif can be dissociated from national rejection and judgement.[92] Tuckett's arguments bear some weight and must be carefully considered.

Tuckett argues that in at least some passages where phrases with γενεά have a primarily moral aim the temporal overtones have nevertheless not been entirely lost. He points, for instance, to Psalm 78.8 where the 'fathers' are tagged 'a stubborn and rebellious generation'. In the preceding verses, reference is made to 'a coming generation' to whom the psalmist sets out to teach the lessons of Israel's history of failure.[93] Clearly Tuckett is correct to see some temporal sense at work, but it is equally clear that its parameters are vaguely defined: as the survey in the balance of

[91] Meinertz, '"Dieses Geschlecht"', 285.

[92] C. M. Tuckett, *Q and the History of Early Christianity: Studies on Q* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996), pp. 200–1.

[93] Ibid., p. 198.

the psalm demonstrates, the 'stubborn and rebellious generation' encompasses the nation not only during the time of the Exodus and wilderness wanderings but also after the Conquest (78.55) up to the rise of David as an upright and skilful shepherd (Ps. 78.72).

Tuckett also cites Psalm 95 where the chronological duration of the generation in view is apparently delimited more sharply:

> For forty years I loathed that generation
> and said, 'They are a people whose hearts go astray,
> and they do not regard my ways.' (v. 10)

But even here it seems more likely that 'forty years' is a historical reflection of the length of Israel's wilderness experience, the time it took for God's anger against the nation to spend itself, rather than a standard way of conceptualizing the length of a generation. As already noted, Deuteronomy 32 makes this especially clear, for although the perverse and crooked generation addressed refers, in the first place, to the contemporaries of Moses, the allusions which follow take in a much broader sweep of the nation's history, as in Psalm 78.

Further, texts which for Tuckett make it 'hard to deny that temporal overtones have vanished completely' in the rhetoric of Jesus in Q are also not as decisive as he thinks. Tuckett points, for example, to Luke 7.31–5/Matthew 11.16–19, where Jesus indicts 'this generation' for rejecting John and himself despite their quite different lifestyles; the indictment applies to the contemporaries of Jesus and John, to those who have heard their message. Similarly, in Luke 11.31–2/Matthew 12.41–2 the contrast is between the Ninevites and the Queen of the South on the one hand and, on the other hand, the 'something greater' who is 'here' in the present.[94] At one level, of course, Tuckett is entirely correct; Jesus clearly is addressing his contemporaries. This fact necessarily means that, in some way, a temporal element must be factored in. But it is essential to recall the perspective of Deuteronomy 32 where Moses addresses his contemporaries as a perverse and crooked generation who are then shown by the context to be representatives of obdurate Israel, rebellious and ripe for judgement, at other times in the nation's history.

Even if we allow that there is some point to Tuckett's argument and grant some secondary temporal indication, the choice set up by Tuckett as a consequence of his argument is false: it is not necessary to relate 'this generation' either to 'the whole people of Israel in their entirety, past and present' (by which he appears to mean every single Jew, living or dead)

[94] Ibid., p. 199.

or simply to 'the sum total of non-responders' in Jesus' audience. Rather, 'this generation' is the nation of Israel viewed in its reversion to familiar, obdurate type and characterized as ready for judgement. To connect the polemic against 'this generation' to the announcement of approaching national judgement in no way implies that *all* Jews are grouped together as 'this generation', as Tuckett seems to assume. Precisely the fact that some Jews do respond to Jesus and are not considered members of 'this generation' indicates that the group is delineated by moral boundaries and that its temporal boundaries remain very rough.

We are now in a position to see the nature of the temporal connotations which do remain. 'This generation' relates to the nation at a particular time in salvation history. The span of time in view may be evaluated on analogy with expressions such as 'the generation of the flood' or 'the generation of the wilderness' to which 'this generation' in the Gospels is typologically related. The clearly defined end of 'the generation of the flood' makes it especially illustrative. The beginning point of the generation of the flood in some texts stretches all the way back to Cain (Wis. 10.3–4; cf. *1 Enoch* 22.5–7); in others it is traced to the actions of the fallen sons of God in Genesis 6.2 (CD 2.18–21; *1 Enoch* 7–10; *T. Napht.* 3.5). On the basis of the latter understanding, the rabbis could interpret Genesis 6.3 as an indication that God had given the generation of the flood one hundred and twenty years to repent.[95] But if the backward stretch is flexible, the terminal point of 'the generation of the flood' is definite: it is the moment of God's radical judgement. The temporal limits of a generation viewed in this way are determined on one side by the moral characteristics which bind a group together under the negative verdict of God and on the other by the fall of divine judgement. 'This generation' is thus a salvation-historical designation, the temporal element of which has a length determined not by a standard conceptualization of a number of years but by the moral congruity of those who belong to it in relation to the judgement of God.[96]

What this analysis shows is that part of the semantic range of 'this generation' is void of overt temporal connotation and similar to such expressions as 'sons of darkness' and 'children of this age'. But, unlike

[95]See the discussion of these texts and the additional references given by Lövestam, 'ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη', p. 407.

[96]This conclusion differs somewhat from that of Lövestam described above in that Lövestam (ibid., pp. 405–7) wants to exclude all temporal reference from 'this generation'. But note the very interesting examples given by Lövestam himself of 'generations' of widely varying or even indeterminate length which clearly cannot be limited to a stereotyped number of years but nevertheless retain a temporal dimension.

these latter phrases, Jesus' use of 'this generation' remains mildly temporal as it is tied to Israel's salvation-historical situation in which God's judgement on the nation is impending. Thus, though a temporal connotation continues to play a part, it is decidedly muted in the face of the primary function of the phrase as part of Jesus' pronouncement of approaching national judgement.

The sayings of Jesus concerning 'this generation' retain some temporal connotations but, when properly conceived, they do not suppress the extreme rebuke of the faithless nation so evident in the scriptural tradition on which the sayings depend. This is true even of Mark 13.30, even if it is judged that the manifest temporal element in 13.28–9 means that chronological duration is more prominent here than in the balance of the sayings addressed to 'this generation'.[97] Viewed in this way, 'this generation' in Mark 13.30 may be placed in illuminating counterpoint to 'the generation of the wilderness': at the time of their rebellion, God declared that 'the generation of the wilderness' would pass away before Israel partook of covenant blessing; in a more climactic way, Jesus declares that 'this generation' will *not* pass away before Israel experiences the curse of the covenant in the form of national judgement and loss of national privilege.

3.3 Conclusion

Unlike many of his contemporaries whose understanding of Israel's situation was shaped by biblical traditions which anticipated Israel's restoration and the judgement of the nation's Gentile oppressors, Jesus' expectations were heavily informed by traditions which declared that the heat of God's wrath would be vented on Israel for covenant unfaithfulness. Moreover, sacred images and motifs which had served the hope of national restoration were not simply ignored by Jesus but were taken up and inverted in the light of alternative traditions. Israel had failed to be the fruitful vineyard. The guests invited to the eschatological banquet refused to come. Israel's disdain for the privileges of election could only mean judgement, for, in Jesus' assessment, Israel had become the corrupt and apostate 'generation' anticipated in Deuteronomy 32, a nation whose salvation-historical situation was one of impending judgement.

[97] Attempts to treat 13.30 as an exception to the pattern have been made by J. Jeremias (*New Testament Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1971), p. 135) and D. Lührmann (*Die Redaktion der Logienquelle* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1969), pp. 30–1) and are noted and refuted respectively by Beasley-Murray (*Jesus and the Last Days*, pp. 444–5) and Lövestam ('ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη', p. 405).

In each of these ways Jesus can be seen in the mould of the prophets before him who made analogous use of Israel's sacred traditions in their prophetic criticism of the nation. But there are differences as well. The national judgement proclaimed by Jesus was far more climactic and the impact on the meaning of Israel's election far more severe. If, for the prophets, national judgement meant a disruption in the nation's experience of the blessings of election, it was nevertheless possible for them to affirm the continuity of Israel's election through judgement. This continuity of election would be experienced in the restoration of Israel after judgement. For Jesus, however, the climactic nature of Israel's judgement changed the nature of Israel's restoration and the sense in which Israel's election could be regarded as one of unbroken continuity. No longer was restoration to be experienced after judgement; such a scenario would not be possible, for in Jesus' view the announcement of Israel's judgement meant the end of Israel's election. But, paradoxically, even as the proclamation of climactic judgement brought Israel's election to an end, it allowed Jesus to reassert the continuity of Israel's election: the pronouncement of Israel's judgement carried with it the announcement of a new act of election. And who could question the absolute freedom of divine grace in determining the shape of the Israel constituted by this eschatological action of God? In Jesus' view, the restoration of the apostate nation could include even apostate individuals and could occur even while the pronouncement of unavoidable national judgement still stood.

The sharp differences between Jesus and his contemporaries in no way suggest that Jesus stepped outside Jewish tradition. Rather they illustrate the way Jesus' use of different streams of tradition helped to generate and substantiate a decisively different perception of Israel's eschatological situation and of the meaning of Israel's election.

4

JESUS AND THE RESTORATION TRADITIONS OF ISRAEL

I have thus far concluded that the scriptural traditions used by Jesus in his assessment of the nation's salvation-historical location were not those which projected the imminent return of Israel to national dominion but those which anticipated a coming national judgement and serviced a reconception of Israel's election. This, however, is not to say that Jesus held no positive expectation of Israel's restoration. In what follows I take up some of the key ways in which Jesus made positive use of restoration traditions and propose a model for understanding Jesus' conception of the eschatological people of God as restored Israel. My aim is to show that contrary to the common belief that Israel's restoration would entail its reconstitution as a tribal league, Jesus believed the eschatological shape of Israel had already been determined through the ministry of John the Baptist. Such a belief implies a conviction that God had so restored Israel that even certain constitutional features of the eschaton had taken form.

4.1 Elijah's restoration

A passage which has received insufficient attention in the now commonplace description of Jesus as a prophet of Jewish national restoration is ironically the only text in the synoptic traditions in which Jesus explicitly employs restoration language. The text is Mark 9.11–13 (par. Matt. 17.10–13):

> As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead could mean. Then they asked him, 'Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?' He said to them, 'Elijah is indeed coming first to restore all things. How then is it written about the Son of Man, that he is to

> go through many sufferings and be treated with contempt? But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written about him.'[1]

Though Matthew has introduced several clarifications, he reports with Mark that Jesus affirmed a belief in a coming Elijah who restores all things. Matthew then makes explicit what Mark implies, namely, that this expected Elijah has already come in the person of John the Baptist. It is extraordinarily unlikely that the early church would have created a saying in which Jesus declares that the Baptist had already restored all things (ἀποκαθιστάνει πάντα). Such a statement appears to be completely at variance with what John seems to have accomplished. If John had in fact restored all things, how is it that the Son of man still suffers?[2] Commentators have thus sought ways to ameliorate the difficulty. Gundry and others argue that as the eschatological Elijah, John's ministry was successful but incomplete: in Matthew the future tense, ἀποκαταστήσει, accurately reflects Jesus' expectation of a return of the historical Elijah who will effect the restoration which John's ministry did not.[3] But then what is the basis for the association of John with the expectation of Malachi 3.23–4 (MT)? Surely the future 'simply agrees with what the OT and the scribes say'.[4]

Davies and Allison suggest, in effect, that John's ministry as the returning Elijah was complete but unsuccessful: Mark 9.13 indicates that Elijah has come but because he was rejected he was not able to effect the expected restoration.[5] This, however, puts Jesus in the awkward position of declaring the failure of a prophecy which he has just affirmed (v. 12a). A particular form of the view that Elijah's ministry was complete but unsuccessful punctuates verse 12a as a question: 'Does Elijah indeed come first and restore all things?'[6] Hooker objects that the scriptural origins

[1] Perhaps the foremost proponent of the view that Jesus was a prophet of national restoration is E. P. Sanders, yet he mentions this passage only once and then only as an indication that restoration was 'in the air', *Jesus*, p. 116.

[2] R. Pesch (*Das Markusevangelium* (HTKNT; Freiburg: Herder, 1976–7), vol. II, p. 79) articulates this tension, but his explanation does not show that he has felt its force; he simply asserts that John's restoration of all things did not mean that the Son of man would not suffer without elucidating the sense in which John actually *had* restored all things.

[3] Gundry, *Matthew*, p. 347; Gundry, *Mark*, p. 465; cf. J. A. T. Robinson, 'Elijah, John, and Jesus: An Essay in Detection', *NTS* 4 (1957–8), 277. Justin Martyr may have been the first to articulate this view, though he mistakenly attributes the biblical promise to Zechariah (*Dial.* 49).

[4] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. II, p. 714.

[5] Ibid., p. 712 n. 11.

[6] J. Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (EKKNT; Zürich: Benziger Verlag, 1978–9), vol. II, p. 41; J. Marcus, 'Mark 9,11–13: "As It Has Been Written" ', *ZNW* 80 (1989), 46–8; followed recently by D. C. Allison, Jr, 'Q 12:51–53 and Mark 9:11–13 and the Messianic

of the expectation make this unlikely.[7] This is certainly true regarding the 'first' in the disciples' question; Malachi is explicit that Elijah comes before the day of the Lord and Jesus' assertion that Elijah had already come appears to leave this aspect of the disciples' question unchallenged. But Malachi says nothing about the restoration of 'all things'. Those who read verse 12a as a question thus understand Jesus to be challenging not the timing of Elijah's return but what he takes to be the disciples' assumption, namely that the returning Elijah 'restores all things'; Jesus' response is a rejection (put in the form of a question) of the idea that the returning Elijah restores all things, since a successful restoration would leave no room for a suffering Son of man. In Marcus' view, Malachi's promise that Elijah returns to heal human relations before Messiah comes is reinterpreted in terms of the prophecy of a suffering Son of man, thus indicating that Elijah was not to restore all things but was to suffer as the forerunner of a suffering Messiah.[8] As we shall see, however, the supposition that the returning Elijah was regarded as Messiah's forerunner is highly dubious. Moreover, if Mark understood verse 12a as a question, he has framed it badly. Whatever the disciples assumed about the nature of Elijah's restoration, their question ostensibly has to do with the *timing* of his return. If Jesus is not challenging the notion that Elijah comes first, why does he mention it in his reply?[9]

We are left, then, with a statement which apparently indicates that through John the 'restoration of all things' was both complete and successful, a conclusion asserted recently by M. Hooker.[10] But Hooker gives no accounting of the apparent entailments of such a claim in light of the developing tradition of what Elijah's restoration would accomplish

Woes', in *Authenticating the Words of Jesus* (ed. B. Chilton and C. A. Evans; NTTS; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), p. 306; and C. E. Joynes, 'A Question of Identity: "Who Do People Say That I Am?" Elijah, John the Baptist and Jesus in Mark's Gospel', in *Understanding, Studying and Reading: New Testament Essays in Honour of John Ashton* (ed. C. Rowland and C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis; JSNTSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), p. 24.

[7] So Hooker, *Mark*, p. 220.

[8] J. Marcus (*The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1992), pp. 100–7) cites parallels from the *Mekilta* as support for his view that Mark 9.11–13 juxtaposes two biblical texts which contradict each other and allows them both to stand by letting the second reinterpret the 'base text'. But the developing tradition makes it clear that 'the restoration of all things' presupposes not simply the promise from Malachi but the intervening development of that promise as well.

[9] It should be noted that Mark generally avoids open questions; the open questions that do occur (1.24; 7.18; 10.38; 13.2; 14.48, 61; 15.9) are marked as such by the context. Further, if Jesus was challenging the disciples' question, this could have been easily clarified (as in D and the Sahidic version) with the use of the conditional particle ἐἰ.

[10] Hooker, *Mark*, p. 220.

(see below). How can any realistic assessment of John's success match up to the comprehensive claim that John restores 'all things'? The answer, I contend, turns on awareness of what has been singularly overlooked in discussions of this text: that both the disciples' question and Jesus' response have fundamentally to do with the timing of Elijah's return, an issue into which the developing tradition concerning the nature of Elijah's return had infused considerable uncertainty. To be sure, Jesus is commenting on the nature of Elijah's restoration, but to understand what he is saying requires an understanding of the temporal conflict engendered by the merging of distinct strands of restoration tradition in the expectation of Elijah's return.

4.1.1 The development of the Elijah tradition

The assertion that 'Elijah comes first and restores all things' comes as a climax to a developing stream of tradition concerning the return of Elijah which originated in Malachi 3. In Malachi 3.1, the Lord declares, 'See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight – indeed he is coming says the Lord of hosts.' Difficulties abound,[11] but the text ostensibly refers to three figures – the 'messenger' who prepares the way of the Lord, the Lord himself and the 'messenger of the covenant'. It is this last figure who serves most readily as the antecedent of the figure in Malachi 3.2 who brings order to the cult. But apart from the repetition of the term מלאך there is little reason to equate the first and third figures. As B. Glazier-McDonald points out, the structure of the text sharply distinguishes the מלאך in 3.1a and the מלאך הברית in 3.1c. Further, there is evidence that it is the Lord's role and not that of the preparatory messenger which coalesces with that of the מלאך הברית.[12]

These considerations also help with the identifications of the two messenger figures. Certainly in the book's final form, the messenger who prepares the way for the Lord in 3.1a can only be understood as Elijah. M. Öhler contends that the presence of 3.23–4 means that the 'messenger of the covenant' of 3.1c must be understood as Elijah as well and concludes that Malachi 3 anticipates that the returning Elijah would bring

[11] See the useful recent history of interpretation by A. E. Hill, *Malachi: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1998), pp. 286–9.

[12] B. Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi: The Divine Messenger* (SBLDS; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), pp. 129–32.

order to the cult (the action attributed to the מלאך הברית in 3.2).[13] However, if the 'messenger of the covenant' is to be distinguished from the preparatory messenger of 3.1a when 3.1 is considered alone, there is no reason why the presence of 3.23–4 – whether as an original part of the text or as a later addition – should lead us to equate the two messengers. Certainly in later traditions Elijah plays no role in renewing the cult.

In 3.23–4, the prophet declares that prior to the day of the Lord, the Lord will send Elijah to 'turn (והשׁיב) the hearts of parents to their children and the hearts of children to their parents'. The meaning of the complementary clauses is not entirely clear. Though some scholars find here the anticipation of a new social order, the broader context of Malachi indicates the likelihood of a covenantal context: Elijah will bring about a return to covenant loyalty that will manifest itself in reconciliation between generations.[14] It is very likely that the focus on this particular effect of Israel's return to covenant faithfulness was suggested by a specific social fracture of the prophet's day. Already the LXX translator sought to transcend such particularity by placing the description of Israel's return on a broader footing: the returning Elijah 'will restore (ἀποκαταστήσει) the heart of father to son and the heart of a man to his neighbour'.

A short time later Sirach takes the generalization a stage further: Elijah is destined

> to calm the wrath of God before it breaks out in fury,
> to turn (ἐπιστρέψαι) the hearts of parents to their children,
> and to restore (καταστῆσαι) the tribes of Jacob.
>
> (Sir. 48.10)

At this point the underlying Hebrew text is fragmentary but corresponds closely to the Greek translation of Sirach's grandson.[15] The last line of the Hebrew text represents a significant expansion of Malachi's promise. Did Sirach have in mind the restoration of the twelve tribes in the Land? The Hiphil of כון often merely means 'prepare'. However, in the light of the strong biblical tradition anticipating the re-establishment of the scattered tribes, the fact that the term occurs with 'the tribes of Israel' may suggest the more specific connotation. It is possible that the author of Sirach has adapted the idea of restoration which had entered into the

[13] M. Öhler, *Elia im Neuen Testament: Untersuchungen zur Bedeutung des alttestamentlichen Propheten im frühen Christentum* (BZNW; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1997), p. 6.

[14] P. A. Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), pp. 342–3.

[15] κοπάσαι ὀργὴν πρὸ θυμοῦ, ἐπιστρέψαι καρδίαν πατρὸς πρὸς υἱὸν καὶ καταστῆσαι φυλὰς Ιακωβ. Cf. להשׁיב לב אבות על בנים ולהכין שׁ[...]ל להשׁבית אף לפן[...]

LXX,[16] or perhaps it is drawn from Isaiah 49.6,[17] though this latter influence seems more likely for the Greek translation.[18] Whatever the source, the restoration of a man to his neighbour has become the restoration of the tribes of Jacob and probably envisions not simply a moral preparation but rather the return of the scattered tribes to the Land. This is all the more evident in the Greek translation.

What we see is a dramatic reinterpretation and expansion of the veiled language of Malachi: the returning Elijah will effect an end-time restoration of the nation's twelve tribes. Of course, Sirach's reworking of Elijah's eschatological role merely reflects what appears as an important idea elsewhere in the book's final form. Sirach 48.15 establishes a link between the failure of the people to respond to the ministries of Elijah and Elisha and their dispersion. More importantly, 36.13–16 records a prayer for Israel's restoration conceived as a regathering of the tribes of Jacob in conjunction with the judgement of the nations on the Day of the Lord.

An additional feature of the developing tradition concerning Elijah's return finds its genesis in Sirach 48.11. The verse is difficult both textually and exegetically. Only the first line and two letters of the second line have been preserved in the extant Hebrew. The Greek text has both lines, but the meaning is not entirely clear. It reads:

> μακάριοι οἱ ἰδόντες σε
> καὶ οἱ ἐν ἀγαπήσει κεκοιμημένοι·
> καὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς ζωῇ ζησόμεθα.

As Öhler has argued, the text most probably relates to the returning Elijah of verse 10 rather than the historical Elijah of verses 1–9.[19] But do the

[16]So Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi*, p. 269. Sir. 48.1–11 is strongly based on the Elijah narrative of 1 Kings. The fact that the Hebrew text of Ben Sira refers to the 'tribes of Israel' as in the LXX of 1 Kings 18.31 may represent another point of contact between Sir. 48.10 (Hebrew) and the LXX inasmuch as the Hebrew text of 1 Kings 18.31 reads 'tribes of the sons of Jacob' in contrast to the LXX which has 'tribes of Israel'.

[17]E.g. J. Lévêque, 'Le portrait d'Elie dans l'éloge des Pères (Si 48, 1–11)', in *Ce Dieu qui vient* (ed. R. Kuntzmann; Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1995), p. 224; P. Volz, *Die Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde im Neutestamentlichen Zeitalter* ([1934]; 2nd edn; Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1966), p. 196; P. W. Skehan and A. A. Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1987), p. 534; and Öhler, *Elia*, p. 8.

[18]Unlike the Hebrew text of Sirach, both the MT and LXX of Isa. 49.6 (the text usually cited as Sirach's source) refer to the Servant's establishment of 'the tribes of Jacob'. The translator of Sirach may have brought the language of 48.10 into conformity with Isa. 49.6 (LXX). Unlike the Hebrew texts, there are several correspondences in the Greek texts. Such dependence would account for the most substantial difference between the Hebrew and Greek texts of Sir. 48.10; the latter has changed 'tribes of Israel' to 'tribes of Jacob' as in Isa. 49.6.

[19]Öhler, *Elia*, p. 9.

two parts of the first colon refer to one group or two? Although a few manuscripts omit the second article, its inclusion is more probable. This may suggest that two groups are in view: those who live to see Elijah's return as well as those who have died in the love (of God) are alike pronounced blessed.[20] The third line then explains why the faithful who have died are as blessed as those who live to see Elijah's return: 'we shall surely live'.[21] Thus, in the Greek translation, at least, the discussion of Elijah culminates in the hope of resurrection. However, the relationship between the return of Elijah and the resurrection remains unclear. Still it is significant that very early in the tradition there is an association between Elijah's return and the resurrection of the dead.[22]

After the translation of Sirach, the next extant evidence for the expectation of a returning Elijah occurs in two highly fragmentary texts from Qumran: 4Q521 2 iii 1–2; 4Q558. The latter attests only an expectation of Elijah's return; if the text included a description of Elijah's role, it is now lost. On the face of it, 4Q521 offers very little more. The fragment does not even mention Elijah by name, though it refers to the hope that 'the fathers will return towards the sons'. It will be recalled from the previous chapter that the preceding column in 4Q521 refers to an anointed figure in terms reminiscent of the Servant in Isaiah 61; this 'messiah' is portrayed, it seems, as the agent of such works as healing and the raising of the dead. Largely on the strength of the allusion to Malachi 3.23–4 in the following column, J. Collins has recently suggested that the anointed figure is either Elijah or a prophet like Elijah.[23] However, parallels to the idea that Elijah is the agent of resurrection are few and late. Furthermore, it must be questioned whether one can deduce from the all too brief allusion to Malachi 3.23–4 that the author of 4Q521 really believed Elijah stood behind the anointed Servant of Isaiah 61.[24] At most, we can

[20]Oddly, the possibility that two groups are in view is not considered by Öhler and others.

[21]The καὶ γάρ construction at the beginning of the final line is often rendered so as to imply that another group is in view: 'For we *also* shall surely live.' But when immediately followed by γάρ, καί often loses all independent force, so the construction may simply be explanatory. So BDF §452(3).

[22]The fragmentary nature of the sole surviving Hebrew manuscript of Sir. 48.11 makes it impossible to tell whether the hope of resurrection was tied into the expectation of a returning Elijah in the original work. For differing assessments of the evidence, cf. E. Puech, 'Ben Sira 48:11 et la Résurrection', in *Of Scribes and Scrolls: Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism, and Christian Origins* (CTSRR; Lanham: University Press of America, 1990), p. 89; Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, p. 532; and Öhler, *Elia*, pp. 10–11.

[23]J. J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1995), pp. 117–21.

[24]So Öhler, *Elia*, p. 19.

say that Collins' suggestion that 4Q521 portrays the returning Elijah as an agent of resurrection is possible.[25]

In the first century, references to the expectation of a returning Elijah are scarce. It is just possible that the actions of Theudas, given a brief description by Josephus, were informed to a degree by the expectation of Elijah.[26] This is not to dispute the more common assessment that Theudas, in his promise to part the Jordan, cast himself in the role of Joshua. But the fact that Elijah also parted the Jordan as the last of his miracles prior to his assumption (2 Kings 2.8) may have helped to generate the promise of Theudas. Further, Theudas declared himself to be a prophet and undertook actions apparently bent on Israel's eschatological restoration which may suggest that the expectation of Elijah's return as the prophet of national restoration serves as part of the explanation for Theudas' activity. If so, the conception of restoration for the movement sparked by Theudas – at least as Josephus reports it – seems to be not so much one of repentance and return to the covenant as a re-establishment of the nation.

The intertestamental literature does not give prominence to the hope of Elijah's return. Insufficiently noticed in this regard is the possibly authentic Epiphanius recension of the *Lives of the Prophets* which declares that Elijah 'will come again before the end'.[27] In 4 Ezra 6.25–6, Elijah returns and is accompanied by Enoch.[28] As in the interpretation offered above for Sirach 48.11a, reference is made to those who remain alive to see his return. The now familiar reference to the change of heart effected by Elijah's return is mentioned, though nothing is said of the restoration of the twelve tribes nor of resurrection. Pseudo-Philo identifies the returning Elijah with Phineas and is concerned to note that his return culminates in his death (*Bib. Ant.* 48).[29] R. Hayward notes that *Biblical Antiquities* 48.3 'places Phineas' ascension and his transformation into Elijah at Passover

[25] Quite unlikely is the attempt of E. Puech ('Messianism, Resurrection, and Eschatology at Qumran and in the New Testament', in *The Community of the Renewed Covenant: The Notre Dame Symposium on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. E. Ulrich and J. Vanderkam; CJA; University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), pp. 243–6) to find in these fragments evidence for belief that Elijah would be a messianic forerunner.

[26] See *Ant.* 20.97–9.

[27] A. M. Schwemer (*Studien zu den frühjüdischen Prophetenlegenden Vitae Prophetarum*: vol. II: *Die Viten der kleine Propheten und der Propheten aus den Geschichtsbüchern: Übersetzung und Kommentar* (TSAJ; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1996), p. 247) argues for the authenticity of the Epiphanius recension, noting that the otherwise reliable anonymous recension departs from its usual framework in its report of the prophetic wonders and the insertion of biblical material.

[28] Cf. *Apoc. Elij.* 5.32.

[29] Pseudo-Philo provides no exegetical basis for the identification. Later Jewish texts equate the two on the basis of the reference to the covenant with Levi in Mal. 2.4 which was easily associated with the messenger of the covenant in 3.1c and thence with the promise

time, when Israel celebrates its past redemption and looks forward to the great redemption at the end of days'.[30]

Although Pseudo-Philo is the earliest datable source for the identification of the returning Elijah with Phineas, the notion is widespread enough in subsequent literature to suggest a possibly earlier origin.[31] Hayward has argued just that, on the basis of a text from *Tg. Ps.-J.* Deuteronomy 33.11 which is widely believed to derive from the time of John Hyrcanus:

> Bless, Lord, the possessions of the house of Levi . . . and accept with good will the sacrifice from the hand of Elijah, the priest, who offered up at Mount Carmel. Break the loins of Ahab his enemy, and the (neck-)joint of the false prophets who arose against him so that there will not be for the enemies of Yohanan [John Hyrcanus], the high priest, a foot to stand on.

Hayward points out that unlike the Hebrew text of Sirach, the Greek text, which dates to the time of Hyrcanus, dissociates Phineas from the Zadokite house and uniquely describes Phineas as both high priest and ruler. It is easy to see that this conception of Phineas may have been informed by the court ideology of Hyrcanus, particularly when it is recalled that 1 Maccabees (which may have reached its final form during the reign of Hyrcanus) asserts Hasmonean descent from Phineas. The text from *Tg. Pseudo-Jonathan* indicates that Hyrcanus was connected with both Phineas and 'Elijah the priest'. This connection takes on added significance in view of Hyrcanus' eschatologically charged programme of reconquest and restoration.[32] Hayward notes that the tie between John and Elijah is strengthened by the fact that in Josephus (*Ant.* 8.299–300; *J.W.* 1.68) and the Tosefta (*t. Sot.* 13.5), Hyrcanus is referred to as a prophet.[33] Whether or not Hayward is correct to trace the origin of the identification of Phineas with Elijah to targumic reflection on Hyrcanus,[34] it is highly probable that Hyrcanus was viewed by some Jews at least as the possible fulfilment of God's promise to effect Israel's restoration through Elijah.

of a returning Elijah in 3.23–4. The covenant with Levi was easily associated with Phineas who had been granted an eternal covenant as reward for his zeal. See C. T. R. Hayward, 'Phineas – the Same Is Elijah: The Origins of a Rabbinic Tradition', *JJS* 29 (1978), 23.

[30] Hayward, 'Phineas', p. 28.

[31] See the plentiful references in L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1909–38), vol. VI, p. 316 n. 3.

[32] See especially J. A. Goldstein, 'The Hasmonean Revolt and the Hasmonean Dynasty', in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. II, *The Hellenistic Age* (ed. W. D. Davies and L. Finkelstein; Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 325–30; and J. Schaper, *Eschatology in the Greek Psalter* (WUNT; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1995), pp. 42–5. See also below, chapter 5.

[33] Hayward, 'Phineas', 32. [34] Ibid., 32–3.

The fact that Hyrcanus was also associated with Phineas would not have detracted from such a claim and may well have been used as additional support for it.[35]

If the development of the Elijah-tradition is toward the expansion of his role, the Rabbinic literature is nonetheless remarkable for the sheer diversity of functions assigned to Elijah.[36] If, in the original promise of Malachi, Elijah turns the hearts of the fathers back to the children, for the rabbis the returning Elijah adjudicates all manner of *halakhic* uncertainty. He can be the eschatological high priest or the one who prepares the way of the Lord. Very occasionally, he can even be considered the forerunner of Messiah.[37] What this diversity suggests is that there was no time in the development of the tradition in which the returning Elijah was firmly situated in a well-defined eschatological scenario. Thus, though Elijah continued to be seen as one who comes before the end, there are one or two texts which also make Elijah the agent of resurrection (*m. Sot.* 9; repeated and expanded in *y. Sheq.* 3.3; *Pesiq. Rab Kah.* 76a), an event which would seem to belong properly to the end itself.

Before returning to Mark 9.11–13, we consider one further text which makes use of the Malachi tradition about Elijah. Luke 1.16–17 says of John the Baptist:

> He will turn (ἐπιστρέψει) many of the people (τῶν υἱῶν) of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn (ἐπιστρέψαι) the hearts of parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous and to make ready (ἑτοιμάσαι) a people prepared for the Lord.

As in Malachi LXX and Sirach, Luke retains the expectation that Elijah will turn the hearts of parents back to their children[38] and adds material which expands the nature of the restoration. There are no linguistic links

[35]Certainly, as noted above, by the time of Pseudo-Philo, the identification of Phineas and Elijah is complete and the role of Phineas in Israel's redemption secure. See also *Tg. Ps.-J.* Num. 25.12 where Phineas, the messenger of the covenant (Mal. 3.1c), lives for ever to herald the redemption at the end of days; similarly *Tg. Ps.-J.* Exodus 4.13; 6.18.

[36]See G. Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer: Redaktionskritische Untersuchung zur Darstellung Johannes des Täufers im Matthäus-Evangelium* (SBB; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1994), p. 341. The wealth of rabbinic material on Elijah assembled by L. Ginzberg (*Legends*, pp. 195–235; and *An Unknown Jewish Sect* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1976), pp. 239–52) is useful even if the diversity is lost in his synthetic approach.

[37]On this question, see below.

[38]Cf. ἐπιστρέψαι καρδίαν πατρὸς πρὸς υἱόν in Sir. 48.10 with ἐπιστρέψαι καρδίας πατέρων ἐπὶ τέκνα in Luke 1.17. The LXX of Mal. 3.23 at this point reads ἀποκαταστήσει καρδίαν πατρὸς πρὸς υἱόν.

to the restoration language of either the LXX of Malachi or of Sirach. But Nolland argues that ἑτοιμάσαι does not mean 'to prepare' in Luke 1.16e, but rather 'to establish': ἑτοιμάσαι has been influenced by the Hebrew כון and 'to prepare a prepared (κατασκευασμένον) people' is awkward.[39] This may connect the text to the restoration language of the Hebrew text of Sirach. But though Luke has expanded the nature of the restoration, he has not done so in the same way as Malachi LXX or Sirach: the return appears to be more limited – only 'many' of the people of Israel will return – and no thought of tribal restoration appears.

Against the background of this developing tradition, the description of the eschatological Elijah as one who ἀποκαθιστάνει πάντα in Mark 9.12 is easily seen as another expanded affirmation of Israel's eschatological restoration. It is thus astonishing that Jesus declares that the eschatological Elijah whose chief task it is to effect the restoration has already come, that, in some sense, Israel's eschatological restoration is already complete. Whatever the implications for descriptions of Jesus' role, taken at face value, Jesus' words suggest that he regarded John not only as a prophet of Israel's restoration but as a successful one.

The failure to see John as the agent of Israel's eschatological restoration may perhaps be attributed to two factors: an overstatement of John's role as a forerunner of Messiah and an overly narrow conception of the nature of restoration. I take these issues in turn.

4.1.2 Elijah as forerunner of Messiah or Yahweh?

An exchange in the *Journal of Biblical Literature* has drawn attention to the difficulty of establishing a background for the relationship between the roles of Jesus and John in Jewish eschatological expectations. M. Faierstein has shown that the evidence for an expectation of an eschatological Elijah who would act as a forerunner of Messiah is scant and late.[40] Faierstein's argument was countered with a series of objections raised by D. Allison, but, as is clear from the subsequent rebuttal by J. Fitzmyer, Allison's objections are not insurmountable.[41] The exchange has helped to foster awareness that there was no widespread pre-Christian expectation that Elijah was to be a forerunner of Messiah. Nevertheless, there remains a widespread assumption that the Gospel writers sought to

[39] J. Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20* (WBC; Dallas: Word, 1989), p. 32.

[40] M. M. Faierstein, 'Why Do the Scribes Say That Elijah Must Come First?', *JBL* 100 (1981), 75–86.

[41] D. C. Allison, Jr, 'Elijah Must Come First', *JBL* 103 (1984), 256–8; J. A. Fitzmyer, 'More About Elijah Coming First', *JBL* 104 (1985), 295–6.

portray the returning Elijah (whom they identify as John) as a messianic forerunner.[42]

The point which I wish to make is that for the Gospels the crucial issue is not that John and Jesus fulfil established expectations of a returning Elijah who is a forerunner of a coming *Messiah*. Rather, together they fulfil traditions which anticipate a returning Elijah who is a forerunner for the coming of *Yahweh*. The point is perhaps clearest in texts where Isaiah 40 and Malachi 3 have been put to use. Isaiah 40.3 and Malachi 3.1 alike speak of nameless messengers sent to prepare the way of the Lord. The synoptic traditions read these texts in light of the announcement in Malachi 3.23–4 that God will send the prophet Elijah.[43] Mark and Q make this connection in quite different ways: Mark 1.2–3 cites Exodus 23.20, Malachi 3.1 and Isaiah 40.3 together as an introduction to a description of John the Baptist which draws striking parallels with OT depictions of Elijah; in Matthew 11.10 (= Luke 7.27) Jesus cites Exodus 23.20 and Malachi 3.1 (but not Isaiah 40.3) in a description of John's significance and then identifies John as the Elijah who was to come (Matt. 11.14). Remarkably, in both of these texts the pronominal forms reflected in both the MT and LXX of Malachi 3.1 have been changed from first person to second person.[44] This does not necessarily mean that the Evangelists are setting forth a straightforward equation of Jesus to Yahweh. Rather, they are suggesting that the coming of the Lord anticipated by the prophets has been fulfilled by Jesus. It is not for that, however, any less the awaited coming of the Lord. The point is illustrated by Mark's ensuing citation of Isaiah 40.3 in which the third-person reference to Yahweh has been left unchanged: 'prepare *your* way' (1.2c modified from Malachi 3.1) is thus paralleled by 'prepare the way *of the Lord*' (1.3b unmodified from Isaiah 40.3). This need imply neither that Mark wholly distinguishes Jesus and 'the Lord' nor that he assigns to Jesus the OT proper name for God.[45] Rather, it seems, Mark subtly asserts that through Jesus the anticipated coming of the Lord has been fulfilled. Thus, the Gospels employ the

[42]E.g. Collins, 'Works of Messiah', 104; J. Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, p. 110.

[43]The assertion in Sir. 48.10a that Elijah will calm the wrath of God before it breaks out in fury (a reference to Malachi's 'day of the Lord') may indicate that at the time of Sirach, Mal. 3.23–4 was already being read in light of Isa. 40.1–4 where the end of God's wrath (vv. 1–2) against his people is followed by the preparation of the way of the Lord (vv. 3–4) and then the revelation of the glory of the Lord to all peoples (v. 5).

[44]The pronominal shift may have been present in Q as well. The citations of Mal. 3.1 in Matthew and Luke fall within Q material and are introduced by a citation formula which is also apparently from Q.

[45]These are the two options posed by J. Marcus (*Way of the Lord*, pp. 37–8) who takes the latter.

promise of Malachi 3 to portray John in the role of the expected Elijah who was to prepare the way for the coming of the Lord, a coming which they understood to have been fulfilled by the coming of Jesus.

Though the Gospels probably invest with great significance Jesus' fulfilment of the coming of Yahweh whose way is prepared by Elijah, it is far from certain that John placed himself within this scheme. It is often supposed that in proclaiming the coming of an eschatological agent John (or, at least, John as he is presented by the Evangelists) assumed for himself the role of Elijah preparing the way for Messiah. But upon closer scrutiny, it appears that John neither viewed himself as the eschatological Elijah nor understood himself specifically as the herald of Messiah. Certainly the Synoptics do not suggest that John thought of himself as Elijah; this identification is asserted by Jesus, who couches it as if it were a revelation.[46] Further, according to John 1.21, the Baptist denies that he is Elijah.[47] But what of the Coming One announced by John? It does seem that John expected the eschatological action of God to occur by means of an eschatological agent. Nevertheless, John's description of this eschatological agent does not correspond closely to known traditions about Jewish eschatological figures in general or a royal Messiah in particular. This point has been well made by R. Webb who suggests that the ambiguity of John's description may have been deliberate: 'John did not wish to identify himself with any one particular form of Jewish expectation' but to stress the necessity of repentance in view of the imminent action of God.[48]

[46]Matt. 11.14–15: 'and if you are willing to accept it, [John] is Elijah who is to come. Let anyone with ears listen!'

[47]John probably preserves here a historical reminiscence: so R. E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John (i–xii)* (AB; Garden City: Doubleday, 1966), p. 48; and J. A. T. Robinson, 'Did Jesus Have a Distinctive Use of Scripture?', in *Christological Perspectives: Essays in Honor of Harvey K. McArthur* (ed. R. F. Berkey and S. A. Edwards; New York: Pilgrim, 1982), pp. 265–6. It is difficult to know why John the Evangelist would have created such a denial; John's Gospel shows no interest in portraying Jesus as Elijah nor is there evidence that the followers of John held the Baptist to be a messianic Elijah in contrast to the messianic claims made for Jesus. It is possible that the Baptist's denial means only that he is not Elijah in the sense assumed by those who queried him. Still, the more straightforward reason for John's answer is simply that he did not understand himself to be the expected Elijah.

[48]R. L. Webb, *John the Baptizer and Prophet: A Socio-Historical Study* (JSNTSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), p. 288. Webb shows that the functions attributed by John to the coming one associate most readily with the actions of Yahweh himself but that John envisions Yahweh acting through a human agent, though of unspecified type; see especially pp. 282–306. Cf. J. E. Taylor (*The Immerser: John the Baptist Within Second Temple Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), pp. 144–6) who thinks that the coming one expected by John was probably Elijah, though the evidence for this is scant.

The Gospel traditions considered thus far do not betray a development of the Elijah tradition according to which Elijah is made the forerunner of Messiah. Instead, they assiduously preserve the conception of Elijah as a forerunner of Yahweh and position Jesus with respect to this established expectation. Thus, Jesus is the one through whom Yahweh comes, but this of itself does not demonstrate Jesus' messiahship even if it plays a part in the Synoptics' presentation of Jesus as the Messiah. It is true that the Gospels present John as Elijah, Jesus as the Messiah, and John as the precursor of Jesus. But the common assumption that the Gospels thereby transform the expectation of Elijah as forerunner of Yahweh into an expectation of Elijah as forerunner of Messiah in no way follows.

Jesus' agreement with the scribal teaching that 'Elijah must come first' (Mark 9.11–13/Matt. 17.10–13) has perhaps more than anything fostered the assumption that the Gospels depict Elijah as the forerunner of Messiah. It is simply assumed that 'first' means 'before Messiah comes'.[49] But the assumption is not borne out by the context. As Fitzmyer notes, the preceding verses most naturally indicate that 'first' means 'before the rising of the dead' or 'before the Son of Man rises from the dead'.[50]

I shall return to Fitzmyer's observation shortly; for now I simply note that not even here do we find evidence in the Gospel traditions for the use or development of the Elijah tradition in which the returning Elijah is placed in the role of a messianic forerunner. The elimination of this reductionistic conception of Elijah's role frees us to reassess the significance of John's ministry in Jesus' understanding of Israel's restoration and thus to reconceive Jesus' estimate of John's independent significance.

4.1.3 The nature of John's restoration

Temporal conflict in the development of the Elijah tradition: the relationship of restoration and resurrection

The placement of the discussion of Elijah after a dispute over resurrection in Mark 9 is often assumed to be redactional[51] and historical contexts for the exchange reconstructed. Perhaps most influential of these is the view of Bultmann that the exchange originally followed Mark 9.1; Bultmann

[49]So e.g. Allison, 'Elijah', 256–8; Gnilka, *Markus*, vol. II, pp. 41–3.

[50]Fitzmyer, 'Elijah', 295.

[51]E.g. D. Lührmann, *Das Markusevangelium* (HNT; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1987), pp. 157–8.

understood the heightened imminence of the saying of 9.1 to be a contradiction of the Jewish belief in a forerunner to the kingdom and took 9.11–13 as a Christian harmonization of the saying with the Malachi promise through the identification of John as Elijah.[52] But an imminent eschatology would not necessarily have been seen as a problem in relation to the expectation of Elijah's return. The Rabbis could later envision Elijah's return just three days prior to the end.[53] More likely to have caused difficulty was a proclamation that the time of fulfilment had already arrived: if the time of eschatological fulfilment was already present and Elijah had not yet returned to restore all things prior to God's eschatological action (as the disciples assume), how can it be that Elijah comes first, that is, before God's eschatological action?[54]

Though this difficulty quite probably lies behind the disciples' question in some sense, Mark indicates that the question stemmed more immediately from the disciples' discussion among themselves about 'what this rising [of the Son of man] from the dead could mean'. Scholars have rarely attempted to relate the question to this discussion, assuming that the awkwardness of the move from verses 9–10 to verses 11–13 results from Mark's awkward redaction. But even if the arrangement of the material is redactional, one cannot merely assume that it had no significance for the redactor. If indecipherable history is a problem, so too is indecipherable redaction.[55] Indeed, one suspects that attributing the order of the material here to Mark turns in the first instance on the difficulty of establishing a meaningful connection between the discussion of resurrection and the exchange about Elijah. It could be argued that the difficulty of reading verses 9–13 together counts in favour of their original unity. More to the point is the fact noted above that long before the first century the returning Elijah had been associated with resurrection although the nature of the connection had not been fully specified. This has been little noticed in the scholarship on this text, an oversight which has contributed to the isolation of verses 11–13 from the discussion about the meaning of the Son of man's resurrection.[56] It would seem, then, that clarifying the

[52] Bultmann, *History*, p. 124. Recently reiterated in a somewhat revised form by M. Casey (*Aramaic Sources of Mark's Gospel* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 122) who unlike Bultmann takes 9.11–13 to be authentic (in its reconstructed Aramaic form).

[53] Ginzberg, *Legends*, vol. IV, pp. 233–4.

[54] Similarly Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. II, p. 712.

[55] Cf. Casey's comment decrying the attribution of the Greek text of Mark 9.11–13 to 'the obtuse and destructive redactor who stalks the pages of NT scholarship', *Aramaic*, p. 255.

[56] An exception is Öhler (*Elia*, pp. 39, 41) who recognizes that the connection between resurrection and Elijah was traditional, but asserts that Mark, aware of this traditional connection, attached the question about Elijah to the discussion of resurrection. Öhler's

nature of the connection between the disciples' discussion of resurrection and their question about Elijah would go a long way toward demonstrating the dominical origins of the material as it stands.

