

Sophie's Voice:
An Ecumenical Conversation with Paul in the Context of
Judaic Angelology

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For Annie, John, and Peter: Do something that makes you this proud of yourself.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

A religious “truth” that has been used in the Christian tradition is the belief that Christianity is the fulfillment of Judaism, and that Judaism resulted in failure due to its refusal to accept Jesus Christ as the Savior. To examine and reconstruct this “truth” it is essential to examine its origin. In this sense, Paul’s letters are considered a significant resource because he directed his comments toward the Gentile Christians about the messianic and salvific qualities of Jesus Christ. Examining the validity of Christianity’s claims about the failure of Judaism based upon Paul’s convictions is an expansive study with many different angles and issues. Some of the most essential aspects of the debate concerning Jewish-Gentile relations are Paul’s ideas about the “chosen” and salvation, his use of Jesus in literal terms that had non-eschatological Judaic meanings, and the subsequent struggle to find a new theological relational construct for the two religions.

Three interpretations of Pauline theology reveal that it is difficult to explicitly determine Paul’s opinion concerning salvation in accordance with the new addition of Jesus Christ’s sacrifice, and subsequently Jewish-Gentile relations. Donald Hagner is a Christian apologetic who claims that the Jews had been rejected by God and replaced by the Gentile believers in Christ as the “chosen” people.¹ Mark Nanos is a Jewish apologetic who argues, alternatively, that because the Jews were God’s “chosen” people, Paul was preaching to the “Jew first and also to the Greek,” meaning that it was Paul’s intention to “save” the new Gentiles by combining them into a faith system that was already promised salvation.² John Gager’s argument is a compromise between Hagner’s

¹ Donald Hagner “Re-Inventing St. Paul: Was the Apostle to the Gentiles the Father of Christian Anti-Judaism?” in Wright, Benjamin, ed., *A Multiform Heritage: Studies on Early Judaism and Christianity in Honor of Robert A. Kraft* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 151.

² Mark Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans: The Jewish Context of Paul’s Letter*, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 22.

already promised salvation.² John Gager's argument is a compromise between Hagner's and Nanos'. Gager claims that Paul's comments toward Jews and the Law may have been negative because they were directed toward Paul's Gentile followers, but these negative convictions were not to be universally applied to the Jewish faith. The Law was still a valid system of faith for the Jews, but not for the Gentiles.³

Significant portions of the interpreters' claims rely on Paul's idea of Jesus' messianic status. Paul used the term "Christos," and "Son of Man," but these terms did not necessarily imply that Jesus was the universal Messiah. An examination of historical Jewish texts reveal that the Judaic terms of "messiah" and "Son of Man" had been used in a different sense concerning divinity and salvation. Furthermore, the Judaic expectations of a messiah differed greatly than that which Paul claimed Jesus fulfilled. Paul's incorporation of Jesus into the Creation story and his characterization of Jesus as fulfilling a primary role on Judgment Day were both roles attributed to the Judaic personification of Wisdom.

A re-evaluation of Pauline interpreters' claims is necessary to determine their validity, considering these historical literary syntheses. Applying the historical use of these terms to the analysis of Pauline scholarship will show that the claims of Hagner, Nanos, and Gager must be reconsidered. Moreover, applying historical criticism to Pauline scholarship may assist in providing a basis for further ecumenical study. Because Christianity and Judaism were derived from the same Old Testament texts, the terms used to describe the roles and divinity of Jesus is a relevant source of interfaith dialogue and scholarship.

² Mark Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans: The Jewish Context of Paul's Letter*, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 22.

³ John Gager, "Re-Inventing St. Paul: Was the Apostle to the Gentiles the Father of Christian Anti-Judaism?" In *A Multifarious Heritage: Studies on Early Judaism and Christianity in Honor of Robert A. Kraft*, edited by Benjamin Wright. (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 61.

A scholarly examination of the use of Messiah and Son of God can be applied to a wider perspective and a practical, religion-related based level. Ecumenical treatment and discussion of classic texts like Pauline letters provides a common matrix by which to function. The relationship between Judaism and Christianity has spurred a discussion concerning Christian-Jewish relations that introduces a new way of connecting the two religions without placing theological or eschatological superiority on one or the other.

The non-salvific nature of the Judaic terms on which key definitions of Jesus were based can be applied to Pauline interpretations to judge these interpretations' historical validity. Furthermore, this discovery may assist in evaluating ways to include Paul in current theological and interfaith discussions that recognize the productive nature of diverse theologies and histories.

CHAPTER II

Paul's "Chosen": Three Interpretations

The origins of Christianity can be attributed in part to Paul's letters; many Christians use his theology as justification for the validity of their faith as well as the failure of the Jewish tradition, despite the fact that Paul considered himself a faithful Jew. Paul's theology is an obvious place to start when examining how he perceived salvation with regard to Judaic-Gentile relations. Paul's letters contains some of the first written theologies proceeding the death of Christ and provide insight regarding Jesus' role, according to his first followers. Due to the ambiguous and contradictory nature of most of the letters, examining Paul results in many different interpretations of his arguments.

For a passage used to justify one interpretation of Paul, there is often a passage that could support the interpretation's antithesis. John Gager points out in his essay, "Re-Inventing St. Paul," that due to Paul's contradictory statements, his letters are malleable and can be translated in either anti-Israel or pro-Israel terms.⁴ For instance, Rom. 3:1 states "What is the advantage of the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? Much in every way," while Gal. 6:15 says, "For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation." Put together, these statements imply both that circumcision has great value but simultaneously counts for nothing. According to Rom. 7:12, "Thus the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good," while Gal. 3:10 says, "For all those who rely on the works of the law are under a curse" and Gal. 3:11 says, "Now it is evident that no man is justified before God by the law." Combined, they both say that the law is holy but that its followers are under a curse and that the law cannot justify them before God. Romans 11:26 says that "All Israel will be saved," but

⁴ John Gager, 51

Rom. 9:31 says, "Israel who pursued righteousness which is based on the law did not succeed in fulfilling the law," and Rom. 11:28 says, "As regards the Gospel, they are enemies of God, for your sake." This means that, in Paul's words, all of Israel will be saved, but that they are enemies of God and have not fulfilled their own law.⁵ Taking Paul out of context or relying on individual passages for the essence of Paul's message is dangerous and misleading. In many cases, the expansions of Paul's arguments that are necessary to argue an interpretation sacrifice the validity of the cohesive messages within Romans and Galatians.⁶ These are messages that have continuity within Paul's letters, and which are not seen as specific to a certain circumstance. Romans contains a large amount of cohesive material, while Galatians is seen as highly specific.

Romans and Galatians: An Example of Exegetical Risk

Romans has been considered by many scholars a summary of Paul's argument, based upon clues that it was not written in response to a particular church-related problem or an attack from his opponents.⁷ Therefore, the tone of Romans may disclose more of Paul's coherent arguments.⁸ Alternatively, scholars believe that Galatians is a reaction to

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ There is a significant risk in irresponsibly interpreting the analyses of Paul. Therefore, two major coherent statements of Paul are used to judge these interpreters: a) that Paul believed that those who had faith were righteous, and b) Paul recognized that the Law had several functions that weren't based solely upon the Judaic path to righteousness. By evaluating the negations of these claims within the interpretations, it can be shown that contingent statements can be destructive to Paul's cohesive doctrine.

⁷ J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 59. Beker agrees that Paul seems to be free from expressing many provoked statements within Romans. Beker concedes, however, that Romans contains enough discrepancies regarding tone and attitude of Paul's greeting to believe that it was written as a whole letter. This does not prevent Beker from using Romans as a letter with minimal occasion; he does not, however, go so far as to agree with Philip Melancthon's opinion that Romans is the "*compendium doctrinae Christianae*" – a compendium of doctrine (from Philip Melancthon, "Römerbrief-Kommentar, 1532," in *Melancthons Werke in Auswahl* 5.).

⁸ Beker claims there are two very distinct patterns of Paul's messages: those written with contingency and those written with coherence. (Beker, 11) What this means is that some aspects of Paul's messages are directed to address a specific problem in the early Gentile-Christian communities, and that some aspects of Paul's messages retain cohesiveness throughout his letters. (Beker, 24) Therefore, Paul's expressions that

Judaizers, who tried to convince the Gentile-Christian community how important it was that they incorporate themselves into the Jewish tradition.⁹ Paul seems defensive and radical in his argument,¹⁰ especially in his attitudes toward the Law.¹¹

According to J. Christiaan Beker, the underlying principle of Romans is "The one who is righteous shall live by faith." (1:17)¹² Romans addresses first the two groups who are righteous through faith. The "old aeon" (Judaism) is addressed in Rom. 1:18-3:20 and the "new aeon" (Christianity) is addressed in Rom. 3:21-4:25. The concluding statement of Paul's message is addressed in Rom. 5:1-8:39. Those who "shall live" are free from wrath (5:1-11), sin (6:1-23), the law (7:1-25), and death (8:1-39).¹³

Galatians' defensive tone and message implies that Paul's theme is more radical than that of Romans. The Judaizers, advocates of the Jewish tradition for Gentiles, claimed that Paul's theology was faulty and only an attempt to gain popularity by discouraging the rigors of the Law. Paul attempts to make their arguments into the "antigospel" by convincing them that Christ has set them free from the domain of the Law. He justifies this by saying that Christ is the culmination of Abraham's promise from God.¹⁴ Hans Joachim Schoeps claims, "Paul is in fact convinced that he has never seceded from Judaism, since the Christian confession means for him the completion of

have continuity throughout the letters are the appropriate ones on which to form some kind of basis for Paul's attitude toward the Law and Gentile-Jewish relations. (Beker, 28) Examining the motives and historical backgrounds of the letters provide a preliminary means of putting Paul's intentions into context.

