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GRACE, OBEDIENCE, AND THE HERMENEUTICS OF AGENCY:
PAUL AND HIS JEWISH CONTEMPORARIES ON THE
TRANSFORMATION OF THE HEART

Kyle B. Wells

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Durham University

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how convictions about gift and grace integrate with conceptions of agency and obedience for Paul and for his Jewish contemporaries. While post-Sanders scholarship has rightly noted the coexistence of grace and works in the Pauline and Jewish literature, it has failed to account for the diverse and sophisticated ways in which those two concepts can coexist. Following recent intertextual studies, this thesis argues that ancient Jews read descriptions of ‘heart-transformation’ in Deuteronomy 30, Jeremiah 31–32 and Ezekiel 36 as the solution to human ineptitude. Paul was no exception and his reading of those texts had a profound influence on his articulations of divine grace and human agency. On Paul’s complex understanding moral competence is dependent upon divine agency and divine and human agencies co-exist and coinhere in, but never outside of, Christ.

Beyond advancing our understanding of the apostle’s agency dynamics, this thesis shows how Second Temple interpretations of texts that concern heart-transformation provide fruitful ways of comparing Paul and his contemporaries’ respective views regarding divine grace, human transformation, and humanity’s ability to obey God. While most Jews in this period did not set divine and human agency or grace and obedience in competition with one another, the precise forms grace took, the functions it performed, the spheres in which it operated, and the qualification for its receptions differed markedly and this would have contributed to vehement disagreements between Jews. Paul would not have been immune from such debates. While his views about grace and agency are not *sui generis* in every respect, he would have still appeared radical to most of his contemporaries.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Paul, Grace, and Agency

Not a few of the differences in the Christian tradition can be traced back to radically divergent interpretations of the apostle Paul. One of the most pivotal factors that determines differences concerns how to navigate Paul's complex discourse on grace and agency.¹ Many read in Paul an absolute contrast between divine and human agency. If salvation is of grace (divine action) then it cannot be of works (human action, cf. Rom 11:6). For these interpreters, the Pauline view of sin rules out any illusion that humans contribute to their redemption. Others notice everywhere in Paul emotive pleas for and even anxiety over the perseverance of his congregations, coupled with an assumption that humans are genuinely responsible agents whose actions hold real consequence. If this antinomy were not baffling enough, matters are further complicated when both premises appear entangled in the same context (e.g., Phil 2:12–13; 1Cor 15:9–10; Gal 5:13–6:10). For communities trying to make sense of the apostle, some form of synthesis seems inevitable.

A recent interchange between two seasoned Paulinists poignantly illustrates how critical scholarship is no less immune from these conundrums. In his review of *Paul and the Stoics*, J.L. Martyn criticises T. Engberg-Pederson for smuggling modern notions of autonomy back into Paul and assuming that Paul's God has abdicated 'the realm of deeds' to humanity, whereby humans are able to seek to establish 'a social pattern of reasoned and altruistic self-governance'.² In contrast, Martyn hears Paul insisting that 'there is for human beings no autonomy, but only en-

1. Schnelle 1996, 77: 'The question of human free will represents a central problem of Pauline theology and anthropology.'

2. Martyn 2002, here at 102.

slavement to Sin and the obedience to God that is incited by God's liberating word.³ Engberg-Pedersen retorts that when Martyn imputes to Paul a competitive (and modern) concept of divine and human agency, he stands guilty of the anachronism he deplors.⁴ For his part, Engberg-Pedersen denies that his own emphases on human agency in interpreting Paul discard God's active role since he is well aware that Paul's statements assume an ancient context that did not strongly differentiate between divine and human agencies. In a subsequent piece, Engberg-Pedersen maintains that divine and human agency are not fundamentally or radically opposed in Paul; nor is Paul's aim 'to contrast the two types of agency in any of the ways in which this has been done in later thought'.⁵

Martyn and Engberg-Pedersen fall more or less on either side of the divide that has persisted for at least sixteen centuries, neither of which seems to do full justice to the apostle. If Engberg-Pedersen downplays the grace/works antithesis in a way that appears to surrender 'the good news of God's powerful invasion to the impotence of a merely human decision to have faith' or to an offer which 'merely presents human beings with a new chance to be obedient',⁶ then Martyn's emphasis on power threatens to render humans as pawns in the battle between God and other supernatural forces, and even to undermine Pauline conviction about anthropological corruption, responsibility, and renewal.⁷ Beneath this dispute lies a web of dilemmas arising from Paul's own pen. To state the problem sharply: If in Paul there is a fundamental contrast between divine and human agency, what do we make of statements where the two agencies seem to stand together in harmonious rather than antagonistic relation? Conversely, if Paul does not conceive of divine and human agency on competitive terms, what becomes of the Pauline antithesis?⁸

Conversations involving questions about grace and agency are not limited to this debate. The last generation of scholarship has witnessed (1) an explosion of studies on Paul and the Law,⁹ (2)

3. Martyn 2002, 88. Among other places where Martyn spells this out, see 1997a, 479–484.

4. Engberg-Pedersen 2002b. On the term 'competitive', see below.

5. Engberg-Pedersen 2006, 127, see also 139.

6. See Martyn's (1997d, 219–220n23) critique of certain trends in Pauline scholarship.

7. See, e.g., his discussion of Romans 7: Sin takes the self captive in such a way that it is '*no longer the agent of its own actions*' (2002, 93–97, here 95). For a nuanced discussion of the tension Martyn's seemingly Docetic tendencies create, see Eastman 2007, 16–18, 59. Note Martyn's (1997d, 62–65) own reflex to what he believes is a denial of human agency in L. Baeck.

8. So Eastman 2007, 17–18: 'The question therefore remains whether it is necessary to maintain a complete separation between divine and human activity in order to maintain the centrality of God's gracious initiative in the gospel, or whether such a separation is softened by Paul's assurance of union with Christ.'

9. For some of the most important works, see Sanders 1983; Hübner 1984; Räisänen 1987; Dunn 1990; Wester-

a reconsideration of the importance of judgement according to works,¹⁰ and (3) a significant contention interpreting *πίστις* as faithfulness.¹¹ These developments have fostered a renewed interest in the themes of participation¹² and obedience;¹³ and for many they have rendered historic assertions about *sola gratia* suspect.¹⁴

Directly or indirectly, all these topics gained momentum from E.P. Sanders's monumental *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*.¹⁵ Contrary to previous opinion, Sanders argued that Judaism was not a religion where humans achieve a standing before God; Judaism was better characterised by 'covenantal nomism'—a grace-based religion founded on divine mercy in election.¹⁶ Sanders's thesis irreversibly shifted the scholarly consensus about Judaism and re-ignited comparison with Paul.¹⁷ And yet while one would have expected his conclusions to stimulate deeper reflection on grace and agency, for the most part these themes have either been taken for granted or entirely ignored. Assuming that in both Paul and Judaism God saves by grace but nonetheless requires obedience (obedience as the response to grace),¹⁸ many now deny that Paul quarrels with contemporaries over such matters: Paul was not opposed to the grace-works dynamic in covenantal nomism, only to an ethnocentric covenantal nomism, or to one that rejected Christ.¹⁹ These factors birthed a 'new perspective',²⁰ which has subsequently muffled traditions championing the

holm 1990; Schreiner 1993.

10. See Donfried's seminal essay 'Justification and Last Judgement in Paul' republished in Donfried 2002, 253–292 with additional reflection. See the more recent studies of Yinger 1999; Gathercole 2002; VanLandingham 2006. For a helpful survey and bibliography, see Ortlund 2009.
11. See the game-changing work of Hays 1983. On possible implications for human agency, see Garlington 1991; Stowers 1994, 199–203; and from a different angle, see Campbell 2005, 185–202.
12. For various forays into Paul's participatory theme, see Sanders 1977; 1983; Hooker 1990; Gorman 2001; 2009; Schnelle 2001. See also Campbell 2009.
13. See Barclay 1988.
14. See, e.g., Räisänen 1987, 186n117; Watson 2007, 346. Compare his earlier 1986, 112, 148.
15. Sanders 1977.
16. Sanders 1977, xi, 33, 38, 75, 420.
17. The literature is now expansive. Two invaluable summaries of the major contributions to the debate up through 2004 are Westerholm 2004b and Dunn 2005c.
18. So Sanders 1977, 513, 517–518, 543; Garlington 1991, 265; Wright 2002, 479; Elliott 1990, 133–134, 198, 294. So also Räisänen 1987, 177–185, but he notes a different 'emphasis' (186) and believes Paul misconstrued the nature of Israel's Law (162–164). For Das (2003), it is Paul's distinctly Christian presuppositions that render otherwise nonlegalistic Jews, legalistic by default.
19. Dunn 1998, 372–375; Wright 1991, 240; Garlington 1991, 264–265, 268; Longenecker 1991, 218–219; however, see his Longenecker 1998, 140, 180–181. While Barclay (1988, 240–241) is more cautious, Gaston (1987, 136, 142) goes further, believing that Paul's only problem with Jews is that they did not except God's provision of Jesus *for* Gentiles; similar is Stowers (1994, 129, 190).
20. A term attributable to J.D.G. Dunn's Mansion Memorial Lecture in 1982, recently republished in a collection of

apostle as the herald of grace.²¹

If in principle divine and human agency could correlate in a number of ways within the covenantal nomist framework, the question of how they do has received sparse attention.²² Does being within the covenant simply extend forgiveness, or does it also sufficiently equip one for obedience? If the latter, what kind of empowerment does the covenant provide and how does it communicate this capacity to its members?²³ New perspective proponents assume Jewish conceptions about grace and works parallel agency dynamics in Paul more or less exactly. So, for instance, J.D.G. Dunn claims that in covenantal nomism ‘good works are the *consequence* and *out-working* of divine grace ... *the fruit and not the root of salvation*.’²⁴ Or take M. Hooker, who notes how ‘God’s saving grace *evokes* man’s answering obedience’.²⁵

Others have questioned this assumption, arguing that Paul rejects the ‘synergism’ of Judaism for a ‘monergistic’ understanding of salvation.²⁶ Unfortunately, many of these studies offer no substantial engagement with the Jewish literature,²⁷ and those that do tend to focus on different questions.²⁸ A further problem is that often contrasts between Pauline ‘monergism’ and Jewish ‘synergism’ come at the expense of Paul’s endorsements of obedience and *divergent* Jewish testimonies about grace.²⁹ The state of affairs is such that only this year K.L. Yinger could repeat a

his essays on the theme (2005a).

21. Noted recently in Barclay 2006b, 2–3.

22. Westerholm (2004a) has analysed the terminology of grace used in Sanders’ own depiction of Judaism, and compared it with a traditional Lutheran reading of Paul.

23. Though the various contributions in Carson et al. 2001, represent a whole-scale reanalysis of the Jewish literature, it sets itself the specific task of asking whether or not ‘covenantal nomism’ serves as the overarching pattern found there (5). Unfortunately, this dependence on Sanders’s categories means that deeper questions about the integration of divine and human agency in obedience are left unanswered. By the conclusion Carson is still left asking: ‘Is all this obedience or law-keeping ... enabled by and empowered by God’s help? Or is it sometimes cast as the human contribution to the entire scheme...’ (545)?

24. Dunn 2005b, 193, my emphasis. Note that here Dunn is comparing covenantal nomism with Reformation/Protestant orthodoxy. On this point, see Westerholm 2004a, 341–351, who rightly criticises how on the one hand there is an implicit bias of Protestant definitions of ‘grace’ in such discussions (similarly, Alexander 1986, 105); and on the other, perhaps paradoxically, that the descriptions of grace seeking to make Jews out to be good Protestants are unrecognisable to most steeped in a particularly Lutheran or Reformed Tradition! See also Seifrid 1994, 74, 92.

25. Hooker 1990, 157, my emphasis. Räisänen (1987, 178–179, 184) and Yinger (2009, 388) share this assumption.

26. See, e.g., Gundry 1985; Talbert 2001; Hagner 1993, 122; Eskola 1998, 54–60; Kim 2002, 83–84; Seifrid 1992, 255.

27. Though Laato’s (1995) monograph addresses the question of anthropological pessimism directly, the English edition devotes less than 9 pages to the Jewish literature and is overly simplistic, both in terms of the categories used and in failing to consider what diversity might exist within Judaism. In a recent article, Westerholm (2006) gives more attention to the Jewish literature on this subject.

28. See, e.g., Gathercole 2002, 223–224, 264; Yinger 1999, 289; Winninge 1995.

contention he made a decade ago, namely that critics had not ‘succeeded in demonstrating that the grace-works axis in Judaism generally is any more synergistic or meritorious than in Paul.’²⁹

If it has not been demonstrated that there were differences between Paul and his Jewish contemporaries (and between them) over agency dynamics, neither has it been shown that all ancient Jews integrated grace and works in precisely the same way. Assuming this gap in scholarship, Dunn has more recently asked: Is Pauline obedience ‘as synergistic in its own way as Judaism’s covenantal nomism? Or are we to understand that for Paul there was a crucial difference between Jewish obedience and Christian obedience?’³¹ But the answer to this question lies beyond the recognition that grace and works coexist to an examination of precisely how they coexist,³² and how they coexist for *each respective author*.³³ It was Sanders himself who described the Pauline pattern of religion as ‘participationist eschatology’.³⁴ If Paul rejected covenantal nomism because it was not Christianity, either because it lacked Christ or because of eschatological developments, how might the eschatological grace of God in Jesus Christ have reshaped his *particular* beliefs about human agency?³⁵ But in answering this question categories like ‘synergism’ and ‘monergism’, ‘getting in’ and ‘staying in’, ‘conditional’ and ‘unconditional’ appear at the same time unhelpfully abstract as over-generalisations and hopelessly reductionistic in their simplicity.³⁶

The new perspective has thus pinpointed the need for reappraising the topics of grace and

29. Note the critique of Dunn 2005c, 70–72, 80.

30. Yinger 2009. A claim originally made in 1999, 4.

31. Dunn 2005c, 71–72, see also 55. He goes on to ask: What difference does the Spirit make (74–80)? From his reply, it is difficult to tell (cf. 78, 86, 88).

32. Barclay 2008, 386.

33. Though Yinger (2009, 386) rightly critiques Laato for his ‘black-and-white contrast between Jewish optimism ... and Pauline pessimism’ and suggests that the ‘relation between human freedom, sin, and divine grace’ is probably more complex than Laato allows, he consistently presents a simplified presentation himself. So, e.g., ‘Jewish texts do not envision human obedience to God’s commands as an independent exercise of human freedom... [H]uman obedience is ultimately tracable to the outworking of divine grace’ (390). Do *all* Jewish texts envision obedience as an outworking of grace and do they all envision grace being worked out in obedience *in precisely the same way*?

34. Sanders 1977, 549.

35. Compare Garlington 1991, 257: ‘In part, it is a minimizing of the dynamics of the eschatological situation which accounts for the persistence of the customary doctrine of a works-righteousness interpretation of first century Judaism’. For Garlington, the in-breaking of the eschaton in the Christ-event accounts for Paul’s disputes with his contemporaries over antiquated nationalistic laws. He fails to consider how the eschatological situation might also carry implications for Paul’s understanding of divine and human agency. Compare Thielman 1994, 245.

36. Sprinkle (2007, 5) rightly asks what is actually meant by a term like ‘synergism’. Yinger (2009, 387–388) helpfully presses beyond asking whether or not something is conditional to scrutinising in what sense it is conditional.

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agency in Paul and other Second Temple Jews.³⁷ Old models that describe Judaism as bereft of grace defy the evidence; those assuming a monolithic definition of grace make little sense of the particularities of the ancient world. And in both cases very particular definitions of ‘grace’ are often unreflectively biased. At the same time, one senses that Christology, Eschatology and agency remain insufficiently incorporated into current discussions about Paul’s own assimilation of grace and works.³⁸ The time is ripe to consider this well-worn topic afresh.

This challenge was recently taken up by a group of scholars who claim that agency issues are ‘neither stale nor uninteresting’.³⁹ The studies in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment* demonstrate that new approaches and questions yield improved answers. While on its own admission not every question could be resolved within the scope of the essays, the studies indicate that Second Temple views were both complex and diverse.⁴⁰ Supporting this is a recent thesis by J. Maston. Without defending Josephus’ representation of Judaism in detail (*J.W.* 2.119–166; *Ant.* 13.171–173; 18.11–25), Maston substantiates that a diversity of opinions existed on the relationship between divine and human agency. By contrasting Sirach and the Hodayot, he is able to situate Paul *within* a lively Jewish debate.⁴¹ In many ways these works represent a new beginning and not the end of discussion on a topic that still has ‘a long way to run’.⁴² By investigating the precise relationship between grace, human transformation, and obedience in Paul against the backdrop of other Jewish perspectives, the modest aim of this thesis is to inch that debate another step beyond old and new perspective paradigms.

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37. So Dunn 2005c, 88: ‘The tensions here have been long debated, but the present controversy over the new perspective shows that the debate has still a long way to run.’

38. However, for a recent foray into the theme, see Barclay 2008. B. Eastman (1999) highlights the importance of grace and its implications for human dependence, but more could be done to specify exactly what this means, and how it might relate to other Jewish perspectives.

39. Barclay and Gathercole 2006, here at 2.

40. Barclay 2006b, 8.

41. Maston 2009, 212. Maston’s thesis addresses the topic of the role of obedience in Paul, but more precision could be used in understanding exactly how Paul relates divine and human agency *in* the obedience of the human agent (147, 206–211, 214–218).

42. Dunn 2005c, 88.

1.2.1. Hermeneutics of Agency

Any move forward in discussions regarding Paul and Judaism requires a fitting comparative methodology.⁴³ This study starts with C. Newsom’s suggestion that “The image of culture as conversation is heuristically valuable for thinking about Second Temple Judaism.”⁴⁴ She believes ‘one can treat the diverse cultural phenomena of Second Temple Judaism as a protracted discussion of the question, “What really constitutes Israel?”’⁴⁵ To ask this question, so fundamental to Jewish identity, is simultaneously to ask: ‘What is the nature of our relationship to God?’ But that question itself raises issues about the dynamic between gift and response, grace and agency.

For any Israelite the answers given to these types of questions must be justified on the basis of the Scriptures entrusted to them.⁴⁶ Paul was no exception. It was R. Hays who forcefully drew our attention to the fact that Paul’s letters often constitute ‘an intertextual conversation between Paul and the voice of Scripture’.⁴⁷ Hays demonstrated that the texts Paul calls *γραφή* and the events he calls *εὐαγγέλιον* worked in dynamic interdependence to refashion the apostle’s world of thought. One would thus expect that Paul’s multiplex ideas about grace and agency cannot be wholly detached from the Scriptures he read.

In his innovative work *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith*, F. Watson exploits intertextuality as a method for comparing Paul with other Jews. Since Paul was not unique in having to reconcile his views with Scripture, Watson demonstrates how one can set Paul’s reading of texts alongside additional readings to engender critical dialogue, particularly over issues of divine and human agency.⁴⁸ This approach holds three immediate advantages. First, the comparison between Paul and other Jews is on their own, or better, their common Scriptures’ terms. Second, the context of the Jewish literature is not easily ignored since to properly understand different readings, one

43. Barclay 2006b, 2.

44. Newsom 2004, 4.

45. Newsom 2004, 4.

46. Watson 2004, 1.

47. Hays 1989, 37. See also the discussion by Stuhlmacher 1967b, 377–378.

48. Watson 2004. Watson argues that Paul reads in Scripture a two fold witness: one asserting the hermeneutical priority of Law (e.g., Lev 18:5) and the other proclaiming the hermeneutical priority of God’s promised initiative which generates world-wide faith (e.g., Gen 15:6; Hab 2:4; see, e.g., 39, 76, 198–201, 218–219, 277).

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must understand how those readings function in their respective settings. Finally, the diversity of Jewish viewpoints need not be downplayed: we can now situate Paul's reading alongside other divergent interpretations without assuming that he is *sui generis* in every respect.

While this methodology allows access to the distinctiveness of various Jewish positions, in theory giving each author a seat at the proverbial table rather than a vote for the party platform called 'Second Temple Judaism', my immediate purpose is to illuminate Paul. Consequently, this investigation explores early Jewish readings of Scripture in order to clarify the points at which Paul's hermeneutic and views about grace and agency are both similar and unique. In each case an initial study of how an author read Scripture is supplemented by an examination of broader but related motifs about grace, transformation, and agency. In addition to bringing to light Paul's distinctive contribution, an examination of the Jewish literature will expand our models for thinking through how ancients could structure divine and human agency, thus better enabling us to interpret Paul's perplexing discourse. Finally, by relating Paul's own scriptural interpretation to his wider theology, we will be able to see if Paul has simply co-opted the text for rhetorical advantage, or whether the text plays a more fundamental role in informing the grace-agency dynamic we find throughout his letters.

1.2.2. Field of Analysis

If comparisons could be made between Pauline and Jewish readings of a number of texts, certain texts are more apropos, offering themselves as arenas on which the battle for particular subjects could be fought.⁴⁹ T.J. Deidun notes how in the Hebrew Bible 'only three texts speak of an interior intervention of God in the depth of man's personality for a directly ethical purpose': Deuteronomy 30:6, Jeremiah 31:31–34 and Ezekiel 36:26–27.⁵⁰ All three passages reflect on the problem of human failure and offer a solution in the form of a transformed existence; all suggest complex possibilities for relating divine and human agencies.⁵¹ As such, the interpretative tradi-

49. Watson's (2004, xi) own reason for selecting texts is 'simply on the grounds that they would make good dialogue partners for Paul'. In a work which looks exclusively at Lev 18:5, Sprinkle (2008) has shown the value of limiting comparison to a specific text. He comes to similar conclusions as Watson (see esp. 196n10).

50. Deidun 1981, 54. One might also include Ps 51:10 and Ezek 11:19–20.

51. On the similarities between these texts, which would allow them to be read together, see Hultgren 2007, 84–95, who advances previous arguments made by Cholewinski 1985, 96–111 and Braulik 1986, 2:212. For a full discussion of the prophets, see also Klein 2008, 90–106, 110–111. Raitt 1977, 204–206; cf. Schwartz 2000, 51.

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tions of these seminal texts provide potent starting points for deciphering Paul and his Jewish contemporaries' respective positions about humanity's ability to obey God.

At a methodological level, then, my inquiry is built on previous intertextual investigations. At the same time, this work arises out of a need for more reflection on Paul's reading of Deuteronomy 30:1–10. Hays, for instance, gives Paul's heart-circumcision metaphor only a few paragraphs in light of its scriptural background.⁵² Watson and Martyn believe Paul overlooks Deuteronomy 30:1–10 altogether because it gives a law-shaped solution to Israel's problem.⁵³ At the conclusion of his study on *The End of Deuteronomy in the Epistles of Paul*, however, G. Waters proffers the relationship between Romans 2:29 and Deuteronomy 30:6 as a topic for further research.⁵⁴ T.W. Berkley goes further by establishing the allusion, but the focus of his study is on intertextual methodology with little thought given to either the context of Deuteronomy 30 or the implications Paul's reading carries for agency dynamics.⁵⁵ In distinction from these previous studies, it is my aim to demonstrate how Paul drank deeply from the narratives of heart-transformation in the Jewish Scriptures. By showing how these narratives gave sustenance to Pauline convictions about grace, transformation, and agency, this study fills another lacuna in scholarship.⁵⁶

This project, then, focuses on the interpretative traditions surrounding Deuteronomy 30, Jeremiah 31, and Ezekiel 36–37 with an eye to unlocking Second Temple views about grace and agency, transformation and obedience. Part 1, comprising only one chapter, situates the Jewish Scriptures in their canonical context. I begin by outlining two distinct ways in which Deuteronomy 30:1–10 can be read, each holding various implications for the interaction between divine agency and the competence of moral agents. The motif of heart-transformation in Jeremiah and Ezekiel is then considered. Since Deuteronomy 30 is the most influential of the three for later interpreters, it receives primary attention.

52. Hays 1989, 44–45.

53. Watson 2004, 436n41, 439; Martyn 2006.

54. Waters 2006, 251–252.

55. Berkley 2000.

56. Other studies on the interpretative tradition of Deut 30, Jer 31, and Ezek 36 include articles by Le Déaut 1981 and Lemke 2003. Deidun 1981 addresses the subject but only cross-references Deut 30:6 three times. Moreover, he offers no analysis of the Jewish background. Various other works touch on the theme both inside and outside of Paul, but no monographs are currently devoted to the topic.

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Part 2 investigates how these passages were read in and around the Second Temple period. Chapter 3 surveys the assorted allusions that appear at Qumran. Chapter 4 examines texts from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. From an investigation into the uses of Deuteronomy 30 in Baruch, Jubilees, 2 Baruch, and 4 Ezra it will become clear that an array of hermeneutics and beliefs existed amongst ancient Jews. Part 2 closes with a chapter on Philo, who offers yet another perspective on these issues. While these specific texts are chosen because they manifest allusions to the heart-transformation narratives, the rationale behind the order of presentation is simply that it aids comparison.

Finally, in Part 3, we turn our attention to Paul. In chapter 5, an investigation into Paul's reading of Deuteronomy 29–30 begins to expose many facets about his way of structuring divine grace and human agency. Chapter 6 investigates how the inferences reached from Romans 2:17–29 interact with larger themes in Pauline Theology, particularly his presentation of moral agency in the flesh and in the Spirit in Romans 5–8. These conclusions are then briefly substantiated by an investigation of 2 Corinthians 3 and Philippians 3. Most conclusions are reserved until the final chapter, which explores the implications this study has for various issues raised here in the introduction.

1.2.3. Criteria for Determining Scriptural Reflection

In his groundbreaking work, Hays proposed the following criteria for discerning intertextual echoes: 1) *Availability*; 2) *Volume*; 3) *Recurrence*; 4) *Thematic Coherence*; 5) *Historical Plausibility*; 6) *History of Interpretation*; 7) and *Satisfaction*.⁵⁷ I draw on these criteria as they have been modified and developed by Berkley for the purpose of identifying sources of Pauline exegesis.⁵⁸ Initially, I will look for:

- 1) *Common Vocabulary*: Common vocabulary includes any verbal correspondence between the Jewish Scriptures and the text in question. Appearances of rare or technical vocabulary are weighted more heavily. While it may strengthen the allusion, grammatical exactitude is unnecessary. Furthermore, where Greek writers

57. Hays 1989, 29–32.

58. See Berkley 2000, 60–64. Berkley improves Hays's excellent work by giving more weight to explicit verbal links and itemising 'Thematic Coherence' into 'Explication', 'Common Themes', and 'Common Linear Development'. For other discussions of criteria, see Thompson 1991, 32–36; Rosner 1994, 17–20; Ciampa 1998, 24–25; Porter 1997, 80–88.

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correspond to Hebrew traditions or where Hebrew writers correspond to extant Greek traditions, it is assumed that even without access to an author's Vorlage, reasonable deductions can be inferred about correspondence.

2) *Vocabulary Clusters*: If multiple vocabulary correspondences appear from a wider scriptural context, this strengthens the case that an author is drawing off of the entire context. Conversely, if vocabulary correspondence is strung throughout an interpreter's discourse, this could indicate that the scriptural passage forms a substructure to that discourse.

3) *Links with other Texts*: Given the ancient Jewish assumption that the Scriptures stand together as divine revelation, it was common for interpreters to link texts together. By combining various passages, readers would create a network of mutually-interpreting texts which then forms the basis of their own reading.⁵⁹ This becomes particularly useful for this study since interpreters often read Deuteronomy 30 in light of other passages (e.g., Deut 10:16, Ezek 36:26). Simply by investing certain texts with hermeneutical priority, authors communicate a great deal about their own theologies.

4) *Explication*: An allusion to the Scriptures will be deemed more likely if that allusion sheds light on an interpreter's presuppositions or argument.

Confirmatory criteria are:

5) *Recurrence*: If an author refers to a passage elsewhere, this gives additional credence to the suggested allusion.

6) *Common Themes*: Additional confirmation is gained when it can be shown that an author reflects on themes that are found in the proposed allusion.

7) *Common Linear Development*: When the movement of thought and themes in a scriptural passage parallel that of an interpreter, an allusion to the broader context will be deemed more likely.

In order to facilitate readability, I have limited detailed discussions of these criteria to those places where I feel echoes need more justification. At the outset, one should acknowledge that any such analysis holds a degree of subjectivity. Some proposals may only become satisfying in light of the cumulative weight of the entire project.

59. See Stockhausen 1993, 144–145.

1.2.4. Categories for Thinking about Grace and Agency

In order to set conceptions about grace and agency within their ancient context, it is necessary to put to one side many modern assumptions about these topics.⁶⁰ That fact notwithstanding, given that ancient thought structures are in ways no less complex than our own, the critical use of sophisticated language is a necessary and unavoidable tool in accessing the dynamics imbedded within ancient literature. I have cautiously employed the use of theological and philosophical terminology to facilitate the communication of ancient viewpoints. It might be worth clarifying some of the more important terms used in the present discussion:

Agent: one who performs an act to bring about subsequent effects.

Agency: the faculty of an agent or of acting.

Created Cause: a cause from within the created order.

Created Effect: a change in the created order made by a created cause.

Created Efficacy: the capacity which human agents possess to bring about change described in terms of their relations to others within a created causal nexus.

Competent Moral Agents: human agents that are sufficiently equipped to bring about the created effect of obedience to God.

Partially Competent Moral Agents: human agents that are only partially equipped to bring about the created effect of obedience to God.

Incompetent Moral Agents: human agents who can in no way contribute to the created effect of obedience to God.

Integrity: an ability to speak of the human agent as a genuine cause in the created order because its agency is neither compromised nor diminished by the influence of other agents.

Competitive Relationship: when divine and human agency are related to one another in an either/or structure.

Non-contrastive Relationship: when divine and human agencies are not set in competitive relationship with one another: not either or but both/and.

Kinship: when divine and human agencies are considered to be fluid aspects of a whole.

60. Barclay 2006b, 3–4.

Asymmetry: when human agency operates in dependence upon divine agency.

Coincidence: when two agents are the subjects of the same effect.

Coinherence: when divine and human agency stand in inseparable unity.

Occasionalism: when human action only provides the occasion for God to bring about subsequent effects.

Grace: ‘grace’, in its broadest definition, is a gift given from one personal being to another. In the literature considered here, it most often refers to God’s gift of putting people in proper relationship to himself.

There are two issues regarding the above vocabulary which need to be spelled out further in light of our current intellectual climate.

1.2.4.1. Models for Relating Divine and Human Agency

The first issue that requires discussion concerns what models are available for relating divine and human agency.⁶¹ While the created efficacy of human agents can be considered in itself, apart from an immediate reference to God, it is important to realise that this does not necessarily rule out God’s own agency. In our modern world, we tend to frame divine and human agencies in antithetical terms, structuring them in competitive relationship: the agency of one operates in inverse proportion to the agency of the other.⁶² When this is done, talk of human efficacy necessarily limits either the scope or the potency of divine agency. Conversely, if within this model God’s agency goes unrestricted, the result is occasionalism: humans are not the genuine cause of subsequent effects in the created order; human action simply provides a shell for an exercise of divine power.⁶³ While on this scheme human agency might be dependent on the divine agent for its existence, human freedom, nevertheless, must entail some type of independence from God’s own action, and space for human action is always created by a divine act of Self-confinement.

Other models are available, however. It is possible to relate divine and human agencies in some non-contrastive fashion. In this case, talk of human agency need not deny or even limit divine agency. One example of this is what J.M.G. Barclay has described as the kinship model. On

61. For a helpful discussion of the models on which these reflections are based, see Barclay 2006b, 6–7.

62. By associating this model with modern tendencies, I in no way wish to insinuate that it was not possible for ancients. However, see Schneewind 1998.

63. Tanner 1988, 86. I am greatly indebted to Tanner’s work for many of these concepts and for sharpening my thinking on these issues. I am equally indebted to Hunsinger 1991.

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this understanding, popular among the Stoics, God and humanity do not comprise ontologically distinct types of being, rather humans are parts of God. When humans act in accordance with the divine will, they represent an extension of that will in the world. Here humans act in the same causal nexus as God, because in many respects the two are one and the same. And yet because it is humans who share in the divine (and not vice-versa), there is asymmetry in kinship oriented, non-contrastive relationships: human agency is always dependent on the divine.

Another way to relate divine and human agencies in a non-contrastive fashion is to conceive of God and humans as operating in different causal nexuses on account of God's absolute transcendence. In this case, God and humans are not of a similar type of being, but wholly distinct. Consider, for example, P.T. Nimmo's description of the way divine and human agencies are discussed in Barth:

The being in action of God and the being in action of the ethical agent are not two species of the same genus. Correspondingly, for Barth, divine action and human action cannot be brought together and compared as if they were two species of the same genus.⁶⁴

Unlike the kinship model, here the actions of God and humanity can coincide in a created effect without diminishing the integrity of the human agent as a *distinct* agent. When it happens that divine and human agencies are both equally responsible for the *whole* of a created effect, there are various possibilities for how these two agencies might relate within that act.

First, divine and human agencies could operate independently of one another, as on a parallel track. Of course, if God's agency is understood to extend to all created effects, then this would not imply that human effects are ever independent of the divine agent, only that as distinct causes on an effect, God and humans work autonomously. In contrast, one could also understand divine and human agencies to operate in intimate connection with one another. Here we could speak of divine and human agency not only coexisting in integrity, but also coinhering in basic unity: The human agent operates neither independently of the divine agent, nor is its agency eradicated by divine agency, nor even do the two agencies form a synthesis. And within this transcendent oriented, non-contrastive structure, there are various options for relating the two asymmetrically, either because the human agent is established by divine agency, or even because its agency is continually and directly sustained by divine agency.

64. See Nimmo 2007, 122–25, here 123.

Notable is that on non-contrastive structures that assume God's unrestricted sovereignty there is no need to mention divine agency where created causes adequately explain created effects. Talk of divine agency, then, while unnecessary, only serves to highlight divine involvement and/or humanity's dependence on God. But if a created effect cannot be adequately explained in terms of created causes, this will often require a direct reference to God's own agency.⁶⁵ An example of this would be in cases where human agents are either partially or completely incompetent to bring about a created effect.⁶⁶

Also notable is that within such structures it is possible, as K. Tanner argues, that under the direct determination and creative intention of God, creatures possess the capacity as effective agents to perform acts which influence God.⁶⁷ One must be careful, therefore, not to confuse an author's predilection for speaking of God's agency in an unrestricted manner for a certain belief about the incompetence or dependence of moral agents. Even after taking into account God's foreordination of all things, in many cases we will see that we are still left with the question of whether humans are constituted with an agency sufficiently capable of performing an act to which God has determined to respond; or whether human efficacy is either partially or totally absent as a result of either anthropological corruption or creation.

1.2.4.2. *Associations with Grace*

A second topic which requires further discussion regards modern assumptions about gift and grace. J.R. Harrison has demonstrated how ancient discussion about divine *χάρις* is fruitfully understood against the backdrop of the Graeco-Roman benefaction system.⁶⁸ But in many respects, the grace-conceptuality behind this system functions very differently from the ways in which it functions in modern theological discourse.⁶⁹ Today, we tend to think of gift and grace as somehow unconditional. For a person to qualify for the reception of a gift or for a gift to carry with it certain conditions or preconditions is to undermine the very nature of the gift as gift. In contrast to modern gift/obligation dichotomies, in pre-modern cultures gifts assumed the necessity of re-

65. Tanner 1988, 105–106.

66. Miracles, e.g. fall into this category.

67. Tanner 1988, 96–104. Mollinism provides another way of conceiving this.

68. Harrison 2003.

69. Rightly, Thurén 2000, 170: 'The Christian history of the word may have somewhat obscured its semantic field'.

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ciprocation.⁷⁰ In the ancient world social, communal, and economic networks all depended upon cycles of reciprocity.⁷¹ One gave gifts with the intention of establishing and furthering such cycles for one's own good and for the good of the community. Thus we read in Seneca, for example, how 'gift' was in no way exclusive of self-regard and expectation.⁷² Even if Seneca's discussion of these topics represents one rather philosophical example, it nevertheless demonstrates how ancients could conceive of gift and grace in ways that strike moderns as altogether bizarre.

Accordingly, those seeking to understand ancient sensibilities cannot automatically suppose that grace is opposed to concepts like conditionality, worth, and expectation. This study proceeds on the assumption that in order to understand the nature of a gift, particular attention must be paid to the ways in which that 'gift' relates to expectations of reciprocity, qualifications for reception, and the accessibility of gift outside of its reception as a gift.⁷³ Perhaps, then, all one should assume within the confines of the above definition is that gift/grace distinguishes itself from payment in so far as it cannot be demanded and involves some personal-relational component. Bearing these methodological considerations in mind, we are now able to turn to an analysis of the relevant texts in the Hebrew Bible, Second Temple Literature, and Paul.

70. See the seminal work Mauss 1990, which originally appeared in 1924 as *Essai sur le don*. For a general introduction to the literature, see Schrift 1997. For an overview of how these concepts relate to the New Testament, see DeSilva 2000, 95–156.

71. Seneca calls gift-exchange 'the chief bond of human society' (*Ben.* 1.4.2).

72. See, e.g., *Ben.* 4.40.1–2. See further Engberg-Pedersen 2008, 16.

73. On this last point note that if someone were to give me medicine necessary to sustain my life, and such medicine I could just as easily go and buy myself, that is entirely different than if someone were to give that same medicine in a situation where I could never afford to buy it myself! In each case both are gifts; in each case both are the *same* gift; but both are not gifts in the same way.

I. JEWISH SCRIPTURES

Chapter 2

RESTORATION AGENCY: DEUTERONOMY 30, JEREMIAH 31–32, AND EZEKIEL 36–37

2.1. Introduction

In Deuteronomy, the covenant came not only with the possibility of life and blessing (28:1–14), but also with the prospect of death and curse (28:15–68). By chapter 29 Moses foresees how the curse will take effect. For the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel Moses' nightmare had become a reality. What all three figures share is a refusal to let death and curse have the final word. In their own ways, Moses, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel each imagine a restoration to life and blessing beyond any present or future failing on the part of God's people. But what exactly each author thought this restoration would entail to solve the problem of human ineptitude, and how it would come about, are the more evasive questions this chapter seeks to address.¹

2.2. Deuteronomy 30: God and Israel in the Drama of Restoration

1. By examining these texts together, I do not want to suggest that differences do not exist between them. However, to tease out all those differences would take us away from our immediate concerns regarding conceptions of agency and transformation. What matters most for this investigation is that any Second Temple reader could connect these passages due to similarities in content and what hermeneutical strategies they might employ to make sense of the texts as Scripture.

Deuteronomy 30:1–10 chronicles the plan for the reversal of the curse. The phrase ‘and it will be when all these things come upon you’ looks to an unspecified time in the future when Israel will find herself in exile (v1). Whether or not ‘all these things/words’ (כל־הדברים) refers to seasons of both blessing and curse or simply to a time of curse is difficult to determine.² Grammatically, ‘all these things’ appears to concern both blessings and curses. The verses leading up to chapter 30, however, are dominated by the theme of curse (29:18–27)³ and the verses under consideration respond to the situation of a broken covenant. It seems that even if Israel has at some time experienced both blessing and curse, כל־הדברים has the curses primarily in view.

Israel and YHWH are the two actors ruling the discourse and both have roles in the drama of restoration. The *Leitwort* שׁוּב highlights and balances an interplay between the actors: Twice Israel is the subject of שׁוּב (vv1–2) and twice YHWH (v3). This dynamic is apparent, albeit in reverse order, in verses 9–10. Thus, verses 1–3 and 9–10 can be structured as follows:

- A) Israel returns and obeys YHWH, returning to her heart (vv1–2)
- B) YHWH returns to Israel, turning her turning (v3)
- B¹) YHWH returns to Israel (v9)
- A¹) Israel obeys and returns to YHWH (v10)

An apparent relationship exists between divine and human action. The questions of how they are related and how verses 6–8 contribute to that relationship are more obscure and can be read in two distinct manners.