My contention is that the interaction was driven by the disciples' confusion concerning the relative timing of certain key eschatological events. The point emerges from the above discussion of the development of the Elijah tradition. In Malachi the returning Elijah was to effect a return to covenant faithfulness *before* the climactic day of the Lord. But the accretion of restorationist ideas to this promise of Elijah's return made it increasingly difficult to distinguish between the return of Elijah and the coming of the Lord, precisely because the expectation of the restoration of Israel's tribes was otherwise so tightly tied to the climactic coming of God himself. In other words, when the climactic event of Israel's restoration was associated with Elijah's return, it became difficult to say how Elijah's return was to take place *prior* to God's decisive eschatological action for Israel. Exacerbating this uncertainty was the fact that the resurrection, an event also tied to the climactic action of God, had also been associated with Elijah's return, albeit in an ill-defined way. In the light of this temporal ambiguity, indeed conflict, in the developing Elijah tradition, Fitzmyer's vague connection of the disciples' query to the discussion of resurrection in verses 9–10 is seen to be fundamental; exploring this connection reveals a quite plausible way of reading Mark 9.11–13 as part of a discussion of resurrection in a pre-Easter setting.

As it stands, the exchange about Elijah follows Jesus' demand that Peter, James and John tell no one of his transfiguration 'until after the Son of Man is raised from the dead'. In Mark this provokes speculation on the part of the disciples about the meaning of 'the rising of the dead'. In other words, the Son of man language does not appear to have been understood as a specific reference to the resurrection of Jesus, or at least, Jesus' resurrection is not viewed in isolation from the general resurrection. Davies and Allison believe that the discussion has to do with the disciples' uncertainty about the general resurrection – an uncertainty eliminated by Matthew's omission of the verse.[57] However, they do not then explain why a saying about the resurrection of the Son of man would have provoked uncertainty about the general resurrection.[58]

failure to consider the possibility that the disciples' question is authentic stems from his inability to explain the meaning of the disciples' preceding discussion of resurrection.

[57]Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. II, p. 713.

[58]It is possible that v. 10 stems from Marcan redactional activity; Mark frequently highlights the failure of the disciples to understand. On the other hand, Matthew's elimination of the verse may be due to his own concern to highlight the understanding of the disciples.

In fact, there are several historically reasonable causes for the uncertainty of the disciples. The referent of 'Son of man' is often ambiguous. Moreover, resurrection language itself was used in more than one way and has allusive connections to 'son of man' language in the Old Testament. I turn first to the use of resurrection as a metaphor for Israel's coming restoration. The most obvious example of this is Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones. The prophet, addressed as 'son of man', is told to prophesy over the bones which are identified as the 'whole house of Israel' (Ezek. 37.11). Resurrection is then made a metaphor of national renaissance: 'I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel' (37.12).[59] In the metaphor of the stick which follows, the restoration is conceived of explicitly in terms of the re-establishment and reunification of the tribes of Judah and Ephraim (37.15–23). Now certainly, in this text, the son of man is the prophet – the agent not the object of resurrection. But the text which probably stood behind Jesus' use of Son of man language – Daniel 7 – also has as its central feature the anticipation of Israel's restoration: whether as a literal figure or as a metaphor, the son of man represents the nation in its coming restoration. But the expectation of Israel's restoration has evocative links to resurrection language even within Daniel. In Daniel 12.1–3, the rise of Michael, Israel's angelic defender, will result in the deliverance of the people after a time of great anguish. It is in this context that verse 2 envisions a resurrection through which the righteous dead will be vindicated. Thus, 'everyone who is found written in the book' (12.1) will be citizens of restored Israel, even if they have already died. An essential part of Israel's vindication and restoration will be the fact that those who have persecuted the righteous will likewise be raised but to shame and condemnation.[60] Thus, in Daniel 12, we see a pattern which parallels that of Daniel 7: after the holy ones of Israel have been afflicted for a time, they will be vindicated and their enemies judged. The texts differ in that in Daniel 7 the pattern emerges through the image of the Son of man's exaltation whereas in Daniel 12 the resurrection of the righteous dead is incorporated into the pattern. The connection between Son of man and resurrection would have been easily made.

Ezekiel 37 and Daniel 12 reflect quite different ways in which the concept of resurrection was tied to Israel's restoration. But there is no necessary conceptual conflict between the two ideas. Indeed it may be that

[59]In subsequent tradition Ezek. 37 became a key text in discussions of actual resurrection, though not without regard to national restoration. See *b. Sanh.* 92b; *Pirqe R. El.* 33.

[60]This discussion of Dan. 12.1–3 largely follows G. W. E. Nickelsburg, Jr, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism* (HTS; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), pp. 11–27.

resurrection as metaphor for national restoration helped to generate the idea of literal resurrection as a constituent element of national restoration. Isaiah 26.19 is illustrative at this point, for its use of resurrection language is more ambiguous:

> Your dead shall live,
> their corpses shall rise.
> O dwellers in the dust,
> awake and sing for joy.

As in Ezekiel 37, the context concerns the exile and restoration of the nation. Moreover, in the Isaianic tradition, exile is frequently associated with death (see e.g. Isa. 5.13, 14) and the context easily suggests the thought that this metaphorical death is about to be reversed.[61] On the other hand, as in Daniel, the context also contains the idea that though the righteous have suffered and perished unjustly at the hands of the wicked, they will be vindicated (Isa. 26.21). The point here is not to decide whether 26.19 has a metaphorical or a literal resurrection in view nor even to argue that both are in view. Rather, I want to suggest that the ambiguity of the text may be the reason that the verse seems to have been interpreted in both ways in subsequent tradition. G. Nickelsburg has pointed out the close linguistic and conceptual parallels between Daniel 12.2 and Isaiah 26.19a which make the dependence of the former on the latter probable.[62] On the other hand, Isaiah 26.19 seems also to stand behind Isaiah 52.1–2, where resurrection language describes not actual resurrection as in Daniel 12.2 but national liberation.

A less certain example of the use of resurrection as a metaphor for Israel's restoration is Hosea 6.1–2.

> Come let us return to the LORD;
> for it is he who has torn, and he will heal us,
> he has struck down, and he will bind us up.
> After two days he will revive us;
> on the third day he will raise us up,
> that we may live before him.

Scholars differ whether the metaphor of Israel's return to the Lord is resurrection or simply healing.[63] Whatever the case, it is perhaps significant

[61] Note especially the detailed arguments of D. G. Johnson, *From Chaos to Restoration: An Integrative Reading of Isaiah 24–27* (JSOTSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1988), pp. 80–1.

[62] Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, pp. 17–18.

[63] F. I. Andersen and D. N. Freedman (*Hosea: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; Garden City: Doubleday, 1980), p. 420) are certain that resurrection is in view. A. A. Macintosh (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Hosea* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1997), pp. 221–3) is just as sure that it is not.

that the targum to this text associates Israel's return and healing with literal resurrection.

There is one further text in which restoration and resurrection traditions come together. *Testament of Judah* 25 begins with the anticipation of the patriarchs and the twelve sons of Jacob: 'And after this Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be resurrected to life and I and my brothers [i.e. the twelve sons of Jacob] will be chiefs (wielding) our sceptre in Israel.'[64] The text coheres with traditions anticipating the restoration of the twelve tribes of Jacob. In addition to the twelve patriarchs, certain others will also be raised, in particular those who have died as the result of persecution. The thought here is close to that of Daniel 12, even if the focus of the resurrection which takes place in conjunction with the restoration of the twelve tribes is more narrowly conceived.[65]

I can now draw together the results of this discussion. First, resurrection language played an important role in the development of expectations concerning Israel's restoration, both metaphorically as an image of restoration and literally as a constituent element of restoration. Second, the association of restoration and resurrection locates Israel's restoration at the time of God's eschatological intervention. This is all the more apparent in contexts where the association of restoration and resurrection is correlated with God's judgement of Israel's enemies. Third, there are sufficient points of contact between the Danielic description of one like a son of man and the associated themes of restoration and resurrection that *to speak of the Son of man and resurrection together could quite naturally have given rise to a discussion of Israel's restoration*. Given the way Scripture was read within Second Temple Judaism, might not Jesus' words about the Son of man rising from the dead in Mark 9.9 have led the disciples in their 'questioning what this rising from the dead could mean' (Mark 9.10) to speculate that Jesus was in fact speaking about the coming restoration of Israel, conceived of as the regathering and re-establishment of the tribes of Israel? Another possibility which might have been raised in their discussion of the meaning of Jesus' words concerning the Son of man rising from the dead is that it related in some way to the resurrection as a constituent element of Israel's restoration.

In any case, the disciples' question stems from the ambiguity concerning the connection between Israel's restoration and the resurrection as these relate to Elijah's return. The question is entirely sensible against

[64]The translation is that of H. C. Kee in *OTP*, vol. I, pp. 775–828. The translations of Charles and de Jonge read: 'I and my brothers will be chiefs of the tribes in Israel.' The variation stems from the fact that σκήπτρον can mean either 'tribe' or 'sceptre'.

[65]For a discussion of this text, see Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, pp. 34–7.

the background sketched above for there appears to have been a contradiction between the developing tradition of restoration tied to the return of Elijah and broader strands of Israel's hope of restoration. As we have seen, by associating the restoration of the tribes of Jacob with Elijah's return, the restoration was located *prior* to the decisive eschatological action of God, the great and terrible Day of the Lord. But apart from this, the restoration tradition more generally indicated that the regathering of the tribes and the climactic intervention of God would be simultaneous, that is, when God came in judgement on Israel's enemies. This was especially clear when Israel's restoration was described in terms of resurrection or when literal resurrection was made a part of that restoration. The disciples speculate that Jesus' words about resurrection mean that he believes that the restoration of the nation will take place in conjunction with the resurrection of the nation on the Day of the Lord. Hence they ask, 'Why then do the scribes say that the restoration will take place when Elijah comes before the Day of the Lord?' If (as they understand Jesus' words) the restoration of the nation takes place at the time of God's decisive action, what exactly will Elijah's role be since he comes *first*, that is, *before* the Day of the Lord and the attendant resurrection (whether physical or metaphorical)?

The disciples' bewilderment and question do not result from uncertainty about Elijah's role as forerunner of Messiah. Rather, their uncertainty arises from the presupposition that Elijah is the forerunner of Yahweh himself, a presupposition which lies behind a conflict in the development of Jewish restoration traditions: Elijah comes before the coming of Yahweh but the traditions appear to associate Israel's restoration with both Elijah's coming and the coming of Yahweh himself.

Jesus' response and strands of restoration tradition

What is often at work in judgements about the success of John's restoration are unstated assumptions about the nature of the restoration.[66] One by-product of the foregoing discussion is the observation that traditions about restoration in general and Elijah's restoration in particular were diverse. Restoration could be conceived of either as a return to covenant fidelity or as the re-establishment of the twelve tribes and national dominion, often related to the fact of dispersion and the expectation of God's judgement on Israel's enemies. Of course, the two ways of thinking about

[66]For example, note Casey's (*Aramaic*, p. 111) breezy comment that 'neither John the Baptist nor anyone else came and restored all things'.

restoration could be held together and sometimes were. But this was not always the case, particularly when those anticipating restoration already saw themselves as penitent and righteous.

My suggestion is that Jesus can say that Elijah has already come and restored all things because he is thinking in terms of one strand of restoration tradition and, in response to the disciples, placing it against the other strand of tradition. More specifically, he interprets the restoration traditions associated with Elijah in terms of Israel's return to covenant faithfulness and not in terms of the re-establishment of the dispersed tribes of Jacob in the Land.

A number of considerations bolster this contention. First, as I have argued, the original tradition in Malachi and the development of that tradition in the LXX and Luke are best understood as anticipating an Elijah who would restore Israel to covenant faithfulness. Sirach does not deny this, but adds to this an understanding of restoration conceived of as national re-establishment.

Second, despite the *Tendenz* of the Evangelists to portray Jesus as the central figure in Israel's eschatological drama, they nevertheless preserve traditions which seem to impute decisive significance to John's ministry, a ministry whose central features – the call to repentance and the offer of forgiveness – are closely associated with covenantal renewal. In some texts the decisive significance of John is so strong that scholars have hypothesized the origin of certain traditions in circles which remained loyal to the Baptist. This has been the case, for instance, in Luke 1.76–7, a section of the *Benedictus* almost universally acknowledged to derive from earlier material:

> And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
> for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
> to give knowledge of salvation to his people
> by the forgiveness of their sins.

Whatever the source, Luke has preserved a strikingly high estimate of John, a fact all the more startling in view of Luke's redactional association of salvation with Jesus. Similar comments apply to Matthew 21.31–2. I shall deal with the text in more detail below, but I note the astonishing fact that the entrance of the tax collectors and the prostitutes into the kingdom ahead of the Jewish leaders is attributed in the first place not to their response to Jesus but to John![67]

[67]Cf. Matt. 11.12–13, which, though disputed, probably indicates that the forceful advance of the kingdom began in the time of John's ministry and that with John's coming the time of fulfilment about which the law and the prophets prophesied has begun.

Third, on the face of it, Jesus' connection of the Elijah traditions to John provides an obvious constraint in that there is no evidence that John or others, including the Evangelists, associated his ministry with the re-establishment of the twelve tribes in the Land. Rather, their consistent witness is that John preached a message and performed a baptism of repentance. This repentance is almost certainly to be understood as a return to covenant faithfulness in view of the imminent judgement of God.[68]

Fourth, the words of Jesus concerning the suffering of the Son of man and of Elijah which follow his affirmation of the expectation of Elijah's return and restoration may function as part of his repudiation of restoration conceived of as the re-establishment of the twelve tribes. The question of Mark 9.12b seems awkwardly placed; verse 13 seems a more logical completion of the thought of verse 12a. Indeed, not a few commentators take verse 12b as an ill-placed redactional insertion.[69] Matthew sees the difficulty and reorganizes the passage to make 12b follow verse 13. Nevertheless, despite the awkwardness, it is possible to detect the logical flow of the text as it stands in Mark. The interrogative πῶς may be taken as an indication that the question which follows provides a crucial correction of an assumption which had been unjustifiably associated with the expectation of Elijah's restoration of Israel: Jesus insists that the traditions concerning Elijah's return and restoration be read in terms of the scriptural anticipation that the Son of man would suffer many things and be rejected.

The difficulty, however, is that there is no clear antecedent for a suffering Son of man figure. A similar difficulty exists in verse 13b where the Scriptures are said to predict the suffering and rejection of the coming Elijah.[70] If one reads 'Son of man' in this context as an idiomatic self-reference, it is possible to take verse 12b as Jesus' association of himself

[68]See especially J. E. Taylor, *The Immerser*, pp. 146–8.

[69]E.g. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. II, p. 711. Cf. J. Taylor ('The Coming of Elijah, Mt 17,10–13 and Mark 9,11–13: The Development of the Texts', *RB* 98 (1991), 117) who considers it evident, despite slim evidence, that Mark 9.12b was constructed from 8.31.

[70]Casey's explanation of scriptural antecedents behind Jesus' claim that Elijah (John) had suffered 'as it is written about him' is remarkable for its imaginative genius: Mal. 3.1 'surely' led Jesus to Isa. 40.3; from there Jesus 'surely' continued to Isa. 40.6–8's presentation of the transitory nature of human life; Isa. 40.6–8 'surely' reminded Jesus of Job 14: 'Man (אדם) who is born of woman is shortlived and full of turmoil.' The rabbinical Targum translates אדם with בר נש, suggesting that Jesus may have used בר (א)נש(א) in a general statement on Job 14 which goes on to speak of suffering and death. Further, Mal. 3.3 would have sent Jesus to Jer. 6.27–30 (near Jer. 7 which Jesus elsewhere cites) where the term מאס is used of the Lord's rejection of his people. This rejection is that which required John's death. This exegetical process resulted in the general statement about humanity (son of man) suffering, which is then given particular reference to John/Elijah; *Aramaic*, pp. 126–35. Few will agree with Casey's contention that there is 'only one serious problem' with his reconstruction.

with various biblical descriptions of the suffering righteous. It would then be possible to read verse 13b in a parallel fashion in terms of similar general descriptions of the suffering righteous: Jesus applies them to Elijah as well as to the Son of man. But it may be that the two parts of verse 13 are not intended to be parallel to one another but to be the *fulfilment* of the two parts of verse 12: the expectation that Elijah will come before the Day of the Lord and restore all things (v. 12a) has been fulfilled in that Elijah has already come (v. 13a); the scriptural anticipation that the Son of man will suffer and be rejected (v. 12b) has been fulfilled, in part, in the way John was treated (v. 13b). On this reading, 'Son of man' is taken collectively, an assumption, I have argued, that the disciples seem to have made in verse 10.[71] If B. Lindars' analysis of the phrase 'Son of man' is correct, this kind of collective reference is not out of the question, even if no allusion to the figure of Daniel 7 is intended, for 'Son of man' refers to 'people in a particular class or group to which the speaker belongs'.[72] But it is possible that Daniel 7 plays a role even here. The 'one like a son of man' in Daniel is tied in some way to 'the holy ones of the Most High' who are subject to suffering and affliction in the end time just prior to the establishment of the kingdom of God (Dan. 7.21–2). Thus, Jesus' reference to the scriptural prediction of the suffering and rejection of the Son of man relates not so much to the general biblical motif of the suffering righteous as to the Danielic expectation that God's holy ones will endure affliction and rejection in the end times. It is precisely this tradition that calls into question the disciples' (and scribes') assumption about the meaning of Elijah's restoration. Jesus says, in effect, '*Elijah comes just prior to the establishment of the kingdom and restores all things, but restoration cannot mean the re-establishment of the twelve tribes, as you assume, because that idea cannot be reconciled with the Danielic tradition whereby God's holy ones are to suffer just prior to the establishment of the kingdom.*' It is in this way that the Scriptures anticipate that the end-time figure of Elijah will be caught up in the end-time affliction of God's holy ones.[73] And it is in this same way that the reference of Mark 9.12b may refer to Jesus after all, for as the

[71]Cf. Allison ('Q 12:51–53', pp. 307–8) who, albeit in the context of a quite different interpretation of Mark 9.11–13, likewise offers a collective reading of Son of man in v. 12 and suggests that the end-time suffering predicted for the Son of man in Dan. 7 thus includes Elijah.

[72]B. Lindars, *Jesus Son of Man: A Fresh Examination of the Son of Man Sayings in the Gospels in the Light of Recent Research* (London: SPCK, 1983), pp. 17–24.

[73]Cf. Matt. 11.12 where the kingdom which has been advancing 'from the days of John the Baptist' meets with opposition, which can easily be taken to mean that John too is affected by the (end-time) opposition to the coming of the kingdom.

unique Son of man – the representative of the holy ones – he too is caught up in their end-time sufferings. The implication is that the restoration to be effected by Elijah must be wholly other than that envisioned by a broad stream of Jewish eschatological expectation of Israel's end-time renewal.

Jesus, I conclude, rejected the idea that the returning Elijah's restoration of Israel would include the re-establishment of the twelve tribes as a powerful national unity and maintained instead that Elijah was to effect a return to covenant faithfulness, a work already accomplished through the ministry of John.

4.2 Jesus and the eschatological remnant

4.2.1 The success of John's restoration

Jesus could claim that John had restored all things because he believed that the restoration which, according to Malachi, was to be effected by the returning Elijah had been accomplished by John's call to repentance and ministry of baptism for the forgiveness of sins. But in what sense could Jesus have regarded Israel's restoration as complete? Or, to put the matter more precisely, what outcome did Jesus identify as Israel's restoration and regard as having been accomplished by John's ministry? This leads to a crucial question which is often dismissed out of hand or left aside altogether in studies of the historical Jesus: was it Jesus' aim to call forth a remnant? E. P. Sanders, R. Horsley and M. Hengel are among those who have answered this question negatively,[74] and this despite the vigorous and articulate case for such an aim in the work of B. F. Meyer.[75]

Although the remnant idea has been rejected or ignored in most recent studies of Jesus, the only way in which Jesus could speak of the restoration of Israel as having been successfully accomplished by John would be if he thought in terms of a remnant. We may approach the issues by asking two questions. First, what do we know about John's ministry that might have led Jesus to think of John's ministry as having established a remnant?

[74]E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, p. 226; R. A. Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence: Popular Jewish Resistance in Roman Palestine* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), p. 211; and M. Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and His Followers* (trans. J. C. G. Greig; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1981), pp. 59–60. Other examples include R. Schnackenburg, *God's Rule and Kingdom* (trans. J. Murray; Freiburg: Herder, 1963), p. 100; and Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment*, p. 313. Many others simply do not mention the concept one way or another, implying its unimportance for Jesus.

[75]B. F. Meyer, 'Jesus and the Remnant of Israel', *JBL* 84 (1965), 123–30; Meyer, *Aims of Jesus.*

Second, what do we know about Jesus' statements concerning John that indicate a belief that Jesus in fact held such a view?

In answer to the first question, several things can be noted. Josephus and the Gospels alike testify to the impressive response of the population to John's message and baptism of repentance.[76] Nevertheless, John's message was far from universally accepted. He appears to envision not only the possibility but also the imminence of God's destruction of the nation's fruitless trees (Matt. 3.10/Luke 3.9). Furthermore, John's message strongly implies a correspondence between response to his message and one's fate when the eschatological agent of the Day of the Lord effects a separation of wheat from chaff (Matt. 3.12/Luke 3.17). Evidently, John perceived the separation as already accomplished on the basis of one's willingness to repent. These themes correlate precisely with the significance which the prophets sometimes attached to the people's response to warnings of impending judgement: those who repented and returned to the covenant would be preserved as a righteous remnant when the day of the Lord came; those who refused to repent would be destroyed.

Three other motifs within John's ministry less certainly suggest connections with OT remnant theology but might well have prompted Jesus to associate John's ministry with the creation of a remnant. First, the connection of John to Elijah may have evoked memories of one whose despair over an apparently failed attempt to effect Israel's restoration in his own day is met with God's assurance of the preservation of seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Ba'al.[77] Second, John warns of a coming destruction of 'every tree that does not bear good fruit' and insists that those coming for baptism 'bear fruit worthy of repentance'. I have previously noted the way the prophets spoke of the fruitlessness of Israel as the reason for coming judgement and anticipated a return to fruitfulness as characteristic of the nation's restoration – themes of obvious importance in John's prophetic proclamation. It is perhaps relevant, therefore, that several texts speak specifically of the restoration in terms of the fruitfulness of a remnant:

> And the surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward, for out of Jerusalem

[76] *Ant.* 18.118; Matt. 3.5/Mark 1.5.

[77] For the role of the Elijah cycle in the development of the OT concept of remnant, see G. F. Hasel, *The Remnant: The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea From Genesis to Isaiah* (Andrews University Monographs; Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1972), pp. 159–73.

> shall go forth a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD will do this.
>
> (2 Kings 19.30–1/Isa. 37.31–2)

> Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. (Jer. 23.3)

Third, a number of scholars, most recently J. P. Meier, have aired the possibility that John's retreat to the desert may have brought him into contact with Essene groups.[78] Definitive proof will probably remain out of reach, but, as Meier points out, there are interesting correspondences: both retreat into the desert and both are characterized by a strong association with Isaiah 40.3.[79] What Meier does not note is that the self-understanding of the Qumran community as those who prepare the way for the Lord in the wilderness is of a piece with their perception of themselves as the remnant of the end of days (on which see below). Whether or not John had contact with the Qumran community, the Qumran literature bears witness to the association of Isaiah 40's desert/restoration motifs with the remnant theology of the prophets.

I turn now to the second question: what do we know from Jesus' statements concerning John that indicate a belief that Jesus regarded John's ministry as having called out a remnant of those who would enjoy the kingdom? One obvious point is that Jesus regards John's ministry as having elicited a divided response. The issue arises in Mark 11.27–33 parallels in the context of controversy over Jesus' authority. Jesus' challenge of the chief priests, scribes and elders turns on their refusal of John's baptism. More significant for present purposes is the text which follows Matthew's narrative of this episode – the parable of the two sons. At the conclusion of the parable,

> Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.' (Matt. 21.31–2)

In its present form, certain elements of the saying correspond to Matthean redactional motifs, but by the criterion of embarrassment alone, its

[78]Meier, *Marginal Jew*, vol. II, pp. 25–7.
[79]Ibid., p. 70 n. 28. Cf. J. E. Taylor, *The Immerser*, pp. 25–9.

essential authenticity is quite likely: would the early church have made up a saying which appears to condition entrance into the kingdom not on response to Jesus but on response to John?[80] Jesus' point seems to be that response to John's baptism had effected a division which determined who would and would not participate in the kingdom. In the larger context of Jesus' sayings, this almost certainly means that Jesus believed that one's response to John's message of repentance determined one's response to his own message of an inbreaking kingdom. But it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Jesus believed that a remnant from within Israel, penitent and prepared for the coming of God's kingdom, had been created through John's ministry.

Further, for Jesus to say that John had already 'restored everything' need not be seen in conflict with what John accomplished, precisely because the nature of Elijah's restoration is qualified by the necessity of his suffering. Certainly Malachi, the source of the expectation of a returning Elijah before the day of the Lord, does not conceive of Elijah's restoration in terms which obviate the anticipation that the Day of the Lord will nevertheless bring judgement on the faithless of Israel. For Malachi, Elijah's restoration will not effect redemption for all, but simply ensure that on that Day God will not strike the Land with 'a ban of utter destruction' (Mal. 3.24 MT). If, as I have argued, it is a return to covenant faithfulness and not the re-establishment of the twelve tribes to national pre-eminence which informs Jesus' use of the tradition of a returning Elijah, it is entirely likely that Jesus' conception of Elijah's restoration is informed by this fundamental premise of Malachi. If Jesus' language seems inordinately expansive, the assertion that the restoration of all things has taken place through John effectively cuts off any expectation of a restoration yet to come.

4.2.2 Jesus and the restoration of John

It is possible, indeed E. Käsemann and others have argued that, although Jesus initially endorsed John's ministry of calling out a remnant, very early on in his own ministry he rejected the idea of a remnant. But this position rests on a number of assumptions which do not stand up to close scrutiny. Käsemann's rejection of remnant theology in his understanding of Jesus rests on the radical difference he sees between the eschatology of Jesus and that of John, indeed of any established category within Judaism. For Käsemann, the horizon of future judgement

[80]Note also the presence of the less typically Matthean 'kingdom of God'.

ceased to shape Jesus' message. Consequently, there was no need to gather around himself a community governed by a rigid discipline and an excluding, rigorous observance of the Law in preparation for the coming judgement.[81] Of course, much of Käsemann's portrait of Jesus' eschatology has been called into question, and his portrayal of the remnant idea is open to criticism.[82] Moreover, in the preceding chapters I have attempted to show the importance of Jesus' announcement of coming judgement on Israel to his message. But even among those who emphasize the substantial continuity between Jesus' eschatology and Jewish eschatology, one can find a denial that Jesus held any remnant theology.

Of particular importance is the position of E. P. Sanders. Unlike Käsemann, Sanders maintains that Jesus like John retained in his message the notion of a coming judgement. But for Sanders, the remnant idea is bound up not with the idea of a final judgement but with a more narrowly conceived judgement of Israel. The former Jesus maintained; the latter he did not. Because a remnant is created only when Israel is reduced by means of a national judgement, Jesus could not have held a remnant theology. Sanders argues that in post-biblical literature the idea of punishment on the nation which leaves only a remnant recedes. Some terminology such as 'poor' and 'lowly' remains, but the emphasis is on the reassembly of the twelve tribes, freedom from foreign domination, punishment of the Gentiles and 'not on a further winnowing of Israel'.[83]

Several things must be said. First, Sanders' generalization does accurately characterize Second Temple Judaism, though exceptions are easier to find than he concedes. Though he does not say as much, there may be a reason for the lack of emphasis on the remnant idea in the period of the Second Temple. In the post-exilic situation, the focus naturally fell on the unfulfilled promises of restoration. Delay in the fulfilment of these promises might sometimes be attributed to divine disapprobation for the inadequacy of the nation's repentance, but the inadequacy of the nation's repentance did not generally create the expectation of a further Day of the Lord directed against Israel. Sanders nowhere makes it explicit, but he is right in implying that the remnant idea is simply the flip side of the expectation of national judgement.[84] But even if he is largely correct in his portrayal of Second Temple Judaism's focus on the promises of

[81]E. Käsemann, 'Primitive Christian Apocalyptic' [1960] (trans. W. J. Montague), *New Testament Questions of Today* (London: SCM Press, 1969), pp. 112–14.

[82]For a trenchant criticism of Käsemann's depiction of the remnant idea as a closed community marked by rigid discipline and an intensified observance of Torah, see Meyer, *Aims of Jesus*, p. 119.

[83]E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, p. 96. [84]Cf. Meyer, 'Jesus', 127–8.

restoration, Sanders errs in his attempt to interpret Jesus in terms of the common expectation that there would be no further winnowing of the nation. As I have sought to show, Jesus' expectation of a further judgement on Israel is one of the primary features which serve to distinguish his expectations from those of his contemporaries. It is this expectation of national judgement which above all alerts us to the importance of the remnant concept for Jesus.

Second, if my analysis of Jesus' use of the Elijah tradition is correct, it is highly significant that restoration is conceived of as a return to the Lord and not as a reassembly of the twelve tribes in the Land. This indicates again that Sanders has overplayed the continuity between Jesus and the dominant expectations of Second Temple Judaism in regard to the nature of restoration. There is a parallel within the Qumran community, whose restoration eschatology knows nothing of a returning Diaspora and stresses in the strongest possible way the centrality of return to the covenant. Indeed, it is apparent that the expectations at Qumran fit least comfortably in Sanders' attempt to sketch a virtually uniform expectation across all strands of Second Temple Judaism of a restoration conceived of as a reassembly of the scattered twelve tribes in their national homeland.

Third, the remnant idea is not as singular as Sanders implies. It is here that the distinctions of G. Hasel are crucial for they indicate a complexity in the concept of remnant which Sanders fails to recognize. The prophets do not speak of a remnant only in terms of the survivors of national judgement – a group sometimes, though not always, referred to as the eschatological remnant. The prophets can also speak of what Hasel calls a 'faithful remnant' – a remnant of righteous who have maintained or returned to covenant faithfulness prior to judgement. The faithful remnant are those who escape when God pours out his wrath on the nation precisely because they have turned back to the Lord prior to judgement (e.g. Amos 5.14–15).[85] As noted above, in the context of Elijah's ministry the preservation of a remnant had already been conditioned on covenant loyalty.[86] In Isaiah, the significance of the name of the sign child Shear-jashub ('A Remnant Shall Return') in Isaiah 7.3 becomes clear as the prophet calls the wavering Ahaz to believe in God. The name serves as a challenge to the king to return to the Lord in faith.[87]

[85] G. F. Hasel, 'Remnant', in *ISBE* (ed. G. W. Bromiley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), vol. IV, pp. 130–4.

[86] 1 Kings 19.18: 'Yet I will leave [וְהִשְׁאַרְתִּי = spare a remnant] seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.'

[87] So Hasel, *The Remnant*, 270–87, against R. E. Clements, 'שָׁאַר', in *TWAT* (ed. G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren; Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1993), pp. 933–50.

It is important to note, however, that the use of the name in Isaiah 7 admits a certain ambivalence, for it is a challenge to take up a promise in faith – the promise that a remnant will in fact return. But in its subsequent application, the return of a remnant is a turning back to the Lord not only prior to but also in and after judgement (Isa. 10.20–2). Moreover, after exile, the promise that a remnant would return is taken up in the expectation that the Diaspora would be brought back to the Land (Isa. 11.11–12, 16). This, it will be recalled, is precisely the conflation of ideas which grew up around the traditions of a returning Elijah.

I am now in a position to propose a possible way in which Jesus perceived his own role in relation to John's restoration of the remnant. It would appear that Jesus viewed John as one who has called into existence a faithful remnant of those who have returned to the Lord. In this sense, the restoration is complete. The pre-exilic prophets in particular anticipated the time of God's eschatological action when the faithful remnant would become the eschatological remnant, the heir of the promises to Israel and recipient of the eschatological blessings. For Jesus, the arrival of the time of fulfilment meant that the faithful remnant was already experiencing the blessings of the kingdom. This implies that the faithful remnant, brought into existence and made ready for the coming of the kingdom by the ministry of John, was being taken up into the eschatological remnant to which others were being added through the ministry of Jesus. John had brought about the end-time restoration of Israel by calling into existence a penitent and faithful remnant; Jesus' role is thus not to call out a remnant, but to bestow on this remnant and those who join it the blessings of the inbreaking kingdom.

Such a conception of a remnant in relation to a partially realized eschatology is quite similar to that reflected in the Qumran scrolls. It is here that Sanders' portrayal of expectations concerning a remnant and restoration during the Second Temple period demands qualification. In what turns out to be a crucial plank in his argument that Jesus held no remnant theology, he makes the expansive claim 'that, in the surviving literature, no group applies [the term 'remnant'] to itself during its own historical existence'.[88] The qualification that no group used the term of itself *during its own historical existence* is apparently Sanders' way of taking into account the frequent use of the term at Qumran,[89] but it is not a view common among Qumran scholars.

[88]E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, p. 96.

[89]E. P. Sanders (*Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, p. 254) has made an identical argument regarding the use of the term 'Israel' at Qumran: 'the sect did not, at least very often, think of itself as "Israel" *during the time of its historical existence*'. On this related but separate question see above, chapter 3.

There are in fact at least one or two texts in which 'remnant' designates the community after the eschatological action of God (1QH 6(14).8; 1QM 13.5–9). Nevertheless, the remaining references to a remnant (when used in a positive sense) refer to the community in its present existence. These references are eschatological only inasmuch as they are associated with texts which reflect a partially realized eschatology. One noteworthy fragment is the *pesher* on Isaiah 10.22–4 (4Q161 frag. 2–6 II.1–8) – a text which deals with the preservation of a remnant through judgement. The text is quite fragmentary, but enough remains to situate the establishment of the remnant *prior* to the coming day of the Lord: '[. . . to des]troy on the da[y of slaugh]ter; and many will per[ish . . .] [. . . but they will be s]aved, surely, by their plan[ting] in the land [. . .]'.[90]

More well known is the opening passage of the *Damascus Document:*

> For when they were unfaithful and forsook Him, He hid His face from Israel and His Sanctuary and delivered them up to the sword. But remembering the Covenant of the forefathers, He left a remnant to Israel and did not deliver it up to be destroyed. And in the age of wrath,[91] three hundred and ninety years after He had given them into the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, He visited them, and He caused a plant root to spring from Israel and Aaron to inherit His Land and to prosper on the good things of His earth. (CD 1.4–10)

P. R. Davies has argued, chiefly on metrical grounds, that the text is composite, with the chronological information being added when the document of an exilic community in Babylon was taken up and reapplied to the situation of the Qumran community. The effect of this, says Davies, is that, whereas the original document made no distinction between the 'remnant' and the 'root', in its secondary context at Qumran the 'root' is regarded as a movement from *within* the remnant.[92] However, subsequent texts suggest that even if his reconstruction is substantially correct, Davies' way of construing the second-century community's relationship to its antecedents is less than satisfactory. In CD 2.11–12 we read: 'And in all of them [i.e. the years] He raised for Himself men called by name, that a remnant might be left to the Land, and that the face of the earth might be filled with their seed.' Here in the context of a review of history

[90] García Martínez/Tigchelaar translation.

[91] With justification, the translation of Baumgarten and Schwartz reads: 'And at the end of (his) wrath . . . '

[92] P. R. Davies, *The Damascus Covenant: An Interpretation of the 'Damascus Document'* (JSOTSup; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1983), pp. 61–5.

it is clear that the final editor reflects upon the characteristic action of God in preserving 'remnants of chosen ones'[93] through the long history of God's anger against those who turned from the path (2.6). Thus, it would be more accurate to say that the community regards itself as part of a succession of remnants. Davies' comment on CD 1.4–10 tends to break the equation of community to remnant. It later appears that this is not in fact Davies' intent; as Davies rightly comments on CD 2.11–12, 'The continuity of the remnant, and implicitly therefore its constitution in the present moment, are asserted in this passage also.'[94] In other words, the significance of the community's continuity with past remnants and, in particular, with the remnant brought about by the devastations of the exile is that it highlights the community's own identity as the remnant of its own generation. Thus, against Sanders' assertion, there is clear evidence for a community within Second Temple Judaism which not only regarded itself as a remnant but did so during its own historical existence.

The emphasis on continuity with past remnants seen in CD 1.4–10; 2.11–12 is less clear in CD 3.10–14 which, in its final form, has to do with God's establishment of a second-century community as a remnant:

> Through [God's anger] the first members of the Covenant sinned and were delivered up to the sword, because they forsook the Covenant of God and chose their own will and walked in the stubbornness of their hearts each of them doing his own will. But with the remnant which held fast to the commandments of God He made His Covenant with Israel for ever, revealing to them the hidden things in which all Israel had gone astray.

This more singular perspective correlates with the community's self-perception as having entered a 'new covenant' (6.19). In this respect, therefore, the relationship with past remnants is one of discontinuity: God had preserved remnants in the past but only now has he created the remnant of the new covenant. CD 1.4–10 reflects this sense of eschatological climax: the divine wrath through which the remnant has come into existence is nearing its end. While the inheritance of the Land and the enjoyment of prosperity are blessings which the community doubtless regarded as primarily future, the community regarded itself as a root already planted. It is notable that the prophetic tradition had already associated the metaphor of a plant taking root with the establishment of

[93]The phrase is that of P. R. Callaway, *The History of the Qumran Community: An Investigation* (JSPSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1988), p. 133.

[94]P. R. Davies, *Damascus Covenant*, p. 75.

a remnant, as seen in 2 Kings 19.30–1/Isaiah 37.31–2, cited above. As noted previously, the image of planting was a well-known metaphor for Israel – both in its identity as a nation and, after judgement, in its transformed identity as a remnant. It is the latter identity which emerges in CD 3.10–14. Here the author distinguishes between 'Israel' identified as the remnant and 'all Israel' which had gone astray. The promises of the covenant, including the blessing of election, belong to a remnant which, as a result, was constituted as Israel (see 1QpNah frags. 3–4, 3.5). For the present, the dimensions of Israel are ethically conditioned but there is an awareness of a past in which the covenant had belonged to Israel as a nation and, as CD 1.4–10 intimates, of a future in which the remnant having become Israel will obtain a dominion of national proportions.

This extended discussion reveals the way in which the remnant idea was correlated with an awareness of partial eschatological fulfilment. Given his overarching reconstruction in which the Qumran community is viewed as a splinter group which broke from the Essenes because it viewed itself as having received the fulfilment of Essene expectations,[95] Davies would presumably argue that texts like 1QH which refer to a future remnant belonged to the Essenes and predate the formation of the community. The Qumran community preserved this material because they saw themselves to be the fulfilment of this earlier expectation. In this case, evidence that the community regarded the remnant as a group yet to be formed is missing even here.

Davies' thesis is far from certain, not least in its dating of various materials. Consequently, it is perhaps more likely that texts referring to a future remnant were read by the community with a future sense. In this case, the community viewed itself as the faithful remnant in the present – the proleptic realization of the eschatological remnant which would emerge from the coming judgement. As I have noted, such a pattern was well established in the prophetic tradition.

The restored remnant and the participation of individuals

I may now add one further observation which strengthens the analogy between the remnant theology held at Qumran and that which I am proposing Jesus held. As we have seen, the Qumran community's conception of itself as a remnant was an expression of its identity as restored Israel – restored, that is, in at least some anticipatory way. But the community's

[95] P. R. Davies, 'Eschatology at Qumran', *Sects and Scrolls: Essays on Qumran and Related Topics* (South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), pp. 61–78.

self-perception as Israel reconstituted as a remnant by virtue of the new covenant did not evidently erect an impermeable barrier between Israel within the new covenant and all Israel outside it. This does not mean that there was an expectation of a future re-establishment of Israel in which all Israel would be restored to national dominion. That, of course, was a common Second Temple expectation. It was not, however, an expectation that found fertile soil at Qumran. Israel would obtain national dominion but this was only to say that the remnant would obtain national dominion. Israelites not presently members of the community might well participate in the national dominion which the remnant would enjoy but this was not conceived of as a future national restoration. Rather, the participation of other Israelites was only possible as they joined the community of restored Israel *as individuals*. Thus we see in CD 4.6b–11a that a short time remains for individuals to join the remnant community:

> [the first men of holiness] whom God atoned and they justified the righteous and condemned the wicked. And all those who come after them to do according to the precise meaning of the Torah which was taught to the first ones until the completion of the time of these years – just as the covenant which God established with the first ones to atone for their iniquities, so, too, will God atone for them. *But with the completion of the time according to the number of these years one may no longer join the house of Judah*.[96]

Here, then, is an understanding of Israel as in some sense already restored and established as a remnant but to which individuals could be joined prior to the coming judgement on those who refused to join. This very striking revision of prophetic hopes for national restoration integrates an openness to individuals into its conception of Israel's restoration. Individuals may still join precisely because, in the establishment of the remnant of the new covenant, the hopes for Israel's restoration have already been decisively fulfilled *in advance of the final eschatological action of God*.[97]

It is my suggestion that the failure to see a similar dynamic at work in the ministry of Jesus has led to the present dichotomy between those

[96]The translation is that of Baumgarten and Schwartz who with García Martínez rightly translate the recurring הראשנים as 'first ones', referring to the establishment of the new covenant community, rather than 'forefathers' as does Vermes in line 9 and García Martínez and Tigchelaar in both 8 and 9. The phrase 'house of Judah' designates the community, see 1QpHab 8.1; 1QpNah frags. 3–4, 3.4.

[97]This calls into question the stark contrast drawn by Meyer ('Jesus', 126–7) between Jesus' 'open remnant' and the closed remnant of, for example, the Qumran community.

who see Jesus as a prophet of national restoration and those who regard him as a preacher of individual demand and decision. For Sanders, the dichotomy is methodological: those (like Caird and himself) who focus on 'the facts' end up with a prophet with national aims; those (like Bornkamm) who focus on Jesus' teachings envision a figure whose aims are more individualistic.[98] Sanders positions his own reconstruction against the latter 'majority' approach. But if anything, the last twenty years of the twentieth century saw the pendulum swing in Sanders' direction. Surely it is essential to hold both strands of the tradition together. In this regard, an important recent article by W. Horbury underscores the personal and transcendent elements of Jesus' proclamation and argues that 'in the teaching and activity of Jesus, a political element – the national orientation of significant actions – must be recognized as co-existing with an ethical element centred on individual obedience to God – evident especially in the kingdom teaching'.[99]

The model which I have set forth for understanding Jesus' aims allows precisely this sort of coordination of national and individual elements in Jesus' ministry. Jesus called individuals to participate in the national restoration which had been accomplished by the establishment of a remnant through John's message of repentance. Those who respond become the heirs of the kingdom, the blessings of which are already being experienced through Jesus. In a way that differed from common Second Temple conceptions of Israel's restoration, Jesus' call to individuals is possible because he views the restoration as having already taken place. In this way, Jesus' understanding of Israel's restoration as accomplished in principle leaves open the possibility of participation by Jews of the dispersion. Though the Jesus traditions are notably silent on the inclusion of Diaspora Jews, there is nothing to suggest that their participation depends on a future restoration of the twelve tribes to the Land. It is possible to understand Jesus' calling of twelve disciples in just these terms.

The calling of the twelve

If Jesus believed John to have effected Israel's eschatological reconstitution, how does this affect our understanding of Jesus' call of twelve

[98] E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, pp. 116–17, citing G. B. Caird, *Jesus and the Jewish Nation* (Ethel M. Wood Lecture; London: Athlone Press, 1965); and G. Bornkamm, *Jesus of Nazareth* (trans. I. McLuskey and F. McLuskey, with James M. Robinson; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1960).

[99] W. Horbury, 'Constitutional Aspects of the Kingdom of God', *The Kingdom of God and Human Society* (ed. R. Barbour; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1993), p. 73.

disciples? Particularly since Sanders' *Jesus and Judaism*, a widespread assumption among Jesus scholars is that Jesus' calling of twelve disciples symbolized Jesus' expectation of an imminent restoration of the twelve tribes to the Land. For Sanders, this action and other facts about Jesus are crucial for they help to provide a framework for understanding the much less certain sayings tradition. However, as others have noted, the facts themselves require interpretation not least when those facts are symbolic actions. Not just the sayings but also the facts require a framework or hypothesis to make sense of them. That Sanders' hypothesis is not just an induction from what we know about the facts of Jesus' life and of first-century Judaism is clear from his treatment of the calling of the twelve. For Sanders, to understand the significance of this action, it is not important that we know anything about what Jesus said about the twelve, what he did with them, or even whether there really were twelve: '*All we have to know is the fact* that Jesus thought of, and taught his followers to think of, there being "twelve".'[100] An amply attested future hope of a restored tribal federation within Judaism shows what this fact means: Jesus also looked forward to the regathering of the twelve tribes.

I do not suppose that Sanders' procedure is wrong, though it is not what he claims it is. But a framework which allows for a greater degree of realization in Jesus' eschatology would suggest a quite different conclusion. If Jesus believed Israel's restoration to be in some sense already accomplished, his calling of the twelve symbolizes his conviction that Israel's restoration was already being experienced among his followers.[101] This, of itself, does not rule out the possibility that the symbol also anticipates a future regathering of the twelve tribes. But such an expectation may not merely be assumed from the fact of Jesus' calling twelve disciples; it needs further corroboration. Yet it is an expectation which seems unlikely inasmuch as Jesus situated his understanding of restoration against the traditions which supported it.[102] Again, the partially realized eschatology at Qumran may provide an analogy. As Sanders acknowledges, in contrast to much Jewish literature, the scrolls say nothing about a regathered Diaspora.[103] However, despite the apparent absence of such an expectation, the sectarians nevertheless utilized the motif of 'the twelve' not

[100] E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, p. 104.

[101] Cf. N. T. Wright (*Jesus*, pp. 300, 431, 532) who does not distinguish his understanding of the symbol from that of Sanders, but nevertheless places it within an eschatological framework that is substantially more realized than that proposed by Sanders.

[102] An important text on the significance of the twelve is Matt. 19.28. See below, chapter 5, for a discussion.

[103] E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, p. 93.

merely as an expectation of future community organization but also as an expression of present community identity. Thus, in 1QS 8.1 the council of the community, at least in its early form, was to consist of twelve men and three priests, a pattern which provides for one representative from each tribe and one from each of the three Levitical clans, that is, 'an Israel in miniature'.[104] This group was to form only a nucleus of what would become a larger community.[105] Yet, from its inception, the group sought symbolically to represent itself as the fulfilment of Israel's hope of restoration.

4.2.3 The remnant and Jesus' ministry of obduracy

Though he emphasizes 'the facts' and what he regards as their distinctive national focus, E. P. Sanders concedes that the preponderance of the sayings material is not directed to the nation; rather, the bulk of the teaching is directed to 'the little flock', that is, to a much smaller group who had responded in some way to his message. For Sanders, this observation is crucial for, though at first glance it appears to run counter to his understanding of Jesus as one whose aim was the restoration of all Israel, it points up the inadequacy of models in which Jesus is said to have called all Israel to repentance. Sanders' own explanation for this falls into two parts: (1) Jesus had no clearly thought-out strategy to persuade others of his expectation of the imminent restoration of all Israel to the whole nation; he simply believed that it was something that God himself would miraculously accomplish; (2) Jesus did not think he had to accomplish the task of Israel's restoration on his own; he thought that it had been John's role to call all Israel to repent whereas his own task was to promise inclusion to sinners.[106]

Sanders' explanation does indeed resolve the tension between a Jesus whose hopes embraced all Israel but whose ministry was primarily aimed at only a relatively small group within Israel. But there are weaknesses. In the first place, Sanders portrays a restorationist Jesus in continuity with a John whose message of repentance bears no obvious relationship to the restoration of all Israel. According to Sanders, John called all Israel to

[104] Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, p. 130.