⁹ Beker 42

¹⁰ Ibid, 45

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid, 65. Beker actually uses a different translation: "He who is righteous by faith shall live," therefore making Nygren's outline of Romans more of an if-then statement. Instead of analyzing the differences between the statements, "he who is righteous by faith shall live" and "the one who is righteous shall live by faith," it will be assumed that they are essentially the same conditional statement.

¹³ Ibid, 67. The idea and summary is taken from Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), p. 7.

¹⁴ Ibid, 48.

the Jewish faith.”¹⁵ This has numerous practical theological implications for Christian-Jewish relations; Beker says, “The crisis situation in Galatia compels Paul to an argument of principle: faith versus works of the law, freedom versus slavery.”¹⁶ Paul is still convinced that the Torah was an essential part of salvation history. Although these convictions are part of the radical rhetoric of Galatians, Paul’s paradoxical views regarding the Torah and the Jews reveals the original question: how he saw the relationship between the Gentiles and Judaism.¹⁷

One of the main themes of Paul’s preaching is that both Gentiles and Jews can obtain righteousness through faith due to the sacrifice of Christ. Romans 1:16 says, “it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” In Galatians, Paul repeats his conviction that Jews are bound to their covenant and their promise: “Once again I testify to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obliged to obey the entire law.” (5:3) Paul thought that the new way of righteousness was more valid than the other; in the next verse, he says “you who want to be justified by the law have cut yourselves off from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.” (5:4)

This does not mean that he believed that Jews who followed the Jewish Law were exempt from salvation, but that dependence on the Law for grace was invalid. When Paul speaks of the Jews in Rom. 9:3, he says, “They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises.”

¹⁵ Ibid. From Hans Joachim Schoeps’ book, *Paul*, 237.

¹⁶ Ibid, 57.

¹⁷ This does not take into account the status of the Jewish-Christians or the God-fearers. For the purposes of this paper it will be assumed that each interpreter’s essays see Paul as addressing different audiences, and so no fair, blanket statement about Paul’s audiences should be made out of respect for the interpreter’s argument. Although this excludes the fate of the Jewish-Christians and God-fearers, for the purposes of argument between early Christian values and Judaism, their ability for flexible worship should be applauded and then sacrificed to the quest for the specific discernment of the paper.

However, in Rom. 9:6 he states, "not all Israelites truly belong to Israel." Jews who depended on faith for righteousness were saved; it was part of God's promise.

Examining three different interpretations of salvation based on Pauline scholarship reveals that Christian-Jewish relations vary drastically according to the scholar. Donald Hagner, Mark Nanos, and John Gager's interpretations are representative of radically different readings of Paul from the standpoint of a Christian apologetic, a Jewish apologetic, and a Dual Covenantist.

Donald Hagner: Christian Apologetic

Donald Hagner argues the closest to what a historically traditional Christian viewpoint. Hagner's article, titled, "Paul's Quarrel with Judaism," refutes the claims of recent writers that Paul was actually on friendly terms with the Jews. Hagner uses E.P. Sander's characterization of Judaism as "covenantal nomism," which means that ideally the Law, for Jews, is placed within the boundaries of "election and covenant."¹⁸

According to covenantal nomism, because the status of grace had already been achieved, the Jews should practice the Law not to establish righteousness, but out of obedience.¹⁹

Sanders' explanation of covenantal nomism²⁰ augments the claim that Jews could follow

¹⁸ Hagner, 138. Sander's interpretation of Judaism using faith as the foundations of their Law-abidance comes from his book, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A comparison of Patterns of Religions* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977). The thrust of his argument can be summarized by Veronica Koperski (from Veronica Koperski, *What Are They Saying About Paul and the Law?* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2001)). Based upon Sanders' reading of Philippians 3:9, Paul uses the righteousness terminology in two different senses. Koperski defines the essence of Sanders' argument: "In view of [Paul's recognition of two senses of righteousness terminology], Sanders asserts, all the passages in Romans and Galatians that state that righteousness does not come by works of the Law should be interpreted to mean that the *right kind of righteousness* cannot come by works of the Law, but comes only through Christ. Sanders maintains that righteousness by faith ultimately amounts to participation in Christ, though Paul 'does not use the righteousness terminology with *any one* meaning.'" (Koperski 22, based upon Sanders' *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, pp. 495-506.) Therefore, the obedience of the Law and basing righteousness upon faith are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Covenantal nomism is taken from Sanders. Covenantal nomism is the structure for salvation. Its main ideas are: God has chosen Israel and given the law, which Jews are required to obey in return for God's

the Torah yet accept faith as the basis of their use of the Law.²¹ Hagner claims that Paul found this unnecessary.²² Taking this statement one step further, Hagner argues that Paul's harsh critique of Judaism was based upon the idea that Judaism "has always been a religion whose strength lies more in praxis than in theory (or theology)."²³ Paul believed in a religion based primarily upon faith and not on practice. Because of Judaism's reliance on the Law for spiritual fulfillment, Hagner explicitly argues that the Christians were the new, chosen people of God.²⁴ Paul implied that the two "faiths" were separated from the start based upon the new, saving characteristics of Christ and the inability of the Jews to give up the Law.²⁵

For proof of Paul's conviction that Jews were not the "chosen" people anymore, Hagner uses Romans: "no human being will be justified in his sight by deeds prescribed by the laws, for through the law comes knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20) and "if it is the adherents of the law who are the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void" (Rom. 3:28). Although some references to the Law show Paul's attachment to Judaism, Hagner maintains that Paul is skeptical of the Jewish tradition. Galatians 3 admonishes the Jews who do not recognize that Christ saves them because they focus on legalism as the basis of their faith. Paul provides no alternative to Jesus' grace as salvation; Rom. 3:22-24 states: "For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of

promise to maintain the election. God rewards obedience and punishes transgression. Obeying the law provides means of atonement, which results in the maintenance and re-establishment of the covenantal relationship. Those who are included in the covenant through obedience, atonement and God's mercy will achieve salvation.

²¹ This begs the question: Did Paul's disregard of the Law as a redemptive agent also promote the disregard of the Jewish faith as it was? The intricacies of Paul's struggle with the validity of the law have an important place within this dialogue and debate. Due to the expansiveness of the issue, and the lesser degree of proximity it claims in relation to Paul's use of angelic terms, it will not be as much of a biblical-evidence focus in this paper with the understanding that no debate about Christian-Judaic relations in the context of Paul could exclude the issue of the Torah and the Law.

²² Hagner, 138.

²³ Ibid, 139.

²⁴ Ibid, 149.

²⁵ Ibid.

God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

Hagner seems to accept Paul’s recognition of covenantal nominism but also simultaneously maintains the conviction that the Jewish faith is composed entirely of works and the Law.²⁶ Hagner resolves this by claiming that *in theory*, the Jewish faith relied on covenantal nominism, but in practice the Jews found themselves justifying their righteousness through the Law.²⁷ Hagner’s Paul has distanced himself from the idea that the Jewish faith recognizes covenantal nominism. Because the Jews were not recognizing the covenantal nominism of their faith, they had strayed from the path of righteousness. Hagner says, “anti-Judaism is part and parcel of Paul’s theological position. Indeed, it is intrinsic to his Christianity...it is also evident in his view of contemporary Israel as being in slavery, blindness, and disobedience.”²⁸ In Hagner’s eyes, Christ’s sacrifice was limited to the followers of Paul and had no bearing on those who followed the Law.²⁹

According to Hagner, Paul inevitably believed the Jews were going to be saved.³⁰ He says, “The salvation of all Israel is instead a part of the extravagance of God, an example of grace that continually surprises.”³¹ “The Deliverer” of Israel for Paul is Jesus Christ; this is evident in Rom. 11:26: “and so all Israel will be saved; as it is written, ‘Out of Zion will come the Deliverer; he will banish ungodliness from Jacob.’” For Paul to deny the faithfulness of God to his promises would be to deny the holiness of God’s

²⁶ Hagner 139.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid, 149.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ probably because it goes against his idea that Paul was anti-Judaic.

³¹ Hagner, 146.

original word. In Rom. 11:28-19, Paul writes, “but as regards the election they are beloved, for the sake of their ancestors; for the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable.” Hagner thinks that God’s promises to Israel were problematic in Paul’s theological argument, and Hagner never resolves the question of how Jews would be saved, but agrees that “the salvation of the world comes through the Jews. Israel can receive its rightful honor and anti-semitism can be avoided without distorting Paul’s theology.”³²

Hagner subscribes to the rejection-replacement theory, according to which the Jews’ failure to accept Jesus as the Messiah negates their role as the “chosen.” This status went to the Gentiles, who were the fulfillment of Judaism and salvation history.³³ However, Paul does not characterize Israel as rejected by God. In Rom. 11:1 Paul says, “I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means,” and clarifies his position later in Rom. 11:23 to say, “And even those of Israel, if they do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again.” To Hagner, Paul recognized there were many Jews who were not including faith as the underlying principle for their practice of the Torah that all of them were. Hagner never recognizes those that may be basing their abidance of the Law on faith first; Nanos’ argues that this does not matter and that the Jews still maintained their “chosen” status before God.