2.2.1. Reading 1: The Priority of Israel in Restoration

2.2.1.1. *The Priority of Israel and The Condition of Renewal*

The reading that has held the consensus in both ancient and modern times focuses upon Israel. Verses 3–7 indicate all that YHWH is willing to do once Israel returns (v2). Verses 1–3 thus form one long conditional sentence with verses 1–2 as protasis and verse 3–7 as apodosis, suggesting an ‘if Israel-then YHWH’ construction.⁴ Likewise, in this reading verses 9–10 form a simi-

2. Whether these seasons are experienced sequentially (Nelson 2002, 348) or intermingled (Driver 1902, 329) is equally unclear.

3. Craigie 1976, 362.

ar construction so that in a series of three occurrences, an initial כִּי (v9) holds together an apodosis and the next two occurrences mark the protasis (v10): ‘YHWH will ... if Israel ... if Israel’. Verse 6 functions as ‘another step’ in the plan:⁵ After Israel returns to YHWH and YHWH returns Israel to the land, YHWH does a further work by circumcising Israel’s heart and transferring the curse to her enemies (vv6–7). Whatever the varying interpretative nuances of heart-circumcision,⁶ Israel elicits the divine gift. As P. Craigie summarises: ‘Having remembered, repented, and obeyed, then the people could look to God for his aid ... only then could they expect to know once again his compassion.’⁷

2.2.1.2. The Priority of Israel, Further Support

Chapter 30 seems to support this reading. Verse 19 exhorts Israel to ‘Choose life!’, and verses 11–14 fashion a direct rebuke against those tempted to think they are unable to accomplish Torah: It is ‘near’ (קרוב) so they can ‘perform it’ (לעשותו).⁸ Furthermore, while in verses 1–5 and in verses 9–10 there is a balance between Israel and YHWH turning, Israel is the only one who turns in verses 6–8. So out of the seven occurrences of שׁוּב, Israel is the subject four times, while YHWH is the subject three times. In addition, Israel’s turning is stated emphatically in verse 8: וּאֵתָהּ תִּשׁוּב. When modified to incorporate all seven instances of שׁוּב, the structure of verses 1–10 suggests:

- A) Israel returns and obeys YHWH, returning to her heart (vv1–2)
- B) YHWH returns to Israel by turning her turning (vv3–7)
- C) Israel, even Israel, returns and obeys YHWH (v8)
- B¹) YHWH returns to Israel (v9)
- A¹) Israel obeys and returns to YHWH (v10)⁹

4. Brueggemann 2001, 267; Nelson 2002, 348. Commentators conclude the apodosis either at v7, v8, or v9.

5. Nelson 2002, 348.

6. J. Tigay (1996, 108) understands YHWH’s work to be the removal of ‘the psychological impediments to whole-hearted devotion.’ This finds some support in the LXX which translates לִבָּב as δὶάνοια in 29:17. Nelson (2002, 349) essentially thinks heart-circumcision makes obedience ‘enduringly possible’. Le Déaut (1981, 181) understands the metaphor as the conversion which God himself performs.

7. Craigie 1976, 363; so also Christensen 2001, 2:735. Tigay (1996, 285) records how the rabbis understood the progression of verses 1–6 as follows: ‘When a person seeks to purify himself, he receives help in doing so’ (on the basis of Bekhor Shor and Ramban, citing Shab. 104a and parallels from Muffs 1992, 17).

8. Brueggemann 2001, 268.

9. Similar to Tigay 1996, 284.

This structure highlights the priority of Israel's return: both YHWH and Israel turn, but the stress is on Israel who 'makes the first move.'¹⁰

2.2.1.3. The Priority of Israel and its Implications for Paul and other Later Interpreters

How we understand Deuteronomy 30 in its literary context will necessarily play a part in how we assess its interpreters. F. Watson, for example, suggests that Paul did not believe 'Israel of the present [had] succeeded in putting right its relationship with God (along the lines of Deuteronomy 30:1–10).'¹¹ In fact, on Watson's account Paul did not believe that Israel's situation could be resolved by that scenario since Deuteronomy 30:1–10 witnesses to something other than an unconditional divine saving act. While Moses' song in chapter 32 would attain 'to a higher level of insight, testifying ... to a divine rather than a human solution',¹² in Deuteronomy 30 Moses has opted for a human answer to Israel's problem.

J.L. Martyn has a similar objection. He sees Deuteronomy 30 as part of the classic moral drama which always presupposes the competency of the moral agent.¹³ Though Martyn never mentions verses 1–10 explicitly, when he speaks generally about Deuteronomy 30 and about human failure being resolved through repentance, he appears to have the entire chapter in mind. For both these scholars, Deuteronomy 30, because of its optimistic evaluation of human nature, could not have been understood by Paul as a positive witness to the gospel.

Yet these analyses assume that a reading prioritising Israel's return to the Law is the only valid reading of Deuteronomy 30:1–10. While my analysis thus far has shown this to be a viable option, it is not the only possible construal. In fact, we shall presently see how ambiguity in Deuteronomy 30 also lends the text to a reading that prioritises the creative initiative of God, a reading in which Moses must assume the office of prophet and testify to YHWH's saving intervention. An analysis along these lines questions the assumption that Paul would bypass Deuteronomy 30:1–10 and, consequently, invites a reconsideration of how this text might have influenced him.

10. Nelson 2002, 347; see also Brueggemann 2001, 266; Werline 1998, 15–18.

11. Watson 2004, 436n41.

12. Watson 2004, 439.

13. Martyn 2006.

2.2.2. Reading 2: Divine Priority in Restoration

There are three ways in which Deuteronomy 30 opens itself up to a reading which prioritises God's initiative and agency: 1) syntactical ambiguity; 2) the structure of the text with respect to *Leitwörter*; and 3) the larger context of the book. We shall consider each in turn.

2.2.2.1. Divine Priority and Syntactical Ambiguity

Syntactical Ambiguity in Verses 1–5: Most commentators assert an 'if-then' relationship between verses 1b–3, beginning the apodosis in verse 3 with the change of subject from Israel to YHWH.¹⁴ An Israel-Priority reading then understands the relationship between protasis (if you return..., vv1a–2) and apodosis (then YHWH will..., vv3–7) as that of cause to effect. However, as M. Brettler has pointed out, the syntax is ambiguous and does not necessitate these choices.¹⁵

While a protasis is introduced in verse 1a by the formula **כִּי וְהָיָה**, this expression appears five other times in Deuteronomy (6:10; 11:29; 15:16; 26:1; 31:21) and the meaning is temporal in all but one.¹⁶ The exception, 15:16, is distinguishable by its context and syntax.¹⁷ Without grammatical or contextual reasons for thinking otherwise, **כִּי וְהָיָה** in 30:1 is best understood temporally:¹⁸ the contingency is with respect to time and not event.¹⁹

The location of the apodosis is also uncertain.²⁰ Following the clause introduced by **כִּי וְהָיָה** comes a string of *weqatal* verbs. The only indication that the apodosis begins in verse 3 is the change in subject. But a change in subject does not mandate a shift from protasis to apodosis. In fact, on that basis the apodosis should begin in verse 1b where the subject changes from 'all these things' to 'you', resulting in a substantially different sense:²¹

14. Craigie 1976, 363; Driver 1902, 328; Tigay 1996, 284; Lemke 2003, 309.

15. Brettler 1999, 176.

16. Barker 2004, 154.

17. Deut 15:16 comes in a casuistic section giving instructions for how one is to deal with the poor (15:7–11). Vv12–18 present instructions for the treatment of an Israelite who has become an indentured servant, both in letting him/her go, and in the case that (**כִּי וְהָיָה**) the servant should wish to remain.

18. So Barker 2004, 154.

19. Even though Nelson (2002, 44) gives v1a temporal significance, he perceives an 'if-then' relationship in vv1b–3. To do this he must distinguish between the enactment of the curses (v1a) and Israel turning (v1b). The former is viewed as a temporal clause 'And it will be *when*...', while the latter introduces the more important 'if you turn...'

20. See Brettler 1999, 176; Lohfink 1998, 120–121.; also admitted by Watson 2004, 438–439n43.

And it will be when all these words/things come upon you, *then*²² you shall return (והשבת) to your heart ... and you shall return (ושבת) to YHWH ... and you shall obey (ושמעו) ... and YHWH your God shall return (ושב)...

The contingency here lies purely in the condition of the curses taking effect. No contingency is placed upon Israel herself, as her turning forms part of the apodosis—something that *will* happen when the curses culminate. Read this way, as G. von Rad notes, ‘[the text] contains no admonitions, but ... is clothed altogether in the style of prophetic predictions.’²³ This is not to argue that a prophetic reading is *the* correct reading; it is simply to show that gaps exist within the text,²⁴ and those gaps open the text up to different perceptions.²⁵ If nothing in verses 1–3 requires that competent readers prioritise the action of Israel, does the same hold true for verses 9–10?

Syntactical Ambiguity in Verses 9–10: As previously noted, verses 9–10 form a similar structure to verses 1–3 and are held together by three כִּי clauses. The first כִּי has a causal function and links verse 9a to 9b.²⁶ Verse 9 has a thematic and lexical correspondence to verses 3–5 and can be argued to parallel YHWH’s actions there.²⁷ Verse 10 links back to verses 1–2.²⁸ Thus verses 9–10 have a close relationship to verses 1–5. Yet how one relates the actions of YHWH and Israel depends upon how one takes the כִּי clauses in verse 10.

P. Barker correctly notes that it is common for commentators to ‘translate the particle in v1a

21. Deut 23:10 suggests that the first ו can be a ו of apodosis. See Brettler 1999, 175, 177.

22. Craigie (1976, 361) does something similar when he starts the apodosis at v1b and then carries it through v3: ...then you ... then YHWH.

23. von Rad 1966, 183.

24. Notably, the relationship between protasis and apodosis is also ambiguous. Though the two often relate as cause to effect, protasis can also relate to apodosis as evidence to inference. Israel’s turning then becomes the evidence that YHWH is restoring her.

25. The LXX contains those same ‘gaps’ by following the ambiguity of the Hebrew, a simple temporal clause (καὶ ἔσται ὡς ἂν) is followed by a series of καὶ+future indicative verbs. Verbs that do not follow this pattern are embedded within subordinate clauses and off the mainline of the discourse (e.g., ἦν ἔδωκα; οὐ ἔάν σε διασκοπίσῃ κύριος, v1).

26. The word ‘causal’, as applied by grammarians, is used broadly to include nuances such as cause, reason, motivation, and explanation, best expressed by the German *Begründungssatz*. A ‘causal’ rendering of the כִּי can thus be ‘direct’ or ‘indirect’. Lemke (2003, 309) suggests an emphatic function. The emphatic function of the כִּי, however, is questionable; see Aejmelaeus 1986, 202–207.

27. On thematic correspondences, note that both sections involve the land and the fruitfulness of Israel. On lexical correspondence, note שׁוּב with YHWH as subject; note also אֲבִתֶיךָ.

28. Barker 2004, 155.

temporally (“when”) but those in v10 conditionally (“if”).²⁹ Yet this frequently betrays a bias for the Israel-Priority reading. Grammarians tell us that it is often difficult to distinguish between temporal and conditional clauses.³⁰ This becomes particularly vexing when כִּי clauses precede their main clause and refer to future events.³¹ Most often the degree of probability regarding the event or action in question guides the interpreter’s choice:³² the higher the probability, the more likely כִּי should be rendered temporally. Although the clauses in verse 10 do not precede their main clause, they do look to the future. And while the probability of the actions in verse 10 are yet to be determined, the corresponding clause in verse 1 contains a high degree of expectation. In the chapters surrounding our text, the curses invoking exile move from potentiality to inevitability (29:18–28; 31:16–17, 27–29). Further, as discussed above, כִּי וְהָיָה should almost certainly be rendered temporally. Given the high correspondence between verse 10 and verses 1–2, it is reasonable to postulate a similar reading of כִּי as ‘when’ in both. Thus, while there is a temporal correspondence between the actions of YHWH and those of Israel, and while those actions are interconnected through the use of the verb שׁוּב, in verses 9–10 the dynamics of that relationship remain uncertain.

For the Divine-Priority reading the ambiguities in verses 1–5 and verses 9–10 remain unresolved at this point. It is only by focusing in on verses 6–8 and rereading the ambiguous clauses through those verses’ hermeneutical light that tensions are resolved. We must remember that such a rereading is far from forced since textual gaps remain obscure, inviting reexamination, and since all reading is in some way dialectical. The logic of the Divine-Priority reading will only fully surface after we examine certain structural features in Deuteronomy 30:1–10 and consider its message in light of earlier motifs in the book.

29. Barker 2004, 154, citing Craigie 1976; von Rad 1966; Ridderbos 1984; Merrill 1994.

30. So e.g., Joüon 1991, §166a: ‘...in certain cases it may be difficult to decide whether a given clause is temporal or conditional.’

31. Aejmelaeus 1986, 197; but compare Joüon (1991, §166p), who suggests that כִּי is only ‘sometimes used in the conditional sense of if.’

32. Aejmelaeus 1986, 197.

2.2.2.2. *Divine Priority and The Structure of the Text with Respect to Leitwörter*

If one were to decide the structure of this passage on the subject of verbs alone, and especially of the key verb **שוב**, Tigay would surely be right to carry the apodosis begun in verse 3 right up to verse 8.³³ This structure is encouraged by the observation that while the emphatic pronoun **אתה** marks a clear break between verses 7 and 8, none appears after verse 5. Supporting the Israel-Priority hermeneutic, this analysis renders heart-circumcision as one of many benefits YHWH will impart to Israel as a result of her return. Barker, however, following the analysis of G. Vanoni, has given reasons for understanding verses 6–8 as a unit.³⁴ His structure centers on the even distribution of *Leitwörter* throughout the text. Verses 1–3 and verses 9–10 contain the following key words or phrases: return (**שוב**); heart (**לבב**); you will obey his voice (**ושמעתי בקולו**); with all your heart and with all your soul (**ובכל-לבבך ובכל-נפשך**), and some variation of commanding/commandments (**מצוה/צוה**). All these words or phrases are present in verses 6 and 8.

V6: And YHWH your God will circumcise your heart (**לבבך**) and the heart (**לבב**) of your seed so that you love YHWH your God with all your heart and with all your soul (**ובכל-לבבך ובכל-נפשך**), so that you might live.

V8: And as for you, you will return (**תשוב**) and will obey the voice (**ושמעתי בקול**) of YHWH and will do all of his commandments (**מצותיו**) which I am commanding you (**מצוה**) this day.

If we divide the text at verse 8, however, we lose this even distribution of *Leitwörter*: verse 8 on its own lacks any reference to the heart or to the crucial phrase **ובכל-לבבך ובכל-נפשך**; verses 6–7 lack any reference to turning or obedience. There is good reason therefore to understand the whole of verses 6–8 as a kind of inner frame corresponding to verses 1–5 and 9–10:

A) Israel returns and obeys YHWH, returning to her heart (vv1–2)

B) YHWH returns to Israel by turning her turning (v3)

33. Tigay 1996, 284; see also Christensen 2001, 2:736; Lohfink 1962, 41.

34. Barker 2004, 141–144.

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- C) YHWH circumcises Israel's heart,
C2) so Israel loves, returns, and obeys (vv6–8).

B¹) YHWH returns to Israel (v9)

A¹) Israel obeys and returns to YHWH (v10)

On this construal, the interplay that exists between the actions of God and Israel in verses 1–5 and verses 9–10 is also apparent in verses 6–8; yet unlike those outer frames, the interplay is not concentrated in the verb **שׁוּב**. Conspicuously, not once does YHWH appear as the subject of **שׁוּב**. Instead, the convergence of divine and human agency is located in the **לִבִּב**. It is on the heart that God operates and it is from the heart that Israel loves. The ל + infinitive construct (**אָהַבָה**) communicates that the divine act of circumcising Israel's heart effects her love.³⁵ Heart-circumcision is then presupposed in verse 8, motivating Israel's turning and obedience.

2.2.2.3. Divine Priority and the Larger Context of the Book

Israel's Heart Problem: The reading that emphasises YHWH's action in verse 6 finds support from the larger context of Deuteronomy. Critical for this reading is that YHWH must operate on the heart before Israel can obey. Israel's problem of infidelity is ultimately rooted in her heart. This assumption is corroborated by Deuteronomy's stress on the heart as the nucleus of human responsiveness toward God. **לִבִּב** is the explicit means whereby Israel is to **אָהַב** (6:5; 13:4; 30:6); **עֲבַד** (4:29); **דָּרַשׁ** (10:12; 11:13); **שׁוּב** (30:2); **שָׁמַע** (30:10). As Barker notes, "These are all key verbs in Deuteronomy, specifying the most important terms of response to Yahweh. With all of these verbs, the repeated expression **בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ** underlines the importance of the heart."³⁶

Yet in Deuteronomy Israel's heart is unwell. Deuteronomy 29:17–22 warns how exile will result from walking after the stubborn and rebellious heart (vv18–22). When the next generation arises and other nations inquire about the exile, the cause is explained from a different perspective: '[B]ecause they abandoned the covenant' (v24).³⁷ According to the logic of chapter 29, the

35. A similar dynamic is reproduced in the LXX's ἀγαπᾶν.

36. Barker 2004, 159.

distorted heart *amounts to* an abandonment of the covenant and summons covenant curse. Earlier in the chapter, Moses declares that YHWH has yet to give Israel a ‘heart to know’ (לב לדעת, v3). Consistent with this pessimism is the assertion that Israel has rebelled from the Exodus up until the present day (9:7); she has been stiff-necked from the beginning (9:13) and in vital need of heart-surgery (10:16). As J.G. McConville observes: “The alternatives placed before the people both at 11:26–32 and in ch. 28 seem to be mocked by a theology that claims Israel is constitutionally incapable of choosing the way of life.”³⁸ A reading that prioritises divine agency finds this problem resolved in God’s initiative to circumcise the heart. Until this occurs, any requirement for Israel to turn is at best a reminder of a promise instilling hope and at worse a condemning critique leading to despair.

The Transformation of Demand into Promise: Finally, the unique manner in which divine imperatives come as promises in Deuteronomy 30:6 encourages the Divine-Priority hermeneutic. This phenomenon occurs with the verbs מול and אהב. Deuteronomy 10:16 is critical for understanding 30:6 as it is the only other time the verb ‘circumcise’ (מול) occurs in Deuteronomy, and as it is used metaphorically with the object ‘foreskin of your heart’ (ערלת לבבכם). After grounding the demand for covenant fidelity in electing love, Deuteronomy 10:12–16 calls Israel to fear, walk, love and serve with all her being (v12). And while she is to keep commandments, Moses’ focus is not on rules, but on the fundamental disposition Israel is to have toward God.³⁹ And yet if Israel is to offer this quality of responsiveness, she must eventually deal with her stubbornness through heart-circumcision (10:16). This very logic is presupposed in 30:6. The marked difference between the passages is that in 10:16 *Israel* is the agent responsible for heart-circumcision, and there מול carries an imperatival force; but in 30:6 *God* circumcises the heart and the verb holds the perlocutionary effect of a promise.

Closely connected with YHWH’s act of heart-circumcision in 30:6 is Israel’s act of love: ומל ואהב. יהוה אלהיך את־לבבך...לאהבה. Barker gives no less than six reasons for supposing that אהב is the most prominent of all verbs used to describe Israel’s responsiveness in Deuteronomy,

37. The text moves fluidly from the individual to the corporate. On this, see Olson 2003, 209; cf. Craigie 1976, 358–359.

38. McConville 1993, 134.

39. Tigay 1996, 107; Barker 2004, 204.

three of which concern us here: 1) it is the only verb qualified three times by the prepositional phrase **בְּכָל־לִבְּךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ**; 2) it is the most recurrent demand in Deuteronomy; and 3) it holds a central place in the *Shema*.⁴⁰ Whether or not **אָהַב** is the most important of responsive verbs, it has a critical place in the book and can be used to summarise the requirements of the covenant (6:4–5).⁴¹ It is therefore of great importance that Deuteronomy 30:6 is the first and only place in the book where **אָהַב** has Israel as its subject and is not ‘expressed as a commandment (6:5; 11:1), or an infinitive construct dependent on a verb of command (10:12; 11:13, 22; 19:9; 30:16; 20) or a participle with similar effect (13:4).’⁴² Deuteronomy 30:6 makes Israel’s *Shema*-fulfillment directly dependent on a divine act.⁴³ The text thus bespeaks a future gift-act of God wherein he establishes covenant responsiveness and thereby refashions the divine command into a divine promise.⁴⁴

2.2.2.4. *Divine Priority and the Invitation to Reread*

Life is the most general term for reward in Deuteronomy⁴⁵ and has been taken to encompass both present and eschatological blessing. If in 30:6 Israel’s act of love is closely connected with YHWH’s act of heart-circumcision, then just as closely linked is Israel’s life with her love. And since life is the result of Israel’s love, in 30:6 life is ultimately the consequence of divine action:

YHWH will circumcise your heart > leads to (לְאַהֲבָה/ἀγαπήσῃ) love for YHWH > leads to (לַחַיִּיךָ/ὄνα ζῆς σὺ) life.⁴⁶

If the logic of verse 6 is that the covenant fidelity which brings life is the result of heart-circumcision, then a reader might legitimately ask: How is Israel supposed to offer such fidelity in verse 2 prior to YHWH’s enabling work? A Divine-Priority hermeneutic will find the answer in verses 6–8 and reread the outer frames, and their ambiguities, in light of the central section. As such, Deu-

40. Barker 2004, 160. See also MacDonald 2003, 99; Craigie 1976, 204.

41. On the relationship between the *Shema* and love, see MacDonald 2003, 97–108. The correlation between obedience to the commandments and love is apparent in 30:16 where ‘that which I am commanding you today’ (**אֲשֶׁר וּלְשֹׁמֵר מִצְוֹתָיו**) is glossed as ‘to love’ (לְאַהֲבָה) and also ‘to keep his commandments’ (וּלְשֹׁמֵר מִצְוֹתָיו).

42. Barker 2004, 162.

43. So Braulik 1994, 163.

44. Contra Weinfeld 1976, 35n63: ‘There is apparently no significant difference between God’s circumcising the heart of Israel and Israel’s circumcising their own heart.’

45. Weinfeld 1972, 307.

46. On לַחַיִּיךָ, see Williams 1976, §365.

teronomy 30:6 does not just bear witness to YHWH’s future gift-act, it testifies to the *divine saving initiative*, which reconstitutes moral beings, creates life and blessing out of death and curse, and refashions command into promise.⁴⁷

2.2.2.5. *Divine-Priority and 30:11–14*

If YHWH must act before Israel can obey, then why in verses 11–14 does Moses rebuke his hearers for believing that the commandments are too difficult? Given that these verses contain the most optimistic statement in Deuteronomy regarding Israel’s power to perform Torah,⁴⁸ should that not speak against taking 30:1–10 as assuming a pessimistic anthropology?⁴⁹ While acknowledging certain syntactical ambiguities present within 30:1–10, Watson, for instance, remains unconvinced that ‘the statement about divine action in v.6 ... [is] ... emphatic enough to determine the interpretation of the whole passage – especially in light of the resulting tension with 30:11–20.’⁵⁰ How can the Divine-Priority reading make sense of these verses?⁵¹

While it is normally assumed that verses 11–14 function as a return to the present,⁵² there are reasons for doubting this. First, the introductory phrase **אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצוּחַ הַיּוֹם** appears twice in the previous section (vv2, 8), a context which addresses the future. Thus, **הַיּוֹם** does not necessarily mark a temporal change from verses 1–10, but could simply function to identify the commandment under discussion.⁵³

Second, the **כִּי** of verse 11 might support a correspondence between the sections. The **כִּי** Driver has labeled ‘introductory’ actually follows a string of **כִּי** clauses beginning in verse 9b.⁵⁴ There I proposed that the **כִּי** introduces a *Begründungssatz*: a clause which broadly provides the cause, reason, motivation, or explanation for what precedes it.⁵⁵ As Aejmelaeus notes, ‘It is char-

47. So Lemke 2003, 310. A reading of this nature will deem Christensen’s (2001, 2:740) suggestion that ‘God’s commandments are his enablements’ to miss the point entirely.

48. McConville 1993, 137.

49. So Wright 1996, 286; Mann 1995, 158.

50. Watson 2004, 438–39n43, emphasis mine.

51. A proposal that is irrelevant for ancient interpreters is to view 30:1–10 as a later insertion (Brettler 1999, 185–188; Driver 1902, 330–331).

52. So Driver 1902, 331; Craigie 1976, 364; Nelson 2002, 349; Tigay 1996, 285; McConville 1993, 137.

53. Cf. Barker 2004, 185.

54. Driver 1902, 331.

55. See Aejmelaeus 1986, 202–203.

acteristic of the indirect causal expression [e.g. *Begründungssatz*] that they [sic] do not state the cause for *what* is actually said in the main clause but rather *the reason for saying it*.⁵⁶ A reader might understand this to be the case in verse 9, where the clause ‘for (כי) YHWH will again delight in you for good’ supports the statement ‘YHWH your God will make you excel in everything’.⁵⁷ One can see the attractiveness of taking the כי clauses in verse 10 as a continuation of this explanation: ‘YHWH will make you excel (v9a) ... *for* YHWH will delight (v9b) ... *for* you will obey (v10a) ... *for* you will turn’ (v10b). If this is the case, what is to stop a reader from including verse 11, or even verse 14, from the litany of *Begründungssätze* enlisted to explicate what it will mean for YHWH to make Israel excel.⁵⁸ In other words, the reason Moses can say ‘YHWH will make you excel’ is because the commandments will not be too hard; they will even be on the mouth and in the heart. Furthermore, following this line of thought, the section could easily bear the translation: ‘this commandment *will not be* too difficult for you... it *will be* on your mouth...’ Verses 11–14, then, would encourage the present generation concerning the things YHWH’s future saving action will accomplish.

Finally, we must remember that Israel’s problem in 29:3 is that she does not have a heart to understand, eyes to see, or ears to hear. Something must have occurred for the pessimism of 29:3 to be transformed into the optimism of 30:11–14. On one reading 30:6 provides the answer. Verses 11–14 could be taken as an explanation of the ability granted to Israel on account of YHWH’s action. Regardless, it is worth noting that the Israel-Priority reading does not escape the tensions that are supposedly caused by the Divine-Priority reading. For instance, D.T. Olson calls ‘the affirmation both that obedience and loyalty to God seem *very difficult* for Israel to maintain (29:22–28) and yet the statement that the commandments are *not difficult* and very near to the heart...(30:11–14)’ a paradox.⁵⁹ The optimism of verses 10–14 seems to be at odds with the pessimism verse 6 assumes.⁶⁰ But when one takes into account that 30:6 falls between 29:22 and 30:11, the paradox disappears.⁶¹ Thus, rather than *creating* a tension, the Divine-Priority reading

56. Aejmelaeus 1986, 203, emphasis original.

57. So Barker 2004, 186.

58. So Braulik 1994, 164.

59. Olson 2003, 209.

60. Nelson 2002, 349.

61. It is puzzling why Olson (2003, 209) calls this a paradox since he believes 30:6 presents ‘the unprecedented notion of God circumcising the heart’ which sets ‘the human intellect and will toward God in obedience’.

might actually *resolve* a tension that is already present in the text when one does not read it in a linear fashion.⁶²

2.2.3. Conclusion

Deuteronomy 30:1–10 is a text fraught with ambiguity that gives way to two plausible, internally consistent, yet conflicting readings. The passage can be understood to hold out the possibility of covenant renewal, a second chance for Israel to recommit to YHWH. It can also be read as the assurance that in the future YHWH will act decisively to rescue Israel and perform an unprecedented work whereby he founds Israel's obedience so as to secure her life. The differences between these two readings stem from the phenomena of textual gaps, gaps which any devoted reader will strive to fill. Since in large measure the filling of textual gaps is precisely what makes later readings unique, and any particular reading interesting,⁶³ in section 2, we will want to note exactly how Second Temple interpreters go about filling those gaps.

2.3. Heart Transformation in the Prophets

Before investigating Second Temple interpretations of Deuteronomy 30 with a view to opening up respective understandings of the interplay between grace, transformation, and agency, it will be helpful to consider two other texts in the Hebrew Bible that describe God establishing the competency of the moral agent *via* heart-transformation. While space will only allow for a brief

62. For similar conclusions, see Coxhead 2006, 305–311; Sailhamer 1992, 473. For a recent analysis which lends support to the Divine-Priority reading, see Papola 2008, 215–220, 223–230.

63. An example of a reader who does not try to fill those gaps is Lemke (2003, 309n21), who argues on syntactical grounds that vv1–5 are conditional and vv6–10 are unconditional. Interestingly, he does this because כִּי usually introduces conditional clauses in legal texts and אֲשֶׁר in narrative prose. But the only אֲשֶׁר in vv1–5 comes in v4 and concerns how YHWH will return the exiles even 'if' they have been scattered to the far reaches of the globe and is not a condition for his retrieving them. On Lemke's own reasoning, he should reject a conditional reading of vv1–5. It is surprising that on Lemke's reading the shift from conditionality in vv1–5 to the unconditionality of vv6–10 does not indicate a change in authors (310), which assumes that our author (or editor) was hopelessly illogical.

consideration of Jeremiah's new covenant and Ezekiel's restoration narrative, surveying these texts will heighten our sensitivity to the hermeneutics involved in later readings.

2.3.1. Jeremiah's New Covenant

The book of Jeremiah's close relationship to Deuteronomy as well as Paul's multiple references to it suggest that Jeremiah was influential for both Paul and his Jewish contemporaries' respective approaches to grace and agency. Especially inviting for our purposes is Jeremiah's employment of the 'heart-change' metaphor to describe human transformation, as well as the loyal life he depicts flowing from that formative event. The various statements made throughout the book on this subject come to a head in chapters 31–32.⁶⁴

Jeremiah presents Israel's future hope as a new and eternal covenant (31:31–34, 32:38–41),⁶⁵ which stands in both continuity (עוד, cf. 31:23) and discontinuity (ולא... עוד, 31:34) with the past.⁶⁶ Importantly, the previous covenant is identified by the rebellion that followed it: It is the covenant 'which they broke/annulled' (אשר-המה הפרו, 31:32). Since 'they' refers to those led out of Egypt, the event described is most likely the debacle featuring the golden calf. For Jeremiah, Israel's apostasy reaches back to the covenant's institution (7:22–26; 11:7–8; cf. Deut 9:7–13, 29:3),⁶⁷ and in many ways the project of the Mosaic covenant failed to launch. Its lack of success, however, was not due to the covenant itself, still less could it be attributed to YHWH,⁶⁸ but as both emphatic pronouns (ואנכי/אשר-המה) indicate, its deficiency was to be located in the people (v32). To understand the inadequacy of the previous covenant and how the new covenant will differ, we need to consider the moral competence of those under that covenant.

2.3.1.1. Moral Competence in the Previous Covenant

If fidelity to the covenant was not present at its inauguration, the situation had not improved by Jeremiah's day (31:32; 7:24–27). Tragically, Israel has persisted in apostasy (7:25; 11:7–8),⁶⁹ ex-

64. For earlier statements, see 3:16–17; 4:3–4; 9:24–25; 3:16–17; 24:5–7; 29:10–13.

65. On the relationship between these passages, see Unterman 1987, 114–115.

66. Lundbom 1999, 2:454; cf. Wallis 1969; Potter 1983, 349, 354.

67. McKane 1986, 1.172–173, 175; Thompson 1980, 289.

68. Contra Carroll 1986, 629–630.

69. McKane 1986, 1.172–173, 175.

acerbating her situation (7:26; cf. 16:11–12).⁷⁰ Her heart, stubborn and rebellious (5:23), polluted by evil (3:17; 4:14; 16:12; 18:12), directed ‘backward and not forward’ (7:24), has led her to other gods (9:14). But this predicament does not initially keep Jeremiah from insinuating that the people are at least partially competent moral agents and addressing them as such. In 4:14, he entreats them to ‘wash their hearts’ so they might be delivered and opens his Temple Sermon with a series of conditional clauses (7:5–7). Yet these buoyant notes are eventually drowned in a chorus of deep despondency. For Jeremiah also states that the people do not know how to do good (4:22). And while they might have eyes to see and ears to hear, they refuse to use them (5:21). Speaking to the people becomes futile. It is not simply that they will not listen; having uncircumcised ears, they *cannot listen* (ולא יוכלו להקשיב) (6:10).⁷¹ Jeremiah is even told not to intercede for the people because the window of opportunity has closed (7:16–20).

Such an indictment leads to the conclusion that Jeremiah speaks to a people beyond reformation (7:27).⁷² They are no different than the nations and stand under the same judgement (9:24–25). By comparing the people to an Ethiopian who cannot transform his skin and a leopard who cannot change its spots (13:23), Jeremiah betrays his conviction that Israel’s state cannot be resolved by human endeavor: they are *unable* to do good?⁷³ Describing her present inability as the result of habitual performance, ‘training in evil’ (למדי הרע), does not soften this indictment. Jeremiah’s analogies do not suggest that she is ‘virtually’ incapable of change,⁷⁴ but that change by human undertaking is now an absolute impossibility (whatever may have been the case before).⁷⁵ Eventually, Jeremiah will even abandon the heart-circumcision metaphor altogether: Israel needed more than heart-repair (4:4); she needed a heart-transplant (24:5–7). In the end, the

70. Thompson 1980, 289. Lundbom (1999, 1:483) correctly notes that לאחור ולא לפנים (v24) does not imply regression. Nevertheless, the מן of comparison in 7:26 does. While the prominal suffixes in the preceding verse are ambiguous (see Craigie 1991, 116), understanding the implied subject as the present generation is not problematic since the rebellion has lasted to the present day. Amending אליכם in v25 to the 3 masc plur of the LXX and Syr. helps to resolve these tensions (McKane 1986, 1:173). These difficulties do not impinge on the overall point.

71. Holladay 1986, 1:214.

72. Craigie 1991, 125. This position stands regardless of the textual problems in 7:27. Elsewhere, Jeremiah conveys the people’s propensity to reject his message (cf. 1:16–19; 5:1–5; 6:10, 16–18; 8:23–9:5; 18:18). For an argument for the MT of v27, see Lundbom 1999, 1:484.

73. Craigie 1991, 193, 314, though he thinks the verse has been inserted. On the nature of the construction, see Holladay 1986, 1:415; Joüon 1991, §167m.

74. As assumed by Carroll 1986, 305; Thompson 1980, 374; Lundbom 1999, 1:687 (with caution).

75. So Fretheim 2002, 140. The only other time the adjective למד appears is in 2:24 where it means ‘accustomed’.

human ineptitude that waylaid the initial covenant was not to be resolved by human ingenuity. The remedy had to come from somewhere outside Israel and yet it also had to root out and affect something at the very core of her existence.⁷⁶

2.3.1.2. *The New Covenant and the Gift of Moral Competence*

The new covenant will not be characterised by the apostasy which dominated the previous one. In fact, the anthropological situation will be entirely different since YHWH pledges to transform Israel's heart by inscribing Torah on it and placing the fear of him within (31:33, 32:40). Furthermore, he will give the people 'one heart and one way' (32:39).

Previous descriptions of the heart provide the background for this promise.⁷⁷ The metaphor of writing on the heart is used to describe the inclinations of people. Judah's sin is 'written ... on the tablet of her heart' (כתובה...על-לוח לבם) because her predilection is for sin (17:1). To write Torah in the heart is then to reorient Israel's will so that she is predisposed to obey.⁷⁸ The first clause of the colon communicates a similar thought: 'I will put my Torah *within/among them*' (נתתי את-תורתִי בקרבם) (31:33).⁷⁹ While this phrase could be taken to mean that Torah will be

76. After surveying moral identity in Jer, J. Lapsely (2000, 52) concludes that 'Jeremiah continues to assume a basically intact model of the virtuous moral self, capable of knowing and doing the good.' Jer's depiction of humans as corrupt represents a 'minor chord' which is only concerned with his generation (52, 58, 64). Curiously, however, Lapsely fails to mention 7:24–27 and 11:7–8, both of which indicate that Israel's apostasy goes back to her origin. Though she argues that people retain the ability to repent, beyond chapters 2–4 she only cites 18:11 and discusses 24:5–7. The former hardly supports her conclusion since in 18:12 the people answer, 'In vain we will follow our own plans ... each according to the stubbornness of his evil heart.' Likewise, her reading of 24:5 assumes that those in the remnant are good; but the text says that YHWH will *regard them for good* (i.e., for a good end). Finally, her distinction between the people's problem being located *in the direction* of the will and not *in their capacity to exert the will* hardly supports her conclusion that the people are capable of good (50). Apparently, she believes making a distinction between the moral will and moral equipment allows for this (51). But it is unclear how the will is not part of the moral equipment since it is 'the thing which controls moral decision-making' (50). And it is hard to see how a will permanently predisposed toward evil does not render persons incapable of good.

77. Lundbom 1999, 2:468.

78. Jeremiah is not promising a developed cognition so much as a reprogrammed and enlivened will (*pave* Carroll 1986, 611–612; Potter 1983; cf. Leuchter 2008, 57–60). Though people will no longer need to say 'know YHWH!' (v34), such knowledge is covenantal and inseparably linked to obedience (cf. 2:8; 9:3, 23; and esp., 22:15–16). See further Brueggemann 1998, 293–294; Jones 1992, 401.

79. Some resolve the issue of the *qatal* perfect (נתתי) by detecting a scribal error (e.g., Holladay 1986, 2:154; Carroll 1986, 610). However, in some poetic texts where a *qatal* in the first clause of the colon is followed by a *weqatal* in the second clause, the events described occur simultaneously; e.g. Ps 139:13:

For you formed (קניית) my inner parts;

you knit (תסכני) me together in my mother's womb.

Here, it is not as if God's fashioning work started in the past, but will finish in the future; 'in my mother's

set in the midst of the congregation, other occurrences of קרב with לב in Jeremiah suggest otherwise. Take 4:14: ‘Wash your hearts (לבך) from evil...! How long will your wicked thoughts lodge in your inner parts’ (בקרנך, cf. 23:9)? The command to wash the ‘heart’ is connected to thoughts ‘in your inner parts’. Similarly, the focus of YHWH’s work in 31:33 is primarily anthropological.⁸⁰ The new covenant ‘kündigt eine radikale anthropologische Erneuerung des Gottesvolkes.’⁸¹

Corresponding to this pledge, in the following chapter YHWH promises to give Israel ‘one heart and one way’ (לב אחד ודרך אחד, v39).⁸² Modified by ‘one’, heart and way characterise a singleness of devotion which can be juxtaposed to previous descriptions of Israel seeking many lovers (3:1; cf. 3:2; 4:30).⁸³ As the infinitive ליראה indicates, YHWH’s gift results in Israel’s fidelity. Verse 40c-d expounds the gift:⁸⁴ God will place the fear of him in the heart of the people so that they do not turn away. Again a purpose clause reiterates that the obedience required for covenant relationship results from a divine gift.⁸⁵ The gift of God constitutes Israel as a competent moral agent who is inclined to live in accordance with God’s will.⁸⁶

Verse 41 says that YHWH performs the reconstituting act ‘with all [his] heart and all [his] soul’ (בכל-נפשי בכל-לבי). Here an expression reserved to communicate the pinnacle of human responsiveness now describes YHWH’s initiative to achieve such responsiveness. Human agency is thus grounded in divine agency.⁸⁷ Furthermore, in pledging to cut the new covenant, YHWH ensures that he will *continue* doing good to the people (לא-אשוב מאחריהם להיטיבם, v40)—a ‘good’ which must be understood in terms of his transformative gift that enables Israel to offer the reciprocity necessary for covenant relationship. For Jeremiah, then, it is as the divine agent

womb’ makes that reading absurd. Instead, the different tenses seem to suggest a totality of action: God began and completed the process. See Moon 2007, 276–277.

80. Moon 2007, 272–276; cf. Schenker 2006, 26–31.

81. Seebass 2003, 33. See also Raitt 1977, 178. Holladay (1986, 2:198) is probably right to understand the text as dealing with the corporate will and intention of the people.