[105] L. H. Schiffman (*Sectarian Law in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Courts, Testimony and the Penal Code* (BJS; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), p. 5) regards the fifteen as the minimum number of members required, which would suggest that the scheme served as a basic organizational pattern for the community. This is well reflected in the tribal basis of the military organization in the War Scroll (1QM 2.1–4; 3.14; 5.1–2), an organization which Yadin (*War*, pp. 59–61) shows corresponded to community practices in the present.

[106] E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, pp. 222–37.

repent, and then, Jesus, seeing that 'too few' had responded, sought to supplement John's message by promising the kingdom to sinners apart from repentance. For Sanders, the meagre response to John's call for national repentance and the limited scope of Jesus' own ministry are countenanced by Jesus because of his overarching expectation of a miraculous divine action which would bring about Israel's restoration. But, on this reading, rejection of John's message of repentance and disbelief of Jesus' proclamation are of no consequence, have no ultimate bearing on an individual Israelite's participation in the kingdom and offer no basis for excluding anyone from Israel's restoration. It would be difficult to find a proposition which the Gospel traditions oppose more strongly.

Perhaps more fundamental is the criticism that Sanders' resolution of the tension between Jesus' intentions toward 'all Israel' and his ministry to the few varies considerably from Jesus' own description of his mission to those outside the group of those who had responded to his message. The description itself is a rare, self-conscious reflection by Jesus on his intentions *vis à vis* the nation. The saying in question is that found in Mark 4.11–12. Once again, the basis for the saying is a text from the Old Testament – Isaiah 6.9–10. Two initial observations illustrate the relevance of the text to the tension posed by Sanders. First, the text is cast in terms of a distinction between Jesus' followers and 'those outside'. In other words, we have here precisely Sanders' differentiation of 'all Israel' and the 'little flock'. Already in Mark's Gospel Jesus had implied a similar distinction in identifying the members of his family as those who do the will of the Father (3.34–5). Second, despite many attempts to the contrary, the language of the text unavoidably has to do with Jesus' intentions.[107]

Verses 11–12 have naturally generated enormous discussion, not least because the stated purpose of the parables – to prevent understanding – appears to be at considerable variance with the way many of the parables actually function. In Mark 12.12 it is clear that 'those outside' understood Jesus' parable only too well. Gundry avoids the difficulty by distinguishing between parables which obfuscate – like the parables of Mark 4 – and those whose meaning is evident.[108] But the basis on which such a categorization of parables may proceed is not easy to establish.

[107]Here reference must be made to the long-running discussion of whether or not the syntax designates the purpose of the parables. For a review and refutation of attempts to read ἵνα . . . μήποτε . . . with non-telic force, see C. A. Evans, *To See and Not Perceive: Isaiah 9.9–10 in Early Jewish and Christian Interpretation* (JSOTSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1989), pp. 92–9.

[108]Gundry, *Mark*, p. 200.

Others have avoided the difficulty – for Jesus if not for Mark – by denying the authenticity of verses 11–12. But it must now be said that this judgement is no longer widely held.[109] If the logion is accepted as authentic, the difficulty remains: how do parables actually prevent understanding? Some who defend authenticity have argued that the logion has been introduced here by Mark but originally served as a broader statement of Jesus' intentions toward the nation. So, for instance, Jeremias argues that 'parables' originally meant 'riddles' or 'enigmas' but that Mark was misled by the catchword to attach the saying to parables, properly speaking. Thus, for Jeremias, the saying embraces the entire public ministry of Jesus.[110] But such arguments in favour of the intrusion of verses 11–12 are not finally convincing: the underlying Aramaic term may have had other connotations than 'parable', but this does not automatically mean that Jesus had them in mind.[111] Nevertheless, the fact that Jesus says that 'to those outside *everything* (τὰ πάντα) happens in parables' must surely be taken as a broad statement of Jesus' intentions toward the nation. To take τὰ πάντα as a reference only to 'everything in the parables', as does Gundry, results in a truism scarcely worth stating: 'everything in the parables comes in parables'.[112] Still, certainly not everything Jesus said to 'those outside' was cast in the form of parable. The difficulty, however, may be resolved simply by taking τὰ πάντα as a reference to everything related to the mystery of the kingdom which is given only to the disciples.

But what precisely is the mystery? The mystery of the kingdom has to do with the arrival of the kingdom and its blessings in advance of its coming with final glory and power.[113] Disciples have been given the mystery of the kingdom in the same sense that Jesus says they have already entered the kingdom: they are already tasting its blessings, enjoying its goodness, experiencing its forgiveness. Nevertheless, to say that they

[109]For a summary of views concerning the text's authenticity, see especially R. A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26* (WBC; Dallas: Word, 1989), pp. 199–201; and Evans, *To See*, pp. 103–5.

[110]J. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (revised edition; London: SCM Press, 1963), pp. 14–18, followed by Evans, *To See*, p. 104. C. F. D. Moule ('Mark 4:1–20 Yet Once More', in *Neotestamentica et Semitica: Studies in Honour of Matthew Black* (ed. E. E. Ellis and M. Wilcox; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1969), p. 103) comments that Jeremias' view requires one 'to assume that someone was so stupid as to render by ἐν παραβολαῖς a phrase which, in an Aramaic floating saying, meant "enigmatically" '.

[111]See Gundry, (*Mark*, p. 200) for a summary and rebuttal of other arguments for the intrusion of vv. 11–12.

[112]Gundry, *Mark*, p. 200.

[113]See esp. R. E. Brown, *The Semitic Background of the Term 'Mystery' in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968), pp. 33–4 and Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom*, p. 104, and the literature they cite.

have been given the mystery of the kingdom is not to say that it has been revealed to them with full understanding. Hence, the need, at times, for further explanation.[114]

By contrast, even when 'those outside' understand precisely what the parables mean (i.e. when they 'see' and 'hear'), they do not enter into an experience of the present eschatological realities they describe (i.e. they do not 'perceive' or 'understand'). But how do parables at once both enable one to see but also prevent perception? Certainly when the meaning of one or more of an allegory's images is not grasped, neither seeing nor perceiving can take place. C. Blomberg's recent work on parables as limited allegories has shown that even when an allegory's meaning is fully understood, the view of reality it invites the hearer to penetrate and then embrace may be rejected.[115] A parable functions, then, to harden by forcing a decision, for the decision to reject the message brings hardening. So, for example, a Marxist who reads Orwell's *Animal Farm* may penetrate its view of reality only to reject it and walk away from the experience more convinced than ever of the deficiency of Orwell's non-Marxist world-view.

To the extent that it was directed to 'those outside' – a group which, following Sanders' lead, we have identified as 'all Israel' – Jesus' message about the mystery of the kingdom abets his proclamation of Israel's impending judgement, for it serves as the beginning of judgement by acting as a catalyst which promotes the nation's obduracy. It is in this respect that Jesus' use of Isaiah 6.9–10 is seen to be particularly apropos. There we see a prophet given a divine commission of judgement. Evans rightly notes, however, that Isaiah 6 is not to be regarded as a description of Isaiah's call to prophetic vocation.[116] Isaiah's message embraces more than a general ministry of obduracy. Even in the context of Isaiah's commission of judgement, there remains a clear expectation of a remnant through which Israel would be delivered and restored. For when the judgement falls on the nation, a remnant, 'the holy seed', will remain like the stump which is burned after the felling of an oak (Isa. 6.13).

Jesus' distinction between those who are given the mystery of the kingdom and 'those outside' suggests that he views his own promotion of 'all Israel's' obduracy within a similar framework. His intention toward the *nation* was to promote its hardening, but precisely because the message of

[114]Note Gundry's comment that 'giving a mystery is not equivalent to explaining it', *Mark*, p. 200.

[115]C. L. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), pp. 53–5. Cf. the early and insightful comments of Moule, 'Mark 4:1–20', pp. 106–9.

[116]Evans, *To See*, pp. 22–4.

the mystery of the kingdom does penetrate and transform the world-view of some *individuals*, we need not conclude 'that those who are addressed (ὑμῖν) and οἱ ἔξω are two irrevocably distinct groups'.[117] His ministry serves both to set in motion the judgement of the nation and to bestow the kingdom on a purified remnant.

4.3 Conclusion

There was an expectation that the constitutional shape of Israel in the eschaton would be determined by the restoration of the tribal league in the Land. At least some Jews expected this to be effected by Elijah. Contrary to that expectation, Jesus asserts that Israel's eschatological reconstitution had already taken place and that the one whose role it was to bring this constitutional feature of the eschaton into existence had already come. John was the Elijah who was to come just prior to the eschaton. But the sense in which he restored 'all things' had to be qualified by the scriptural necessity that the saints of the Most High would endure affliction just prior to the eschaton. Even the returning Elijah would not escape. But this in no way called into question the success of his restoration. Rather John's call to repentance and baptism had accomplished the restoration of Israel by calling into existence a remnant made ready for the eschaton.

In its origin the expectation of Elijah's return was primarily related to Israel's return to covenant fidelity, but the tradition had undergone considerable development with the integration of an expectation that the restoration would include the regathering of the twelve tribes and their re-establishment as a powerful nation. It is precisely this latter notion which Jesus rejects in his claim that Elijah's end-time restoration had already been accomplished by John. John's ministry had called into existence a penitent remnant, prepared for the coming of the kingdom. In experiencing the blessings of the kingdom which Jesus announced were already available, John's faithful remnant becomes the eschatological remnant into which individuals, including Diaspora Jews, may yet be incorporated. If this imbues the formation of restored Israel with a dynamic character, it neither pushes restoration into the future nor makes

[117]Moule, 'Mark 4:1–20', p. 99. Though she does not deny the authenticity of Mark 4.11–12, Hooker (*Mark*, p. 128) finds it difficult 'to see what place the words could have had in the ministry of Jesus, for we may confidently assume that the purpose of his teaching was to stimulate response, not prevent it'. But if the analysis given above is correct, then Jesus' intentions are seen to be more complex; as with Isaiah, his teaching both stirs up the nation's rejection leading to its judgement and incites individuals from within the nation to embrace the kingdom he announced.

it contingent upon the re-establishment of Israel as a tribal federation. For Jesus, the restoration of Israel was not an awaited but rather an accomplished reality, symbolized by the gathering of twelve disciples. By provoking a decision, Jesus' ministry hardened the nation and initiated its judgement. But to the poor and the meek (Matt. 5.3, 5) who accepted his message belonged the promises of Israel's eschatological restoration as the fruitful remnant. As for the pre-exilic prophets before him, the announcement of Israel's imminent judgement by Jesus in no way called into question the fact of Israel's election and restoration. For, with the renewal of a remnant, it is not simply part of the whole but a new whole which has been made heir to the blessings of the kingdom.[118]

[118]See Hasel's summary of the OT concept of remnant, *The Remnant*, pp. 387–8.

5

JESUS AND THE PURITY OF ISRAEL

In the foregoing chapters I have argued that the eschatological proclamation of Jesus must be viewed as the paradoxical announcement that the judgement and restoration of Israel were to be experienced as simultaneous realities. In this and the following chapter, I wish to examine the way this assessment of the eschatological situation of the nation played out in Jesus' intentions toward three central and interrelated constitutional features of the eschaton: purity, Land and Temple. Few Jews believed that Israel's restoration would take place on a strictly spiritual or theological plane. Dramatic changes were expected, changes which would alter Israel's social structures and institutions. This is not to say that the sacred traditions which serviced these expectations were univocal. This diversity lies behind the divergence of Jesus' aims from the expectations of many of his contemporaries. Central to the eschatological hopes of Second Temple Judaism were the beliefs that Israel would be reassembled in a pure Land and reconstituted as a pure people. A crucial question, then, is how Jesus' message of national restoration *and* judgement affected his intentions concerning the purity and Land of Israel.

5.1 Purity, society and Israel

5.1.1 Purity and the Temple

On the Pharisees of Sanders and Neusner

A useful, if not wholly obvious, point of departure is the recent debate between E. P. Sanders and Jacob Neusner over the purity practices of Pharisees in the first century.[1] What is obscured in their overheated

[1] See especially E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah* (London: SCM Press, 1990), pp. 131–254; and J. Neusner, 'Mr. Sanders' Pharisees and Mine: A Response to E. P. Sanders' *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah', SJT* 44 (1991), 73–95.

polemic is that Sanders, like Neusner, acknowledges that the Pharisees did indeed seek to maintain a higher state of purity than did many other first-century Jews. Of greater importance is why the Pharisees sought to be more pure for more of the time than others. As is well known, Neusner has argued that the Pharisees were attempting to eat ordinary food in the same state of purity as required of priests in the Temple.[2] In rejecting Neusner's explanation, Sanders says simply that the Pharisees sought purity for its own sake.[3] 'The Pharisees had a positive concern for purity; it was better to be pure than not . . . The same was true of a lot of Jews and of a lot of pagans . . .'[4] Sanders thus attributes the pursuit of purity to a vague desire to signify 'godliness'.[5] Paradoxically, Sanders also repeatedly asserts that most people, including Pharisees, were impure much of the time and that this was no particular problem, since impurity outside the cult had no practical consequences.[6] Sanders thus portrays the Pharisees and many other Jews as people to whom purity was important but for whom it did not matter.

Sanders has successfully demonstrated that Neusner wrongly deduced that the Pharisees ate their food in the same state of purity as required of priests in the Temple. But in breaking the connection between Pharisaic pursuit of purity and priestly norms, Sanders also denies that the extra purity sought by the Pharisees was connected in any way to a concern for the sanctity of the Temple. The position is odd, for, as we shall see, Scripture stipulates cleanness outside the cult for reasons which relate ultimately to the cult. Moreover, when Sanders actually specifies the sorts of extra purity sought by the Pharisees, he begrudgingly concedes that in some respects at least the extra purity sought was, in fact, an attempt to emulate priestly purity.

Sanders allows that the Pharisees sought a higher state of purity than did the *ʿam haʾaretz* in four ways. They sought to avoid (1) 'fly-impurity', that is, the impurity imparted by the carcass of a 'swarming thing' especially to tables, vessels, liquids and moistened foods;[7] (2) *midras*-impurity, that is, the secondary impurity of things touched by someone with a discharge,

[2]See e.g. J. Neusner, *Rabbinic Traditions About the Pharisees Before 70* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), vol. II, pp. 294–300.

[3]E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law*, p. 188. [4]Ibid., pp. 245–6.

[5]Ibid., p. 192. [6]Ibid., pp. 245–6.

[7]W. Houston (*Purity and Monotheism: Clean and Unclean Animals in Biblical Law* (JSOTSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), p. 51 n. 1) comments that Sanders 'is of course quite incorrect in referring to the dietary pollution conveyed under this law [Lev. 11:29–35] as "fly-impurity". Flies, which were not "swarming things that swarm upon the ground" but swarming things of the air, could not convey ritual impurity.' Sanders (*Judaism*, pp. 520–1 n. 17) has acknowledged the mistake.

a menstruant or woman in the first stage of childbirth-impurity; (3) corpse-impurity. In addition, (4) they practised handwashing in connection with sabbath and festival meals.[8] Sanders especially stresses Neusner's error in attributing avoidance of fly-impurity to priests, when Leviticus 11 states that it was an obligation for all.[9] Handwashing, Sanders argues, is by no means a priestly law and was practised on a limited scale, probably because of concern about fly-impurity. Nevertheless, he concedes that the avoidance of the remaining two types of impurity were obligations laid on priests alone. Though Sanders admits this, he minimizes the significance of Pharisaic concern to avoid corpse- and *midras*-impurity by suggesting that it would have been impractical to do so. At most, one can say that the avoidance of corpse- and *midras*-impurity constituted a 'minor gesture' toward living like priests.[10] It must be said that tagging such purity pursuits as 'minor gestures' turns on a comparison of Pharisaic practice with Sanders' understanding of what biblical law required of priests and not with what priests in the first century actually did or with what the Pharisees thought priests should do.[11] One suspects that many of the impracticalities which lead Sanders to doubt that the Pharisees were actually able to avoid *midras*-impurity in particular would have been equally impractical for priests.[12] Whether or not the Pharisaic 'gestures' toward living like priests were 'minor', Sanders admits that at least some Pharisaic purity pursuits were priestly.

In this respect, at least, Neusner has the better part. In considering the biblical stipulation that intercourse with a menstruant pollutes the Land, Neusner detects in Scripture the principle which in his view would be greatly expanded by the Pharisees, namely, the idea that pollution of the Land cannot be separated from pollution of the cult. '[T]he Land is the locus of the Temple'; there is 'no way to distinguish cult from people and Land, and the cleanness of the latter is directly and repeatedly related to the preservation of the holiness of the former'.[13]

[8]For a summary, see E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law*, pp. 231–5.

[9]Ibid., pp. 204–5. So also J. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1991), p. 1006.

[10]E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law*, p. 235.

[11]For a similar argument, cf. B. Chilton, 'The Purity of the Kingdom as Conveyed in Jesus' Meals', *Society of Biblical Literature 1992 Seminar Papers* (ed. E. H. Lovering, Jr; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), pp. 478–9.

[12]For instance, Sanders (*Jewish Law*, pp. 149–51) makes much of the fact that it would have been economically unfeasible for a Pharisee to expel his wife during menstruation and after childbirth in order to live like a priest. But would priests have found such expulsion any more feasible?

[13]J. Neusner, *A History of the Mishnaic Law of Purities* (Leiden: Brill, 1974–77), vol. XXII, pp. 29–35. On the connection between the purity of the Temple and the Land, see below.

It must be said that the scriptural origins of this principle are often obscured in Neusner's various writings on the subject because they stand in tension with his central thesis that the hallmark of Pharisaic innovation is the attempt to maintain cultic cleanness outside the Temple, most particularly cleanness at the table. He thus makes statements which suggest that the priestly code regards uncleanness outside the cult as inconsequential, even as he acknowledges that the priestly code *advocates* cleanness outside the cult! For instance, he ends his discussion of the tractate *Niddah* by concluding that the Pharisees reversed the significance of Leviticus 15.31; whereas the priestly authors of this text believed that uncleanness was significant only within the tabernacle, the Pharisees took it to mean that cleanness was essential even outside the cult: '*Because the tabernacle is in their midst, Israel must be clean, even when not in the tabernacle*, which is exactly what Lev. 15.31 says – to a Pharisee.'[14] Neusner seems unaware that he thus attributes to the priestly code the view that cleanness outside the cult was important but did not matter.[15] Only with the Pharisees did cleanness outside the cult begin to matter. For such statements Neusner has been justly scathed by J. Milgrom, who argues in the strongest terms that the meaning of Leviticus 15.31 that Neusner attributes to the Pharisees, namely, the necessity of cleanness outside the cult, is precisely the meaning the priestly authors intended for biblical Israel.[16]

In a moment I shall attempt to fill out Neusner's suggestion that the connection of cleanness outside the cult to the cleanness of the cult results from the association of the Temple with the Land and the people who occupy it: extra-cultic uncleanness defiles the Land which cannot be dissociated from the Temple. But enough has been said to indicate that while Sanders is probably correct in saying that observance of purity regulations outside the Temple was not an attempt to live like priests, he is wrong to infer that it was wholly unrelated to priest and cult.

On the meaning of Pharisaic extensions of purity

We are left with something of a conundrum. On the one hand, Neusner is partially correct: the Pharisees *did* attempt to adopt some of the purity regulations that had been laid down for priests; on the other hand, Sanders has demonstrated that this Pharisaic programme stopped short of an

[14]Ibid., vol. XVI, p. 211.

[15]In this respect, the views of Sanders and Neusner oddly converge, except that the apparently nonsensical view of cleanness that Neusner attributes to Scripture is held by Sanders to apply also to the Pharisees and many other Jews.

[16]Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, pp. 1004–9.

attempt to emulate the purity of priests in every respect. What could the meaning of such a mediating position have been? As we have seen, Sanders does not think that Pharisaic 'gestures toward living like priests' meant much of anything at all. But why did the Pharisees choose to go as far as they did in the pursuit of priest-like purity but no further? If the Pharisees deemed purity intrinsically worth while and pleasing to God, why would they have stopped short of efforts to achieve full priestly purity?

The answer, I suggest, depends on the observation of the tension within Scripture between Israel's call to be the holy people of God and the special consecration of a priestly class within Israel. In other words, Israel was holy, but Israelite priests were holy in an additional and hence elevated sense. The special holiness of priests stemmed from their consecration to the cult which meant that they were to maintain a higher degree of purity *even when they were outside the Temple*. Thus, even within Scripture one may distinguish between purity regulations laid down for the laity and the stricter regulations laid down for priests. The difference in the holiness of priests and laity goes to the heart of why a priest was granted greater proximity to the sanctuary than an ordinary Israelite even when both were pure.

The point may also be made with reference to the dispute noted above concerning the state in which Pharisees ate ordinary food. Here both Sanders and Neusner fail to take into account adequately that the simple distinction between holy food and ordinary food is insufficient. In the first place, this distinction presupposes a prior one, that is, between permitted and proscribed food. The latter category was made up of food which was inherently unclean. But even permitted food which was regarded as inherently clean could nevertheless contract uncleanness, as Leviticus 11.33–4 indicates. Thus, greater sophistication is required. In addition to proscribed food which was always unclean, food which was permitted could be (1) holy and therefore also clean; (2) common and also clean; or (3) common but unclean. As we shall see, even this typology is not precise because the degree of cleanness necessary to make common food clean is not sufficient for holy food.

Now priests and Israelites alike avoided inherently unclean food for a very specific reason: Scripture declared that avoidance of inherently unclean food was a crucial way in which Israel set itself apart from the nations (Lev. 11.44). Beyond this, priests not only avoided inherently unclean food but also consumed only food that was holy, which therefore also had to be free of uncleanness. As Sanders is aware, the rabbis did not dispute this postulate of Scripture but only disagreed about what

was necessary to ensure the cleanness of holy food in the course of its production. Thus, as the holy status of Israel among the nations was expressed by the avoidance of inherently unclean food, so too was the special status of priests as a holy class within Israel expressed through the consumption of clean, holy food.

If inherently unclean food was avoided, was permitted food which had contracted uncleanness likewise avoided by laity as well as priests? On this point a major contradiction emerges in Sanders' work. Because he rejects Neusner's claim that Pharisees ate food in priestly purity, he wants very much to say that Pharisees and Israelites generally did not hesitate to eat impure food. He deduces this from the fact that the Pharisees took special concern for the purity of holy food: 'If Pharisees always handled their own food in purity . . . we would have to imagine them as thinking "Though we handle and eat all food in purity, we must still ask whether or not heave offering must be handled in purity."'[17] And again, the Pharisaic debates over the protection of priestly food suggest 'purity in handling the priests' food; impurity in handling their own'.[18] But the deduction leads Sanders into a corner, for in the same essay he allows that Israelites generally *did* avoid not merely inherently unclean food but also permitted food which had contracted uncleanness, though he is quick to assert that Scripture is not explicit in the matter.[19]

So which of Sanders' contradictory statements is accurate? In fact, on the question of lay consumption of food with contracted uncleanness, Scripture is less ambiguous than Sanders suggests. The text which specifies the way in which permitted food is rendered unclean – Leviticus 11.32–5; 37–8 – is part of a lengthy discussion of unclean foods which are not to be eaten, whether they are inherently unclean or have contracted uncleanness (as in 11.39–40). Moreover, 11.44–7 and Deuteronomy 14.21 strongly suggest that avoidance of unclean food, of whatever type, was part of Israel's vocation to be holy.

If Sanders is correct to affirm that Israelites generally avoided impure food, his other statements to the contrary result from an inadequate description of the Pharisaic and biblical understanding of degrees of impurity. That the intensity of uncleanness varies depending on the nature of the source and in proportion to the directness of the contact with the source is thoroughly biblical. It is thus axiomatic even within the earliest strands of the *Mishnah* that the capacity of uncleanness to defile depends both on the strength of the uncleanness and on the degree of holiness of

[17]E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law*, p. 197. [18]Ibid., p. 174.
[19]Ibid., p. 232; cf. p. 204.

that with which uncleanness comes into contact. For instance, in *m. Nid.* 10.6–7 the Houses agree that a woman in stage-two childbirth impurity was not to touch hallowed things (i.e. things brought as offerings in the Temple) but could eat second tithe and separate heave offering (which were holy but not as holy as hallowed things). Thus, they assume that uncleanness which polluted hallowed things did not necessarily pollute less holy offerings. So Sanders is mistaken simply to assume that because special concern was shown for the purity of holy food, the purity of ordinary food was not a concern.[20] It could well be that the purity of common food *was* a concern, but fewer safeguards were required for common food because to be considered clean it did not have to be as clean as holy food.

It is this latter proposition that must now be investigated. I concede that Sanders is entirely correct in his observation that Pharisaic concern for the purity of food had mostly to do with the purity of priestly food. But there are two reasons for this: (1) holy food was more susceptible to defilement and hence more concern was required; (2) perhaps most importantly, the consequences for a priest consuming defiled holy food (*kārēt*; Lev. 7.19–21) are far more dire than for an Israelite eating unclean common food: immersion and sunset.[21] This latter point is anomalous within Torah for it is the only command which, when violated, does not require sacrificial remedy.

The idea that minor uncleanness could be considered as cleanness for common food is frequent in rabbinic writings. The assertion 'third-grade uncleanness counts as clean in common food' is repeated like a mantra in *m. T. Yom.* 4.1–3. But how early is this idea? In *t. Ter*. 3.12 the Houses debate when a vat for winepressing can be made unclean. Neusner, following Lieberman, explains that the vat may have been intentionally rendered unclean so as to leave no doubt as to its status and thus to encourage care in permitting clean things to touch it.[22] Whether or not this explanation is valid, the debate concerns the point at which the cleanness of the vat ceases to matter with respect to the sacred portions of its contents. Shammaites said it no longer matters after the first tithe has been removed, that is, the portion from which heave offering of tithe would be taken. Hillelites, by contrast, permitted the vat to be made unclean only after second tithe had been removed. Clearly, the Hillelite position is more stringent, but for present purposes the Shammaite position is more interesting. It presupposes that the vat can be rendered unclean *while second tithe is still*

[20] Ibid., p. 197.

[21] See, for example, Lev. 11.39–40 where only sunset is specified but immersion is probably implied for eating the flesh of a permitted animal which has died naturally.

[22] Neusner, *Rabbinic Traditions*, vol. II, p. 87.

in the vat. Now second tithe was less sacred than heave offering, but it still had to be eaten in cleanness. The Shammaites seem to suppose that the degree of uncleanness transmitted to second tithe if the vat containing it were rendered unclean would still count as clean for second tithe but not for heave offering of first tithe. Consequently, we should not imagine that either House would have entertained the possibility of using, say, a corpse to render the vat unclean. The Shammaites' willingness to expose second tithe to uncleanness demonstrates that the uncleanness envisioned cannot have been very severe. Sanders infers from this text that everyone who drank the wine after the vat had been rendered unclean would have been drinking impure wine and that this was not seen to be a problem. But this fails to take into account what the Houses presuppose, namely, that there are degrees of uncleanness and susceptibility. Once this presupposition is taken into account, it is easy to see that the text refers to a vat which, having been rendered unclean, transmits to the wine a degree of uncleanness which counted as cleanness for second tithe (Shammai) or for common food (Hillel) but not for heave offering.

The point emerges again when considering Pharisaic laws concerning the buying and selling of produce. As Sanders indicates, the Pharisees debated what to do with purchased produce about which there was doubt concerning whether tithe had already been paid. Some Pharisees scrupled to tithe the produce if there was any doubt. What is interesting for present purposes is that, in accordance with Scripture (Lev. 27.30–1), the Houses presuppose that the seller of produce was the one who was obliged to pay tithe, hence the debate about whether the buyer should assume that the seller has been scrupulous in the payment of tithes. This observation illumines a crucial Pharisaic text in *m. Dem*. 6.6: 'The School of Shammai say: A man may sell his olives only to an Associate. The School of Hillel say: Even to one that [only] pays Tithes.' Now the concern of the Hillelites in restricting the sale of olives to tithers cannot have been that the buyer of the olives might not tithe them; a Pharisee would only sell produce that he had already tithed and a person buying olives from a Pharisee would have assumed that the Pharisee had tithed them. In other words, the olives in question can only have been olives from which the holy portions had been removed before the olives had even been sold: *the olives were common food and would only ever be common food*. Still the Shammaites refused to sell common olives to non-*haberim*. The reason can only have been that they distrusted all but *haberim* to preserve the olives in purity.[23] The

[23]The particular concern for olives is that olives ooze oil, thus becoming moist; moistened foods have greater susceptibility to uncleanness than do dry foods.

Hillelites agree that even common olives must be kept clean but allow that a person known to be scrupulous in tithing should also be assumed to take appropriate precautions in maintaining the purity of the olives. Here, then, is an indication that the Pharisees were concerned about the purity of even common food.

A similar point emerges in regard to handwashing. It is true, as Sanders emphasizes, that handwashing arises most frequently in connection with the handling of holy food. But it has yet to be observed adequately that the issue here is not, in the first instance, that such food would be eaten by priests who were holy but that *the food itself was holy*. Sanders makes the fact that such food was to be eaten by priests the central issue. But the danger is not simply that priests might consume defiled food but, more immediately, that holy food might be touched by what is unclean; this would be to violate the fundamental stipulation of the priestly code that what is unclean must be kept separate from what is holy. This qualification of Sanders' position is crucial. I contend that the same care taken to ensure the cleanness of holy food that was about to be *touched* (quite apart from any thought of its potential consumption) would also have been required for common food which was about to be *consumed*.

The point follows from several considerations. The Houses decreed that the one who ate food which was unclean in the second degree could invalidate heave offering, that is, communicate to it third-degree uncleanness by touch (*m. Zab* 5.12; *y. Shab*. 1.4; *b. Shab*. 13b).[24] In addition, heave offering could be similarly invalidated by direct contact with food of second-degree impurity (or, for that matter, with anything of second-degree impurity).[25] In other words, second-degree impure food and the eater of second-degree impure food have the same defiling effect on heave offering. What this suggests is that, in this case at least, *consumption communicates impurity more completely than contact, for the eater*

[24]There is widespread acceptance of the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmud's report that the so-called Eighteen Decrees (of which ten are the rules concerning what invalidates heave offering, *m. Zab*. 5.12) go back to the Houses. But as G. Alon ('The Levitical Uncleanness of Gentiles', *Jews, Judaism and the Classical World: Studies in the Times of the Second Temple and Talmud* (trans. I. Abrahams; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1977), p. 156) notes, the Decrees should not be read as if they were innovations made at the time they were issued but as a consolidation of earlier *halakhah*, making it likely that the *halakhah* concerning the eating of second-degree impure food was already current in Jesus' day. Cf. the similar conclusion of R. P. Booth, *Jesus and the Laws of Purity: Tradition History and Legal History in Mark 7* (JSNTSup; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), pp. 184–5.

[25]The point follows from the principle, which is basic to both the purity code of Scripture and the Mishnaic system, that the defiling subject communicates one degree less uncleanness to the defiled object. But the principle is made explicit for the specific case we are considering in the anonymous *m. Toh*. 2.3 where common food with second-degree uncleanness renders heave offering invalid.

is rendered impure in the same degree as that which was eaten[26] – a clear exception to the general principle that a defiled object receives one less degree of uncleanness than the defiling subject.

But what happens to ordinary food when touched with unwashed hands? Two initial observations are necessary. First, the Pharisees assumed unwashed hands to be capable of invalidating heave offering, that is, that unwashed hands possessed second-degree impurity.[27] Second, it mattered whether the food in question was moistened; dry food was not susceptible to defilement (except, of course, if it was in an earthen pot into which a forbidden carcass fell; Lev. 11.32–5). To dry food unwashed hands communicated third-degree impurity, which counted as cleanness for common food and did not matter. But ordinary food such as fish, meat and bread would have been regarded as moistened. Here, it appears, we meet another exception to the general principle that uncleanness decreases by one degree as it is transmitted; for it appears that moistened food received the *same* degree of uncleanness as the defiling subject. Thus, unwashed hands, assumed to be unclean in the second degree, would communicate uncleanness to common food in the second degree.[28]

I can now add this conclusion to the preceding observation that common food of second-degree impurity defiled the one who ate it not in the third but in the second degree. This means that clean persons who ate with unwashed hands would defile themselves to the second degree. What were the practical consequences of this? Such persons were (1) capable of invalidating heave offering; (2) obliged to immerse themselves and wait for sunset in order to return to a state of cleanness. The latter obligation is plain from the fact that second-degree uncleanness of hands required

[26]The hypothesis of J. C. Poirier ('Why Did the Pharisees Wash Their Hands?', *JJS* 47 (1996), 217–33) that the Pharisees believed ingestion of unclean food would defile their inward parts is rendered unlikely not only by the meagreness of the evidence that a distinction between external and internal defilement was made, but by the fact that the rabbinic writings treat uncleanness resulting from the ingestion of unclean food in the same way as other sorts of uncleanness. Poirier says that the Pharisees did not believe immersion rectified interior uncleanness, but in that case we would expect to find discussions of purification procedures for inward uncleanness.

It is debatable whether the Pharisees would have also held that the eater is rendered impure in the same degree as that which was eaten in the case of one who eats food of *first*-degree uncleanness. Rabbis Eliezer and Joshua were still debating the defiling effect of eating first-degree impure food at the end of the first century (*m. Toh.* 2.2). But the principle of the ten decrees that the one who eats second-degree impure food contracts second-degree uncleanness remained undisputed.

[27]See E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law*, pp. 228–9; Neusner, *Rabbinic Traditions*, vol. I, p. 317.

[28]See Booth, *Jesus*, p. 184.

a water rite for purification; how much more so the second-degree uncleanness of the whole person?

All of this counts against Sanders' view that the Pharisees washed their hands before handling priests' food and their own holy food but not before eating ordinary food. But it should not be taken to imply with Neusner that the Pharisees were trying to eat their food in priestly purity. They were simply trying to avoid food of second-degree uncleanness, whereas a priest was obliged to avoid food of third-degree uncleanness outside the Temple (i.e. heave offering) and food of fourth-degree uncleanness inside the Temple (i.e. hallowed things).

I conclude, then, that although Sanders is correct to reject Neusner's claim that the Pharisees ate ordinary food in priestly purity, he is wrong to suggest that the purity of ordinary food did not matter. Impurity which counted as uncleanness for holy food did not necessarily count as uncleanness for common food. So for a Pharisee to eat clean ordinary food would not mean that he was eating food that was just as clean as the food eaten by priests at home or at the Temple. Moreover, the passage from *m. Demai* examined above suggests that many non-Pharisees were regarded by Pharisees as being above suspicion in the matter of preserving ordinary food in purity. It is likely that many more Jews tried to eat ordinary food that was pure than were regarded by the Pharisees as having actually done so.[29] What this suggests is that priests, Pharisees and even many Israelites more generally attempted to eat pure food, but what was appropriately pure for an Israelite was not therefore regarded as sufficiently pure for

[29]Cf. Mark's assertion that 'all the Jews' washed their hands before eating (7.3), which, when the hyperbole is taken into account, may deserve more credence than is often allowed. Sanders, of course, rejects this possibility for he does not believe that even Pharisees washed before eating common food. Neusner and Booth think that Pharisees washed their hands before eating ordinary food but assume that most non-Pharisees did not regularly immerse in a *miqveh* to rectify the impurity of the whole body, so would not have bothered to wash impurity from their hands. Ironically, the fallacy of this assumption is exposed by Sanders, who comments: 'In Palestine Jews kept most of the biblical purity laws. Neusner has recently exclaimed, "as if the masses kept the purity laws!", as if he knows that they did not.' Sanders (*Judaism*, pp. 222–30) supports this statement, in part, with the archaeological evidence for the very widespread use of *miqvaʾot*. On this cf. now especially E. Regev, 'Pure Individualism: The Idea of Non-Priestly Purity in Ancient Judaism', *JSJ* 31 (2000), 181–6. Widespread concern to avoid defilement is also reflected by the difficulty encountered by Antipas in settling Jews in Tiberias, a city he had built over a graveyard (*Ant*. 18.6–8). Further evidence that many non-Pharisees did in fact practise handwashing before eating ordinary food comes from *b. Shab*. 13b. As noted above, Neusner takes as authentic the Talmud's explanation concerning why the handwashing decree of Shammai/Hillel was attributed to the Houses in the Eighteen Decrees, namely, that it was decreed by Shammai/Hillel but accepted only as a result of the work of the Houses. But accepted by whom? Surely not the Pharisees, among whom it would have been difficult to find dissenters to a ruling on which Shammai and Hillel agreed. The Talmud must be speaking of *popular* acceptance.

priests. Thus, non-priests who ate pure food were not attempting to live exactly as priests did, eradicating the distinction between holy priests and ordinary Israelites. Rather, they were acknowledging that Israel's vocation was to be holy in a sense analogous though not identical to the holiness of priests within Israel.

5.1.2 Purity, Temple, people, Land – the wider view

I have alluded to basic connections between purity regulations, the Temple and the Land – connections bound up with assumptions about Israel's election. I will in due course have to explore the literary evidence for this latter set of relationships. Before doing so, however, it is necessary to try to clarify the nature of these various interconnections by taking a wider view.

Particularly helpful in gaining this wider view is the recent work of D. Wright and P. Jenson, who have given independent but complementary accounts of the symbolic order which Israel's Scripture articulates and which was basic to the first-century Palestinian world-view. Both Wright and Jenson frame their discussions in terms of a spectrum of impurity or holiness. As the phrase suggests, both view holiness and purity as graded; holiness and impurity are relative. For Jenson, the spectrum ranges from very holy to very unclean with several intermediate values and can be correlated with spatial, personal, ritual and temporal dimensions of life (see table 1).[30]

Table 1. *Jenson's holiness spectrum*

	Very holy	Holy	Clean	Unclean	Very unclean
Spatial	holy of holies	holy place	court	camp	outside
Personal	high priest	priest	Levites, clean Israelites	clean, minor impurities	major impurities, the dead
Ritual	sacrificial (not eaten)	sacrificial (priests eat)	sacrificial (non-priests eat)	purification (1 day)	purification (7 day)
Temporal	Day of Atonement	festivals Sabbath	common days		

[30]P. P. Jenson, *Graded Holiness: A Key to the Priestly Conception of the World* (JSOTSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), p. 37.

Wright's spectrum differs somewhat from that of Jenson in that it reflects only gradations of impurity (see table 2).[31] Both charts formalize for the priestly code the observation, made above in relation to the Pharisees, that there are degrees or grades of both impurity and holiness. Considered together, however, a point emerges that is not immediately apparent from an examination of the charts in isolation: the necessity of speaking of two gradations – one of holiness and one of impurity – which interact in a complex way. Neither chart makes this explicit, though Jenson and Wright are both aware of the problem.[32] Jenson tries to account for both gradations by placing degrees of impurity and of holiness on a single gradation. But holiness, though threatened by uncleanness, is not its opposite.

Jenson's chart does illustrate the fact that the degree of cleanness required is correlated both with relative proximity to the sanctuary and with the holiness of the person in question. This is why the question of cleanness outside the cult could not have been dissociated from the cult; the degree of one's uncleanness was specified relative to the cleanness of the cult. Jenson's chart relates to the purity regulations of P. But I have indicated above that the Pharisees were also concerned with, even elaborated, the notion of degrees of impurity; such a gradation would only have been meaningful in relation to what was clean, namely, the sanctuary.[33]

Though Jenson does not note it, the spectrum he lays out is a subset of a larger structure which corresponds roughly to the first of his four dimensions: sanctuary, Land, foreign territory. As Wright indicates, this structure echoes on a larger scale the structure of the wilderness camp with its three grades: sanctuary, camp, outside the camp.[34] Similarly analogous is the tripartite structure of the sanctuary itself: holy of holies (adytum), holy place (shrine), court. The court of Herod's Temple assumed a threefold division into the court of Israel, the court of women and the outer court. There is also evidence for the development of another gradation – sanctuary, city (Jerusalem), Land. These latter two substructures

[31]D. P. Wright, 'The Spectrum of Priestly Impurity', in *Priesthood and Cult in Ancient Israel* (ed. G. A. Anderson and S. M. Olyan; JSOTSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), p. 153.

[32]D. P. Wright ('Review of *Graded Holiness: A Key to the Priestly Conception of the World*', *HS* 35 (1994), 162) suggests that separate graded scales are needed for holiness and impurity.

[33]This corresponds to the basic anthropological insight of M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), p. 41: 'Defilement is never an isolated event' and 'cannot occur except in view of a systematic ordering of ideas'.

[34]D. P. Wright, 'Unclean and Clean (OT)', in *ABD* (ed. D. N. Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992), vol. VI, p. 740.

Table 2. *Wright's spectrum of impurity*

Tolerated		Prohibited	
(No distinction between intentional and unintentional)		Unintentional	Intentional
No sacrifices	individual ad hoc sacrifices	individual, sometimes communal, ad hoc sacrifices	Day of Atonement sacrifices
Pollution of person	pollution of sanctuary (outer altar) and person	pollution of sanctuary (outer altar or shrine); 'ritual' personal pollution if deriving from tolerated impurity	pollution of sanctuary (adytum, shrine, outer altar), sometimes land; 'moral' pollution of persons; 'ritual' personal pollution if from tolerated impurity
Non-communicable to profane; hence, restriction only from sacred and sanctuary	communicable to profane; hence restriction from sanctuary and other sacred matters and restriction within the (profane) habitation	potential removal from life; restriction from sanctuary and sacred and sometimes from habitation (if communicable to profane) if the sin derives from a tolerated [im]purity [sic]	removal from life: *kārēt* or capital penalty; in some cases exile; restriction from sanctuary and sacred and sometimes habitation if sin derives from a permitted impurity (until penalty takes effect)

in particular demonstrate that the world-view of the priestly code not only persisted during the time of the Second Temple but was expanded and developed. By the time of the *Mishnah*, the space from the Land moving inward to the holy of holies had been divided into ten degrees of holiness, each marked out by corresponding grades of cleanness (*m. Kel.* 1.6–8).

From the preceding considerations it is clear in Scripture as well as in the rabbinic writings not only that uncleanness was meaningful only in relation to the cleanness of the cult, but that purity regulations marked out boundaries between grades of holiness. Thus, the biblical and rabbinic texts reveal what cultural anthropology also affirms: impurity demarcates boundaries within and around society. However, this apparently straightforward affirmation belies the complexity of the purity code. Different regulations marked out different things. As we have already seen, certain food regulations marked the distinction between holy priests and common Israelites, but other food laws distinguished Israel as a holy nation from Gentile nations. In other words, purity regulations could mark boundaries not only on a gradation defined by the polarity holy/common but also on the distinct gradation indicated by the polarity holy/non-elect. Moreover, since transgressions also generated impurities of varying severity, a gradation between 'holy' and 'sinful' would also be meaningful.

It is this complex relationship between purity and holiness that accounts for the difficulty in distinguishing 'ritual' from 'moral' purity. Here, Wright's distinction between tolerated and prohibited impurity is of fundamental importance. It must be noted that Wright has merely schematized what may be viewed as a recent shift in studies of Jewish purity, namely that *the use of impurity language to describe moral failure is more than merely metaphorical; transgression produces real defilement with concrete consequences for the cult, the Land and the perpetrator.*[35] Many have questioned the traditional distinction between ritual and moral which implied that ritual was an external, artificial substitute for moral religion which was inward and real. But those who have made this critique have often not gone far enough, for in asserting the reality of 'ritual'

[35]For indications of this shift, see, in addition to Wright's work, especially J. Klawans, 'The Impurity of Immorality in Ancient Judaism', *JJS* 48 (1997), 1–16; and T. Frymer-Kensky, 'Pollution, Purification and Purgation in Biblical Israel', in *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth: Essays in Honour of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of His Sixtieth Birthday* (ed. C. L. Meyers and M. O'Connor; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1983), pp. 399–414. The shift is evident also in the work of Milgrom, much of which has been brought together in his recent commentary, *Leviticus 1–16*, especially pp. 254–61. As Klawans notes, these works were anticipated in part by A. Büchler (*Studies in Sin and Atonement in the Rabbinic Literature of the First Century* (London: Oxford University Press, 1928), pp. 212–69), though it must be noted that Büchler maintained a sharper disjunction between 'levitical' and moral impurity than is allowed by these later scholars.

impurity they have not always affirmed the reality of moral impurity. But recent work shows that moral impurities are not only real but closely related to bodily impurities. Wright shows that tolerated impurities help to prevent the more dangerous prohibited impurities by signalling the potential for prohibited impurity. The former is the symbolic counterpart of the latter. Tolerated impurities bring social restriction which is removed through a prescribed process ending with reintegration into society and open access to habitation and sanctuary. Prohibited intentional impurities also bring restriction and exclusions penalties. 'What is unique is that prescriptions concerning these latter impurities do not openly offer ways for the offender to be reintegrated into the community.' If repentance and reintegration are possible at all, they are certainly more difficult. The tolerated impurities, by acting out the detrimental side of the prohibited impurities, serve as a kind of inoculation against the higher evils.[36]

Tolerated impurities, however, are more than simply passive reflections of prohibited impurities; they actively generate conceptions of prohibited impurities and the sins that bring them about.[37] The social consequences of the lesser impurities promote aversion toward prohibited impurities. The tolerated impurities thus symbolically demonstrate 'that the serious impurities are to be loathed and that their consequences are certain'.[38] Rejecting the requirements for purification or restriction during impurity marks one 'as a social rebel and traitor'. Those who do not observe the regulations regarding tolerated impurities are suspect as to the greater impurities; indeed unremedied tolerated impurities are transposed into intentional prohibited impurities, and new significance is assigned to those who inadvertently forget to purify, in that they are given added obligations for purification but not the harshest sanctions.[39]

It must be emphasized that this is not the standard division of 'ritual' and 'moral' which cannot account for the fact that severe bodily impurity and prohibited impurity alike pollute the sanctuary and the Land and lead to concrete consequences for the individual. Sanders seems aware that the traditional distinction between 'ritual' and 'moral' impurity is inadequate. But he nevertheless continues to make the distinction and, corresponding to this, isolates 'ritual' impurity from prohibited impurity.[40] The decision is fateful, for it means that he cannot see the fundamental relationship between purity, holiness and, ultimately, election.[41] And this, in turn,

[36]D. P. Wright, 'Spectrum', pp. 170–4. [37]Ibid., pp. 174–5. [38]Ibid., p. 177.
[39]Ibid., pp. 178–9. [40]E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law*, pp. 137–9.
[41]Cf. M. Hengel and R. Deines, 'E. P. Sanders' "Common Judaism", Jesus, and the Pharisees' (trans. D. P. Bailey), *JTS* 46 (1995), 46.

further inhibits his ability to grasp adequately the motivation of various groups in seeking purity.