Mark Nanos: Jewish Apologetic

Mark Nanos, in his book, *The Mystery of Romans*, offers a view that is almost entirely opposite Hagner’s. He argues that Paul wrote a letter to the Romans to “remind” the early church in Rome (composed almost entirely of Gentiles who were associating

³² Hagner, 150.

³³ Ibid, 151.

with Jews under the authority of the synagogue) of the importance of their 'obedience of faith.'"³⁴ Paul encouraged the Gentiles to adopt the Jewish Law. Nanos says:

I do not mean to suggest that the doing of the Law was an "entrance requirement" for salvation, but rather, the application of the Law and Jewish customs to the lifestyles of those believing in Jesus as the Christ: for the Jew believing in Christ Jesus would continue to be a Jew and thus obey the Law, and the gentile believing in Christ Jesus would continue to be a gentile and thus not under the law; however, the gentile would now through Christ Jesus have a new relationship with Israel that made it necessary to respect the "rules" of behavior.³⁵

Paul encouraged these early Christians to incorporate their worship and beliefs within the Jewish tradition. Nanos makes the credible argument that the environment of Jews and Christians were closer than previous scholars of Paul had assumed.³⁶ Because the Jews were God's "chosen" people, Paul was preaching to the "Jew first and also to the Greek." It was Paul's intention to "save" the new Gentiles by integrating them into a faith system that was already promised salvation.³⁷

Nanos argues that the restoration of Israel did not necessarily require the acceptance of Jesus by the Jews.³⁸ He says, "When Jews glorified the One God of Israel they glorified the same God as the gentiles whom they were to enlighten with the knowledge that gentiles should *also* glorify the One God of Israel – for he is truly the One God of the whole world."³⁹ For any kind of religious doctrine to be valid, it must reach the Jews first and then the Greeks.⁴⁰ Regarding Romans, Nanos argues,

Paul makes it quite clear that not only are [the Christians] wrong [about their status as the "new chosen"], they are treading on sacred ground and jeopardizing their own inclusion in God's family. Rather than arrogance, their new position

³⁴ Nanos 34

³⁵ Nanos, 23.

³⁶ Ibid, 42.

³⁷ Ibid, 22.

³⁸ Ibid, 38.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 21.

ought to result in humility and service to the stumbling children of Israel, for the fate of the children of Israel is inextricably tied up with their own.⁴¹

Romans 11 can be used for proof of this: "The very purpose of [Paul's] apostleship to the gentiles is in the service of Israel's restoration."⁴² Paul's preaching was to the Jew first and also to the Greek, which means that Jews were responsible for extending the teaching of the Scripture and Christ's sacrifice to those not originally in the honored Abraham sect.⁴³

Nanos ignores Paul's dismay at Israel's noncommitment to Christ. Paul still thought of Israel as sacred group that had been appointed righteousness through the covenant. He says in Romans 11:28, "for regards to the election [Jews] are beloved, for the sake of their ancestors, for the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable." Paul also opined that those who relied on the justification of the Law were redeeming themselves wrongly that were outdated in light of Christ's redemption. Romans 10:4 says, "For Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes." Paul's acceptance of the use of the Law is based upon freedom from the Law by Christ's redemption. Perhaps the most important piece of Nanos' argument that can be taken is that Paul remains committed to the religious validity and superiority of Judaism. This sentiment, while not recognized by Hagner, is included in Gager's compromise between the two faiths that allow each to maintain a valid claim as being the "chosen."

John Gager: Dual Covenantism

John Gager, in an essay titled "Re-Inventing St. Paul: Was the Apostle to the Gentiles the Father of Christian Anti-Semitism?," argues that Paul's comments toward

⁴¹ Ibid, 22.

⁴² Ibid, 21.

⁴³ Nanos, 38.

Jews and the Law were indeed negative, but only in the respect that they were aimed at Paul's, and subsequently Jesus', Gentile followers.⁴⁴ Therefore, the Law was still necessary for the Jews, but for the Christians, Paul saw many tenets of the Law as unnecessary.⁴⁵ Paul saw the Jews and Christians as separated from the beginning, Gager maintains, and the fact that Paul was a convert did not mean that he was anti-Jew and had dismissed all aspects of the religion. "[Paul's] arguments against the validity of circumcision and the Mosaic covenant apply only to the status of the law for Gentiles within the Jesus-movement. They have no bearing whatsoever on their validity for Israel...Paul never speaks of Israel's redemption in terms of Christ."⁴⁶

Gager argues that Paul was preaching to the Gentiles within synagogues, and that this incited hostility from the Jews. Christians, according to Gager, have mistaken this as a sign that Paul was speaking to the new "True Israel," the Gentiles.⁴⁷ Paul says in Romans that laws apply to the Jews, but also says in Rom. 11:1: "I ask, then, has God rejected his people (Israel)? By no means!" Paul mentions the Gentiles', not Israel's, redemption with regard to Christ. Paul's only concern was the new status of the Gentiles and not the status of Israel.⁴⁸ "Paul never speaks of Gentiles (those whom we mistakenly call Christians) as replacing Israel or of God as having rejected Israel in favor of a new chosen people."⁴⁹

Gager ignores Paul's dismay at Israel's failure to accept Christ. Romans 9:6 says that "not all Israelites truly belong to Israel, and not all of Abraham's descendants are his true descendants." Again, Paul's sentiment in Rom. 10:4 says, "Christ is the end of the

⁴⁴ Gager, 61.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Gager, 61.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 58.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 61.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.” It would not make sense⁵⁰ for Paul, as a former Jew and as one who believed that the Jews were incorporated into the new grace of God by covenant, to argue that the Law’s altered validity should have no bearing on the Jews. Although Gager’s argument is faulty in this way, its dedication to the uniqueness of each tradition, the new Gentiles’ and Judaism, is a theme that is predominant throughout Paul’s works.

The examination of Hagner, Nanos, and Gager show that interpretations of Paul can vary greatly, even when drawing upon some of the same verses to validate their arguments. However, it can be surmised from the theories that Paul was basing the idea of salvation on the coming of Jesus Christ, who provided a salvific function for those whose faith was founded in him. Although Paul believed that Jesus saved his followers, the idea that Jesus was also the Judaic Messiah is not an automatic or responsible extension of this statement. Paul’s characterization and names for Jesus within his letters may indicate how he intended to clarify Jesus’ role with the two religions based upon their linguistic histories.

⁵⁰ although admittedly, with Paul, this term *must* be used in its most expansive sense

CHAPTER III

Historical and Literal Functions of Judaic Angelic Terms in Paul's Writings

Additional factors by which to judge the validity of Hagner, Nanos, and Gager may be found by combining theological and literary analysis of Paul's work with the origins of the descriptions he uses. The Jews could not be admonished for the rejection of Jesus if Jesus did not fit their definition of the "messiah." Similarly, the roles of "Son of God" and "Son of Man" do not necessarily support Jesus' divine position within the context of Judaic literary terms. Aside from the phrases "messiah" and "Son of God," only Paul's characterization of Jesus as personified Wisdom discloses Paul's acceptance of Christ's divinity by Judaic literary standards.

Because Christianity is accustomed to one figure fulfilling the roles of both "messiah" and "Son of God," the recognition that they were not always mutually assigned is critical to determine their use. The use of "son of Man" and "messiah," while significant, did not imply that these figures from the Old Testament were the awaited Judaic figures that would bring divine peace and love and create the quintessential state of Israel.⁵¹ Only Jesus' association with the characteristics of personified Wisdom facilitates inclusion in both the Creation story and in Judgment Day, both of which are clearly characteristics of Israel's God. If Paul adequately characterizes Jesus as divine, then the argument of the Christian apologetic gains credibility within the field of ancient Judaic terminology. This has not been the trend.

Scholars speculate that Dead Sea Scrolls commentaries on Old Testament books and other Jewish literature provided the basis for materials from ancient Judaic literature.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Some of this terms in this literature appears in the New Testament. The research on pre-Christian terms Paul used to describe Jesus is extensive, especially by Larry Hurtado. According to Hurtado, the New Testament uses language that refers to “exalted figures” in Judaism that has subsequent theological implications for Christianity. Recent exploration of the first-century development of christology has placed great emphasis on the intermediary figures used in Judaic literature. This is because the study of angelic literature might create a way to place Jesus within a Judaic monotheistic tradition. Perhaps these Judaic intermediary figures could help the way in which Jesus developed from an exalted human figure to his incorporation in God.

References to exalted figures and angels appear in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. According to Hurtado, we must “ask, not merely whether the New Testament presents Christ as an angel, but whether Jewish angelology may have assisted early Jewish Christians in coming to terms theologically with the exalted Christ.”⁵²

Hurtado’s examination of exalted patriarch reveals that the deifying of humans served as a justification for Israel that they were God’s “Chosen.” For God to have selected sacred men from out of humankind was evidence that they were the favored religion, and from their midst came instruments of holiness.⁵³ He also suggests that these once human figures “served for some Jews as assurance of the eschatological reward for which they themselves hoped.”⁵⁴ In Dan. 7:13-14 “the enthronement of the humanlike figure in heaven – an angelic being or a purely symbolic figure or an earthly Messiah – is clearly connected with the exaltation of the elect. In similar fashion it seems likely that

⁵² Larry W. Hurtado, *One God One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism*. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 74.