82. The LXX’s ‘another heart’ and ‘another way’ suggests that either it or the MT has confused אחד and אחר in the Hebrew Vorlage.

83. Jones 1992, 417.

84. Fretheim 2002, 466.

85. Keown and Scalise 1995, 160. Compare 7:23.

86. On the issue of Torah in the new covenant, see Schenker 1991. Compare Adeyemi 2006, 320.

87. Importantly, the restoration of the divine-human relationship is announced in the terms of the covenant formula with the accent placed upon YHWH’s commitment (ואני, v38). So Lundbom 1999, 2:518, 520.

continues to work in Israel that she becomes more and not less of a competent agent.⁸⁸ Divine and human agency stand in direct and positive relationship.

2.3.2. Ezekiel and the Recreation of Moral Agents

Issues regarding humanity's moral competence saturate the book of Ezekiel. Like Deuteronomy and Jeremiah, Ezekiel contains the hope that God will transform people into faithful covenant partners, all the while bringing his own unique contributions and perspective to such hope. The two passages that most directly reflect on these themes are 11:17–20 and 36:24–27. Differences notwithstanding, both passages speak of 1) deliverance from exile, 2) cleansing from idolatry, 3) the transformation of Israel's personhood, 4) a resulting obedience, and 5) a reinstatement of the covenant formula. In both texts the divine agent is the source of transformation, which is especially reflected by the repetition of the *Leitwort* נתן ('give').⁸⁹ In what follows, we will consider how this gift relates to human agency.

2.3.2.1. *The Gift of a New Self and Divine Spirit*

Ezekiel declares that YHWH will replace Israel's heart of 'stone' (אבן) with a heart of 'flesh' (בשר, 11:19; 36:26). 'Flesh' must be defined both in contrast to 'stone' and by its being the place where the new heart is inserted. A heart of stone most likely expands Ezekiel's earlier descriptions of Israel's heart as 'hard' (קשה, 2:4; 3:7).⁹⁰ If the hard heart is a stubborn one, a stony-heart is calcified in unresponsiveness.⁹¹ To place a 'heart of flesh' in Israel, then, is to give Israel a sensitive disposition, responsive to YHWH.⁹² Importantly, Ezekiel says that the heart of stone is re-

88. That human agency is not abrogated is suggested by the result clauses 'that they may fear me' ... 'that they might not turn from me' (vv39b, 40d). Holladay (1986, 2:198) asserts, 'The passage offers no solution to the riddle of how the new situation will reconcile human freedom with the new exercise of God's sovereignty in injecting his law into the heart of the people.' However, we might need to consider the possibility that Jeremiah does not correlate human freedom with autonomy; that in fact, human freedom is experienced most fully under the exercise of divine sovereignty.

89. נתן appears 3x in 11:19 and 4x in 36:26–27.

90. Block 1997, 1:353.

91. Compare the 'soft' (רכך), responsive heart of Josiah (2Chr 34:27).

92. Due to Ezekiel's insistence on both physical and heart circumcision for participation in worship in the new temple (44:7–9), and that nowhere does he actually describe the heart being circumcised, it is best to understand that concept as the one being described in 11:19 and 36:26; so Le Déaut 1981, 183.

moved from the ‘flesh’, insinuating that a stony heart is unnatural. Putting a heart of ‘flesh’ into ‘flesh’ thus completes the human constitution.⁹³

The ‘new’ heart (36:26) that God will give is also a singular heart (11:19). Coming as it does after the removal of idols (v18),⁹⁴ ‘one heart’ (לב אחד)⁹⁵ carries a similar connotation to Jeremiah 32:39—to be singular in focus.⁹⁶ Added to this new heart is a new spirit (רוח חדשה). The absence of an article or pronominal suffix in 11:19 introduces some ambiguity: Is this God’s Spirit or a human spirit? Since the concern is with the duplicity of the human mind and will and since describing God’s Spirit as ‘new’ seems odd, it would appear that ‘spirit’ refers to the human spirit here. רוח thus correlates with לב to describe an anthropological renovation.⁹⁷ Regardless, in 36:26–27 Ezekiel closely associates the gift of anthropological renewal with the bestowal of YHWH’s own Spirit (רוחי),⁹⁸ and there the two cannot be separated.⁹⁹

2.3.2.2. *Obedience through the New Self and Divine Spirit*

In both texts, God’s gifts of a new Self and divine Spirit are intended to bring about obedience; in both Israel’s ‘capacity for right action is dependent upon a radical change in their being.’¹⁰⁰ But whereas in chapter 11 this is communicated through a purpose clause (למען, v20), chapter 36 says that YHWH will make (ועשיתי) Israel obey (v27). It appears that the gift of the divine Spirit has somehow intensified the connection between divine and human agency.¹⁰¹ Through the Spirit-gift, God participates ‘directly in man’s new obedience.’¹⁰² This does not render Israel’s agency inconsequential, however, as the restoration involves her cleansing the land of idols (11:18).¹⁰³ Nevertheless, even this act is not detached from YHWH’s influence since it

93. Lapsley 2000, 104; Greenberg 1983, 2:730.

94. Cooper 1994, 143: ‘שקרויך is always associated with idolatry’. See also Grisanti 2005, §2.

95. The LXX reads ἐτέραν, while the Syriac and Targum revise according to חדש in 18:31 and 36:26.

96. Cf. 1Chr 12:33, 38; Ps 86:11. For its opposite, compare Ps 12:3.

97. Joyce 1989, 111; cf. Raitt 1977, 181.

98. Block 1997, 1:353; 1989.

99. As Greenberg (1983, 2:730) notes, ‘Vs. 26a is explicated by vss. 26b–27a’.

100. Lapsley 2000, 105.

101. Williams (1976, §520) lists למען as a purpose clause. Joüon (1991, §169g) notes that while it is especially used to indicate purpose, it can also have consecutive force. ועשיתי followed by את אשר does not allow for this ambiguity (cf. Eccl 3:14).

102. Zimmerli 1979, 2:249.

103. Block 1997, 1:352.

comes as the ‘declaration of YHWH’ and as a response to the outburst: ‘YHWH, *You* (אתה) are making a complete destruction of the remnant’ (11:13). If YHWH’s refusal to destroy the remnant is borne out by the remnant’s actions, then those actions must somehow be attributable to divine agency.¹⁰⁴

But it does not appear as though divine and human agency are related in inverse proportion to one another. For one, in 36:23 human agency is shown to be integral to YHWH’s purposes. As M. Greenberg notes, ‘God’s holiness ... would be vindicated and acknowledged by all nations, through the agency of Israel.’¹⁰⁵ It is through the creation of a new humanity that is both formed by and taken up in divine action (vv26–27) that YHWH would make his glory known. Furthermore, the descriptions of Israel loathing herself and her former practices make little sense if her humanity has been abrogated (36:31). Rather than effacing human agency, it would seem that God has actually reinforced and enhanced the efficacy of the newly created moral agent by working directly through her obedience.¹⁰⁶ This inference finds support in Ezekiel’s vision of the valley of dry bones.

2.3.2.3. The Dry Bones Illustration

The vision of the valley of dry bones illustrates how at the restoration God will create Israel anew. ‘Created’ is an apropos description since the discourse powerfully evokes the Genesis narrative to advance its point: ‘Behold I will send breath/Spirit into you so that you live’ (הנה אני) **הנה רוח וחיותם מביא בכם רוח וחיותם**; v5 cf. Gen 2:7).¹⁰⁷ The comparison with creation is made possible by Ezekiel’s insistence that the exiles are dead.¹⁰⁸ It is notable that after God has placed sinews, flesh, and skin on the bones, they still need ‘breath/Spirit’ (vv7–8). Drawing on the creation narrative, the bones cannot be considered alive until God sends his breath/Spirit into them (vv9–10).¹⁰⁹ The indwelling of YHWH’s Spirit is thus native to reconstituted human nature.

104. So Lapsley 2000, 104: ‘Verses 17–20 should be read all together as one divine act of deliverance.’

105. Greenberg 1983, 2:735, presumably taking the **ב** in **בכם** to denote agent or means (cf. Williams, § 243, 245).

106. Greenberg (1983, 2:735) believes that ‘God’s uninterrupted glorification entails the curtailment of human freedom.’ This is only the case if one accepts a particular definition of ‘freedom’.

107. See further Crane 2008, 94, 99, 100; Kutsko 2000, 137; Seitz 1992, 53; Zimmerli 1979, 2:257–2:258.

108. As indicated by the fact that the bones are very dry (v2), have been slain (v9), and come up from graves (vv12–13). So Lapsley 2000, 170.

109. Block 1992, 34. Of course, this is at some variance with the creation story itself, since it involves **רוח** rather than **נשמה** and **נפש**. Paul exploits this variance in 1Cor 15:45.

Importantly, in the vision YHWH's creative activity is not devoid of human means; it comes as a result of Ezekiel's obedience to the command to prophesy (vv4, 7). And while Ezekiel testifies on YHWH's behalf that this is what YHWH will do (vv5, 12), it is precisely as Ezekiel prophesies (כהנבאי) that YHWH works.¹¹⁰ This dynamic sequence is explicitly repeated in a second stage regarding the indwelling of the Spirit (vv9–10).¹¹¹ Both phases of the vision vividly demonstrate that YHWH's saving plan will utilise the means of Ezekiel's obedient speech (v12), even though the creative activity is fully attributed to God.¹¹²

Such observations become more suggestive if one accepts that throughout the book Ezekiel himself represents the newly created agent.¹¹³ Significant in this respect is the address 'son of man/Adam' (בן-אדם). Son of man most certainly suggests a 'human' and so distinguishes Ezekiel from God.¹¹⁴ And yet his being completely under the influence and power of the Spirit along with his exercising obedience toward God (cf. 2:2; 3:12, 14, 24; 8:3, 11:1) distinguishes Ezekiel from his audience. It could be that the phrase denotes humanity in its mortality as in 31:12; and yet this is also the only time (out of 94 occurrences) when Ezekiel is not specifically addressed. To understand the import of the title as 'mortal' without considering Ezekiel's life seems imbalanced.¹¹⁵ When the latter is taken into account, 'son of man' denotes Ezekiel as a true אדם: 'a model of the human creature who does hear the divine word, who responds fully and appropriately to what YHWH is doing.'¹¹⁶ As one vivified by YHWH's 'Spirit', he acts *in* the divine will; therein his agency is substantiated.¹¹⁷

110. Likewise Block (1997, 2:376) suggests that the awkward syntax 'emphasizes the connection between the prophetic word and event.' So also Zimmerli 1979, 2:257: '[T]he prophet participates in the divine activity'; contra Fox 1980, 8–9.

111. On the two stage process and parallelism between vv4–8 and vv9–10, see Block 1997, 2:375n37. On the rhetorical effect of dividing restoration into two stages, see Fox 1980, 10–13.

112. Davis (1989, 116) asserts that Ezekiel does not envision 'a new creation which eliminates the element of willful obedience, but rather a radical act of forgiveness which ... frees Israel from the burden ... of the past and renders it capable of hearing, of forming new habits, and of entering into a new relationship with YHWH'. While I agree that Israel's wilful obedience is not eliminated, reverberations of the creation story suggest something much more radical than forgiveness and the capacity to form new habits.

113. For an extensive argument on this subject, see Lapsley 2000, 116–117.

114. Greenberg 1983, 1:61.

115. Cf. Brownlee 1986, 26; Greenberg 1983, 1:62.

116. Davis 1989, 83–84, emphasis removed.

117. Interestingly, the first time Ezekiel is called 'son of man' is also when he is infused by the Spirit (2:1–2).

Conclusion

2.3.2.4. Motivation and Initiative

In chapter 11 the objective of the divine gift is simply to reverse Israel's situation by making her obedient (11:20; cf. 5:7, 11:12). In chapter 36, however, the explicit reason given for saving deliverance is YHWH's concern for his reputation (vv21, 22, 23).¹¹⁸ These verses unambiguously and emphatically communicate that restoration will not be for any good done by Israel;¹¹⁹ in fact, she is to feel shame for her past (vv31–32), understanding that her disobedience is the reason the divine name requires vindication.¹²⁰ There is an innate connection between Israel's fidelity and YHWH's reputation; a desire for the latter motivates the establishment of the former.¹²¹ So while in chapter 11 the prospect of Israel's obedience motivates YHWH's work, in chapter 36 obedience can only be understood as a penultimate motivation—YHWH's own glory being the ultimate motivation. In either case, any obedience or remorse on Israel's part must be understood as the logical outcome of a divine saving initiative, the result of God's transformative gift.¹²² In both texts 'the yearning of Yahweh for the obedience of his people ... [is] satisfied through a remarkable divine initiative whereby Yahweh will grant as gift that which he previously demanded.'¹²³ The reciprocity necessary for covenant relationship is therefore the outcome of and not the prerequisite for the gift-event.

2.4. Conclusion

In all three books considered, catastrophic events—whether prospective or retrospective—give way to fresh reflections on the moral competence of human agents. To one degree or another all

118. Joyce 1989, 97.

119. The negation of a noun clause with **אֵין** is emphatic (Joüon 1991, §160c; Block 1997, 2:349, 2:351n82).

120. See Greenberg 1983, 2:728–2:729.

121. Allen 1990, 179; Joyce 1989, 127.

122. Cf. Davis 1989, 115.

123. Joyce 1989, 99n55. On the relationship between divine initiative, gift and human obedience, see further Davis 1989, 115–116. In contrast to 11:17–20 and 36:22–28 is 18:30–32, which describes Israel's transformation as the obedience she must offer. This passage gives a conflicting impression of the nature and purpose of transformation and introduces a tension into the book as a whole (Joyce 1989, 125).

three prescribe an anthropological transformation as the cure for the lack of such competence.¹²⁴ Somewhat unclear, however, is the extent to which humans are incompetent, the role humans play in their transformation, and the relationship between divine and human agency in the transformed existence.

All three books introduce ambiguity when they place transformation under the responsibility of the human agent (Deut 10:16; Jer 4:4; Ezek 18:30–32), while also promising it as a divine act (e.g., Deut 30:6; Jer 31:33; 32:39–40; Ezek 36:26–27). Textual gaps make Deuteronomy 30:1–10 particularly susceptible to different understandings of human competence and divine agency. A careful reading of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, however, suggests that both prophets at least come to despair ‘that unaided or unimproved human nature could ever meet what God expected.’¹²⁵ Here it would seem that God’s gift of transformation provides the solution to a comprehensive ineptitude.¹²⁶ As such, any human response, including repentance, must come under the power of God’s creative initiative.

Along with evidencing a more dire pessimism about human competence, both prophets insinuate that God’s saving agency perpetually works in the newly created moral agent (Jer 32:39–40; Ezek 36:27). While on certain constructions of divine and human agency this would necessarily limit human agency, it must be remembered that here the goal of the divine work is the establishment of human participation in a mutually affirming relationship, the reinstatement of the covenant formula.¹²⁷ If the prophets cannot conceive of a relationship with God devoid of genuine reciprocity,¹²⁸ then it seems unlikely that either prophet believes the divine gift diminishes the human contribution to that relationship or damages the integrity of human agency. Neither would it seem that God has decreased his expectations of humans.¹²⁹ Rather, both prophets

124. Raitt 1977, 181: ‘It will not do merely for God to elect Israel and try it all again one more time.... God has to deal with their proven and enduring tendency toward *waywardness*’ (emphasis his). So also Gowan 2000, 69.

125. Raitt 1977, 176.

126. However, compare Lapsely (2000, 63), whose argument seeks to demonstrate how even Jer 31:31–34 could be read as YHWH’s response to Israel’s initiative.

127. See Freedman 1964, 431.

128. See Raitt 1977, 178.

129. While Raitt (1977, 181) believes that the ‘conditionality’ of the Mosaic covenant ‘has been wholly superseded’ in the prophets’ messages, he rightly insists that ‘the moral rigor of the Mosaic Covenant is not abandoned.’ Similarly, speaking of the latter portion of Jer, he states: ‘The amazing thing in these passages is the tenacity of holding together both the salvation era sign-marks of election, forgiveness, deliverance, and the refusal to compromise away the necessity of moral preconditions, even if those moral preconditions are fulfilled by God as an

Conclusion

speaking of an ongoing aspect of divine gifting which continues to provide the grounds for and possibility of human ability and responsibility.

arbitrary act of his divine prerogative.... God's standards have not changed, and ultimately what he expects of his people has not changed. But the source of initiative and the divine strategy are so radically transposed that we sense that we have been brought to the beginning of a new era' (179). And further, '[m]an is still evaluated by his actions in relation to the norm of the law.... Here, however, the man who is evaluated by the norm of the law is no longer natural man left to his own power and his own instincts toward goodness' (176). See also Gowan 2000, 72–73.

II. SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM

Chapter 3

QUMRAN

3.1. Qumran and Scripture

3.1.1. Introduction

We launch our study of the interpretative traditions of these important restoration narratives by turning to the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Scrolls reveal how Scripture stood at the heart of the Qumran community's self-understanding. Moses, the Prophets and David offered one unified testimony that was imperative to understand (4QMMT C10).¹ 4QMMT is representative in this respect. Its self-professed *raison d'être* is to explicate Scripture's voice (C10). There we find that the errors of an opponent could not be separated from his failure to read rightly. It is therefore unsurprising that C10–31 presents an exposition from Scripture intended to set him on the proper path so that he, and his community, may be counted righteous (C30–32).² The stakes set on right reading could not be higher; a more elevated view of Scripture is hard to imagine.

3.1.2. Qumran and Deuteronomy 30: Non-Liturgical Texts

3.1.2.1. 4QMMT

¹⁰to you we have [written] that you must attentively consider the book of Moses [and] the book[s of the pr]ophets and of Davi[d...]¹¹[the annals of] each generation. ...¹²...
And further it is written that [you shall stray] from the pa[t]h and this evil will encounter

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1. The view that C10 refers to a tripartite division of the HB has come under scrutiny (e.g., Lim 2001; Ulrich 2003). Nevertheless, as the citation formulas indicate, C10 refers to authoritative texts. Since David is paired with the books of 'Moses' and the 'Prophets', his life was to be 'attentively considered' (בִּיָּן) through reading (C23, C25).
 2. Bernstein 1996, 49.

[you]. And it is writ[ten: ¹⁵and it shall happen] [when ¹⁴a]ll [these] thing[s] shall befall you at the e]nd of days, the bles[sing and] the curse, [and you shall return it to] your [heart] ¹⁵and will turn [to him with a]ll your heart ¹⁶and with a]ll [your] soul at the end [of time.] ¹⁷[And it is written in the book] of Moses and in the b[ook of the prophet]s, that there will come [...]... [...] [...] ...¹⁸[the bles]sing[s...] ... [...] in the days of Solomon the son of David and also the curses ¹⁹[which] came in the days of [Jer]oboam son of Nebat and up to the ex[i]le of Jerusalem and of Zedekiah, king of Juda[h] ²⁰[that] he should bring them in [...]. And we are aware that part of the blessings and curses have occurred ²¹that are written in the b[ook of Mos]es. And this is the end of days, when they will return in Israel ²²to the To[rah...] and not turn bac[k] and the wicked will act wick[edly] and [...] ²³and [...] remember the kings of Israe[l] and attentively consider their deeds, how whoever of them ²⁴was respecting [the ... To]rah was freed from afflictions; and those who so[u]ght Torah ²⁵[forgiv]en sins. Remember David, one of the pious [and] he, too, ²⁶was freed from many afflictions and was forgiven. And also we have written to you ²⁷some of the works of the Torah which we think are good for you and for your people, for we s[a]w ²⁸that you have intellect and knowledge of the Torah. Attentively consider all these matters and seek from him that he may support ²⁹your counsel and keep far from you the evil scheming of Belial, ³⁰so that at the end of time, you may rejoice in finding that this part of our words are true. ³¹And it shall be reckoned to you as righteousness when you do what is upright and good before him, for your good ³²and that of Israel. (4QMMT C10–32)³

While all Scripture unanimously testifies to the community's existence, the final chapters of Deuteronomy play a leading role. The exposition above opens with two (possibly three) citations from Moses' fifth book: Deuteronomy 31:29 is followed by what appears to be a combination quote from 4:30 and 30:1–2.

3. Taken from 4Q397 f14–21; 4Q398 f11–13, f14–17 *col. II*. I assume Kister's placement of C18–24 against Strugnell 1994, 67–70. See the discussion by Qimron 1996, 12–13. All translations of DSS are taken from García Martínez and Tigchelaar 1997 and only revised where necessary to comply with the original. On מקצת דברינו as 'this part' (C30), see Fraade 2000, 517.

<p>And further it is written:</p> <p>you shall stray from the path and this evil will encounter you.</p> <p>שתסור מהדרך וקרתכה הרעה</p> <p>And it is written:</p> <p>and it shall happen when all these things shall befall you at the end of days (והיא כי)</p> <p>יבוא עליך כול הדברים (האלה באחרית הימים), the blessing and the curse (הברכה והקללה), and you shall return it to your heart (והשיבותה אל לבבך) and will turn to him (ושבתה אל) with all your heart and with all your soul (בכל לבבכה) at the end of days (באחרית הימים); 4QMMT C12–16)</p>	<p>For I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly <u>and you shall stray from the path</u> (וסרתם מן-הדרך) that I have commanded you. <u>And evil will encounter you at the end of days</u> (וקראת) (אתכם הרעה באחרית הימים), because you will do what is evil in the sight of YHWH, provoking him to anger through the work of your hands. (Deut 31:29)</p> <p>When you are in tribulation, and <u>all these things</u> find you in the end of days (ומצאוך כל הדברים אלה באחרית) (הימים), <u>and will turn</u> to YHWH (ושבת) (עד-יהוה) your God and obey his voice. (Deut 4:30)</p> <p><u>And it shall happen when all these things shall befall you, the blessing and the curse</u> (והיה כייבאו עליך) (כל-הדברים האלה הברכה והקללה), which I have set before you, <u>and you shall take them to your heart</u> (והשבת) (אל-לבבך) among all the nations where YHWH your God has driven you, <u>and will turn</u> to (ושבת) YHWH your God, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, <u>with all your heart and with all your soul</u> (בכל-לבבך ובכל-נפשך) (Deut 30:1–2)</p>
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As the underlined portions indicate, the language of 4QMMT C12–16 is lifted from Deuteronomy.⁴ The citation is in two parts, introduced and divided by the refrain ‘as it is written’.⁵ The first part is from Deuteronomy 31:29, where Moses forecasts Israel’s apostasy after his death. G.J. Brooke attributes the differences between text and citation to a certain *Tendenz*: ‘As in several other places, MMT here abbreviates the scriptural text by omitting the redundant phrase **אתכם וקראת** and it replace [sic] the periphrastic construction **אתכם וקראת** with a verbal pronominal suffix.’⁶ MMT also changes the suffixes from plural to singular in order to apply the

4. Brooke 1997b, 78.

5. (C12) **ואפ כתוב** indicates that a quotation has been lost.

6. Brooke 1997b, 77.

citation to its addressee (C10).⁷ Thus with a desire to appropriate the text for his present situation, our author maintains that Scripture has a powerful voice that needs to be heard.

Importantly, for our author, the evil that will come upon the people in Deuteronomy 31:29 occurs **באחרית הימים** (in latter days/at the end of days). But this phrase does not appear until the second quotation. The phrase might have provided a link to Deuteronomy 4:30, which was then easily read into 30:1–2. The similarities between Deuteronomy 4:30 and 30:1–2, however, make it difficult to determine if the former is actually echoed.⁸ Our author might simply have read the phrase from 31:29 into 30:1–2.⁹ Regardless, the outcome is the same: in Deuteronomy 30 Moses forecasts the ‘end of days’.¹⁰

Our author believes himself to be living on the cusp of the eschatological era (C21). While the blessings and curses have already taken place in part (C18–C20),¹¹ a new scene is about to unfold. The question of what this new movement will entail is answered in C21–22:

וזה הוא אחרית הימים שישבו בישראל לת [--] ולוא ישבו אחו

The meaning is difficult on any account. Who or what is returning and how should we reconstruct לת? Qimron and Sturgnell have the translation ‘when they [i.e. the blessings] will return to Israel forever and not be cancelled...’¹² In order to do this, they have (1) taken ב directionally, (2) reconstructed לת as לת[מיד], and (3) understood the final phrase ולוא ישבו אחו with לת[מיד] to describe the permanency of the new situation. In support of this proposal is that Israel has not been the subject of any verbs in the section thus far. Based on the preceding clause, the ‘blessings and cures’ are the closest candidates for the antecedent.

7. Brooke 1997b, 77

8. We can be sure that Deut 30 is echoed due to the phrases ‘the blessing and the curse’ and ‘you shall take [it/them] to your heart’. And yet in Deut 30 there is no mention of ‘end of days’, a phrase our author firmly places in his second quotation. Deut 4:30 does contain this phrase, but there the blessings and curses ‘find’, rather than ‘befall’.

9. Qimron and Strugnell 1994, 55.

10. Bernstein 1996, 48.

11. García Martínez (1996, 21–22) argues that this is not a reference to eschatology on the basis of the phrase’s meaning in Deut 31:29 and on account of the community’s belief that this history had already played out. But the citation stops precisely before **באחרית הימים** in 31:29. By transferring the phrase to the end of Deut 30:1 and 2, MMT associates the ‘latter days’ more with the time for ‘turning’ than with previous periods. See also Fraade 2003, 161. For a supporting conclusion on *Florilegium*, see Brooke 1985, 176. On the expression **באחרית הימים** at Qumran, see Steudel 1993.

12. Qimron and Strugnell 1994, 61. García Martínez (1996, 22n27) does not take Qimron and Sturgnell to be assuming that ‘blessings’ are the subject. But compare Qimron and Strugnell 1994, 60n18, 61n22.

However, this consideration must be balanced against the evidence that these lines give an interpretation of Deuteronomy 30:1–2 and in those verses the blessings and the curses never ‘return’ (שוב), they only ‘come’ (בוא), while Israel is the subject of שוב three times. With that, the clause that immediately follows speaks of ‘the wicked’ who ‘act wickedly’. This description fits as a juxtaposition to the righteous who keep Torah. Supporting this reading, F. García Martínez argues (1) that it is better to translate ב locatively, ‘in Israel’, on the basis of the line’s preference for using ל to indicate direction, and (2) that לת]ורה should be reconstructed as לת]ורה instead of לת]מיד on the basis of passages like 1QS 5:22; 4Q171 f1 2:2–3.¹³ On balance, it seems preferable to maintain our original translation and understand these lines as describing a new era which is ripe for recommitment to Torah (cf. 4QFlor 1–3 ii:3). If so, ולוא ישובו אחרור (‘and they will not turn back’) should be understood in relation to לשובו בישראל לתורה as qualifying the type of obedience the people offer (resolute) more than the length of blessing (continual).¹⁴

As a motivation for obedience, the addressee is directed toward the lives of the kings, especially David, who sought Torah, performed righteous deeds, and were granted forgiveness of sins (C23–26). Since eschatological rejoicing comes on the basis of Torah-faithfulness (C30),¹⁵ the addressee must seek Torah for his own sake and for his community (C23–26). And while such practices would certainly have provided a sociological function (as all communal practices have), what ultimately matters is that the works performed are done ‘before him’ (לפניו); i.e., God who has the ability to reckon righteousness (C31).

The process of seeking is closely connected with the act of reflecting: By attentively considering the works of the kings, the addressee is to seek Torah (C23, C28). Beyond seeking Torah, the addressee is implored to seek God, both for assistance and for protection from Belial (C28–29). At Qumran, the world-scene is more complex than a person autonomously following Torah uninhibited by outside agents. Rather, people act on a battleground of cosmic forces. Since one’s desire to act rightly can be frustrated, it is necessary to seek the aid of God, who is able to stay any powers that might curtail the faithful’s obedience.¹⁶

13. García Martínez 1996, 18–19. So also Fraade 2003, 153.

14. Cf. 1QS 1:16–17; so Fraade 2003, 153n10.

15. Strugnell and Dimant 1988, 94.

16. See the descriptions of a ‘three-actor drama’ in Martyn 2006, 177–178.

But it is difficult to determine whose initiative stands behind the restoration and how competent people are thought to be. The fact that ‘intellect and knowledge’ qualify the addressee for receiving instruction (C28) suggests that he holds a degree of competence: he is able to seek God through exegetical reflection. Still, he *needs* the instruction, as well as God’s support and protection (C29). He would thus seem competent to elicit God’s support, but not completely competent to obey without God’s support. Although it is not altogether clear what instigates the period of seeking, MMT does evidence a community who read Deuteronomy 30:1–2 as bespeaking an eschatological period in which people obey Torah.

3.1.2.2. 11QT

Another text in which we find Israel’s story being told against the backdrop of Deuteronomy 30 is 11QT. After cataloguing the curses that have come upon Israel, 59:5–13 states:

⁵And they, themselves, in the lands of their enemies, shall cry ⁶and scream under a heavy yoke; and they shall call, but I shall not listen, they shall shout but I shall not reply ⁷to them because of their evil deeds. Rather I will hide my face from them; and they shall be fodder, ⁸and prey and spoil, and no-one will save them because of their wickedness—for they broke my covenant ⁹and their soul loathed my law, so that they became guilty of all wrongdoing. After they shall return ¹⁰to me with all their heart and all their soul, in agreement with all the words of this Law. ¹¹Then I will save them from the hand of their enemies and redeem them from the hand of those who despise them, and bring them ¹²into the land of their fathers, and I shall redeem them and multiply them, rejoice in them. ¹³And I shall be their God and they shall be my people.

Here Israel’s petitions to God are denied on account of their sin (5–8). Eventually, however, God will receive Israel’s entreaty and redeem her to the tune of Deuteronomy 30:5, 7 and 9.¹⁷ Though no explicit reason is given for the transition from non-listening to listening, it would seem that whereas before Israel’s cries were marred by evil deeds (7–8), her seeking is now acceptable because it is wholehearted (10). Confirming this is the change in verb tenses from imperfect (ישׁוּבוּ) to perfect (וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּים) at the beginning of line 11, which marks the apodosis ‘then I will deliver them’. It is important to note that even while Israel’s obedience is the impetus for restoration, God responds in spite of a broken covenant. Since Israel would have no claim on

17. Verbal resonances include, e.g., שׁוּשׁ, רְבִידָה, אֵיב, בּוֹא, שְׁנָא, אֵב.

God and no rights to intervention, salvation remains a gift, even while it entails certain qualifications.

As in MMT, there is no indication that the divine gift affects Israel's anthropological state, and in both texts Deuteronomy 30:6 is conspicuously absent in the retelling of Israel's story. Perhaps behind this silence stands an assumption about Israel's relative competence as a moral agent. With the proper path revealed, all that remains is for Israel to act. If we are going to understand what role verse 6 played in Qumran's reading of Deuteronomy 30, and so better engage their conceptions of grace, transformation, and agency, we must turn elsewhere.

3.1.2.3. The Community Rule

¹This is the rule for the men of the Community/Yahad who freely volunteer to turn from all evil and to keep themselves steadfast in all he commanded in compliance with his will: to separate from the congregation of ²the men of injustice in order to constitute a community/Yahad in Torah and possessions, and acquiesce to the authority of the Sons of Zadok... No one should walk in the stubbornness of his heart in order to go astray following his heart, ⁵and his eyes and the musings of his inclination. Instead he is to circumcise (למול),⁽¹⁸⁾ in unity, the foreskin of intention/inclination/nature (יצר), and stiffness of neck, in order to lay a foundation (ליסד) of truth for Israel, for the Community/Yahad of the eternal ⁶covenant, which makes atonement (לכפר)⁽¹⁹⁾ for all who freely volunteer for holiness in Aaron, and for the house of truth in Israel, and for those who join them... Whoever enters the Council of the Community/Yahad ⁸... shall swear with a binding oath to return to the Torah of Moses according to all that He commanded with all ⁹his heart and with all his soul, in compliance with all that has been revealed from it to the Sons of Zadok, the priests who keep the covenant and interpret His will and to the multitude of men of their covenant. (1QS 5:1–9)

Column 5 begins a new section in the Community Rule which sets out principles that are central for faith and practice. That it at one time might have opened the Rule nominates it as a fruitful place to launch our discussion of Qumran's understanding of heart-circumcision.²⁰ Particularly inviting is this passage's resonant allusions to Deuteronomy 29–30. Line 4's injunction that 'a man not to walk in the stubbornness of his heart' (לוא ילך איש בשרירות לבו) is taken from Deuteronomy 29:18's warning against the one who boasts: 'I will walk in the stubbornness of my heart' (בשרירות לבי אלך). This motif is followed in both texts by a form of מול. We also

18. From למול forward comes a string of infinitives, leaving the subject of the verbs somewhat ambiguous. Here, I have carried forward the masculine singular of line 4. Compare Wise et al. 1996 who have gone with the plural.

19. It is noteworthy that ברית עולם לכפר does not appear in 4QS^{b,d}.

20. See Bockmuehl 2001, 407; Metso 1997, 37n6.

read that those who enter the covenant return (לשוב) to the law of Moses—specifically to ‘all which he commanded’ (ככול אשר צוה), ‘with all their heart and all their soul’ (בכול לב), and ‘with all their strength’ (ובכול נפש, 5:8–9), echoing Deuteronomy 30:2’s description of the returnees who will ‘return (ושבת) to YHWH ... and obey his voice in all that I [i.e. Moses] am commanding you today ... with all your heart and with all your soul’ (בכל לבבך ... ככל אשר-אנכי מצוך היום ... ובכל-נפשך). The verbal allusions, thematic resonances, and similar movements between 1QS 5:1–9 and Deuteronomy 29–30 demonstrate the former’s reliance upon the latter.²¹ Again it is clear that the Qumran community availed themselves of these chapters for constructing and defining their self-understanding.

1QS 5:4 has utilised the language of Deuteronomy 29:18 as a foil to describe the character of a true covenant member. The one who ‘walks in the stubbornness of his heart’ describes an apostate. This is evident from 1QS 2:11–17:

¹¹And the priests and Levites shall continue, saying, ‘Cursed by the idols which his heart reveres, ¹²whoever enters this covenant, and places the obstacle of leaving his iniquity in front of himself to fall over it. ¹³When he hears the words of this covenant, he will congratulate himself in his heart, saying: “I will have peace, ¹⁴in spite of my walking in the stubbornness of my heart.” However, his spirit will be obliterated, the dry with the moist, without mercy. ¹⁵May God’s anger and the wrath of his verdicts consume him for everlasting destruction. May all the ¹⁶curses of this covenant cleave to him. May God separate him for evil and may he be cut off from the midst of all the Sons of Light...’

From the Rule’s standpoint, a person who walks after a stubborn heart is cursed already.²² Even if that person has voluntarily departed from the community or been excommunicated, they cannot be considered true covenant members since they will not endure (2:16–17).²³ Instead, those who enter the covenant are ‘to circumcise ... the foreskin of inclinations and stiffness of neck’ (למול, 5:5). While features of 1QS 5:1–9 align it with Deutero-

21. Less significant verbal resonances are הנסתרות and הנגלות in lines 11–12 (cf. Deut 29:28). The description of the one who ‘goes after his heart, and his eyes and the musings of his inclination’ in lines 4–5 might recall Deut 29:3: לב לדעת ועינים לראות. Since a description of ears (אזנים לשמע) is absent this proposal cannot be confirmed.

22. 1QS 7:18–19 suggests that it is possible for those who have been members less than ten years to return (7:22–24).

23. On the possibility that there were those within the community who were ‘unbelievers’ at heart, see Merrill 1975, 48; cf. Joosten 2009, 112–113, 115.

onomy 29–30, line 5 contains significant restyling that introduces integral components of the community's reading strategy.

First while Deuteronomy 30:6 speaks of the circumcision of the heart, 1QS 5:5 refers to the circumcision of the **יצר**. From other occurrences in 1QS, **יצר** is difficult to define. It seems to carry the meaning 'purposes' or 'plans' (4:5, 8:3), but can also mean 'form', as in the form of a clay pot (11:22). Probably more important for determining its meaning here are its appearances outside 1QS. For example, 1QH^a 7:16 states: 'I know that a man [cannot choose] his way, nor can a man establish his steps, I know that the inclination (**יצר**) of every spirit is in your hand.' The structure of this line associates **יצר** with 'establishing steps' and 'choosing (?) a way', suggesting a relationship with human volition. **יצר** often carries a negative connotation as well, and so in 1QH^a 13:6 there is a plea for God not to leave the person to the devices of the inclination (**יצר**). In CD 2:16, the **יצר**, along with the licentious eye (**עני זנות**), leads to the downfall of both celestial beings and humanity (2:17–3:4).

Important for our purposes is also that the scrolls closely associate **יצר** with the heart:

For you know the inclination (**יצר**) of every work, and scrutinise every reply of the tongue. You establish my heart (**לבי**) [with] your [tea]ching and with your truth. To straighten my steps on the paths of justice... (1QH^a 15:13–14)

you have given a pure heart. The evil inclination (**יצר רע**) [you have] remo[ved] (4Q436 f1a+bi:10)

And YHWH judged them according to [all] their ways, and according to the thoughts of the inclination of their heart (**וכמהשבות יצר לבם**). (4Q370 f1i:3)

In the first of these, the fact that God knows every inclination (**יצר**) is supported on the grounds that he establishes the heart. **יצר** is associated with **לב** and seems to have the connotation of 'motivation'. Similarly, 4Q436 f1a+bi:10 links the removal of the evil inclination with the giving of a pure heart. In our final example, the 'inclination of the heart' is the source of devices and **יצר** appears to describe the heart's direction. In sum, **יצר** can be used to describe or to denote the disposition of the will.²⁴ While neutral in itself, **יצר** is often considered corrupt.²⁵ This survey

24. Or as R.E. Murphy (1958, 334) defines it: *יצר* is the make-up, the nature of something in the concrete, *as it acts* (emphasis his); cf. Qimron and Strugnell 1994, 191–192.

throws light on 1QS 5:5's reading of Deuteronomy 30:6: when 1QS 5:5 renders the object of circumcision as **יצר** instead of **לבב**, it interpretively understands 'heart' as the direction of the will,²⁶ specifically in its tendencies toward evil.

This conclusion is corroborated by a second observation about the differences between these texts; namely, that whereas Deuteronomy 30:6 has the naked heart as its object (**את-לבבך**), the Rule supplies '*foreskin* of intentions and *the stiffness of neck*' (**עורלת יצר ועורף קשה**). But this correlates more with Deuteronomy 10:16 than 30:6:

Circumcise the *foreskin* (**עורלת**) of your heart, and have *stiffness of neck* (**וערפכם...תקשו**) no longer.

Important vocabulary features in 1QS 5:5 overlap with Deuteronomy 10:16 but are absent from Deuteronomy 30, suggesting that the former was read into the latter.²⁷ As we have seen, the two texts assign different agents to the circumcising act: in 10:16 Israel is commanded to circumcise her heart, while in 30:6 God promises to circumcise her heart. In contrast to 'the man who walks in the stubbornness of his heart', 1QS 5:5 describes community members who have circumcised their inclinations.²⁸ Along with this descriptive function, **מול** assumes the illocutionary force of an imperative for anyone considering the Rule.²⁹ By reading Deuteronomy 10:16 into Deuteronomy 30:6, 1QS (1) maintains that heart-circumcision is an act on the will which the human agent is responsible to perform and (2) mutes divine agency by eliminating the promise motif of Deuteronomy 30:6.³⁰

If circumcising the inclinations represents a defining characteristic and requirement of com-

25. See, e.g., 4Q417 f1ii:12; 4Q422 1:12. See also the reconstructions of 4Q436 f1a+bi:10; 11Q6 f4 5:16. Le Déaut (1981, 191–192) attributes this to Qumran's dualism and anthropology. These wider considerations are addressed in section 3.2. below (pp.72–93).

26. Seely (1996, 532) suggests that **יצר** and **לבב** are basically synonymous. Compare Le Déaut 1981, 192, who notes that **יצר** is not a simple substitution for heart.