5.1.3 Purity, Temple and Land

Having established a broader framework, I now look more carefully at the way that the Land fits into this framework. Earlier I noted Neusner's comment regarding pollution of the Land produced by intercourse with a menstruant: such impurity is connected with the Temple precisely because of the inextricable relationship between Temple and Land. In fact, Torah identifies a number of prohibited impurities besides intercourse with a menstruant which pollute the Land.[42] As table 2 suggests, such transgressions are very similar to the prohibited impurities which pollute the innermost part of the sanctuary.[43] Thus, for instance, child sacrifice is sometimes said to pollute the sanctuary (Lev. 20.3), at others to pollute the Land (18.20–5). So also the same penalties are associated with sins which pollute the sanctuary and those transgressions which are specifically said to defile the Land: execution, *kārēt* and exile. This close association leads Wright to conclude that Land-polluting sins also defile the adytum.[44] But there are indications that the reverse is true as well: sins which pollute the sanctuary also pollute the Land. Thus, in Leviticus 20, following a catalogue of sins, including sins which either here or elsewhere are said to defile the sanctuary, we find the broad conclusion: 'You shall keep all my statutes and all my ordinances, and observe them, so that the Land to which I bring you to settle in may not vomit you out' (Lev. 20.22). Thus, pollution of sanctuary and of Land are closely intertwined.

This, however, is not to say that the connection between sanctuary and Land defilement is totally specified, and texts which speak of the pollution of the people complicate the matter further. Still, certain parallels emerge. In particular, it appears that both pollution of the Land and defilement of the sanctuary have a cumulative effect. Only in the case of murder is a Land-polluting sin explicitly made eligible for purification: the Land is cleansed through the death of the perpetrator (Num. 35.33). Perhaps we should extrapolate this principle to other Land-polluting sins,[45]

[42] Intercourse with a relative's wife, child sacrifice, homosexuality, bestiality (Lev. 18.20–5), making one's daughter a prostitute (Lev. 19.29), consultation with mediums, all manner of sexual perversion and incest (Lev. 20.6–23), murder (Num. 35.30–4), allowing an executed criminal to hang on a tree overnight (Deut. 21.22–3), and retaking a first wife after she has been married to another (Deut. 24.4).

[43] See Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, p. 258. [44] D. P. Wright, 'Spectrum', p. 162.

[45] So e.g. E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law*, p. 139.

though it may be that purification of the Land from the pollution of such sins was not thought possible. Whatever the case, it seems that pollution of the Land was thought to accumulate inexorably until a threshold was reached which demanded the punishment of exile. In contrast to most Land-polluting sins, the defilement of the adytum is rectified by the bringing of the חטאת on the Day of Atonement. We should probably think of texts which speak of the pollution of people in this connection. Such pollution results from wilful sins as indicated in such passages as Leviticus 18.16–24, but, in contrast to the permitted bodily purities, no remedy is stipulated: the life of the individual is forfeit, either through a capital penalty or *kārēt*. The absence of a mechanism for purification may suggest that the impurity is metaphorical.[46] But the impurity generated by wanton sin attaches itself to the sanctuary and must be purged on the Day of Atonement. Precisely because the impurity of wanton individual sin pollutes not only the individual but also the sanctuary, even individual sins place the community of Israel in danger of divine wrath. This is why the Day of Atonement purgation of the sanctuary's impurities is done on account of the impurities of the people of Israel (Lev. 16.16): there is collective responsibility for individual deliberate sin, which produces collective impurity. Nevertheless, there appears to be a point at which the pollution of wanton sin overwhelms the efficacy of the Day of Atonement purgation, leading to the divine abandonment of the sanctuary. Not even the priestly writers deemed the purificatory rites of the Day of Atonement automatically effective.[47] Consequently, like the pollution of the Land, the pollution of the adytum and of the people accumulates. For this reason, exile (the punishment most closely linked to Land pollution) and the divine abandonment of the Temple (the express consequence for sanctuary pollution) are inextricable, an assumption that undergirds Ezekiel's description of Israel's national disaster (Ezek. 1–11).

The close intertwining of purity, Temple and Land is evident also at Qumran where the perceived pollution of the Land presents an acute problem for the community in view of their strong belief in the imminent eschatological action of God. How could this action take place and the hopes of the community to possess the Land be fulfilled when the Land had been defiled by the wickedness of the nation? Still the hopes remained. Indeed the community conceived of itself as an end-time 'planting in the Land', the congregation of the poor who were about to inherit the

[46]So D. P. Wright, 'Spectrum', p. 162.

[47]Priests as well as prophets could envision circumstances in which God refused to accept the people's sacrifices!

Land and grow fat on its eschatological abundance (CD 1.7–8; 4QpPs 2.4–11), and this despite the present uncleanness of the Land. This tension appears to have generated a striking innovation: though Torah provided no rectification for pollution of the Land, at Qumran there developed the idea that the community itself atoned for the Land, an idea sometimes couched in language which betrays the community's conception of itself as God's Temple. Thus in texts such as 4Q265, 1QS 8.3–10; 9.3–4, the community's eschatological compliance with Torah, endurance of affliction and prayers rightly offered are all said to atone for the Land, to serve as sacrificial purification of the Land (cf. Prov. 16.6).

The change in conceptions of atonement *vis à vis* the Land at Qumran is substantive but it is clear that at Qumran, as in Scripture, purity, Temple and Land remain integrally related. The desire for Israel to remain pure even outside the cult is driven not by a uniquely Pharisaic or Essenic desire to live like priests in the cult but by the scriptural conviction that the Land and the people as well as sanctuary and priesthood were holy. If the holiness of the former was of a different grade from that of the latter and the degree of cleanness required somewhat less, the overarching principle that holiness was to be marked out by cleanness was the same.

5.1.4 Purity, election and eschatology

If the principles according to which many Israelites sought to be clean even when not in the Temple are now clear, we have not yet clarified why, in doing so, some Israelites (the Pharisees and Essenes in particular) adopted extra 'gestures' toward living like priests. To the extent that they did, Neusner and Sanders disagree not at all and Sanders' characterization of the extra purity pursuits of Pharisees as non-priestly is misleading. Why then did the Pharisees go as far as they did and no further?

Of particular interest is Sanders' denial that Exodus 19.6 played any role at all in prompting the Pharisees to adopt the minor gestures toward priestly purity that he identifies.[48] Sanders is undoubtedly correct to decry the facile way scholars have used Exodus 19.6 as a prooftext for Neusner's position. But Sanders has not considered all the evidence. Here the LXX may suggest that the text was more important than Sanders has allowed. For not only is the expectation that Israel would be a royal priesthood (βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα) and a holy nation articulated

[48] E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law*, p. 184.

in Exodus 19.6, it is taken up and repeated verbatim in Exodus 23.22![49] Moreover, Exodus 19.6 obviously stands behind the restorationist text of 2 Maccabees 2.17–18:

> It is God who has saved all his people, and has returned the inheritance to all, and the kingship and priesthood and consecration (τὴν κληρονομίαν πᾶσιν καὶ τὸ βασίλειον καὶ τὸ ἱεράτευμα καὶ τὸν ἁγιασμόν), as he promised through the law. We have hope in God that he will soon have mercy upon us and will gather us from everywhere under heaven into his holy place, for he has rescued us from great evils and has purified the place.

Here βασίλειον is construed not adjectivally as it was in the LXX of Exodus 19.6 but as a substantive in its own right.[50] Against the NRSV, βασίλειον in 2 Maccabees 2.17 should be rendered 'kingdom' rather than 'kingship', and 'kingdom, priesthood and consecration' understood as constituent elements along with the Land (the probable meaning of 'inheritance') of the restoration which God had lately granted to 'all the people'.[51] The eschatological context is significant: already the restoration that would soon include the regathering of dispersed Jews had yielded the return of Israel's inheritance, the establishment of the kingdom, and their unique identity as his priestly and holy people.

[49]Of course, it is not possible to know whether the insertion belonged to the original translation, though the evidence indicates it was quite early. So J. W. Wevers, *The Textual History of the Greek Exodus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), p. 246. D. R. Schwartz (' "Kingdom of Priests" – a Pharisaic Slogan?', *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity* (WUNT; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1992), p. 59 n. 7) attributes the repetition to scribal error, but this is a speculation for which there is neither textual nor internal support. The fact that the introductory words of 19.5 have been modified to fit this new context indicates that the duplication was deliberate. The translator may have wanted to frame the account of the giving of the law with the words of 19.6, thus emphasizing that the fulfilment of 19.6 would hinge on Israel's obedience to the law, see O. Camponovo, *Königtum, Königsherrschaft und Reich Gottes in den frühjüdischen Schriften* (OBO; Freiberg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), p. 385.

[50]See J. A. Goldstein, *II Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; Garden City: Doubleday, 1983), p. 188. The LXX of Exod. 19.6 is somewhat ambiguous because of the construction βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα: βασίλειον may be either an adjective or a substantive. In 2 Maccabees, it is clearly taken as a substantive. The author of 2 Macc. 2.17 could hardly have understood βασίλειον in Exod. 19.6 LXX as 'kingship'. In other texts where a conjunction has been inserted between the two terms, it is 'kingdom' rather than 'kingship' that is in view. See *Jub.* 16.18; 33.20; Rev. 1.6; 5.10; *Tg. Onq.* and *Tg. Ps.J.* of Exod. 19.6.

[51]The emphasis on God's salvation and return of the inheritance to *all* the people (πάντα . . . πᾶσιν . . .) may indicate a concern to show that God's deliverance extends to the Diaspora (see 2 Macc. 2.18).

Similarly, *Jubilees* 16.18 takes up Exodus 19.6 and makes it part of the promise to Abraham to make Isaac's descendants 'a kingdom, a priesthood and a holy nation', distinct from the profane seed of Abraham's other sons. Even Schwartz, who minimizes the significance of later use of Exodus 19.6, must allow that the term priesthood is applied here to all the people.[52] The text sets the stage for the repeated polemic against the profanation of the holy seed of Isaac through sexual contact with Gentiles. The citation of Exodus 19.6 recurs in *Jubilees* 33.19–20 at the end of a condemnation of the defiling sexual sin illustrated by Reuben's fornication with Bilhah. The citation, however, appears as part of a generalized warning against the impurity generated by all forms of sexual sin: 'No sin is greater than the sexual impurity which they commit on the earth because Israel is a holy people for the Lord its God. It is the nation which he possesses; it is a priestly nation; it is a priestly kingdom; it is what he owns. No such impurity will be seen among the holy people' (cf. 30.8).

These texts in *Jubilees* are particularly significant for two reasons. First, *Jubilees* provides an indication of the nature of Israel's priesthood in relation to that of Levi's descendants. *Jubilees* does not take the application of Exodus 19.6 to the whole of Israel to displace the unique priestly role of Levi's descendants, which chapters 31–3 stress. However, *Jubilees* also indicates that it does not view the priesthood of Levi as completely distinct from that of Israel. This is perhaps best seen in the use of the priestly codes of Leviticus 21 in the rhetoric of *Jubilees* 30 against intermarriage. The priestly regulation of Leviticus 21.9 states, 'When the daughter of a priest profanes herself through prostitution, she profanes her father; she shall be burned to death.' But, as Endres observes, in *Jubilees* 30 this regulation is applied to any woman who marries a foreigner. The underlying narrative of the rape of Dinah by Shechem records the refusal of the sons of Jacob 'to give *our sister* to a man who is uncircumcised' (Gen. 34.14). By contrast, *Jubilees* 30.12, aligning the wording with Leviticus 21.9, has them assert, 'We will not give *our daughter*' to a man who is uncircumcised and then omits the biblical detail that Shechem and his clan had in fact undergone circumcision. *Jubilees* equates intermarriage with prostitution by the daughter of a priest and applies the law not only to daughters of priests but to all the daughters of Israel.[53] Against Endres, it is not apparent that *Jubilees* makes priestly purity the norm for all Israel,

[52] D. R. Schwartz, 'Introduction: On the Jewish Background of Christianity', *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity* (WUNT; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1992), p. 59.

[53] J. C. Endres, *Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Jubilees* (CBQMS; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1987), pp. 137–42.

but it is clear that principles of purity which governed the expression of priestly holiness (e.g. marriage to an unsuitable Israelite) could be taken up and reapplied to the whole people as an expression of its analogous priestly holiness (e.g. marriage to a Gentile).[54]

Second, the broader context of *Jubilees* reveals that the *halakhah* laid down in the book was eschatologically motivated.[55] The opening chapter of Jubilees makes an explicit connection between its *halakhic* concerns and national restoration. When they return to God, that is, conform to the *halakhah* set forth in the book, Israel's restoration will begin (1.15–17). And, it should be noted, this eschatologically oriented *halakhah* is centrally concerned with Israel's purity; the pure (by the standards of *Jubilees' halakhah*) are those whom God will purify (1.23).[56]

It must be emphasized that none of these texts eliminate a special priestly class within Israel, despite their designation of the whole of (eschatological) Israel as a priesthood. This observation points up the false dichotomy set up by D. Schwartz's study of this text. In considering the Jewish use of Exodus 19.6, Schwartz distinguishes between two possible applications: (1) to serve as a slogan for setting Jews above Gentiles; or (2) to agitate for the elimination of a priestly class within Israel. None of the texts just considered envision the elimination of a specially consecrated priesthood within Israel. Consequently, for Schwartz, those texts which do refer to all Israel as a priesthood should be read as innocuous references to the special holiness of Israel *vis à vis* the other nations.[57]

But the eschatological context of at least some of the references points to a third possibility, one that could easily serve as a rationale for submitting oneself to *some* but not all of the purity obligations laid on priests, which is precisely what some Jews did. My contention is that Exodus 19.6 was taken as an indication that eschatological Israel would live out its vocation as 'a holy nation' by taking on itself stipulations laid down for the priesthood which were not perceived to be intrinsic to the special role and consecration of the priestly class. Viewed in this way it is entirely

[54]See C. Hayes, 'Intermarriage and Impurity in Ancient Jewish Sources', *HTR* 92 (1999), 3–36.

[55]M. Himmelfarb's analysis of what she calls 'the democratization of the priesthood' in *Jubilees* is useful, but she fails to note the eschatological framework in which it is placed; '"A Kingdom of Priests": The Democratization of the Priesthood in the Literature of Second Temple Judaism', *JJTP* 6 (1997), 89–98.

[56]For the use of Exod. 19.6 by Philo, see *De Sobr.* 66; *De Abr.* 56. Note also the fact that at Qumran, although no specific reference is made to Exod. 19.6, the whole community could be assigned priestly identity quite apart from priestly lineage, though without elimination of a special priestly class. Cf. e.g. CD 3.21–4.4.

[57]Schwartz, 'Introduction'.

likely that some Second Temple Jews did take Exodus 19.6 as a motivation for adopting certain priestly purity practices, without necessarily feeling it incumbent on them to submit to all the purity requirements of the specially consecrated priestly class; the supposition that Israel was to be a 'holy' nation did not call into question the unique holiness of the Temple and those specially appointed to serve there. Thus, a mediating position between Sanders and Neusner appears entirely feasible and explains why, if Pharisees were not attempting to live in the same purity at home that priests maintained in the Temple, they nevertheless adopted certain gestures toward priestly purity outside the Temple.

We cannot, of course, be sure that the Pharisees were motivated by reflection on Exodus 19.6 in particular. But there are other strands of evidence which indicate that there was probably a basic connection made by many between the pursuit of purity and the fulfilment of eschatological expectations concerning Israel's restoration. A fundamental postulate of Israel's Scriptures is that the fortunes of the nation are bound up with the presence of God in the Temple and the Land. Ezekiel's portrayal of the divine evacuation of the Temple as an indication of impending judgement simply dramatized what was everywhere assumed. So too the expectation that the hallmark of the eschatological restoration of Israel would be the return of the *Shekinah* to dwell among the people of God (Ezek. 37.26–7). Much of the post-exilic biblical literature is taken up with concerns for the rebuilding of the Temple precisely because the fulfilment of the hopes of Israel's restoration cannot be conceived of apart from the return of God's presence to his Temple. Indeed, the yearning for the full manifestation and return of the presence of God continued up through the formulation of the Eighteen Benedictions.[58] But such a return of God to dwell among his people presupposes an appropriate state of purity. Very early Ezra 9.10–15 expressed the fear that the restoration perceived to be in process might be aborted if the returning exiles defiled themselves with the impurities with which the inhabitants of Palestine had polluted the Land. A text already examined – 2 Maccabees 2.17–18 – similarly links the full realization of restoration already in progress to the just-completed purification of the Temple and the full compliance of Israel with Torah. I have already considered the ways in which the Qumran community resolved the tension between their perception of the Land and the Temple as defiled but the beginning of the eschaton already at hand:

[58]The longing for the return of God's presence is manifest in several benedictions and in both recensions. This may indicate that even before the destruction of the Temple, there was a perception that God was not yet dwelling in the Temple and the Land in the way that he one day would.

they viewed themselves as the purified Temple which made atonement for the pollution of the Land in preparation for and anticipatory experience of the eschatological dwelling of God among his people.[59] The point emerges negatively in Josephus, who considers that the eschatologically motivated rebellion of 66–70 CE was doomed to fail on account of the defilement of city and Temple: God had turned away 'because he deemed the Temple to be no longer a clean dwelling place for Him' (*Ant*. 20.165–7; cf. *J.W.* 4.201, 318–24; 5.15–20; 6.93–111). Thus, inasmuch as purity was perceived as integrally related to the Temple, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that *the practice of purity was bound up with hopes for Israel's restoration and that the pursuit of extra purity by groups such as the Pharisees was probably an attempt to actualize what they regarded as a presupposition of the eschaton.*[60]

If the eschatological holiness of Israel was a motivation for the pursuit of extra purity in the present for many, there is at least some evidence that the holiness of the eschaton would generate a quite different conception of purity, one in which the question of physical impurity was irrelevant. The most striking text in this regard comes from the final verses of Zechariah:

> On that day there shall be inscribed on the bells of the horses, 'Holy to the LORD.' And the cooking pots in the house of the LORD shall be as holy as the bowls in front of the altar; and every cooking pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be sacred to the LORD of hosts, so that all who sacrifice may come and use them to boil the flesh of the sacrifice. And there shall no longer be traders in the house of the LORD of hosts on that day. (14.20–1)

The text follows a description of the pilgrimage of nations to observe the yearly festival of booths in the eschaton and envisions the eschaton as a time in which the distinction between sacred and profane will have been obviated. Both the participation of the nations in the ancient festival marking God's covenant with his holy people and the sacralization of

[59]See further M. Newton, *The Concept of Purity at Qumran and in the Letters of Paul* (Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 36–8.

[60]N. T. Wright (*Jesus*, p. 382) perceptively criticizes Sanders for viewing Jesus within the framework of restoration eschatology but then discussing questions of purity and the law 'within the non-eschatological category of "patterns of religion" '. I agree that for the Pharisees and others the purity pursuits were eschatologically motivated. Wright, however, does not give due consideration to the ways in which eschatological concerns shaped the particular forms which the pursuit of purity assumed in the first century. It is not simply a heightened zeal for Jewish identity markers which reveals the eschatological motivations of Jesus' contemporaries but rather the specific approaches which were taken to matters such as purity in the light of Jewish expectations concerning the eschaton.

even menial common objects suggest not so much that the disjunction between holy and common is no longer meaningful as that the domain of the holy has become universal. This last observation shows that the distinction between holy and profane was correlated with that between clean and unclean. But while the profane could be either clean or unclean, the holy was necessarily clean. Thus the universalization of the domain of holiness leaves no possibility even for tolerated impurity.

A similar text is found in the final verses of Isaiah. As in Zechariah 14, the context is that of the eschatological pilgrimage of the nations:

> They shall bring all your kindred from all the nations as an offering to the LORD, on horses, and in chariots and in litters, and on mules, and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the LORD, just as the Israelites bring a grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the LORD. And I will also take some of them as priests and as Levites, says the LORD.
>
> (Isa. 66.20–1)

The text is difficult, not least because of the uncertain antecedents of several of the pronouns. Most scholars agree that the kindred being brought from the nations are dispersed Israelites. Those who bring them are from among the 'survivors' of the nations who have come up to Jerusalem. But from whom is the LORD to take some as priests and Levites? Grammatically either the Israelite 'kindred' or the Gentile 'survivors' of verse 19 are possible. If the former, the idea is radical in its own right – the democratization of the priesthood.[61] But is this radical enough? The NRSV translates the adverb גַּם with 'also', but if the term intensifies, 'the phrasing "*even* from them" suggests that the more surprising of the options is more likely – that the prophet does anticipate priestly service performed by foreigners'.[62] Either way, but all the more if foreign priests are in view, it seems that the author envisions a time in which the Torah-enshrined distinctions between what is holy and common will have disappeared. This is confirmed by the peculiar analogy of verse 20, for it requires us to understand the sundry means of transport by which dispersed Jews are brought to the holy mountain as suitably pure for contact with sancta. If the notion differs slightly from that of Zechariah it is in the vision of uniform purity rather than universal holiness. But the result is much the same. If even common things are insusceptible to

[61] Cf. B. Schramm, *The Opponents of Third Isaiah: Reconstructing the Cultic History of the Restoration* (JSOTSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), p. 172.

[62] B. D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66* (Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 148.

impurity, a principal way of marking the distinction between common and holy is lost.

The idea is not developed in any meaningful way in the intertestamental literature but there are texts which anticipate a time when all impurity will have disappeared. In *Jubilees* 4.26, as in Zechariah, the expectation is connected to a vision of universal holiness: Mount Zion 'will be sanctified in the new creation for the sanctification of the earth. For this reason the earth will be sanctified from all its sins and from its uncleanness into the history of eternity.' A similar perspective recurs at the end of the book: 'The jubilees will pass by until Israel is pure of every sexual evil, impurity, contamination, sin and error. They will live confidently in the entire land. They will no longer have any satan or any evil person. The land will be pure from that time until eternity' (50.5). So also, the exaggerated view of the diluvian purgation in *1 Enoch* 10.22, which anticipates final judgement: 'And all the children of men are to become righteous and all nations shall serve and bless me and all shall worship me. And the whole earth shall be freed from all defilement and from all uncleanness . . .'[63]

Most of these references pertain to moral impurity and are commonly taken in a merely metaphorical sense. But while I would not deny that it is possible to speak of impurity in a metaphorical way, it seems clear from the foregoing considerations that moral impurity was frequently perceived as being every bit as real and its consequences just as concrete as its so-called 'ritual' counterpart.[64] Moreover, it is easy to see how the abolition of even physical impurities could be associated with the still more widely attested anticipation of absolute Torah-conformity in the eschaton, for physical impurities could be seen as the direct or indirect result of moral failure. Even in Scripture, impurity is sometimes inflicted as punishment for sin (e.g. 2 Sam. 3.29; Num. 12.10; 2 Kings 15.5). At Qumran, at least, the connection is absolutized, for even tolerated physical impurity was thought to be a result of sin. Thus does 4Q512 'include formulae of repentance within a blessing that is presumably to be recited upon purification from menstrual impurity', and 4Q274 stipulate that those with genital emissions must sit alone in sorrow until they have been purified.[65] The close association between purity and their self-identity as 'the men of perfect holiness' (CD 20.2, 5, 7; 1QS 8.20) as well as the refusal to admit any with bodily impurity to the eschatological assembly (1QSa 2.3–9; 1QM 7.4, 5) suggest that the covenanteers struggled to

[63] Black's translation.

[64] Cf. the conclusion of Klawans ('Immorality', 15) 'that many of the [references to moral impurity] that have been assumed to be metaphorical are not'.

[65] Ibid., 10.

reconcile the thought of physical impurity with their conception of an eschaton characterized by uncompromised holiness. There is therefore good reason to think that the references noted above to the eschatological abolition of uncleanness may well suggest not only the cessation of moral failure but also the elimination of even physical impurities.

I note finally that in the few texts which anticipate that everything will become holy or pure in the eschaton, the perspective is decidedly universal. As I have noted, the priestly code of Torah was concerned almost exclusively with the purity of Temple and Land, of priests and Israelites. But in a few texts the eschatological manifestation of God's kingship over the whole earth will one day result in the absolute holiness not only of the Land and the nation but of the whole earth and all the nations. These texts burst the limits of the priestly code.

I have argued in this section that the heightened concern for purity which was held by many Jews in Jesus' day was ultimately motivated by a particular vision of Israel's eschatological holiness. In most cases, however, the concept of graded holiness and purity was so deeply embedded within the Jewish world-view that even the eschaton was perceived in such terms. Most Jews probably did think that the degrees of holiness and the corresponding, distinct requirements for differing degrees of purity would persist into the eschaton. But the heightened holiness expected of Israel in the eschaton also generated the conviction that in many ways priestly purity would characterize eschatological Israel, that Israel would faithfully carry out its calling to be a kingdom of priests by taking up those priestly requirements which were not perceived to be intrinsic to the special role and consecration of the priestly class. If such an expectation retained the basic structure of the purity code laid down in Torah even while moving beyond some of its requirements, there was a minority tradition which seemed to obviate that structure altogether. In this tradition, the anticipation that 'the LORD will become king over all the earth' (Zech. 14.9) was so closely tied to the expectation of a universal holiness and purity that questions concerning the unique holiness of Israel and its Land and the purity which appropriately marked this special status would cease to be meaningful.

5.2 Jesus and the purity code

The foregoing discussion raised the possibility that in the context in which Jesus' ministry took place, the structuring of social life in keeping with the purity code of Torah may often have been at stake even when purity as such was not in question. Much of the discussion of Jesus' stance

vis à vis the Jewish purity code has degenerated into endless assertions and counter-assertions regarding authenticity of sayings which directly speak to the issue. My suggestion is that a more fruitful approach to an understanding of Jesus' perceptions of the purity code lies in looking not only at what he said directly about purity but also at statements and actions which imply a particular stance. These suggest that Jesus believed that fundamental postulates of the purity code, including ones which had direct ramifications on the role of the Land in Israel's restoration, were no longer operative in the new eschatological situation that was coming into existence. There is also evidence of Jesus' sympathy with the minority tradition just reviewed according to which the absolute holiness of the eschaton largely obviated questions concerning contracted impurities.

5.2.1 The unpardonable sin

Nearly all discussion of 'the unpardonable sin' (Mark 3.28–30/Matt. 12.31–2) revolves around the attempt to identify what precisely the unpardonable sin was. But the preceding analysis of prohibited impurities suggests that an equally important question is what the unforgivable sin *was not*. The failure to recognize that this also is a crucial question results not least from the failure to take into account the all-important distinction between deliberate and inadvertent transgressions within the Torah.[66] Moreover, the full significance of Jesus' words emerges only when they are read with the understanding that transgression generally generated impurity and that deliberate transgression generated irremediable impurity.

In chapter 3, I examined a number of texts which regarded certain sins as equivalent to apostasy and therefore not subject to repentance and forgiveness. A few texts specifically associate such sins with impurity. So, for instance, in 1QS 8.20–6 where deliberate sin results in permanent expulsion, inadvertent sin, extended exclusion from the pure Meal and the Council. It would be difficult to state the matter more emphatically. Inadvertent sin called a member's election into question; deliberate sin invalidated the claim altogether. Inadvertent sin rendered the offender 'ritually' impure; deliberate sin rendered the offender perpetually impure.[67] *Jubilees* reflects a similar perspective in its declaration

[66]Luz (*Matthäus: 2 Teilband*, pp. 263–7) observes that the saying assumes the Jewish distinction between forgivable and unforgivable sins, but the observation is dropped and plays no part in his exegesis.

[67]CD 10.3 appears to have a more moderate stance in its disqualification as a witness against others of 'someone who has deliberately transgressed any precept until he has been purified to return'. The contradiction with 1QS may be ameliorated if, as Schiffman

that there is no forgiveness for sins which pollute the holy people of God (33.17–21) or for covenant-rejecting sins (15.34).

The perspective of Torah is similar, though Milgrom has recently argued that Torah allows for the possibility of atonement in the case of some deliberate sins. This possibility can only be seen as a rather cautious qualification of the over-arching priestly idea that no deliberate sin could be expiated sacrificially.[68] Milgrom does not unequivocally distinguish between deliberate sins which are and are not eligible to be reduced to inadvertencies. Nevertheless, one key criterion seems to have been whether or not the sin was public.[69] Public deliberate sin could only be regarded as an apostate's tacit rejection of the covenant and a violation of the absolute verdict of Numbers 15.30–1 against high-handed or brazen sin.[70]

The rabbis exercised themselves not a little over the question of what counted as unpardonable sin. Some rabbinic writings indicate that the primary reference in Numbers 15.30–1 is idolatry,[71] though other sins which 'dishonour Torah' are not thereby excluded.[72] Some later rabbinical material substantially develops the principle Milgrom believes to be already at work in Torah itself: 'R. Simeon B. Lakish said: Great is repentance, which converts intentional sins into unintentional ones' (*b. Yoma* 86b). Unlike Torah, this implies that there are no inherently unpardonable sins; only sins for which no repentance is made are unforgivable.[73] Another form of rabbinic leniency in the application of Numbers 15.30–1 turns in part on the contemplation of non-cultic means of atonement, namely, suffering and death. Thus, in *t. Yoma* 4.6–8, the deliberate violation of a command for which *kārēt* or capital punishment is required is atoned for through repentance and the Day of Atonement (to suspend the punishment) but also suffering for the rest of the year to wipe away the sin; desecration of the divine name is atoned for through repentance, the Day

(*Sectarian Law*, p. 61) argues, a distinction was made between transgression of sectarian precepts and violation of a clear stipulation of Torah, with the former being in view in CD 10.3. Whatever the case, it is clear that even transgression of sectarian precepts rendered the offender impure.

[68] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, pp. 365–78.

[69] See Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, pp. 371–2. Note the translation of Num. 15.30 in *Tg. Onqelos* and *Tg. Neofiti*: 'publicly'.

[70] Rejecting Milgrom's position, R. H. Bell ('Sin Offerings and Sinning with a High Hand', *JPJ* 4 (1995), 29–35) argues that Num. 15.30–1 covers all deliberate sins.

[71] See G. A. Anderson ('The Interpretation of the Purification Offering (חטאת) in the *Temple Scroll* (11QTemple) and Rabbinic Literature', *JBL* 111 (1992), 33–5) who cites *b. Hor.* 8b and *Sifre* 111–12.

[72] Bell, 'Sin Offerings', 47–9.

[73] Cf. *Tg.* Hos. 3.1 which, at least for the nation, permits repentance even for idolatry.

of Atonement and the death of the individual.[74] But the perspective of an unattributed pronouncement of the *Mishnah* is undoubtedly earlier: 'If a man said, "I will sin and repent, and sin again and repent", he will be given no chance to repent' (*m. Yoma* 8.9). Here the view is closer to that of Torah where the basic premise is that intentional sin will not be forgiven.

This evidence along with that considered in chapter 3 seems to point to a fairly common belief that certain Israelites had put themselves irremediably outside the covenant by their brazen rejection of Torah's demands.[75] On the basis of this evidence, we can be reasonably sure that *the statement of Jesus that 'people will be forgiven every sin and blasphemy' rather than the following exception is what would have been most surprising to Jesus' hearers*.[76]

The virtual elimination of an entire category of unpardonable sin is germane to Jesus' view on purity precisely because within the purity code such sins are marked as particularly dangerous because of their generation of irremediable impurity; the unpardonability of certain sins is closely tied to their generation of irremediable impurity. At least part of the reason why Jesus' association with tax collectors and prostitutes was scandalous very probably had to do with the perception that the brazen sinfulness of such people infected the Land with impurity that compromised the holiness appropriate to it.[77] If the position of Wright and Klawans sketched above is correct, the constant reinforcement of the danger of severe moral failure is the *raison d'être* of the purity code as a whole. Consequently, for Jesus to say that a class of sins should no longer be regarded as unpardonable suggests that such sins no longer produced irremediable defilement of the Land and the corresponding pollution of

[74]Note the comment of W. Krauss, *Der Tod Jesu als Heiligtumsweihe: Eine Untersuchung zum Umfeld der Sühnevorstellung in Römer 3,25–26a* (WMANT; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991) 86: 'In der rabbinischen Tradition gelten . . . auch die vorsätzlichen Sünden als sühnbar, weil man versucht, sie als unbeabsichtigt, und deshalb als sühnbar zu erweisen.' But even this attempt presupposes the unforgivability of truly high-handed sin.

[75]Cf. Bell ('Sin Offerings') who argues that the distinction between inadvertent sin and deliberate sin for which repentance was not possible was generally maintained throughout the Second Temple period.

[76]Cf. J. Weiss (*Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God* (from the 1st German edn [1892]; translated, edited and with an introduction by R. H. Hiers and D. L. Holland; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), p. 100) who made a similar statement more than a hundred years ago, though without considering OT assertions concerning high-handed sins or the connection of such sins with impurity.

[77]It must be stressed that the impurity generated by transgression was not contagious like some forms of bodily impurity and would not have been the reason why association with sinners was scandalous.

the sanctuary. By implication, such a position tends to empty bodily impurities, which signal the danger of irremediable impurities, of their symbolic value. This is not to say that Jesus no longer regarded such sins as impure in any sense, but his statement eviscerates the fundamental connection of such sins to *cultic* impurity.

The consequences of this conclusion for Jesus' view of society follow immediately: (1) even those in flagrant violation of Torah could no longer be regarded as irremediably unclean and outside Israel; and (2) the significance of speaking about the defilement of the Temple and Land which Torah indicated was the ineluctable result of high-handed sin is thrown into question.

5.2.2 Jesus and 'unclean' spirits

One aspect of Jesus' ministry which has not received sufficient attention is that Jesus' use of the language of impurity is almost exclusively associated with his work as an exorcist.[78] The fact is striking, particularly in view of the dissociation of impurity from the demonic in Torah. As several have noted, one of the things that set Israel's purity code apart from that of surrounding nations was the near absence of any connection between unclean spirits and the concept of impurity. As we shall see, it is perhaps significant that the only possible vestige of such a connection within Torah is the consignment of the second goat to Azazel on the Day of Atonement. The reference is quite probably to some demonic being, but one stripped of any meaningful role in the rite.[79] Indeed, even here, the dominant concern of the priestly writers to associate impurity with moral failure emerges as the priestly officiant symbolically transfers both impurities and transgressions of Israel onto the goat.

But in the Gospel traditions, the connection between the demonic and impurity is re-established. There is a preponderance of references to 'unclean' spirits in Mark, but an occurrence in Q (Matt. 12.43–5/Luke 11.24–6) as well suggests that we may be dealing not simply with a redactional tendency of Mark but with a characteristic expression of Jesus. Moreover, the account of the Gerasene demoniac in the triple tradition

[78] S. McKnight ('A Parting Within the Way: Jesus and James on Israel and Purity', in *James the Just and Christian Origins* (ed. B. Chilton and C. A. Evans; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), p. 96 n. 24) notes that one of the most thorough and recent studies of Jesus' role as exorcist – that of G. H. Twelftree (*Jesus the Exorcist: A Contribution to the Study of the Historical Jesus* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1993)) – 'omits any exploration of the significance of "unclean" with respect to the demons and Jesus' mission'.

[79] D. P. Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity* (SBLDS; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), pp. 21–5.

associates demons and possession with swine and tombs, two notable sources of impurity (Mark 5.1–20 pars.). Such associations seem to suggest that the application of the language of uncleanness to evil spirits is not merely metaphorical, as most simply assume. The non-metaphorical nature of such language is underscored by the tendency of the Jesus tradition generally to emphasize the impurity produced by the evil within in a way that reduces the significance of bodily impurity. This suggests that for Jesus the lines that divide pure from impure are indistinguishable from the lines that separate good and evil, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. And those lines cut through Israel.

This is borne out by two further considerations. First, in several accounts of exorcism in the Gospels malevolent spirits are called both 'unclean' and 'evil' without apparent differentiation. Second, Matthew's version of the Q saying alluded to above associates 'unclean' and 'evil' in a still more revealing way:

> When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it wanders through waterless regions looking for a resting place, but it finds none. Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' When it comes, it finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then it goes and brings along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and live there; and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So will it be also with this evil generation.
>
> (Matt. 12.43–5/Luke 11.24–6)

Here it is not just that 'unclean' and 'evil' are interchangeable descriptions of demons, but that an analogy is drawn between the spirit who returns with other demons to a house empty, swept and put in order and 'this evil generation'. I argued earlier that 'this evil generation' is shorthand for the nation in rebellion against God. But what precisely is the point of the analogy between the soliloquy of the returning spirit and the destiny of the nation? N. T. Wright is surely correct in his assertion that the saying has little to do with the difficulties faced by Palestinian exorcists.[80] In fact, contrary to common assumptions, the passage is not even clearly dealing with exorcism as such: the text says simply that the unclean spirit 'went out'. As is his wont, Wright sees here an allusion to the events of 70 CE and takes the house as a cipher for the Temple. But this makes little sense of the details and is plausible only within the larger framework of his reconstruction.

[80]N. T. Wright, *Jesus*, pp. 455–6.

My suggestion is that the saying echoes what would probably have been a common feature of first-century Palestinian life: the application of Levitical regulation governing houses afflicted with scale disease. In Leviticus 14.33–53 the owner of a house which is infected with a fungus is to inform the priest. The first thing the priest must do upon notification is to order the house to be emptied. The order is important, for it implies that everything in the house is subject to impurity by overhang, even items ordinarily not vulnerable to impurity. The comprehensive threat to everything in the house is particularly stressed by the *Mishnah* (*m. Neg*. 12.5). A seven-day quarantine follows after which a priest re-examines the house. If the fungus has spread, more drastic measures ensue: first, an attempt is made to eliminate the uncleanness by removing the infected stones and scraping and replacing the plaster, followed by an additional seven days of quarantine.[81] Second, if the fungus returns, the house must be razed and removed to an impure place outside the habitation. Noteworthy is the implication of Leviticus 14.43 that the house must be condemned if the fungus returns, even if it has already been pronounced clean, an implication made explicit by the rabbis (*m. Neg*. 3.8).

The possible points of contact with the Q saying emerge with the observation that the departure of the spirit is portrayed as the removal of uncleanness from a house. If the case of the unclean fungus house is in view, the situation envisioned is one in which the procedures of the first two weeks have led to the removal of the fungus and the certification of cleanness. The sequence 'emptied, swept, and put in order' could as easily apply to various aspects of the procedure required after the discovery of a fungus: the emptying of the house prior to the priest's arrival, the sweeping out of the house after the removal of the plaster, and the putting of things back in order either in relation to the replastering of the house or the returning of the house's contents.

I have noted above that the Levitical code retains a connection between impurity and the demonic only in the sending of the live goat into the wilderness bearing the transgressions of the people. Despite the attempt of some to segregate rigidly the functions of the sacrificial goat and the scapegoat – the former to remove impurity, the latter, transgression[82] – no such separation can be made. The point here is that although the scapegoat is only said to bear Israel's transgressions the goat must be seen as carrying away impurity as well, as is evident in the fact that the one who leads the

[81]The time period is implicit to Lev. 14.43, though the rabbis make it explicit (*m. Neg*. 3.8; 12.7). See Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, pp. 874–9.

[82]E.g. S. K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 208–10.

goat away contracts impurity (Lev. 16.26). The sending of the goat away to Azazel is thus a way of describing the return of uncleanness to its origin symbolized by the wilderness.[83] The rite of purification for the fungus house is closely analogous: two birds are required, one to be slaughtered and the other to be let loose into an 'open field' after being dipped in the blood of the slaughtered bird. Is the idea of impurity returning to its demonic origin at work here as well? If so, there is another parallel, one that sheds light on a feature of the saying long troubling to scholars: the passing of the unclean spirit 'through waterless places seeking rest'. It suggests the traditional association of the demonic and the unclean with the wilderness. Within the priestly legislation, the continuous need to consign uncleanness to the wilderness implied the inexorable propensity of uncleanness to return and again pollute people and Land. So, too, in Jesus' saying, the failure of the spirit to find rest in waterless places vividly underscores the return of uncleanness, an uncleanness exacerbated severely by the additional spirits more evil than the first.

As noted, the saying is ultimately concerned with 'this evil generation'. The connection has two implications. First, if the saying alludes to case law for houses infected with fungus, then Jesus may be suggesting that the fate of 'this generation' will be the same as that of a house which, having been declared clean, is subject to the return of uncleanness: destruction must immediately follow. As I have already argued, this is precisely the point of the pair of 'this generation' sayings with which this saying is joined in both Matthew and Luke. The second implication is that for Jesus the moral failure which constituted Israel as an 'evil generation' is analogous to the evil of demonic possession and both may be described as 'uncleanness'.

This discussion suggests that Jesus altered the way in which impurity constitutes a threat to the community of Israel. Not less for his contemporaries than for Jesus himself there was a basic connection between transgression and uncleanness. But for his contemporaries the connection was twofold: (1) transgression or, better, the threat to the community posed by transgression was signified by bodily impurity which constantly threatened from without; and (2) transgression itself produced impurity. The two notions are intimately related and give rise to a conception of the purity codes as protective lines intended to keep impurity out. But the sayings I have been considering suggest that in Jesus' view impurity was

[83]For similar associations between the wilderness and malevolent forces, see R. J. Bauckham, 'Jesus and the Wild Animals (Mark 1:13): A Christological Image for an Ecological Age', in *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ* (ed. J. B. Green and M. Turner; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), p. 14 and the literature cited there.

already in. And evil has penetrated 'this generation' in such a dramatically exacerbated and climactic way that, like the house to which fungus has returned, only destruction is now possible.

5.2.3 Jesus, holiness and purity

Predicating impurity of the people was central to predictions of national judgement in the prophetic writings. No more for Jesus than for the prophets did the attribution of defilement to the nation indicate the perception of physical impurity. This takes us to the heart of the relation between purity and holiness within Israel's Scriptures, where we find a tension that re-emerges in Jesus' conflict with the purity programme of the Pharisees. As we have seen, Torah is explicit that purity was to be the expression of the holiness that was Israel's as a result of God's election. The tension emerges with the recognition that though in some texts Israel's holiness is a fact consequent upon election, in other texts holiness is enjoined. What this means is that the rectification of tolerated, bodily impurities *expressed* the holiness that had been created by God's election of Israel, whereas the avoidance of prohibited, moral impurities (including the avoidance of forbidden animals) *created* the holiness that God had commanded of Israel to correspond with the holiness of election. It must be stressed that in Scripture the contraction of bodily impurity as such did not compromise Israel's holiness (not counting consumption of forbidden animals which is treated as a prohibited impurity rather than a tolerated, bodily impurity). But the close correlation between purity and holiness would certainly have made the preservation of purity desirable to those concerned about Israel's holiness.

This latter concern corresponds to my earlier conclusions regarding the motivation behind the pursuit of extra purity in the first century and takes on particular importance in the light of two observations about the much disputed purity controversy of Mark 7. The first is that in view of the foregoing discussion of handwashing, the major reason for dissociating the handwashing dispute in Mark 7.1–5 from the logion of 7.15 and its development in 7.16–23 disappears. Sanders had denied the connection, declaring the issue of handwashing to be wholly unrelated to dietary law (which he takes to be the concern of 7.15–23). Sanders' denial, however, depends on his prior argument that laity, more particularly lay *haberim*, would only have washed their hands before handling priests' food and perhaps also their own food on occasions when it too was holy.[84] I have

[84] E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, pp. 265–6.

tried to show above that this is incorrect, that Pharisees and quite probably many Jews as well did wash their hands before eating even ordinary food.

A further element of Sanders' case for dissociating the two pericopes involves an exegetical sleight of hand, for in focusing on Mark's deduction about 'the cleanness of all food' he highlights the unrelatedness of handwashing and eating *inherently* unclean food. But this is irrelevant in the context of Jesus' ministry; no one imagines that Jesus and the Pharisees debated the propriety of eating pork, still less whether one's hands should be washed before doing so! Moreover (and this point is often overlooked), the fact that Mark has not placed the deduction of 7.19b on Jesus' lips shows that he too was aware that Jesus was not specifically addressing the issue of prohibited foods. These considerations raise the possibility that something like what is found in 7.15–23 was uttered by Jesus in the context of a dispute over lay handwashing before consumption of ordinary food.

I would suggest that it is precisely the fact that the saying of 7.15 (or one like it) was uttered in the context of a dispute about handwashing before consumption of ordinary food that accounts for the key difference between Matthew and Mark, namely, Matthew's omission of 7.19b. As I have indicated above, the point of handwashing before eating common food would have been to avoid ingesting food with second-degree impurity and thus becoming unclean in the second degree. Matthew, in omitting Mark 7.19b, has restricted the significance of the saying in Mark 7.15 to the issue that was in question when Jesus uttered it, that is, whether or not hands ought to be washed before consumption of common food for the purpose of avoiding second-degree impurity. The ease with which Matthew restricts the application of Mark 7.15 suggests that even if this logion was circulating widely, it would not have been sufficient to determine that inherently unclean foods should be permitted even for Jewish Christians.

The second observation has to do with the use of the κοινός word group throughout the text. The Pharisees ask Jesus why his disciples eat their food κοιναῖς χερσίν (v. 5; cf. v. 2). The cognate verb then occurs four times in Jesus' response of verses 15–23 (as also in Matthew). The word is translated with forms of such terms as 'defiled' or 'unclean', a rendering which has not been questioned by commentators. If we allow that the κοινός word group can bear this connotation, it is at best uncommon and unknown outside biblical and apocryphal literature. But I would argue that in each of the cases where it has been thought to connote defilement, the meaning is 'common', that is, 'profane' or, when the form is a verb, 'desecrate', that is, 'to make common what is holy'. Of course, 'common' is much closer

to the root meaning of κοινός than 'unclean', and, as I have emphasized above, the distinction between the two terms in Scripture is axiomatic, as Leviticus 10.10 succinctly indicates: 'You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean.'

Leaving aside Mark 7 for a moment, in the contexts in which κοινός language has been taken with connotations of 'impurity', the issue at stake invariably has to do primarily with the distinction not between clean and unclean but rather between what is holy and what is common. Of the eleven non-Marcan texts, nine have to do with Jewish consumption of abominated food (1 Macc. 1.47, 62; 4 Macc. 7.6; Acts 10.14, 15, 28; 11.8, 9; Rom. 14.14). Scripture is explicit that the avoidance of such food marked Israel's holiness, its separateness from the nations. But, as I have noted above, there is a possible source of confusion in Torah, for prohibited food and defiled permitted food are alike referred to as unclean. No Jew would have confused the two, as the consequences imposed by Scripture differed radically: for eating unclean permitted food, immersion and sunset are required (Lev. 11.29–40; cf. 17.15–16); for eating unclean prohibited food the consequence, though not specified in the priestly code, was presumably the same as for apostasy, namely, *kārēt* (see e.g. *Ant*. 11.346–7). This explains why Luke says that Peter when faced with a sheet filled with 'all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air' (Acts 10.11–12) and the command to 'kill and eat', responds by protesting that he has never eaten anything that is profane or unclean (κοινὸν καὶ ἀκάθαρτον) (10.14). The two terms are commonly thought to be synonyms. But here the NRSV's translation is precise: κοινός specifies the sense in which the animals were ἀκάθαρτος. Verses 11–12 had not indicated whether there were any permitted animals from which to choose. Peter's response makes it clear that he has been commanded to kill and eat from animals which, when consumed, would not only defile but also desecrate, compromising his holiness as a member of God's elect people.