⁵³ Hurtado, 66.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

the installation of Moses or other patriarchs was seen as prefiguring, and giving assurance of, the ultimate vindication of the Jewish faithful.”⁵⁵

The sacred men historically selected as “messiah” and “Son of God” fulfilled a role distinctly unlike Jesus’, and the descriptions of one that would fulfill this role do not explicitly include divine status. Therefore, it is difficult to discuss the “failure” of the Jews to recognize Jesus as a “Savior” because of the wide gap in spiritual and practical expectations in Jewish and Gentile thought concerning definitions of “Son of God” and “messiah.”

Son of God

Scholar James D. G. Dunn claims that “at the time of Jesus ‘son of God’ was a way of characterizing someone who was thought to be commissioned by God or highly favored by God.”⁵⁶ In the Jewish scriptures the term “son of God” was used to identify Israel collectively (Ex 4.22; Jer. 31.9; Hos.11.1), in the plural to refer to angels (Gen. 6.2, 4; Job 1.6-12) or in the singular to a king (II Sam 7.14; Ps. 2.7; 89.26-7). Righteous men were also given the term (Sir. 4.10; Wisd. 2.13, 16, 18; *Pss. Solomon* 13.8). “Son of God” was also used in the Qumran texts in reference to the Davidic Messiah; the connection between the two terms can be seen in Mark 14:61 when the High Priest asks Jesus, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed?”⁵⁷ Wisdom of Solomon 2:13 says, “Let us lie in wait for the righteous man, because he is inconvenient to us and opposes our actions; he reproaches us for sins against the law, and accuses us of sins against our training. He professes to have knowledge of God, and calls himself a child of the Lord.”⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ James D. G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways: Between Christianity and Judaism and their Significance for the Character of Christianity*. (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1991), 171.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ This is taken from references in Isaiah 52:13-53:12, a text which has been traditionally used by Christians for the prophesy of Jesus’ divine messianic role.

This writing of this book is estimated between 250 B.C.E. and 50 C.E., in historical proximity to Jesus' life. There are two major figures in Judaic history that have typically fulfilled this role, and these are Enoch and Moses.

Moses and Enoch: Historically Exalted Figures

In *Jubilees*, written in the second century B.C.E., describes Enoch as the first man "to learn to write and to acquire knowledge and wisdom." (4:17) In *2 Enoch* (dated first or second century CE), he is credited with writing over 360 books. Two of these are mentioned in *Jubilees*, where he wrote a book about "the signs of heaven," and about a dream in which he saw everything until Judgment Day. In his glorified state, according to *Jubilees* 4:23-24, he is taken to the Garden of Eden, where he records all human deeds until Judgment Day and where his priestly duties include burning the incense of the sanctuary (4:25). This is based upon Genesis 5:24, "Enoch walked with God," and from this it was derived that "righteous Enoch" would record human deeds and act as a witness to human sins on Judgment Day.⁵⁹

Enoch is identified as the "Son of Man," or the "Chosen One" throughout *1 Enoch* (dated early second century BCE to 1-3 century CE). The book describes "his righteousness, familiarity with divine secrets, triumphant position (46:3), victory over the mighty of the earth and judgment of the wicked (46:4-8, 62:9, 63:11; 69:27-29), preordained status in God's plans (48:2-3; 6, 62:7), and salvific role on behalf of the elect (48:4-7, 62:14)." Due to these roles, and the names given to the same roles throughout the chapter, it can be reasonably concluded that Enoch is also referred to as the "Chosen

⁵⁹ Enoch may have been exalted to the role of the Metatron, although this reference is mostly referred to in *3 Enoch*, and this is speculated to have been written too late (fifth century C.E.) for Paul's use. However, Hurtado claims that the transformation of Enoch from learned man to Metatron may be derived from earlier Judaic deifications and therefore remains a valid example of the practice. (Hurtado, 55).

One” and as a “Messiah.” Enoch is not a figure that rivals God or becomes a second god, but assists God on Judgment Day when, “On that day the Chosen One will sit on the throne of Glory.”⁶⁰

Judaic scholar Wayne A. Meeks refers to Moses as “the most important figure in all Hellenistic Jewish apologetics.”⁶¹ He was chosen “out of all mankind” (*Sir.* 45:4, early second century B.C.E.) and saw God “face to Face” on Sinai (v. 5). Exodus describes Moses as a “god” to Aaron (4:16) and Pharaoh (7:1). In the *Testament of Moses*, he is “described as chosen and appointed ‘from the beginning of the world, to be the mediator of his covenant’ (1:14; cf. 3:12). Moses is also celebrated as ‘that sacred spirit, worthy of the Lord...the lord of the word...the divine prophet throughout the earth, the most perfect teacher in the world,’ the ‘advocate’ and ‘great messenger’ whose prayers on earth were Israel’s greatest security (11:16-19).”⁶²

Philo of Alexandria (50 B.C.E. to 50 C.E.) serves as a relevant resource for the Jewish apologetic examination of Moses as God’s chief agent. Philo refers to Exodus 7:1, where Moses is called “god” and claims that Moses entered “into the darkness where God was, that is into the unseen, invisible, incorporeal, and archetypal essence of existing things,” there beholding “what is hidden from the sight of mortal nature.” (1.158) In Deut. 5:31, after the Israelites are told to return to their tents, God commands Moses to “stand here by me,” therefore indicating that Moses served a special capacity and position that was superior to others’.

⁶⁰ It should be noted that Davidic kings were also alluded to as sitting on the throne, so this may not involve deification but a reference to the designation of that figure as superior to others in the eyes of God.

⁶¹ Wayne A. Meeks and Robert L. Wilken, *Jews and Christians in Antioch in the First Four Centuries of the Common Era*. (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press for the Society of Biblical Literature, 1978), 45.

⁶² Hurtado, 57.

"Son of Man"

Despite the fact that authentic Pauline letters⁶³ do not use the term "Son of Man," the examination of its use is relevant because it is also a role attributed to Enoch and Moses that is more specific in its historical use. Barnabas Lindars defines the Son of Man problem as "the great centre of debate in New Testament studies of the twentieth century."⁶⁴ This debate started with the works of Rudolf Bultmann, who divided the Son of Man sayings in the Judaic texts into three separate groups: one emphasizes on the future coming of the Son of Man as judge; one, his earthly activity; and one, his suffering.⁶⁵ Of these three, Bultmann accepted only the passages with the Son of Man as the coming judge in the future as valid.⁶⁶ He ignores all references to the earthly lives of Enoch and Moses, both whom are called "Son of Man" within the texts.

A number of biblical scholars later rejected Bultmann's theories for three different reasons. Norman Perrin questioned the previously researched pre-Christian apocalyptic messianic expectations on the basis of literary analysis.⁶⁷ Then the Qumran

⁶³ The letters that scholars attribute to Paul are Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon, according to the *HarperCollins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version*, edited by Wayne A. Meeks (New York: HarperCollins, 1989) 2192. The other books are suspected to be written by Paul's students and attributed to his name. "Son of Man" is largely used within the Gospels.

⁶⁴ Barnabas Lindars, *Jesus Son of Man: A Fresh Examination of the Son of Man Sayings in the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 1.

⁶⁵ Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (2 vols. In 1; New York: Scribner's, 1955) 30-31; *History of Synoptic Tradition* (2nd ed.; New York: Harper and Row, 1968) 120-130

⁶⁶ Bultmann claimed that the passages that dealt with Jesus' earthly activity were mistranslated from Aramaic to Greek, and that the predictions of suffering were *vaticinia ex eventu*. Bultman was then supported by works from F. Hahn, H.E. Todt, and R. H. Fuller. Their arguments can be found in F. Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology: Their History in Early Christianity* (London: Lutterworth, 1969); R. H. Fuller *The Foundations of New Testament Christology* (New York: Scribner's, 1965); H. E. Todt, *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965). They argue that the passages relating to the future, and specifically Dan 7:13 and *1 Enoch* 37-71, emphasized an expectation of a heavenly eschatological figure who would serve as judge at the end of history.

⁶⁷ Perrin's original publications were "Mark XIV, 62: The End Product of a Christian Peshier Tradition?" *NTS* 12 (1965-66) 150-155; "The Son of Man in Ancient Judaism and Primitive Christianity: A Suggestion," *BR* 11 (1966) 17-28; "The Creative Use of the Son of Man Traditions by Mark," *USQR* 23 (1967-68) 357-65; "The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition," *BR* 13 (1968) 3-25 (currently collected in

scrolls were published, but the Simultudes of Enoch, *1 Enoch* 37-71, were not included in the complete work. This made dating the Simultudes of Enoch (which most of the references to the Son of Man as an apocalyptic figure) necessary to determine whether or not their contents could have been used by New Testament writers.⁶⁸ One argument against Bultmann's original claim is the phrase's Semitic meaning.

Geza Vermes and Joseph A. Fitzmeyer debated the meaning of the phrase "son of man" in the early 1980's. Their debate centers on the Greek phrase *ho huios tou anthropou* and its two translations, "the man's son," and "the son of man." Because it is originally a Semitic phrase, a solution to its meaning relies upon its Semitic contents, according to the two scholars.⁶⁹ Both agree that the term "Son of Man" was not a messianic title in the MT, the Simultudes of Enoch, or in the language of first-century Palestine.⁷⁰ Its use in a pre-Christian context does not provide a cohesive background for its use to describe Jesus or within Synoptic tradition.⁷¹ Previously, the term had been assigned to significant figures in Judaic history; both Moses and Enoch have been identified as having "Son of Man" attributed to them. Both of these figures would serve a role at the time of Judgment, although they would not necessarily participate in ushering in the messianic age.