27. **ערף**, **עורלה**, and **קשה** are all taken from Deuteronomy 10:16. While Le Déaut (1981, 191) correctly detects an allusion to 10:16, he fails to pick up on the allusions to Deut 30 in the surrounding context. Freedman and Miano (2003, 22) see a reference to Ezek 18:30–31 and thus on human initiative. While Ezek 18:30–31 and Deut 10:16 share a common focus on human initiative, the latter is more clearly in view.

28. With Sanders (1977, 300), I understand the individual to be the subject. Garnet (1977, 60–64), following Brownlee (1951, 19n18, 49–19n18, 50), understands God to be the subject. This fails to distinguish between Deut 10:16 and 30:6.

29. See C. Newsom (2004, 6–12) on the significance of the community's discourse not being restricted to members.

30. So Le Déaut 1981, 192.

munity members, then those members must have begun as partially competent moral agents. While their hearts had certain evil impulses, they were not so inclined that they could not enact self-reform. The text does not specify how this reform materialised. Lines 8–9 return to the language of Deuteronomy 30:1–2 and are followed by a reference to the teachings of the Sons of Zadok.³¹ This might suggest that heart-circumcision is somehow related to Zadokite exposition. However the act occurred, by construing the community's identity in the light of Deuteronomy 30 and in contrast to the apostate in Deuteronomy 29:18, the Rule assumes that restoration promises are coming true for the sect as they follow the Zadokite teaching. And while they await the consummation of that restoration, in its eschatologically visible form the community represents a proleptic version of the new age (5:8–9). Herein lies the justification for appropriating Deuteronomy 30:1–10 for their own identity: they have removed their evil inclinations; they live covenant-keeping lives; and thus, they are the beginnings of God's eschatological community.

3.1.2.4. Damascus Document

The Damascus Document (hereafter CD) is another text that can be associated with the movement of which the Qumran community was a part. Since the relationship between the CD and the community is rather complex and since there does not seem to be any scholarly consensus on the matter, I will not attempt to provide solutions here.³² Sufficient for our purposes is to recognise that within the large and diverse scene labelled 'Judaism' at the turn of the eras, the groups associated with the various texts surveyed in this chapter come from a similar mentality and are probably related.

Like the community at Qumran the community of CD meditated deeply upon the Scriptures. The scriptural literature provides, as Lars Hartman puts it, 'a kind of warp on which the text is woven'.³³ So much so that one feels compelled to conclude with P.R. Davies that 'not only is the bible used by the community to present its appeal, but also that it was in the bible in the first place that the community found its identity.'³⁴ This is true in spite of its infrequent use of citation

31. As correctly noted by Nitzan (1998, 147), at Qumran to return to Torah assumes its 'Zadokite-sectarian interpretation'.

32. See Murphy-O'Connor 1974; Davies 1983; Knibb 2009, 213–231. For a recent proposal, see Hultgren 2007 esp. chap. 5 and 9.

33. Hartman 1979, 11.

34. Davies 1983, 55.

formulas. Subterranean reverberations in CD testify to the scriptural consciousness of its audience. Davies notes how ‘whole passages of the Old Testament provide a conceptual framework for the *Admonition*, their influence unremarked by a reader who is not, like the author and his original audience, steeped in biblical language and literature....’³⁵ This is especially true of how the community viewed its history. As demonstrated from its opening lines, ‘The cumulative force of the numerous quotations and allusions amounts to a statement that the “plot” of CD can be read in the bible’.³⁶

¹(Vacat) And now, hear, all who know righteousness, and understand the actions of ²God; for he has a dispute with all flesh and will carry out judgment on all those who spurn him. ³For when they were unfaithful in forsaking him, he hid his face from Israel and from his sanctuary ⁴and delivered them up to the sword. But when he remembered the covenant with the forefathers, he saved a remnant ⁵for Israel and did not deliver them up to destruction. And at the moment of wrath, three hundred and ⁶ninety years after having delivered them up into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, ⁷he visited them and caused to sprout from Israel and from Aaron a shoot of the planting, in order to possess ⁸his land and to become fat with the good things of his soil. And they realised their iniquity and knew that ⁹they were guilty [men]; but they were like blind persons and like those who grope for a path ¹⁰over twenty years. Yet God discerned their works (ויבן אל אל מעשיהם), because/that they sought him with their whole heart (כי בלב שלם דרשוהו)¹¹ and raised up for them a Teacher of Righteousness, in order to direct them in the path of his heart. (CD 1:1–11)

A covenantal background informs the opening passage of CD. Along with a host of other scriptural references, J.G. Campbell detects allusions to Deuteronomy 27:17; 28:20, 29; and 29:20, 21, 26.³⁷ The purpose of the passage is to reveal to the ‘knowledgeable’ (יודעי) a *riš*, the covenant lawsuit God has against Israel.³⁸ The many allusions to covenantal texts and the purpose statement lead Hartman to conclude: ‘Although the connections between the CD text and the individual passages of the OT are a bit loose, there can be no doubt that it is precisely the OT covenant blessings and curses that have influenced the contents of the CD passage.’³⁹

Importantly, from 1:3 onwards the verb tenses set the discourse in the past; our text is not describing present realities so much as rehearsing a historical narrative that continues in its effects.⁴⁰ In which case, CD does not echo Deuteronomy for a discussion of the covenant, its stip-

35. Davies 1983, 54–55.

36. Davies 1983, 55. See also Watson 2004, 99.

37. Campbell 1995; refer to the chart on p. 179.

38. See Davies 1983, 56–61; Hartman 1979, 61–62; Elliott 2000, 628.

39. Hartman 1979, 79

ulations, blessings, and curses as such, but wishes to chronicle these motifs as they have played out on the stage of human history. Accordingly, these lines contain a *narrative* of sin-exile-restoration, which J.D.G. Dunn believes has its basis in Deuteronomy 30.⁴¹ The pattern is straightforwardly evident in lines 3–5: after Israel forsakes the covenant (3a), God punishes Israel (3b-4a), and then restores her (by restoring a remnant) (4b-5a), which has been played out in the historical events of the Babylonian exile, its aftermath (5bff), and continues up to the time when CD was composed.

Yet the pattern of Deuteronomy 30 that Dunn believes reverberates through these lines is also present in Deuteronomy 4:25–31 and verbal allusions from the latter suggest that it might be the primary referent. Deuteronomy 4:31 concludes its pattern with the statement: ‘[God] will not forget the covenant of your fathers’ (ולא ישכח את־ברית אבותיך). CD 1:4 could be translated similarly to mean that restoration occurred when God ‘remembered the covenant of the former ones’ (ברית ראשנים ובזכרו).⁴² Most likely, however, this phrase is taken from Leviticus 26:45 (וזכרתי להם ברית ראשנים), which comes from a context containing the sin-exile-restoration pattern.⁴³ Even so, line 10 of CD says that God discerned the remnant’s works ‘because/that they sought him with their whole heart’ (כי בלב שלם דרשוהו), an echo of Deuteronomy 4:29: כי תדרשנו בכל־לבבך.⁴⁴ Is there not good reason for understanding Deuteronomy 4:25–31, or even Leviticus 26, rather than Deuteronomy 30, as the ‘source text’ from which CD gleaned the sin-exile-restoration pattern?

The many references in CD 1:1–2:1 to the chapters surrounding Deuteronomy 30 suggest otherwise.⁴⁵ References to Deuteronomy 4:25–31, then, are probably best accounted for by the pervasive intratextuality of the Deuteronomic passages themselves. To be sure, the positive role

40. So Davies 1983, 57.

41. Dunn 2005c, 60–61; cf. Campbell 1995, 59, 66, 102–103.

42. See, for instance, the translation by Wise et al. 1996 of 1:4. Compare CD 1:4 with 8:18 and 19:31 which use the more explicit ברית האבות.

43. Noteworthy is that in Lev 26 it is only *after* their ‘uncircumcised heart’ is humbled that God remembers his covenant (v41).

44. Also alluded to in Jer 29:13: כי תדרשני בכל־לבבכם.

45. Explicit verbal allusions to Deut 29 include אלות בריתו (Deut 29:20 [only here in HB] at CD 1:17), דור אחרון (Deut 29:21 at CD 1:12). Note also how in both God’s ‘anger burns’ (Deut 29:26; CD 1:20). And throughout CD apostates are described as בלכתם בשרירות לבם (2:17–18; 3:5; 8:8, 19; 19:20, 33 20:9; cf. Deut 29:18). Deut 30:5’s repetition of the root ירש might be detected in CD 1:7’s לירוש. And Deut 30:9’s side by side combination of ‘land’ and ‘good’ (אדמתך לטובה) is reminiscent of CD 1:8’s בטוב אדמתו (Hultgren 2007, 105).

of Deuteronomy 29–30 in no way denies the influence of other texts. Rather, what is in view is a phenomenon that permeates the Second Temple literature, namely, that various texts are being read together and in light of the experience of a particular community. Thus, while we might not be able to distinguish between CD's readings of Deuteronomy 4:25–31; 29:17–30:10, and the other alluded material, that in no way hinders our ability to say something about how CD read all of these texts together.⁴⁶

Apostasy in CD: In both Deuteronomy 29 and CD 1:1–2:1 what sets off the narrative is the apostasy of the people of God. CD 1:3 begins to ground God's *rib* in historical events by recalling how Israel 'abandoned' (עזבו) God. CD 3:10–12, another pre-exilic survey, recounts Israel's apostasy with similar language: "The very first to enter the covenant made themselves guilty and were delivered up to the sword, for having abandoned (עזבום) God's covenant and ... followed the stubbornness of their heart (לבם שרירות)". As previously noted, Deuteronomy 29:18 and 23 depict walking after the stubbornness of one's heart and abandoning YHWH's covenant, respectively, as the events which brought the curse and exile.

Restoration in CD: Restoration is also understood in the light of Deuteronomy 29–30.⁴⁷ God began to call out a remnant of exiles and prepare them to inherit the Land (CD 1:4–5). Following Deuteronomy 4:31, God's act of preserving a remnant is intrinsically bound up with the memory of his initial covenant (CD 1:4).⁴⁸ The remnant are those who 'realised their sin and knew that they were guilty men—were like blind persons and like those who grope for the path' (1:8–9). This portrayal corresponds to Deuteronomy 30:1's projection of Israel, who will 'return to [their] heart' (והשבת אל-לבבך) in exile. Since the exact meaning of the phrase והשבת אל-לבבך is somewhat unclear, CD might easily have understood the phrase to express that a remnant came to recognise Israel's sin and its consequence. Supporting this hypothesis is J.G. Campbell's suggestion that since the Teacher of Righteousness teaches 'later generations' (דורות אחרונים; CD 1:12), 'those who grope' are 'the later generation' (הדור האחרון) mentioned in Deuteronomy 29:21.⁴⁹ In any case, line 10 makes it clear that such recognition entailed action:

46. For an argument that the community at Qumran read Deuteronomy as a unit, see Waters 2006, 45–48.

47. See pertinent references in n45 above.

48. The restored covenant is in fundamental continuity with the original covenant (CD 8:16–18). See VanderKam 2000b, 152; Bockmuehl 2001, 391n36 and bibliography there.

‘Yet God discerned their works (מעשיהם), that they sought him with their whole heart’ (כי בלבם; 1:10). Even though this last phrase is lifted from Deuteronomy 4:29,⁵⁰ it fits well as a summary description of the returnees in 30:1–10; three times in those verses they are characterised as acting ‘with all their heart’. Deuteronomy 30’s influence might be detected further in Deuteronomy 30:8’s description of those who are restored as those who ‘work’ (עשה) all the commandments.

As we have seen in Chapter 2, on one reading of Deuteronomy 30 Israel’s wholehearted turning initiates the restoration (30:2).⁵¹ YHWH responds to Israel’s turning by turning to her, bringing her into the land and doing the further work of circumcising her heart (30:3–6). In CD, the remnant’s acknowledging (בין) its iniquity is returned by God’s acknowledging (בין) the remnant’s works. As in Deuteronomy 30:1–3, CD 1:8–10 contains an interplay between divine and human activity; but rather than centring on the verb שוב, that interplay is located in ביו (knowing), which fits CD’s opening address to יודע יצדק (‘those who *know* righteousness’). As with the remnant, so God’s knowledge entails action: ‘he raised up a teacher of righteousness (מורה צדק) in order to direct them in the path of his heart’.⁵² God then responds to the remnant’s recognition and deeds by performing an act that will facilitate the group’s further faithfulness (similar to the ‘two-step’ reading of Deuteronomy 30:6). Since what the מורה צדק comes to do is ‘make known’ (ויודע), even the opening line’s address to יודע יצדק suggests that the group’s sustained existence is a manifestation of the teacher’s work.⁵³ While there is no direct reference to the circumcision of the heart, its place in the narrative is substituted by the giving of divinely inspired scriptural interpretation, suggesting that the revelation of scriptural interpretation and the act of heart-circumcision were linked in the community’s mind.

The importance of revelation in CD’s reading of the restoration is further borne out in 3:12b–16:

49. Campbell 1995, 102

50. To describe the heart as שלם, however, appears in Kgs, Chr, and Isa.

51. See section 2.2.1. (pp.19–21).

52. As Bockmuehl (1990, 49) notes: ‘[The teacher of Righteousness] is the primary mediator of the sectarian revelation; the priests are its primary stewards; the whole community ... its ultimate addressees.’ See also Fishbane 1988, 361–362. Even if, as Davies (1983, 63–65) suggests, מורה צדק is a latter gloss, he also admits that in its original composition the passage still communicated some event of revelation (74–75).

53. This conclusion questions those who would say that the Teacher of Righteousness had no redemptive function (e.g., Merrill 1975, 46).

¹²...But with those who remained steadfast in God's precepts, ¹³with those who were left among them, God established his covenant with Israel forever, revealing to them ¹⁴hidden matters in which all Israel had gone astray: (vacat) his holy sabbaths and ¹⁵his glorious feasts, his just stipulations, and his truthful paths, and the wishes of his will, which ¹⁶man must do in order to live by them.

Following a survey of Israel's perpetual unfaithfulness (3:4b–11), lines 12b–13 describe the remnant, who 'remained steadfast in God's precepts'. God established his covenant with them; hence they are the true heritage of 'Israel' (3:13). The reinstatement of the covenant happened through 'revealing' (לגלות) hidden things (נסתרות), which include 'sabbaths', 'feasts', 'stipulations', 'truthful paths', and 'the wishes of his will' (3:13c–15). This list reflects an ongoing dispute between the CD community and other Israelites over the proper interpretation and practice of Torah (cf. 4:12b–5:16).⁵⁴ For CD, accurate exegesis (פרוש) comes from divinely inspired teachers and gives the understanding that is necessary for Torah practice (6:14–21).⁵⁵ 'Understanding', as Davies suggests, 'is predominantly the outcome of an exegetical process.'⁵⁶ The consequence of an accurate hermeneutic is brought out by the relative clause which immediately follows: the 'hidden things' are things 'which a man must do (יעשה) in order to live (ויהיה) by them' (3:15–16).⁵⁷ Line 20 reinforces its eternal significance: 'Those who are remaining steadfast in it will acquire eternal life.' If in order to keep Torah one must understand it, to misunderstand is eternally fatal (3:17).⁵⁸

CD's stance on the importance of divinely revealed and inspired interpretation cannot be attributed solely to the community's existential experiences; reading Scripture also played an influential role. As I have tried to establish, Deuteronomy 29–30 provided a lens through which to understand the CD story. But not all is of equal value in those chapters. As the transition from exile and death to restoration and life, Deuteronomy 29:28 plays a hermeneutically fundamental role. It states:

54. More specifically, the things listed probably reflect calendar disputes that were prevalent amongst Jews at that time (Bockmuehl 1990, 43n5). See the discussion in Davies 1983, 81–83, 86–87.

55. See further Bockmuehl 2001, 392, who notes how the praxis of halakic insights distinguish the faithful.

56. Davies 1983, 127, emphasis his. So also Bockmuehl 1990, 44–45.

57. Cf. Lev 18:5; Ez 20:11, 13, 21; Neh 9:29. See further Sprinkle 2008, 58–66.

58. On the necessity of proper understanding for obedience at Qumran, see Fishbane 1988, 344–347, 360.

The hidden things (הנסתרת) are to YHWH our God and the revealed things (והנגלת) are to us and our children forever (עד-עולם), to do (לעשות) all the words of this Torah.

CD 3:15–16 echoes some important words and themes from this verse. First, we have the repetition of the key roots גלה and סתר.⁵⁹ Second, CD has picked up on the eternal (עד-עולם) nature of the revealed things and applied it to God’s covenant: God established his covenant with Israel ‘forever’ (עד-עולם). Third, the ‘hidden things’ that are revealed to the remnant specifically include moral stipulations (3:13c-15), consonant with Deuteronomy 29:28’s theme that the ‘revealed things’ are for Torah practice. Finally, for both Deuteronomy 29:28 and CD the purpose of revelation is ‘to do’ (לשות) Torah. These allusions elucidate for us how CD read Deuteronomy 29–30 in the light of its own historical situation.

For CD covenant reestablishment occurred when ‘hidden things’ were ‘revealed’ to the remnant, things which in Deuteronomy 29:28 belong to YHWH. The specifics of this revelation—sabbaths, feasts, etc.—give the vital knowledge one needs in order to do, and thus ‘live by them’. As with Deuteronomy 30:6, CD believes that Torah faithfulness is necessary for eternal life (cf. 4Q266 f11:11–12). However, CD reads in Deuteronomy 29:28 that in order for one ‘to do’ (לעשות) Torah, one must possess the revealed things.

CD then finds in Deuteronomy 29:28 the hermeneutical key for understanding the restoration. It is the revelation of an accurate Torah-hermeneutic that can be marked as *the inceptive salvific event* which separates the community from the rest of ‘apostate’ Israel and enables a person ‘to do’ Torah (line 15).⁶⁰ As Davies writes, ‘What is being communicated is the theological claim that the נסתרות are now in the possession of a privileged group, and not of all Israel; only this group can fulfil the law...’⁶¹ As such, only those who remain in this group (through Torah obedience) will enjoy eschatological life.⁶² In the Damascus Community, Deuteronomy 29:28 and 30:6 are read together and bespeak the revelation moment on which the community was founded.

Though enhancing our study, CD nevertheless has much in common with the gift-dynamics of the previous documents. Here, God’s gift of sending the teacher comes to those distinguish-

59. So Campbell 1995, 61n20, 77.

60. Fishbane 1988, 364.

61. Davies 1983, 87.

62. Fishbane 1988, 664: ‘By following the true meaning and practice of the Law, the sectarians believed that they would not sin and would be guaranteed salvation’.

able by their works (1:8). And while due to ignorance those works could only be described as a groping (1:9), it was whole-hearted groping nonetheless (1:10). Such ignorance is resolved only after God reveals hidden things to the community. In line with a ‘two-step’ reading of Deuteronomy 30, CD assumes a partial competence on the part of the gift-recipients. But where they lack in competence is not due so much to a faulty will—their groping was wholehearted—as to ignorance. Having this problem resolved, the competent human agent is now placed under the full knowledge of the divine requirement. It is up to her to respond by continuing to make the choice of obedience and so enter eschatological life (3:15–17, 20).

3.1.2.5. Summary of the Non-Liturgical Material

In sum, the non-liturgical material demonstrates the pervasive influence Deuteronomy 29–30 has had in shaping the identity of the Qumran community. Chapter 29 gives language to describe and understand the downfall of pre-exilic Israel. Those outside and especially in opposition to the community, along with those who apostatise from it (1QS 7:22–24), remain in this hopeless state. The community, however, are the faithful continuation of the remnant, those who remained steadfast in seeking Torah (CD 3:12b), in whom the restoration is finding its fulfilment. Deuteronomy 30 colours the picture of their renewal. One of the reasons for their obedience is because they have circumcised their hearts.⁶³ In Qumranian interpretation, this metaphor denotes a removal of impediments from the will and is closely connected with the revelation of and reflection on the proper interpretation of Torah (1QS 5:5–9; CD 1:10–11, 3:12b–16). Having looked at Deuteronomy 30 in the non-liturgical literature, this study turns its attention to the heart-circumcision metaphor in the liturgical texts of the DSS literature.⁶⁴

63. This conclusion supports Nitzan’s (1998, 146) proposal that ‘it was the Community’s aim to realize the eschatological repentance expected in the historiographic and prophetic biblical books.’

64. 1QpHab 11:8b-14a is not an interpretation of Deut 30 but supports this conclusion. The Hab commentator believes the woes in Hab 2 are aimed at the Wicked Priest. As elsewhere, the enemies of the sect are described as uncircumcised and this state is closely associated with their actions. It is reasonable to assume that the uncircumcision of the Wicked Priest can be juxtaposed with the community who have both circumcised their hearts and live upright lives (Le Déaut 1981, 195). Two additional fragments which seem to refer to ‘heart-circumcision’ through a human agent’s ‘turning the foreskin of the heart’ are 4Q177 f7:6 and 4Q177 f9:8. Unfortunately, the condition of these texts renders the context unintelligible.

3.1.3. Qumran and Deuteronomy 30: Liturgical Texts⁶⁵

3.1.3.1. *Barki Nafshi*

³In the abundance of his mercy he has favoured the needy and has opened their eyes so that they see his paths, and their ear[s] so that they hear ⁴his teaching. He has circumcised (וימול) the foreskin of their hearts and has saved them because of his mercy and has set their feet firm on the path....

⁹he turned darkness into light before them, and rough paths into a plain. He revealed to them the Torah of peace and truth. [...] ¹⁰their spirits to the measure, established their words on the scales and their uprightness like flutes. For he will give them an[oth]er heart, and they will walk on pa[ths of...] ¹¹and also he has brought them on the path of his heart for [...] they pledged their spirit. (4Q434 f1i:3–4, 9–11)

As these lines demonstrate, the literature at Qumran also attributes heart-circumcision to divine agency. D.R. Seely has proposed an echo to themes from Deuteronomy 29–30.⁶⁶ The hymn praises God for circumcising the heart of the needy in conjunction with opening ‘their eyes’ (עיניהם) and ‘their ears’ (ואזני[ם]). Deuteronomy 29:3 states that YHWH had not given Israel a heart to know (לב לדעת), eyes to see (עינים לראות), or ears to hear (אזנים לשמע). By associating the gift of heart-circumcision with the community’s ability to see, hear, and walk, the psalmist suggests that he understood Deuteronomy 30:6 to resolve the predicament of 29:3.⁶⁷

Significantly, the divine work provides the ability to ‘see his paths’ and ‘hear his teaching’. Because of the close relationship between heart circumcision and exegesis elsewhere, it is likely that the work being described concerns the enlightenment of the community through the exposition of Torah. Line 9 confirms this when it speaks of God turning darkness into light and making rough paths into a plain. This divine gift of clarity is followed in line 10 by the gift of ‘another heart’ (לב אחר). Similar to line 4, the act allows the people to walk on paths ... the path of his heart (בדרך לבו).

In Jeremiah 32:39 we hear YHWH proclaim that he will give his people לב אחד. In further similarity with line 10, Jeremiah relates the giving of the one heart to דרך אחד and YHWH says

65. 4Q509 f287:1 is too corrupt to consider.

66. Seely 1996, 533–534.

67. Seely (1996, 533) is probably correct to suggest that the circumcision of the heart allows the eyes to see and ears to hear.

that he will do these things with his ‘heart’ (לִבִּי). Since ר and ד are easily confused, the hymn could echo these words. The LXX’s *ὁδὸν ἐτέραν* supports this proposal. Thus instead of echoing Deuteronomy, line 10 probably borrows language from Jeremiah to repeat the same theme. If so, the hymn has linked the promises of Deuteronomy 30 with the new and eternal covenant of Jeremiah 32. By incorporating elements of a divine-priority reading into his congregation’s liturgical corpus, and by connecting that reading with the promises of Jeremiah 32, the author shows that he believed God to have established his community in a new covenant, enlightened them to this truth, and renewed their capacity for obedience.⁶⁸

However, there is a question as to how fully a divine-priority reading is incorporated. Line 11 states ‘and also he has brought them on the path of his heart for/because [...] they pledged their spirit’ (כִּי ... עָרְבוּ אֶת רוּחָם). Since כִּי ... עָרְבוּ אֶת רוּחָם is corrupt, it is difficult to be certain of its meaning.⁶⁹ But if this reconstruction is correct, then it is possible that God is ultimately responding to an eagerness on the part of the people as in CD 1:10.⁷⁰

3.1.3.2. *Words of the Luminaries*

⁹... You remembered your covenant [cf. Lev 26:45], ¹⁰for you redeemed us in the sight of the nations and did not desert us ¹¹amongst the nations. You did favours to your people Israel among all ¹²the countries amongst whom you had exiled them, to place ¹³upon their heart to turn to you (לְהָשִׁיב אֶל לִבְכֶם לְשׁוּב) and to obey your voice, ¹⁴[in agreement] with all that you commanded through the hand of Moses your servant [cf. Deut 30:1–2], ¹⁵[fo]r you have poured your holy spirit upon us, ¹⁶[to be]stow your blessings to us, so that we would look for you in our anguish [cf. Deut 4:30]. (4Q504 ff1–2 col 5:9–16)

The Words of the Luminaries also echoes Deuteronomy 30. These lines from fragments 1–2 re-tell the restoration narrative with words from Leviticus 26:45, Deuteronomy 4:30 and 30:1–2, again demonstrating how these texts could be read together.⁷¹ As S. Hultgren notes, lines 12–13 straightforwardly make God out to be the initiator of restoration: ‘Whereas Deut 30:1 simply says that in exile *Israel* will call (וְהִשְׁבֹּתָ) to mind the covenant with its blessings and curses and

68. 4Q436 1.i:5 supports this conclusion: ‘You have commanded my heart and my inmost parts you have taught well, lest your statutes be forgotten’; see further, Seely 2000, 227. The context concerns the confession that God gives ‘knowledge to strengthen the downcast ... to make receptacles of knowledge’.

69. Compare the translation in García Martínez and Tigchelaar 1997: ‘for their spirit at ease’.

70. Smith 2007, 33.

71. See the discussions above on 4QMMT (pp.44–49) and CD (pp.54–61).

will return to God..., leaving it open as to how this will happen, 4Q504 says explicitly that it is *God* who caused these to come (להשיב) to Israel's mind *so that* Israel could return to God.⁷² Lines 15–16 associate this initiative with the giving of a 'holy spirit'.

4Q504 thus provides another testimony to a divine-priority reading of Deuteronomy 30 in the Second Temple period. Whether 'holy spirit' describes a divine Spirit, anthropological transformation, or both, is difficult to determine.⁷³ If the reconstruction כִּיָּא is correct, then we should not doubt that this holy spirit is the effective means whereby the people obey. At the very least, this roots obedience in the divine gift.

A close connection between the spirit and Deuteronomy 30 is also found in another passage in the Words of the Luminaries.

⁴[...Fo]r you are the God of knowledge and every though[t...] ⁵These things we know because you have favoured us with a h[oly] spirit. [Have pity on us] ⁶[and do not ho]ld against us the iniquities of the forefathers in all their wic[ked] behaviour, ⁷[those stiff-]necked. You, redeem us and forgive, [please,] our iniquity and [our] s[in]...

¹¹...Circumcise the foreskin of [our heart...] ¹²[...]...again. Strengthen our heart to do [...] ¹³[...to] walk in your paths. (4Q504 f4:5–7, 11–13)

The opening lines of fragment 4 proclaim the works of God. The knowledge required for this confession is not natural; it must be traced back to the endowment of a holy spirit (5). While partial, lines 6–7 can credibly be reconstructed as a petition to God not to punish the community for the sins of their stiff-necked ancestors. This is followed by a plea for God to circumcise their heart (11). We can tell that 'heart' is the object of God's work by the parallelism of line 12: 'Strengthen our heart to do' (חזק לבנו לעשות). 'To do' along with line 13 indicates that God's work would enable obedience. Thus corresponding with its divine-priority reading of Deuteronomy 30:1–2, the Words of the Luminaries attribute heart-circumcision to divine agency and associates this act with an enlightenment that leads to obedience.

Yet another passage from 4Q504 correlates this divine-priority reading with 'implanting the Law in the heart'.

Remember ¹²your marvels which you performed in the sight of the peoples, for your name has been called out over us. ¹³[These things were done] that we might [return] with all (our) heart and all (our) soul, and to implant your law in our heart (ולטעת תורתכה)

72. Hultgren 2007, 111, emphasis his.

73. Defining the holy spirit as 'your holy spirit' suggests the former.

(בלבנו)¹⁴[that we do not stray from it] either to the right or the left. For you will heal us from such madness, blindness and confusion. (4Q504 ff 1–2 col. 11:12–13)

While line 13 is fragmentary, ‘with all (our) heart and all (our) soul’ (בכול לב ובכול נפש) might suggest an allusion to Deuteronomy 30. Other verbal allusions to Deuteronomy 30 in 4Q504 make this proposal more attractive. Yet here Deuteronomy 30 is not simply correlated with ‘spirit’ but with the implanting of Torah in the heart, a connection to Jeremiah’s new covenant.⁷⁴ The author looks back at God’s marvellous works in history and sees that these things were done so that the people’s wholehearted repentance might come to fruition (line 13).

It is noteworthy that the community authoring 4Q504 either believed heart-circumcision was not in their possession or that it was something that could be repeated or deepened. This might be accounted for by their associating heart-circumcision with the process of enlightenment. Regardless, the Words of the Luminaries reveal a reading of Deuteronomy 30 which prioritises divine agency and connects heart-circumcision with ‘holy spirit’ and ‘new covenant’.

3.1.3.3. *Summary of the Liturgical Material*

The liturgical material confirms Deuteronomy 30’s formative role in the identity-formation of the community. Again we find the motif of heart-circumcision closely connected to enlightenment by revelation, resulting in an obedient life. These passages also demonstrate how Deuteronomy 30 could be connected to Jeremiah’s new covenant promises. And it might even be possible to detect faint echoes of Ezekiel 36–37 when 4Q504 associates restoration with the S/spirit.

In stark contrast to the non-liturgical material, the liturgical material consistently applies elements of a divine-priority reading in its interpretation of Deuteronomy 30. This is most evident in 4Q504, where divine causation is emphasised. And in every case, God is the author of heart-circumcision. This disparity will be considered below. For now, it is important to note that these texts give evidence of a divine-priority reading in the Second Temple period and that they connect this reading to the themes of new covenant and spirit.

74. Jer 31:31 reads: נטע את-תורתך בקרבם ועל-לבם. One could see how נטע could be substituted for נתן, due to a conflation with Jer 32:41, a new covenant text that speaks of God planting (נטע) Israel in the land.

3.1.4. Qumran and Ezekiel 36–37

Another less prominent scriptural text that appears in the DSS literature is Ezekiel 36–37. While thus far we could only detect distant echoes to these chapters, other texts provide us with a more thorough reading. In 1QH^a 21:4–5, a liturgical text, the Psalmist praises God for opening his eyes to see and ears to hear; for revealing his truths to one uncircumcised of ear and heart. These lines hint at Deuteronomy 29:3 and 30:6. The motivation for the divine act, however, appears to be explained in terms of Ezekiel 36:22: God did these things for the sake of his own glory (6–7).⁷⁵ More important are the two references to a heart of stone (לב האבן):⁷⁶

¹⁰...And I, I am a creature ¹¹[of clay ... an ear of du]st and heart of stone... For you have given to the ear of dust, and you have inscribed forever what is to happen in the heart of ¹³[stone...]

In this passage the Psalmist describes his experience of revelation through a mixture of terminology from Deuteronomy 29–30 and Ezekiel 36. In some sense, he must believe that God's revelation has inaugurated some kind of restoration.⁷⁷ The restoration is not complete, however. While the disclosed word has opened his eyes and ears, there is no mention of a heart of flesh. Most likely, this is because the Psalmist believed this type of transformation was something to occur at the eschaton.⁷⁸

A reading of Ezekiel 37 appears in Pseudo-Ezekiel:⁷⁹

¹[that I am the YHWH,] who rescued my people, giving them the covenant. (vacat) ²[And I said, 'YHWH,] I have seen many in Israel who love Your name and walk ³on the paths [of Righteousness⁽⁸⁰⁾,] when will [the]se things happen? And how will they be rewarded for their loyalty?' And YHWH said ⁴to me: 'I will make the children of Israel see,⁽⁸¹⁾ and they

75. See Manning 2004, 49. See also 1QH^a 12:38; 14:10.

76. In the HB, this phrase only appears in Ezekiel's restoration narratives.

77. Manning 2004, 49–50.

78. Support for this might be seen in the Treatise on the Two Spirits (discussed below at pp.77–80), especially if 1QS 3–4 also alludes to Ezek 36. See Manning 2004, 50–51; see also Klein 2009, 182.

79. There is a question over the relationship between Pseudo-Ezekiel (sometimes called Second Ezekiel) and the Qumran community. It appears that Pseudo-Ezekiel, while drawing on literary forms and styles found in the Jewish Apocalyptic literature, contains 'ideas and terminology occurring also in the sectarian writings' (Strugnell and Dimant 1988, 46). This can especially be seen in its obsession with the themes of sin, exile and restoration (Brady 2005, 108). I proceed as if 4Q385 is the community's work, even if the fragment did not originate from the community and had a wider influence.

80. Wise has: 'Your heart'.

81. Wise has: 'I see the Children of Israel'. Kister and Qimron (1992, 596) propose: 'I will make [it] manifest to the

shall know that I am YHWH.’ (vacat) ⁵[And He said,] ‘Son of man, prophecy over these bones and say: “May a bone [connect] with its bone and a joint [with its joint.”]’ ⁶And s[*o* it happe]ned. And he said a second time: ‘Prophecy, and sinews will grow on them and they will be covered with skin ⁷[all over.’ And so it happened.] And He s[ai]d, ‘Prophecy over the four winds of the sky, and the wind[s] [of the sky] will blow ⁸[upon them and they will live] and a large crowd of men will [ri]se and bless YHWH Sabaoth wh[o] ⁹[caused them to live.’ (4Q385 f2:1–9=4Q386 f1=4Q388 f8)

While there can be little doubt that these lines utilise Ezekiel 37 to retell the vision of the dry bones, Pseudo-Ezekiel comes to that vision with very different questions. This fragment, as Brady notes, is set ‘within a different framework, creating a new interpretation intended for a different time and context.’⁸² The framing question in the biblical account is from YHWH to Ezekiel: ‘Can these bones live (37:3)?’ This question assumes Ezekiel’s anthropological pessimism: lavish promises in combination with the depravity of the people raised the question of whether a people as good as dead could really come to life.

A new question has arisen by the time of Qumran. Instead of a pedagogically purposed interrogative from YHWH intended to reaffirm his sovereign power, we find Pseudo-Ezekiel’s complaint: ‘How will they be rewarded for their loyalty?’⁸³ This question is not simply new, *it stands on completely different anthropological premises*.⁸⁴ Pseudo-Ezekiel’s intercession, ‘I have seen many in Israel who love your name and walk on the paths [of righteousness]’ (2–3), runs counter to the biblical account. As Brady puts it, ‘a vision originally intended to describe the return of the people to the land of Israel is reinterpreted to deal with the question of reward for the faithful at the end time.’⁸⁵ But it is hardly conceivable from the biblical account that Ezekiel would be concerned with rewards for obedience;⁸⁶ until God implants his Spirit (36:26–27), there are no faithful. For Qumran, having the correct interpretation of Torah meant that this could not be the vision’s meaning. Since they had been equipped for obedient lives already, their question was not a matter of *how* faithfulness could occur but of *when* these things will take place. Assuming their own

children of Israel’.

82. Brady 2005, 96.

83. So Brady 2005, 96.

84. Strugnell and Dimant (1988, 55) note how **ישתלמו חסדם** is ‘a Hebrew formulation of the concept of the reward of the Righteous.’

85. Brady 2005, 96; so also Kister and Qimron 1992, 596. This is in some senses true even if the text does not, as Tromp (2007, 72–75) argues, envision individual resurrection from the dead.

86. Manning 2004, 70.

faithfulness, the community awaited vindication.

3.1.5. Qumran and Scripture: Summary and Conclusion

This study has demonstrated how Deuteronomy 30, read alongside Jeremiah's new covenant, helped shape sectarian identity and theology. The covenanters believed themselves to be the true and faithful Israel, re-established by God in a new covenant. By sending the Teacher of righteousness, God gave the community the requisite knowledge to interpret Torah aright and so live by it.

3.1.5.1. Divine Gifting and Moral Competence

From a survey of Qumran's reading of Scripture, it is somewhat difficult to determine the moral competence which the human agent was thought to possess. It seems that by raising up a teacher of righteousness who imparted the insight needed for Torah-interpretation and practice, God sent this group a gift that would enable them to obey to a degree sufficient for eschatological blessing. That is not to say that community members do not sin; only that they thought themselves sufficiently capable of a self-determination that effects obedience. Neither does this self-determination imply that the moral agent is fully competent to bring about obedience irrespective of the divine agent's continual action. With a world-scene that is invaded by supra-human agents, wilful determination is not the only factor; God must assist the community and protect them from anti-God powers (4QMMT C28–29). It is only by seeking God to make space for human action that the community's choices can come to fruition.

Difficulties come when we try to understand the competence of the moral agent before the gift-event. The non-liturgical material paints the consistent picture that those who are now members of the community had some capacity for obedience prior to initiation. Even though stifled by ignorance, to a degree, they were able to seek God by seeking Torah, understood in terms of the interpretation of and obedience to its details (4QMMT C23, C28; CD 3:12b). The apostle Paul's characterisation of 'those who had zeal, but not according to knowledge' fittingly describes the community's self-perception of their previous lives (cf. Rom 10:2). And, importantly, it was just such a zeal which qualified them for reception of the divine gift. In this material God's gifts are not given to anyone, but precisely to those who, though ignorant, still seek God to the

degree that they are able.

In the liturgical material the divine gift serves a similar function, but there a divine-priority reading of Deuteronomy 30 complicates the above picture. In every case, God circumcises the heart and the fact that divine initiative is sometimes emphasised makes one question if anything qualifies these recipients for the gift. If they do possess moral competence, this is certainly not highlighted, nor put forward as a condition for gift-reception. What are we to make of this discrepancy?

While stark, the variance between the liturgical and non-liturgical literature is not without explanation. By definition, liturgical material is meant to praise God. One would then expect that in hymns God's agency would be fore-grounded.⁸⁷ But that does not necessarily deny human competence. Similarly, in historical material, ethical material, or in material outlining requirements for covenant-initiation, one can see how there would be reasons for emphasising human agency. But this neither denies the divine gift nor nullifies divine agency. While these different genres have different functions,⁸⁸ both witness to true and important aspects of the community's understanding of the dynamics underlying gift and agency. If we are going to elucidate these dynamics, it will not be helpful to prioritise one genre over against another.⁸⁹

Though genre helps us comprehend the divergent emphases, nevertheless, the very fact that Qumran conceived of heart-circumcision being performed by *different* agents suggests that more than genre issues are at play. The very presence of the metaphor in *both* genres implies a more complex understanding of heart-circumcision than that it was performed by either God or humans. Since the gift-event that was so prominent at Qumran was the revelation of the proper interpretation of Torah, the specific form of that gift lends itself to being understood from two perspectives.

On the one hand, since it was God who revealed the hidden things by raising up a teacher, or group of teachers, the enlightenment which heart-circumcision brings can be attributed to God, both *proximately* in his act of raising up teachers, and *ultimately* as through those teachers he

87. Maston (2009, 98) correctly notes that the hymn or prayer genre is not bound to contrast God's righteousness with human sinfulness. Nevertheless, the genre does communicate through particular modes of speaking, and sensitivity to genre is necessary to understand communicative intents.