If, then, in the context of a dispute over handwashing, the question of consuming food which would revoke one's membership among God's holy people is not in question, why is κοινός language used? Here I return to the earlier observation of the tension between the pursuit of extra purity as an expression of holiness which is Israel's by virtue of election and the holiness to which Israel is enjoined. I suggest that Pharisaic insistence on handwashing reflects the first pole of this tension, for the expression κοιναῖς χερσίν refers not merely to hands which have been defiled but hands which have been *desecrated* because they were defiled. The point then is that impure hands were at variance with an Israelite's holy status and threatened to transmit desecrating uncleanness to the whole body.

If this is what was at stake in the washing of hands, Jesus' protest must be understood as an assertion that bodily defilement could not take away one's holiness. The point of Jesus' saying is to deny the connection between handwashing and holiness. In Torah, it was true that the rectification of bodily impurity expressed holiness, but the converse was not: contraction of impurity said nothing at all about one's holiness. *But to adopt an expanded purity programme is to suggest that it is not merely rectification of impurity but the preservation of purity which expresses holiness. And this is tantamount to saying that contracting impurity does in fact compromise one's holiness*. In the logion of Mark 7.15, Jesus speaks *not about defilement as such but about desecration*. He asserts that nothing outside a person can take away one's holiness; it is the evil within that compromises a person's holiness.

Although some have understood the saying of verse 15 as an absolute rejection of Jewish purity rules,[85] much recent work has attempted to show that it should be regarded as a relative subordination of physical purity to moral purity: a person is defiled more by what goes out than by what goes in.[86] But this would have been a truism in first-century Judaism; no one – not even the most scrupulous Pharisee – would have doubted that moral impurity was more serious than 'ritual' impurity, especially in view of the likelihood that moral impurity was perceived as being just as real as bodily impurity with consequences far more dire. If the foregoing analysis of the saying is correct, its point has far less to do with the relativization of physical purity than with the inadequacy of physical purity as an indicator of holiness. *For the Pharisee, the emphasis falls on the capacity of bodily purity to express holiness; Jesus stresses the inability of bodily impurity to take one's holiness away; only the evil within could do that.*

Jesus' apparent rejection of the necessity of handwashing indicates that he very probably rejected measures designed to preserve Israel's purity which went beyond the explicit stipulations of Torah. I am inclined to think that he did keep Torah's requirements on the rectification of impurity, a likelihood suggested, for instance, by his directive to a cleansed leper to show himself to the priest and offer what Moses required (Mark 1.34 pars.). On the other hand, to assert that bodily impurity posed no threat to holiness, to remain silent on the capacity of physical purity to

[85]E. g. Riches, *Jesus*, pp. 136–8.

[86]J. D. G. Dunn, 'Jesus and Ritual Purity: A Study of the Tradition-History of Mark 7.15', *Jesus, Paul, and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians* (London: SPCK, 1990), p. 51; S. Westerholm, *Jesus and Scribal Authority* (ConB; Lund: Gleerup, 1978), p. 83; Booth, *Jesus*, pp. 68–71.

express holiness, and to emphasize intentionality and purity of heart as the proper indicators of holiness all suggest that for Jesus the significance of bodily impurity was drastically attenuated.

Both the emphasis of the Pharisees and that of Jesus were based on ideas rooted in Scripture itself. But in contrast to the present form of the Pentateuchal purity code in which bodily impurity signalled the danger posed by moral impurity to Israel's holiness, Jesus' assertion that bodily impurity in no way compromised holiness functioned to downplay the significance of bodily impurity.[87] I shall in due course attempt to place Jesus' position in the wider context of Israel's sacred traditions and eschatological expectations. For now, I simply observe that if knowledge of Mark 7.15 would not have been sufficient to secure universal acceptance of inherently unclean foods in the early church, it is easy to see how knowledge of Mark 7.15 *and* of the severely constricted significance of impurity in Jesus' message led many to precisely that conclusion. To get ahead of my argument, such a conclusion would not have been driven by the belief that Jesus had revoked the laws against forbidden meats, but that such laws had been eschatologically obviated.

5.2.4 Jesus, purity and Land

One of the most puzzling features of the Jesus tradition, given its strong eschatological overtones, is the virtual absence of any discussion of Israel's Land. In his important study on the topic, W. D. Davies finds only four possible references to the Land: Luke 13.6–9; Matthew 5.5; Matthew 25.14–30; Matthew 19.28. Davies is sure of none of these and doubts whether the first and third are authentic.[88] Assuming for the moment that these texts are authentic, it is immediately evident that each is also subject to quite different understandings. I earlier concluded that the Land motif is not present at all in Luke 13.6–9, and it is widely acknowledged that the concept has been transformed and universalized in Matthew 5.5.[89] An allusion to the Land promise is most doubtful in Matthew 25.14–30; it is suggested only by the fact that γῆ in verse 25 is articular. But in verse 18

[87] Cf. the comment of Klawans, 'Immorality', 15: 'Jesus nowhere defends ritual purity as a symbol of moral purity. Prioritizing moral purity, without underscoring any connection between ritual and moral purity, leaves ritual purity without a leg to stand on. If Jesus did not explicitly reject these laws himself, the sayings attributed to him in the synoptic gospels point the way in that direction.'

[88] W. D. Davies, *The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 355–65.

[89] Cf. Sir. 44.21; *Jub.* 22.14; 32.19; *2 Bar.* 14.13; 51.3; 4 Ezra 6.59; Rom. 4.12. It is not unlikely that the LXX of Ps. 36.9, 11 would have been read in this way as well.

the term is anarthrous (in the most probable reading), suggesting that the article in verse 25 is merely anaphoric.

A text not included in Davies' list is Matthew 8.11–12/Luke 13.28–9, which portrays many coming from east and west to sit at table with the patriarchs. This text is often cited in discussions of Jesus' expectations concerning the inclusion of Gentiles, though a case has recently been made that Jesus was speaking of Diaspora Jews.[90] It is not, however, clear that the image of gathering to the eschatological banquet tells us very much about Jesus' expectations concerning the Land; the image was tied not so much to the promise of Land as to the general promise of Israel's blessedness. As we have seen, the eschatological banquet and the table fellowship that anticipated it were ways of talking not so much about the substance of that blessedness but rather about who would and would not share in that blessedness.[91] Further, what is shocking in the saying is its assertion that the apparent heirs to the blessings promised to Israel would be excluded. This assertion runs counter to the spirit and perhaps also the substance of the common expectation concerning Israel's re-establishment in the Land. This is perhaps why Davies does not include the passage among those which could be taken to indicate a positive expectation by Jesus concerning the Land and, in fact, sees it as evidence for the opposite understanding: 'Were it not for such a passage . . . it would be tempting to find Jesus sharing in the doctrine of the Land . . .'[92]

Much more likely is the possibility, considered though not accepted by Davies, that the Land promise stands behind the saying in Matthew 19.28 which asserts that the disciples will sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. If present, reference to the Land remains implicit. Sanders, in particular, has used this text as evidence that Jesus' eschatology retained as central the common expectation that the twelve tribes would be re-established in the Land. But it is possible to read this saying not so much as an anticipation of the re-establishment of the tribes in the Land as a pointed *rejection* of that expectation! Several commentators have laid out the probable links between this text and Daniel 7. There, thrones are set up in a court of judgement where one like a son of man is invested with a kingdom and dominion, evidently to act as the agent of

[90]Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. II, pp. 27–8. Luke, at least, may regard a significant number of Diaspora Jews as among those who come from east and west, though not as part of an eschatology of the Land. See J. B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), p. 532; and Nolland, *Luke 9:21–18:34*, p. 735.

[91]Even Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. II, p. 29, who interpret the logion in terms of the pilgrimage of dispersed Jews back to Zion, are reluctant to see any implied convictions regarding the Land.

[92]Davies, *The Gospel and the Land,* p. 353 n. 51.

God's judgement on the kingdoms of the world (7.9–14). But in 7.22–7 this role is taken up by the saints or holy ones who gain possession of the kingdom and to whom is granted judgement over their enemies. Inasmuch as Jesus identified himself as the Son of man who would occupy a glorious throne, it is easy to see how such a conviction might carry with it the implication that his followers would likewise sit on thrones. Despite the fact that the judgement carried out by the son of man and the holy ones in Daniel 7 is clearly punitive, many have been reluctant to accept that Jesus might have anticipated a punitive role for his followers. But quite apart from the probable background in Daniel 7, the idea is not without precedent. In the prophets, a punitive function is sometimes elsewhere assigned specifically to the remnant of Israel (Micah 5.8 and Zeph. 2.9). A similar idea is attested in the Animal Apocalypse (*1 Enoch* 90.19) and the Apocalypse of Weeks (*1 Enoch* 91.12; cf. 4Q212 4.15–17) where the righteous are given a sword of judgement against their enemies. In 1QpHab 5.4 we read that 'God will execute the judgement of the nations by the hand of His elect.' The involvement of the righteous in judgement is fundamental to the War Scroll (1QM) where the sons of light exact retribution not only from the nations but also from 'the ungodly of the covenant'. Of particular note in 1QM is the careful attention given to the community's preparation for the Day of Vengeance along lines largely determined by its organization as a federation of twelve tribes. So too in the Community Rule is the Council of the Community, at least initially made up of twelve men and three priests, charged with the judgement of the wicked (1QS 8.1, 6–7, 10). There is, then, ample evidence for the belief that the righteous would be the agents of God's judgement of the nations. To the extent that the people of Qumran thought of themselves as Israel of the new covenant chosen from amongst 'all Israel' (CD 3.10–15), they would have anticipated a role as judges of the nation as a whole.[93]

That Jesus could think in similar terms is at least suggested by Matthew 12.41/Luke 11.32 where he involves the penitent of a past generation in the judgement of 'this generation', a designation which we have seen to be decidedly national in scope.[94] Moreover, in their mission to Israel, the twelve exercise a punitive function as witnesses who symbolically consign unbelieving towns to judgement (Matt. 10.14/Mark 6.11/Luke

[93] Against I. Broer, 'Das Ringen der Gemeinde um Israel', in *Jesus und der Menschensohn* (ed. R. Pesch and R. Schnackenburg; Freiburg: Herder, 1975), p. 160), who rejects the possibility that the community anticipated a punitive role against Israel because it believed itself to be Israel. This, however, is to ignore the bivalent way in which 'Israel' was used at Qumran.

[94] Cf. 1 Cor. 6.2 where Paul takes as given the idea that 'the saints will judge the world'.

9.5; cf. Luke 10.11). More than most, C. Evans recognizes the connection of Matthew 19.28 with the punitive judgement carried out by the son of man and the holy ones in Daniel 7. It is therefore odd that he does not entertain the possibility that the judgement of Matthew 19.28 might also be punitive.[95] Indeed Evans rejects this view, despite his similar reading of Daniel 7 as the background to Mark 14.62. In this text, Jesus vows that as the Son of man, seated at the right hand of the chariot throne of God, he will come in judgement on the leaders of Israel.[96] It is not surprising, therefore, that Jesus should assign his followers a role in the judgement. Rather more surprising, however, is that for Jesus the objects of judgement are not the enemies of Israel but the tribes of Israel.[97]

Sanders agrees that the judgement in view is punitive, but limits this judgement to 'some' Jews against the broader context of salvation for 'all' Israel. Nevertheless, in view of Sanders' own evidence for a widespread expectation of a re-established tribal league, it is not difficult to hear polemical overtones in Jesus' promise: the tribes of Israel will not be reconstituted but judged. Moreover, Sanders' view rests on the unquestioned assumption that Jesus had taken up unchanged common expectations concerning the Land.[98] This rather large assumption is itself based on an argument from silence: if the expectation of the Land is so central, why is its presence in the Jesus tradition so tenuous? It is possible, as Sanders would presumably argue, that the silence of the tradition stems

[95]C. A. Evans, 'In What Sense "Blasphemy"? Jesus Before Caiaphas in Mark 14:61–64', *Jesus and His Contemporaries: Comparative Studies* (AGJU; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), pp. 427–8. So also Horsley, *Spiral of Violence*, p. 203 who likewise understands 'judge' as 'rule'. J. Dupont ('Le logion des douze trônes (Mt 19,28; Lc 22,28–30)', *Biblica* 45 (1964), 372) observes that no other occurrence of κρίνω in the New Testament has the meaning 'rule'. Luz (*Matthäus: 3 Teilband*, p. 129) regards the assertion that κρίνω can mean 'to rule' as a 'philological fairytale': 'Es basiert auf einer Verwechslung der *historischen* Tatsache, daß in Israel Richter herrschten und Könige richteten, mit der *semantischen* Bedeutung von κρίνω.' This confusion is especially evident in the assertion of Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, vol. III, p. 55) that for Matthew and his tradition κρίνοντες corresponds to the Hebrew שפט.

[96]Evans, 'In What Sense "Blasphemy"'?, pp. 417–23. Though Jesus' words are addressed to Caiaphas and other members of the council, we have seen in chapter 3 the way in which the nation as a whole is often implicated in the failure of its leaders.

[97]I. H. Marshall ('The Hope in a New Age: The Kingdom of God in the New Testament', *Them* 11 (1985–6), 11) and G. R. Beasley-Murray (*Jesus and the Kingdom,* pp. 75–6) likewise view the judgement of Matt. 19.28 as a punitive judgement on the nation. Luz (*Matthäus: 3 Teilband*, p. 130) allows it for the pre-Matthean tradition; cf. Broer, 'Das Ringen der Gemeinde um Israel', p. 164.

[98]The link between the expectation that the twelve tribes would be established and hopes concerning Israel's possession of the Land is fundamental in Second Temple Jewish literature. See Mendels, *Land of Israel*, p. 4, qualifying W. D. Davies, *The Territorial Dimension of Judaism: With a Symposium and Further Reflections* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), p. 22.

precisely from the fact that it was so central that it was simply assumed. But, it is also possible that the silence was due to the fact that for Jesus the Land did not occupy the central place of importance that it held for many of his contemporaries. On what basis can one choose between these two arguments from silence? The absence of direct evidence means that we must rely on more subtle indicators.

The purity of the Land and anti-Samaritanism in Jewish restorationism

A frequent but little-noticed corollary to the expectation of the re-establishment of the twelve tribes in the Land was a strident anti-Samaritan polemic. The connection stems from the fact that the Samaritans were regarded as occupying Land which was the historical and eschatological inheritance of the as yet unreturned tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim. Consequently, the presence of Samaritans in the Land was perceived as a barrier that would have to be eliminated prior to the realization of a central eschatological hope, not least because the Samaritans were regarded as polluting the Land which would have to be pure if God were to make it his eschatological dwelling (cf. Ezra 9.11). My suggestion is that against this background the attitude of Jesus toward Samaritans, as evidenced particularly in the parable of the good Samaritan, provides us with a subtle index on Jesus' view of the Land as well as the Temple.

I turn now to several texts which reveal the anti-Samaritan component within Jewish expectations concerning the Land. The first text comes from Sirach. I have devoted considerable attention to Sirach's expansion of the returning Elijah's role to include the restoration of the tribes of Jacob (48.10). The text echoes the petition of 36.13: 'Gather all the tribes of Jacob and give them their inheritance, as at the beginning.'[99] Sirach 48.10 itself falls within Sirach's fond reminiscence for Israel's golden age when the whole of the Jewish people lived in peace in the Land and the expression of a desire that it would again be so one day.[100] In chapter 49 he praises Simon son of Onias who, in repairing the Temple, had once again 'made the court of the sanctuary glorious' (50.13) and follows this with a prayer that God will grant 'peace in our days, in Israel as in days

[99] See also the sixth line of the prayer which appears in the Hebrew between 51.12 and 51.13: 'Give thanks to him who gathers the dispersed of Israel, for his mercy endures for ever.'

[100] Mendels, *Land of Israel*, p. 16.

of old' and 'deliver us in our days' (50.23–4). The petition is followed immediately by this bitter invective:

> Two nations my soul detests,
> and the third is not even a people:
> Those who live in Seir, and the Philistines,
> and the foolish people that live in Shechem.

'The people of Shechem' was a widely employed designation in Jewish polemic against the Samaritans, useful for its capacity to portray the Samaritans as descendants of Shechem, the rapist of Dinah, the sister of Jacob's twelve sons (Gen. 34).[101] The translation above reflects the Hebrew. As it stands, the intensifying parallelism focuses the deepest antipathy on the third group – 'the foolish people of Shechem' – and scorns even the claim of national identity. But even more striking is the modification evident in the LXX: 'in Seir' has become 'in the mountains of Samaria'. The Greek translation dates to just before Hyrcanus' campaign against Shechem and destruction of the Gerizim temple in 128 BCE.[102] In this context, it is probable that 'those who live in the mountains of Samaria' and 'the foolish people of Shechem' alike target the Samaritans.[103] If so, the translator's animosity has outrun all sense of poetic balance: the Samaritans are now the first as well as the third detested people![104] Of Israel's enemies, Sirach and, even more, his translator regard the Samaritans as the greatest fissure in the nation's territorial integrity and the most reviled obstacle to the nation's territorial destiny.[105]

The *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* are no less hostile towards the Samaritans and again Land eschatology fuels the antagonism. The dating

[101] A serendipity for Jewish polemicists was the fact that Shechem was also the name of Samaria's capital city.

[102] J. Zangenberg (ΣΑΜΑΡΕΙΑ: *Antike Quellen zur Geschichte und Kultur der Samaritaner in deutscher Übersetzung* (TANZ; Tübingen: Francke Verlag, 1994), p. 43) argues that the elimination of 'Seir' was made possible by the conquest and forced Judaization of the Edomites in 129 BCE. This suggests a slightly later date than that proposed by others.

[103] Against the sharp distinction of R. Hanhart ('Zu den ältesten Traditionen über das samaritanische Schisma', *ErIsr* 16 (1982), 106–7) who does not adequately note that all the hill country of Samaria was claimed by the Samaritans and the likelihood that the Gerizim temple had been supported by the region as a whole and not just the people of Shechem (*Ant*. 302–47).

[104] R. Smend (*Die Weisheit des Jesus Sirach* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1906), p. 491), missing the polemical intent, emends the text, precisely because the reference to Shechem is geographically identical to 'the mountains of Samaria'.

[105] For a discussion of Jewish–Samaritan antipathy in the time of Simon II (the Just), with whose praise this invective is linked, see J. D. Purvis, 'Ben Sira and the Foolish People of Shechem', *The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Origin of the Samaritan Sect* (HSM; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 119–29.

of the *Testaments* is disputed. But even if the intriguing view of Mendels that the *Testaments* date to around the time of the Jewish–Samaritan conflicts at the end of the second century BCE is incorrect,[106] it is clear that the original form of the document was virulently anti-Samaritan. The issue of Israel's possession of the Land is implicitly pushed to the fore with the focus on the eponymous fathers of the twelve tribes and is underscored by the recurrence of sin–exile–return themes throughout the book. Within this context, the anti-Samaritan polemic emerges in part with the awareness of the Samaritan claim to be the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh (cf. *Ant*. 9.291; 11.341), a tradition doubtless related to the Samaritans' occupation of land ceded to Joseph's sons in the traditional settlement scheme. The presence, then, of Samaritans in the Land allotted to Joseph's sons sheds light on the otherwise inexplicable emphasis in the *Testaments* on the sale of Joseph. Repeatedly stressed is the repentance of several of the sons who were party to the crime and the gracious willingness of Joseph to forgive. Unlike the biblical account of Genesis 34, the *Testaments* emphasize not the roles of Reuben and Judah in the affair but the particular guilt and repentance of Simeon, Dan and Gad, precisely the tribes granted the Land of the South in the original settlement scheme.[107] Intriguingly the Land of these three tribes corresponds to the Hasmonean-ruled territory from which was launched the campaign against the Samaritans.[108] Whether the purpose of this slanted take on Genesis 34 is to justify a war already fought, as Mendels supposes, or to legitimate a campaign still in the future, the point is clear: whatever strife there may have been between Joseph and his brothers in the past, the ancient story shows that the reconciliation is complete; Jacob is whole; the Land, rightfully one.

Against the Samaritan claim of descent from Ephraim and Manasseh, much Jewish polemic identified them with Shechem against whom the sons of Jacob had exacted vengeance for the rape of their sister Dinah. However, not all of the details of the biblical story neatly fit anti-Samaritan polemics, not least the anger of Jacob over the violent reaction of Simeon and Levi. *T. Levi* 5–6 transcends such difficulties. The destruction of Shechem's city is made the response to an angelic command to Levi. Unlike the biblical story in which the other sons of Jacob merely plunder the city after it has been defeated, in *T. Levi* 6 the sons all participate in the city's destruction. In Genesis 34 the whole clan is killed though

[106] Mendels, *Land of Israel*, pp. 90–105.
[107] Of course, Dan later moved to the north.
[108] Mendels, *Land of Israel*, pp. 94–7.

only Shechem committed the crime; in *T. Levi* the crime is imputed to all Shechemites (as also in *Jubilees* 30, Judith 9, *Joseph and Asenath* 23). As in the biblical story, Jacob is angered by the actions of his sons, but in *T. Levi* the anger rises not from fear of reprisal from the peoples of the Land, as in Genesis 34, but from the fact that Shechem and his clan had been circumcised before they died.[109] Levi himself is exonerated for he had explicitly reported to both Jacob and Reuben the command of God that Shechem and the others *not* be circumcised (*T. Levi* 6.3).[110] In this way, the *Testament of Levi* claims that God had commanded the destruction of Shechem and his city but had explicitly forbidden their circumcision. This latter detail doubtless calmed Jewish minds nervous about military assault on circumcised Samaritans: their practice of circumcision like their claim to Israel's Land were violations of the divine will. The indictment of Shechem is sealed with the final detail – also non-biblical – that Shechem had merely succeeded in doing to Dinah what his clan had previously intended to do to both Sarah and Rebecca![111] In the context of a work strongly oriented toward the regathering and re-establishment of the twelve tribes,[112] the anti-Samaritan polemic must be understood as serving the larger aim of Israel's restoration in the Land.

Brief mention should also be made of 4Q371–2, a text which dates to the Hasmonean period and recalls the dispersion of the tribe of Joseph to foreign lands.[113] After their removal from the Land, the mountains were appalled to see 'fools' make 'a high place on a high mountain' and blaspheme the 'Tent of Zion' in order to arouse the jealousy of Israel. The text laments the loss of the northern tribes: 'My land [has been taken]

[109]The correspondence between the circumcision of Shechem and the circumcision-practising Samaritans who lived in Shechem was doubtless a happy one for Jews wishing to exploit the story for anti-Samaritan purposes.

[110]According to the text adopted by Kee and Charles against Hollander and de Jonge.

[111]Two recent discussions helpfully explicate the literary and textual issues of this narrative but pass over its ideological aims. See J. Kugel, 'The Story of Dinah in the *Testament of Levi*', *HTR* 85 (1992), 1–34; and T. Baarda, 'The Shechem Episode in the Testament of Levi: A Comparison with Other Traditions', in *Sacred History and Sacred Texts in Early Judaism: A Symposium in Honour of A. S. Van der Woude* (ed. J. N. Bremmer and F. García Martínez; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1992), pp. 11–73.

[112]See A. Hultgård, *L'eschatologie des Testaments des Douze Patriarches: interprétation des textes* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1977), pp. 200–2, and especially D. Mendels (*The Rise and Fall of Jewish Nationalism* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1992), p. 95; and *Land of Israel*, pp. 89–108) who argues that, not least in their anti-Samaritan polemic, the *Testaments* reflect 'a claim made by the Jews to the whole of Palestine, which is symbolized in this document by the twelve tribes of Israel'.

[113]I am grateful to Professor R. Bauckham for calling this text to my attention. For a transcription, translation and brief commentary, see E. Schuller, '4Q372 1: A Text About Joseph', *RevQ* 14 (1990), 349–76.

from me and from all my brothers who joined me. A hostile people dwells upon it and is stirring up trouble with the words of his mouth to despise and revile, and he is opening his mouth against all the sons of your beloved Jacob.'[114] Line 22 then yearns for their annihilation. The fragmentary text hints at an awaited restoration, a restoration which turns in part on the destruction of the Samaritans.

Finally, two passing references in Judith, a book often dated to the Hasmonean period, betray anti-Samaritan polemic. In a story that functions less as history than as a kind of parable aimed at boosting confidence that God will enable his chaste and faithful people to triumph over their enemies,[115] it is striking that the heroine (whose name, meaning 'Jewess', suggests that she is a personification of Israel) steels herself for her act of vengeance with a prayer for God to help her as he had helped Simeon to slaughter the Israel-polluting Shechemites (9.2–4). The reference takes on added meaning if the eschatologically motivated efforts by the Hasmoneans to conquer the Land stand behind the ahistorical idealization of the conquest in 5.15–16, where the Shechemites are oddly placed among the peoples driven out by Israel. Do we have here another rationalization of violence against the Samaritans in the service of reconquest ideology?

These examples indicate the way in which eschatological expectations concerning the Land, especially in connection with the idea of the restoration of the twelve tribes, helped to generate strong anti-Samaritan feelings. This connection has not been sufficiently noticed, most especially in relation to the treatment of Samaritans in the Jesus tradition. Certainly, the four Gospels bear ample witness – much of it incidental – to the continued existence of Jewish anti-Samaritan hostility in the first century.[116] But there are also a number of texts which indicate that Jesus distanced himself from that antagonism, even if the focus of his mission remained Israel (Matt. 10.5–6).[117] It is not my purpose here to review the disputes over the authenticity of the various incidents. It is my intention

[114]Lines 19–21. The translation follows E. Qimron, 'Observations on the Reading of "A Text About Joseph" (4Q372,1)', *RevQ* 15 (1992), 604.

[115]M. Delcor, 'The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Hellenistic Period', in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. II: *The Hellenistic Age* (ed. W. D. Davies and L. Finkelstein; Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 445.

[116]Other examples of Jewish anti-Samaritanism closer to the time of Jesus may be found in Pseudo-Philo, Josephus and *Joseph and Asenath*.

[117]Note, for example, Jesus' rebuke of James and John when they offered to call down fire to consume a Samaritan village, Luke 9.51–6. Like much of the literature just reviewed, the disciples evidently did not believe the annihilation of Samaritans to be outside the purview of God's eschatological purposes.

to build on the recent work of R. Bauckham on the parable of the good Samaritan, the authenticity of which is not in question.[118]

Purity and love – the halakhic situation in the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10.30–6)

Bauckham successfully shows that the parable sets up a *halakhic* situation in which a priest is confronted with a choice between obedience of the prohibition of corpse-impurity for priests and the command to love one's neighbour.[119] The point thus indicated is that Jesus treated the love commandment not as some overarching principle which points up the general intent of the law, but rather as a commandment in its own right, capable of overriding other commandments.[120] The significance of the Samaritan in the story is that Samaritans claimed to be under the Mosaic law, but yet were regarded by Jews as suspect in their observance of the law. Beyond this, the geographical location of the episode probably implies the Jewish–Samaritan debate over the Temple. According to Bauckham, the Samaritan would have been regarded as impure since corpse-impurity could only be removed by recourse to the red heifer ceremony in the Jerusalem Temple. This makes all the more emphatic Jesus' assertion of the superiority of the love commandment to the purity laws. The Samaritan disregards the purity laws – not by his actions *vis à vis* the wounded man but by being a Samaritan – but still keeps the more important

[118]For responses to the odd dissenting voice, see Nolland, *Luke 9:21–18:34*, pp. 588–600.

[119]R. J. Bauckham, 'The Scrupulous Priest and the Good Samaritan: Jesus' Parabolic Interpretation of the Law of Moses', *NTS* 44 (1998), 477–8. While Bauckham is not the first to see purity concerns at work in the parable (see e.g. Fitzmyer, *Luke* vol. II, p. 883; Dunn, *Partings*, p. 41; E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law*, pp. 41–2), his treatment of such concerns advances the discussion in several important ways. M. Gourgues ('The Priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan Revisited: A Critical Note on Luke 10:31–35', *JBL* 117 (1998), 709–10) has recently assembled the objections to reading the parable with purity issues in mind, but they do not withstand scrutiny: (1) whether or not Luke tends to put scribes and Pharisees rather than priests on stage when he is depicting strict observance of the law is irrelevant if the parable goes back to Jesus; (2) the observation that the priest was on his way back from Jerusalem does not mean that he would have been any less concerned about contracting corpse-impurity, since corpse-impurity is proscribed for priests even outside the cult except in the case of a close relative; (3) though it is true that 'the narrative provides no grounds for equating the body of the beaten man with a corpse', the narrative's description of the man as 'half dead' *does* provide grounds for suspicion on the part of the priest and the Levite that the man could well have been dead. A further objection, voiced by Green (*Luke*, p. 430), is that even priests would have been obliged to bury a neglected corpse. But even if the parable caricatures the actions of the priest and the Levite, all would have recognized the purity issue involved.

[120]Bauckham, 'Scrupulous Priest', 484–5.

requirement of the law.[121] Thus 'his disobedience to the purity laws is conspicuously overlooked'; 'by stressing the superiority of the love commandment specifically to purity laws, the parable tends to downgrade, while not necessarily invalidating, purity concerns, in rather striking contrast to the emphasis on them in much Second-Temple halakhah'.[122]

I am in substantial agreement with much of Bauckham's argument. But further consideration of two key elements of the parable shows that it is possible to develop the discussion in ways which take the argument toward a rather different conclusion. First, Bauckham is uncertain about the role of the Levite in the parable. Second, it has yet to be explained adequately why Jesus placed a Samaritan in the role of the loving neighbour.

The role of the Levite. There is no clear indication in Jewish literature that the Levites were under a similar obligation to that of priests to avoid corpse-impurity. Bauckham consequently regards the Levite as a kind of transitional figure whose obligation to avoid corpse-impurity was less absolute than that of the priest but perhaps more than that of the Samaritan, who as a lay person would have been under no requirement to avoid corpse-impurity even as an observer of Pentateuchal law.[123] There is evidence, however, which may indicate a first-century proclivity toward treating Levites as being under the same restrictions in regard to corpse-impurity as were priests. Josephus reports that just prior to the Jewish War the Levites who were singers successfully petitioned the king to allow them to wear linen robes 'on equal terms with the priests' (*Ant*. 20.216–18). The petition is important, for Josephus regards it as a violation of ancestral law and one of a list of transgressions which 'was bound to make us liable to punishment'. The significance of this emerges from a careful examination of the regulations concerning the wearing of linen garments. Within a cultic context, linen garments are prescribed only for priests and were to be worn only while carrying out their duties within the inner court (Exod. 28; Lev. 6.3; 16.4, 32); Ezekiel 44.9–19 explicitly prohibits Levites from wearing the linen vestments, reserving a special holy status for priests. The episode in Josephus thus suggests a yearning by at least some first-century Levites for a holiness status in some respects equal to that of priests. This almost certainly would have entailed assimilation of the same purity obligations as priests.

Second, the Pentateuchal law is often silent concerning the purity obligations placed on Levites. In the entire book of Leviticus where much

[121] Ibid., 486–8. [122] Ibid., 488–9.
[123] Ibid., 485–6.

of the purity code is laid down, Levites are mentioned only once. On the other hand, Numbers 8 makes it clear that Levites underwent a purification rite which, though distinct from the rite of consecration for priests (Lev. 8–9), nevertheless distinguished them from lay Israelites: in association with this rite God declares that the Levites are separated from Israel, given over to God to be his possession. Furthermore, though in the Pentateuch they are not regarded as holy in the same way as priests, they do serve as substitutes for every firstborn among the Israelites who is holy to the Lord, which may indicate that the Levites were holy in a way that lay Israelites were not (Exod. 13.2; Num. 8.16–17). This holy status is made explicit in 2 Chronicles 29.34; 35.3, and could easily imply purity requirements distinct from those of other Israelites.[124] When this fact is combined with the Pentateuchal silence concerning the purity obligations of Levites, it is not difficult to see how disputes of the sort witnessed by Josephus could have arisen.

Third, in Numbers 8.21 part of the Levites' rite of purification is the demand that 'they purify themselves'. The language is significant because, as Levine notes, the *hithpa'el* is rare and used elsewhere only in Numbers and only in reference to purification after contact with a corpse.[125] Inasmuch as this rite is apparently a rite of initiation for Levites who have come of age, it would not be difficult to adduce that the avoidance of corpse-impurity was expected and proper for a Levite.

Fourth, the parable itself suggests that the Levite's motive for passing by the injured man was exactly that of the priest: the avoidance of corpse-impurity. The key is in a detail which has not yet been adequately explored: both the priest and the Levite pass by *on the other side*. As Bauckham is aware, a corpse pollutes aerially. But how and where? The fact that investigating the man's condition would require close proximity to the man explains the concern over corpse-impurity should the man prove dead. But just what sort of proximity would contaminate? There is no direct evidence for what first-century priests deemed a safe distance from a corpse. Bauckham here follows Harrington in her contention that the aerial transmission of corpse-impurity was limited to vertical motion.[126] Bauckham,

[124] So also J. Milgrom, 'The Shoulder for the Levites', in *The Temple Scroll* (Y. Yadin; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1983), p. 169 n. 1. By the time of the Palestinian Talmud, the differentiation of purity obligations had been formalized: if a priest and a Levite find a neglected corpse, the Levite defiles himself; if a Levite and an Israelite, the Israelite defiles himself (*y. Naz.* 7.1, 15a–b).

[125] B. A. Levine, *Numbers 1–20* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1993), p. 278. Cf. Num. 19.12–13; 31.19–20, 23.

[126] H. K. Harrington, *The Impurity Systems of Qumran and the Rabbis: Biblical Foundations* (SBLDS; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), p. 155.

assuming that the road was relatively narrow, suggests that by passing on the other side the priest and the Levite sought to avoid defilement by overhang. The Jericho–Jerusalem road, however, was probably more than a narrow footpath.[127] Moreover, though it is true that the *common* person was threatened by corpse-impurity only by overhang, Harrington's contention that impurity moved only vertically is misleading. The possibility that a holy person would fear corpse-impurity in open space is suggested by considering two questions: first, does impurity move horizontally? And, second, are holy persons and things more susceptible to defilement than common persons and things? If the world-view which Milgrom ascribes to the priestly legislators remained intact during the first century, the answer to both of these questions is clear: impurity assaults the sanctuary from afar and thus necessarily travels horizontally precisely because of the attraction of impurity to sancta.[128] Though Milgrom suggests that the aerial movement of impurity was sharply curtailed by the rabbis, there is evidence that such a view persisted in a more limited form into the rabbinic period. The example cited by Milgrom is instructive for it addresses both of the questions. In *m. Sanh.* 2.1, there is a debate over whether or not the high priest should be allowed to follow after the bier when one of his next of kin dies.[129] The more lenient view of R. Meir was that he was permitted provided he had no eye contact with the bier. The concern that the high priest should not even see the bier cannot be explained if the fear is contamination by overhang. Horizontal movement of impurity is presupposed, and its attraction to the high priest feared.[130] More direct confirmation that first-century Jews believed that impurity could move horizontally is found in the assumption of the Houses that 'corpse-contamination flows through a passage of a specified

[127]D. A. Dorsey (*The Roads and Highways of Ancient Israel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), pp. 11–12) adduces evidence from the OT period for the widespread use of both chariots and wheeled carts even in the hill country for commercial and personal as well as military purposes. He concludes that 'a network of wider roads must have existed throughout Israel' during this period. As the main artery for traffic from the plain of Jericho, the fords of the Jordan and the Transjordanian region, the road from Jericho was probably such a road. Based on archaeological evidence for vehicles in the ancient near east, the road must have been 1.5–2 metres wide. Though its dating is uncertain, the Mishnah specifies that for purposes of compensation, the prescribed width of a private (one-lane) road should be 4 cubits, i.e. 1.8 metres (*m. B. Bat.* 6.7). In 69 CE the road from Jericho was used by the Roman tenth legion in their approach to Jerusalem (*J.W.* 5.42, 69), a fact which may suggest a road sufficient to accommodate vehicles.

[128]Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, pp. 254–8.

[129]Only the high priest and Nazarites were to avoid all corpse-impurity.

[130]R. Judah disagrees but only because he thinks that avoidance of eye contact with the bier was an inadequate precaution from defilement, as Lev. 21.12 indicates. See the discussion of Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, p. 980.

size, a square hand-breadth (M. Oh. 7.3), and that if there are various windows in a Tent, one which is open draws the corpse-contamination out, so that what is subject to the overshadowing of the others is not affected'.[131]

Though the greater sensitivity of holy persons to impurity is axiomatic, we should not think that priests (and those Levites who submitted to priestly purity regulations) thought themselves so susceptible to impurity that even the sight of a corpse could defile, as with the high priest considered in *m. Sanh.* 2.1. Unlike the high priest, they could depart the Temple precincts and even Jerusalem with impunity. Nevertheless, for one who was consecrated, the fear of defilement would probably not have been restricted to concern about incidental or accidental direct contact with one who appeared to be and might well be dead. Nor was it even fear of inadvertently entering into the path of vertically ascending corpse-impurity. Rather, the miasmic quality of corpse-impurity combined with its perverse attraction to the holy might well have meant that a holy person regarded even proximity to a corpse as potentially defiling.[132] This is what generates the necessity that the priest should not simply go on his way but pass by *on the other side* (ἀντιπαρῆλθεν). That the Levite shares precisely the same concern is suggested by the fact that he too ἀντιπαρῆλθεν.

Consequently, the Levite in the parable of the good Samaritan would quite possibly not have been perceived as a transitional figure as Bauckham suggests, that is, a person whose corpse-impurity obligations were somewhere between that of the priest and the Samaritan, who as a lay person would not have been obliged. Rather the Levite would have been perceived as one who had taken up the stricter interpretation of an ambiguity within the OT purity code. This complements the point argued by Bauckham that the priest's decision would probably have been disputed within the first century and represents the stricter application of the purity requirements in an ambiguous situation. But if the priest's situation is ambiguous, the Levite's is doubly so; his avoidance of corpse-impurity requires a resolution of ambiguity concerning the permissibility of corpse-impurity for Levites and, having decided that it was proscribed, the resolution of the same ambiguity as that of the priest. *So if the priest has resolved an ambiguity in the direction of strict maintenance of purity,*

[131] Neusner, *Purities*, vol. XXII, p. 55. *See* also *m. Ohol.* 3.7 where this pre-first-century principle is explicit: 'it is the way of uncleanness to issue forth and not to enter in'. Cf. 11.1.

[132] Num. 19.16 implies that a corpse's power of contagion is lower in an open field than in a house: only direct contact defiles ordinary Israelites in the open, whereas even being in the same house as a corpse makes one unclean, even if no direct contact occurs. But if mere proximity to a corpse within a house can defile an ordinary Israelite, proximity to a corpse in open space could easily have been seen as a danger to holy persons.

the Levite has done so twice! The result is that both the priest and, even more, the Levite are presented as figures who choose to maintain purity rather than carry out the obligations of the love command in a situation where obedience only to one is possible.

One final consideration brings the purity concerns of the priest and the Levite into focus. The parable is explicit that the priest and the Levite were heading away from Jerusalem and the Temple. If the parable is really driven by purity concerns, why did Jesus not steer the priest and the Levite toward the Temple to emphasize that concern? Of course, corpse-impurity was proscribed for priests even when entrance to the Temple was not contemplated. It must be noted that the prohibition against contraction of corpse-impurity by priests was not absolute, for corpse-impurity was permitted, even required, for a priest dealing with the death of a close relative. This was the source of the *halakhic* ambiguity. But if the priest and the Levite had been bound for the Temple, the situation would have been less ambiguous, for corpse-impurity was unambiguously forbidden for all – not just for priests and Levites – who were entering the sanctuary. Now I think it is possible that worries about impurity even outside the Temple could still have been prompted by concerns about the purity of the Temple – impurity can defile from afar.[133] Thus, together, the priest and the Levite may represent the most strenuous possible defence of the Temple's sanctity. But since the parable specifies that they were heading away from the Temple, their purity concerns may be more immediately tied to their own holy status and to the holiness of the Land. If I am correct in suggesting above that the rigorous pursuit of purity was motivated ultimately by a concern for the holiness of Israel and the Land in view of Israel's imminent restoration, the *halakhic* situation set up by the parable may have had an eschatological dimension: what was to be the appropriate manifestation of the holiness of Israel and the Land in the eschaton?

The role of the Samaritan. I turn now to assess the significance of Jesus' inclusion of the Samaritan. As Bauckham rightly notes, if all that had been at stake had been the demonstration of the priority of the love command over the obligation to avoid corpse-impurity, the third figure need only have been another priest.[134] The Samaritan claim to be under the law is important, as Bauckham avers, but not precisely for the reason he suggests. So too is the Samaritan rejection of the Jerusalem Temple,

[133] See Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, pp. 253–61.
[134] Bauckham, 'Scrupulous Priest', 485.

but again not for the reason Bauckham sets forth. Bauckham correctly observes that by virtue of their claim to be under the law Samaritans would have been regarded as perpetually impure. Hence, for Bauckham, the importance of the geographical location of the episode and its implication of Jewish–Samaritan debates over the Temple is that elimination of corpse-impurity was only possible through the red-heifer ceremony in the Jerusalem Temple.[135] On this latter point, Bauckham may be mistaken. The red-heifer ceremony was idiosyncratic in that it was to be performed in its entirety not in the Temple but 'outside the camp' (Num. 19.3); use of the ashes from the red heifer could be made wherever needed and not just in the Temple (Num. 19.17–20).[136]

I do think that Bauckham is correct to stress the purity status of the Samaritan, but the significance of this needs further elucidation. It is here that we again find help from Josephus. In *Ant.* 11.346–7 he writes:

> When Alexander died, his empire was partitioned among his successors (the Diadochi); as for the Temple on Mount Garizein, it remained. And, whenever anyone was accused by the people of Jerusalem of eating unclean food or violating the Sabbath or committing any other such sin, he would flee to the Shechemites, saying that he had been unjustly expelled.

Here, it seems to me, we have a clear instance of exaggeration driven by anti-Samaritan bias. The specified sins are the quintessential marks of apostasy precisely because keeping the food laws and the Sabbath were central markers of Jewish identity. Josephus' reference to 'any such sin' indicates that he is thinking of a particular category of sins. And the category in view can only be the covenant-rejecting sins which generate irremediable impurity, defile the sanctuary and the Land and are not subject to forgiveness – hence, the expulsion from the community. But are we really to believe that *all* Jewish apostates immediately took refuge among the Samaritans? No, it seems rather that for Josephus this

[135] Ibid., 486–8.

[136] See J. Bowman ('Did the Qumran Sect Burn the Red Heifer?', *RevQ* 1 (1958), 73–84) for the case that although the Qumran community did not offer sacrifices after their withdrawal from the Temple, they did continue to burn the red heifer. Though it is likely that the red-heifer ceremony ceased not long before the Temple's destruction or perhaps shortly thereafter (the ashes were not all kept in the Temple complex, allowing for its continuation), the reasons for this are not clear and may have had little to do with the necessity of the Temple for the rite itself. In Bauckham's favour, however, is the fact that some of the blood from the red heifer was to be sprinkled toward the front of the tent of meeting (Num. 19.4). In any case, I am not disputing his contention that Samaritans were assumed to be corpse-impure, only that the Samaritan's corpse-impurity is crucial to understanding the parable.

is simply a way of commenting on their status. Like seeks like, and Samaritans, like Jews who apostasized, were assumed by Josephus to be irretrievably outside the covenant. And, says Josephus, irremediably unclean apostates could find fitting asylum at the illicit Gerizim Temple, the cultic centre of those whom Josephus tags 'apostates of the Jewish nation' (*Ant*. 11.340). The association of Samaritans and Jewish apostates is strengthened by another exaggerated assertion: all Jewish apostates not only fled to Shechem but claimed to be unjustly accused. But is this second assertion credible? Again, no, but Josephus is highlighting the perceived similarities between Jewish apostates and Samaritans; Samaritans, like apostates who claim to be unfairly charged, regarded themselves as falsely accused by Jews as law-breakers.[137] Josephus is willing to concede that Samaritans are faithful to Jewish customs. They are not simply pagans, though Josephus accepts the common conviction that the Samaritans were originally pagans who had been settled in Samaria by the Assyrians. But he regards the Samaritans as formerly zealous proselytes to Judaism, having at one time come to the worship of Yahweh as a result of instruction from Israelite priests (*Ant.* 9.289–90). But they have abandoned that faith and adhere to Jewish customs in a context of essentially pagan loyalties. *Ant.* 12.257–61 illustrates: the Samaritans under Antiochus IV kept the Sabbath but renounced kinship with the Jews and bowed to Hellenistic pressure by renaming the Gerizim temple after Zeus.[138]

The texts from Josephus simply make explicit what might have been guessed from my previous examination of anti-Samaritan polemics: Samaritans had put themselves under the law, but their refusal to keep the law in the right way and rejection of the Temple meant that they were worse than Gentiles;[139] like apostates, they had knowingly and wilfully rejected the covenant. The crucial point, then, is not simply that Samaritans were regarded as *perpetually* impure, as Bauckham argues, but that they

[137]The association of Samaritans and apostates may shed light on the otherwise uncertain use of 'Samaritan' as a slur in John 8.48.

[138]Cf. 2 Macc. 6.2 which does not indicate whether the Samaritans renamed the Temple willingly. J. P. Meier ('The Historical Jesus and the Historical Samaritans: What Can Be Said?', *Bib* 81 (2000), 206–18) expends much energy in attempting to prove that the historical Samaritans did not adhere to a 'syncretistic polytheism combined with Jewish elements'. However, the perhaps more important fact which Meier's quest for the historical Samaritans underplays is that this was often precisely the way Jews perceived Samaritans.

[139]Against the common supposition that Samaritans were regarded as equivalent to Gentiles, as e.g. F. Dexinger, 'Limits of Tolerance in Judaism: The Samaritan Example', in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, vol. II: *Aspects of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman Period* (ed. E. P. Sanders, A. I. Baumgarten and A. Mendelson; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), p. 107.

were regarded as *irremediably* impure and hence not to be regarded as potential proselytes. Such uncleanness was neither bodily nor contagious, but it was infinitely more dangerous and problematic. Yet Jesus' parable strongly implies that *the Samaritan who was deemed by Jews to be irremediably impure and a defiler of the Land but who keeps the divine will by showing neighbourly love is approved by God, and those who most rigorously defend the holiness of the Temple, the Land and the people but fail to love their neighbours are not*. The point that emerges is not merely that Jesus took a unique approach to Jewish *halakhah*, as Bauckham suggests. Rather, the parable indicates that divine approval is possible even for those who are perceived to be irretrievably outside the covenant and this quite apart from the Temple or concern for its purity.