A Modern Pilgrimage in New Testament Christology [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974]). His work is also restated in *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967) 154-206

⁶⁸ John Donahue, "Recent Studies on the Origin of 'Son of Man' in the Gospels," *CBQ* 48.03, 484.

⁶⁹ For further resources and outlines of this debate see Donahue's article.

⁷⁰ Donahue, 487.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

Richard Longenecker: Jesus Mistakenly Titled

Richard Longenecker's analysis of first-century scholarly debate draws two conclusions.⁷² The first is "that there existed in pre-Christian Jewish thought a generally well-defined concept of a transcendent redeemer-figure, spoken of as the Son of Man, whose coming to earth as Judge would be a feature of the drama of the End Time." The second conclusion is "that the title Son of Man was not a self-designation of Jesus, but was applied to him by the early church through a series of misconceptions and became the foundational motif in the various early christologies; the few authentically dominical son-of-man sayings in the Gospels refer not to Jesus but to a future apocalyptic figure."⁷³

The first part of Longenecker's theory supports the claim that the use of "Son of Man" could indicate that Jesus was the awaited Jewish apocalyptic figure, if not serving as a messiah then taking part in the Judgment process. However, the second portion clearly refutes the claim that Jesus fulfilled this role. Simply, Jesus could not be assigned a role for an event that had not yet occurred. This theory supports a Jewish apologetics' reading of Paul; the Jews were correct in maintaining their own faith because Jesus was not the Messiah. Hagner's interpretation of Jesus as a redeeming "Son of God" cannot be accurate. Bauckham's claim is largely apologetic toward the Jews concerning "Son of God" as well.

Richard Bauckham: No Grey Area

Bauckham refutes the claim that the intermediary figures fit into a grey area of divinity.⁷⁴ He draws the line between "divine" and "not divine" by theorizing that

⁷² Richard Longenecker, *The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity*, (Naperville: Alec Allenson, 1970), 82.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Richard Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1998), 3.

YHWH was recognized by Second Temple Judaism as having created these intermediary figures, but that they in no way fulfilled the duties allocated to the Creator and the Ruler. The angelic figures and exalted patriarchs were only a small part of the religion, and created by God as servants of God's message.⁷⁵ The first feature that Bauckham identifies as proof that the angels did not participate in God's rule was the literary aversion to references of angels sitting on God's throne. Jewish writers could have used this reference to indicate power or a viceroy.⁷⁶ Secondly, the angels are rejected the idea of being worshipped themselves.⁷⁷ The one exception to these rules is referenced in Parables, where it is claimed that at the eschatological day of judgment Enoch, the Son of Man, will be placed by God on God's throne to exercise judgment on God's behalf, and will subsequently be worshipped.⁷⁸ This participation in divine sovereignty is only partial because Enoch does not take part in God's role as Creator or sovereignty until judgment day.⁷⁹ For Jesus to be divine, as Paul claims, he must fulfill a role that is more significant than that of Enoch and Moses.

The historical use of the terms "Son of Man" and "Son of God" creates an ideological problem, due to its inclusion in Paul's discussion concerning Jesus. If these terms are applied to Jesus in the Judaic context, then Jesus did not fulfill a role that was literally different than either Moses or Enoch, and therefore does not maintain divinity. It is easy to concur with Nanos and Gager in this sense because both terms were used in earlier Judaic terminology. The role "Son of God" referred to a man that was holy and of

⁷⁵ Ibid. 18

⁷⁶ Ibid, 19. Bauckham uses Tob. 12:15, *T. Abr.* A7:11; 8:1-4; 9:7-8; cf. also Luke 1:19

⁷⁷ Ibid. Bauckham has many primary source references that he refers to. See Tob. 12:16-22; *Apoch Zeph.* 6:11-15; 3 *Enoch* 16:1-5; *Cairo Genizah Hekhalot A/2*, 13-18, and in Christian literature Rev. 19:10; 22-8-9; *Ascen. Isa.* 7:18-23; 8:1-10; *Ap. Paul* [coptic ending]; *Apocryphal Gos. Matt.* 3:3; cf. also 2 *Enoch* 1:4-8; 3 *Enoch* 1:7; *Lad Jac.* 3:3-5; *Jos. Asen.* 14:9-12; 15:11-12.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 19-20. Enoch's role on Judgment Day appears in 1 *Enoch* 61:8; 62:2, 5, 69:27, 29; cf. 51:3. The worship of Enoch appears in 1 *Enoch* 46:5; 48:5; 62:6; 9.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

Israel and the term “Son of Man” was applied to those who had proven themselves valuable to Judaism and who would eventually assist God on the Day of Judgment. Neither Enoch nor Moses provided reason for a theological change in praxis.

Christos/Messiah

George MacRae, in his essay *Messiah and Gospel*,⁸⁰ emphasizes the importance of Paul’s letters within the study of Messianism. He claims that while other New Testament writers like Luke emphasize Jesus’ messiahship, “Paul himself shows no general reluctance to presume that his new gentile Christians are interested in and can understand even detailed references to the fulfillment of Jewish or Israelite traditions.”⁸¹

Paul uses the name *Christos* more than any other New Testament author, who uses it as Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus, (Jesus) Christ the Lord, the Lord (Jesus) Christ, and just plain Christ.⁸² The Hebrew term “Messiah” was translated to “Christ” in Greek; both meant “the Anointed One.”⁸³ Paul uses the term “Christ,” yet because of the term’s Greek meaning it must be questioned as to whether or not Paul is referring to the Judaic Messiah, or using the terms and name in a completely different sense.

Messiah, for Jews of the Old Testament, was a distinction that had been associated with Judaic leaders 39 times.⁸⁴ The word messiah means “to anoint,” and significant leaders such as kings, who had defended the Jewish faith, had been appointed the term by the authors of the Bible, if not by their subjects. Jews had been waiting for

⁸⁰ George MacRae, “Messiah and Gospel,” in Jacob Neusner, William S. Green, and Ernest Frerichs, eds. *Judaisms and their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 169.

⁸¹ Ibid, 170

⁸² Ibid, 171.

⁸³ The evolution of the term and its societal-religious position can be examined within J.H. Charlesworth’s essay, “From Messianology to Christology,” in in Jacob Neusner, William S. Green, and Ernest Frerichs, eds. *Judaisms and their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

⁸⁴ Rabbi Herbert Brockman, “Messianic Expectations.” (Speech presented at “Tuesday Scholars” at Gustavus Adolphus College, 3/12/2002).

something distinctly unlike that which Jesus was. According to Jewish scholar Rabbi Herbert Brockman, the Jews had been waiting for a leader, the Davidic Messiah, who would usher in an age of peace. The messianic age could be identified by 5 indicators: that the messiah would be a descendant of King David, Israel would gain sovereignty, Jews would be united from the four corners of the earth, the observation of the Judaic tradition would be restored, and peace would be obtained throughout the entire world.⁸⁵

George MacRae: Not Israel's Messiah

MacRae claims, "most of those who have examined the evidence have concluded that *Christos* is never or virtually never used by Paul as a title in the sense of Messiah, but only as a proper name."⁸⁶ Although "Christos" and "Messiah" are the same word in origin, the term "Christos" alone does not necessarily imply that Jesus meets the messianic expectations of Israel.

There is no question that Paul is aware of the Christian claim that Jesus is the Messiah, and this claim may have formed part of his original preaching, of which we have no direct record. The important point is that he does not discuss the issue in his writings, making no effort to prove or demonstrate the messianic identity of Jesus. For him the Christian message does not hinge, at least primarily, on the claim that Jesus was or is the Messiah. For this reason, in absence of evidence to the contrary, I do not agree with those scholars who argue that the Messiah issue must have been central for Paul and essential to his gospel. His gospel hinges on the saving death and resurrection of Christ.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Brockman.

⁸⁶ The exception to this, according to MacRae, lies within Romans 9:5, where Paul, while describing the blessings to Israel, says, "and from them is the Christ with respect to what is according to the flesh." (MacRae 171) This argument should be supplemented by the contrary position, that (according to J.H. Charlesworth, same book) the Hebrew term "Messiah" was translated to "Christ" in Greek, both meaning "the Anointed One." The evolution of the term and its societal-religious position can be examined within Charlesworth's essay, "From Messianology to Christology."

⁸⁷ MacRae, 172.

MacRae uses Corinth 15:22-28: "For as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming all those who belong to Christ." It is clear to him that Paul saw the resurrection of Christ as the beginning of God's raising of the dead. Paul uses the term, "first fruits," to designate this eschatological function, and in this way Paul could be seen as envisioning Christ as the catalyst for the final age, but without limiting this role and person to the "limited concept of Messiah as traditionally known."⁸⁸

Nonetheless, according to MacRae, Christ as the agent of eschatological salvation is utterly central to Paul's theological understanding. Christ liberates from the Law, sin, death, and dominating powers. Although this is a messianic function, it is not necessarily the role Israel's messiah. It is an interpretation of this function. MacRae concludes, "the Son of God is indeed the Messiah, but for Paul the operative categories go beyond classical messianic ideology. Only in this way can the gospel appeal to the Gentile world at large."⁸⁹ If Jesus' eschatological role is seen outside the parameters of the traditional Judaic Messiah's, at least within Paul's letters, then it cannot be claimed that the Jews denied Christ. After reading Hurtado it must be admitted that Israel recognized many messiahs before Jesus, and many after. However, Israel was expecting a Davidic Messiah that would fulfill the prophet's writings. Although presumably drawing on Judaic expectations as part of the messianic fulfillment that Paul saw Jesus providing, MacRae's analysis may be premature. Paul, in MacRae's view, didn't interpret Jesus' actions to fit the Jewish messiah's, he reinterpreted the messianic fulfillment to fit Jesus' actions.