88. Similarly, Garnet 1977, 59. See also Sanders 1977, 292, 328.

89. So Carson 1981b, 82.

enlightens the community. This appears to be the aspect of ‘heart-circumcision’ on which the liturgical material focuses. On the other hand, the application of the revelatory gift necessarily engages human faculties. For by its very nature the revelation of the hidden things assumes an exegetical process that requires reflecting, remembering, and seeking to understand.⁹⁰ In this way, it is only as an individual participates in the knowledgeable community that enlightenment occurs. As C. Newsom summarises:

Knowledge of the ‘hidden things’ is thus a gracious divine response to the initial and continuing commitment of its members to life in a life of perfect obedience... Both obedience to commandments already known and the further understanding of the commandments of God embedded in scripture require an extraordinary discipline, one that can only be undertaken within the community.⁹¹

CD can therefore speak of God revealing hidden things (3:13–14) *and* of humans opening their own eyes (4Q266 f2i:5).⁹² The covenanters could attribute heart-circumcision to either humans or God, depending upon which aspect of the revelation-interpretation event they were focusing, on what their purposes were, and how genre guided those purposes. The two perspectives are *complementary* explanations of the gift-event.

3.1.5.2. Grace, Gift, and Qualifications

The scrolls have been pointed to as the definitive demonstration that grace was present in Second Temple Judaism.⁹³ However, some might understand the evidence presented here, especially regarding the qualifications for gift-reception and the partial competence of moral agents, to suggest that grace was not so pervasive as others have made out. If possessing ‘intellect and knowledge’ or ‘wholehearted seeking’ qualified a person for the salvific gift, does that not undermine Qumran’s theology of grace? Importantly, behind such an objection stands an assumption about grace that is somewhat foreign to antiquity, namely that grace is incompatible with either conditions or human agency. Rather than making these texts conform to some abstract (or Protestant) notion of ‘grace’, the approach here seeks to allow the phenomena of the divine gifts themselves to shape how we define and understand grace at Qumran.

90. Baumgarten 1996, 16. This theme is prominent in 4QInstruction, see further Elgvin 1998, 131–133. See also Goff 2004, 266–267. Compare Philo’s description of the Essences’ study habits (*Prob.* 80–83).

91. Newsom 2004, 71.

92. **וְזָנַם פִּתְחוּ** [...]

93. Dunn 2005c, 3–4.

As it happens, God's salvific gifts permeate these texts even while human agency is accented and qualifications involved. Though in the non-liturgical material it is clear that to receive God's gifts Israel must turn in obedience, God still answers that obedience through a salvific act which he is not obliged to perform. Here grace takes the form of an undeserved response to repentance (11QT 59:10–11; 1:11–12; 3:13–14). In CD grace is also apparent in the divine causation of the remnant's growth (חמצירו, 1:7), though 3:12–14 indicates that even this might find its basis in, or at least correlate with, the remnant's Torah-faithfulness.⁹⁴

The relationship between the divine gift and the faithful's obedience cannot be comprehended without attention to the particular *form* and *function* of the gift. Throughout the corpus of literature surveyed here, grace is most prominently and fundamentally exhibited in the revelation of the proper interpretation of Torah (its form). It is through this act that one becomes enlightened to Torah's true meaning and practice (its function). Before this event the remnant groped about blindly; after, their eyes were opened and darkness turned to light.⁹⁵ Thus the form of grace at Qumran (scriptural revelation) informs the specific way it enables the righteous—by clarifying the truth for them. At Qumran, the remnant's greatest problem is ignorance and God's gift opens their eyes. This conclusion, based on Qumran's reading of Scripture, needs to be placed inside the broader framework of their theology. Especially important in this regard is their concept of predestination, along with their beliefs about apocalyptic dualities.

94. By assuming that the author of CD 'shared the general view represented in 4Q504', Hultgren (2007, 111) surmises a divine initiative reading in CD. In support, he cites CD 1:3–5. While I can agree that 'it is inaccurate to say that the (new) covenant of *D* [Damascus] comes *solely* by human initiative' (112, emphasis his), I also believe that Hultgren's argument fails to distinguish between the perspectives of CD and 4Q504. Unlike 4Q504, all CD 1:3–5 tells us is that God saved a remnant 'when he remembered his covenant with the forefathers'. But this says nothing as to whether the remnant's seeking was within their power or somehow spurred by God; it only tells us that the previous covenant was a necessary condition for God's redeeming act. Likewise, Sanders (1977, 269) believes that in CD 3:13 it is God's initiative which establishes the covenant. Yet God is said to have done this 'with those who remained steadfast', their steadfastness being prior to, and perhaps a reason for, the covenant.

95. This is precisely what we find in the fragmentary text 4Q306, which speaks of those who, '[...]... their heart [...] [and] they sought the Torah and the co[m]mandment... with all their heart] and with all their soul. And they will be like those who grope for a p[ath...] eyes, and the law going forth and ...[...] until (their eyes) are opened and they see' (f22–6= col 1:10–14). Even in its fragmentary state, we can still detect a description of people who seek Torah. But this seeking can only be described as groping until something happens which opens their eyes; cf. Wise 2003, 101.

3.2. Qumran and Agency: Larger considerations

3.2.1. Predestination at Qumran

One of the most striking features of the Scrolls is the degree to which all things are attributed to the predestining purposes of God. As unabashed monotheists, the covenanters believed everything had its source of origin in an all-supreme Being (1QH^a 9:7–15; 18:1–2; 1QS 10:12). That Being, who relinquishes no sovereignty, continues to sustain all he created (1QH^a 9:19–20; 1QS 3:15–16): without him ‘nothing is done’ and ‘nothing is known apart from’ his will (1QH^a 9:8; 1QS 11:11). As such, the covenanters’ predestinarian theology interrelates with their creational theology (e.g., 4Q180 1:1–5).⁹⁶ At its most general level, predestination functions to secure history as an outworking of the divine will (1QH^a 9:23–24; 9:10–20).⁹⁷

At Qumran, predestination also operated in more particular and direct ways. This is especially true when humanity is concerned:

¹⁵... But I, I know, thanks to your intellect, that [...] is not by the hand of flesh, and that a man [cannot choose] ¹⁶his way, nor can a human being establish his steps. I know that the inclination of every spirit is in your hand, [and all] its [task] ¹⁷you have established even before creating him. How can anyone change your words? You, you alone, have cr[eated] ¹⁸the righteous, and from the womb you determined him from the period of approval, to keep your covenant, and to walk on all (your paths), and to ... on him ¹⁹with the abundance of your compassion, to open all the narrowness of his soul to eternal salvation and endless peace, without want. And you have raised ²⁰his glory above flesh. (Vatcat) But the wicked you have created for [the time] of your wrath, from the womb you have predestined them for the day of slaughter. ²¹For they walk on a path that is not good, they reject your covenant, their soul loathes your [...], and they take no pleasure in what ²²you command, but choose what you hate. (1QH^a 7:15–22)

Not only do these lines state that for human decisions to come to fruition they must be ratified by divine establishment,⁹⁸ they also claim that God ‘creates’ (ברא) both the righteous for ‘eternal salvation’ and the wicked for ‘wrath’. Closely related to God’s creating both righteous and

96. So Merrill 1975, 16; Becker 1964, 138. Maier 1971, 205; Seifrid 1992, 90; Eskola 1998, 80; Lange 1995b, 340–354 esp. at 335. For the wisdom background to these concepts, see Lange 1995a.

97. Goff (2004, 264) notes how 4QInstruction and the Hodayot narrate the creation event ‘to assert that reality unfolds according to a deterministic framework’.

98. See also 1QH^a 18:5–7: ‘I am dust and ashes, what can I plan if you do not wish it? What can I devise without your will? How can I be strong, if you do not make me stand? How can I be learned if you do not mould me? What can I say if you do not open my mouth? And how can I answer if you do not give me insight?’

wicked individuals is his assigning them a specific ‘lot’ (גורל). The various uses of גורל in the scrolls reinforce the predetermination of all things.⁹⁹ Often גורל is grammatically linked to a specific group: the righteous and wicked are placed into ‘the lot of God’ and ‘the lot of Belial’ respectively (1QS 2:1–5; 1QM 1:5; cf. 1QS 11:7–8; CD 13:12, 20:3–4; 1QH^a 11:20–23; 1QM 13:5). The predetermined fate of humans is therefore distinctly manifest through corporate realities (1Q34 3ii:6),¹⁰⁰ and those realities are specifically bound up with God’s creative purposes.

A localised perception of predestination relates to more than the destiny of the individual, but as the logic of line 16 suggests the יצר is also under divine influence: ‘I know that the inclination (יצר) of every spirit is in your hand.’ As the surrounding lines show, ‘spirit’ (רוח) is used to designate a person and יצר her fundamental disposition. Thus a person’s will and, indirectly, her acts are under divine control. This is why the hymn goes on to say that God has predestined the righteous ‘to keep your covenant and to walk on all (your paths)’ (1QH^a 7:18). 1QH^a 7:16 is not an isolated incidence, but as E.H. Merrill observes:

Throughout 1QH ... there is the teaching that the creative act by which God formed all things, especially their energizing spirits, is more than just a static work of bringing all things into being—it is also the time and means employed by the Creator to give ‘inclination’ of will to every part of the universe.¹⁰¹

While probably the clearest example, such a theology is not limited to the Thanksgiving Hymns. CD notes how God is actively involved in causing the reprobate to stray (2:13).¹⁰² The ‘Treatise on the Two Spirits’ opens by observing that God has determined the works of all generations (1QS 3:14). The hymn closing the Community Rule attributes to God the perfection of behaviour and uprightness of heart (11:2). God steadies a man’s steps in obedience (11:13). Since apart from him ‘no behaviour is perfect’ and apart from the divine will ‘nothing comes to be’, God is beseeched to establish works in righteousness (11:16–17). While some of these references could be attributed to the ‘general’ predestination discussed above, other references serve a different function: to communicate that in the final account the righteous cannot take credit for their works and ultimate destiny. Works are not, as Sanders might be understood to mean, a hu-

99. Alexander 2006, 44–46.

100. Alexander 2006, 46; Merrill 1975, 22–23.

101. Merrill 1975, 19.

102. See also 4Q266 f11:9–11.

man's autonomous fulfilment of a condition for remaining elect;¹⁰³ rather works are a consequence of being elect.¹⁰⁴ At Qumran, a discourse that localises predestination functions to secure the priority of divine agency in the lives of the righteous.¹⁰⁵

This would seem to suggest a theology of absolute predestination with respect to the individual. Some, however, have questioned this conclusion. T. Eskola, for instance, tends to downplay the idea of predestination at Qumran on the basis of its insistence that people must obey God.¹⁰⁶ He fails, however, to consider how predestinarian systems might be able to incorporate conditions, all the while maintaining that God himself predestines all things, including those human actions which fulfil conditions. Predestination need not contradict the necessity of human action, especially when those actions are accounted for in the predestinarian schema. For a clear example of this, note 1QH^a 7, where the righteous are not only predestined for eternal life, but also *to keep the covenant* (18). On one level, the righteous gain eternal life solely on account of their election. And yet as a necessary and instrumental condition it is equally valid to say that the righteous must keep the covenant to enter that life.

Other scholars believe absolute predestination is softened in 1QH^a 7:20–21:

‘But the wicked you have created for [the time] of your wrath, from the womb you have predestined them for the day of slaughter. For (כִּי) they walk on a path that is not good, they reject your covenant...’

Brownlee understands the כִּי particle to be the hermeneutical ‘key’ that unlocks the predestination of the wicked at Qumran: ‘It is “BECAUSE” these people “have walked in the way not good/and have rejected” God’s “covenant,” that they are consigned at birth “to the day of slaughter.”’¹⁰⁷ God predestines the wicked *on the basis* of the works they would eventually perform. Merrill, who calls 7:20 the ‘*crux interpretum*’, takes this line of reasoning a step further, by applying it to the righteous.¹⁰⁸ Is it, then, correct then to view predestination as a response to human action?

103. Sanders 1977, 312. While works might be a necessary condition for retaining membership in the sect, to be a member of the sect and to be predestined as righteous, though correlating, are not exactly the same.

104. So Carson 1981b, 77–78.

105. My distinction between ‘general’ and ‘localised’ or ‘particular’ predestination finds some correlation with Diamant’s (1984, 536) distinction between the predestination of ‘human history’ and ‘personal biography’.

106. Eskola 1998, 82–83.

107. Brownlee 1972, 236.

108. Merrill 1975, 50.

First, it must be pointed out that both Brownlee and Merrill take the כִּי clause as a direct causal clause. While a כִּי particle can function this way, it can also function indirectly. In other words, the clause could easily be translated ‘for...’ and thus be giving the evidence which suggests that God has *indeed* created the wicked for wrath.¹⁰⁹ I, however, tend to agree with Brownlee and Merrill’s ‘direct’ reading since the lines before do not speak of God creating the wicked for wicked works, but for wrath.¹¹⁰ But regardless of how one takes the כִּי clause, it is striking how the structure of lines 20–22 differs from the structure of those lines which describe the righteous (15–19). While the same themes are apparent by antithesis, in lines 15–19 the righteous are established and appointed for favour not ‘because’ (כִּי), but ‘in order to keep your covenant’ (לְדַשְׁמַר בְּבְרִיתְךָ). What the alternative structures suggest is that while the actions of the wicked may well be the reason for their assignment to wrath, one cannot say the same about the righteous.¹¹¹ Whatever led the author to this construction, we have to allow for the possibility of asymmetrical attribution in discourse involving predestination at Qumran.¹¹² In other words, it seems highly probable that the predestination of the righteous and wicked, respectively, perform different functions in the sect’s theological discourse. With respect to the righteous, predestination safeguards the priority and reign of God’s creative initiative.¹¹³ But with respect to the wicked, predestination solidifies the severity of the consequences brought on by human rebellion.¹¹⁴

109. Interestingly, CD 2:6–7 speaks of those who rebel against the proper way ... ‘for/because (כִּי) God had not chosen them’. On their own logic, Brownlee and Merrill must affirm that here rebellion is a result of a divine decree!

110. A similar view might be put forward in CD 2:2–13, where predestination is framed in the language of ‘knowing’ beforehand. However, if God’s foreknowing is, as Merrill (1975, 15) suggests, concomitant to the decrees of God, there is little difference to be seen between the concepts of predestination and foreknowledge. For an argument that CD does not soften predestination in terms of ‘prior-awareness’, see Alexander 2006, 43.

111. We have noted how CD attributes the wicked’s straying to the active agency of God (CD 2:13, 4Q266 f11:9–11). While this might represent a different theology than the hymns, it is possible to harmonise the two by understanding this divine act as judgement for prior disobedience. The context of the latter, however, makes this option difficult.

112. See Philo, who suggest that the Essenes have an imbalanced view of divine causation (*Prob.* 84).

113. So Seifrid 1992, 90–91, 93; contra VanLandingham 2006, 118–119.

114. Compare Sanders (Sanders 1977, 268), who comes close to this position, but departs when he says, ‘man’s destiny was really in his own hands’ (267; cf. 294). If so, Sanders is unhelpful when he calls election the ‘irresistible grace of God’ (261). On Sanders’ understanding, election is based upon membership in the sect (294). One wonders, then, in what sense election is irresistible.

3.2.2. Apocalyptic Dualities at Qumran

Another important aspect to consider when thinking about agency in the Scrolls is what scholars frequently label ‘Dualism’. J. Duhaime, following U. Bianchi, defines Dualism as a worldview that assumes two irreducible principles as the cause of all that exists in the world. Formally, it should only be found when ‘the principles responsible for bringing the world and man into existence’ are opposites.¹¹⁵ From this starting point the universe is understood in the terms of opposite principles and can often be broken down into sub-categories: metaphysical; cosmic; spatial; eschatological; ethical; soteriological; theological; physical; anthropological; and psychological.¹¹⁶ All or any of these could be apparent in any given system and related to one another in various ways.

All these categories do not concern us and to discuss them thoroughly would take us far afield. Besides, the closer we look at the sectarian literature the more ‘Dualism’ requires qualification. In the first instance, since God is alone sovereign over all things, Dualism is absent from Qumran’s thinking at the most fundamental level. But it is not simply at the foundational level that descriptions of ‘Dualism’ break down. Take, for example, the most characteristic of all dualistic texts: The Treatise on the Two Spirits (1QS 3:13–4:26).¹¹⁷ In the Treatise, God is the unrivalled sovereign of the universe (1QS 3:15). Moreover, while there is Light and Darkness, Good and Evil, a Prince of Light and an Angel of Darkness (3:18–4:1), Sons of Light and Sons of Darkness, and even paths of light and paths of darkness (3:20–21), all is not balanced. When the Spirits are introduced in juxtaposition, they are labelled Truth and Iniquity (האמת והעול).¹¹⁸ In fact, there is an inequality of terms throughout the section: a מעין of Light and a מקור of Darkness; a שר of Lights (plural) and a מלאך of Darkness. There is a host associated with the Angel of Darkness but no corresponding host mentioned with the Prince of Lights (1QS 3:24–25).¹¹⁹

115. Duhaime 2000, 216.

116. On these categories, see Frey 1997, 282–285.

117. Collins 2000, 17.

118. Unfortunately, English translations often render עול as ‘Deceit’ or ‘Falsehood’, suggesting more dualistic vocabulary than is present.

119. Stuckenbruck 2008, 14n47 of a pre-published version. P. Alexander (2006, 32) is certain that we should assume a host belongs to the Angel of Truth. If so, it passes mention.

In the discussion of ethical actions associated with each Spirit, there is a slight emphasis on the deeds of light: seven lines (4:2–8) to the dark deeds' five lines (4:9–14). Furthermore, whereas the Sons of Light are influenced to sin by the Angel of Darkness, there is no such discussion of the Sons of Darkness. We are not given any indication that the Angel of Light influences the Sons of Darkness for good. Finally, the conflict is not eternal. And so while there are reasons for utilising categories associated with Dualism to describe this literature, a more accurate description of what we have at Qumran is a worldview containing *apocalyptic dualities*—how humans are associated with transcendent and opposing realities which influence humans and their actions. It is under the influence of these opposing realities that the possibility for and nature of human agency must be understood. I now turn primarily to the Treatise on the Two Spirits to show how this works out.

3.2.2.1. *Apocalyptic Dualities in the Treatise on the Two Spirits*¹²⁰

The opening lines set out the purpose of the Treatise:

¹³For the Instructor to instruct and teach all the Sons of Light about the nature of all the sons of man: ¹⁴all the varieties of their spirits, in accordance with their signs, concerning their deeds in their generations, and concerning the visitation of their punishments and ¹⁵the times of their reward.

This heading provides the structure for the rest of the Treatise¹²¹ and states that its goal is to inform the Sons of Light about the nature of humanity.¹²² The text is concerned with anthropology.¹²³ Since anthropology and soteriology stand together,¹²⁴ it is reasonable to make this our primary concern.

Importantly, the first note sounded in the instruction is a declaration that God is the sovereign creator and preserver of the universe (3:15–17). Once again predestination is bedrock for Qumran's anthropology.¹²⁵ And yet God's predestining purposes are worked out by other medi-

120. The Treatise is thought to be older than the Rule. To try to chronicle its development would be overly tedious. Sufficient for our purposes is that it has been fully incorporated by the community. See further Alexander 2006, 37–47; Hogeterp 2007; cf. Lange 1995a, 165–167. See also, Frey 1997, 301–307, who argues that the cosmic dualism of the Treatise was strengthened in its new setting.

121. Alexander 2006, 28–29; Frey 1997, 290; Licht 1958, 93. On the structure of the Treatise, see Lange 1995a, 140–143.

122. On understanding תולדות as nature, see Licht 1958, 89–90n5; Hultgren 2007, 341n59.

123. Frey 1997, 291; Stuckenbruck 1999, 57.

124. Brownlee 1972, 219.

ating agents. Set within this larger creational framework, God has established transcendent and opposing powers that influence humans (3:18) for a designated period of time (4:25). On the one hand is a Spirit of Truth (3:18–19), on the other is a Spirit of Iniquity (3:19). So while God created humans ‘to rule’ (לממשלת, 3:17)—agents who exert influence on the world—human agency does not operate irrespective of more powerful agents. As such, Qumran’s anthropology cannot be understood apart from these higher powers.¹²⁶ This is true whether or not the ‘spirits’ are cosmological principles, since they are embodied by spiritual beings.¹²⁷ The Spirit of Truth is associated with the Prince of Lights or the Angel of God’s Truth (3:18–19; 20; 24), who exercises influence on the ‘rule’ (ממשלת) of the Sons of Righteousness (3:20). The Spirit of Iniquity is associated with the Angel of Darkness (3:20–21), who exercises his influence on ‘the complete rule’ (כול ממשלת) of the Sons of Iniquity (3:19–20). The repetition of ממשלת is hardly coincidental: human agency is subject to cosmic powers.¹²⁸ The spirits, therefore, play an ‘ancillary role’ in humanity’s mission.¹²⁹

Under the sway of the two spirits, humanity is divided into two distinct groups: Sons of Light/Righteousness and Sons of Darkness/Iniquity. An individual lives in accordance with whatever spirit that person is associated (3:20–21).¹³⁰ Catalogues of virtues and vices distinguish the actions of the righteous from the wicked (4:2–6; 9–11). Such actions provide visible manifestations, ‘signs’ or ‘markers’ of identity (3:14; 4:2–6, 9–11).¹³¹ Of course these tokens are only temporal and should not be equated with the ultimate manifestation that will occur at the eschatological judgement.¹³² The reason for provisionality is because the Sons of Righteousness are not

125. Hengel (1974, 1:219, 2:143n699) notes how אל הדעות is ‘always connected with the idea of predestination’, referencing 1QH 1:26; 12:10; fr. 4:15.

126. Even if one takes 3:18 to be a reference to anthropological spirits, this does not negate the fact that these ‘spirits’ are closely associated with corporate realities and higher agents (3:20–21), which P. Wernberg-Møller’s (1961, 414–441) reading does not adequately consider.

127. Alexander 2006, 31–32.

128. García Martínez and Tigchelaar (1997) translate כול בני צדק ממשלת שר אורים as ‘in the hand of the Prince of Lights is dominion over all the sons of justice’, thus understanding ממשלת verbally: *The angel exercises dominion over*. I prefer to translate the phrase: ‘In the hand of the Prince of Lights is the rule of all the sons of justice’, since ממשלת is a noun in construct and since we were already introduced to humanity’s ‘rule’ in line 17. Compare Wise et al. 1996, which has its own difficulties.

129. Duhaime 2000, 216.

130. Frey (1997, 293) notes how ‘[p]articipation in the two spirits and subjection to their influence is expressed by metaphors of source (3:19) and foundation (3:25), terms of dominion (“in the hand” ביד: 3:20; cf. 3:16); spatial interiority (“walk in” ב:הלך: 3:18; 4:6, 12, 15; “be in” 4:15) and spiritual participation (4:17, 20–22, 24–26).’

131. So Hultgren 2007, 346.

immune from the operations of the Spirit of Iniquity. One of the ‘mysteries of God’ is that the Sons of Light can be corrupted by the Angel of Darkness, ‘all their sins, iniquities, guilt and offensive deeds’ being attributed to him or the ‘spirits of his lot’ (3:22–24). These dark agents do not simply impose their power from without, but the Spirit of Iniquity is also found within the Sons of Righteousness (4:20).

Some have taken the influence of the Spirit of Iniquity within the Sons of Righteousness as a reason for locating *psychological* dualism in ‘every single person’.¹³³ The claim that God created ‘man (אָנוּשׁ) ... and placed within him two spirits’ in 1QS 3:18 might lend support to this notion. So also when 4:23–24 states, ‘Until now the Spirits of Truth and Iniquity feud ‘in the heart of man’ (בְּלִבְּב גִּבֹּר), it could suggest that the two spirits contend over an individual’s heart.¹³⁴ However, two factors warn against this interpretation. First, the Treatise never specifically states that every individual has a share in *both* spirits. Coming in a discussion about the origin of humankind, אָנוּשׁ in 3:18 is a reference to humanity in general, not to each individual specifically.¹³⁵ Likewise גִּבֹּר in 4:23 is specified as humanity in general by the 3MP verb that immediately follows: יִתְהַלְכוּ (4:24).¹³⁶ R.W. Kvalvaag and P. Wernberg-Møller both take 3:13–14 to be a reference to humankind, and yet maintain that the two spirits concern every individual.¹³⁷ While this is not impossible, a reference to humanity in general leaves the meaning indeterminate. And the basis for such a view must be sought elsewhere. Importantly, the only places in the Treatise which unambiguously teach that both spirits influence any single individual are 3:20–24 and 4:20–22, where the righteous are specifically in view. To be sure, the author maintains that the righteous are influenced by the Angel of Darkness, giving an explanation for their sin; yet he gives no corresponding account of good deeds done by the Sons of Iniquity.¹³⁸

H. Lichtenberger has argued that we should not infer from this silence that the Prince of

132. Frey 1997, 293.

133. Frey 1997, 294; Duhaime 2000, 216; Hultgren 2007, 344–45, 349n67; Stuckenbruck 1999, 57; Lichtenberger 1980, 137, 140; Wernberg-Møller 1961, 425; Kvalvaag 1998, 161.

134. Lichtenberger (1980, 140) is stronger: ‘Die beiden Geister sind zugleich im Menschen.’

135. Licht 1958, 91n13.

136. The lexical choice of גִּבֹּר might also indicate a reference to the righteous. Further, the Sons of Iniquity have not been mentioned explicitly since 3:21.

137. Kvalvaag 1998, 160–161 and Wernberg-Møller 1961, 419–420.

138. Lichtenberger 1980, 129.

Lights is not in a position to influence the Wicked, since his title indicates that he has sovereignty over the Angel of Darkness.¹³⁹ Without quibbling over the comparative powers of the Prince and the Angel, if Lichtenberger is suggesting that the Prince *actually does* influence the wicked then I remain sceptical. Capacity does not assume action. Furthermore, the Sons of Iniquity are said to be completely under the powers of darkness. The placement of כּוֹל in lines 3:20–21 is significant.¹⁴⁰ Whereas line 20 states that in the hand of the Prince of Lights is ‘the rule of *all the Sons of Righteousness*’ (ממשלת כּוֹל בני צדק), line 21 states that in the hand of the Angel of Darkness is ‘the complete rule of the Sons of Iniquity’ (כּוֹל ממשלת בני עוֹל). Brownlee suggests that the differing location of כּוֹל ‘indicates that the “Sons of Righteousness”... are at times under the sway of the angel of darkness.’¹⁴¹ But that would only be communicated negatively. Positively, the lines deny the Sons of Iniquity any favourable influence.¹⁴² So while a kind of psychological dualism can be located in the Sons of Righteousness, the same cannot be said of the Sons of Iniquity.¹⁴³

3.2.2.2. Apocalyptic Dualities in other Manuscripts

Can this conclusion be sustained if we move outside 1QS to other Dead Sea manuscripts? 4Q186, frequently referred to as one of the ‘Horoscope Texts’, is purported to contain a detailed account of psychological dualism. It puts forward the idea that a person’s visible features, their basic disposition, and the positioning of the stars at the person’s birth are directly related.¹⁴⁴ An individual’s disposition seems to be made up of a combination of light and darkness. Having five or more parts in either direction on a nine-part scale determines that individual’s status. So, for instance, if a person’s toes are thick and short, they are eight parts in darkness and one part in light (4Q186 f1 3:5–6) and, thus, a son of darkness. If these texts are of sectarian ilk, as P.S. Alexander argues,¹⁴⁵ then it would suggest that ‘Sons of Darkness’ are influenced by the dominion of Light.

139. Lichtenberger 1980, 129.

140. So Wernberg-Møller 1961, followed by Brownlee 1972, 214. Lichtenberger (1980, 128n24) believes this gives too much weight to the placement of כּוֹל, but without further explanation.

141. Brownlee 1972, 214.

142. Cf. Licht 1958, 92.

143. See 1QM 13:12 (4Q495 f2:4), where the messengers/angels of Darkness are described as *only* desiring to walk in darkness.

144. On 4Q186, see Albani 1998, 279–330; cf. Alexander 1996 and the initial proposals by Allegro 1964.

145. Alexander 1996, 390–394.

Yet it remains unclear that the divisions are actually referring to individuals, since רוח might be translated ‘space’: It has a space in the House of Light of six (units).¹⁴⁶ Further, the astrological nature of 4Q186 is also somewhat questionable.¹⁴⁷ Along with these ambiguities, the fragmentary nature of the manuscripts makes any hypothesis extremely tentative and it would be dubious to let conclusions drawn from 4Q186 dictate our understanding of sectarian anthropology. It thus seems prudent to maintain our initial conclusion and to locate psychological dualism only in the righteous.

3.2.3. Identity, Transference, and Sin

By stating that psychological dualism exists within the righteous, I by no means wish to suggest it is as though the righteous are both Sons of Righteousness and Iniquity,¹⁴⁸ that the spirits have an equal influence over them, or that their status is in constant jeopardy or flux depending on which spirit is ‘winning out’ or in which spirit an individual is participating at any given moment.¹⁴⁹ On the contrary, a son of righteousness is always and ever a son of righteousness. While his human nature might leave him vulnerable to humanity’s sinful tendencies and the influence of the Dark Angel, he is also fundamentally different from the wicked. These texts seem to allow for the possibility of the righteous being ‘influenced’ or ‘ruled’ by both spirits, even at the very core of their existence, without asserting that they *belong to* both.¹⁵⁰ From the world’s foundation one’s inheritance and ‘spirit’ are predestined (1QS 4:26)¹⁵¹ and therefore unchangeable (1QS 4:24). Importantly, in line 26 a person is judged at the visitation according to ‘his spirit’ (רוחו). The singular suggests that, at a fundamental level, the Treatise only associates a person with one spirit. Furthermore the Treatise gives no indication that a person would ever move from a state of

146. On this rendering, see Gordis 1966, 38, furthered by Bergmeier 1980, 78–81. Albani (1998, 284–294, 313–315) sets out the difficulties of the anthropological interpretation.

147. See Albani 1998, 286–289.

148. Contra Kvalvaag 1998, and as Wernberg-Møller (1961, 428) seems to suggest.

149. Lichtenberger (1980, 137) correctly notes how 4:15–18 is not a fight for humans. In 4Q544 1:10–14 a man awakens from a dream to find two angels fighting over him. But this struggle does not mean that the man’s identity was ‘neutral’ or that his status was not secure. In fact, he addresses the Angel of Light familiarly as ‘my lord’ (מראי), suggesting that he was a son of light.

150. Contra Kvalvaag 1998, 161, who conflates influence and nature with identity.

151. Again, Lichtenberger (1980, 137) correctly links the certainty of a person’s status to divine ‘Festlegung’. Yet he also believes every individual has a portion of both Spirits.

wickedness to righteousness.¹⁵² So whilst the Angel of Darkness causes the righteous to stray and even corrupts their inmost parts, the righteous are never *identified* with the Angel of Darkness, Spirit of Iniquity, or Sons of Darkness (and vice-versa). At most, a person who is created as a son of righteousness is made manifest upon joining ‘The Sons of Righteousness’,¹⁵³ demonstrates the signs of the Spirit of Truth, and has his or her eyes opened by the truth.¹⁵⁴ In terms of identity and ontology, however, there is no transfer from darkness to light.¹⁵⁵

3.2.3.1. *The Question of Transference*

At least one passage from the Thanksgiving Hymns might lead one to believe that either the sectarians had an inconsistent understanding of transference or that the reading proposed here is illegitimate:¹⁵⁶

²⁰I thank You, Lord, because you saved my life from the pit and from Sheol of Abaddon have lifted me up to an everlasting height, so that I can walk on a boundless plain. And I know that there is hope for a person ²¹you formed from the dust for the Eternal Council. The perverse spirit you have cleansed from great transgression so that he can take a place with ²²the host of the holy ones, and enter in communion (or in the Yahad) with the congregation of the Sons of Heaven. And for man, you cast an eternal lot with the spirits of ²³knowledge, so that he praises your name together with shouts of joy, and recounts your wonders before all your creatures. But I, a creature of ²⁴clay, what am I? Mixed with water, as whom shall I be considered? What is my strength? For I find myself at the boundary of wickedness ²⁵and share the lot of the scoundrels, for I have taken my stand within the border of wickedness, and with those who are wretched by lot. The soul of the poor lives with great tumults, and the calamities of hardships are with my footsteps. ²⁶When all the traps of the pit open, all the snares of wickedness are spread and the net of the scoundrels are upon the surface of the sea. (1QH^a 11:20–26)

152. The same can be said of the ‘horoscope texts’. Regardless of the anthropological questions, if the divisions refer to people, then a person’s destiny is determined from birth and the nine-part scale ensures that they fall into one of two lots (Alexander 1996, 388).

153. Frey (1997, 304) argues that the levels of opposition found in the Treatise differ significantly from CD. Whereas in the Treatise opposition is between the righteous and the wicked, in CD it is between members and non-members. Further, in CD there is no struggle ‘within’ the righteous and ethical criteria is now related to social boundaries. However, because CD allows for members who apostatise secretly (e.g. CD 20:1–4a, 8–10; see Davies 1983, 183–185) and since in the context of the Rule the Sons of Light are associated with a group defined by a social boundary (1QS 3:12; *pace* Stuckenbruck 1999, 57), the difference here is not as drastic as Frey makes out. Compare Stuckenbruck’s (2008, 17 from a pre-published format) more recent assessment of the Treatise; cf. Hengel 1974, 1:222–1:223.

154. On the relationship between knowledge and election, compare Sanders 1977, 259–60, 318.

155. Compare Merrill 1975, 23; VanLandingham 2006, 114; Maston 2009, 107.

156. See, for instance, VanLandingham 2006, 114.

In 11:20 the psalmist praises God for saving his life from the pit. He also claims in line 25 that he once stood *'within the border of wickedness and with those who are wretched by lot.'* Does this not indicate that the psalmist has been brought out from the lot of the wretched and into the congregation of the Sons of Heaven? Indeed, it appears so. But this raises two related questions: How was the psalmist saved from 'the pit' and in what way was he ever *within* the border of those wretched by lot? Lines 25–26 help us answer the first question when they associate 'the pit' with hardships and traps set by 'the scoundrels'. While the psalmist could be thinking of a time when his life was in physical danger, such danger might also be that of deception (10:31). In any case, when the psalmist confesses that he has taken his stand 'within the border of wickedness and with those who are wretched by lot', there is reason to believe that he simply refers to his physical locale during this period of hostility.

Column 10, connected to column 11 in content and theme, supports this reading. As the psalmist recounts the responses to his teaching, he notes how he was a medicine for those who turn from offence, but a 'trap', 'reproach', 'mockery', 'target of slander' and 'laughing stock' for offenders and traitors (10:8–12). The 'traps of the pit' from which he was saved (10:20; cf. 11:20, 26) are the zealous attacks 'of the interpreters of deception' (10:31). The result of God's preservation is that he praises God *'from their assembly'* (מקדולם)—the assembly of false interpreters (10:30). If we read 11:20–26 in light of column 10, it seems clear that what we have is a prayer of thanksgiving, not for being brought out of a state of wickedness and into a state of righteousness, but for God's preserving and protecting mercy during a time when the psalmist was surrounded by the wicked community.¹⁵⁷

3.2.3.2. *The Question of Anthropological Pessimism Concerning the Righteous*

Of course the psalmist never denies his participation in the actions of the wicked community and throughout these hymns the psalmist both acknowledges his sins (e.g., 5:21–22; 9:22, 25–27; 17:13; 22:7, 14) and praises God for cleansing those sins (e.g., 4:11, 18–19; 5:23–24; 12:38; 19:11, 30; cf. 1QS 11:15; 4Q370 f1ii:3; 4Q511 f20i:1, f36:2). Indeed, since the purity of the community

157. This correlates with the reading of Wise (2003, 110), who finds here an allusion to Mal 1:4. Cf. Goff 2004, 271–272, who takes these lines to be referring to tensions within the sect. If so, then by the time the lines were composed the author could no longer conceptualise 'the sect' as 'the righteous'.

must be upheld, upon entering the community God purges the righteous from previous sins and from an iniquitous spirit (1QH^a 11:21).

Stronger statements appear when the psalmist refers to himself with terms such as ‘flesh’ (בשר, 7:24) and a ‘spirit of flesh’ (רוח בשר, 5:19). Taken on their own, such descriptions are hardly striking since in these contexts they merely denote someone born of a woman. Nor is it striking that he refers to himself as ‘dust’ (עפר, 5:21) and a vessel of clay (יצר החמר, 9:21; 11:23–24). What is striking is that he goes on to link his frailty with being full of sin, impurity, and ruled by ‘a perverse spirit’ (רוח נעודה, 5:21). Likewise the hymn writer at the end of 1QS says not only that he belongs ‘to wicked humanity’ (לאדם רשעה) and ‘to the assembly of iniquitous flesh’ (לסוד בשר עול), but also that he either belongs to or should belong to ‘the assembly of worms and those who walk in darkness’ (לסוד רמה והולכי חושך, 11:9–10).¹⁵⁸ It is simply assumed that the righteous will be plagued by sin until the end of the present age; they are ‘in iniquity’ from the womb and ‘in the guilt of unfaithfulness right to old age’ (12:29–30). What is the function of such statements and what do they tell us about anthropological beliefs at Qumran?

While it might appear that these adjectives communicate a debased anthropology, the incompetence of the moral agent within the created causal nexus, this is not the case. These depictions come from sections with characteristics that H.W. Kuhn has dubbed *Niedrigkeitsdoxologie*.¹⁵⁹ *Niedrigkeitsdoxologie* is a specific form of praise in which the addressee utilises a humble discourse with the intention of exalting God’s sovereign character and grace. As such, statements about human frailty and sinfulness rhetorically serve as foil to accentuate the praise of God. Importantly, in passages like 5:19–23, 7:24, and 9:21 the stress is actually not on sinfulness so much as on the incapacity to comprehend God’s truth apart from the divine gift of an understanding S/spirit.¹⁶⁰ As several of these texts show, praising God for creating a disposition to comprehend truth is connected with enthroning God as the only perfecter of ‘the path of the sons of Adam,’ who makes known ‘the strength of his power ... on the sons of his approval’ (12:31–32; cf. 7:25–26; 11:22–23).¹⁶¹ The ability to comprehend truth and the ability to walk in perfection are

158. The verb must be supplied, which makes it unclear whether the psalmist believes he is among these people, or is rhetorically suggesting that he should be.

159. Kuhn 1966, 27.

160. Frey 2002, 379–380. See also Maier 1971, 205.

closely related. Even still, there is no indication that ‘the sons of his approval’ were ever anything other than sons of his approval. These statements do not describe a state from which a person is rescued so much as communicate that, vis-à-vis their creator, people are dependent, sinful, and *Nichtigkeit*, and as such, always in need of God’s salvific gifts.¹⁶² Nor are these statements intended to suggest that the sons of his approval are *only* sin, impurity, and ruled by a spirit of depravity.¹⁶³ Rather, as the conclusion of the section in column 12 states, God ‘created the righteous and the wicked’ (12:38). It would appear as though the Thanksgiving Hymns maintain the idea that while as part of humanity the righteous participate in humanity’s sin, this does not mean that the righteous are to be identified with wicked humanity; rather the Sons of Righteousness are to understand themselves as the paradigmatic psalmist does, as those made ‘for the Eternal Council’ and whose lot is with ‘the Sons of Heaven’ (11:22–23), not ‘in the Congregation of Vanity’ (7:34).

3.2.3.3. *Eschatological Renewal*

The anomalous state of affairs in which the Sons of Righteousness sin will not last forever. At the eschaton God will show his love for the Prince of Light and hatred for the Angel of Darkness (1QS 3:26–4:1) by obliterating all things associated with the Angel (4:18–19), therein establishing a new creation (4:25). Since the Spirit of Iniquity is found within the Sons of Righteousness, it will not suffice for God to defeat sin at a cosmic level only,¹⁶⁴ he must also cleanse the Sons of Righteousness by irradiating the Spirit of Iniquity from their inmost being (4:20).¹⁶⁵ This victory, both cosmic and personal, frees the Sons of Light from the dominion of Darkness.¹⁶⁶ It is at this point in the Treatise’s schema when a complete transformation occurs. Those

161. Garnet 1977, 25. Kvalvaag (1998, 174) argues that since ‘spirit’ is never the object of God’s creating activity, this disposition was given upon entering the community; so also Sekki 1989, 127. Yet we know that elsewhere God does ‘create’ the righteous from the womb along with their **יִצְרָה** (1QH^a 7:16–18), which is closely connected to their spirit. Kuhn (1966, 117–139), followed by Smith (2007, 235), distinguishes between *two* types of anthropological spirits/dispositions: one given at creation and another upon initiation, citing 12:31 as an example of the latter. Yet 12:38 says that God ‘creates’ the righteous. With 12:38’s similarity to 7:16–18, 12:31 would also seem to be situated in a creational context.