The internal logic of the parable suggests that it was prompted by just the sort of question that Luke uses to introduce it: 'Who is my neighbour?'[140] But by making purity the central concern of a parable which speaks to this question, Jesus exploits the common assumption that the question 'Who is my neighbour?' is bound up with the question 'Who is pure?' It is commonly observed that Jesus turns the first of these questions on its head by suggesting that the crucial question is 'To whom are you a neighbour?' But in doing so, Jesus also suggests that this latter question is the truly decisive one in answering the question, 'Who is pure?' *The irony of the parable is thus that the priest and the Levite, in seeking to preserve bodily purity, in fact contract far more grievous impurity by their deliberate rejection of Torah's fundamental demand to love one's neighbour*. Perhaps Jesus also implicitly claims that the Samaritan, regarded by many as irremediably unclean, proves himself pure by showing love to his neighbour.

It is not possible to dissociate the contention that Samaritans were cut off from the covenant from the anticipation that their judgement by God would clear the way for the realization of Jewish expectations that the twelve tribes would be re-established in the purified Land. But the parable's presentation of the Samaritan as one who fulfils God's will and meets divine approval distances Jesus from this expectation and cuts the tie between election and purity on the one hand, Temple and Land on the other. This inclines me to conclude that Jesus' remarkable silence about the Land is best explained if we suppose that it did not hold a central place in his eschatology.

[140]See e.g. J. Fitzmyer who attributes the lawyer's question in Luke 10.29 to Lucan composition, but nevertheless interprets the parable as centrally concerned with the meaning of neighbourly love, *Luke*, vol. II, pp. 882–4.

5.2.5 Jesus and eschatological holiness

I can now attempt to place the preceding discussion of the role of purity in Jesus' message in a larger context by inquiring about the possible precedents for the absence of all traces of a positive assessment of bodily impurity and the simultaneous presence of a strong emphasis on moral purity. What emerges is the solid possibility that his de-emphasis of bodily purity is tied in with both aspects of his message of impending national judgement and of national restoration.

The first precedent is the sharp de-emphasis of bodily impurity and simultaneous denunciation of moral impurity that characterizes the prophetic literature. This is not a new insight. However, what has not received due attention is the close relationship between the prophets' announcement of impending national judgement and the devaluation of the importance of bodily purity. The point has been largely obscured by the tendency to see the repeated references to moral uncleanness as strictly metaphorical and by the prevalence of a view of the prophets as opposed in principle to the cult. But the latter position is no longer tenable. And if moral impurity was as real as bodily impurity and the significance of the latter bound up with the danger posed by the former, an explanation for the de-emphasis of bodily impurity emerges: if the moral defilement of the people, the Land and the sanctuary had become so great as to make judgement inevitable, bodily impurity is emptied of its significance. The nation is frequently castigated for its inattention to Torah, but failure to rectify bodily impurity is not made a reason for impending judgement. Moreover, defilement is even inflicted on the people as a constituent element of their judgement, as when God orders his sanctuary to be defiled with the corpses of the inhabitants of Jerusalem after his glory had departed (Ezek. 9.7). For the prophets, the fact that what should have been done had not been done effects a judgement in which much of the law either cannot be done or need not be done. Thus, for example, if God has abandoned the sanctuary, its protection from defilement is irrelevant. Against this background, there is a strong possibility that the similar de-emphasis of bodily impurity in Jesus' ministry was likewise induced by the conviction that Israel was a defiled generation moving inexorably toward judgement. Jesus castigates his contemporaries for failing to keep the weightier matters of the law alongside *halakhic* occupation with matters of less importance. Their failure to do so has brought them to the brink of judgement, a judgement which in no way faults observance of the finer points of Torah, but which severely marginalizes the importance

of such observance in the present.[141] Such a stance explains why discussions of bodily impurity in the Gospels can become occasions for Jesus to condemn his contemporaries for moral torpor.

The second precedent is closely related. If the prophets perceived that the nation's defilement had reached a threshold which demanded judgement, they were also aware that this defilement could only be removed by God; Scripture had stipulated no 'ritual' means for remedying such defilement. Consequently, they anticipated a restoration in which God would cleanse Israel of its defilement. Moreover, as noted above, there is at times an ultimacy associated with that eschatological act of God which suggests that the holiness of the eschaton would be so absolute that the need to mark out grades of holiness and the distinction between the holy and the profane by means of bodily impurity would be obviated. In other words, the eschatological purification would be so profound that it would effect a profound constitutional shift in the structure of Israel's social life. In a context in which the pursuit of physical purity was often eschatologically motivated, Jesus' manifest refusal to grant any meaningful role to physical purity in his conception of Israel's restoration may imply a belief that such a constitutional change was already taking place. His ethical absolutism suggests a perception of the eschaton characterized by absolute holiness; perhaps as in a few prophetic texts before him, he believed that in a social order unthreatened by moral impurity the role of bodily impurity in signalling such threats would be obviated. If one's vision is of an earth brought wholly under God's kingly reign and made holy by that reign, the uncleanness of Samaritans in the Land is no longer a meaningful issue, but the capacity of Samaritans to meet God's demands and in this way be constituted as pure is fundamental.

5.3 Conclusion

Jesus' stance toward Jewish purity concerns cannot be abstracted from eschatology, for the pursuit of purity by his contemporaries was ultimately driven by the anticipation of the unthreatened presence of God in his holy Temple and among his holy people in his holy Land: election, purity, Temple and Land – all interrelated aspects of a vision of the eschaton and

[141] Against those such as Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, vol. III, p. 295) who read the final clause of Matt. 23.23/Luke 11.42 as a straightforward affirmation of Pharisaic *halakhah*. Of course, the sharply qualified affirmation of past observance in minor matters, for which I have argued, must be read with texts in which Jesus criticizes particular points of *halakhah* which he regards as fundamentally incompatible with obedience to Torah's central tenets, as in the parable of the good Samaritan; cf. Mark 7.9–13.

of a programme for achieving that vision. For all the differences within first-century Judaism concerning how purity should be pursued, there remained broad agreement that the present persistence of impurity was a hindrance to the full realization of God's presence in Israel.

For Jesus, the urgency of the new eschatological situation was such that what was needed was no longer the redoubling of efforts to keep impurity out. Concerns about bodily uncleanness could scarcely remain central when the impurity which gave bodily uncleanness its significance had already so penetrated the life of the nation as to make its judgement certain. However, Jesus' message of national judgement did not lead him to abandon the expectation of a pure people in a pure Land. Rather, it appears that Jesus drew on alternative sacred traditions according to which God's people would only be constituted as a pure society through the sanctification of the whole earth by an eschatological action of God. Perhaps the actions of the priest and the Levite in the parable of the good Samaritan are caricatured. But the reality behind the caricature is a society whose patterns of relation are structured in part by grades of purity. Jesus, however, speaks of a constitutional change which will obviate such concerns, a society in which undifferentiated purity will be predicated upon absolute, ungraded holiness. And by loving his neighbour, a Samaritan, far from being a defiling obstacle to Israel's restoration in a pure Land, manifests the purity of this eschatological order. In this way, even constitutional features of the eschaton are coming into existence, and those who 'go and do likewise' likewise participate in the purity of this new society.

6

JESUS AND THE ESCHATOLOGICAL TEMPLE

I have argued in the preceding chapter that Second Temple Jewish attitudes toward the Land and concerns about purity cannot be dissociated from fundamental convictions about the centrality of the Temple. Thus the conclusions reached concerning Jesus' marginalization of Israel's purity and corresponding territorial expectations would seem to imply an analogous stance toward the Temple. If the Temple was 'the linchpin of Jewish territorialism',[1] the evidence that Jesus distanced himself from common expectations concerning the Land would seem also to suggest a similar distance from common notions concerning the role of the Temple in the eschaton. Is this the case?

In this chapter, I examine a number of sayings and actions of Jesus concerning the Temple and attempt to show that they are sensible and that the tensions evident in them find resolution within a particular eschatological framework which formed the basis of Jesus' conception of the relationship between the society of the eschaton and life in the present. I wish to argue that Jesus' conviction that the time of fulfilment had arrived was such that he believed that the eschatological Temple should already be functioning. Thus the failure of the standing Temple to be the eschatological Temple stands at the heart of his indictment of the Temple and prompts a conception of the eschatological Temple which drew on sacred traditions quite distinct from those of Jewish restorationism. To these traditions I turn first.

6.1 The eschatological Temple in Jewish thought

The expectation of an eschatological Temple within Second Temple expectations of the eschaton is well known.[2] Less uniform, however, are the expectations concerning the relationship between the eschatological Temple and the Second Temple. Would the Second Temple be renewed or displaced? That question generates other questions: would the

[1] Schwartz, 'Introduction', p. 15. [2] E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, pp. 77–90.

eschatological Temple be earthly or heavenly or even spiritual, as some scholars have suggested in relation to the Qumran community? By whom would the eschatological Temple be built? Would it be an undertaking of restored Israel or would the Temple be established by God's own hand? Would a messianic figure be involved? The various alternatives suggested by these questions could obviously be put together in a variety of ways. And they were.

6.1.1 Heavenly Temple

A long-running tension within Jewish thought had been the conception of both the Temple and heaven as the dwelling place of God. The tension is palpable in Solomon's prayer of dedication when he petitions the Lord to hear from heaven, his 'dwelling place' (מקום שׁבתך), whenever his people pray toward 'this place' (המקום) (1 Kings 8.30/2 Chron. 6.21). The author of this text seems to resolve the tension by viewing heaven as the unique dwelling place of God ('But will God indeed dwell on the earth?' (1 Kings 8.27/2 Chron. 6.18)), and the Temple as the locus of God's presence only in a derivative sense: the place on which he sets his name and the focus of his unceasing attention (1 Kings 8.29/2 Chron. 6.20). In line with this, many have argued that the Second Temple was not widely regarded as God's dwelling place, though this now requires qualification in the light of G. Davies' study.[3] Other texts, however, are content to let the tension stand: in Psalm 18, the psalmist prays to God who hears from his Temple (v. 7 [6]) but answers by 'bowing the heavens' and coming down (v. 10 [9]), by thundering in the heavens (v. 14 [13]), by reaching down from 'on high' (v. 17 [16]).[4]

Two other approaches were also possible. First, even to the author of Solomon's dedicatory prayer, viewing heaven as God's dwelling place is not unproblematic, for 'even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built'. Perhaps, then, convictions about God's omnipresence were in part responsible for the development of the idea that the Temple was the microcosm of heaven and earth: to think of the Temple as God's dwelling place imposed no restrictions on the deity as long as the Temple 'was thought to correspond to, represent, or, in some sense, to be "heaven and earth" in its totality'.[5]

[3] G. I. Davies, 'The Presence of God in the Second Temple and Rabbinic Doctrine', in *Templum Amicitiae: Essays on the Second Temple Presented to Ernst Bammel* (ed. W. Horbury; JSNTSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), pp. 32–6.

[4] Cf. Ps. 24.

[5] C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, 'The Destruction of the Temple and the Relativization of the Old Covenant: Mark 13:31 and Matthew 5:18', in *The Reader Must Understand: Eschatology*

Finally, and most important for present purposes, there is evidence even within Scripture that the tension could be resolved by speaking of God's dwelling in a heavenly Temple. The thought cannot be far removed from the parallelism of Psalm 11.4: 'The LORD is in his holy Temple; the LORD's throne is in heaven.' And it is central to Isaiah's vision: 'In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the Temple.'[6] D. Freedman has argued that the notion of a heavenly Temple stems from the ancient idea, evident in the very early Song of the Sea (Exod. 15.1–18, 21), of a sacred mountain which joins heaven and earth. The original sacred mountain was Sinai, the location of the heavenly sanctuary which Moses was shown as a pattern for the earthly tabernacle to be constructed at the base of the mountain (Exod. 25.9, 40). Later, the Temple was established in Jerusalem and the image changed: the earthly dwelling-place of God was at the top of the sacred mountain, Mt Zion, though the heavenly Temple still remained closely associated with the mountain as well.[7] Later post-OT works also reflect the idea of the earthly Temple or tabernacle as a reflection of the heavenly tabernacle, most notably Pseudo-Philo[8] and Hebrews. The *Songs of Sabbath Sacrifice* also refer to a heavenly tabernacle, though its relationship to an earthly analogue is uncertain.[9]

Within this framework it is not difficult to see how the heavenly Temple could be conceived of as the eschatological Temple, for texts such as Exodus 15.17 were taken to imply that the eschatological Temple would be established by God himself.[10] Certainly the idea that God himself would establish the Temple could simply be taken to refer to a divinely constructed physical Temple analogous to, perhaps even continuous with, the existing Temple. But the notion of a Temple made by God himself could also be readily associated with the divine dwelling place in heaven. The idea may be implicit in texts which speak simply of a heavenly, eschatological Jerusalem or Zion, as in Isaiah 65.17–18, where the creation of a new Jerusalem is part of the creation of new heavens and a new

in Bible and Theology (ed. K. E. Brower and M. W. Elliot; Leicester: Apollos, 1997), pp. 156–62.

[6]See also 2 Sam. 22.7; Pss. 18.6; 29.9–10; Micah 1.2; Hab. 2.20.

[7]D. N. Freedman, 'Temple Without Hands', *Temples and High Places in Biblical Times* (ed. A. Biran; Jerusalem: Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology, 1981), p. 21.

[8]See especially C. T. R. Hayward, *The Jewish Temple: A Non-Biblical Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 154–67.

[9]For a discussion of 4Q403 1 ii 10–6; 4Q405 20 ii 21–2 7–8, see especially C. R. Koester, *The Dwelling of God: The Tabernacle in the Old Testament, Intertestamental Jewish Literature, and the New Testament* (CBQMS; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1989), pp. 37–9. D. Mendels (*Rise*, p. 148) believes that the *Songs* refer to 'a heavenly apolitical *duplicate* of (not an alternative to!) the present real Temple'.

[10]On the use of Exod. 15.17 in subsequent texts see below.

earth. So too in 4 Ezra 10, where the new city appears from heaven to be established in the eschaton.[11] That the Temple is part of the heavenly city yet to be revealed is made explicit in *2 Baruch* 4.1–6. In this latter text it is noteworthy that the eschatological Temple will be the heavenly tabernacle shown to Moses on Sinai as a model for the wilderness tabernacle.

Of particular interest are texts which describe the eschatological manifestation or construction of the heavenly Temple or city in terms which outstrip a merely physical conception of the Temple, even when the figurative nature of the language is given its due. Certainly texts which speak of the eschatological revelation of the heavenly Temple tend to move in this direction. *1 Enoch* 53.6 speaks of a coming manifestation of the house of the congregation, through a heavenly mediator. Whether the spectacular heavenly Temple mentioned later in the *Similitudes* (71.5–7; cf. 14.15–18) is here in view is difficult to discern,[12] but it seems likely that such a connection would have been made by subsequent readers. More explicit is 4 Ezra 10.56–7: the heavenly city is to be revealed in a field where there was no foundation of any building, and its Temple is so splendid and vast that the seer's eyes could not take in the whole.[13] *Sibylline Oracles* 5.414–33 describes an eschatological city and Temple established by God through a messianic agent in cosmic dimensions. Whether the eschatological 'house' of the *Animal Apocalypse* is to be understood as Zion or a Temple is disputed, but the fact that all Israel and all the nations make the house their dwelling suggests an ideal which no physical city, still less a material Temple, could accommodate.[14] Such a notion may also lie behind 2 Maccabees 1–2 (1.27–9; 2.17–18) which

[11]Cf. M. E. Stone, *Features of the Eschatology of IV Ezra* (HSS; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), p. 101; Volz, *Eschatologie*, p. 377. To say with B. W. Longenecker (*2 Esdras* (Guides to Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha; Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), pp. 68, 107) that the hope of restoration of an earthly Jerusalem is 'somewhat irrelevant' in 4 Ezra does underscore the author's concern to transfer the focus to the heavenly Jerusalem. But it would perhaps be more accurate to say that the hope of restoration of the earthly city is maintained precisely through the coming revelation of the heavenly Jerusalem: what is irrelevant is not the earthly city and its restoration but the distinction between the earthly and heavenly Jerusalem in the eschaton.

[12]Cf. R. J. McKelvey, *The New Temple: The Church in the New Testament* (Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 31.

[13]Certainly the revelation of the heavenly city in a field where no foundation had been laid rather than on the Temple mount suggests substantial discontinuity with the historical Temple. It is perhaps also significant that the heavenly Zion of 4 Ezra 13.36 is described as 'a mountain carved without hands' in language drawn from Daniel 2.34–6 where we are told that the mountain 'filled the whole earth'.

[14]This dimension of the text is overlooked by C. C. Rowland ('The Second Temple: Focus of Ideological Struggle', in *Templum Amicitiae: Essays on the Second Temple Presented to Ernst Bammel* (ed. W. Horbury; JSNTSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), p. 186) who wants to distinguish sharply the eschatological Zion of the *Animal Apocalypse* from that of, for example, 4 Ezra 10 where the city is more plainly heavenly.

anticipates the gathering of all Israel into the purified holy place, relying explicitly on Exodus 15.17, the text from which the idea of an eschatological Temple built by God originated. Such conceptions seem to assume that in the eschaton the distinction between earthly and heavenly Temple will no longer hold, though of course the distinction had already been blurred by the association of both earthly and heavenly Temples with Mt Zion.[15] This contrasts significantly with the argument of Hebrews in which the heavenly tabernacle precisely in becoming the eschatological tabernacle has become an alternative to – not just a duplicate of – any earthly sanctuary, an alternative to which believers already have access (12.18–24).[16]

6.1.2 Messiah's role in the building of the eschatological Temple

Though light references to a 'messianic Temple' still sometimes occur,[17] the expectation of a clearly defined role for a messianic figure in constructing an eschatological Temple is far from frequently attested. In view of the precedents for such an idea in 2 Samuel 7.13 and Zechariah 6.12–13, it has been remarked that the lack of evidence in Second Temple literature for an eschatological Temple built by Messiah is surprising.[18] R. Gundry even asserts that '[n]owhere in Jewish literature certainly written before Mark is the Messiah portrayed as builder of the Temple'.[19] Nevertheless, a good case can be made that the idea was earlier and more widespread than is often allowed.

The messianic Temple in post-70 CE literature

Sibylline Oracles 5.414–33, which probably dates from the end of the first century CE or beginning of the second, describes the appearance from

[15] Against Bietenhard's overly synthetic conclusion that Jewish eschatology is the restoration of the parallelism between heavenly and earthly Jerusalem and Temple, H. Bietenhard, *Die himmlische Welt im Urchristentum und Spätjudentum* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1951), pp. 196, 204.

[16] Despite the perception of continuity between wilderness tabernacle and Jerusalem Temple (e.g. Sir. 24.10), it is the former which was frequently regarded as the more accurate reflection of the heavenly sanctuary. Despite frequent attempts to see Hebrews' use of the tabernacle as an indication of a post-70 date, it was probably the existence of an association between the wilderness tabernacle and the heavenly and eschatological tabernacle rather than the non-existence of the Jerusalem Temple that was determinative.

[17] B. Z. Wacholder, *The Dawn of Qumran* (Cincinnati: HUCA Press, 1983), p. 23.

[18] A. Chester, 'The Sibyl and the Temple', in *Templum Amicitiae: Essays on the Second Temple Presented to Ernst Bammel* (ed. W. Horbury; JSNTSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), p. 51.

[19] Gundry, *Mark*, p. 899. Similarly R. E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave* (ABRL; London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1994), p. 442.

heaven of a blessed man who builds city and Temple with glory and splendour. Though the figure is not explicitly termed 'Messiah', as A. Chester shows, the points of contact between this text and other more obviously messianic texts both within *Sibylline Oracles* 5 and other Jewish literature make the deduction highly likely.[20] It is well to note that the passage concludes with the assertion that the founder of this, 'the greatest Temple', is God himself, an assertion which evidently excluded Israel's involvement but not the mediation of a messianic figure.[21]

This latter observation is important in a text that is often passed over in discussions of Messiah's role in construction of the eschatological Temple – 4 Ezra 13. This text records a dream-vision of a heavenly redeemer figure and an interpretation of the dream. The chapter is plainly influenced by Danielic language and ideas. For present purposes, it is of particular interest that in verse 6 we are told that the messianic 'man' 'carved out for himself a great mountain, and flew up on it'. The language is taken from Daniel 2 where a stone representing the kingdom of God is cut out and becomes a great mountain, reducing the kingdoms of the earth to dust. In 4 Ezra's interpretation of the dream the fact that Daniel's stone becomes a mountain comes to the fore: the mountain is not the divine kingdom as such but rather Mt Zion. As I will argue below, the fourth vision of 4 Ezra 10 strongly implies the presence of a Temple in the heavenly Jerusalem that is to be revealed. But despite the fact that in the dream the 'man' carves out the mountain, in the interpretation of verse 36 the comment is added that the mountain was 'carved without hands'. For M. Stone, this places the vision in 'direct contradiction' to the dream.[22] But it may simply be that, as in *Sibylline Oracles* 5, the idea that God himself would establish the eschatological city and Temple 'without hands' was not viewed as incompatible with the mediated construction of Zion by a redeemer figure.

Finally, some later Jewish texts clearly attest the idea that Messiah will build the eschatological Temple (*Lev. Rab.* 9.6/*Num. Rab.* 13.2/*Midr. Cant.* 4.16; *Tg.* Isa. 53.5; *Tg.* Zech. 6.12). Of course, it is widely acknowledged that some targumic material probably originated prior to the destruction of the Temple, and, of the material just cited, the targumic citations perhaps have the strongest claims to a pre-70 CE

[20]Chester, 'Sibyl', p. 49.

[21]Chester (ibid., p. 50) rightly contests Gaston's argument that 'the blessed man' is God himself: it is entirely possible to speak of God acting even when mediatorial figures are involved.

[22]M. E. Stone, *Fourth Ezra: A Commentary on the Book of Fourth Ezra* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), p. 398.

provenance. Nevertheless, an early date is exceedingly difficult to prove.[23]

The messianic Temple in pre-70 texts: preliminary considerations

At least two of the examples just adduced for the notion of a messianic Temple come fairly soon after the fall of Jerusalem. Thus the fact that the two works have provenances that are quite removed from one another may suggest that the concept circulated somewhat earlier. In fact, there is evidence within 4 Ezra that may point in this direction. M. Stone argues quite plausibly that the vision of 4 Ezra 13 was taken from a source;[24] the interpretation was then added at the time 4 Ezra was composed, shortly after 70 CE.[25] If so, then the notion of a heavenly 'man' carving out a mountain very probably preceded the fall of the Jerusalem Temple. Of course, it could be objected that it is not until the later interpretation that the mountain is identified as Zion. Perhaps, then, in the pre-existent vision the mountain that is carved maintains its Danielic identity as the kingdom of God. But this seems not to be the case. Unlike Daniel, the vision taken up in 4 Ezra 13 does not focus initially on a stone which becomes a mountain but simply on the mountain. This suggests that in the original vision the mountain was already heavenly Zion, a conclusion indicated also by the man's ascent to the top of the mountain.[26] Moreover, in 13.7 Ezra says that he tried but was not able to see the mountain's origin. Stone comments rather anaemically 'that a feeling of seeking and not being able to find is congruent with dream experience'.[27] A much preferable interpretation, however, is that the verse reflects the not unparalleled notion that the heavenly, eschatological Zion is hidden prior to its revelation (see e.g. 4 Ezra 7.26). If this analysis is correct, 4 Ezra 13 draws on a source which ascribes the construction of eschatological Zion to a messianic figure, a source which pre-dates 4 Ezra and thus conceivably also the fall of Jerusalem.

[23]For a discussion of these texts see especially Chester, 'Sibyl', pp. 52–3.

[24]M. E. Stone, 'The Concept of the Messiah in IV Ezra', in *Religions in Antiquity: Essays in Memory of Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough* (ed. J. Neusner; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968), pp. 303–10. For a refutation of Casey's objections, see Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, pp. 395–6 n. 2.

[25]Stone (*Fourth Ezra*, p. 10) dates the work to the reign of Domitian (81–96 CE).

[26]Cf. the appearance of the Lamb at the top of Mt Zion in Rev. 14.1. Stone (*Fourth Ezra*, p. 213) fails to elucidate the significance of the image but, against Stone, the figure's role as a conqueror (13.8–12) and gatherer of the Gentiles and exiles (13.12–13) seems to suggest royal dominion.

[27]Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, p. 385, citing B. Violet.

In the *Similitudes* of *1 Enoch* we meet a transcendent redeemer figure not unlike the ones witnessed in *Sibylline Oracles* 5 and especially 4 Ezra. The reference is brief, but 53.6 seems to grant this figure a role in the establishment of the Temple to be revealed in the eschaton: 'After this, the Righteous and Elect One will reveal the house of his congregation'.[28] The revelation of the Temple by a messianic figure aligns the text closely with 4 Ezra 13 and *Sibylline Oracles* 5. Of course, the dating of the *Similitudes* is controverted, though scholars seem now to favour a dating much earlier than had been supposed by Milik: sometime within the first century CE or perhaps just before the turn of the era.

Brief mention should also be made of the LXX of Zechariah 6.12–13. The MT is difficult, and some have suggested that the LXX had a different *vorlage*. But the two substantive differences between the LXX and the MT can easily be read as textual or theological clarification of the more difficult MT. The latter type of clarification is suggested by the fact that the LXX, confronted with the MT's 'a priest shall sit on his throne', supplies 'the priest shall sit at his right hand'. Thus, by assigning the priest an exalted but yet clearly subservient position, the translator distances himself from the MT which apparently suggests without differentiation that both king and priest will sit upon thrones.[29] What seems not to have been noticed in the comments on this text is that such a clarification may have been advanced against the sort of dual messianism evidenced at Qumran and, in a less developed way, in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*.[30] Thus, in making the change, the LXX translator shows that he too read the Zechariah text eschatologically but is concerned that the text should not generate a faulty expectation of two messiahs. But it is only the notion that the eschatological priest and king will be on equal terms that he finds objectionable; the expectation of a messianic king who will build the Temple he fully retains.

[28]With W. Horbury ('Herod's Temple and "Herod's Days"', in *Templum Amicitiae: Essays on the Second Temple Presented to Ernst Bammel* (ed. W. Horbury; JSNTSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), p. 112 n. 12), against R. H. Charles (*The Book of Enoch* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), p. 105) who takes the singular 'house' as a collective reference to the synagogues of the righteous.

[29]B. A. Mastin, 'A Note on Zechariah VI 13', *VT* 26 (1976), 114–15. Cf. C. L. Meyers and E. M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; Garden City: Doubleday, 1987), p. 361.

[30]Mastin ('Note', 115) rightly rejects M. Bič's argument that the LXX of Zech. 6.13 *participates* in the dual messianism known at Qumran, since the LXX assesses the priestly role in the *opposite* way. Mastin fails to follow this up by exploring the possibility that the change in the LXX was made precisely to counter the rise of dual messianism, a phenomenon in which Zechariah played a central role.

Herodian messianism and Herod's Temple

Further evidence for the early circulation of ideas concerning a messianic role in the construction of an eschatological Temple comes from an unlikely source – Herod the Great. The focus in recent decades on the various protest movements under Roman rule as antecedents to the Jewish War has tended to highlight non-Jewish aspects of the Herodian dynasty and the consequent Jewish distaste for Herodian kingship. But however well such a focus may apprehend the attitudes of many, perhaps most, Jews at the time, it is necessary to emphasize that this perspective was not universal. Many Jews would have regarded Herod and his claims with considerable sympathy, perhaps even with a fair amount of eschatological enthusiasm.

D. Mendels has drawn attention to the actions undertaken by Herod on behalf of Diaspora Jews. In *Ant*. 15.62–5, Herod assembles the people of Jerusalem and reports the results of a trip into Asia Minor: 'Appearing before them, he gave an account of his whole journey and told them about the Jews of Asia, saying that thanks to him they would be unmolested in future.' Mendels aptly comments that Herod wished to be not merely the 'King of Judea' but rather the 'King of the Jews'.[31] The discovery of the inscription 'Regi Herodi Iudaic(o)' on pottery found at Masada certainly confirms the assessment.[32] It is not unlikely that Herod's construction of the Temple, like his appointment of high priests from the Diaspora, was undertaken precisely to make the Temple a centre for world Jewry and served as a crucial plank in what W. Horbury is probably correct to assess as 'Herodian messianism'.[33]

The 'Temple of a man' in 4QFlorilegium

In commenting on the surprising dearth of Second Temple texts which develop the apparently obvious concept of a Messiah-built Temple in several biblical texts, A. Chester draws particular attention to *4QFlorilegium* (4Q174) in which 'a clear opportunity to interpret 2 Sam. 7:13 of the messiah building the Temple is passed over, apparently deliberately'.[34] This observation is entirely germane given the readings of *4QFlorilegium*

[31]Mendels, *Rise*, p. 284. [32]For details, see Mendels, ibid., p. 322 n. 22.

[33]Cf. the comments of Mendels (ibid., pp. 284–90) and the evidence assembled by Horbury, 'Herod's', pp. 102–23.

[34]Chester, 'Sibyl', p. 51. Cf. Brown, *Death*, p. 442. Dunn (*Partings*, p. 50) apparently does not recognize the difficulty for he merely assumes that *4QFlorilegium*'s messianic interpretation of 2 Sam. 7.12–14 entails the belief that Messiah would build the Temple.

which have been proffered to date. But I wish to put forward an alternative reading of the text in which a Temple built by Messiah is precisely what is in view.

The crucial reference, of course, is to the מקדש אדם in 1.6b. The text has been widely discussed, with scholars arriving by various routes at an understanding of the text either as a reference to the community as a 'Temple of men'[35] or as a 'Temple among men'.[36] Despite the influence of Y. Yadin in favour of the latter, the former is now more widely accepted. Early adherents tended to equate this 'Temple of men' to the eschatological community, though most now affirm that the idea of a community as the Temple in the present did not exclude an expectation of a physical Temple in the eschaton. The chief weakness of this view, however, is that it does not explain the origin of the peculiar phrase מקדש אדם as part of a *pesher* on 2 Samuel 7. Sensing the problem, D. Dimant has recently attempted to derive the expression from 2 Samuel 7.11a – ולמן היום אשר צויתי שפטים על עמי ישראל – but few are likely to be convinced.

A much more likely origin of the phrase is 2 Samuel 7.19. Three key terms in *4QFlorilegium* 1.6–7 appear in the verse – בית, תורה and אדם – and למרחוק ('for a distant time') in 2 Samuel 7.19 probably caused the author to think of the eschatological Temple. Indeed 2 Samuel 7.19 was read in just this way in *Tg. Pseudo-Jonathan*.[37] It is perhaps also significant that the two terms of the phrase האדם אדוני in 7.19 are constructed with the two occurrences of מקדש. Though Flusser and Wise make the connection between מקדש אדם and 2 Samuel 7.19, neither has explicated the author's understanding of 2 Samuel 7.19 in relation to 7.10–14 which is the central focus of the *pesher*. Of crucial significance is the way the author has flattened the polyvalence of בית in 2 Samuel 7. In the MT, the term refers alternatively to both the Temple and the Davidic dynasty. But the author of *4QFlorilegium* has taken *all* of the occurrences of בית as references to the eschatological Temple, even those which ostensibly refer to the Davidic dynasty. This is clear from *4QFlorilegium* 1.2–3 where the promise to build a house for David, that is, a dynasty

[35] See especially G. J. Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran: 4QFlorilegium in Its Jewish Context* (JSOTSup; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985); D. Dimant, '*4QFlorilegium* and the Ideal of the Community as a Temple', in *Hellenica et Judaica: hommage à Valentin Nikiprowetzky* (ed. A. Caquot, M. Hadas-Lebel and J. Riaud; Leuven-Paris: Editions Peeters, 1986), pp. 165–89.

[36] Y. Yadin, ed., *The Temple Scroll* (3 vols.; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1983), vol. I, pp. 183–8; Y. Yadin, 'A Midrash on 2 Sam. vii and Ps. i–ii (4Q Florilegium)', *IEJ* 9 (1959), 96.

[37] M. O. Wise, '*4QFlorilegium* and the Temple of Adam', *RevQ* 15 (1991), 121–2; D. Flusser, 'Two Notes on the Midrash on 2 Sam. vii', *IEJ* 9 (1959), 102 n. 11.

(2 Sam. 7.11b), is equated to the promise of an eschatological sanctuary built by God himself in Exodus 15.17. This means that the eschatological Temple is identified with the house that God promises to build *for David* (2 Sam. 7.11). But 'house for David' is not an obvious designation for the eschatological Temple. Nevertheless, 2 Samuel 7.19 made it a *necessary* one, for there David says that God has 'also spoken of the house of your servant [David] *for a distant time*'. It is thus likely that an exegesis of 7.19 prompted the author of *4QFlorilegium* to make the original identification of the house that God promised to David in 2 Samuel 7.11 with the eschatological Temple of Exodus 15.17.

The promise of a house is given in two forms in 2 Samuel 7.11b–13. The first form of the promise of a house – that it will be built by God himself – is taken up in the expression 'sanctuary of the Lord' (4QFlor 1.3) drawn from Exodus 15.17, whereas the second form – that the Temple will be built by the seed of David – is taken up in מקדש אדם (4QFlor 1.6), the Temple of Messiah.[38] As Flusser had suggested, אדם derives from 2 Samuel 7.19c: וזאת תורת האדם אדני יהוה. My suggestion is that *4QFlorilegium* offers a reading of 2 Samuel 7.19b,c which can be rendered: 'You have also spoken concerning the Temple (בית) of your servant [David] for a distant time, and *this* is the instruction (תורה) for the man of the Lord (אדם אדוני), O LORD.' Read in this way, 'the man of the Lord' is a messianic figure given the task of building the Temple, the 'house for David' (2 Sam. 7.11).[39] Thus *4QFlorilegium* indicates that God will give the task of building the eschatological Temple to Messiah, a Temple which, on the authority of 2 Samuel 7.11, 19, can be called 'the house of David', a 'house for David' or a 'Temple of a man'.

6.1.3 Gentiles and the eschatological Temple

Corresponding to the variety of expectations related to the eschatological Temple within the Old Testament are similarly disparate expectations

[38]G. J. Brooke ('Miqdash Adam, Eden and the Qumran Community', in *Gemeinde ohne Tempel = Community without Temple: Zur Substituierung und Transformation des Jerusalemer Tempels und seines Kults im Alten Testament, antiken Judentum und frühen Christentum* (ed. B. Ego, A. Lange and P. Pilhofer; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1999), p. 287) assumes that the description of the house as one built by God himself rules out the possibility that the author also views Messiah as builder of the Temple. However, I have noted above at least two texts – *Sib. Or.* 5 and 4 Ezra 13 – in which the ideas were held together.

[39]On the use of 'man' as a messianic title, see W. Horbury, 'The Messianic Associations of "the Son of Man"', *JTS* 36 (1985), 49–52; G. Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies* (SPB; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1961), pp. 56–63. To the texts discussed by Horbury and Vermes, I would perhaps add the 'man' of 4 Ezra 13, a text of particular significance because the 'man' carves out a mountain 'not made with hands' – Mt Zion.

regarding the relationship between Gentiles and the eschatological Temple. Isaiah, for instance, very closely associates the eschatological Temple with Gentiles: they will stream to the Temple, bringing the scattered of Israel with them and with their wealth the Temple will be beautified (Isa. 2.2; 56.7–8; 60.4–13). The idea is echoed in *Testament of Benjamin* 9.2 where the twelve tribes along with all the Gentiles gather to the glorious Temple. *Sibylline Oracles* 3.616–34; 715–20 and the *Animal Apocalypse* (*1 Enoch* 90.32–3) likewise envision Gentile participation in the worship of the eschatological Temple.

But other texts suggest that Gentiles would not be welcomed into the eschatological Temple. Such a position is simply to be assumed in texts which severely circumscribe Gentile participation in the eschatological hope of Israel. So, for instance, in *Jubilees* and *Sibylline Oracles* 5 the accent falls almost exclusively on the wickedness of Gentile practices and the certainty of their coming judgement. If *Psalms of Solomon* 17 could in some sense concede the Isaianic idea that Gentiles would bring as gifts the children who had been driven out (17.31), the dominant expectation is that no alien or foreigner would be permitted to dwell among the re-established tribes (17.28), that Gentiles would be purged from Jerusalem and that the nations would be subjected to Israel (17.22, 30). The Qumran materials are still more exclusive. 4QFlor 1.3–4, for instance, declares that the eschatological Temple will be 'the house where shall not enter [. . . for] ever either an Ammonite, or a Moabite, or a bastard, or a foreigner, or a proselyte, never, because his holy ones are there'.[40] 11QT agrees that foreigners are not to enter even into the outer court as is clear from the placement of the rampart (*ḥêl*) outside the outer wall;[41] the admissibility of proselytes to the outer court (only) is restricted but not absolutely proscribed as in *4QFlorilegium*: Ammonites and Moabites are banned for ever; third-generation descendants of Edomite and Egyptian converts are admitted and the fourth-generation descendants of all other proselytes.[42]

If the expectation that Gentiles would be welcomed into the eschatological Temple could lay claim to scriptural traditions, so too could the conviction that they would be excluded. In the context of a description of the eschatological Temple, Ezekiel 44.6–9 explicitly decries and forbids the presence of foreigners.[43]

[40] García Martínez/Tigchelaar translation.

[41] This contrasts with Herod's Temple in which the rampart was behind the balustrade in the outer court which prevented Gentile entrance into the sanctuary.

[42] J. M. Baumgarten, 'Exclusions from the Temple: Proselytes and Agrippa I', *JJS* 33 (1982), 216–17; Yadin, ed., *Temple Scroll*, vol. I, pp. 274–5.

[43] In its original context the concern is probably with the use of uncircumcised foreign temple-servants. See J. M. Baumgarten ('The Exclusion of "Netinim" and Proselytes in

Josephus (*J. W.* 5.193; 6.124–5; *Ant*. 15.417) and *m. Middoth* (2.3) alike describe a low wall (*soreg*), constructed within the outer court of Herod's Temple, on which were inscribed warnings that Gentiles who passed the barrier would have themselves to blame for their subsequent execution (cf. Philo, *Legatio* 212).[44] The origins of this division within the outer court are unknown. Reference is often made to 'the court of the Gentiles' as if this were a common and accepted designation of the outer court of the Temple. In fact, even if the presence of the wall suggests that Gentiles were admitted to the outer part of the outer court, the ancient literature nowhere makes reference to 'the court of the Gentiles'. The descriptions indicate that the wall did not so much serve as a division between two distinct courts as a subdivision of the outer court. This point is inadequately recognized but it points up the oddity of such a division within a complex whose design was driven by strongly held notions of sacred space.

The Temple Scroll is an instructive case in point. Although the plan of the Temple Scroll and that of Herod's Temple are similar, certain important architectural differences are apparent.[45] One glaring distinction is that there is no subdivision in the outer court of the Temple of 11QT. Instead, the entire outer court serves the function of the 'court of women', which in Herod's Temple was a forecourt of the holy place.[46] For the author of 11QT, there was no need for a division within the outer court for, as already noted, Gentiles were not to be permitted in the outer court in the first place.

It is therefore doubtful that the construction and continued presence of the *soreg* would have been undisputed. But it is important to note that the Qumran community and those who approved the presence of the *soreg* agreed on one thing at least: Gentiles should not share the same access to the sanctuary as enjoyed by Israelites. This observation spawns another. The erection of the *soreg* would not have been necessary had Gentiles not been permitted in the outer court. How then did the oddity come about that Gentiles were permitted to enter the outer court but no further?

E. P. Sanders supposes that earlier in Israel's history, Gentiles could bring sacrifices into the holy place in the same way that ordinary Israelite

4QFlorilegium', *Studies in Qumran Law* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977), pp. 77–8) who emphasizes the influence of Ezek. 44.6–9 on *4QFlorilegium*.

[44]For a transcription of recovered inscriptions bearing similar warnings, see Schürer, *History*, vol. II, p. 222 n. 85.

[45]M. Delcor ('Is the Temple Scroll a Source of the Herodian Temple?', in *Temple Scroll Studies: Papers Presented at the International Symposium on the Temple Scroll* (ed. G. J. Brooke; JSPSup; Sheffield Academic Press, 1989), pp. 67–89) has emphasized the correspondences between the two plans.

[46]J. Maier, *The Temple Scroll: An Introduction, Translation & Commentary* [1975] (trans. R. T. White; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), p. 110; Yadin, ed., *Temple Scroll*, vol. II, p. 170.

men did.[47] His only evidence for this is Numbers 15.14–16.[48] But this text speaks of the access to the courts of the tabernacle that was granted not to Gentiles in general but to the גר in Israel's midst – the resident alien or the sojourner. The גר was one who in some sense had come under Israel's law as verse 16 makes explicit.[49] Of course, at some point during the Second Temple period the regulations governing the biblical גר came to be applied to the proselyte. However, since there is no evidence that Numbers 15.14–16 was ever understood to grant Gentiles the same access as Israelites to the sanctuary, it is hardly the case that the reinterpretation of גר to mean 'proselyte' was the development which made a ban on Gentile entrance into the holy place possible.[50] For D. Schwartz the absence of support for the entrance of Gentiles into the Temple to sacrifice is simply an entailment of biblical monotheism[51] and (I would add) the election of Israel as God's holy people.

It is reasonable, then, to ask whether the construction of the *soreg* might reflect a liberalization whereby Gentiles were permitted a degree of access which they had been previously denied. Because of his misreading of Numbers 15.14–16, Sanders assumes the opposite: he reasons that the erection of the *soreg* must have expressed a development of Israel's law whereby Gentiles were denied access to the sanctuary which they formerly enjoyed. In view of the absence of evidence for the earlier access, however, I would suggest that the process took place in an opposite fashion, that is, that the *soreg* was constructed after Gentiles were permitted access to the outer court.

From his belief that Gentile access to the sanctuary had been curtailed, Sanders infers a reason: restriction of Gentile access must have become necessary after a legal innovation according to which Gentiles were to be regarded as in some sense impure.[52] But does the evidence bear this out? Here it is necessary to note that there is something of a tension implicit in his analysis: he seems to suggest at once that the curtailment of Gentile

[47] E. P. Sanders (*Judaism*, pp. 220–1), it should be noted, holds that the original situation was the opposite of that in the first century, namely, that Gentiles but not Israelite women were admitted. But Sanders has wrongly read Lev. 12.4: this text does not proscribe women from ever entering the sanctuary but only women who were bringing a sacrifice for impurity.

[48] Ibid., p. 72.

[49] On this text, see especially J. Milgrom, *Numbers* (JPSTC; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990), pp. 398–402.

[50] Against the implausible supposition of Schürer, *History*, vol. II, p. 309, that 1 Kings 8.41–3 and Lev. 22.25 envisioned Gentile access to the Temple, see D. R. Schwartz, 'Sacrifice by Gentiles in the Temple of Jerusalem', *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity* (WUNT; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1992), p. 103.

[51] Schwartz, 'Introduction', p. 104. [52] E. P. Sanders, *Judaism*, p. 73.

access was prompted by the development of the view that Gentiles were impure but also that the restriction of Gentile access is our bedrock datum for the assessment of the purity status of Gentiles prior to 70 CE. The difficulty is that it is impossible to correlate the degree of access granted to Gentiles with any clearly defined purity status. This is clear from Sanders' own assessment of the purity status of Gentiles which correctly concludes that the evidence is conflicting.[53] Sanders, however, fails to explain *why* the evidence is conflicting, given the established fact that Gentiles were admitted to the outer court. This cries out for explanation. Israelite access to the sanctuary was governed by extraordinarily detailed purity regulations. If Gentile access was determined on the basis of purity we would expect the same detailed regulations.

My suggestion is that the admission of Gentiles into the outer court generated the conflicting evidence, for in bringing Gentiles into proximity with sancta, Gentiles were brought into space governed by a purity gradation which had not previously been applied to them. In other words, the admission of Gentiles into the outer court provided the impetus for reflection on Gentile impurity and not the other way round, as Sanders supposes. *It is inherently unlikely that an obviously ambiguous assessment of Gentile impurity could result in the very definite stipulation that Gentiles could be admitted to the outer court and no further*. But it is entirely plausible that Gentiles were admitted to the outer court for reasons which had nothing to do with a prior assessment of their impurity and that this development subsequently gave rise to reflections on Gentile impurity as a kind of secondary rationalization of an established fact.

Examples of this are ready to hand. *M. Kel*. 1.8 suggests that the holiness of the outer court could be assessed not only by the admission of those bearing corpse-impurity but also by the admission of Gentiles. What is the relationship between these two measures of the holiness of the outer court? The Tosefta indicates that those with corpse-uncleanness were allowed in the outer court for reasons which had nothing to do with the admission of Gentiles (*t. Kel. B. Qam*. 1.8). Also the fact that *m. Kel*. 1.8 describes a full gradation of impurity (of which corpse-uncleanness in the outer court is merely one part) tends to confirm that this *halakhah* did not derive from the admission of Gentiles who were judged to be corpse-impure to the outer court. That the admission of Gentiles to the outer court took place independent of any judgement that they were corpse-impure is confirmed by looking at the topics the rabbis debated. They do not seem to have debated the propriety of admitting Gentiles to the outer court, but they

[53] Ibid., pp. 72–6.

did debate whether or not Gentiles were inherently corpse-impure. The House of Hillel, at least, thought that they were: in a debate with the House of Shammai in *m. Pes*. 1.8, the Hillelites argued that a new proselyte 'is as one who separates himself from a grave', that is, he must undergo the purification procedures for corpse-uncleanness before contact with sancta, in particular before eating the Passover sacrifice. The House of Shammai prescribes only immersion for a proselyte to eat the Passover offering. This indicates that the Shammaites believed that the Gentiles either inherently bore a relatively light impurity[54] or were not inherently impure at all.[55] Either way, the fact that the Houses were still debating the purity status of Gentiles long after Gentiles were permitted into the outer court indicates that Gentile access to the outer court *preceded* the conclusion of some that Gentiles were inherently corpse-impure.