⁸⁸ MacRae, 172.

⁸⁹ Ibid, 173.

Paul's use of the term "messiah" has implications upon the interpretations of his work. For Hagner, the adaptation of the word "messiah" for Jesus' role could be used as proof that Paul was attempting to reconstruct Judaism, eventually resulting in a new religion that regarded Jesus and Christianity as the fulfillment of old, irrelevant notions of Judaic messiahs. On the other hand, Nanos could use Paul's use of the term "messiah" as proof that Paul was working within a Judaic context, and Paul may have sought to redefine the terms with which the messiah was met by Judaism. Alternatively, Nanos could argue that because Jesus was not the Davidic Messiah, the Jews remained "the chosen." The use of the term "messiah" is problematic for Hagner's concept of dual covenantism. Paul saw Jesus' death as providing salvation and eschatological promise, whether or not Jesus was the Judaic Messiah. This paradox cannot be solved without looking to an additional portrayal of Jesus.

The use of "messiah" seems to have the same problems as that of "Son of God." What the Jews expected, Jesus did not offer. Additionally, neither "messiah" nor "Son of God" were terms that were used to describe Jesus' divinity which would allow him to serve the salvific role that Paul preached. For Jesus to fulfill this role, he must be personified as being part of God. Aspects of the characteristics of Wisdom which have been applied to Jesus provide the first way that Jesus' role could be incorporated into God's, thus giving Hagner's Christian-apologetic argument some credibility.

Wisdom/Sophia

According to Prov. 3:19 and 8:22-36, God created Wisdom as a supernatural helper in the task of creating Earth and assisted humans with knowledge. In the Old Testament apocryphal book Wisdom of Solomon 8:1 and 9:4, Wisdom sustains and

governs the earth and then dwells among human beings, bestowing gifts upon them. In 1st Enoch, after humans reject her, a humiliated Wisdom returns to heaven.⁹⁰

Although Jewish literature does not state that Wisdom took a human form, Paul refers to Wisdom. In Cor. 1:23-25, for example, Paul comes very close to calling Jesus Wisdom.⁹¹ The theme of Jesus' humiliation on earth and redemption in heaven is repeated in Pauline letters and the gospels. This idea could also be extended to explain Paul's inclusion of Christ in the creation story.⁹²

Because Wisdom was known to be with God at creation, it is appropriate for Wisdom and Jesus to be associated. Paul implies that Jesus was a part of creation. In 1 Cor. 8:6, Paul claims Christians believe in "One God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and One Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist."

The personified attributes of Wisdom and Word are recognized as being divine because they are seen as attributes of YHWH.⁹³ 2 Enoch 33:4 says that Wisdom was God's advisor in the work of creation, yet God had no advisor. What this implies is that Wisdom is a part of God's identity.⁹⁴ In 1 Enoch 84:2-3 and Wisdom of Solomon 9:4 and 10, Wisdom is depicted as sitting with God on the throne, participating in divine sovereignty.⁹⁵

It is essential that Jesus' role differs from that of the Judaic "Messiah" and "Son of Man." In his book, *God Crucified*, Richard Bauckham suggests that Jesus' place could

⁹⁰ G.A. Wells, "The Historicity of Jesus," in *Jesus in History and Myth*, R. Joseph Hoffman and Gerald A. Larue, eds. (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1986), 37.

⁹¹ Ibid. 38

⁹² Robert M. Grant, "Christ at the Creation," in *Jesus in History and Myth*, R. Joseph Hoffman and Gerald A. Larue, eds. (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1986), 159.

⁹³ Bauckham's primary sources for his arguments are satisfactorily thorough. For Wisdom: Jer. 10:12; 51:15; Ps. 104:24; Prov. 3:19; 8:30; Sir. 24:3b, Wis. 7:22; 8:4-6; cf. 1QH 9:7, 14, 20; Wis. 9:2; for Word: Ps. 33:6; Sir. 42:15; *Jub.* 12:4; *Sib. Or.* 3:20; 2 *Bar.* 14:17; 21:4; 48:8; 4 *Ezra* 6:38; *T. Abr.* A9:6; Wis. 9:1.

⁹⁴ Bauckham, 21.

not be an adaptation of previous angelic figures. The acceptance of intermediary figures was irrelevant because Jewish monotheism did not recognize these figures as part of YHWH. Therefore, Jesus' role was singular. Only personified attributes like Wisdom and the Word were considered divine, because they were seen as aspects of YHWH. Divine, according to Bauckham, is assigned to YHWH because YHWH is depicted as both the creator of all things and ruler of all. None of the intermediary figures are given this status.⁹⁶

Because they were not seen as divine, Jesus could not have been any derivation of an angelic figure. The monotheism of the Second Temple Period recognized YHWH as the divine figure. Therefore, the writers of the New Testament intentionally characterized Jesus as sharing the rights with God with regard to both creation and judgment. The authors of the New Testament, he claims, carved out a place for Jesus that was unlike the intermediary figures, yet assigns Jesus the same duties that the monotheism of Second Temple Judaism recognized as divine.⁹⁷

Bauckham says that the recognition of Jesus' participation with God was significant:

This decisive step of understanding a human being to be participating now in the unique divine sovereignty over the cosmos was unprecedented. The principal angels and exalted patriarchs of Second Temple Jewish literature provide no precedent. It is this radical novelty which leads to all the other exalted christological claims of the New Testament texts. But, although a novelty, its meaning depends upon the Jewish monotheistic conceptual concept in which the early Christians believed it.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 11.

⁹⁷ Bauckham, 26.

⁹⁸ Ibid, 28-29.

Jesus' participation in God's sovereignty is identified throughout the New Testament by reference to Psalm 110:1.⁹⁹ It says:

The LORD said to my Lord,
'Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies your footstool.'

Although these things weren't simply literary metaphors, Bauckham claims that that the early Christians took them as such.¹⁰⁰ Jesus' sovereignty over all things is alluded to with great emphasis in the texts of the New Testament, which Bauckham claims is a point that New Testament scholars overlook when claiming that Jesus fit into a lesser position than God. Jesus is associated with ruler of 'all things,' a phrase used in Judaic texts when signifying God the Creator and Ruler.¹⁰¹

Bauckham also uses Ephesians 1:21-22 as an example of Jesus sharing God's power over all the angelic figures:

[God] raised [Jesus] from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet...

Bauckham concludes the argument of an incorporation of Jesus into God by arguing that Jesus was given the divine name of YHWH in Hebrews 1:4 (Jesus became 'as much

⁹⁹ According to Bauckham there are 21 allusions to the Psalm within New Testament texts: Matt. 22:44; 26:64; Mark 12:36; 14:62; 16:19; Luke 20:42-43; 22:69; Acts 2:33-35; 5:31; 7:55-56; Rom. 8:34; 1 Cor. 15:25; Eph. 1:20; 2:6; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12-13; 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22; Rev. 3:21 (which is probable)

¹⁰⁰ Bauckham, 30.

¹⁰¹ Bauckham, 32. Bauckham again provides no inadequate justification: for references to God as Creator and Ruler: Isa. 44:24; Jer. 10:16; 51:19; Sir. 43:33; Wis. 9:6; 12:13; Add. Est. 13:9; 2 Macc. 1:24; 3 Macc. 2:3; *1 Enoch* 9:5; 84:3; 2 *Enoch* 66:4; *Jub.* 12:19; *Apoch. Abr.* 7:10; *Jos. Asen.* 12:1; *Sib. Or* 3:20; 8:376; *Frag* 1:17; *Jospephus, BJ* 5.218; *1QapGen* 20:30; *4QD* 18:5:9. For references about Christ's lordship over 'all things,': Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 3:35; 13:3; 16:15; Acts 10:36; 1 Cor. 15:27-28; Eph. 1:22; Phil. 3:21; Heb. 1:2; 2:8; cf. Eph. 1:10, 23; 4:10; col. 1:20. For Christ's participation in the creation and sustaining of 'all things,' see John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:3.

superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs') and in Philippians 2:9 (when Jesus is bestowed 'the name that is above every other name').¹⁰²

If Bauckham's argument is expanded, then the use of the terms "Messiah" within Paul should not matter. The place that Jesus took was emphasized as divine as God, and not a servant or intermediary figure. Jesus' role should not be examined as developing from Judaic traditions that would place Jesus as a lesser figure, but as part of God due to the roles accredited to him. The messiahs and angelic figures of Judaism have no place within Paul's christology because it is monotheistic. Bauckham uses 1 Corinthians 8:6 as proof:

⁴Hence, as to the eating of the food offered to the idols, we know that 'there is no idol in the world' and that 'there is no God except one.'⁵ Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth – as in fact there are many gods and many lords – ⁶but for us there is one God, the Father, from whom all things and we for him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and we through him.

Verse 6 is known to be adapted from the *Shema*, a statement about God which devout Jews recited twice daily.¹⁰³

The significance of the angelic figures and their ability to provide a model for the early church's role of Jesus should be examined with the results in mind. By relating Jesus to past messiahs, as Hurtado has done, the question of Jesus' divine role comes into question. Based upon the previous arguments, it is important to realize that, although angelic figures and exalted patriarchs may have been a part of the Judaic heritage, the daily use of the *Shema*, and Judaism's emphasis on God the Ruler and Creator, more clearly defines the lines drawn between what was divine and what was not. The language used to describe Jesus were metaphors that had been previously tried at a different time and proven to work.