162. See Becker 1964, 139; Sanders 1977, 278.

163. So also Lichtenberger 1980, 130; VanLandingham 2006, 121–122.

164. Hultgren 2007, 348.

165. That he is referring to the Sons of Righteousness is clear from 4:13–14. See further Licht 1958, 96–97.

166. Lichtenberger 1980, 140.

identified with and characterised as Sons of Light from the earth's foundation will become undefiled Sons of Light in every sphere of existence. Until then, the Sons of Righteousness have the aid of God and the Angel of Truth to assist them (3:24–25),¹⁶⁷ but the Treatise is silent regarding any fundamental reconstitution of the Self in the present age.¹⁶⁸

When evil is finally eradicated, it is done 'with truth' (באמת, 4:20), sprinkling the righteous with the 'Spirit of Truth' (רוח אמת, 4:21), instructing them 'in knowledge' (בדעת), 'to make them wise' (להשכיל, 4:22). Eschatological salvation, then, accomplishes the same goal that was set forth in the introduction: to provide the Sons of Righteousness with 'insight' (1QS 3:13–15), which, no doubt, has the purpose of enabling them to live in accordance with the divine will (4:24–26).¹⁶⁹

From the fact that when the opposition between the Spirits is first raised it is posed in ethical terms (*Truth and Iniquity*), Alexander notes how the author is primarily concerned with the moral universe of human action and that his lexical choices dress an ethical discussion in specifically intellectual vocabulary.¹⁷⁰ The cerebral language fits with an emphasis we saw in Qumran's reading of Scripture; namely, that sin results from ignorance or dismissal of the truth, obedience from knowing the truth.¹⁷¹ One can see how '[i]mplicit here ... is a whole practical scheme of salvation based on study of Torah and the words of the teacher of Righteousness.'¹⁷² For all its cosmological language, the Treatise still construes salvation primarily in cognitive terms.

It would be natural for a community to conceive of eschatological salvation in light of its previous experiences and the defining experience of salvation at Qumran is the revelation of the proper interpretation of Torah.¹⁷³ The Treatise explains the moral life on these terms, situating it

167. On divine 'assistance' and human participation, see below on p.90.

168. Rightly, Sanders 1977, 278–279, though his downplaying predestination makes him construe the righteous and the wicked as in exactly the same anthropological states. As will be discussed below, elsewhere this process of transformation is anticipated by the study of Torah within the community.

169. Frey 1997, 295, 300. Interestingly, Vanlandingham (2006, 113) asserts that 4:21–25 'provides a statement that logically excludes determinism', because '[p]rayers of this nature ... make no sense unless humans can choose their own path.' And yet the Psalmist's confesses that God 'establishes the path' of those whom he chooses; that God 'prevents' the elect from sinning through the gift of divine insight; and that God 'restores his humility'. That the Psalmist then asks God to 'prevent' him from sinning in no way denies divine agency since even the asking is part and parcel of God's preservation.

170. Alexander 2006, 29.

171. Alexander 2006, 29–30. On the vocabulary used, see Hultgren 2007, 345–349.

172. Alexander 2006, 30.

173. See Wernberg-Møller 1961, 440, who makes this point with regard to purification rituals. In 4:20–22 the language used to describe eschatological salvation combines concepts from Torah-study with concepts from the

first within the closely connected concepts of creation and predestination, then under the structure of apocalyptic dualities, and finally in the light of its eschatological telos.¹⁷⁴ At Qumran, then, predestination represents the first stage of a three stage soteriological process, followed by entrance into the community and culminating in eschatological purification.¹⁷⁵ It is from within this infrastructure that a distinctly Qumranian understanding of agency and obedience must be worked out.

3.2.4. God's Gift and Enlightenment

From Qumran's predestinarian theology and apocalyptic worldview, I have argued that in the present age transformation is primarily understood as a cognitive process of becoming more aware of who one is, of what God requires, and of God's control of history.¹⁷⁶ Until God eradicates darkness both cosmically and anthropologically at the end of the age, a fundamental reconstitution of the person does not take place.¹⁷⁷ Concomitant with that, Sons of Light, it does not seem, are ever to think of themselves as having been Sons of Darkness. This is because the most important event in the righteous' existence happens at creation. Thus the concept of transference does not factor into identity formation at Qumran.

This does not mean that God's gifts were not thought to bring any renewal in the present age. Significantly, many of the things listed in association with the Spirit of Iniquity (1QS 4:11) are the very things which God removes in the Psalms (4Q434 1i:4; 4Q436 1i:10, 1ii:1–3; 1QH^a 20:33–34), and things which the community removes themselves (1QS 5:5).¹⁷⁸ Primarily, these things are displaced through the cognitive appropriation of freshly revealed truths. The salvific value of this process is only fully understood when we take into account that it was God's wrath that removed the human capacity for 'knowledge' in the first place (CD 10:7b–10a).¹⁷⁹ Enlighten-

purification rituals.

174. Cf. Frey 1997, 290.

175. See Klein 2009, 183. While Sanders (1977, 311) notes the association between enabling grace and predestination, he overlooks it in his discussion on transference into the sect. This under-emphasis on Qumran's predestinarian theology leads Sanders to detect only a two-stage process. As a result, he puts more weight on a person's entrance into the sect than is warranted (275, 283–284).

176. Newsom 2004, 72

177. So Manning 2004, 50–51.

178. Seely 2000, 330.

ment, then, constitutes the reversal of divine judgment. This is why the refrain ‘I thank you, Lord’, which is dispersed throughout the Hodayot, is often followed by some explanation of the illumination attained through revelation:

I thank you, Lord, because you have enlightened (האיררתה) my face for your covenant. (12:5)

I thank [you], [Lord,] because you have taught me your truth, you have made me know your wonderful mysteries. (15:25–27a)

Blessed are you, Lord ... because you have made [me] know [these] th[ings]. (18:14)

I thank you, my God, because you have made me know the foundation of truth, you have revealed [yo]ur [wonder]s to me. (19:15–17)

So also in the Community Rule:

Blessed are you, O my God, who opens the heart of your servant to knowledge. (1QS 11:15–16)

Among all the things for which the psalmist praises God, the revelation of truth is pre-eminent. And it is not truth in general or even the giving of Torah at Sinai that is being referenced, but the revelation of mysteries (רזים) and hidden things (נסתרות) to the psalmist and his community through a ‘vision of glory’ (דבמראת כב[ו]ד), 1Q34bis 3ii:6–7; cf. 1QM 10:9–11) communicated by the holy S/spirit:

I, the Instructor, have known you, my God, through the spirit which you put in me, and I have listened loyally to your wonderful secret through your holy spirit. You have [op]ened within me knowledge of the mystery of your wisdom. (1QH^a 20:11–13)¹⁸⁰

The gift of revelation is a demonstration of God’s mercy: ‘Your compassion [is] for all the sons of your approval, for you have taught them the secret of your truth and have instructed them in your wonderful mysteries’ (1QH^a 19:9–10). Similarly, mercy is demonstrated in his raising up men of *insight* (CD 6:2). From the use of the *hiphil* האיר (to enlighten) and *hiphil* participle משכיל (to be made wise), it is clear that this instructive process actually effects real change in the community. They move from a place of ignorance to a place of knowledge, from those who grope for a path to those whose eyes are opened (4Q306 f2 2–6=col 1:10–14).

179. Beyond this consequence, CD 10:7b-10a says that human’s lives were shortened. The thoroughgoing connection between enlightenment and ‘life’ must be understood as undoing this judgment (CD 3:12b-16; 1QH^a 15:13–15; 4Q481 81:10;). See further, Wacholder 2007, 125–127.

180. See also 1QH^a 26:14–15. On the the use of רז and סתר at Qumran, see Bockmuehl 1990, 53–56. See further Abegg 2003, 85–88.

But this process is not one sided. Those who have been enlightened are those who love learning (1QH^a 10:14) and who contemplate the revealed things (14:11–12). The maturation of salvation comes through drinking the milk of the leaders' instruction (15:20–22).¹⁸¹ Likewise, in CD it is only by attentive listening that understanding is gained (2:14–16). So, corresponding to what we saw in Qumran's reading of Scripture, while God's gift enlightens the community with the secret things, the enlightening process assumes a degree of initial insight and participation. Put alternatively, the gift is met by a willing reception on the part of moral agents who are sufficiently capable of apprehending it.¹⁸² Otherwise, the gift might be given capriciously.

3.2.5. The Divine Gift and Obedience

It seems evident that in order to obey God one must know his requirements. So 1QS^a 1:4–5 says that people are to be indoctrinated in all of the laws, lest they otherwise fall into sin. But as we have seen, making wise actually represents an undoing of the judgment brought on by sin and thus has salvific value that allows for obedience. This process is described in 1QH^a 6:8–9, where the psalmist thanks God for putting wisdom in the heart, an act that leads to knowledge and results in the ability to resist wicked deeds. Likewise 1QH^a 4:21–22 notes how God keeps the human agent from sin by granting insight: 'I have understood that [you smooth] the path of the one whom you choose and by the insight [of your knowledge, you pre]vent him from sinning against you.' Since prior disobedience results from deficient insight (CD 5:15–17), the divine gift is necessary to abstain from sin.¹⁸³

Alongside helping to curb sin, the divine gift positively produces works of righteousness. In CD 2:14–16 the opening of the eyes to see and understand is meant to result in walking 'perfectly on all his [God's] paths.'¹⁸⁴ In 1QH^a 15:13–15 it is through divine instruction that the

181. Garnet 1977, 21. On the prominence of teaching as the means of salvation in the Thanksgiving Hymns, see his helpful charts on pp. 31–35.

182. See the quote by Newsom on p.70 above.

183. See also 4Q504 f1–2ii:16, where the statement 'You freed us from sinning against you' is matched in the next line by 'you make us to understand testimonies.'

184. In 4Q436 God gives 'knowledge to the wise' so that the upright increase in insight (1i:2). This process strengthens them to walk on God's path (1i:4–5). Note also that God has 'given a pure heart' and removed the evil inclination (1i:10).

psalmist is strengthened to live righteously, a journey that has its conclusion in the reward of eternal peace (cf. 4Q491 11ii:18).¹⁸⁵ So the priests bless the people with a rewritten version of Numbers 6:24–26: ‘And may he illuminate your heart with the discernment of life’ (שכל חיים, 1QS 2:3). שכל חיים should probably be taken as a genitive of result: ‘the discernment that brings life’. This brings us closer to what 1QS 3:24–25 means when it says that God and the Angel of his Truth assist the Sons of Righteousness: God’s aid is demonstrated when he, both directly and through intermediate agents, enlightens the community with the wisdom of the mysteries so that they might live righteous lives. The divine gift is thus necessary for obedience and any power that the Sons possess to fight the cosmic battle in which they are engaged is dependent upon the divine gift rather than being sourced in humans themselves (1QH^a 11:4–5).¹⁸⁶

3.2.5.1. Divine Agency and Obedience

As we have seen above, the gift-act of God is a prerequisite for the community’s informed obedience. Human obedience is thus dependent on divine gifting. God protects the community so that they do not forsake his service (1QH^a 10:25, 35–36) and puts them in secure places so that they walk in paths which he has chosen (12:3). He strengthens those with knocking knees (1QM 14:6). And yet here, divine and human agency could be conceived of separately from one another: Divine assistance creates the possibility of the human agent’s independent acts.

However, the writings of Qumran also speak of God playing a prominent and direct role in their obedience. So the psalmist confesses that his life is maintained and guided by God (1QH^a 10:22–23); that through the gift of a holy S/spirit, God enables the community to adhere to truth and love so that they might not desert his covenant (1QH^a 8:15; 15:7–8; 20:11–13).¹⁸⁷ The perfection of the community’s walk is ‘in his hands’ (1QS 11:2). After confessing that he is made of clay, the psalmist attributes his responsiveness to God (1QH^a 18:3–7). The community can even go so far as to say that God gives vitality to all human action (1QH^a 20:33–35). It would thus appear that human obedience should not be conceived of independently from but in intimate rela-

185. Nitzan 2003, 131.

186. See Becker 1964, 124.

187. Garnet 1977, 56. Cf. Smith 2007, 230–237. While I agree with Smith’s conclusion that ‘a human being cannot obey God unless God first imparts to him a principle of obedience’ (237), I am less convinced that רוח קודש always means ‘principle of obedience’ or that it is clearly given at the time of community initiation.

tion with divine agency.

3.2.5.2. *Human Agency and Obedience*

This is not to suggest that human agency is inconsequential, made obsolete by higher agents. The significance of the human agent is evident in the way these texts attribute eternal consequences to human actions. In CD 7:4–9 those who live by the laws receive life, while those who reject the laws perish.¹⁸⁸ Abraham is put forward as a model since he chose not to follow the preference of his spirit, but observed the commandments and was deemed a friend of God (CD 3:2–3). On the other hand, an earlier generation of Israel perished because they did not make the same choice (3:7). In the hymn at the end of the Community Rule we find a resolution not to give refuge in the heart to Belial (1QS 10:21). So while earlier we saw how God protects the Sons from Belial, here the psalmist is able to refuse Belial. In the same vein, CD 16:5 claims that on the day that a man promises to return to the law of Moses, the Angel of Obstruction will leave him, if he keeps his words (CD 16:4–5). This statement is followed with the example of Abraham who was circumcised on the day that *he knew* (16:6). Through knowledge and community initiation, the righteous play their part in staying evil spirits.¹⁸⁹ In the cosmic battle between light and darkness, truth and iniquity, humans are not viewed as helpless victims, but as active contributors and 1QS^a uses military language to describe their roles: they are to strengthen their loins and fulfil their assignments in proportion to their intelligence and the perfection of their walk (1:17–18). In short, even while humans are influenced and captive to higher agents, their integrity as active agents is undamaged.

But it is not only that human agency can exist alongside higher agents in complementary fashion, it is often that human agency is affirmed *at the very point* when the divine agent is engaged in human affairs. It is precisely as God wills that the psalmist is able to will (1QH 18:5); it is as God cuts off the wicked and causes the righteous to stand (12:18–21) that the psalmist stands against the wicked (12:22; cf. 10:23–25).¹⁹⁰ Most of all, it is as the community is granted knowledge that they are invested with the potential to be effective agents. Thus the psalmist confesses:

188. See also CD 12:21–23; 14:1–2.

189. This is not irrespective of God's agency, however. See further VanderKam 2000a, 127–128.

190. Garnet 1977, 24–25. See also Fletcher-Louis 2002, 106–107.

‘You have favoured me with the spirit of knowledge [to love tr]uth [and justice,] and to loath all the paths of injustice, *therefore I love you freely* (נדבה), and with (my) whole heart’ (1QH^a 6:25–26). This claim, ‘to love freely’, is repeated in 7:13 alongside the averment that he has purified his heart and not turned aside from the commandments (7:13–14). The notion of נדבה in these lines is associated with free-will offerings and suggests that these acts were performed in a voluntary and unconstrained manner. And yet the psalmist then turns around in 7:15 to say that thanks to divine illumination he knows that these things did *not* come by the hand of flesh and that humans *cannot* establish their steps (7:15–16). Within the same breath the psalmist affirms the free agency of humanity and denies the possibility of a human agent working (in any productive way) apart from the divine agent. And so he can affirm in lines 19–20 both that 1) God has appointed him for the covenant and 2) that he, himself, clings to the truth (ואתמוכזה). A stronger statement is made in 19:10: ‘For the sake of your glory, you have purified man from offence, so that he can make himself holy (להתקדש)’. The *hithpael* suggests that the one who has been purified by God is therein established to act on him or herself to accomplish purification.¹⁹¹

In light of such cases, it is hard to imagine that the sectarians did not conceive of an intimate relationship existing between agencies, human and divine.¹⁹² It seems there is a coexistence and coinherence of divine and human agencies, wherein the human remains in direct dependence on the divine. This phenomenon can be detected in other Qumran manuscripts as well. The same document that includes a Treatise which describes people being appointed for the community, also repeatedly speaks of members as those who ‘freely volunteer’ (נדב).¹⁹³ This is as true of covenant initiation (1QS 5:6, 8, 22), as it is of covenant continuation (1QS 1:7, 11; 5:1, 10). Likewise, the Sons of Aaron are described as those who volunteer (1QS 5:21) and as those whom God raises up (CD 6:2). Such propositions can only be explained if the covenanters conceived of di-

191. This might also suggest that purification has transformative value at Qumran, empowering obedience. If so, it seems to me that this line must be understood in light of the previous one: ‘you have taught them the basis of your truth, and have instructed them in your wonderful mysteries.’ Here purification is still closely connected with learning mysteries. Furthermore, it is possible that the issue here is purification at the eschaton, since he goes on to describe this person being ‘united wi[th] the sons of your truth in the lot with your holy ones, *to raise the worms of the dead from the dust, to an ever[lasting] community* and from a depraved spirit, to [your] knowledge, so that he can take his place *in your presence* with the perpetual host and the spirits [...], *to renew him with everything that will exist*, and with those who know in a community of jubilation’ (1QH^a 19:11–14).

192. Contra Sanders 1977, 265–66n67.

193. On the cultic background of נדב in 1QS, see Dimant 2007.

vine and human agency existing in some sort of non-contrastive relationship. Our conclusion must be that the divine operations do not deny human freedom, but establish and enhance it.¹⁹⁴

3.3. Conclusion

Studying larger structures within sectarian theology has supplemented our initial investigation based on Qumran's reading of Scripture. From Qumran's scriptural interpretation, I argued how the divine-priority and Israel-priority readings of Deuteronomy 30 exist together as complementary explanations of the revelation they possess. Nevertheless, even with the divine-priority reading informing the community's understanding, it is only those predisposed to seek out the knowledge of the hidden things who will eventually enter the community and have their hearts circumcised through the exegetical process. Becoming knowledgeable is in many ways the 'gracious divine response' to a whole-hearted longing for truth,¹⁹⁵ and heart-circumcision is a divine-human act, towards which both agents make substantial and necessary contributions. Perhaps, then, heart-circumcision is synergistic in the truest sense of the term.

If members were forced to explain how it is that, out of the rest of apostate Israel, they ended up in the community, illumined under the Teacher's instruction and on route to eschatological purification, then the answer must be that they eagerly searched for the hidden things, while others did not (CD 3:12–16; 1QS 5:11–12). But this is hardly the whole of the matter. By looking at predestination we have seen how, with respect to the righteous, God created them with a good inclination. Thus any good attributable to the righteous, especially their desire for the hidden things, must ultimately be attributed to God. Their communal identity was thus formed by pushing back the most fundamental event in every member's individual story to creation itself.¹⁹⁶ Fashioned with an upright disposition, the righteous are initially made manifest by

194. Studies that conceive of divine and human agencies in contrast deny either predestination (e.g., Treves 1961, 449–452; Sanders 1977, 262–268) or human agency (e.g., Maier 1971, 204, 208). On some methodological problems here, see Carson 1981b, 81.

195. Newsom 2004, 71.

196. See Newsom 2004, 133–134.

Conclusion

joining the community and searching out the hidden things. D. Dimant summaries well how part of the goal of this process is to be enlightened as to who one truly is:

Man himself is incapable of deciphering that mystery, which embraces both this personal biography and history at large. His lot is to search all his life, by his own action, and by divine illuminating grace, in order to discover to which part he belongs, Light or Darkness.... The freedom given to man is not to choose where to go but to discover where he is. This can be done only with the aid of divinely-inspired knowledge of the true meaning of the world, of man and of history. This is why the starting point of man is ignorance, while the final election is marked by a gift of knowledge.¹⁹⁷

Importantly, the fact that the righteous were created as righteous and in distinction from the wicked means that terms like ‘conversion’, ‘salvation’, and even ‘grace’ which hold certain connotations in the Christian tradition turn out to be less than helpful here. In fact, unless we take care to understand these and like terms in light of the *particular* and *concrete* ways in which these concepts take shape and function in various communities, ‘common’ terms may easily mislead comparisons of Qumran with other Jews.¹⁹⁸

Beyond this important insight, this larger study has also pointed out how Qumran’s apocalyptic worldview does not allow for a single-dimensional, flat, conception of agency where humans are able to make choices irrespective of outside influences. Persons are always under the sway of higher, ancillary agents. While this does not diminish their ability to talk about human agency, it does qualify the sectarian discourse: there are no independently ‘free’ agents save God himself. The essence of true freedom is to be fully and finally liberated from the oppression of dark forces at the eschaton. Such a conception of freedom does not dislocate humans from divine influence, for it is precisely as that influence is felt most acutely that human potential is realised. This constitutes all the glory of Adam and grants one the ability to rule rightly.

In conclusion we might then say that Qumran’s particular understanding of God’s ‘salvific’ gifts locates divine grace primarily in creation, but also in the raising up of a teacher to reveal hidden things, in preserving and protecting the righteous from evil, in the moral enablement and empowerment of the righteous by those truths, and in eschatological transformation. Especially with respect to the present age, God’s gifts predominantly take the form of the revelation of

197. Dimant 1984, 538.

198. And this is all the more true when great similarities exist between Qumran and other Jews. Again, while such terms might appear to be common property in ancient Judaism, as Newsom (2004, 11) astutely points out, they are better seen ‘as common space within which many different intentions and socially charged meanings meet together.’

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truth which is cognitively appropriated, and in every case save creation, these gifts come to those who are righteous and exercise a degree of moral competence within the created order.

Chapter 4

RESTORATION AGENCY IN THE APOCRYPHA AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

4.1. Baruch

In its literary setting, Baruch was composed by Jeremiah's scribe during the Babylonian captivity (1:1–2). Exile provides the metaphorical backdrop for presenting a confession of the sins that warranted God's wrath (1:13).¹ To account for these atrocities and to stir the people's hope, Baruch draws inspiration from the writings of Moses.² More specifically, the logic of 1:15–3:8 follows the final chapters of Deuteronomy.³ If Watson is correct in believing that the narrative of Deuteronomy 30:1–10 serves as Baruch's hermeneutical focal point,⁴ then we need to explore just how that text has been read.

4.1.1. Deuteronomy 30 and the Narrative of Israel

In Deuteronomy 28 Moses pronounces a blessing upon Israel and is quick to stress how it comes on certain terms: 'May the Lord send the blessing upon you ... if you listen to the voice of the Lord your God and walk in his ways' (ἐὰν εἰσακούσης τῆς φωνῆς κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου καὶ

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1. So Michael 2007, 925, from which all translations are taken and only slightly revised where necessary. Whether exile is metaphorical or actual in our author's perspective matters little for our purposes. On the historical function of the literary perspective employed, see Steck 1998, 25. There are substantial arguments for dating the original compilation of the book during the Maccabean period; however, its similarity with Daniel-Theodotion suggests at least a 1st century BCE dating. Compare Burkes 1999, 269n42 with the recent proposal by Watson 2004, 457–458.
 2. Watson 2004, 461.
 3. Nickelsburg 1984, 140; Scott 1993, 203.
 4. Watson 2004, 470.

πορευθῆς ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ, 28:8–9). Baruch surveys Israel’s history and concludes that the people have ‘not listened to the voice of the Lord, our God, to walk by the decrees...’ (οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν τῆς φωνῆς κυρίου θεοῦ ἡμῶν πορεύεσθαι τοῖς προστάγμασιν, 1:18). By reshaping Moses’ conditional appeal into a negative description, Baruch establishes Israel’s guilt and roots it in Scripture.⁵ Accentuating Israel’s culpability is that her rebellion has been on display since the exodus: ‘From the day when the Lord brought our fathers out of the land of Egypt even until this day ... [we did] not listen to his voice’ (ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμέρας ἧς ἐξήγαγεν κύριος τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου καὶ ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης ἡμεθα ... τὸ μὴ ἀκούειν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ, 1:19). While it is impossible for Baruch to establish his case empirically, Scripture’s unique vantage point authorises his claim: ‘From the day that their fathers came out of the land of Egypt even until this day ... they did not listen to me’ (ἀφ’ ἧς ἡμέρας ἐξήλθοσαν οἱ πατέρες αὐτῶν ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου καὶ ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης ... οὐκ ἤκουσάν μου, Jer 7:25–26).⁶ But the relationship between history and text works both ways. For instance, the reason why ‘the curse’ (ἡ ἀρά) ‘clung’ (ἐκολλήθη) to Israel (Bar 1:20) is precisely because Moses declared that if a person serves the nation’s gods, all ‘the curses’ (αἱ ἀραί) would ‘cling’ (κολληθήσονται) to that person (Deut 29:19).⁷ Since ‘each went off in the intent of his evil heart to work for other gods’ (Bar 1:22),⁸ the full extent of the curse has been unleashed—even down to parents eating their own children (2:3–5; cf. Deut 28:53–57; Jer 19:9). History thus serves to substantiate the scriptural witness, fully establishing Moses’ authority.⁹

In order to offer his readers hope, Baruch continues to rely on Moses’ authority as he petitions God for deliverance (2:11–35). While much of his prayer utilises Daniel 9,¹⁰ its conclusion reminds God of promises that came ‘by the hand of ... Moses’ (v28):

5. It is also possible that Bar 1:18 is echoing LXX Jer 39:23 (Steck 1998, 40). Though missing the phrase κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου and inverting verb-object order, Bar 1:18 contains a direct verbal correspondence to προστάγμασιν. Additionally, Bar 1:16 echoes LXX Jer 39:32.

6. So Werline 1998, 92. Cf. Deut 9:7. See also Deut 29:3–4 which has the following correspondences with Bar 1:18–19: δίδωμι; κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν; ἀκούω; ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης; ἄγω.

7. Werline (1998, 94) suggests Deut 28:21, 60 as the referent; yet LXX 29:19 offers a verbal parallel with both subject and verb.

8. Cf. Jer 7:24, 16:12, 18:12; Gen 6:5.

9. Watson 2004, 461.

10. On the use of Dan 9, see Nickelsburg 1984, 145–145. On Daniel-Theodotion specifically, see Watson 2004, 457n74, 459–460.

³⁰For I knew that they would not obey me, because the people are stiff-necked. And they will return to their heart in the land of their exile, ³¹and they will know that I am the Lord their God. And I will give them a heart and hearing ears, ³²and they will praise me in the land of their exile, and they will remember my name, ³³and they will turn away from their hard back and from their wicked deeds, because they will remember the way of their fathers who sinned before the Lord. ³⁴And I will return them to the land, which I swore to their fathers, to Abram and to Isaac and to Jacob, and they will rule over it, and I will multiply them, and they will not diminish. ³⁵I will establish with them an everlasting covenant, that I be God to them and they be a people to me, and I will not disturb again my people Israel from the land that I have given them. (Bar 2:30–35)

With a turn back to the words of Moses our author directs his readers to the pages of Deuteronomy. By alluding to Deuteronomy 9:13 where God declares that he knows how the ‘people are stiff-necked’ (λαὸς σκληροτράχηλός ἐστιν), Baruch further grounds Israel’s incompetence in Scripture: Israel could do nothing other than disobey precisely ‘because the people are stiff-necked’ (ὅτι λαὸς σκληροτράχηλός ἐστιν, Bar 2:30). The beginning of verse 29 most likely recalls Deuteronomy 28:62,¹¹ while ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν οὗ διασπερῶ αὐτούς ἐκεῖ at the end of the verse resembles Deuteronomy 30:3. Interestingly, however, stronger verbal parallels to this phrase are found in Ezekiel, the most prominent being 12:15:¹²

καὶ γνώσονται διότι ἐγὼ κύριος ἐν τῷ διασκορπίσαι με αὐτούς ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν καὶ
διασπερῶ αὐτούς

The connection between the end of Baruch’s prayer and Ezekiel becomes more pronounced if we consider Baruch 2:31:

καὶ γνώσονται ὅτι ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεὸς αὐτῶν καὶ δώσω αὐτοῖς καρδίαν

The highlighted portion is a near exact verbal parallel to LXX Ezekiel 12:15.¹³ Of course the phrase καὶ δώσω αὐτοῖς καρδίαν echoes the previous chapter of Ezekiel where YHWH promises that while his people are still in exile he will ‘give them another heart’ (καὶ δώσω αὐτοῖς καρδίαν ἑτέραν, 11:19; cf. 36:26, Jer 24:7).¹⁴ One begins to wonder just how or even if Moses is still speaking. Yet as Watson notes, all the main themes of Deuteronomy 30:1–10 are present and it is best to understand it as the primary influence, even though Baruch draws on other material.¹⁵

11. Both portray how the nation will go from numerical notoriety to insignificance.

12. Cf. Ezek 20:23; 22:15; 29:12; 30:23; 36:19.

13. D.E. Gowen (2001, 223), Werline (1998, 98), and Steck (1998, 43) all locate Jer 24:7 as the referent. While conceptually these texts are very similar, Bar 2:31 contains verbal parallels that nearly replicate LXX Ezek.

14. Cf. Martyn 2006, 178n15; Steck 1993, 109.

4.1.1.1. *Ezekiel's Influence*

Baruch places a description of the people returning to their heart in exile immediately before the gift of a new heart: *καὶ ἐπιστρέψουσιν ἐπὶ καρδίαν αὐτῶν ἐν γῆ ἀποικισμοῦ αὐτῶν* (Bar 2:30c). While LXX Deuteronomy 30:1 only speaks of ‘taking (*δέχομαι*) to heart’, the MT reads: ‘you will turn to your heart in all the nations’ (*והשבת אל־לִבְכֶם בכל־הגוים*). Baruch echoes the MT at this point, confirming that the restoration is initially set forth according to Deuteronomy 30. Why then does Baruch use language from Ezekiel to describe the divine gift?

In Ezekiel a new heart is given because the old one is no longer responsive; it is stone (11:19; cf. 36:26). On one reading, the circumcision (MT)/purification (LXX) of the heart in Deuteronomy 30:6 has the effect of reconstituting Israel as a responsive agent, who up until that point has been ‘given’ (*δίδωμι*) neither a heart to know, eyes to see, nor ‘ears to hear’ (*ὄτα ἀκούειν*, Deut 29:3; cf. Jer 5:21). It is no coincidence that Baruch foresees ‘ears that hear’ (*ὄτα ἀκούοντα*) accompanying God’s gift of a heart (2:31). Utilising language from Ezekiel in combination with the motif of ‘hearing ears’ helps Baruch communicate exactly how God’s salvific act in Deuteronomy 30:6 solves the deficiency posed in Deuteronomy 29:3.¹⁶ Thus while Moses provides the form of the restoration narrative, Ezekiel helps to interpret its content.

4.1.1.2. *Jeremiah's Influence*

Ezekiel is not Baruch’s only counsellor. Jeremiah also assists him in discerning the meaning of Deuteronomy 30. Before mentioning heart-circumcision, Deuteronomy describes how YHWH will gather people, return them to the land, and multiply them (Deut 30:3–5). Our author, however, places these things after the promise of reconstitution and does so employing language from Jeremiah 36–37.¹⁷ He also believes that God’s deliverance establishes an ‘eternal covenant’

15. Watson 2004, 461. See also Steck 1998, 43.

16. If this work was intended for Greek speaking audiences, then heart-circumcision might have been an unfamiliar metaphor and the use of Ezekiel might have been used to avoid this.

17. Compare Bar 2:34 (*καὶ ἀποστρέψω αὐτούς εἰς τὴν γῆν ἣν ὤμοσα τοῖς πατράσιν αὐτῶν ... καὶ κυριεύσουσιν αὐτῆς*) with Jer 37:3 (*καὶ ἀποστρέψω αὐτούς εἰς τὴν γῆν ἣν ἔδωκα τοῖς πατράσιν αὐτῶν καὶ κυριεύσουσιν αὐτῆς*). Compare Bar 2:34 (*καὶ πληθυνῶ αὐτούς καὶ οὐ μὴ σμικρυνθῶσιν*) with Jer 36:6 (*καὶ πληθύνεσθε καὶ μὴ σμικρυνθῆτε*).

(*διαθήκην αἰώνιον*). While an eternal covenant is mentioned several times in the Hebrew Bible,¹⁸ the reference here is to LXX Jeremiah 39:40 where it is linked with the promise that God ‘will give fear of him into the heart’ (*τὸν φόβον μου δώσω εἰς τὴν καρδίαν*) of the people so they might not turn away. We can be sure that Baruch echoes LXX Jeremiah 39:40, as this verse reverberates through a prayer in the following chapter:¹⁹

⁶For you are the Lord, our God, and we will praise you, O Lord. ⁷For because of this you have given your fear in our heart (*ἔδωκας τὸν φόβον σου ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἡμῶν*) in order that we call upon your name, and we will praise you in our exile, for we have put away from our heart all the injustice of our fathers who sinned before you. (Bar 3:6–7)

Baruch’s reference to fear being placed in the heart communicates that Jeremiah’s promised new and eternal covenant is now realised. Importantly, for both Jeremiah and Baruch the divine gift stimulates human action. The logical relationship between divine and human agency is explicated through two distinct grammatical constructions. First, as in Jeremiah, an infinitive of purpose (*ἐπικαλεῖσθαι*) demonstrates how a divine gift was given in order that they might call upon and offer praise to God. Following this clause is another statement of human action introduced by *ὅτι*. In the first of these clauses divine gifting makes human action possible; in the second, human action offers the evidence whereby the reception of the gift might be inferred (Baruch’s own prayer being exemplary).²⁰ Both clauses relate the two agencies in a way that makes human action dependent on the divine gift.²¹

4.1.1.3. Conclusion

By reading Deuteronomy 30:1–10 through the bifocals of Ezekiel and Jeremiah, Baruch has assured us that God’s act of reconstitution happens ‘in exile’ and prior to any calling, praise, or reform on people’s part.²² Against this, it could be argued that since the people are said ‘to turn to their heart’ prior to the divine gift, human action is still foundational and initiates the restora-

18. Gen 9:16, 17:7, 13, 19; Ex 31:16; Lev 24:8; 2Sam 23:5; 1Chr 16:17; Ps 105:10; Is 24:5; Is 55:3; Is 61:8; Jer 32:40; Ezek 16:60, 37:26

19. This is the only place in the LXX which combines *δίδωμι*, *φόβος*, and *καρδία*.

20. Steck 1998, 44.

21. Contra Werline (1998, 105), who asserts that v5 ‘requests that God free the present generation from the sins of the past because the present generation is repentant.’ V5 asks not that God free them on the basis of repentance, but for his namesake.

22. So Gowan 2001, 223; Cf. Steck 1998, 43. Contra Werline 1998, 99.

tion. Three factors dispute this reading, however.

First, as R.A. Werline has shown, the idiomatic Hebrew expression behind this (והשבת אל-לבבך) denotes mental recognition or reflection; in this context it describes Israel's consideration of her situation and guilt²³ and not her 'return to law'. Certainly, a renewed commitment to Torah was to arise from this reflection and thus one would expect such a description to follow. Importantly, however, this is precisely where Baruch proclaims the divine gift, suggesting its priority over law-observance.

Second, a similar expression can be found in Isaiah 44:19, where the prophet protests how 'no one turns to his heart' (ולא-ישיב אל-לבו). It is significant that prior to this phrase we read how '[God] besmeared their eyes so they could not see and their hearts so they could not understand.' Baruch paints Israel in a similar condition. It would seem reasonable to assume that in Baruch too receptive eyes and hearts are necessary to 'turn to the heart'. In fact, verses 32–33 present statements of reflection (*μιμνήσσκομαι*) and turning (*ἀποστρέφω*) after the gift-event. In light of this, I suggest that we take verses 31b–36 as a detailed exposition of verses 30–31a, the latter functioning as a summary statement for the restoration.

Finally, it is important that Baruch does not make use of any conditional causes. Our author does not pen *εἰ*, *ἐάν*, or even *ὅταν*, but simply uses a string of *καί* + future indicative verbs. The placement of a statement about God's intimate knowledge of Israel's unresponsive condition—*λαὸς σκληροτράχηλός ἐστιν* (2:30)—immediately before Israel's turning even sharpens the point that her turning is a result of divine compassion. In fact, the beginning of the section attributes the whole sequence to God's *ἐπιείκεια* and *οἰκτιρισμός* (2:27; cf. Deut 30:3). What we have, therefore, is an interpretation of the restoration that is distinctly divinely initiated. To label this new situation an 'eternal covenant' implies its abiding nature: God acts in such a way so as to secure sustainability on the part of human agents.²⁴ And in language reminiscent of Ezekiel 36, salvation is put forward as being accomplished emphatically for the sake of divine glory (2:14, 17; 3:5) over against human achievement (2:19).²⁵

23. Werline 1998, 16.

24. Rightly, Garlington 1991, 203.

25. On this motif, see Werline 1998, 103–104, though he seems unaware of any influence from Ezek.

4.1.2. Deuteronomy 30 and Baruch's Wisdom Hymn (3:9–4:4)

Abruptly concluding the former section is a call for Israel to 'hear the commandments of life'. This call introduces a sapiential poem in the form of a hymn (3:9–4:4).²⁶ Using an ancient metaphor for curse and exile, Israel is described as 'among those in Hades' (3:11).²⁷ Her destitution is the result of abandoning 'the spring of wisdom' (3:12). As verse 13 emphatically states, living in accordance with 'wisdom' or 'insight' is a condition for life. Israel is admonished 'to learn where there is insight' because to know that is simultaneously (*ἀμα*) to locate life (3:14). Wisdom and life are closely related, as possessing the former is a sufficient condition for possessing the latter.

Much of this applies to Torah since it is 'the source of wisdom', 'the way of knowledge', or 'the way of God'. As with chapters 1–2, the curse is the result of Israel's forsaking Torah. Just as those who have forsaken (*ἐγκαταλείπω*) the spring of wisdom end up in Hades (3:12), so 'those who forsake' (*οἱ ... καταλείποντες*) Torah will die (4:1). But those who hold on to Torah are headed 'toward life' (*εἰς ζώην*, 4:1). Accordingly, Torah is 'the spring of wisdom' spoken about in 3:12 and heeding it is the condition for life.²⁸

This helps to interpret the genitive *ἐντολὰς ζωῆς* in 3:9: The commandments are commandments which *lead to life*; that is, they have the purpose and expected result of life.²⁹ The goal of 'hearing' the commandment of life is 'to learn insight' (*γινῶναι φρόνησιν*, 3:9).³⁰ Assumed is the association between 'insight' and 'life' noted above, both of which have Torah as their source. Whereas in the Shema, 'hear' means 'obey' or 'do', here it has the connotation of 'find' and 'learn'.³¹ Baruch thus presents us with a chain of associated concepts:

Knowing Torah > *leads to* insight which = Life.

However,

Forsaking Torah > *cuts off the means to* insight and therefore > *leads to* death.³²

26. Burke 1982, 4–5.

27. Cf. Deut 30:19 and Ezek 37, both of which equate the curse with death.

28. Schnabel 1985, 98–99.

29. Schnabel 1985, 99

30. Sheppard 1980, 84.

31. Cf. *ἄκουε* *Ἰσραηλ* in the *Shema* (LXX Deut 6:4).

32. On the relationship between wisdom and life, compare Schnabel 1985, 99.

But presupposed in these correlations is the premise that Torah is available to be known.

4.1.2.1. *Inaccessibility of Torah*

Right after admonishing his readers to seek Torah, Baruch presents the endeavour as futile. With the question, ‘Who has found her place?’ our author ‘raises the frightening possibility that the one thing that gives life is also not accessible to humans.’³³ The most powerful people in society demonstrate that everyone perishes without wisdom (vv16–28). And in the search for wisdom, human striving is futile:

²⁹Who has gone up into the sky and taken
her and brought her down from the clouds?