I have argued that for much of Israel's history, Gentiles had not been admitted to the holy place not because they were considered impure but because they were not holy. But the addition at some point of an outer court to the Second Temple made Gentile access to such a court possible, at least in principle, for there is nothing in the Torah which specifies the purity or holiness status of the outer court. The reason for this is simple. The regulations are laid down with respect to the tabernacle which had no equivalent to the outer court of the Second Temple. On the face of it, it could well have been that the outer court was deemed as holy as or only marginally less holy than the sanctuary itself. But this seems not to have been the case, for when the rabbis asked the question, 'How holy is the outer court?' the answer seems to have been, 'Not very.' As noted above, *m. Kel*. 1.8 indicates that even Israelites with corpse-impurity were allowed in the outer court. This is surprising since corpse-impurity was contagious and the most severe of the impurities which did not require sacrificial remediation. This suggests that the holiness of the outer court was not conceived of in such a way as to make the admission of unholy Gentiles particularly problematic.

Still nothing in what has been said thus far actually required that Gentiles be admitted. My contention is that for many Jews conceptions of the eschatological Temple made Gentile admission desirable, even necessary. The point emerges when we recall that Ezekiel's Temple was a key source for conceptions of the eschatological Temple but also for convictions about the exclusion of Gentiles from the eschatological Temple.

[54]Ibid., p. 74.

[55]It is likely that everyone immersed before eating Passover, as Sanders (ibid., p. 228) elsewhere acknowledges. Thus Shammai's ruling may indicate that proselytes were to immerse against the possibility of having contracted minor impurity *after* circumcision.

Despite the latter theme, it would still have been entirely possible to read Ezekiel as allowing at least the possibility of Gentiles in the outer court, for Ezekiel's Temple had no outer court. *Thus, in keeping with Isaianic expectations, which admit Gentiles to the eschatological Temple but do not specify the degree of permitted penetration, Gentiles were permitted access to the outer court; but in accord with Ezekiel, which forbids Gentiles from entering the Temple but has no outer court, Gentiles were denied access to the sanctuary*. What I am suggesting is that the oddity of the situation in which Gentiles were allowed into the outer court but no further, as well as the oddity of a low wall in the middle of the outer court to maintain that situation, may be fully explained *as an attempt to bring the Temple into conformity with the disparate expectations of the eschatological Temple within Israel's sacred traditions*.

Now this resolution of the tension in the traditions would clearly not have been satisfactory to all concerned. I have already suggested that the author of *Psalms of Solomon* 17 seems to have favoured more rigorous restriction of Gentiles but without altogether dismissing the more favourable stance of Isaianic traditions. Unfortunately, we do not know how the positive traditions of Isaiah were interpreted by the Qumran community; it seems likely that the author of 11QT, at least, would have understood the Gentiles of the eschatological Temple as proselytes, hence the careful regulations concerning which generations of proselytes could be admitted. By contrast, for the author of *4QFlorilegium* the traditions of Ezekiel alone are evident, perhaps because he thinks only of a sanctuary without reference to an outer court. Thus are even proselytes excluded for ever.

Partial confirmation of the process of eschatological reflection which led to the situation which we meet in the first-century evidence comes from Josephus. In *Ant*. 12.138–53 there is a series of three documents which detail privileges granted by Antiochus III to the Jews for siding with him in his struggle for Palestine with Ptolemy Epiphanes in 201–198 BCE.[56] It is probable that certain elements of the decrees have been influenced by Jewish desires. This is probably the case in the determination of Antiochus 'to repeople [Jerusalem] by bringing back to it those who have been dispersed abroad' (12.138). Also stipulated are specific measures designed to effect the return of the Diaspora (12.143–4) and to provide for an abundance of materials 'for making the restoration of the temple more splendid' (12.141). Now both the glorification of the Temple and

[56]On the authenticity of these documents see R. Marcus, 'Appendix D: Antiochus III and the Jews (*Ant*. xii 129–153)', *Josephus: With an English Translation. Jewish Antiquities, Books XII–XIV* (LCL; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1933), pp. 743–66.

the return of dispersed Jews figured prominently in Jewish restoration eschatology; similar hopes are expressed in Sirach, which, like the Seleucid decrees, stems from the early years of the second century BCE. Thus, when we come to the proscription of Gentile entrance into the Temple (12.145), it is difficult not to entertain the idea that the restriction gave expression to Jewish expectations concerning the eschatological Temple.

The Qumran materials reveal that the basis of the critique levelled against the Temple was its failure to conform to the ideal, an ideal to be realized in the eschaton. The cultic differences which engendered the break bear witness to the attempt to effect the ideal within the context of the standing Temple. Nor were such attempts limited to the Qumran sectarians. Early in the Jewish War, the rebels destroyed the tower of Antonia (*J.W.* 6.311), in what was very probably an attempt to bring the dimensions of the Temple more fully in line with their understanding of the eschatological ideal. The preceding discussion suggests that practices and beliefs concerning Gentiles in the Temple were shaped in significant ways by conceptions of the structure and practice of the eschatological Temple derived from Israel's sacred traditions. For the Qumran covenanteers and perhaps for other Jews as well, differences between the present and their understanding of the ideal were not simply accepted as shortcomings that would be overcome with the onset of the eschaton, but as failures that must either bring judgement on those responsible or be righted in terms of the ideal.

6.2 The Temple action

The foregoing discussion of the eschatological Temple in Second Temple Jewish thought allows us to grasp more clearly the significance of Jesus' actions towards and words about the Temple. In particular, it is my contention that the various strands of tradition concerning the ideal Temple allow considerably more diversity than is often allowed in the attempt to describe the expectations of Jesus concerning the eschatological Temple. I consider first the much discussed account of Jesus' action in the Temple (Mark 11.15–17).

6.2.1 Authenticity of the action

The authenticity of the synoptic version of the incident is not disputed nor, generally, are the individual elements of Jesus' action.[57] The saying

[57] Sanders' case would have been well served had he been able to mount a case against the authenticity of all of the elements of Jesus' action except for the overturning of the

of Mark 11.17, however, is a different matter. The saying conflates citations of Isaiah 56.7 and Jeremiah 7.11 and scholars have raised concerns about both elements of the citation. Sanders' case against Jesus' use of Isaiah 56.7d rests on two objections: (1) the presence of the redactional introduction 'and he taught them and said';[58] and (2) the impossibility of deriving 'house of prayer for all nations' from the Hebrew version which Jesus would have used.[59] These objections, however, are weightless for (1) even if the introduction is redactional, this in no way suggests that the saying itself was generated by Mark; and (2) to say that 'house of prayer for all nations' cannot be derived from the Hebrew is false.[60] But it becomes clear that Sanders' key objection to Jesus' citation of Isaiah 56.7 is that he thinks this would imply that Jesus opposed sacrifice. I shall deal in due course with the view that Jesus' action was intended as a symbolic rejection of the sacrificial system. But if Jesus did cite Isaiah 56.7d, it would be a very odd way to substantiate a rejection of sacrifice in view of the close link Isaiah 56.7 makes between prayer and sacrifice: 'Their [foreign proselytes'] burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.' Positively, Jesus' citation of the Isaiah text implies nothing more than what was a common if not universal expectation within Second Temple Judaism – the influx of Gentiles into the eschatological Temple. Moreover, the elimination by Matthew and Luke of the phrase 'for all nations' indicates that the saying was open to charges of non-fulfilment and thus a potential embarrassment to early Christians.

The second part of the saying is a citation of Jeremiah 7.11. Here Sanders' objection, again following Harvey, is that 'robbers' cave' is inappropriate since the term 'robber' always means 'raider' but never 'swindler'. The objection is an odd one for Sanders to take up, precisely because he does not think Jesus believed the Temple authorities were swindling people. It is doubly peculiar, for it presupposes a literalism that Sanders would presumably decry elsewhere and that is not even present in the original context of Jeremiah. In Jeremiah 7 the 'robbers'

tables, from which alone he derives his understanding of the significance of Jesus' action. In a note, he does cast doubt on the authenticity of Jesus' interference with the carrying of vessels (Mark 11.16), *Jesus*, p. 364 n. 1. But he offers no explanation as to why such an addition might have been made. Cf. C. A. Evans, 'Jesus' Action in the Temple: Cleansing or Portent of Destruction?', *CBQ* 51 (1989), 247–8.

[58]E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, p. 66, citing Roloff. [59]Ibid., citing Harvey.

[60]M. D. Hooker ('Traditions About the Temple in the Sayings of Jesus', *BJRL* 70 (1988), 18) drolly comments: 'But what Hebrew version is *Harvey* using? For the words in question are there in *my* Hebrew text.'

commit all manner of covenant misdeeds and yet regard the Temple as a guarantee of national inviolability. But what were the 'crimes' in Jesus' view? For this I turn to the elements of Jesus' action.

6.2.2 Interpretations which focus on a single element of the action

Some interpretations of the Temple action focus only on a single part of the action. Sanders focuses on the overturning of tables as a symbol of the Temple's impending (non-punitive) destruction. Moule rightly suggests that if this is what Jesus meant, other symbolic actions could have evoked destruction more clearly.[61] But if the association of an overturned table and the Temple's destruction is not unambiguous, the connection between the traffic of vessels through the Temple and destruction is positively remote. B. Chilton concentrates almost exclusively on the buying and selling of sacrificial victims to bolster his case that the action of Jesus be understood as a demand that the one who offers a sacrifice should own the offered victim.[62] Now it is not at all clear that Chilton has shown that the position he attributes to Hillel (and adduces for Jesus) was actually held by Hillel. He must deduce it from the bare fact that Hillel, unlike Shammai, required that the one sacrificing should lay hands on the victim before giving it to the priests for slaughter. It is not clear why purchase of a victim within the Temple precincts would thwart Hillel's requirement that the worshipper lay hands on the victim nor why Chilton thinks that a victim purchased at the Temple was not really owned by the worshipper, whereas a victim purchased outside the Temple was. But beyond these objections, Chilton's explanation of the action does not make sense of other elements of the action. Chilton may be correct in his assertion that the overturning of the tables of the money-changers was not an attack on the sacrificial system as such, but if, as Chilton himself seems to acknowledge, the money-changers were present not for the purchase of sacrificial victims for individual worshippers but for the collection of the Temple tax, what does Jesus' attack on the money-changers have to do with the demand that individuals own their own sacrifices?

[61] Moule's suggestion is acknowledged but dismissed by E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, p. 70. For a rigorous critique of Sanders' view, see especially R. J. Bauckham, 'Jesus' Demonstration in the Temple', in *Law and Religion: Essays on the Place of the Law in Israel and Early Christianity* (ed. B. Lindars; Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1988), pp. 72–89.

[62] B. Chilton, *The Temple of Jesus: His Sacrificial Program Within a Cultural History of Sacrifice* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), pp. 100–11.

6.2.3 Interpretations which focus on all elements of a single action

If the four elements of the action are understood collectively, they indicate an action directed against the commercial activity that was taking place in the outer court. But what about the commercial activity in the Temple precincts that bothered Jesus? A number of suggestions have been set forth.

Jesus' action as a cleansing

The traditional view is that Jesus 'cleansed' the Temple of commercial trade which, it is assumed, was inherently defiling. More recently, the view has been nuanced with the recognition that Jesus' action was quite probably limited in scope. Thus the action was only a symbolic cleansing. After surveying a number of representatives of this position, Sanders finds that common among adherents to this view is the idea that Jesus objected to commercial trade itself, which he viewed as an abuse of the true purpose of the Temple. Framed in this way, Sanders can launch another salvo in his now familiar assault against scholars who caricature Judaism as crassly external: the trade was necessary for the sacrificial system, so to suggest that the Temple needed to be 'cleansed' of it betrays an assumption that sacrifice is external and bad.[63] However, Sanders' criticism is too harsh; it is, after all, not difficult to see why scholars might look at commerce in animals and currency and simply assume that such activity was inherently defiling. Many who hold that Jesus 'cleansed' the Temple do not so much assume that sacrifice was external and bad as that the trade which supported the sacrificial system need not have taken place in the outer court. Sanders assumes the opposite, that is, that the commerce was located in the Temple *necessarily* and impugns those with whom he disagrees with the worst possible motives. In fact, the commerce could have easily been located elsewhere. The reason that it was carried out in the outer court was not that there was some legal requirement that it take place there, as Sanders comes close to saying. Rather the most obvious explanation of the silence of our sources on the matter is that the outer court was simply the most convenient place for it. But, against many who view Jesus' action as a cleansing, this would not have been the elevation of convenience over purity. As we have seen, the late Second Temple period in general was a time of significantly *heightened*

[63]E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, pp. 62–3.

concern for purity and yet there is little or no evidence that any group was critical of the Temple commerce as inherently defiling. The reason for this is simply that there is nothing in the Pentateuchal purity codes which suggests that the Temple commerce would have defiled the Temple. Thus, the most trenchant criticism of the view that Jesus cleansed the Temple of an inherently defiling commerce is the near certainty that such trade was not regarded as defiling.

Sanders' failure to make this criticism is perhaps part of the reason why several scholars responding to Sanders have continued to assert the validity of viewing Jesus' action as a cleansing. M. Hooker, for instance, sees the action as a cleansing in that Jesus protests against those who worship in the Temple but without loving God with heart, soul, mind and strength.[64] By Hooker's retention of the term 'cleansing', she attempts to place her interpretation in line with the traditional understanding of the text, while taking on board Sanders' contention that Jesus did not condemn sacrifices or the Temple commerce with the aid of which sacrifices were offered. But surely 'cleansing' is the wrong word in so far as it suggests that Jesus viewed the practices he disrupted as introducing pollution into the Temple. If that is what Hooker means (though it is not clear that she does), she fails both to explain why insincere worship should effect cultic pollution and to discuss the peculiarity of an action which disrupts the sacrificial system through which alone the pollution could be removed. Even without the problematic term 'cleansing', Hooker's view encounters difficulty. Does Hooker mean to suggest that the worship of all who made use of the trade facilities was false? If Jesus did not view the Temple commerce as in some sense problematic, why did he target it as a way of protesting against a problematic attitude in worship?

J. Dunn also persists in describing the action as a cleansing. In his view, however, the action is a symbolic purification of the Temple in preparation for its eschatological function. Crucial for Dunn is the expectation of *Psalms of Solomon* 17.30 that Messiah will purify Jerusalem so that the nations may come from the ends of the earth to see his glory.[65] But, as K. Tan points out, the source of the defilement in *Psalms of Solomon* 17 is clear – the contamination of the city by Gentiles.[66] Dunn, however, is unable to explain the sense in which Jesus regarded the Temple as defiled; he says that it is a protest, but against what? He argues that it is a purification, but from what? Perhaps because he feels the force of

[64] Hooker, 'Traditions', 18. [65] Dunn, *Partings*, pp. 48–9.

[66] K. H. Tan, *The Zion Traditions and the Aims of Jesus* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 173.

Sanders' criticisms of the traditional view, Dunn is unwilling to say that the commerce in the Temple was objectionable to Jesus, only that it did not conform to the ideal suggested by Zechariah 14.21, according to which there will be no trader in the eschatological Temple. We are thus left with a symbolic purification of an undefiled Temple directed against Temple traders whose presence would only be inappropriate if the eschatological Temple had already arrived.

Jesus' action as a repudiation of the cult

Some have emphasized that the elements of the action all target activities which were essential for the proper conduct of the cult and have deduced from this that the action of Jesus can only be understood as a rejection of the cult as such. At times such a view has been allied with the notion that Jesus' action was a cleansing or symbolic cleansing. More recently, however, P. Stuhlmacher and his student J. Ådna have sought to show that the action would have been understood as an attack on the cult itself, in which, like Jeremiah's contemporaries, the people continued to trust in the sacrificial apparatus 'as if nothing new was happening, instead of answering obediently the call of Jesus for repentance and discipleship at the threshold of the kingdom of God'. While the action did not symbolize the coming replacement of the cult, by symbolically repudiating the cult it anticipated and provoked Jesus' own violent death, which Jesus himself believed would effect forgiveness of sins and function as a substitute for the cult.[67] A somewhat unexpected ally for this view is J. Neusner.[68]

In favour of this view it must be said that the various elements of Jesus' action were directed against activities which were in fact related either directly or indirectly to the functioning of the cult. As we have seen, in Sanders' critique of those who view the Temple as a cleansing, he insists that the commerce in the Temple was there in order to keep the sacrificial system functioning. On this point at least, Stuhlmacher, Ådna

[67] J. Ådna, 'Jesus' Symbolic Act in the Temple (Mark 11:15–17): The Replacement of the Sacrificial Cult by His Atoning Death', in *Gemeinde ohne Tempel = Community without Temple: Zur Substituierung und Transformation des Jerusalemer Tempels und seines Kults im Alten Testament, antiken Judentum und frühen Christentum* (ed. B. Ego, A. Lange and P. Pilhofer; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1999), pp. 461–75. The paper is based on his 1993 Tübingen dissertation which is forthcoming in two monographs, to be published by J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) and Harrassowitz Verlag. P. Stuhlmacher, *Jesus of Nazareth – Christ of Faith* (trans. S. Schatzmann; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988), pp. 30–1, 46.

[68] J. Neusner, 'Money-Changers in the Temple: The Mishnah's Explanation', *NTS* 35 (1989), 287–90.

and Sanders agree entirely. But the point can be overstated. Of course, in a general sense, the Temple commerce supported the sacrificial system in that the activities were probably all related to the Temple in some way: no one contemplates the outer court as a general market. But were all the activities disrupted by Jesus linked so directly with sacrifice that an onlooker would have easily concluded that Jesus' action signalled his rejection of the sacrificial system as an acceptable means for expiating sin?

Let us grant for a moment that all of the activities disrupted by Jesus directly serviced worshippers coming to make sacrifices, as we must certainly accept in the case of those selling doves. It nevertheless seems to me that Ådna and Stuhlmacher overlook a crucial fact: only a relatively small proportion of sacrifices would have been offered to expiate sin; most sacrifices would have been for the purgation of impurities, the expression of communion with God, and the like. In other words, one of the controlling assumptions of the view that Jesus' action repudiated the cult in anticipation of his own sin-expiating death is that the priestly code of Torah conceives of 'the whole sacrificial cult as a cult of atonement'.[69] In Ådna's view, this means that in one way or another all sacrifices dealt with the expiation of sin. If, however, the vast majority of sacrifices were not directly related to expiation of sin, a substantial plank in this view gives way.

But it is not clear in any case that each of the activities was as tightly connected with sacrificial worship as Ådna believes. Beside upsetting the tables of those selling doves, Jesus interfered with those who were buying and selling. It is possible that the reference here is to those who were buying and selling sacrificial animals. John's Gospel has Jesus driving out livestock with a whip (John 2.15). But inasmuch as the commodity is not specified, it may be that a more general reference is in view: not merely the trade of sacrificial animals but also the selling of supplies to the Temple staff and the buying of goods donated to the Temple.[70]

Further, what is to be made of the curious reference to Jesus' prevention of vessels from being transported through the Temple? This is frequently explained by referring to *m. Ber*. 9.5 which inveighs against using the Temple Mount as a short cut.[71] But the focus seems to fall not so much on irreverent route selection as on the vessels which were being carried. Some who view the action as a cleansing suppose that the vessels were thought to introduce impurity in some way. If so, we are left to speculate how. Two possibilities remain. It could be that the vessels transported

[69] Ådna, 'Jesus' Symbolic Act', p. 468.
[70] See Tan, *Zion*, pp. 178–9.
[71] So, recently Hooker, *Mark*, p. 268.

materials suitable for sacrifice: flour, wine and oil. But it is also possible that they were used to carry money to the treasury in the inner court. Ådna argues that it makes little difference; either way, the Temple service would have been disrupted.[72] But if the vessels were merely for the transmission of funds it is difficult to see any direct connection with sacrifice. If, on the other hand, the vessels were for materials such as flour, wine and oil, then we must inquire further about the situations in which such materials were offered. What we find is that such materials could function as a burnt offering for those who lacked the wherewithal to make an offering of livestock. Such materials also accompanied the morning and evening collective whole offering which, as we shall see, were not viewed as expiatory.

But what of the money-changers? It is widely recognized that the presence of the money-changers facilitated the payment of the Temple tax in the accepted Tyrian half-shekel. Neusner and Ådna connect the tax exclusively with the provision of the daily whole offering (*tamid*). Neusner, like Sanders, focuses exclusive attention on the overturning of the tables of the money-changers and accepts Sanders' conclusion that this was a symbol of destruction. However, as a refinement of Sanders' view, he offers an evaluation of the purpose of the *tamid* which the Temple tax funded and, like Ådna, answers that it was for the expiation of sin. He derives his answer not from analysing the biblical precedents for the *tamid* and the Temple tax which funded it, but by turning to a single passage in the Tosefta which appears to connect the tax exclusively with the *tamid* and suggests that the 'public offerings appease (מרציין) and effect atonement (מכפרין) between Israel and their father in heaven' (*t. Sheq*. 1.6).[73]

Neusner, of course, is aware of the need to date such traditions but thinks the fact that Exodus 30.16 is 'explicit' in the matter indicates that the interpretation was early.[74] So, concerning what is Exodus 30 explicit? Certainly not about the purpose of the *tamid*, for on this Exodus 30 is silent. Neusner's assertion that the Tosefta simply reiterates what Exodus 30.16 had already clearly stated is mistaken. The Tosefta associates 'atonement' with the *tamid* which the half-shekel tax funded, whereas Exodus 30.11–16 identifies the 'atonement' with the tax itself. Neusner, however, seems unaware that this position is unique in the whole of the Jewish literature. Instead we find a wealth of material suggesting that the tax served as a ransom (see below).

Neusner assumes that כפרין in the Tosefta connotes atonement and thus assigns the *tamid* an expiatory function. But this is certainly not the

[72] Ådna, 'Jesus' Symbolic Act', p. 466.
[73] The translation is Neusner's.
[74] Neusner, 'Money-Changers', 288.

original connotation of the כפר word-group in Exodus 30, where the tax serves as a ransom and not as an expiating offering. The Tosefta seems to view the public offerings purchased by the half-shekel tax in line with the original function of the half-shekel levy of Exodus 30, that is, as a ransom: the association of מכפרין with מרצין suggests appeasement of wrath, a characteristic of many ransom texts.

If the passage from the Tosefta provides insufficient warrant for regarding the *tamid* as expiatory, is it possible to say what its purpose was? In the Torah, nowhere does it say that the daily collective burnt offering atones; only one passage indicates that an *individual* burnt offering atones (כפר; Lev. 1.4) and the meaning of כפר in this text is disputed. Leviticus 1.4 is a general statement about the individual burnt offering, but when we come to particular cases, the burnt offering is never said to expiate sin except perhaps in its role as part of the rites of Yom Kippur (Lev. 16.24).[75] Levine notes the discrepancy and claims that even in Leviticus 1.4, כפר functions as a denominative of the semantically distinct noun, כֹּפֶר, denoting ransom rather than expiation.[76]

Positively, it is clear that the individual burnt offering was brought as a gift to God, often voluntarily, and expressed the existence of a right and good relationship between the worshipper and God. Thus it is not surprising that where the daily collective burnt offering is discussed, the purpose is not clearly expiatory: 'It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there' (Exodus 29.42). Here the offering of the daily collective sacrifice is associated with the revelatory presence of God in the tabernacle. Far from an offering intended to expiate sin, the collective burnt offering was offered as a gift to God and a fundamental expression of Israel's relationship to God.[77] Descriptions of the daily offerings in later texts confirm this assessment: Sirach describes the daily offerings as occasions for worship and the pronunciation of blessings from the Lord over the people (Sir. 50.12–21); Philo indicates that the morning offerings expressed thankfulness for the blessings of the night; the evening offerings, for those of the day (*Spec. Leg*. 1.169).[78]

[75]Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, p. 176. [76]Levine, *Numbers 1–20*, p. 277.

[77]G. A. Anderson, 'Sacrifice and Sacrificial Offerings (OT)', in *ABD* (ed. D. N. Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992) vol. V, p. 878.

[78]Josephus does not comment on the purpose of the *tamid*, but it is peculiar that he describes the daily offerings with the word ἐναγισμός, which the Loeb translation tendentiously renders 'expiations' or 'expiatory sacrifices' in *J.W.* 1.39, 148; 6.97 but – oddly – as 'daily offerings' in 1.32. Elsewhere in Greek literature the term refers to sacrifices made to or for

As noted above, the Tosefta was able to assign the ransom effect of the tax to the *tamid* only by narrowing the function of the tax to the provision of the *tamid*. But would such a transfer of function have been made in the first century? In other words, was the tax as exclusively connected with the *tamid* as the Tosefta (followed by Ådna and Neusner) assumes? Apart from the Tosefta, the relevant texts unanimously assign a considerably broader purpose to the tax. The three biblical texts which mention the tax all designate it for the general upkeep of the tabernacle or Temple (Exod. 30; Neh. 10.33; 2 Chron. 24.6). Josephus also envisions a quite generalized use for the tax (*Ant*. 3.174–6). Finally, when we turn to the Mishnah, we find the broadest application of all: an entire tractate is devoted to the tax, not least because of the great variety of uses to which the tax was put, including such apparently non-Temple-related functions as the repair of the city walls (*m. Sheq*. 4.2).[79] It is unlikely, then, that the Temple tax would have been linked in an exclusive way with the provision of the *tamid*, if for no other reason than that the funds collected would have far exceeded that required for the *tamid* alone.[80] Thus there is ample reason to doubt that when the Temple was actually functioning, with all its rather pedestrian needs for provision and maintenance, the Temple tax was thought to be exclusively related to the *tamid*, as the Tosefta seems to imply. Rather, the tax was associated more generally with the ongoing and varied needs of the Temple, an association which doubtless accounts for its widespread payment by Diaspora Jews as an expression of Jewish identity. In other words, the association of the tax with the general support of the Temple probably made payment of the tax a symbol of Israel's election.

In response to this it could perhaps be argued that even if Jesus' interference with the payment of the Temple tax was not seen as a direct attack on the expiatory *tamid*, it was still an attack on the tax which was viewed as a ransom. It is here that caution must be exercised, for the distinction between 'ransom' and 'expiation of sin' is not sufficiently

the dead, cf. the Loeb translation of *Ant*. 19.272. This raises the possibility that Josephus' use of the word is drawn from Graeco-Roman cultic practices and misleadingly (mistakenly?) applied to the daily offerings in the Jerusalem cult. For a brief description of the *tamid* as a non-expiatory sacrifice, see E. P. Sanders, *Judaism*, pp. 104–5.

[79]This diversity of use seems not to have been acceptable to all. According to *m. Sheq*. 3.1–2, an appropriation was made thrice yearly in lots of three baskets of specified capacity. Any remainder was eligible to be used for these more diverse purposes such as maintenance of the city and, more controversially, for the purchase of items which could be sold for profit in the temple market (*m. Sheq*. 4.2–3). This is why the house of Gamaliel paid their tax directly by entering into the treasury on the day of the appropriation to ensure that their contribution was in the basket and not part of the remainder which was used in a less restricted way.

[80]See Chilton, *Temple of Jesus*, p. 110 and texts cited there.

observed. Neusner, for instance, sees the verb כפר and immediately assumes that expiation of sin was in view in both Exodus 30 and the Tosefta. But this is manifestly not the case in Exodus 30, where the verbal expression לכפר על-נפשתיכם (vv. 15–16) is associated with a substantival equivalent: כֹּפֶר נַפְשׁוֹ. Now the meaning of the substantive is undisputed; it simply means 'ransom'.[81] And an examination of closely related ransom texts indicates that 'ransom' has a positive as well as a negative dimension (Num. 8.10–19; 18.16; 21.48–50; Exod. 13.11–16). Milgrom, for instance, focuses only on the latter in defining the purpose of the ransom: to keep God's wrath from falling on the entire community as well as the guilty within the community.[82] But, positively, it is also apparent that the half-shekel ransom of Israelites, like the ransom of the firstborn (Exod. 13.11–16; cf. Num. 18.16), was fundamentally connected with the ransom of all Israel from Egypt, the signal moment in God's election of Israel. In other words, a ransom may be required to redeem life that is forfeit because of guilt but also to redeem life to which God has special claim. Viewed in this way, it is possible to see an essential connection between the ransom of Israelites and the election of Israel.

It is this basic connection of the half-shekel tax with Israel's experience of election that explains an otherwise puzzling feature of the Mishnaic discussion of the tax. The rabbis in no way proscribe any and all Gentile participation in the cult. But it is stipulated that even should a Gentile or a Samaritan wish to pay the half-shekel voluntarily it must be refused (*m. Sheq*. 1.5). This is analogous to the basic principle that Gentiles were permitted to participate only in non-obligatory aspects of the cult.[83] In other words, the close connection between the Temple tax and the essential functioning of the Temple strongly suggests that the tax was an expression of Israel's election. The connection of the tax conceived of as a ransom and Israel's experience of election is underscored by a passage from Philo: 'The donors bring the [ransom money] cheerfully and gladly, expecting that the payment will give them release from slavery or healing of diseases and the enjoyment of liberty fully secured and also complete

[81] Milgrom, *Numbers*, p. 370; Levine, *Numbers 1–20*, 277. Oddly, B. Janowski ('Auslösung des verwirkten Lebens: Zur Geschichte und Struktur der biblischen Lösegeldvorstellung', *ZTK* 72 (1982), 44) does not entertain the possibility that the verb כפר, even in the *pi'el* form, can have a connotation that derives from the substantive. As a result, he speaks of the innovation of a priestly author who interprets the substantive with the help of the *pi'el* verbal forms. Thus, despite the apparently parallel use of the substantive in 30.12, he persists in rendering הכפרים כסף as 'das Sühnegeld'.

[82] J. Milgrom, *Studies in Levitical Terminology: The Encroacher and the Levite. The Term 'Aboda* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), p. 30.

[83] See Schürer, *History*, vol. II, p. 310; and Schwartz, 'Introduction'.

preservation from danger . . . For it is on these first-fruits, as prescribed by the law, that the hopes of the pious rest' (*Spec. Leg*. 1.77–8). Philo thus clearly connects the payment of the ransom with the realization of the benefits and privileges of Israel's election.

It is clear, then, that the tax, both in its intrinsic function as a ransom and in its support of the Temple, gave expression to Israel's election. And, as we shall now see, it is the connection between the tax and the Temple on the one hand and Israel's election on the other that goes to the heart of the meaning of Jesus' action.

6.2.4 Election and the eschatological Temple

A conclusion that emerges from the foregoing analysis of attempts to take into account all of the constituent elements of Jesus' action is that the action was not directed against one aspect of the Temple's function, for example expiation of sin, but rather *against the operation of the Temple as a whole*. Thus, the attempt to associate the disparate elements of the action with a criticism of a specific aspect of Temple praxis is largely misguided.

What then was the significance of Jesus' action? The answer, I think, must begin with a simple but often overlooked observation: if we take Mark 11.17 to be essentially authentic, as I have argued, we must conclude that the meaning of Jesus' action was complex. Jesus' explanatory pronouncement draws on two quite distinct scriptural traditions and holds them together in a way that the Old Testament does not. One tradition – of which Jeremiah 7 is a part – is pre-exilic and anticipates coming judgement on the nation. The other tradition – to which Isaiah 56 contributes – looks ahead to a national restoration to be realized after national judgement. Within the Old Testament the two traditions represent distinct, consecutive stages in God's dealings with Israel.

I have argued that Jesus proclaimed the paradoxical message that Israel's sacred traditions concerning national judgement and national restoration were coming to simultaneous rather than sequential fulfilment. I now want to show that Jesus' action in the Temple signified precisely that complex belief. As an explanation of the action which signified that belief, he could scarcely have done better than to combine two texts which represent those apparently separate traditions. The combination of these two texts, it must be emphasized, does not merely exemplify the fact that 'eschatological hopes involve judgement as well as renewal'[84] but rather

[84] So e.g. Hooker, *Mark*, p. 266.

the far more difficult expectation of simultaneous *national* judgement and *national* renewal.

If this observation is correct, the significance of Jesus' action emerges when it is examined in relation to both traditions. Of prophetic passages which deal with the expectation of national judgement, Jeremiah 7 is among the most arresting. The prophet rails against the nation for its dependence on the Temple as a symbol of Israel's election and on its uninterrupted cult as a guarantee of national inviolability. Such confidence, declares the prophet, is profoundly misplaced, for it fails to reckon with the fact that Israel's election and the promise of divine protection had always been conditioned on Israel's faithfulness to the covenant (7.4–15). But, in this, the nation had failed, and the prophet recites a litany of covenant crimes as proof (7.6–9). Thus had the Temple become like a cave to which bandits flee, convinced that the cave would provide protection from pursuers seeking vengeance.[85] The image derives from the occasional use of the Temple as a place of refuge: as God's dwelling place, it was thought to be a place of inviolable sanctity and safety. Ironically, says the prophet, it will not be that, precisely because it had become nothing more than that. The Lord is cast both in the role of the offended pursuer and of the one whose house provides protection: the guilty party seeks refuge in the house of his victim. The Temple and its cult continued to operate as always, but its worship had become valueless before God.

If the guilty seek safety in the house of the one they have offended, is there any hope that they will nevertheless find it? M. Hooker holds out just such hope and sees in Jesus' use of Jeremiah 7 only a warning of possible judgement if the people do not mend their ways.[86] But even in Jeremiah it is clear that the opening appeal is made in the face of certain doom: God tells the prophet to stop interceding for the people for he would no longer hear: 'my wrath shall be poured out on this place . . . it will burn and not be quenched' (7.20). In chapter 3, I have argued that Jesus used prophetic themes and texts, especially Isaiah 5, to counter notions

[85]It must be emphasized that Jeremiah's reference to the Temple as 'a den of thieves' is a metaphor. It is therefore unlikely that Jesus regards those against whom he directs the action and saying as 'thieves' or 'bandits' in some literal sense. As noted above, this belies the frequent assumption that the word indicates a belief by Jesus that the Temple authorities were swindling or stealing from the people. It also weighs against the assertion of N. T. Wright (*Jesus*, pp. 419–20) that the term refers to violent revolutionaries. Wright's argument is doubly specious inasmuch as the term λῃσταί does not mean revolutionaries. In fact, as M. Hengel (*The Zealots*, pp. 43–4) points out, Josephus often labels those who were involved in revolutionary activity as λῃσταί precisely to downplay their political and religious ideals.

[86]Hooker, *Mark*, p. 266.

of national inviolability and misguided conceptions about the meaning of Israel's election, positing instead predictions of national judgement. It is my contention that Jesus has a similar idea in mind in his Temple action and in his use of Jeremiah 7 to explain it.

Jeremiah supports his repudiation of his contemporaries' belief in the inviolability of Israel's election with a list of ways in which Israel has broken faith with the covenant. If Jesus is making a similar charge, what are the covenant 'crimes' which undergird it? One of the benefits of Sanders' discussion of this action is that his bald assertion that the Temple establishment was not corrupt and that no one (including Jesus) would have thought that it was has incited a number of scholars to explore the question more carefully. Of course, the reference to the Temple as 'a den of thieves' had in the past led a number of scholars simply to assume that this was the case; Sanders' assertion to the contrary is an understandable reaction against such an assumption. The reassessment of this question has proceeded in two ways. First, C. Evans, in particular, has assembled the evidence that there were at least some Jews who regarded the Temple establishment as corrupt.[87] Not all of Evans' evidence is early; in particular, Evans is excessively confident about the usefulness of the targums. Nevertheless, on the whole, it seems apparent that the ruling priests of Jesus' day were regarded as corrupt by some. Second, R. Bauckham and K. Tan have suggested links between the particular elements of Jesus' action and charges of profiteering, some of which I have underscored above: the possibility of extortionate pricing in the selling of doves which were primarily intended for the poor; the funding of profit-making trade with the Temple tax (see above); corruption in the buying and selling of Temple supplies or donated goods.[88]

The complementary evidence of Evans, Bauckham and Tan bears up the possibility that Jesus' action may have been perceived by some as an attack on the Temple authorities for corrupt profiteering. But several observations suggest that Jesus' objections may have been broader and aimed more widely. First, against those who restrict the target of the action to the Temple establishment alone, it seems likely that the action would have been perceived to be directed against worshippers making use of the Temple commerce as well. Whatever culpability may attach to the authorities in their conduct of the commerce, the fact remains that it existed as a service to worshippers, facilitating the purchase of goods

[87]C. A. Evans, 'Jesus' Action in the Temple and Evidence of Corruption in the First-Century Temple', *Jesus and His Contemporaries*: *Comparative Studies* (AGJU; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 319–44.

[88]Bauckham, 'Jesus' Demonstration', pp. 76–8; Tan, *Zion*, pp. 177–8.

and animals for sacrifice and the payment of the Temple tax. That a more general target of the action was intended may also have been suggested by Jesus' use of Jeremiah 7 which denounces the people generally: priestly authorities are not mentioned; the Temple has become a den of thieves because of the presence of the *people*.

Second, although Bauckham and Tan successfully show how each of the elements *might* have been understood as an attack on profiteering, such an understanding requires that the elements of the action be construed with considerably more specificity than the Gospels suggest. The descriptions of the action are in fact rather general. The point emerges also when we recall the above examination of the elements of Jesus' action. Here Sanders must be given his due, for though he ignores most of the elements of Jesus' action he rightly recognizes that the purpose of the Temple commerce was the efficient operation of the Temple. The observation is an important one, for it highlights the fact that, however much various aspects of the commerce were vulnerable to profiteering, in and of themselves the activities targeted by Jesus' action allowed the Temple to continue functioning.

At this point caution is warranted, for, as Sanders points out, scholars have too often been guided by unspoken assumptions that cultic practices are somehow unworthy of true religion.[89] The Jesus traditions contain too many positive sayings by Jesus concerning the Temple for such a position to merit consideration. But this in no way means that Jesus' action could not have been a general attack on the Temple. With frequent appeal to the sacred traditions stemming from the pre-exilic prophets (see chaps. 2–3), Jesus asserted that the nation was ripe for judgement and not even the continual, smooth operation of the Temple could change that stark fact. In fact, the continued functioning of the Temple actually obscured the truth, for it engendered ill-advised confidence in the protective presence of God and focused ill-conceived expectations of national restoration.[90] *By disrupting the operation of the Temple, Jesus' action in the Temple did not so much give expression to objections to specific elements of Temple praxis as symbolically call into question the efficacy of the Temple as a guarantee of the privileges of national election.*

If this analysis is correct, the attempt to read into the elements of Jesus' action an objection to a particular fault in the conduct of the Temple – whether in its purity, its polity, the profiteering of its authorities, or its

[89]E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, p. 63.

[90]On the temple as a focus of ideological hope, see especially Schwartz, 'Temple and Desert', pp. 29–43.

expiatory purpose – is seen to be largely misguided. If we ask what perceived crimes of the nation led Jesus to believe that the Temple was no longer an efficacious expression of Israel's election, we must look to the broader context of his proclamation of coming national judgement in which the nation is condemned for its morally culpable fruitlessness and its unbelief in his message of eschatological fulfilment. The action itself tells us little concerning the specifics of this long-running indictment of the nation, but rather serves as its culmination. Some may have suspected an implicit charge of corruption. But to the extent that such an accusation was part of Jesus' own intentions, it would have simply been a constituent element in his broader indictment against the nation.[91]

I have said that the action of Jesus was complex. Thus far I have focused only on the function of the action as the culmination of Jesus' message concerning national judgement and specious notions of election. Such an understanding is entirely consonant with Jesus' use of Israel's sacred traditions stemming from the pre-exilic prophets and Deuteronomic history. But it is possible also to understand the action within the context of sacred traditions concerning national restoration.

This is precisely what the citation of Isaiah 56.7 suggests, for it picks up on one element of the sacred traditions concerning the restored or eschatological Temple: it was to be the focus of the eschatological ingathering of the Gentiles. Some have argued that Jesus took issue with the presence of Temple commerce in an area of the Temple which was designated for use by the Gentiles.[92] But, as I have noted, there is no evidence that the outer court was regarded as the Court of Gentiles. Further, it is not clear that the presence of commerce in one part of the vast outer court would have inhibited worship. Finally, how would clearing space for any Gentile who *might* want to enter the outer court have been a meaningful fulfilment of a text that envisioned the Temple as a structure which actually was a house of prayer for all nations?

The fact that Jesus seems to think that the standing Temple should have been a house of prayer for all nations leads Bauckham to suggest that Jesus was not in fact referring to the eschatological Temple. Bauckham does not deny that Isaiah 56.7 refers to the eschatological Temple but says that Jesus uses the text to declare that what was to be fully realized in the eschaton had been God's intention for his people all along. For Jesus, the Temple of Isaiah 56.7 could not have been *only* the eschatological

[91]Cf. N. T. Wright (*Jesus*, pp. 406–28) who likewise views the significance of the Temple action as the culmination of Jesus' indictment of the nation, though Wright's understanding of that indictment differs from that offered here.

[92]Davies, *The Gospel and the Land*, pp. 349–52.

Temple; otherwise the text could not have been used to indict the Temple authorities. Thus, Jesus is saying that the Temple was to be a house of prayer for all the proselytes and Gentile God-fearers who came to sacrifice and worship there in anticipation of the day when it would serve that function for all nations.[93] But proselytes and Gentiles already enjoyed such access.[94] Moreover, Isaiah 56.7 so clearly participates in the expectation of a pilgrimage of the nations to the eschatological Temple that an application of that tradition to a non-eschatological Temple would appear to require greater substantiation.[95]

In his recent account of the Temple action, K. Tan has largely followed Bauckham in characterizing the action as a protest against profiteering by the Temple authorities. But at this point Tan departs from Bauckham by suggesting that Jesus' citation of Isaiah 56.7 was an indication that though the time for the renewal of Zion had arrived, the corruption of the existing Temple meant that it was unworthy to be the eschatological Temple. 'Hence instead of a renewal of the Temple, it is sentenced to be destroyed.' Tan leaves aside the question of whether or not Jesus envisioned an eschatological replacement of the Temple, but I think he has taken the discussion in the right direction.[96]

Nevertheless, it is possible to take the argument a step further. Bauckham assumes that Jesus could not have been referring to the eschatological Temple because he was addressing the authorities of a clearly historical Temple. But that, I believe, was precisely Jesus' point: he indicts the Temple because, though the time of fulfilment had come, the Temple was clearly not the eschatological Temple, as evident from the obvious fact that the Temple was not functioning as a focal point for the eschatological ingathering of the nations. In view of the foregoing discussion of Gentiles in the Temple, it seems likely that some attempt had already been made to conform Temple polity to expectations regarding the eschatological Temple by admitting Gentiles to the outer court. For Jesus this was not enough. The eschatological moment was such that not just polity in preparation for a coming reality but the reality itself was what mattered. Jesus' use of Isaiah 56.7 suggests not merely that the Temple was disqualified from *becoming* the eschatological Temple, as Tan seems to suggest. Rather, Jesus employs Israel's restoration traditions *to indict the Temple for failing already to be* the eschatological

[93] Bauckham, 'Jesus' Demonstration', p. 85.

[94] On the question of proselyte access to the Temple, see especially Baumgarten, 'Exclusions'. Of course, as Bauckham is aware, Gentiles would only have been permitted to offer non-obligatory sacrifices; cf. Schwartz, 'Introduction'.

[95] Cf. Tan, *Zion*, p. 189. [96] Ibid., p. 190.

Temple. Jesus does not merely deny the Temple's eligibility for the renewal that would make it the Temple of the eschaton but charges that the Temple of restoration should already have come into existence. His symbolic termination of the Temple's operation is seen as a declaration that the Temple had failed to be what it should already have become.

Albeit rather more tenuous, other evidence may be adduced as support for this view. J. Dunn among others has called attention to the possible relevance of the closing line of Zechariah: 'And there shall no longer be traders in the house of the LORD of hosts on that day'(14.21).[97] As Dunn notes, the fact that Zechariah 14.21 is not actually cited makes it difficult to be certain. However, there are good reasons to think that the text did help to motivate Jesus' action. First, the so-called triumphal entry indicates that just before the Temple action Jesus undertook an action conceived of as a fulfilment of prophecies from Zechariah. Second, there is a reason why Jesus may have chosen to enact Zechariah 14.21 rather than to cite it: the Hebrew text is susceptible to two interpretations. The term rendered above as 'traders' literally means 'Canaanites' (כנעני). If the literal meaning is in view, the text is easily read as an indication that Gentiles would be excluded from the eschatological Temple. The LXX provides us with evidence that the text was in fact read in this way during the Second Temple. By enacting Zechariah 14.21, Jesus demonstrated that his interpretation of the text was contrary to the literal reading; the citation of Isaiah 56.7 confirms his action's rejection of the literal reading.

On Dunn's reading, the text provides additional evidence that Jesus was symbolically purifying the Temple in anticipation of its eschatological function. But Zechariah provides no reason to think that the presence of traders was defiling. Instead, Zechariah anticipates an eschaton in which the distinction between sacred and common, pure and impure, disappears: 'every cooking pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be sacred to the Lord of hosts' (14.21).[98] Consequently, the traders whose task it was to provide worshippers with commodities and currency of appropriate sanctity and purity would no longer be required. If Jesus read the text in this way, not only would it be consonant with his stance toward purity regulations generally, but it would reveal yet another way in which Jesus measured the standing Temple by the eschatological Temple and found the former wanting: the eschatological Temple was to be a place in which the need for commerce had been obviated by the sanctification of all society; the

[97]Dunn, *Partings*, pp. 48–9. Cf. C. Roth, 'The Cleansing of the Temple and Zechariah xiv 21', *NovT* 4 (1960), 174–81.

[98]See W. Harrelson, 'The Celebration of the Feast of Booths according to Zech xiv 16–21', in *Religions in Antiquity* (ed. J. Neusner; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968).

continued presence of commerce was further evidence that the standing Temple was not the eschatological Temple. Thus it is entirely plausible that against the backdrop of Zechariah 14's expectation of the eschatological Temple, Jesus' action as well as his citation of Isaiah 56.7 served as an indictment of the Temple for having failed to become the eschatological Temple.

Further confirmation of this understanding of the Temple action comes from the pericope with which Mark joins his account of Jesus' action – the cursing of the fig tree (11.12–14). It is often asserted that the fruitless fig tree serves as a symbol of Jerusalem or Israel, making the pericope a natural precursor to the action which in some sense criticizes the conduct of the Temple. I do not wish to discount completely the possibility that Mark sees the fig tree as a symbol, but it has to be said that if this was the primary significance of the incident, he has obfuscated it by relating the search for figs to Jesus' hunger (11.12) and by making the withered fig tree an illustration of the power of faith (11.20–4). Moreover, if the fig tree could serve as a symbol for the nation, particularly in texts which anticipate national judgement, it is also true that the fig tree was emblematic of eschatological blessing.[99] But the association of fruitfulness with the eschaton was not just symbolic. As is well known, there was also the very material expectation of abundant, indeed perpetual fruitfulness in the eschaton: 'Their leaves [i.e. of trees in the eschaton] will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month' (Ezek. 47.12).[100]

The laboured attempts of scholars to explain the incident illustrates its difficulty. Gundry finds it significant that 'Mark does not say that Jesus went to the tree in hope of finding "figs" or "fruit," i.e. ripe figs', but rather that Jesus went to find 'something', suggesting that Jesus was looking for edible buds which would later become fruit.[101] But Mark's explanation – 'it was not the season for figs' – reads not so much as an incidental explanation of why Jesus went searching for 'something' as opposed to fruit, as an explanation of why the fig tree had no fruit. Hooker suggests that if the story is understood symbolically, 'it is entirely appropriate that

[99] W. R. Telford, *The Barren Temple and the Withered Tree: A Redaction-Critical Analysis of the Cursing of the Fig-Tree Pericope in Mark's Gospel and Its Relation to the Cleansing of the Temple Tradition* (JSNTSup; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980), pp. 134–7.