¹⁰² Ibid, 34.

¹⁰³ Bauckham, 35-37.

The consideration of ancient Judaic terms with regard to Paul's claims about Jesus reveals that Paul's use of the words "messiah" and "Son of Man" do not support a traditional Christian view of Jewish-Christian relations. The inclusion of Jesus within the Creation story and Judgment Day is essential for Hagner's argument, because this gives credibility to Jesus' divinity and participation in God. If Jesus is seen by Paul as participating in the divine, then the Jews' rejection of Jesus is potential cause for admonishment.

However, taking these historical uses of terms into consideration does not negate Nanos' or Gager's argument. Writers of the New Testament personified Jesus as having a tradition within the Jewish Scriptures and as being divine. More than simple literary devices should be considered to evaluate the three claims of the interpreters. Moreover, Paul's intention, although valid, must not be taken as the definitive Judaic-Christian relational word, but instead should be put in dialogue with other considerations as part of our current ecumenical discussion about Jewish-Christian relations.

CHAPTER IV

The Next Step

Evidence of Ineffectual Resolutions

This exercise has also showed that the use of imagination regarding Paul's message, although admittedly exegetically risky, has been very recent and very necessary. A significant amount of literature written in the past has accepted Paul's frustration with Jews as evidence of his conviction that the Gentiles had taken the place of Israel. If Paul believed that the Gentiles had taken the place of Israel, then Christianity could justifiably claim superiority over the Jewish heritage and faith. Providing historical examples of Christianity's abuse of this idea is unfortunately exhausting. Mark Nanos¹⁰⁴ provides an appropriate motive to continue to explore of alternative interpretations of Paul:

Let us hope that the work of these scholars reaches the pulpits and Sunday School classes and permeates the cultural milieu from which Christian perceptions of 'others' are born, particularly so in the case of Jews and things Jewish. Perhaps Jewish people will no longer be victims of the hatred of those who find justification of their views and actions in the uncritical and twisted adaptation of the literature of the New Testament.¹⁰⁴

The continued examination of the relations between Jews and Gentiles in the first century should justify a departure from a long tradition of biased academic scholarship.

Interpreting Paul with regard to Christian eschatological doctrine has been problematic. Scholars have had a tendency to regard Paul's works as the definitive Christian doctrine. This does not mean Paul's social, historical, and religious context has been ignored; Nanos in particular demonstrates knowledge of Paul within the context of the synagogue. However, just as Paul reinterpreted the use of terms, "Messiah," and "Son of God," so must we interpret Paul to fit our context. It is irresponsible to take Paul's

¹⁰⁴ Nanos, 4.

word as so sacred that it cannot be questioned. The sources and histories surrounding Paul and the origins of christology provide a basis for sometimes contradictory theories. This scholarship has real bearing on interfaith dialogue and the forming of new relationships between religions.

Judaic scholar Gavin D'Costa is just one of the many scholars who agree that the problem lies in the belief that Christianity has defined itself as the manifestation of Israel. "The 'new covenant' and 'new Israel' were formed in the person of Christ and the church that he established. Israel's history reached its completion and fulfillment in these events. Judaism should have flowered into Christianity – but (and here there are variations) through ignorance or hard-heartedness the Jews rejected their true destiny."¹⁰⁵

The devastation of the Holocaust has caused many scholars to re-evaluate these opinions, and a number of Christian theologians have responded with a compromise called the "dual covenant" position, much like Gager's. This position holds that Judaism and Christianity should be viewed as separate, but complementary, covenants.¹⁰⁶ Jews and Christians share the same God, but the Jews are being faithful their covenant while the Christians are being faithful to an additional covenant grafted from the first for the gentiles.¹⁰⁷ Because they are theologically unjustified, both the fulfillment model and a mission to the Jews should be abandoned.¹⁰⁸

The "dual covenant" doctrine may be appropriate for the validation of both Judaism and Christianity. However, it does not create a model that is conducive to

¹⁰⁵ Gavin D'Costa, "One Covenant or Many Covenants? Toward a Theology of Christian-Jewish Relations," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 27:3 (Summer 1990) pp. 441-452, 442

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ For further arguments see Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide: The Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Seabury Press, 1974); James Parkes, *The Theological Foundations of Judaism and Christianity* (London: Vallentine-Mitchell, 1960); J. Coert Rylaarsdam, "Jewish-Christian Relationship: The Two Covenants and the Dilemmas of Christology," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 9 (Spring, 1972): 249-268.

discussion between the two faiths, which is necessary for further examination of historical claims. For deconstruction of these previous historic "truths," it is necessary for scholars to examine Pauline scholarship with regard to their own previous experiences and social locations. Van A. Harvey's argument shows the challenges that scholars may face while attempting to create a Pauline philosophy for themselves on the basis of their linguistic and experiential knowledge, and what kind of implications this has had on biblical scholarship.

Examining Paul: Only for the Experienced?

In his essay, "New Testament Scholarship and Christian Belief," Harvey outlines one dilemma that faces aspiring scholars throughout the field of biblical scholarship.¹⁰⁹ According to Harvey, there is a distinct gap in "what the average layperson believes to be historically true about Jesus of Nazareth and what the great majority of New Testament scholars have concluded after a century and a half of research and debate."¹¹⁰ Unlike professors of history, who are regarded as experts, New Testament scholars' work is viewed as threatening to systems of belief, and therefore is met with resistance and hostility.¹¹¹ Furthermore, the typical student's research on history would not have the same direct and subjective result as that of research on American history; a religious conclusion about the divinity of Christ may have more significant personal relevance than the economic results of the Boston Tea Party.

Harvey identifies two issues in the field of New Testament scholarship that have particular bearing on the divide between scholars and students. Scholarship, he claims, is

¹⁰⁹ Van A. Harvey, "New Testament Scholarship and Christian Belief," in *Jesus in History and Myth*, R. Joseph Hoffman and Gerald A. Larue, eds. (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1986) 193.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 193.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

so specialized and requires so much background knowledge that the student¹¹² “has simply been disqualified from having any right to a judgment regarding the truth or falsity of certain historical claims” by scholars.¹¹³ This background knowledge includes tools such as Greek, Aramaic, Hebrew, form and tradition criticism, and knowledge of ancient Near Eastern religions.¹¹⁴ The second issue is a general skepticism concerning biblical claims that has developed into skepticism about the entire faith. Paul Tillich responded to this tension by arguing for the “religious truth” surrounding Jesus’ life and placing less emphasis on the valid historical claims of the Bible.¹¹⁵

It has become apparent through the study of Pauline scholarship that the use of original texts and external religious histories lends a great deal of weight to their arguments. The monolingual scholar has little basis by which to question these claims. Additionally, as serious criticisms of historical and religious scholarship have arisen recently, it is apparent that no intellectual claim is flawless or universal; all should be evaluated relative to each scholar’s social and political commitments. The student looking for even the slightest piece of background information cannot trust even an encyclopedia to provide a definitive and unbiased view.¹¹⁶

Harvey’s statements regarding the ignorance of young scholars could be a blessing in disguise to the student who is looking for a way to excuse errors in judgment concerning linguistic or historical claims. However, sentiments like these also contribute to a belittled sense of scholarly self and interrupt a wider intellectual voyage, when

¹¹² Harvey uses the term “layperson,” but it is appropriate to use the term “student,” in my opinion

¹¹³ Harvey, 197.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 198.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 199.

¹¹⁶ This is no way is a bad thing; it should be noted that the less a document claims to provide the definitive answer to history or religion, the more it can be taken seriously. However, this subjective and specific way of publishing and theorizing is intimidating to the student not extremely well-read in all areas pertaining to the topic in question.

decreed by a learned scholar. The struggle to find the “truth” of an issue of the New Testament is not one to engage in only after obtaining the correct amount of linguistics and history.

This paper’s study of early Christianity and Paul, although shaped primarily by secondary sources and the Bible (which could be considered a secondary source in itself), is not the work of a well-read scholar. It is evidence of the struggle between scholarly limitations and the desire to find the “truth” about a highly disputed and relevant historical and religious matter. However, this “truth” may need to include more than just historic speculation about what Paul’s intentions were. Paul’s letters could be used in a way that promotes a unified attempt to branch the divided nature between Christianity and Judaism; Daniel Boyarin provides an interpretation based upon biblical scholarship that could incorporate both current issues of Jewish-Christian relations and literary analysis of Pauline doctrine.

Daniel Boyarin: A Fourth Option

Boyarin’s interpretation differs from the previous three. He does not concentrate on the validity of each religion’s claims; instead, he argues that it was the unity of both religions was what Paul hoped to achieve. In this sense, it provides a model by which further conversation between Judaism and Christianity can be supported.

Daniel Boyarin argues that Paul idealized a universal church for the Jews and Christians based upon a Hellenistic desire for the One. This church would be beyond difference and hierarchy.¹¹⁷ “[Paul’s] system required that all human cultural specificities – first and foremost, that of the Jews – be eradicated, whether or not the people in

¹¹⁷ Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: UCPress, 1994), 7.

question were willing.”¹¹⁸ Both the Gentiles and the Jews should keep the essential aspects of Judaism for this universality. From Boyarin’s perspective, although Paul preached tolerance for the Jewish Law, he also saw the Law as a dividing point between the Jews and Christians.¹¹⁹ This dichotomy creates a tension within Paul’s gospel that is left unresolved. Ultimately, however, eradicating this difference would form a universal church that would recognize the saving power of both Judaism and Christ.¹²⁰

Therefore, both Christians and Jews were the new Israel.¹²¹ He says, “[Paul’s] argument is precisely *against* those who think that what one eats is of significance. It is, however, this very tolerance that deprives difference of the right to be different, dissolving all others into a single essence in which matters of cultural practice are irrelevant and only faith in Christ is significant.”¹²² Boyarin points to Gal. 3:28, “there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave nor free, there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus,” as proof that Paul was not encouraging a separation between the Jews and Gentiles. To expand this argument, one can look to Gal. 3:25: “But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith.”