³⁰Who has crossed over the sea and found
her and will bring her as choice gold?³⁴

³¹There is no one who is familiar with her way,
nor one who thinks much about her path. (3:29–31)

4.1.2.2. *Rewriting Deuteronomy 30:11–14*

Torah’s Gift Character: The questions in 3:29–31 take us back once again to Deuteronomy 30,³⁵ which along with the theme of exile links this section with the previous one. After presenting the narrative of restoration, Moses insists:

¹¹this commandment that I command you today is not excessive nor is it far from you.
¹²It is not in the sky, saying, ‘Who will go up to the sky and get it for us? And when we hear it, we shall do it.’ ¹³Neither is it beyond the sea, saying, ‘Who will cross to the other side of the sea for us and get it for us and make us hear it and do it?’ ¹⁴The word is very near to you, in your mouth and in your heart and in your hands, to do it. (LXX Deut 30:11–14)

The rhetorical questions in verses 12–13 stress the *accessibility* of Torah, possession of which leaves Israel without an excuse. There is no need to search in some distant place since the word is near. Baruch, it would seem, utilises these questions to make the very opposite point about

33. Burkes 1999, 272–273.

34. Or possibly ‘acquire her for’ choice gold. The textual issue here is quite complex. See Burke 1982, 102–103 esp., n105; cf. Sheppard 1980, 92–93.

35. For an examination of Baruch’s replication of LXX Deut 30:12–13, see Waters 2006, 73. On the verbal parallels specifically, see Sheppard 1980, 90–91.

wisdom's source, the Torah; namely, that human power is unable to procure it.³⁶ Torah's inaccessibility is a qualified inaccessibility, however:

³²But he who knows all things is familiar with her; he discovered her by his intelligence...
³⁶This is our God; no other will be reckoned with him. ³⁷He discovered the whole way of knowledge and gave her to his servant Jacob and to Israel who was loved by him. (3:32, 36–37)

As these verses stress, what is unattainable by human resources can be acquired as a gift. God has furnished Israel with that which human power could never obtain on its own. Baruch, therefore, does not deny Israel the fountain of wisdom, but only insists that her possession of it is the result of a divine gift and not human achievement.³⁷ The entire section begins with a juxtaposition between the powerful whom God did not choose and gift (οὐ τούτους ἐξελέξατο ὁ θεὸς οὐδὲ ... ἔδωκεν, 3:27), and Israel whom God has chosen to gift. Accordingly Israel's uniqueness vis-à-vis the nations is a result of electing love.³⁸ Once again in his reading of Deuteronomy 30, Baruch prioritises divine agency and gift over against human agency and achievement.

To Hear and to Do? Another important adaptation in Baruch's presentation is that he edits out the repeated phrase 'to hear and to do'. The first appearance of this phrase is taken up by the notion of bringing wisdom down from the clouds; the second appearance is replaced with the idea of 'finding' her and 'bringing' her as choice gold. A passage originally dealing with Torah-obedience has been coloured with the theme of seeking wisdom.³⁹ Consequently, Deuteronomy's emphasis on human law-keeping becomes an emphasis on Torah-possession.

It is difficult to determine the reason for this shift in focus. It might simply be assumed that the gift of Torah sufficiently entails its accomplishment. In fact, verses 32–35 paint an analogy between God's creative power in furnishing the universe and God's giving of Torah-wisdom: God equipped the earth for all time; when he 'sends the light', 'it goes'; he 'summoned light' and 'it obeyed' (ὕπηκουσεν). In other words, creation demonstrates how God's sending incites response. It would seem natural to assume the same about the gift of Torah, making it unnecessary

36. So Sheppard 1980, 91.

37. Harrelson 1992, 164.

38. Bekken (2007, 148, 170–171), and to a lesser extent Garlington (1991, 207–208), focus here on Jewish exclusivity. While this might be an implication of election, the more fundamental question here concerns agency. Garlington's (210) conclusion that Baruch does not put forward a 'doctrine of "legalistic" acquisition of merits', but 'the proud consciousness of the Jews of their superiority to the Gentiles' suggests a dichotomy that distracts us from agency-questions so apparent in the text.

39. Cf. Sheppard 1980, 93.

to mention ‘doing’ explicitly.

However, it is more likely that the shift in speaking of Torah as wisdom necessitated an adjustment in descriptions about responsiveness. It is not as if responsiveness is excluded or automatic in this section. The people are to seize wisdom, to take hold of her, and ‘pass through’ to stand in the presence of her light, all probably describing the process and results of learning Torah. Israel is obliged to cherish wisdom as her most prized possession (4:1–4).

Nickelsburg is probably correct to detect in 4:4 an echo of LXX Deuteronomy 33:29, as this is the only other place in the LXX which contains the combination of *μακάριος* and *Ἰσραήλ*.⁴⁰ Interestingly, in Deuteronomy Israel is happy because she is ‘a people who are saved by the Lord’. In Baruch, happiness derives from knowing what pleases the Lord. It appears that Baruch has glossed salvation as Torah-possession. This makes better sense of Harrelson’s suggestion that the purpose of the poem was ‘to underscore ... that the Torah offers to an embattled community all the guidance for life that the community needs.’⁴¹ Yet if this is true, then Torah-possession needs to be accompanied by Torah-fulfilment. Happiness comes not just because what is pleasing to God is known (4:4), but because following what is known will bring Israel out of her situation. The section calls Israel to obedience.⁴² Consequently, Baruch’s gloss focuses salvation in the giving of Torah. Those who appropriate it are *μακάριος*.

4.1.3. Zion Poem

More briefly we turn to see how these themes play out in the final section of Baruch. The book closes with a poem of lament and comfort modelled on sections of Isaiah (4:5–5:9). Its final word is a resolution that the people will be shown mercy (5:9). Initially, such confidence is based on an emphasis that redemption is YHWH’s work:⁴³ ‘But I [i.e., Jerusalem], how am I able to help you? For (γάρ) he who brought these bad things upon you will deliver (ἐξελεῖται) you’ (4:17–18). The reason anthropomorphised Jerusalem cannot help is because salvation belongs to the Lord.

40. Nickelsburg 2006, 229.

41. Harrelson 1992, 159; see also Garlington 1991, 210.

42. Bekken 2007, 171.

43. Garlington 1991, 204.

Hope and joy come ‘on the basis of’ (ἐπί) God’s promised rescue (4:22). Israel is to take courage; to cry out; to seek God because ‘just as your intention became to go astray from God, multiply by ten when you return to seek him. For the one who brought these bad things upon you will bring you everlasting merriment with your salvation’ (4:21, 28–29). In such statements, it would be wrong to understand salvation as a response to Israel’s repentance; rather, imperatives to seek God are rooted and grounded in the confidence that God will bring salvation. Salvation motivates obedience without resulting from it. And yet even though the basis for comfort is divine deliverance, such deliverance is not meant to leave Israel passive.⁴⁴ God gathers Israel by his ‘word’, brings mountains low and fills valleys, but does so ‘that Israel may walk’ (ἵνα βαδίση, 5:5–7). Founded upon the firm hope that God will save, this passage conveys a certainty throughout that Israel will obey, her obedience established on the divine promise.⁴⁵

4.1.4. Summary and Conclusion

This investigation confirms Watson’s identification of the ‘deuteronomic scheme’ in Baruch. In chapters 1:1–3:9 we might even see how Deuteronomy 30:1–10 provides a ‘hermeneutical key.’⁴⁶ For this reason it is important to consider which reading of the ‘deuteronomic scheme’ Baruch elaborates so clearly.⁴⁷ Watson begins to uncover Baruch’s particular reading when he observes how exile, transformation, and return appear as distinctly marked phases and also how God’s heart-cleansing work ‘ensures continued obedience and therefore life.’⁴⁸ Yet Watson still proposes an unrelenting antithesis between Paul and Baruch with respect to conditionality:

The deuteronomic ideology that shapes Baruch’s confession has no room for an unconditional promise; for, in both the old and the new histories [i.e., before and after restoration], possession of the land promised to the fathers is dependent on faithful observance of the law. In one case, the turning-point between the old and new is a matter of appropriate *human* action, beginning with confession and determined by the law. In the other case, the turning-point is a matter of definitive, unsurpassable *divine* saving action, which reorients human action toward itself and so represents a breach with the law.⁴⁹

44. Cf. Garlington 1991, 204–205.

45. From the section’s focus on the past, Watson (2004, 470) deduces an ‘unspoken anxiety about the hoped-for-future’. This conclusion is not necessary, however, and it seems better to concentrate on the spoken rather than the unspoken.

46. Watson 2004, 470.

47. Watson 2004, 455.

48. Watson 2004, 462, 455.

Leaving aside for a moment the relationship between Paul's gospel, conditionality, and law-observance, it is worth asking whether Baruch's 'turning point' consist of an 'appropriate human action'.⁵⁰ Since in Baruch's reading of Deuteronomy 30 the divine gift of a new heart stands prior to and supportive of human action, it does not seem entirely accurate to say that neither Baruch nor Deuteronomy leaves room for an unconditional promise.⁵¹ While the acquirement of land could be construed as conditional, God's pledge to reorient the will is not. Watson goes on to soften his statement, noting how the ...

... antithesis between human and divine action is by no means absolute. The return to the laws is a human action inspired by God (Bar.2.31–33; 3.7), and the divine action in Christ intends the human action of faith that corresponds to it and acknowledges it. Yet, although the return to the law is achieved only with divine assistance, the law's basic premise, that the divine blessing is conditional on human obedience, remains intact... In Deuteronomy 30, Moses announces that the problem posed by the old history can be solved by the offer of a second chance to secure life under what is still essentially the old regime. Baruch follows him in this.⁵²

However, if God's saving action in some way ensures law-observance, as Watson states, then this would seem to require a reconceptualisation of law-observance's conditionality. True, law-shaped obedience is still a necessary, instrumental condition for continued blessing; but this condition's fulfilment is dependent on and guaranteed by a divine gift-act.⁵³ In 2:30b–35, Moses offers a new way of existing as much as a 'second chance'. The condition of obedience has been transformed by and encompassed within the promised deliverance.

In 3:9–4:4, Baruch maintains his emphasis on divine agency, but the focus shifts from the di-

49. Watson 2004, 464, emphasis his.

50. See also Werline 1998, 105. The critique which follows applies to Werline *mutatis mutandis*.

51. Watson (2004, 462) might respond that 'Baruch's confession ... enacts the transformation of which it speaks', and thus human agency initiates transformation. However, (1) he fails to give adequate reasons for why this is; (2) if 'confession' is defined as 'calling upon the name' or 'recalling the way of their fathers' then this is a consequence of God's gifting (3:7; 2:32–33); and at any rate, (3) Watson also calls confession 'the fulfilment' of God's promise (462).

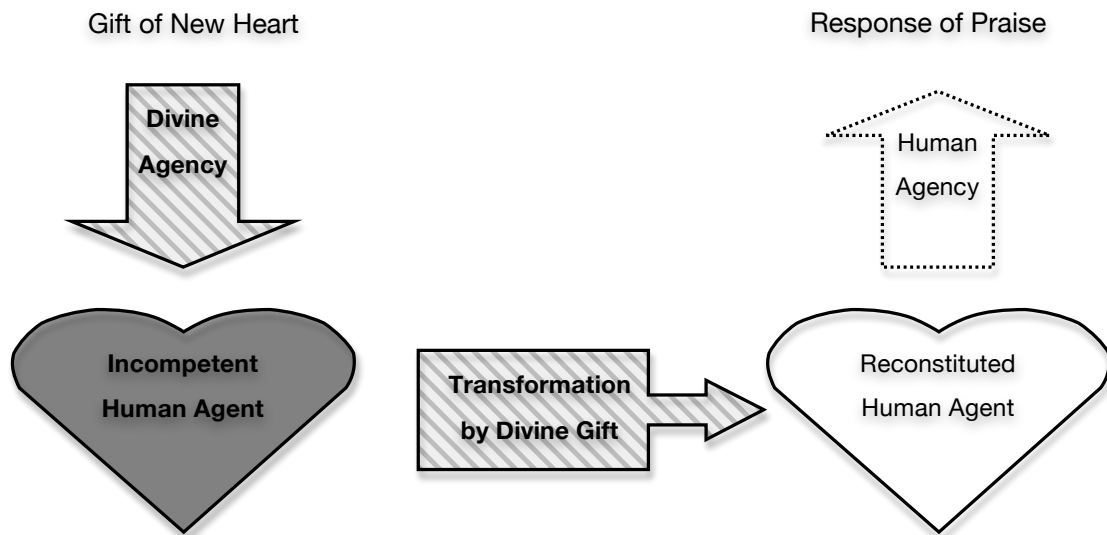
52. Watson 2004, 464–465.

53. This is what I find so puzzling about Watson's (2004, 470) belaboured point: 'If the experience of violence at the hands of a foreign conqueror is interpreted as divine retribution for transgression, what guarantee can there be that the cycle of law, transgression and judgment will not be repeated? And how can there be any real confidence in the Isaianic vision of Jerusalem's glory when it remains subject to the condition: *if* you keep my commandments...?' Again: '[H]ow can Jerusalem be so confident that, this time at least, the return to the law will be sufficient? If the Isaianic vision is subjected to a deuteronomistic condition, it threatens to become a groundless fantasy.' All these questions revolve around the question: How can Baruch really give any assurance concerning life? I would suggest that the answer lies in a divine saving act which establishes obedient agents. Martyn (2006, 178n15, 179n18) appears to agree.

Baruch

vine gift of a new heart to the divine gift of Torah. Torah is given as something to be obeyed, and obedience has life-securing value. In this section, there is no immediate interplay between divine and human agency. Rather than reconstituting the human agent, the divine gift of Torah simply provides the opportunity for Israel to gain insight and life. The final section implores Israel to take comfort, call upon God, rejoice and seek after him in the light of the coming salvation (4:36).

If allowed to correlate the sections, I would propose we understand Baruch as follows: Dead in exile, incompetent Israel will be reconstituted by God as a competent moral agent. The gift of a new heart along with the gift of Torah allow Israel to respond to God and obey unto life.



While Baruch seems to indicate that the divine gift not only enables but *establishes* human reciprocity, there is no discussion about whether or not divine agency and recreated human agency coincide or coincide. Thus in the diagram above, the diagonal stripes representing divine agency cease once the recreated heart has been established. As the text stands, it appears that although Israel's competency is brought into existence by the divine gift, a gift that even secures her responsiveness, her newly created efficacy does not coincide with divine agency in producing the response of praise.

4.2. Jubilees

Jubilees is a second-century BCE retelling of stories from Genesis 1 through Exodus 24. Moses' reception of revelation on Mt. Sinai provides the literary setting. To create this backdrop, the author utilises sections from the end of Deuteronomy that are pertinent to this study. For instance, B.Z. Wacholder sees Deuteronomy 31 lurking behind the author's portrayal of Israel's apostasy.⁵⁴ In an independent inquiry, G.J. Brooke noted more specific allusions to Deuteronomy 29:11, 13; 30:1; 31:6, 17, 19–21, 26–27.⁵⁵ As we look into the prologue, it may be possible to detect further influences from Deuteronomy 29–31 in the background.

In Jubilees, the revelation Moses was given at Sinai includes a window into Israel's past and future which he was to store away so that Israel would know God's faithfulness vis-à-vis her unfaithfulness (1:4–6). According to Jubilees, Israel was defiant and 'stiff-necked' (ערפם הקשה) before entering the Land (1:7) and would inevitably turn after other gods and apostatise (1:9–14).⁵⁶ It is only after bearing the punishment of exile and returning to her covenant Lord that she will be restored: 'Afterwards they will return (אהרי כן ישובו) to me from among the nations with all their heart. Then I will gather them from among all the nations, and they will search for me so that I may be found by them when they have searched for me with all their minds and with all their souls' (1:15).

Due to the allusions noted above, it is sensible to hear a faint echo of Deuteronomy 30:1–2. However the idea that Israel will 'find' YHWH because she seeks with her whole being could also signal the influence of either Deuteronomy 4:29 or Jeremiah 29:13. While the frequency of allusions to Deuteronomy might lead one to assume the former, explicit verbal resonances actually demonstrate that the latter text reverberates here. Based on 1:15a, which is attested in 4Q216 ii:17,⁵⁷ the phrase 'Then I will gather them from among all the nations' in 1:15b is plausibly reconstructed: וקבצתים מתוך כל־הגוים. While nothing like this appears in Deuteronomy 4,

54. Wacholder 1997, 204–205.

55. Brooke 1997a, 43, 49–52. See also Nickelsburg 1999, 103.

56. Where available, reconstructions of the Hebrew and translations are taken from VanderKam and Milik 1994 and otherwise translations come from VanderKam 1989. Versification follows the latter.

57. 4Q216 ii:17 reads [ישובו] אלי מתוך הגוים

Jubilees

Jeremiah 29:14 contains a near verbal correspondence: וקבצתי אתכם מכל-הגוים. The differences in Jubilees are only minor: The new setting has required a 3MP pronominal suffix rather than the original 2MP, and instead of מכל we find מהוך כל. It is reasonable to assume that 1:15 has combined Deuteronomy 30:1–2 with Jeremiah 29:13–14, perhaps associated on the basis of common themes and the key roots שוב and קבץ.⁵⁸ Consequently, both texts are utilised in 1:15 to predict the sin-exile-repentance-restoration narrative.

Upon hearing the horror of these circumstances Moses pleads with God:

¹⁹Lord my God, do not allow your people and your heritage to go along in the error of their minds, and do not deliver them into the control of the nations with the result that they rule over them lest they make them sin against you. ²⁰May your mercy, Lord, be lifted over your people. Create for them a just spirit. May the spirit of Belial not rule them so as to bring charges against them before you and to trap them away from every proper path so that they may be destroyed from your presence. ²¹... Create for them a pure mind and a holy spirit. May they not be trapped in their sins from now to eternity. (1:19–21)

Moses—terrified by the vision of his people banished to a foreign land, enslaved by foreign rule, and participating in foreign practices—prays that God would prevent these things from happening. First he asks that God, out of mercy, would create a righteous spirit for the people (1:20), further developed as a pure mind and a holy spirit (1:21). All three phrases denote a new disposition toward obedience.⁵⁹ He also pleads that the spirit of Belial would not rule the people (1:20). His intercession suggests two things about Israel's state: 1) she was constitutionally unwell—hence the need for a new mind and spirit; 2) she could be enslaved by both Belial and her sin.

And yet it would appear that Moses' prayer availed little.⁶⁰ God agrees that the Israelites have a 'contrary nature' (1:22) and in the language of Deuteronomy 30:6 reassures Moses that he 'will cut away the foreskins of their minds' (1:23). Further, he 'will create a holy spirit for them and will purify them' (1:23). While this last phrase could echo Ezekiel 36:24–27 where God promises to 'cleanse/purify' (טהר) Israel from her impurities, 'give' (נתן) her a new heart and a 'new spirit' (רוח חדשה), the original Hebrew of 'create a holy spirit' would probably come closer to Psalm 51:12, where David asks God to 'create' (ברא) for him a 'clean heart' (לב טהור) and 'steadfast spirit' (רוח נכון).⁶¹ In the parallel line he ask that God's 'holy Spirit' (רוח קדש) not be taken

58. קבץ appears twice in Deut 30:3–4.

59. Smith 2006, 77.

60. Halpern-Amaru 1994, 50.

from him.⁶² Even so, this is not a conclusive case for dismissing Ezekiel 36's influence. For one, the underlying verbal form of 'purify' in Jubilees probably comes closer to Ezekiel's 'cleanse/purify' than Psalm 51's 'clean' heart. More important is that in Jubilees a purpose clause—'in order that they may not turn away from me from that time forever' (1:23)—follows God's work. This purpose is further explained in 1:24: 'their souls will adhere to me and to all my commandments.' While there is no such explicit purpose in Psalm 51, in Ezekiel 36 God's action causes people to perform his statutes and keep his laws (36:27), and in both Jubilees and Ezekiel this result is followed by variations of the covenant formula (1:24; Ezek 36:28).

Without the Hebrew any hypothesis is tentative and should be held loosely. What we can affirm with certainty is that in describing the narrative of restoration, Jubilees combines the notions of mind/heart-circumcision, the creation of a holy spirit, and purification. Jubilees also sees these components as the solution to Israel's 'contrary nature', with a resulting obedience (1:23). What we have therefore is a re-established moral competence on the basis of a reconstituted disposition. Nevertheless, it is still only after people 'acknowledge their sins and the sins of their ancestors' that they will return in an upright manner, which, it is implied, requires the pain of exile (1:22).⁶³

4.2.1. Agency and the Prologue: A Recent Proposal

In a 2006 article, D. Lambert has deemed this passage to be of 'pivotal importance' for our concerns 'because it suggests a nuanced distinction regarding the role of human agency in redemption'.⁶⁴ Lambert finds here a creative solution to an exegetical conundrum posed by the inconsistency of Deuteronomy.⁶⁵ Deuteronomy 4:29–31 represents the standard Deuteronomistic paradigm, sin-exile-repentance-redemption, which suggests 'the efficacy of human agency'.⁶⁶ Deuteronomy 30:1–10, on the other hand, represents a divinely initiated restoration, which places a priority on heart-circumcision.⁶⁷ God's initial declaration to Moses in 1:15–18 conforms

61. On the similarities between Ps 51 and Ezek 36, see Klein 2008, 106–110.

62. Le Déaut 1981, 196.

63. See Lambert 2006, 645.

64. Lambert 2006, 633.

65. Lambert 2006, 634–635.

66. Lambert 2006, 632.

Jubilees

to ‘the standard Deuteronomistic paradigm’, that is, to Deuteronomy 4:29–31.⁶⁸ Moses’ request for the transformation of human nature has the function of altering this drama. Thus in 1:22–25 God revises the program according to Deuteronomy 30, promising that *he* will launch the restoration by intervening to recreate Israel.⁶⁹ Lambert’s conclusion: ‘*Jubilees* anticipates a dramatic, *divinely* initiated transformation of human nature ... rather than *humanly* initiated repentance.’⁷⁰

Lambert’s study helpfully highlights how agency issues surface in both Deuteronomy and *Jubilees*. He is right to understand the circumcision of the mind in 1:23 as repairing Israel’s ‘contrary nature’. When *Jubilees* describes Israel as stiff-necked, it is not simply asserting that she acts in corrupt ways; it is making a larger point about her constitution. Such anthropological claims have important implications for agency since God’s merciful acts are intended to release Israel from sin’s bondage and establish covenant allegiance. In spite of these valuable observations, Lambert’s innovative proposal that *Jubilees* works out an exegetical problem in Deuteronomy contains critical difficulties that caution against its acceptance.

First, Lambert assumes that Deuteronomy 4:29–31 underpins *Jubilees* 1:15; but as my analysis has shown, Jeremiah 29:13–14 is echoed there. Even if the similarities between Jeremiah 29:13–14 and Deuteronomy 4:29–31 are intertextually related, the question needs to be asked whether or not the respective contexts give the related phrases different meanings. It could be argued that in Jeremiah 29:13–14 Israel’s seeking is not so much a pre-condition to restoration as part of God’s promise to restore.⁷¹ This opens up the possibility that *Jubilees* 1:15 is emphasising divine agency and initiative as well. At least it is not clear that the prologue solves a discrepancy between two passages in Deuteronomy.

Second, the concept of transformation is not as foreign to God’s first declaration as Lambert assumes. In 1:16 God transforms Israel ‘into a righteous plant’ with all his mind and soul. Interestingly, the only place in the Hebrew Bible where God acts with all his mind/heart and soul is in Jeremiah 32:41, a few chapters after the aforementioned allusion: I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, *with all my heart and all my soul.*⁷² In this new covenant passage Israel is promised a

67. Lambert 2006, 634–635.

68. Lambert 2006, 637.

69. Lambert 2006, 637–638.

70. Lambert 2006, 633, emphasis his.

71. By rooting the promise in the divine decree (note כִּי), Jer 29:11 assures Judah that YHWH intends her good and ultimate serenity, which includes her seeking and finding him (v13). See Fretheim 2002, 404; Gowan 2000, 63.

new disposition that results in obedience.⁷² Unfortunately, the missing Hebrew in Jubilees 1:16 prevents us from firmly establishing whether or not Jeremiah 32:41 is being echoed, but there is reason to believe it is, especially since ‘plant’ in 1:16 was probably a form of **נטע**.⁷³ Nevertheless, the very fact that God will transform Israel into a ‘righteous plant’ assumes some sort of renewal that enables righteousness.⁷⁴ Undoubtedly the transformational terminology is more prevalent in Moses’ prayer and in God’s response (vv19–23), but that is hardly grounds for thinking that Moses has altered a plan that hitherto did not include transformation.

The third major difficulty with Lambert’s thesis is in his assumption that human transformation generally, or heart-circumcision specifically, *necessarily* entails divine initiative. Could heart-circumcision not be a response to Israel’s turning? Many have read Deuteronomy 30:1–10 this way. J.C. Vanderkam, for instance, assumes this reading in his critique of Lambert: ‘[I]t is ... clear that the “returning” of the people in exile *precedes* the divine transformation of their nature, just as it does in Deut. 30.1–10.’⁷⁵ Putting aside whether or not Vanderkam’s construal is *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, he demonstrates the possibility of reading these texts without assuming a divinely initiated restoration.

To be fair, Lambert’s argument seems to evolve when he later contends that while human nature is renewed only *after* the remnant turns, its turning is all the while foreordained, and thus a product of ‘divine grace’.⁷⁶ What is confusing, however, is why this reasoning would not also apply to 1:15. Presumably, it would:

The process of **שוב** described in the two so-called repentance passages found in ... Deuteronomy, 4:29–31; 30:1–10, appears to have been understood at Qumran as divinely foreordained... Similarly, *Jubilees*, both in the passage discussed above⁷⁷ and in the so-called Jubilees Apocalypse, ties **שוב** to the foreordained rediscovery of the forgotten, correct interpretation of the Torah.... In light of this interpretation of Deuteronomy, it seems difficult to maintain that the author of Jubilees and the Dead Sea sect believed that Israel’s redemption depend on its repentance; rather, the turn to sectarian law ... and the consequent re-creation of human nature were part of the divinely ordained plan for a remnant’s redemption.⁷⁸

72. See the discussion in section 2.3.1. above (pp.32–36).

73. Also noted by Charles (1902, 5) and Halpern-Amaru (1994, 29).

74. VanderKam 2008, 425.

75. VanderKam 2008, 425 emphasis his.

76. Lambert 2006, 649–650, esp. n41. He lists 1:22–25, 23:26 as examples. Unfortunately, Vanderkam does not interact with this.

77. From the context, it is difficult to tell which ‘passage’ is in mind. I assume 1:22–25.

Jubilees

Assumed here is that if something is divinely foreordained, it is divinely initiated. On this logic, Jubilees 1:15 would also put forward a divinely initiated restoration since the author understood שׁוֹב as foreordained in Deuteronomy 4:29–31.⁷⁹ Again, it is difficult to see a major shift from 1:15–18 to 1:22–25.

But even the conflation of foreordination with divine initiation and grace is somewhat questionable. Though it is certainly conceivable that the two work together, this is not demanded since each functions at a different level of discourse. It is possible that under the direct determination and foreordination of God, creatures possess the capacity as effective agents to perform acts which influence God.⁸⁰ So even taking into account God's foreordination of all things, we are still left with the question of whether humans are constituted with an agency sufficiently capable of performing an act to which God has freely determined to respond; or whether as a result of either anthropological corruption or creation, created efficacy is either partially or totally absent. It is with these questions in mind that we continue our investigation.

4.2.2. Agency and Initiative in the Prologue's Restoration Narrative

The issue of divine initiative in the restoration narrative is a delicate one. The statement in 1:15 'after this they will return' (וְאַחֲרַי כֵּן יָשׁוּבוּ) functions as neither a promise nor a condition, but as a simple prediction about how the future will play out. The purpose of writing down 'all these things' is for Israel to recognise that God has been 'more faithful than they' (1:6). Since 'all these things' appears to include the restoration, the restoration reveals divine faithfulness. And yet it is probably over-reading 1:6 to make it the grounds for a divinely initiated restoration since faithfulness could be expressed by God responding to Israel's turning. Put differently, it is simply unclear on grammatical grounds whether God's faithfulness is a faithful initiative or response.

When God answers Moses' prayer he states that Israel's stubbornness will keep them from listening 'until they acknowledge their sins and the sins of their ancestors' (1:22). It is 'after this' that proper turning happens (1:23). Since it is most plausible that 'this' refers to what has just been stated (acknowledging sin) rather than what follows (personal transformation), it would ap-

78. Lambert 2006, 649–650, emphasis mine.

79. Assuming, for the sake of argument, Lambert's understanding of the allusion.

80. See Tanner 1988, 96–98.

pear that more emphasis is being placed on acknowledging sin than on divine transformation: ‘direct divine intervention’ follows human recognition.⁸¹

While it is possible that God supports human agents in this act, since verse 23 goes on to describe an anthropological transformation to the tune of Deuteronomy 30 and since this renewal corrects Israel’s ‘contrary nature’, God’s response in verses 22–25 simply replays ambiguities already present in Deuteronomy 30. It is therefore difficult to tell whether or not re-creation is a prerequisite for turning. But this ambiguity presents itself most forcefully only when we isolate God’s response to Moses’ prayer from the initial narration. When verses 15–18 describe the restoration, human agency assumes a more emphatic role:

After this they will return to me from among the nations with all their minds, all their souls, and all their strength. Then I will gather them from among all the nations, and they will search for me so that I may be found by them when they have searched for me with all their minds and with all their souls. (1:15)

It is only after fulfilling the *shema* that God gathers Israel from the nations. Even in describing God’s act of gathering, the text reinforces the fact that the exclusive reason people find God is because they search intently. Subsequent to declaring that God will impart peace is the notion of transformation (v16).

If, as I argued earlier, it is improper to drive a wedge between the two portrayals of restoration, then both depictions should be looked at together and as mutually interpreting. While ambiguities remain in this prior account, it stresses human agency and creates more distance between Israel’s seeking and God’s transformational act. Furthermore, to say that God will ‘*rightly* disclose’ peace suggests that God’s gift of peace is commensurate with their wholehearted searching. The prologue thus seems to foreground human agency as the mechanism which brings about restoration. While the possibility for the divine agent’s contribution remains, our author appears to assume that *under God’s own determination, humans in their present state are at least partially capable of inciting God to bring restoration and that this deliverance corresponds to an exertion of their wills*. It will be helpful to see if the rest of Jubilees upholds these conclusions.

81. Scott 2005, 137.

4.2.3. Agency and Initiative in Other Restoration Narratives

The prologue is not Jubilees' only extended treatment of the restoration; 23:8–31 also reflects on these issues. The death of Abraham raises a discussion about the shortening of human life. After the flood people no longer live 19 jubilees—they grow old quickly, their knowledge departs, and most of their lives are characterised by toil and distress (23:12). The generations grow progressively worse until 'all are evil' (23:15, 17–21).⁸² 'Complete disobedience' will result in the earth's ruin (23:18) and other nations will carry out the divine judgement (23:22–23). Verse 24 introduces what appears to be a change in the people's actions: 'They will cry out and call and pray to be rescued...' But they will not be rescued until the children 'begin to study the laws, to seek the commands, and to return to the right way' (23:26). The restoration assumes the discipline of rigorously searching the Scriptures to find God's will.⁸³ As Nickelsburg notes, 'The return of blessing is catalyzed by the study of the Torah, the identification of right halakhah, which facilitates true obedience...'⁸⁴ The pendulum then swings upward as human life grows progressively longer.⁸⁵ Interestingly, God does not explicitly step into the drama until the time when '[t]here will be neither a satan nor any evil' and the world is a place of 'blessing and peace' (23:29). 'Then the Lord will heal his servants' (23:30). The text goes on to note how the people would enjoy peace, all the curses would be transferred to their enemies, and God's enemies become nonexistent (23:30). Since it has already been said that people are living 'peacefully', without 'satan' or 'evil one', it is hard to see exactly whom God will destroy or how he will add to the peace that is already experienced.

G.L. Davenport seeks to solve the problem by understanding verses 30–31 as happening concurrently with verses 24 and 26 so that verses 24–31 do not provide a rigid timeline.⁸⁶ While this may be, it seems difficult to conceive of the time when distressed people cry out without a response and children look old (v24) as the very same time when days increase (v27), no one

82. Human longevity and sinfulness are correlated. See Scott 2005, 107–113.

83. On taking $\Psi\Gamma\Gamma$ as 'interpret', see Kugel 1994, 333n13; Werline 1998, 111–112.

84. Nickelsburg 1999, 105; 2006, 225.

85. VanderKam 2001, 58–59: 'This group which is not further defined is somehow able, within God's sovereign plan, to reverse a process that even Abraham could not retard.'

86. Davenport 1971, 39.

outlives her lifetime (v28), and lives are joyful (v29).⁸⁷ While this does not rule out the possibility that verses 26–29 and 30–31 are simultaneous, the majority opinion is that those who rise and see great peace—who offer praise, whose bones rest in the earth and spirits are happy (vv30–31)—are the righteous who died before the tranquil era. Their rising and happy resting fits better with renewal’s consummation than with its inauguration. In any case, it is striking how divine activity is not mentioned until verse 30, as an afterthought of sorts. To be sure, the symmetrical view of history would already assume, as would the heavenly tablets,⁸⁸ a concept of divine governance. While it might be argued from this that the children’s ‘turn’ in 23:26 is divinely ordained,⁸⁹ divine agency has been submerged to such a subterraneous level that one must strain to see it. The same could be said of Jubilees 50:5: ‘The Jubilees will pass by until Israel is pure of every sexual evil, impurity, contamination, sin, and error.’ Here, the divine orchestration of time purifies Israel. But neither chapter 23 nor 50 give the sense that the restoration required a special act of divine intervention which granted an otherwise incompetent moral agent creative efficacy.

One other pertinent passage for our consideration comes from the flood narrative. Recounting the tragic event whereby angels take women and sire giants leads to a discussion of the world’s depravity (5:1). The very fabric of creation was altered by this incident.⁹⁰ Animate beings—human and otherwise—are so wicked that God must obliterate them (5:2–4). However, Noah and his family were spared on account of his exceptional righteousness (5:5, 19). The flood represents the just judgement of everything that did not follow its ordained path (5:13–16). But judgement is not the final word. After the flood God demonstrates his mercy by making it possible for Israel to amend her ways:

If they turn to him in the right way, he will forgive all their wickedness and will pardon all their sins. It has been written and ordained that he will have mercy on all who turn from all their errors once each year. To all who corrupted their ways and their plan(s) before the flood no favour was shown except to Noah alone because favour was shown to him for the sake of his children whom he saved from the flood waters for his sake be-

87. See Scott 2005, 73–158, who argues for a tripartite division of world history in Jubilees.

88. García Martínez (1997, 249) discusses 23:32 under the category ‘The Book of Destiny’. See also VanderKam 2001, 90.

89. Lambert (2006, 649) lists 23:26 as proof that repentance was divinely caused, but this claim, based on an equivocation between ordination and causation, is by no means explicit.

90. VanderKam 2001, 35.

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cause his mind was righteous... He did not transgress from anything that had been ordained for him. (5:17–19)

These verses provide the rationale for the covenant-renewal ceremony on the Day of Atonement. If Israel turned to God ‘in the right way’, God would forgive wickedness and pardon sin. As it is presented, this ceremony offers Israel an opportunity for renewal that did not exist before the flood. The critical focus of such renewal is that the people reform their lifestyles. This ‘restoration’ ceremony assumes a competency which can enact self-reform.

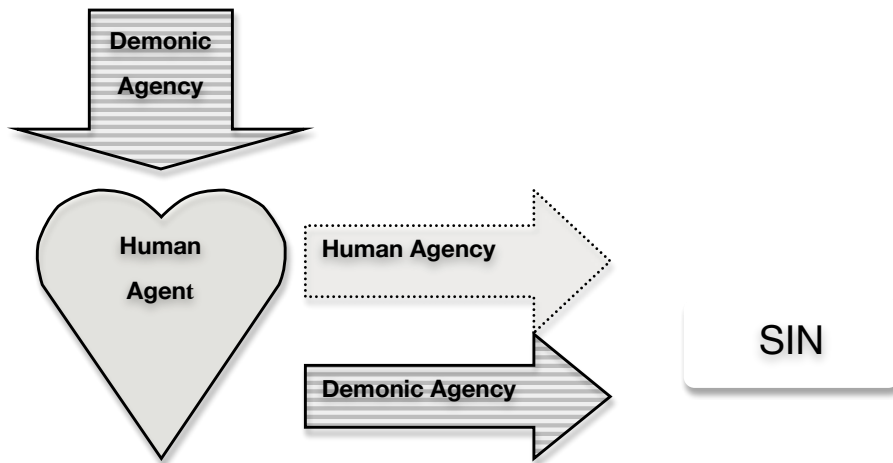
4.2.4. Incompetent Moral Agents in Jubilees

If Jubilees prioritises human agency in the restoration, it is not because it conceives of humans as uninhibited agents, free from internal deficiency or external constraint. God knows Israel to be defiant and stiff-necked (1:7). Likewise, 15:33 states that Israel will ‘prove false’ by not circumcising their sons (15:33). They have a contrary nature, are trapped in sins (1:21–22), and thus in need of renewal in order to live righteously (1:20–21, 23–24). As the flood narrative demonstrates, this problem is not confined to Israel: ‘Every thought’ of human knowledge ‘was evil ... all the time’ (5:2). And human depravity is accentuated at Babel (10:18). Moreover, as the years pass generations grow worse until ‘all are evil’, ‘everything they do is impure and something detestable’ (23:15, 17; cf. 18–21).

Not only are humans constrained by the sins which altered the fabric of the universe, the very event by which the universe was altered demonstrates that humans are influenced by mediatory agents (5:1–2). The story of the watchers makes explicit a worldview where ‘[u]nder the ultimate control of God is a populous world of spirits...’⁹¹ While demonic influence apparently decreases by 90 percent after a petition by Noah (10:3–11), this is hardly seen in the narrative. The strongest statements about the influence of demons on Noah’s children and grandchildren are made *after* his prayer (11:4–5; cf. 7:27, 10:1). Despite Jacob’s upright disposition his blessing still includes protection from evil spirits (19:28; cf. 35:17). Spirits rule over the nations (15:31) and play a role in the Exodus narrative as well (48:2–4, 8–10; 49:2). If the demonic host was limited to 10 percent of its previous capacity, that 10 percent remains formidable.

91. VanderKam 2001, 126.

We gain important insight into how demons influence human action in 11:5, which notes how ‘Prince Mastema was exerting his power in effecting all these [sinful] actions ... sending to those under his control the ability to commit ... sin.’ Demonic agency here extends to human agents’ abilities, as well as the efficacy of their actions:



The agencies of human and supra-human powers thus coincide and are set in a direct, positive relationship.

The influence of angelic beings in human affairs does not diminish human culpability, however.⁹² After detailing the watcher tragedy, the text charges humanity with corrupting their own way (5:2). If Noah’s sons are led by demons to shed blood, the sons will be punished (7:27–28). In Jubilees, it is not a prerequisite that one must be an autonomous and competent agent to be held responsible. People are even held responsible for things that were supposed to happen to them: If a person is not circumcised on the 8th day, he is destroyed ‘because *he* has violated the covenant’ (15:26). If this seems odd to modern conceptuality, then that is precisely why many current assumptions must be unlearned to make sense of these texts. In Jubilees humans are morally corrupt, externally coerced, yet responsible agents.