[100] Cf. Joel 2.22; Hag. 2.19. The idiom of ideal prosperity, 'everyone shall sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees', was easily applied to the ideal age (Micah 4.4; Zech. 3.10). Cf. *1 Enoch* 10.18–19; *2 Bar*. 29.5; *Sib*. *Or*. 2.320; 3.744–51. Lev. 26.4–5 depicts year-round abundance and productivity for the obedient, an ideal which is even more idealized by Philo (*De praem*. 100–4); perpetual productivity is also anticipated by the rabbis (*b. Shab*. 30b). See Volz, *Eschatologie*, pp. 387–8.

[101] Gundry, *Mark*, p. 636.

the Lord should look for fruit at the most unexpected time of year'.[102] But surely cursing a fig tree for not having fruit when it was not supposed to have fruit is only poorly analogous to condemning the nation for not having fruit when it was meant to have fruit.[103] A better explanation places the point of the pericope precisely in Jesus' search for figs at a time when figs were not expected. In Jesus' estimation, the tree should have been laden with figs whatever the season, for it was the time of eschatological fulfilment; since fig trees were to bear fruit perpetually in the eschaton, Jesus asserts that it should have been possible to find figs even if it was not the season for figs.[104] Thus, Jesus' curse of the fig tree for failing to produce the perpetual fruit of the eschaton in Mark 11.12–14 parallels precisely his condemnation of the Temple for failing already to be the Temple of the eschaton (Mark 11.15–17).

Only now is it possible to see the symbolic significance of Jesus' cursing of the fig tree. Just as the spiritual fruitlessness of the nation, portrayed as a fig tree, was associated with the material fruitlessness of the nation's punitively withered fig trees (cf. Jer. 5.17 with 8.13), so too for Jesus the absence of figs from the tree results from the nation's fruitless failure to realize the conditions of the eschaton which should already have been in place.

6.3 Jesus and the Temple tax

My suggestion is that a similar idea also lies behind the curious episode concerning the Temple tax in Matthew 17.24–7. The logion suggests that the 'sons of the king' are not obliged to pay the Temple tax, even if concern not to offend the Temple authorities makes it expedient that the tax be paid.

The authenticity of the episode has been ably defended, and I have nothing to add.[105] For the case that I wish to make here, the authenticity

[102] Hooker, *Mark*, p. 267.

[103] Cf. the comment of S. Bergler ('Jesus, Bar Kochba und das messianische Laubhüttenfest', *JSJ* 29 (1998), 161): 'Die übliche Antwort, daß Jesus Israel das Gericht ankündigt, weil es keine Frucht gebracht hat und seine Botschaft ablehnte, würde nur Sinn machen, wenn jetzt wirklich die Zeit für Feigen wäre.'

[104] Similarly Bergler, ibid., p. 162.

[105] See especially W. Horbury, 'The Temple Tax', in *Jesus and the Politics of His Day* (E. Bammel and C. F. D. Moule; Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 266–84. J. P. Meier (*Marginal Jew*, vol. II, pp. 883, 975 n. 21) allows that the episode stems from a pre-70 tradition but attributes it to 'a scholastic dispute about whether Jewish Christians should pay the temple tax', chiefly because he does not think the historical Jesus could have held the temple tax to be wrong in principle. This, of course, is to prejudge the case on the basis of an unexpressed conviction about what Jesus could and could not have believed.

of Jesus' miraculous knowledge of the money in the mouth of the fish is of little moment. But even many who see legendary elements in the story nevertheless recognize that verses 25–6, at least, correspond to an incident in the life of Jesus.

The collectors of the tax came asking whether Jesus paid the half-shekel tax rather than merely assuming that he did. This, however, does *not* mean that payment of the tax was optional[106] or widely neglected nor even that the legitimacy of the tax was controverted.[107] As we have seen, the Temple tax was firmly grounded in biblical law.[108] What *was* disputed was the frequency of payment.[109] At Qumran, the tax was paid not once a year but once per lifetime (*4QOrdinances*; cf. 11QT 39.8–10). This may explain the otherwise curious use of the plural δίδραχμα in the question put to Jesus: the collectors assume that Jesus accepted the Temple tax in principle (why would they not?) but wondered whether he paid the tax yearly.

Peter's simple 'yes' may reflect awareness that Jesus had paid the tax in the past. But on this occasion, at least in private, Jesus objects. The objection is remarkable not only because it was exceptional,[110] but also because, as noted above, the Old Testament clearly stipulates payment of the tax. Thus, although this text has not been a focal point for the debate about whether Jesus ever contradicted the law, Jesus' objection does seem to constitute a straightforward abrogation of OT law, even if

[106]Against E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, p. 64; G. N. Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1992), p. 141; and Theissen and Merz, *Historical Jesus*, p. 176. Apart from Matt. 17.24–7, there is no evidence that the tax was voluntary. If it had been voluntary there would have been no debate about whether priests were *obliged* to pay (see below).

[107]See E. P. Sanders (*Jewish Law*, pp. 49–50), reversing his earlier position. Luz (*Matthäus: 2 Teilband*, p. 530) argues that the Sadducees questioned the legitimacy of an obligatory tax, citing rather slim evidence that Sadducees believed that the *tamid* should be funded only with voluntary gifts. But, as we have seen, the tax was used not only for funding the *tamid* but also for a variety of other temple-related needs. The Sadducees' position on the funding of the *tamid* in no way indicates that they questioned the legitimacy of a compulsory temple tax, only that they objected to one of the ways in which the tax was used.

[108]This is not to say that the institution of the tax goes back to the earliest days of Israel's history; the tax may have been instituted relatively late. Nevertheless, even if Exod. 30.11–16 was not originally understood as mandating a levy for the sanctuary, it was nevertheless already interpreted that way within Scripture (Neh. 10.33; 2 Chron. 24.6), against J. Liver, 'The Half-Shekel Offering in Biblical and Post-Biblical Literature', *HTR* 56 (1963), 173–98.

[109]*M. Sheq*. 1 (cf. *b. Men*. 65a) also indicates that whether or not priests should pay was disputed as well, but against D. Daube ('Temple Tax', in *Jesus, the Gospels and the Church: Essays in Honor of William R. Farmer* (ed. E. P. Sanders; Macon: Mercer University Press, 1987), pp. 121–34) this can hardly stand behind Jesus' objection: the sons – not the priests – of the king are declared exempt.

[110]E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law*, p. 49, equates non-payment to apostasy.

(in its Matthean form, at least) it does not issue in an abrogation of the law in practice. Jesus, it seems, did not generally go around abolishing clear biblical commands. But it is also true that his approach to questions of *halakhah* was informed by his understanding of the eschatological situation. My suggestion is that Jesus' objection to the payment of the tax is driven by a conviction that *in the eschaton there would be no need for God's people to support the Temple through the payment of a tax.*

The point emerges, in part, from recent discussion of the episode which has focused attention on the stress Jesus lays on the fatherhood of God.[111] To be sure, Jesus does not use the word 'father', nor is reference to God anything but implicit. Nevertheless, the point of Jesus' saying turns on the privileges which belong to those whose father is also king: as sons of an earthly king are exempt from taxation, so too are those whose father is the divine king. In Bauckham's analysis, Jesus emphasizes that God's fatherhood takes precedence over his kingship in his relationship to his people; payment of the Temple tax is tantamount to paying a tax to God and this is inconsistent with an understanding of God as father.[112] This, however, needs to be qualified: the passage does not so much emphasize God's fatherhood *as distinct from* his kingship, as stress that God's kingship is to be understood *in terms* of his fatherhood.

Of course, in Jewish thought generally God was regarded as king. But there was a sense in which God's kingship was yet to be realized in the present world. Thus, central to the expectation of Israel's restoration was the hope that God alone would reign over his people. Various first-century movements bear ample witness to the radicalization of this hope with the insistence that to acquiesce to foreign rule violated the first commandment.[113] For Jesus, the notion of God's eschatological kingship was no less central. But in Jesus' message God's eschatological kingship did not receive its distinctive character from a radicalization of the first commandment but from the assertion that this kingship was already being experienced by those who characteristically addressed God as Father.

The notions of sonship and divine fatherhood in relation to God's kingship in Jesus' thought are fundamental to Jesus' message of eschatological fulfilment. In relation to the disciples' prayer Davies and Allison comment, 'Given the eschatological orientation of most if not all of Matthew 6.9–13, note should be taken of the fact that sonship was often set forth

[111] R. J. Bauckham, 'The Coin in the Fish's Mouth', in *Gospel Perspectives: The Miracles of Jesus* (ed. D. Wenham and C. Blomberg; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), pp. 219–52; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. II, pp. 741–9; G. H. Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracle Worker: A Historical and Theological Study* (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999), p. 137.

[112] Bauckham, 'Coin'. [113] Hengel, *The Zealots*, pp. 190–6.

as an eschatological hope (Matt 5.9; Luke 6.35; 20.36).'[114] Of course, in Matthew the children of the Father are not ethnic Israel but the disciples of Jesus;[115] having Abraham as father may identify the *apparent* 'sons of the kingdom' (Matt. 3.9; 8.12), but it in no way determines the *true* 'sons of the kingdom' (Matt. 13.38, 43). But it is very likely that this was also the case for Jesus himself. W. Horbury is entirely correct to say that Jesus takes Israel's election for granted,[116] but this in no way implies that the identity of Israel was likewise taken for granted.[117] For Jesus, the sons are not simply 'Israel in general',[118] but those who do the will of the Father as proclaimed by Jesus (Matt. 12.39–40). The concept of sonship thus has a decidedly eschatological cast in Jesus' proclamation.

So too the notion of divine fatherhood. The disciples' prayer (Matt. 6.9–13), much of which has a decidedly eschatological orientation, begins by addressing God as father.[119] The significance of this fact emerges with consideration of Jesus' own consciousness of God as father. Vermes has particularly emphasized this aspect of Jesus' religious experience. But in view of the close connection he draws between the address of God as father and the petition for the coming of the kingdom, it is odd that Vermes sees no royal figure in Jesus' representation of God.[120] More to the point are the conclusions of G. Beasley-Murray that Jesus' characteristic way of addressing God as *Abba* is 'one with his awareness of his vocation with respect to the reign of God' and that his encouragement of his disciples to address God likewise underscores their own participation in the saving reign of God.[121] In other words, for Jesus and his disciples, the experience of God as father is bound up with their experience of him as eschatological king.

I return now to Matthew 17.24–7 where the experiences of God's fatherhood and kingship are (I am arguing) similarly bound together: the sons relate to God as king differently from others precisely because they relate to him as father. But for Jesus, God's kingship is an eschatological kingship which is already being experienced by his disciples. This suggests that the principle by which the sons are declared exempt from the Temple tax is eschatologically determined. I have explained Jesus' action

[114] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. I, p. 601.
[115] Meier, *Marginal Jew*, vol. II, p. 882. [116] Horbury, 'Temple Tax', p. 283.
[117] See above, chapter 3. [118] Against Horbury, 'Temple Tax', p. 283.
[119] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. I, p. 601.
[120] G. Vermes, *The Religion of Jesus the Jew* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), pp. 165, 180. In addition to the pervasive references to the kingdom of God, see the specific references to God as a father in Matt. 5.35; 22.1–14, though the reference in the latter text may be redactional.
[121] Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom*, p. 149.

in the Temple as an indictment of the nation for the failure of the Temple already to be functioning as the Temple of the eschaton. My suggestion is that something similar is at work in Jesus' objection to the tax. He does not argue that the Temple tax had been wrong since its inception. Rather, for Jesus, the proper relation between the eschatological king and his people is one of a father to his children. And a king does not tax his children. Given such a relationship, a Temple tax will simply have no place in the eschaton. Beneath Jesus' objection to the tax lies the conviction that this eschatological state of affairs already obtains; inasmuch as God's eschatological kingship is already at work in the world, the authorities should already have ceased collecting it. If concern not to give offence means that Jesus and his disciples continue paying the tax, the fundamental objection remains unchanged. And if the conflict between Jesus' principle and practice created a *halakhic* ambiguity for Jesus' followers that would take several decades to resolve, there can be no mistake that the principle nevertheless constitutes an indictment of the Temple for failing already to be the Temple of the eschaton.

6.4 The Temple not made with hands

If Jesus indicted the Second Temple for its failure to be the eschatological Temple, what did he take the eschatological Temple to be? In Mark 14.58, Jesus is accused of threatening to destroy the Temple and in three days replace it with a Temple 'not made with hands' (ἀχειροποίητον). Mark, however, contends that the testimony was false. Nevertheless, there is strong support for the view that Jesus must have said something like this.[122] In view of the evidence marshalled above for a Temple built by Messiah, we cannot simply rule out the possibility that Jesus claimed that he would build a new Temple.[123] Indeed the fact that in Matthew and Mark, at least, the charge that Jesus did make such a claim prompts the high priest to ask Jesus directly whether he was the Christ suggests an existing association between a new Temple and messiah. In what sense, therefore, was the testimony in Mark false and what does his report of the testimony tell us about Jesus' aims in regard to the eschatological Temple?

Matthew, it must be noted, appears not to accept Mark's description of the testimony against Jesus on this point as false. However, even Mark leaves space for the conclusion that at least part of the testimony was true:

[122] For a review of the evidence, see Dunn, *Partings*, p. 49.

[123] Against, for example, Brown (*Death*, p. 451) who speculates that the early church was responsible for the move from 'destroyed' and 'built' to 'I will destroy' and 'I will build'.

the testimony as a whole is false in that the witnesses did not fully agree (14.59). But despite the reported lack of agreement among the witnesses, Mark does not specify what each witness testified, supplying only a single report of variant versions of what Jesus said. This may suggest that Mark regards the report he gives as incorporating both true and false elements: the report is false in that it is not wholly true. Thus, Matthew's apparent assessment of the testimony as true may have been made possible by his elimination of what he believed to be false in Mark's report of the testimony.

What, then, in Matthew's eyes is the false element in the testimony reported by Mark? Matthew has made three substantial changes: (1) he has eliminated the χειροποίητον/ἀχειροποίητον antithesis; (2) he has made the destruction and rebuilding potential rather than predicted (δύναμαι καταλῦσαι versus Mark's καταλύσω); and (3) he has rejected the description of the Temple that Jesus will build as ἄλλον.

Dunn focuses on the first change as the significant one; Mark's antithesis between χειροποίητον and ἀχειροποίητον has been rightly omitted by Matthew as a Hellenistic elaboration of the common tradition, as evidenced by the recurrence of the language in the speech of Stephen in Acts 7.[124] Against this, two things must be said. First, I have shown above that there is an abundance of Jewish evidence that the eschatological Temple would be built by God himself, that is, 'without human hands', and that there are even texts in which this expectation is held together with the belief that a messianic figure would also play a role in the construction of this divinely built Temple. Moreover, 4 Ezra 10, a first-century and by no means Hellenistic text, can interpret the stone cut from a mountain 'not by human hands' in Daniel 2.34, 45 as Mt Zion which a messianic figure carves out for himself (see above).

Second, the reason that Dunn and others reject the antithesis is that in the context of Stephen's speech, the reference to the standing Temple as χειροποίητος may be taken to imply that Stephen regarded it *intrinsically* as an idol. But the point and the inference Dunn draws from it concerning what Jesus actually said about the Temple can be contested. Although Dunn is correct in his observation that the LXX often uses χειροποίητος of idols, it is not at all clear that Stephen's speech regards the Temple as inherently idolatrous.[125] Even if this were the point of the language in the context of Stephen's speech, the idea cannot be derived from the

[124]Dunn, *Partings*, p. 69.

[125]Note especially the perceptive comments of E. Franklin (*Christ the Lord: A Study in the Purpose and Theology of Luke–Acts* (London: SPCK, 1975), p. 105) who argues

occurrence of χειροποίητος alone. Thus to suggest that χειροποίητος contributes to the portrayal of the Temple as an idol in Acts 7 does not at all establish that it served the same purpose in Luke's source.[126]

Several scholars have recently drawn attention to possible theological concerns that led Matthew to drop χειροποίητον/ἀχειροποίητον.[127] A more straightforward reason may be that Matthew omitted the antithesis simply because it was redundant. The presence of διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν itself implies that Jesus' building of a Temple would be supernatural in keeping with a fairly common expectation concerning the eschatological Temple. This is substantially the point made by the χειροποίητον/ἀχειροποίητον contrast.

Hooker is among those who view the substitution of δύναμαι καταλῦσαι for ἐγὼ καταλύσω as the change which allowed Matthew to imply that the testimony was true.[128] But the charge is repeated in Mark 15.29 without any indication that Jesus had merely threatened the Temple, and Matthew carries this over from Mark unchanged (Matt. 27.40). The change in Matthew 26.61 can be seen not so much as an attempt to soften the claim of Jesus as it is reported by Mark's witnesses as a reflection of Matthew's redactional concern to accentuate Jesus' messianic authority.[129]

The third change noted above rarely draws remark.[130] Perhaps this is justified. It is possible that Matthew has missed out ἄλλον simply because he viewed it as redundant: if Jesus destroys the standing Temple, what else could the Temple that he vowed to build be except 'another' (ἄλλον) one? In this case, it may be that Matthew regards the Marcan report of the testimony against Jesus as false only to the extent that it was part of a conflicting testimony about what Jesus said concerning the Temple. But Matthew's deletion of ἄλλον may be what enables him to drop Mark's contention that the testimony was false. The varied views within Second Temple Judaism over whether the eschatological Temple would be a physical structure or a heavenly/universal sanctuary may make the presence of ἄλλον highly significant: if the connotation of ἄλλον is

that Stephen's speech 'is an attack, not upon the Temple itself but upon an attitude which assigned permanence and finality to it'. Cf. R. Pesch, *Die Apostelgeschichte (Apg 1–12)* (EKKNT; Zürich: Benziger Verlag, 1986), pp. 256–7.

[126]Dunn, *Partings*, p. 69. [127]See e.g. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, vol. III, p. 526.

[128]Hooker, 'Traditions', 12. Cf. C. A. Evans, 'Jesus and the "Cave of Robbers": Towards a Jewish Context for the Temple Action', *Jesus and His Contemporaries: Comparative Studies* (AGJU; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), p. 363.

[129]Brown, *Death*, p. 435.

[130]Even in the exhaustive analysis of Brown, ibid., pp. 434–60.

that which it bore consistently in the classical period and frequently in the New Testament – 'another of the same kind'[131] – its inclusion in the 'false' testimony reported by Mark may suggest that Jesus claimed that he would destroy the Temple and rebuild another Temple *of the same kind* in its place, that is, another physical Temple. Mark takes this assumption to be false either because he thinks it definitely not to be Jesus' expectation or because he believes that the assumption of a physical Temple in Jerusalem was not a *necessary* implication of Jesus' claim to build a Temple 'not made with hands'.

E. P. Sanders has, of course, made a saying like Mark 14.58 central to his understanding of Jesus' Temple action. For Sanders, the saying indicates an expectation that God himself would shortly construct a physical, eschatological Temple in Jerusalem.[132] However, Sanders has simply assumed that if Jesus spoke of an eschatological Temple he necessarily meant a new, physical Temple in Jerusalem, an assumption which would appear to be unwarranted in view of the foregoing survey of Jewish expectations concerning the eschatological Temple. Sanders, of course, does not think Jesus envisaged 'a new temple built by stonemasons', doubtless because of the strength of the Jewish idea that God himself would build the eschatological Temple.[133] But his further comment that Jesus 'also did not expect a new temple "in the air"' is a far from fair assessment of the Jewish evidence surveyed above of a heavenly, eschatological Temple which was neither 'in the air' nor strictly physical.

It must be admitted that the more common belief was that the eschatological Temple would be a physical Temple. But contrary to Sanders, there is no evidence that such a material conception of the eschatological Temple was tied to expectations of the Second Temple's destruction. Rather, it seems that in some way the Second Temple would itself become the eschatological Temple through a divine renewal. The fact that the Hasmoneans could purify the Temple and yet await a coming renewal and dedication testifies to such an expectation. So too does the rebel attempt to bring the dimensions of the Second Temple into conformity with expectations of the eschatological Temple through the destruction of Antonia early in the Jewish War (*J.W.* 6.311). So too does 11QT inasmuch as the Temple it describes is an idealization closely paralleled by the Herodian Temple but exactly reproduced by the Temple that God himself will establish.

But a minority view which I have sketched above and which Sanders fails to take into account seems to conceive of the eschatological Temple

[131]This possibility is noted but not explored by Gundry, *Mark*, p. 900.
[132]E. P. Sanders, *Jesus*, pp. 71–6. [133]Ibid., p. 229.

quite differently: not as a physical structure already in substance mirrored by the standing Temple but as a heavenly Temple whose presence would be realized with the coming of the eschaton and the dissolution of distinctions between heaven and earth. Such an understanding is easily if not automatically suggested by the description of the eschatological Temple as 'a Temple not made with hands'. The close association between the phrase and descriptions of God's heavenly dwelling place as a Temple underscore the fact that Jesus' use of it could have readily triggered thoughts of an eschatological Temple of heavenly origin with dimensions which far excelled any physical structure located in Jerusalem. As for the Jewish texts which shared this perspective, the eschatological Temple *would not be* a Temple made with hands precisely because it was the sort of structure which *could not be* made with hands.

At this point it is well to bear in mind the effective history of Jesus' attitude concerning the Temple. If Jesus had no clear expectation of a material Temple in the eschaton, this would correspond precisely with what we see in the New Testament. The significance of this has been insufficiently grasped. If Jesus had held a definite expectation of a physical Temple in the eschaton, there is no reason why such an expectation would not have been evidenced in the New Testament. And yet it is not.[134] Moreover, in light of the way the saying of Mark 14.58 seems to tie destruction and building together we would, if anything, expect that at least some of the NT literature composed after the destruction of the Temple would anticipate the impending construction of the eschatological Temple with heightened intensity. And yet it does not. This, of course, need not imply that they did not maintain an unexpressed expectation of a new material Temple. But, it is not merely an argument from silence, for the NT writers are far from silent on the subject of the Temple. Still, the greater diversity of NT perspectives on the significance of the Temple in the new eschatological situation does not include an expectation of a future Temple. Similar comments apply to the Apostolic Fathers of the second century.[135]

[134]The sole apparent exception is 2 Thess. 2.4, but even if one arrives at the controverted conclusion that the temple of this text is a physical temple, this in no way suggests a positive expectation of a new or renewed Temple in the eschaton.

[135]*Barn*. 16.4 betrays awareness of a heightened Jewish expectation of an imminent rebuilding of the temple in cooperation with the Romans, but considers that the true (eschatological) Temple of God already exists within the heart of the believer (16.6–9). On *Barn*. 16.4 see especially J. Carleton Paget, *The Epistle of Barnabas: Outlook and Background* (WUNT; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1994), pp. 17–27. *1 Clem*. 23.5 cites Mal. 3.1 – 'the Lord will come suddenly into his temple' – in reference to the parousia but without indication as to how this Temple is conceived. Irenaeus seems to

Of course, it is often observed that the early Jewish Christians of Acts appear to maintain a close association with the Temple. It is presumed by many that this would have entailed continued participation in the Temple cult; that it was only with the emergence of the interpretation of Jesus' death as an atoning sacrifice that Jewish participation in the cult came to an end; and that this development was also responsible for the absence of any expectation of an eschatological Temple in the New Testament. Two things can be said. First, even if some early Christians continued to offer sacrifices (as seems likely), there is no reason to think that this practice was incompatible either with the belief that Jesus' death was an expiatory sacrifice or with the expectation of an eschatological Temple. *In view of the fact that only a relatively small portion of the cult was devoted to the expiation of sin, it is entirely conceivable that a Jewish Christian could have believed that Jesus' death obviated other forms of expiatory sacrifice and yet see no contradiction between this belief and continued participation in the rest of the cultic system.* This, it seems to me, is a plausible understanding of the phenomenon of ongoing participation in the Temple by early Christians.[136] Such an explanation only comes into focus when one rejects the widely held tacit assumption that the cult was essentially or even exclusively a cult of expiation. Thus, it was not until sacrifices came to be regarded in an undifferentiated way that all literal sacrifices were rejected in principle. The book of Hebrews may well have been the starting point for this (as would soon become common) perception of Christ's expiatory death as the end of *all* sacrifices,[137] though in Hebrews itself it is not so much the sacrificial system generally as it is the *expiatory* sacrifices of the Day of Atonement which come to fulfilment in Christ. It cannot be then that the development of the belief that Christ's death was a sacrifice accounts for the absence of any expectation of an eschatological Temple in the New Testament.

understand 2 Thess. 2.4 as referring to a physical Temple in Jerusalem in which Antichrist takes up residence for three and a half years but, as in 2 Thess. 2, does not indicate whether he maintains a positive expectation of a Temple in the eschaton. Elsewhere in Irenaeus, the Temple is heavenly (*Against Heresies* 4.18.6), the Christian's heart (5.6.2; 5.40), and a type of truth (4.27). For Justin, the Temple had never been necessary or even desirable but had been given to the Jewish people as a concession to keep them from idolatry (*Dial*. 22).

[136]The most striking and specific example of an early Christian engaging in sacrifice is Paul's provision of the plainly non-expiatory sacrifices that accompanied the completion of a vow by four Jewish Christians (Acts 21.23–6). Assuming the authenticity of the episode, it reveals the most stalwart defender of the exclusivity and finality of Christ's expiatory death within early Christianity freely offering non-expiatory sacrifices.

[137]See e.g. Justin, *Dial*. 22; Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 4.15–17. The *Epistle of Barnabas* and the *Gospel of the Ebionites* evince a more wholly negative attitude toward literal sacrifice as such, though this idea does not seem to originate in the New Testament.

Second, even if some Christians believed that Christ's death had fulfilled the sacrifices *in toto* and not just expiatory sacrifices in particular, there is no reason that such a belief would have eliminated the expectation of a physical Temple in the eschaton; in view of Mark 11.17, such Christians could have easily anticipated a Temple whose function was non-cultic. Yet there is no evidence that any first-century Christian did.

If the emergence of the interpretation of Jesus' death as an expiatory sacrifice is not an adequate explanation for the absence of an expectation of a physical Temple in the eschaton, what is? The simplest and best explanation is that Jesus himself had no such expectation, that he expected instead some kind of non-physical Temple. Of course, to argue that Jesus probably did not expect a physical Temple is not to specify the sort of non-physical Temple that Jesus did expect. And here the sources permit us to say nothing more. Again the effective history of Jesus' words provide confirmation that Jesus did not further specify the nature of the envisioned Temple: only in the absence of a firmly delineated tradition could the great diversity in the NT writers' spiritualization of the Temple have taken place.

6.5 Conclusion

I have argued that Jesus' stance toward the Temple is best understood in terms of an eschatological timetable according to which the time had arrived for the eschatological Temple to be fully functioning. The Temple had become a focus for mistaken confidence in God's protective presence and specious conceptions of national election. And for this reason, the Second Temple had failed to become the eschatological Temple. In this sense, Jesus' action must be understood as a symbolic pronouncement of judgement. This should not be taken to mean that Jesus was forced to conclude that the time for the eschatological fulfilment had been delayed. Rather, the reality of the time of fulfilment for Jesus was such that if the physical Second Temple was not functioning as the eschatological Temple, he himself would build a Temple of another kind, a non-physical Temple. If what Jesus meant in setting forth such a claim remains uncertain, Israel's sacred traditions were more than capable of supporting an expectation of a non-material eschatological Temple built by Israel's Messiah.

7

CONCLUSION

7.1 Summary

I have attempted to further the discussion of Jesus' eschatology by considering his aims in relation to several key elements within Second Temple Jewish restorationism. If Jesus held a partially realized eschatology, it is in principle unlikely that he would have done so in isolation from the concrete, this-worldly expectations of the eschaton which characterized Jewish eschatology in this period. In attempting to specify the degree to which Jesus' eschatology was realized, much scholarship in the last hundred years has assumed that if eschatological reality was present for Jesus it must have been abstract or spiritual. This study represents an advance over such approaches by considering Jesus' intentions in relation to central constitutional features of the eschaton within Jewish restorationism.

The use of Jewish expectations for the eschaton as a measure of the degree to which Jesus' eschatology was realized is complicated enormously if Jesus also announced a coming national judgement. Since the realization of Jewish eschatology was to take the form of national restoration, how can the announcement of national judgement be reconciled with the belief that Israel's restoration had already begun?

If the conclusions of chapters 2–3 are sound, Jesus did proclaim coming national judgement. The point emerges from a consideration of Jesus' use of Israel's sacred traditions, for it appears that Jesus not only drew on sacred traditions which had previously served a message of national judgement but also appropriated sacred traditions in a way that subverted widespread conceptions of national restoration. The most striking instance of the latter is seen in Jesus' response to the request for a sign. In the Second Temple period there was a variety of factors which for some could heighten an expectation of a near end. Thus, for instance, miraculous phenomena, when interpreted in light of a particular understanding of Scripture, could intensify such hopes. Yet these phenomena were not sufficient to command common assent. It does appear, however, that many

Jews believed that Israel's restoration would begin with another iteration of the definitive events which had led to Israel's original redemption and conquest of the Land. Indeed Scripture had associated restoration with such events. Furthermore, the 'sign prophets' of the first century are best understood as figures who promised to perform just such signs. I have argued that where Josephus specifies the sort of signs promised by these figures, the signs were invariably associated with the Conquest. It seems likely, then, that the sign demanded from Jesus was a sign of a certain sort, a sign which would not merely authenticate his message but actually begin to effect Israel's restoration. Jesus refused this, offering instead only the 'sign of Jonah' – a figure consistently associated in Jewish tradition with the announcement of unavoidable judgement: what Jonah was to the Ninevites, the Son of man would be to 'this generation'. The national focus of the sign offered by Jesus emerges not only in his contraposing it to the request for a sign which would effect national restoration but also in directing it against 'this generation'.

The polemic against 'this generation', examined in chapter 3, stems from the covenant curse texts of Deuteronomy. Despite the attempts of C. Tuckett and others to dissociate the motif from the projection of national judgement to which it is connected in Deuteronomy 28–32, I have argued that Jesus used the expression as a moral and salvation-historical designation of the nation poised for judgement, even if in certain contexts a secondary temporal connotation remains. This in no way implies a belief that every Jew past and present would be caught up in judgement, for it is possible to be a contemporary of an 'evil generation' without belonging to it.

Perhaps most indicative of a national dimension in Jesus' pronouncements of judgement is his use of two motifs – the vineyard and the eschatological banquet – which appear in two distinct streams of tradition. On the one hand, these motifs could serve Israel's hope of restoration. But they were also used negatively in contexts of national condemnation. This latter stream of tradition is taken up in Jesus' vineyard parables and parable of the great banquet, which may be read as part of Jesus' assessment of the nation. This is not to say that judgement is an express part of all of these parables; in the parables of the two sons and of the workers in the vineyard, the prospect of judgement remains implicit. But all of the parables address the meaning of Israel's election, an issue which traditions of national judgement had always raised.

In the wider context of Jesus' ministry the question of election was implicit in the controversy over his association with 'sinners', and three of the parables – the two sons, the workers in the vineyard, and the great

banquet – are related with reasonable clarity to Jesus' acceptance of 'sinners'. A fourth, the parable of the barren fig tree, functions as commentary on the use of such labels in the context of first-century Judaism. Though these labels seem not to have been used simply as designations for anyone outside one's own group, they gained their significance in the context of convictions about who did and did not belong to Israel. A number of Jewish texts indicate that such convictions were worked out through reflection on the nature of the repentance that would precede Israel's restoration. This eschatological repentance appears to have been widely understood as the adoption of a (sometimes quite specific) pattern of Torah-compliance appropriate to the eschaton. In this way, conceptions of the repentance leading to restoration defined perceptions of the shape of Israel in the eschaton.

To understand how this repentance functioned it is necessary to observe the tension between national and individual repentance; a number of Jewish texts indicate that repentance was possible for the apostate nation but not for apostate individuals, 'sinners'. E. P. Sanders errs fundamentally in his reading of texts which speak about the repentance of the apostate nation as if they were speaking about the repentance of apostate individuals. But if the quite different ways that national and individual apostasy were treated is observed, the reason for objections to Jesus' acceptance of 'sinners' becomes clear: 'sinners' were those who had overtly rejected the covenant, cutting themselves off from all possibility of participating in Israel's eschatological repentance; Jesus' association with them rankled precisely because it was seen as compromising the integrity of Israel's penitent preparation for eschatological restoration. Against this, Jesus asserted the absolute freedom of God to include even apostate individuals in the eschatological forgiveness of apostate Israel, to determine the shape of eschatological Israel through a new act of election. For Jesus, the nation's judgement brings Israel's election to an end. But precisely because the announcement of judgement carries with it the proclamation of a new act of election, the continuity of God's commitment to Israel is firm.

If Jesus drew on sacred traditions which challenged and subverted accepted conceptions of Israel's restoration, this is not to say that he made no positive use of restoration traditions. But neither did he re-present these traditions in wholly conventional ways. There was, for example, a common expectation that the constitutional shape of Israel in the eschaton would be determined by the re-establishment of the tribal league in the Land. In much of the tradition, this was to occur at the time of God's climactic action for Israel. But there is evidence that at least some

Jews associated this restoration with the return of Elijah *before* the Day of the Lord. I have argued that this temporal conflict stands behind the exchange between Jesus and his disciples in Mark 9.9–13. The disciples' question about Elijah coming 'first' is sensible given the ambiguity within the developing tradition which associated Elijah's return with both preliminary and climactic events and the fact that reference to the Son of man rising from the dead could connote either literal resurrection or national restoration. In agreement with at least one stream of tradition Jesus asserts that Israel's eschatological reconstitution was indeed associated with the return of Elijah but that this restoration by Elijah had already taken place through the ministry of John. In doing so, Jesus rejects that strand of the tradition which anticipated a re-establishment of the twelve tribes by the returning Elijah. For Jesus, such an expectation is impossible not least because of the Danielic tradition according to which God's people are to endure affliction just prior to the end; since Elijah is God's agent just prior to the end, he must necessarily be caught up in that end-time affliction, and his restoration of 'all things' must be understood in that light.

If Jesus believed John to have restored 'all things', we are led inexorably to the conclusion that Jesus believed John to have called forth a faithful and penitent remnant. Such a conclusion explains some of the more elevated statements about John which the Gospels have preserved against the *Tendenz*. It also allows us to construct a model for understanding not only the relationship between Jesus and John but also for understanding why Jesus' message is suffused with personal and transcendent elements: much as the Qumran community looked back to its constitution as the remnant of Israel while remaining open to the admission of new individual members, Jesus called individuals to join in the remnant called out by John. In Jesus' view, the eschatological reconstitution of Israel had already taken place through the creation by John of a penitent remnant. And on this remnant, and those individuals who join it, Jesus bestows the blessings which make it the eschatological remnant. Such a model corresponds to Jesus' claim to carry out a ministry of obduracy to 'all Israel' while imparting the mystery of the kingdom of God to a 'small flock'.

Another important Second Temple expectation for the eschaton was that restored Israel would be a pure people dwelling in a pure Land. The eschatological motivation for the adoption by many of purity practices not explicitly mandated in Scripture has been obscured in the work of both J. Neusner and E. P. Sanders. If Sanders is correct to dispute Neusner's influential assertion that the Pharisees attempted to eat their food in the same purity as required of priests in the Temple, Sanders' own explanation

of the phenomena – that they sought purity for its own sake as a vague way to signify godliness – is inadequate. I have argued against Sanders that the Pharisees and many Jews generally did attempt to eat common food that was clean but that the degree of cleanness required for common food was less than that required for holy food. The practice of handwashing before eating common food was driven by this concern and the belief that consumption communicated impurity more completely than contact: food eaten with unwashed hands would communicate to the whole body impurity sufficient to require immersion and sunset. I have argued that the pursuit of extra purity which stopped short of priestly purity was tied to the tension in Scripture between Israel's call to be holy and the consecration of a special holy class within Israel. Gradations of purity marked out boundaries on gradations of holiness, which is why the purity of Israel and the Land, though not the same as the purity of priests and the Temple, was closely related and analogous to it. Israel's vocation of holiness was signified by both the rectification of tolerated impurity and the avoidance of prohibited impurity, though grades of holiness were primarily marked by the former. A recent trend in studies of impurity, taken up in this study, has been to see that transgressive impurity was just as real as its bodily counterpart. Both could effect real defilement, though all agreed that transgressive impurity posed the greater threat to Israel, Temple and Land. I have shown that the intense concern to be the holy people of God stands behind the pursuit of purity in the first century, and that conceptions of the holiness of Israel, Temple and Land in the eschaton fuelled that pursuit. But if this pursuit was supported by traditions which emphasized the importance of purity, including bodily purity, there was nevertheless a minority tradition in which the holiness of the eschaton is so absolute that the need to mark out the distinction between holy and common with a purity gradation is lost.

I have shown that various sayings of Jesus indicate his belief that fundamental postulates of the purity code were irrelevant to the present eschatological situation. In the purity code of Torah an entire category of brazen sin generated impurity which was irremediable; in part at least, this is what made such sins unpardonable. Jesus declares this no longer to be so – a conviction worked out in his acceptance of 'sinners'. For Jesus, the language of uncleanness is characteristically associated with the demonic, suggesting that the line dividing pure and impure was the line between good and evil. There was thus little point to the redoubled effort to keep uncleanness out, since uncleanness had already penetrated 'this generation' to such an extent that, as for a house to which a fungus has returned, destruction was now required. I have argued that the controverted saying of Mark 7.15 is sensible within a dispute over handwashing. The significance

of the saying stems from the connection that had been made between handwashing and holiness. The pursuit of extra purity meant that, for many, Israel's holiness was expressed not simply through the rectification of impurity but through the preservation of purity. By contrast, Jesus asserts that it is the evil within and not food eaten with unwashed hands which takes one's holiness away. Perhaps most jarring to first-century Jews who valued preservation of purity as preparation for restoration would have been Jesus' parable of the good Samaritan. The parable may have been intended as a subtly mocking caricature of a priest and a Levite who, when faced with *halakhic* ambiguity, chose not to show neighbourly love when doing so entailed even a chance of defilement. Instead neighbourly love is shown by a Samaritan who would have been regarded as not only perpetually but irremediably unclean. Moreover, the Samaritan presence in the Land was a gaping fissure in the territorial integrity of Israel and their defilement of the Land an obstacle to Israel's restoration. These widespread convictions notwithstanding, Jesus declares that it is the Samaritan and not those who most rigorously preserve purity who stand approved by God. Such a stance hardly comports with a strong belief in the restoration of the twelve tribes to a pure Land. But it is entirely sensible if, according to a minority stream of Israel's sacred traditions, Jesus conceived of the holiness of the eschaton and eschatological Israel in a way that emptied bodily impurity of its significance.

Sacred traditions concerning the eschatological Temple were likewise far from uniform. Against the common assumption that this Temple would be a structure similar to or even continuous with the Herodian Temple, a substantial body of evidence describes the Temple of the eschaton in terms which no physical Temple could accommodate. Such conceptions were sometimes associated with the long-standing belief that the ideal Temple was the dwelling place of God in heaven and were easily supported by the belief that God himself would be the builder of the Temple. Such a belief did not exclude the conviction that a messianic figure would build the Temple – an idea which I have shown to be earlier and more common than many have allowed. Another feature of Jewish expectations regarding the eschatological Temple was the expectation that Gentiles would share in its worship. However, part of the tradition strongly asserted that foreigners would be excluded from the eschatological sanctuary. I have argued that the (probably controversial) oddity of a low wall in the middle of the outer court resulted at least in part from the attempt to accommodate both parts of the tradition and to bring the standing Temple into conformity with the eschatological ideal.

Against a diversity of proposed explanations, Jesus' action in the Temple is best understood not as an attack on one aspect of the Temple's

function (e.g. expiation of sin) or on a specific aspect of Temple praxis (whether its corruption or *halakhic* shortcomings); rather, the action was directed against the operation of the Temple as a whole, an understanding confirmed by Jesus' striking juxtaposition of a citation related to national judgement (Jer. 7.11) with another associated with national restoration (Isa. 56.7). With the former, Jesus explicates his action as a denial of the Temple's capacity to be a guarantee of national protection, election and restoration. The nation was heading for judgement, a fact unaltered and even obscured by the smooth, uninterrupted operation of the Temple. With Isaiah 56.7, Jesus indicts the Temple for failing already to be the eschatological Temple. If, by permitting Gentiles in the outer court, an attempt had been made to conform Temple polity to expectations of the eschatological Temple, the Temple was nevertheless not what it should already have been: a focal point for the eschatological ingathering of the nations. Jesus' action is thus readily grasped as an enactment – a citation could have been misconstrued – of the expectation in Zechariah 14.21 that no traders would be present in the eschatological Temple. By symbolically expelling the Temple commerce Jesus declared that the Temple was not, and therefore would not be, the Temple of the eschaton. Such an understanding is supported by two closely related incidents. Jesus' cursing of the fig tree for its failure to have figs out of season makes sense against the expectation of perpetual fruitfulness in the eschaton; the fig tree, like the Temple, is condemned for failing to manifest the conditions of the eschaton. Jesus' objection to the Temple tax may be founded not so much on the belief that the tax had always been wrong as on the conviction that the eschatological king would not require his children to support the Temple of the eschaton through the payment of a tax. If, then, the Second Temple had failed to become the eschatological Temple, Jesus in no way allows that the appearance of this central constitutional feature of the eschaton be delayed any longer. He thus predicts that he will himself be the agent for the construction of a Temple 'not made with hands'. If it remains unclear what specifically Jesus thought this Temple would be, there was ample support in Israel's sacred traditions for the expectation of a non-material Temple built by Israel's Messiah.

7.2 Implications for the study of the historical Jesus

This study has confirmed the perception of much recent scholarship that Jesus was a prophet of Israel's restoration. However, I have also shown that an expectation of a distinctively national judgement played a central role in Jesus' thought. Many others have emphasized the centrality

of judgement within Jesus' message; a few recent scholars have even acknowledged that Jesus' words of judgement were in some sense directed against the nation. However, it has not been adequately recognized how the expectation of national judgement put Jesus at odds with Jewish restorationism. This is especially evident in Jesus' use of traditions which had served an expectation of national restoration to pronounce coming national judgement.

This leads to a second implication for current historical Jesus research. It is commonly assumed that Jesus' expectations reflected a relatively conventional appropriation of Jewish restorationism. One recent study suggests that Jesus' eschatology differed from that of many other Jews only inasmuch as he changed the timetable from 'soon' to 'now'.[1] However, the evidence that Jesus, like many prophets before him, anticipated an approaching national judgement makes it quite unlikely that he took up without alteration the central elements of Jewish restorationism, particularly given Jesus' propensity to transfer terms and images which often served the hope of restoration to a context of judgement.

Previous prophets of national judgement had anticipated that Israel's restoration would follow judgement. It might, therefore, be expected that the announcement of national judgement would carry with it a message that restoration had been postponed by the necessity of further purgation. However, this does not appear to be the case with Jesus; his announcement of national judgement in no way meant that Israel's restoration had been pushed into the future. Indeed, it appears that for Jesus, Israel's restoration was neither a hope to be realized after judgement nor simply an expectation of the near future. Rather, Jesus drew on alternative traditions to support his belief that even constitutional features of the eschaton – the shape of eschatological Israel, the purity of God's people, and even the Temple of the eschaton – were already coming into existence.

This conclusion has particular significance for the wider question posed at the beginning of this study, for it indicates that Jesus' eschatology was substantially though not completely realized; for Jesus, Israel's restoration did not remain a wholly future event. Of course, the idea that Jesus' eschatology was at least partially realized is not new. But it has rarely been argued in relation to the *realia* of the predominantly this-worldly expectations of Jewish restorationism.

The conclusion that Jesus' message of restoration embraced central constitutional features of Israel's society also suggests that the current

[1] Paula Fredriksen, *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews: A Jewish Life and the Emergence of Christianity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000).

divide between those who cast Jesus as a social revolutionary and those who regard him as an eschatological prophet is misleading. The vision of Israel's restoration was fundamentally a social vision. But the social dimension of this vision was not restricted to community renewal or a transformation of social values, as some have suggested, but extended even to central constitutional elements of Jewish society. And Jesus' message was not simply about the way in which a comprehensive vision of Israel in the future should affect the nature of life in the present. It was about the way in which this comprehensive vision of society was already being realized.

That Jesus announced a restoration which had both clear connections to the restoration anticipated by many of his contemporaries as well as marked differences from it has significance for the larger question of Jesus' relationship to Judaism. The Judaism of Jesus' day is neither an unyielding constraint nor simply background for a description of a Jesus who did not fit within Judaism. Judaism was shaped by sacred traditions, but they were *developing* traditions. If Jesus' reappropriation of Israel's traditions steered the developing tradition on a course other than that taken by many of his Jewish contemporaries, it is not for that any less a *Jewish* course.

Finally, this study contributes to the understanding of Jesus' relationship with early Christianity. Many scholars no longer posit as sharp a disjunction between Jesus and the early church as was once common. But in so far as Jesus is portrayed as one who participated fully in the form of restorationism held by many of his contemporaries, substantial discontinuity remains. By contrast, if Jesus conceived of Israel's restoration in the way that I have suggested, strong continuities between Jesus and early Christianity emerge in their respective handling of central features of Jewish eschatology such as election, purity, Land and Temple. However, any suggestion of continuity between Jesus and early Christianity must account for the diversity which the movement reflected from its earliest stages. I have hinted at ways in which Jesus' views may have led to the diversity of opinions regarding the Temple and purity we find within the early church. If Jesus' development of sacred traditions ruled out certain trajectories, it by no means eliminated all ambiguity. Certainly these issues merit further attention, but enough has been said to indicate that the situation which obtained in the early church can be located on a trajectory which goes directly back to a thoroughly Jewish Jesus. If, as Sanders and others suggest, Jesus subscribed fully to the central elements of Jewish restorationism, why is there so little evidence for these expectations in the early church? We would not expect Jewish restorationism to have

been taken up within Gentile Christianity in a wholly unmodified way. Still, it is difficult to see why even the separation of Jews and Christians would have effected such a monumental shift in conceptions of life in the eschaton that so central an expectation as that of an eschatological Temple would have been transformed so completely. However, if Jesus' understanding of Israel's restoration was anything like I have suggested, it is possible to see how early Christianity as we now know it arose from Jesus' proclamation that the time for the restoration of Israel had come.

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