Boyarin’s claim also fits nicely with Rom. 11:11-12: “So I ask, have they stumbled so as to fall? By no means! But through their stumbling salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. Now if their stumbling means riches for the world, and if their defeat means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean?” By implying that Paul’s message encourages the relaxing of Jewish

¹¹⁸ Boyarin, 8.

¹¹⁹ Boyarin, 10.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid, 9.

¹²² Ibid.

tradition and Law in order to facilitate the followers of Christ, Boyarin can include both Jews and Christians in his new tradition.

Boyarin's argument is flawed because Boyarin does not accurately portray Paul's commitment to the Laws.¹²³ Looking beyond this, his strongest point the insistence that Paul intended the two faiths to be united in harmony. Although this was not achieved, we can begin to find a context with which to discuss the differences between them based upon Boyarin's view of Paul. Paul's intention for harmony between the two faiths, without declaring one invalid, could create a new model for current ecumenical discussion. Our modern intellectual and religious society could relate to this interpretation in the same way that Christians have previously been inclined to use Hagner's. Paul's vision of religion based upon the faith in God can be a starting point for such discussion. Both currently hope for a Messiah and a time of peace amidst differences.

¹²³ Because Boyarin does not adequately portray the significance of the Law for Israel, his argument for the new guidelines of the universal church is flawed. Once again Gal. 5:3 can be used to clarify this sentiment: "Once again I testify to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obliged to obey the law." In Romans 9:4-5 he says, "For they are the Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever." Boyarin addresses what he sees as contradictory in Paul's statements, that is, the supposed tolerance for the differences of Judaism and the desire for a universality among the Gentiles and Jews. (Boyarin 10)

CHAPTER V

Conclusion: A Discussion-Based Solution

Ongoing engagement of intellectual debate and theories should be a major part of every level of scholarship. This has become apparent, as many theologians and historians have noted in the past half-century, due to the horrible, but physical, results in which biased ignorance has manifested itself in World War II and the Holocaust. The relationship between Judaism and Christianity has been reevaluated out of intellectual necessity and has as a result furthered the condemnation of the idea of Christian superiority. The evaluations of Paul in the past have not worked. The excessive amount of discrimination and misunderstanding between religions in our current state is justification enough.

Amidst the technological, psychological, military, and political breakthroughs and tragedies of this century there exists an intellectual struggle to grapple with these issues of diversity within history. Hundreds of years of discriminatory opinions and majority-based, pride-driven answers to philosophical, religious, and historical questions have tainted reality and "truth." It is the responsibility of current students and scholars to deconstruct these "truths" by evaluating their origins and testing their validity through previously overlooked social locations.

David Tracy's discussion of conversing with texts eloquently illuminates the crux of this argument.¹²⁴ Classic texts, such as Paul's, are most responsibly used when placed into conversation between the reader, the writer, and the text. A model based upon conversation with Paul eliminates a large amount of pressure to determine whether Paul is "right" with regards to salvation, and as to whether Christianity is "right" with regards

¹²⁴ David Tracy, *Plurality and Ambiguity: Hermeneutics, Religion, Hope* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 20.

to Paul. Paul was a man who intuited the divine and who also wrestled with complicated questions, offering ambiguous answers with little proof concerning salvation and the law that 2,000 years of theological study has yet to clarify or prove. Certain historical contexts must be applied to Pauline works before evaluating their validity or relevance.

There is ample evidence that shows that Paul thought those who believed in Jesus as a salvific Christ were to be saved by grace. Regardless of whether this means that he thought that Christians were the new "chosen" people, millions of people have used Paul's doctrine as justification for the persecution of others. Yet his doctrines have no evidence or proof, just as the Old Testament's claims about the superiority of Israel are difficult to justify historically.¹²⁵ At the heart of Paul's doctrines which we now call sacred and use as theological justification is a notoriously power-hungry institution which found Paul's works to be beneficial as early as 70 C.E. when the Jews fell into disfavor with the Romans and the Gentiles worked to find a way to disassociate their religion from the Jews.

Paul was working under the impression that there were imminent eschatological time constraints. The first century was regarded as the "birth pangs of the messiah," and spurned the literary works of such Jewish writers as Josephus and the formation of the Bar Kochba so that the events could be preserved.¹²⁶ Taking this into consideration, the evaluation of Pauline doctrine and thought as it has been evaluated heretofore should not

¹²⁵ Whether or not the stories questioned in the Bible are "true" depends on the definition of truth; historically, many of the stories have flaws and many may not be valid as factual stories at all. However, these can be placed into the context of greater history and held as valid doctrines or stories that have guided and shaped civilization and have been held as truths. In this sense, that which may be completely false could be considered a basic and concrete "truth" of the society that regards it as such. In this sense it is important to recognize Paul's material as a classic "truth" of society, yet realize that there is no evidence whatsoever to validate his claims.

¹²⁶ Brockman

be considered valid for use in this present day and age. Just as the rules of diplomacy have shed many aspects of the Machiavelli and despotic rule, modern Judaism and Christianity should adjust their thinking of the relationship between Christians and Jews.

Jesus, and subsequently Paul, created a vast rift between not only Judaism and Christianity, but between Christians and the rest of the world, regardless of their intent. Perhaps Jesus is, as the Christians say, a part of God and was sent from heaven so that we may be saved through grace. On the other hand, Jesus may be a figure mistakenly appointed by men as the Messiah; there is no direct proof, only oral traditions. Because there is no proof that God's intent was to have Jesus separate two significant God-fearing religions, it is difficult to continue speculation about the state of history without making assumptions about God's nature.

What Paul did through his use of terms such as "messiah" and "Son of God" was to transfer terms that Judaism had appointed to many figures into one definitive answer. The Judaic idea that only God could be seen as the Redeemer and that a messianic leader would execute God's plan was different from the theological role that Jesus took within Paul's letters. This analysis not only provides a literary connection between Christianity and Judaism, but it allows for a Jewish and Christian reading of a classic text.

The Catholic Church is currently rescinding the notion that its religious ideals are superior to that of Judaism's. In May of 2001 the Pontifical Biblical Commission of the Vatican produced a statement titled, "The Jewish People and their Sacred Scriptures in the Bible."¹²⁷ The document states the importance of the inclusion of the Jewish tradition

¹²⁷ The Pontifical Biblical Commission, "The Jewish People and their Sacred Scriptures in the Bible," (Vatican Press, 2001). It's main themes are: "the Sacred Scriptures of the Jewish people are a fundamental part of the Christian Bible," "Fundamental themes in the Jewish Scriptures and their reception into faith in Christ," and "the Jews in the New Testament."

in understanding and respecting both the Old and New Testaments. Two problems that it addresses are these:

Can Christians, after all that has happened, still claim in good conscience to be the legitimate heirs of Israel's Bible? Have they the right to propose a Christian interpretation of this Bible, or should they not instead, respectfully and humbly, renounce any claim that, in the light of what has happened, must look like a usurpation? The second question follows from the first: In its presentation of the Jews and the Jewish people, has not the New Testament itself contributed to creating a hostility towards the Jewish people that provided a support for the ideology of those who wished to destroy Israel?¹²⁸

This last part is a recognition of the anti-Judaic statements within the New Testament, and this recognition may be the beginning of a reconciliation.

In addition to this statement, the Pope's spokesman, Joaquín Navarro-Valls, issued a statement in January of 2002 that declared that the Jews were not being unfaithful to their religion when they refused to recognize Jesus as the promised Messiah of Israel. He also claimed that the Catholic Church and the Jews were shared the wait for another Messiah. The difference is that the Christians look for a Second Coming of the Messiah similar to Jesus, and the Jews look for a first Messiah. Navarro-Valls claims, "The expectancy of the Messiah was in the Old Testament, and if the Old Testament keeps its value, then it keeps that as a value, too. It says you cannot just say all the Jews are wrong and we are right."¹²⁹ This theological standpoint is respectful of the historical arguments put forth by the examination of literary phrases such as "Son of Man" and "messiah." Statements that connect the two religions would not have been justifiable without the research of New Testament scholars over the past fifty years. Slowly the

¹²⁸ Ibid. Due to the expansiveness of the document's findings, further specificities will not be examined here.

¹²⁹ Melinda Henneberger, "Vatican Says Jews' Wait for Messiah Is Validated by the Old Testament," *New York Times*, 18 January, 2002.

bridge between the two religions is being formed, mostly due to the work of these scholars.

Waiting for another Messiah unites Jews and Christians. Yet it should not stand in the way of theologians hoping to construct important ecumenical dialogue between the two religions. The two religions will not and should not be united: each has a rich history and tradition as sacred as the truths by which they abide. Religions must put aside their differences and start working toward a common goal of peace - without the necessity of a divine messianic figure. Even Jesus could not fulfill this role. It should not take a second Messiah for the Christian faith to come to peaceful terms with Judaism, and the reverse to be true as well.

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