92. See further VanderKam 1999, 153–155.

4.2.4.1. *Exceptions to Moral Incompetence*

The lives of the patriarchs testify to the fact that there can be exceptions to the moral abnormality of the universe. From an early age Abram ‘began to realise the errors of the earth’ (11:16). He separates from his father to abstain from idolatry (cf. Josh 24:2) and stands alone as a worshipper of YHWH (12:16–20). B. Halpern-Amaru notes how unlike the biblical story Abram’s prayer and inquiry ...

transfer the initiative from God to Abraham, and diminish the dramatic impact of a “context-free” divine command to migrate. Consequently, the promise that follows appears as a reward for Abraham’s knowledge of and fidelity to God, rather than as a gratuitous gift.⁹³

The story of Jacob and Esau communicates a similar notion. Jubilees consistently presents Jacob as morally upright and Esau as morally inept. The only reason Isaac favoured Esau at first is because he was blind to this reality: ‘At first I did love Esau more than Jacob, after he was born; but now I love Jacob more than Esau because he has done so many bad things and lacks (the ability to do) what is right’ (35:13). Esau so lacks the constitution to be virtuous that even if he promises something he ‘will not do what is virtuous but rather what is evil’ (35:16), which is confirmed when Esau swears against attacking Jacob (36:6–14, 37:4) and then lapses (37:13–24). Jacob on the other hand and in spite of the biblical evidence has a righteous disposition from birth (19:13). He did no perceivable wrong (35:6, 12–13) and is utterly upright in his own self-perception (which is apparently not a problem for the narrator) (35:3). In distinction from Esau, Jacob is a righteous figure whose actions demonstrate his superior nature. And so while Jubilees can depict humanity as ‘trapped by sins’ and as having a ‘contrary nature’ this holds true for some more than others. Particularly exceptional are the patriarchs—including Adam, Enoch, Shem, Noah, and Joseph. Might Israel show exceptional qualities as well, or does she enter too late on the downward spiral of human history to exert moral efficacy?

93. Halpern-Amaru 1994, 31–32.

4.2.4.2. *Israel and the Question of Moral Competence*

There are indications that Israel too maintained some degree of competency as moral agents. For instance Abraham's final words to Isaac note how 'all actions of mankind are sin and wickedness ... with them there is nothing that is right' (21:21). Abraham then goes on to distinguish 'them' from 'us' by warning Isaac: '[B]e careful not to walk in their ways or to tread in their paths so that you may not commit a mortal sin'; for committing a mortal sin results in being handed over to the 'power' of one's sins (21:22). By following the commandments, Israel's patriarchs were able to elude this power under which the rest of humanity was enslaved. Coming as it does after an explanation of the laws, our author encourages his audience to emulate Isaac.

Indeed, Israel is distinct from the nations, set apart for the very purpose of keeping the Sabbath (2:18–21). When asked why Israel was chosen, the answer is: 'There were twenty-two heads of humanity from Adam until him [Jacob]; and twenty-two kinds of work were made until the seventh day.' (2:23). In Jubilees, Israel's election is not so much based on moral achievement as on suitability: Her patriarch was born in the right sequence. To be sure, Israel is in need of divine mercy; God had to remove from Israel the impurity and error of the nations (22:19). Nevertheless God's choice is not random, but reasonable and coheres with the very structure of creation.

An explanation of the rite of circumcision also distinguishes Israel from the nations:

For the Lord did not draw near to himself either Ishmael, his sons, his brothers, or Esau. He did not choose them (simply) because they were among Abraham's children, for he knew them. But he chose Israel to be his people. He sanctified them and gathered (them) from all mankind. For there are many nations and many peoples and all belong to him. He made spirits rule over all in order to lead them astray from following him. But over Israel he made no angel or spirit rule because he alone is their ruler. (Jub 15:30–32)

Our author equates Ishmael, his family, and Esau with the many nations whom the Lord did not choose 'because he knew them'. Something about these nations made them unsuitable to be his people. Israel, however, was chosen. A distinguishing factor between Israel and the nations is that whereas the nations were ruled by spirits, keeping them from following the Lord, Israel was not so constrained. The juxtaposition of rulers is, in turn, a juxtaposition between two moral competencies. Yet the contrast is not absolute; for the next verse foresees Israel proving false to the circumcision ordinance.

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In *Jubilees*, the constitution of Israel is an obscure reality: she is an ambiguously competent moral agent. She has a ‘contrary nature’ and can be influenced by evil spirits and nations, all the while retaining the ability to obey God. In order to overcome these hindrances, Israel is given things to enable or empower her obedience. For instance, Israel’s obedience is made possible through the communication of the laws. The reason Jacob gives for being able to resist sin is ‘because Father Abraham gave many orders’ (25:7). The angel instructs Moses ‘to tell the Israelites not to sin or transgress the statutes ... so that they should perform’ the covenant (30:21).⁹⁴ Writing accomplishes the same function (33:18). Similarly, Joseph was enabled to resist temptation by remembering what was written down and what he had studied (39:6). But for no other reason than that evil spirits could meddle in the righteous’ affairs, Israel required more than acquaintance with God’s commandments.

Thus we also see that God is invoked to help the righteous. Abram prays that God would save him from evil spirits who would mislead him, would guard him from the error of his mind, and would straighten his path (12:20–21). When Abram blesses Isaac and Jacob, he asks God to strengthen them to do the divine will (21:25; 22:10, 14). Isaac is confident that the Lord will ‘guard’ Jacob from every evil (27:15). Here ‘evil’ is external to Jacob since he was ‘just in his way ... perfect ... a true man’ (27:17). Nevertheless, as Abram’s prayer indicates, evil is not always external to the individual and sometimes even the righteous must be protected from themselves.

A prominent way that Israel is kept from sin and enabled to obey is through separation. Throughout its retelling *Jubilees* maintains a concern for purity. Separation from the nations is an absolute necessity:⁹⁵

Separate from the nations, and do not eat with them. Do not act as they do, and do not become their companion, for their actions are something that is impure, and all their ways are defiled... As for you, my son Jacob, may the most high God help you and the God of heaven bless you. May he remove you from their impurity and from all their error. (22:16, 19)

The logic of this section is that if Israel does not segregate, she will mimic the nations.⁹⁶ Marrying outside Israel is strictly forbidden because ‘there is no hope ... for all who worship idols’ (22:20–

94. Halpern-Amaru (1994, 43) observes that *Jubilees* ‘evidences a clear predilection for a covenant defined in terms of adherence to stipulated law.’

95. VanderKam 2008, 416.

96. Klawans 2000, 47.

22). Here non-separation and the sin of idolatry are strictly correlated.⁹⁷ Behind the assumption that Israel will take on gentile practices when she mixes with gentiles stands a particular anthropology. Separation was needed precisely because of a deficiency in Israel's ability to resist sin. Nevertheless, the very fact that she could resist sin by separating also suggests that she was not completely incompetent.

4.2.5. Conclusion

The book of Jubilees sets forth a fairly complex portrayal of human competence. At the most basic level, humans are responsible moral agents with a progressively diminishing ability to obey. This is because the very sins humanity commits have the power to ensnare. Secondarily, humans are coerced by demonic powers, with whom their agencies coincide.⁹⁸ They are thus in continual need of God's protection from these powers.

Complexity arises when individual cases of human competence are considered. While most of humanity, like Esau, is incapable of virtue, Israel's patriarchs remain relatively unscathed by the corrupt world, able to obey God. The nation of Israel is more nuanced still. Israel has a corrupt nature, is prone toward evil, and is often depicted as doomed to fail; yet she also has the distinct possibility of obeying God. She is what I have labelled an ambiguously competent moral agent. For this reason she needs to be continually reminded of the law and of the necessity of strict adherence to it. With that, she must remain separate from other nations, lest her weakness be exploited and she fall prey to those nations' sins. Eventually, however, pessimism wins out: Israel will indeed turn after other gods.

Restoration is on offer and must begin with Israel's turning. While it is true that Israel has a 'contrary nature', nothing in the book compels an interpretation of this statement that would deny Israel the ability to return 'in a fully upright manner' (1:23) or 'to study the laws' and 'seek out the commands' (23:26). It is assumed throughout that Israel's created efficacy extends to these actions, that following the law is achievable, albeit difficult.⁹⁹ Nevertheless, it will take go-

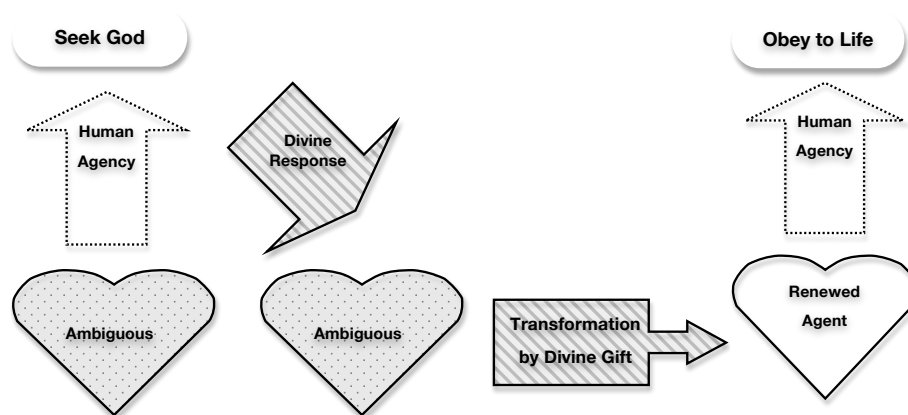
97. Concurring with the assumption of Klawans 2000, 48.

98. In this respect, Jubilees shares a conception of divine and human agency with Qumran that is not apparent in Baruch.

99. Halpern-Amaru 1994, 50.

ing through the pain of exile before she realises the gravity of her sin and turns back to her Lord with appropriate obedience.¹⁰⁰

At this point, Jubilees reads Deuteronomy 30:6 as speaking of a gift-act of God which transforms Israel from an ambiguously competent agent into a competent one. What she gains is not so much a new moral efficacy as a constitution that is now directed toward obedience. Unfortunately, we are not given any specificity as to how mind-circumcision would occur or exactly what the author thought the metaphor conveys. Details are overridden by a preoccupation with the chronological system of time. Whatever the case, Jubilees anticipates a humanly initiated restoration that leads to a dramatic, divinely enacted transformation of human nature.¹⁰¹ And while the absolute flourishing of humanity is dependent upon the gift of God, that gift is appropriately distributed to those who obey.



The importance of this conclusion should not be overlooked. E.P. Sanders has demonstrated how obedience is a necessary condition for retaining salvation in Jubilees, since ‘obedience *preserves* salvation’.¹⁰² Failure to obey compromises membership in the salvific community and disqualifies a person for ultimate salvation.¹⁰³ But where does that leave the human agent prior to God’s transformational act? What was to empower her? It would seem that before this act obedience was most fundamentally up to human agents, who were themselves competent enough to

100. So also Halpern-Amaru 1994, 64.

101. To modify the conclusion of Lambert 2006, 633; cf. Sanders 1977, 383.

102. See Sanders 1977, 368–371, here 371, emphasis original.

103. E.g. 2:27; 6:12; 21:22; 26:34; 30:7–16; 33:13–18; 36:8–11; 49:8–9.

obey, even if not predisposed towards obedience. It is precisely those who exercise such competence who would be transformed and inherit eternal life.

It is worth noting that the broad framework and the general theology of Jubilees supports this conclusion. Jubilees' focus on the 364-day calendar and its cycled history present a world that conforms to a very meticulous system. History's 'ultimate goal' is the restoration of sacred time and space, so that what occurs on earth matches heaven's pattern.¹⁰⁴ The secret revelation Moses passes down gives the indication that the strict operations of the world reflect the character of God. God does not operate, it would seem, contrary to the order he has established, and this would include not acting in a way that is out of sync with moral conformity to his Law. Thus while humans are in need of divine gifts, it is in keeping with the ordained or natural order of the universe to bestow those gifts on those who comply with that order to some degree.

4.3. Second Baruch

2 Baruch is a text that utilises the fictive setting of the aftermath of the first temple destruction to explain a post 70 C.E. world.¹⁰⁵ Here we find another author who takes on the persona of Jeremiah's faithful companion and explains his situation in the light of Deuteronomy's curse. Like the epistle of Baruch his message of hope stems from Deuteronomy 30.¹⁰⁶ And yet as we shall see, their respective readings of that text are by no means homogeneous.

104. Scott 2005, 8

105. Though 2 Baruch is thought to date after 4 Ezra, it is analysed before 4 Ezra as it manifests a clearer engagement with the scriptural texts we are considering.

106. Though several scholars have detected a 'Deuteronomistic scheme' in the book (e.g., Steck 1967, 180–184; Murphy 1985, 117–133; Henze 2008b, 203–206), the influence and reading of Deut 30:1–10 has received scant attention.

4.3.1. The Use of Deuteronomy 30 in Second Baruch

While Deuteronomy's influence appears throughout the book,¹⁰⁷ perhaps it is most prevalent in Baruch's final speech (77) and letter to the exiles (78–87).¹⁰⁸ The command to 'go up to the top of this mountain' after 40 days to see 'all the countries of this earth' (76:3–4) frames Baruch as a second Moses (cf. Deut 32:48–52).¹⁰⁹ Then, like Moses on the plains of Moab, he assembles the people to give his final instructions (77:1).¹¹⁰

Baruch insists that rather than mere happenstance, the current devastation transpired because people 'transgressed the commandments' (77:4, 9; cf. 79:1–2, 44:5–6). Yet the wicked are not the only ones who bear the consequences; the curse fell upon the righteous as well (77:10). Deuteronomy 29 could give a similar impression when it warns of either an individual, clan or tribe turning from YHWH (29:17–18), and then foresees the curse devastating the entire nation (29:21–27). Later in Deuteronomy, Moses calls this period the 'end days', a time when 'evil will encounter the people' (וקראת אתכם הרעה, 31:29).¹¹¹ In 30:1 he simply says that 'all these things will happen/befall' (כִּי־יבֹאוּ עֲלֵיךָ כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה). As was pointed out, 4QMMT demonstrates how these verses could be read together (C12–16).¹¹² A comparable tradition might appear in 2 Baruch, where the post-Temple juncture is considered the 'consummation of time'¹¹³ in which 'evil ... has befallen' the people so they might 'consider the judgement of him who de-

107. For instance, chapters 55–74 interpret a vision detailing the cycles of history. The period of the exile is told in light of Deut's curses. As a consequence of idolatry, a famine comes and women are forced to eat their children (64:4, cf. Deut 28:22–24, 53–57). YHWH 'scatters' his people amongst the nations where they experience shame (67:5; cf. Deut 28:36–7, 64). In the period just before the new age, God will cause 'confusion of the spirit' and 'amazement of the heart' (70:2), similar to Deut 28:28: לִבְבִּי וּבְעוּרוֹן וּבְשִׁגְעוֹן וּבְתַמְהוֹן לִבִּי. Israel must recognise the God who 'brought [them] out of Egypt' or history will repeat itself (75:7–8). Similarly the curse becomes a certainty by the end of Deut 29 because the people abandon the covenant YHWH made when he 'brought them out of Egypt' (29:25; see also 29:2, 16). For further similarities, see Murphy 1985, 120–128.

108. So Steck 1967, 181–182. Several authors believe the epistle functions as a summary of the book's primary themes (e.g., Murphy 1985, 25; Bauckham 2001, 176; Bogaert 1969, 1:76). I assume that the epistle belongs with chapters 1–77, as it appears in our oldest textual witness. On this question, see further Whitters 2003, 3–14; Bogaert 1969, 1:67–1:78; cf. Saylor 1984, 11–39, esp. 38n25.

109. Unless otherwise noted, translations from 2Bar follow Klijn 1983.

110. See Henze 2006. Whitters (2001) argues that among other things, this puts the epistle in the genre of a Testament.

111. The LXX reads *καὶ συναντήσεται ὑμῖν τὰ κακά*.

112. See section 3.1.2.1. above.

113. Henze 2008a, 35. See 19:5: 'Now is the consummation of time!' Compare 10:3.

creed it against you' (78:5; c.f., 81:4). But God's judgement does not leave the people without hope:

If you think about these things you have suffered now for your good so that you may not be condemned at the end and be tormented, you shall receive hope which lasts forever and ever, particularly if you remove from your hearts the idle error from which you went away from here. For if you do these things in this way, he shall continually remember you. He is the one who always promised on our behalf to those who are more excellent than we that he will not forever forget or forsake our offspring, but with much mercy assemble all those again who were dispersed. (78:6–7)

These words are roughly based on Deuteronomy 30:1–6. Two conditions accompany restoration: First, the people must 'consider' or 'think about' what has happened. Conceptually, this action corresponds to Deuteronomy 30:1, where the Israelites 'turn to [their] heart' (והשבת) (יבאו עליך כל-הדברים) 'all the things which have happened/befallen' them (אל-לבבך). Secondly, and more particularly, they must 'remove' from their 'hearts' the 'idle error' that instigated the curse in the first place. To understand this injunction it is important to remember that Moses' warning in Deuteronomy 29:18 concerned a person who walked *בשררות לב* ('in stubbornness of heart'). But in the LXX, *בשררות לב* becomes *ἐν τῇ ἀποπλάνησει τῆς καρδίας* ('in the error of the heart'). The reason why the author of 2 Baruch understood *מול/περικάθαριζω* in 30:6 as the removal of an 'error' is easily discernible:¹¹⁴ since an 'error' (*ἀποπλάνησις*) of the heart brought the curse, for an individual to be rectified this 'idol error' must be eradicated (78:6).

To encourage his audience to fulfil these conditions Baruch reminds them of the promise that 'with much mercy' God would 'assemble all those again who were dispersed.' The promise borrows concepts from Deuteronomy 30:3–4, which notes how God would 'show compassion/mercy' (*רחם/ἐλεέω*) and 'gather' (*קבץ/συνάγω*) the people from the places where they were dispersed (*נדח/διασπορά*). As should now be evident, our author's understanding of restoration has been informed by Deuteronomy 30:1–6. However for him restoration is not characterised by a temporal return to the land, as in Deuteronomy, but by eschatological salvation; the one who fulfils Baruch's conditions will 'not be condemned at the end and be tormented' but 'shall receive hope which lasts forever.'¹¹⁵ As such, the exiles must 'prepare' their hearts that they might be

114. See Jer 4:4 where the injunction to circumcise oneself is explained by a parallel command to 'remove' (סור) foreskin from the heart.

115. Bauckham 2001, 177: 'The restoration of Israel is to be understood in terms of this contrast between two ages.'

spared, not only from being excluded in this world (by exile), but also from the world to come (83:8; cf. 46:4–5). So while Baruch attributes Israel’s present sufferings to the chastening love of God (78:3), if she remains unresponsive God’s loving discipline will give way to eternal condemnation (v6).

These themes are repeated in chapters 84–85. Chapter 84 begins by reminding the exiles how ‘Moses called heaven and earth to witness against you’, saying, ‘If you trespass the law, you shall be dispersed. And if you shall keep it, you shall be planted’ (84:2). This verse represents an elaboration on either Deuteronomy 4:26–27 or 30:19.¹¹⁶ Since the latter is also referenced in 19:1, it is the more likely candidate: ‘Therefore he appointed a covenant for them at that time and said, “Behold, I appoint for you life and death,” and he called heaven and earth as a witness against them.’ As we will see in 4 Ezra, Deuteronomy 30:19 is cited to affirm Torah as the way to Life.¹¹⁷ Since Israel has ‘forsaken the Law’, everything Moses said has come true (84:5). However, the people can still receive what God has prepared for them if and only if they obey Baruch’s instructions (84:6). After reiterating his instructions in 78:5–6—to remember their identity as it is enshrined in their national heritage and symbols¹¹⁸—Baruch urges the people to pray for God’s mercy with their ‘whole soul’ (84:8–11). A discussion of the necessity of God’s mercy leads to a variation on the scheme found in 78:6–7:

We have departed from our land, and Zion has been taken away from us. We have nothing left at all except for the Mighty One and his Torah. If, therefore, we direct our hearts and set them aright, then we will receive everything that we have lost—indeed, much better things than we have lost, many times over. For what we have lost was subject to corruption, whereas what we are about to receive is incorruptible. (85:3–5)¹¹⁹

Again against the backdrop of sin, exile, and covenant curse, a solution is offered in the vein of Deuteronomy 30: God’s will restore the people far beyond their losses;¹²⁰ he will even give them an ‘incorruptible’ gift. Part of what awaits is explicated in verse 15: ‘he will make alive those whom he has found, and he will purge them from sins.’¹²¹ Yet in order to be found by God and receive his gift, the people must reorient their hearts.

Similarly, Murphy 1985, 124–126.

116. See Murphy 1985, 125.

117. Burkes 2001, 64.

118. On the identity issues underlying this, see Davila 2005, 128–129.

119. Following the translation of Henze 2008b, 201.

120. Compare the enigmatic expression *וּשְׁבַח יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת־שְׁבוּתְךָ* in Deut 30:3:

121. Cf. Ezek 37:13–14, 23.

4.3.2. Torah-Obedience as the Way to Life

Of great concern for our author is the question of whether life is still a viable option: Is it possible for Israel to receive Life when all that remains is God and Torah (85:3)? The book's answer is reassuringly positive; its message, as Bauckham notes, 'is that, since God has not abandoned his covenant with Israel, it is imperative that Israel keep the Law in order to benefit from the covenant promises.'¹²² Life is still on offer, but requires attentiveness to Torah.¹²³ This fact, already discernible in our author's reading of Deuteronomy, can be seen in conditional statements throughout the book. Take 44:7: 'For when you endure and persevere in his fear and do not forget his Law, the time again will take a turn for the better.' Similarly, 84:2–6: 'If you trespass the law, you shall be dispersed. And if you shall keep it, you shall be planted ... if you obey the things which I have said to you, you shall receive from the Mighty One everything which has been prepared...' Included in 'everything' are God's incorruptible gifts (85:5), especially new Life (85:15).

Restoration and life are therefore synonymous and stand for eschatological life in the new world. If the people want to experience that Life, it is vital that they 'remember the commandments' (84:7). As M.F. Whitters comments, 'the main message is that the people must get ready for the Age to Come by observing the Law.'¹²⁴ Since keeping the Law is a necessary condition for new Life, it is even possible to say that the 'Law is life' (38:2). The Torah-instruction Baruch gives is thus able to 'make them alive' (45:1–2).¹²⁵ This accounts for his audience's distress at the news of his departure: in order to obtain that which has been stored away, they must heed Torah-teaching (46:3; 59:2; 84:6).

At one point Baruch even asks God about the relationship between law-observance and eschatological favour: 'For whom and for how many will these things be? Or who will be worthy to live in that time' (i.e., after the corrupt world ends) (41:1)? The question arises out of a con-

122. Bauckham 2001, 176; see also Sayler 1984, 38–39.

123. Bogaert 1969, 1:399.

124. Whitters 2003, 3.

125. However, as 77:15–16 makes clear, Law is not dependent upon teachers but vice-versa.

cern for two groups of people. On the one hand, there are many apostates, those who spent much of their early lives observing Torah but have now ‘cast away ... the yoke of your Law’ (41:3). On the other hand are proselytes who converted to Torah late in life (41:4). How will these two groups be considered? Will their deeds be ‘weighed exactly’ as on a scale (41:6)? No: What matters is not so much how one starts, but how one finishes. While the good works of the deserters will count as nothing, the faithful latecomers attain mercy:¹²⁶ ‘These are they who prepared for themselves treasures of wisdom. And stores of insight are found with them. And they have not withdrawn from mercy and they have preserved the truth of the Law. For the coming world will be given to these’ (44:14).¹²⁷ Thus while not a strict meritocracy irrespective of covenant relationship, final fidelity to the Law still determines if one will be received or rejected in the new world (51:7–13).¹²⁸

4.3.3. Human Competence and Transformation of the Heart

As much as our author stresses obedience to Torah, it is not the only condition for ‘Life’. F.J. Murphy notes how, like Deuteronomy, 2 Baruch also ‘lays considerable emphasis upon the disposition of one’s heart and soul.’¹²⁹ As such, the people are commanded: ‘Prepare your souls for that which is kept for you, and make ready your souls for the reward which is preserved for you’ (52:7). If they do not guard their hearts from the corrupt world (83:4) and prepare their hearts for things to come, they will ‘be in bondage in both worlds’ (83:8), tormented like their enemies (85:9), and condemned (85:11). Receiving the eternal hope and gaining that which is incorruptible is contingent upon removing the ‘idol error’ from the heart (78:6), reorienting the heart (85:4). Thus heart-preparation is also a necessary condition for ‘Life’.¹³⁰

126. Bauckham 2001, 179; Henze 2008a, 38.

127. Compare Baruch’s earlier view on the reception of blessings: ‘What have they profited who have knowledge before you, and who did not walk in vanity like the rest of the nations ... behold, they have been diligent and, nevertheless, you had no mercy on Zion on their account. And if there are others who did evil, Zion should have been forgiven on account of the works of those who did good works and should not have been overwhelmed because of the works of those who acted unrighteously’ (14:5–7). On the correlation between Law and Wisdom in 2Bar, see Burkes 2001.

128. See also 14:12: ‘The righteous justly have good hope for the end and go away from this habitation without fear because they possess with you a store of good works which is preserved in treasuries. Therefore, they leave this world without fear and are confident of the world which you have promised to them...’

129. Murphy 1985, 126.

130. Whitters (2003, 47) observes how pleas to prepare the heart do not occur before the first speech, but fifteen

Are Torah-observance and heart-preparation simply two unrelated, but necessary conditions for Life; or does our author correlate the pair? Two texts show that the two conditions are related and reveal ‘heart-preparation’ as that which capacitates one for obedience. The first text to mention is 32:1: ‘You, however, if you prepare your hearts to sow into them the fruits of the law, he shall protect you in the time in which the Mighty One shall shake the entire creation.’ Here an agricultural metaphor is used to liken heart-preparation with sowing the seed of Torah into the heart so that the heart might produce Torah’s fruit. While like much of the book this statement could be taken as equating heart-preparation with Torah-obedience,¹³¹ the relationship is probably better understood as causal: heart-preparation brings forth a Torah-shaped life. The dynamic is more straightforward in 46:5–6:

But only prepare your heart *so that* you obey the Law, and be subject to those who are wise and understanding with fear. And prepare your soul *that* you shall not depart from them. If you do this, those good tidings will come to you ... and you will not fall into the torment of which I spoke to your earlier.

Here we see how heart/soul-preparation *results in* Torah-obedience. Importantly, the outcome is ‘good-tidings’ rather than ‘torment’, which brings the whole sequence together:

Heart-preparation > *leads to* obedience > *leads to* Life.

Similar to the pattern found in Deuteronomy 30:6, an act on the heart results in a moral constitution that is competent to produce the obedience necessary for Life. The reason heart-preparation can be stated as a condition for Life without specific reference to Torah-obedience is precisely because our author assumes that those who remove the ‘error’ from their heart will obey. And yet the reformation of the heart is consistently attributed to human agents. Heart-preparation is in fact the principal act of human obedience—the *sine qua non* of obedience. God neither prepares the heart, removes the error from the heart, nor changes the disposition of the heart. And yet the book is not despondent. Though not fully competent moral agents, Adam’s sin did not leave people incapable of preparing themselves for glory (54:15–19); they remain ‘in the power of liberty’ (85:7),¹³² and there is an expectation that Israel will act rightly (1:5). The re-ordering of the heart, therefore, is committed to human agents and within their power to

times after, five of which are in the Epistle.

131. So Nickelsburg 1981, 283.

132. Bogaert 1969, 2:159; see further his discussion on pp. 400–401.

achieve.¹³³ God's mercy can only take root in this fertile soul.

4.3.4. Gift, Grace, and Human Agency

As with other texts we have surveyed, the onus 2 Baruch places upon human agents to work toward anthropological renewal in no way prohibits our author from reflecting on and attributing salvation to God's gifting. Grace and mercy are fundamental characteristics of God. In a prayer, Baruch confesses that it is only by God's 'gift' that anyone is able to enter the world (48:15). Specifically in this context Baruch is seeking to demonstrate humanity's 'nothingness', which is given as a reason for God not to 'take count of our works' (v14). Baruch then pleads: 'Protect us in your grace, and in your mercy help us' (v18). While God's reply is that his Law 'demands its right' (v27),¹³⁴ the book's message is nevertheless: 'He is merciful whom you honor, and gracious in whom you hope' (77:7). God's mercy is expressed in his patience toward the righteous and the wicked (24:2), his grace compensates for human forgetfulness (77:11) and drives God to console Baruch with revelation (81:4). Likewise, eschatological salvation is impossible apart from God's grace: 'If he judges us not according to the multitude of his grace, woe to all us who are born' (84:11).¹³⁵ Because of sin, God must show grace at the judgement by purging the sins of the righteous (85:15). Without grace there can be no salvation.

Benevolence is not only operative at the judgement; all the gifts of the eschaton are attributed to mercy: 'For who of those who are born can hope to come to those things, apart from those to whom you are merciful and gracious?' (75:5). It is 'with much mercy' that God restores people (78:7) and after the judgement (50:2) he transforms them:

And it will happen after this day which he appointed is over that both the shape of those who are found to be guilty as also the glory of those who have proved to be righteous will be changed. ...as for the glory of those who proved to be righteous on account of my law, those who possessed intelligence in their life, and those who planted the root of wisdom in their heart—their splendor will then be glorified by transformations, and the

133. Note that the creative efficacy of human agents is not incompatible with an extension of divine sovereignty over all creation. God must 'sustain those who exist', which specifically includes the righteous and those who sin (21:9). In non-contrastive fashion, our author assumes both that God must uphold all things and that righteousness and sin are within human potential.

134. Murphy (1985, 58) notes that the opening 'but' of v27 is a 'strong adversative'.

135. Most of 2Bar gives the impression that 'all' sin. However, compare 75:6.

shape of their face will be changed into the light of their beauty so that they may acquire and receive the undying world which is promised to them. (51:1–3; cf. 73:1–2, 83:9–21)

Two points are worth highlighting from this survey. First, in 2 Baruch grace is primarily future oriented; it ‘is coming’ (82:2) and will be demonstrated when the righteous receive their inheritance in the new world.¹³⁶ In the present age and right through the judgement, grace takes on a primarily retroactive, restorative, and negative character: it does *not* count works; it *cancel*s sins; it *forbears* and *overlooks* ineptitude. In the new world, grace will take a recreative and transformative shape. By restricting the sphere in which God’s recreative gifts are bestowed, our author is able to attribute salvation to God’s grace without applying grace into the here-and-now reorienting of the human-heart or integrating grace into his understanding of human agency.¹³⁷

Secondly, it worth noting that again and again the recipients of grace are those who show themselves to be righteous (24:2).¹³⁸ The sins of the righteous are purified, while the wicked, who are ‘*polluted* with sins’, are destroyed (85:15). For all who sinned and are born from Adam ‘their end will put them to shame, and your Law which they transgressed will repay them on your day’ (48:47): there is ‘no mercy for them’ (44:12). When we inquire about the righteous, however, we find that ‘blessedness’, ‘glory’, and transformation in the new world is reserved for them (48:48–49, 51:1). And ‘righteous’ delineates more than the status of those who will receive eschatological salvation; ‘righteous’ is something one proves oneself to be through obedience (21:12), making salvation what one is worthy to receive (41:1; cf. 64:7–10).¹³⁹ Nevertheless, as we have seen throughout, the righteous still sin, but their sins and the sins of the wicked can be distinguished by degree (85:15). So while to live unrighteously is to cut oneself off from God’s beneficence, to live righteously is to qualify for and remain in it (44:14; cf. 61:7).¹⁴⁰ To be sure, God *does* gift the unrighteous—God’s gift of life and his beneficence to the nations are prime examples (13:12)—

136. On glorification in 2Bar, see Sprinkle 2007, 208–210.

137. Salvation is also attributed to works in 2Bar (51:7). The reason our author can attribute salvation to both grace and works is not because he believes that grace brings forth works, but because they are both necessary, yet *distinguishable* and separate conditions of eschatological salvation.

138. Klijn 1983, 618.

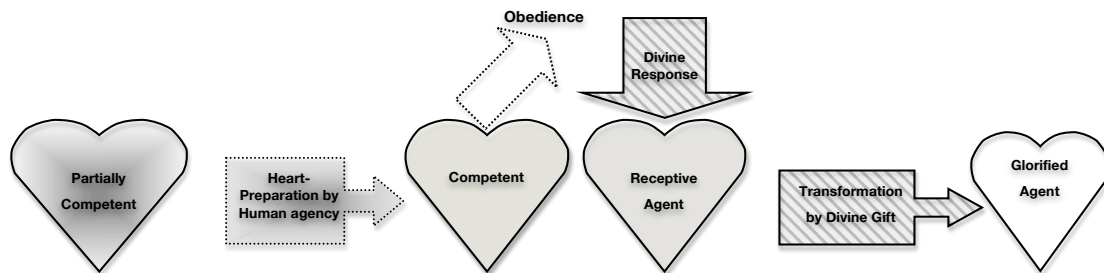
139. ‘Worth’, however, does not quite denote desert. Whereas desert implies that the righteous have a claim on recompense, worth here means that the righteous qualify for God’s gifts as fitting recipients, but without a claim on those gifts. So, for instance, while God gives revelation to those who are ‘spotless’, they had no claim on revelation (54:4–5, 9).

140. Collins 1984, 175: ‘Mercy, then, is only for those who convert and obey’; likewise, Bauckham 2001, 180–181.

but *salvific gifts* are reserved for those who observe the Law and are capable of receiving those gifts.¹⁴¹

4.3.5. Summary

In the light of the final chapters of Deuteronomy, 2 Baruch understands Israel to stand under God’s discipline for sin. The scene in Deuteronomy 29 has played out just as Moses anticipated, with a heart-error leading people astray. As with the epistle of Baruch, then, Israel’s problem is a heart-problem.¹⁴² Also like Baruch, 2 Baruch reads Deuteronomy 30:6 as the solution. Yet in stark contrast to Baruch, 2 Baruch has put the onus on Israel to reflect on her actions, pray to God for mercy, remove the error from her heart, and reposition her heart in line with the divine will.



By substituting the divine subject of heart-circumcision in Deuteronomy 30:6 for a human subject and by conflating ‘restoration’ with eschatological salvation, 2 Baruch prioritises human agency in that salvific process. This does not give Baruch a pessimistic tone, however. Israel’s constitution is not so perverted that she cannot take steps to rectify her situation and from the outset there is the expectation that she will make the right choice and thus become qualified to receive God’s abounding grace and mercy (1:5).

141. It is noteworthy that the nations ‘have always denied the beneficence’ (13:12).

142. While Bauckham (2001, 181) is correct in his analysis that 2Bar has a more optimistic anthropology than 4Ezra, he might suggest to much when he claims that ‘2 Baruch does not mention the problem of the evil heart’. While Baruch might not use those terms, the concept is certainly present; cf. 78:6–7. On anthropology of 4Ezra, see pp.140–144 below.

4.4. Fourth Ezra

4 Ezra (2 Esdras 3–14) is another piece of apocalyptic literature composed in the aftermath of the Temple-destruction (70 C.E.). Seven episodes structure the book with a discussion between the biblical character Ezra and the angel Uriel carrying its content. At first the discussion takes the form of a penetrating debate over questions about God’s character. How can God’s people lie in ruin while gentiles glory over them (3:2; 4:23; 5:28–30)? Why is the Law ineffectual (4:23)? Why does Israel not possess its promised inheritance (6:59)? Are only a few to be saved (7:48)? These are the pertinent concerns our author seeks to address in his post-70 world. The disillusionment of a war-torn Judaism is not the only factor generating such questions; Ezra’s anxiety also arises out of and is informed by a conflict this situation presents with the Scriptures themselves.¹⁴³ 4 Ezra thus represents yet another example of an ancient Israelite wrestling with his scriptural heritage in search of fresh answers.

One of the most fascinating features of 4 Ezra—its dialogical nature—also makes it difficult. The two characters, Ezra and Uriel, personify two opposing perspectives and there is a question as to which one communicates the author’s theological programme. M.E. Stone has explained their opposing viewpoints as the author’s own internal struggle: Ezra represents the author’s feelings of grief and doubt while Uriel represents his faith.¹⁴⁴ While it seems right to find here something of a spiritual, and even theological, pilgrimage (if not the author’s own, at least the one that he hopes his readers will traverse), it is perhaps better to understand Ezra and Uriel as more akin to two points on that journey rather than an ongoing internal dialectic.¹⁴⁵ As B.W. Longenecker points out, by chapter 10 Ezra ‘internalizes and articulates the sentiments that Uriel had voiced earlier.’¹⁴⁶ In other words, he eventually agrees with Uriel. When taken as a whole, it is clear whose perspective has ‘the upper hand’:¹⁴⁷ Uriel wins out. This should not surprise us since he is God’s ambassador and as such communicates the divine perspective.¹⁴⁸ In this way

143. Longenecker 1995, 94.

144. Stone 1990, 32–33.

145. Cf. Longenecker 1991, 154.

146. Longenecker 1995, 95.

147. Compare Longenecker 1995, 95, who says this is not the case with respect to the dialogues.

148. Compare statements of Uriel (e.g., 5:56; 7:11, 17. 28–29) with statements made by God (13:32, 37, 52; 14:9).

the author's current perspective has been retrojectively placed in conversation with his older (or simply another) perspective in order to lead readers to the same place.¹⁴⁹ By not rejecting Ezra-type concerns out of hand he is able to recognise their validity, but without endorsing them.¹⁵⁰ The purpose of this rhetorical move is to guide readers to what he feels is a more orthodox position. We therefore locate our author's view not in a synthesis of Ezra and Uriel, but rather in Ezra's theological outlook *after* it has been corrected by Uriel. To understand the fallacy of Ezra's early attitude and its corrective, we need to consider the characters and their positions in more detail.

4.4.1. The Dialogue

At the heart of the dialogue is Ezra's struggle to come to terms with God's righteousness in two interrelated areas: 1) his covenant with Israel and 2) his creation of humankind.¹⁵¹

4.4.1.1. *Ezra's Complaint: God's Covenant Faithfulness*

From the beginning the Scriptures establish how God judges transgression with death (3:7–11). But those same Scriptures speak of God's special love for Israel. When the nations were sinning, God chose Abraham, loved him, and made a covenant with him to love his descendants, verified in the giving of Torah (3:14–19; cf. 5:23–30). All things being equal, the covenant should give Israel a privileged position. If Israel sins like the nations, this is only because God did not take away her 'evil heart' (*cor malignum*) so that Torah could produce fruit (3:20). But this reality should not negate God's regard for Israel: Or '[a]re the deeds of Babylon better than those of Zion? Or has another nation known you besides Israel? Or what tribes have so believed your covenants as these tribes of Jacob' (3:31–32)?¹⁵² All these questions warrant, it is implied, a negative answer. Then why should the nations prosper at Israel's expense? This seems to run right against God's promises, the giving of Torah, and the particularity of Israel (4:23); it defies the fact that the nations are regarded as 'spittle', while the world was created for Israel, those 'zeal-

149. Bauckham 2001, 162.

150. Bauckham 1998, 138; followed by Gathercole 2002, 138.

151. Stone 1990, 36.

152. Translations from Metzger 1983. Latin references are from Klijn and Mussies 1983.

ous' for God (6:55–56). Besides if people actually were judged strictly by works, the nations should be suffering at least as much as Israel.¹⁵³ In the first instance, then, Ezra's concern about God's righteousness is a concern about God's uprightness with respect to his covenant. For Ezra the situation plainly suggests that God is being unfaithful to his promises.

4.4.1.2. *Uriel's Response: The Necessity of Covenant Obedience*

The first main component of Uriel's response to consider is his insistence on covenant-conditionality. Uriel begins to answer Ezra's question 'why has Israel not inherited the world that was created for her' by reminding Ezra that in light of Adam's sin, God's promises are reached through much toil and striving:

For I made the world for their [Israel's] sake, and when Adam transgressed my statutes, what had been made was judged. And so the entrances of this world were made narrow and sorrowful and toilsome... But the entrances of the greater world are broad and safe, and really yield the fruit of immortality. *Therefore unless the living pass through the difficult and vain experiences, they can never receive those things that have been reserved for them.* (7:11–14)

One of the reasons God has not blessed Israel is that she must first go through hardships to gain immortality. Yet there is a more fundamental reason why Israel has not seen the fulfilment of the promises: the necessity of covenant obedience.

This is the meaning of the contest which every man who is born on earth shall wage, that if he is defeated he shall suffer what you have said, but if he is victorious he shall receive what I have said. For this is the way of which Moses, while he was alive, spoke to the people, saying, 'Choose life for yourself, so that you may live!' (7:127–129)

Ezra's struggle concerning God's righteousness was a struggle over Scripture. He saw how God had not only loved Abraham, but also his descendants. In order to repudiate such strong scriptural reasoning, Uriel needed an equally potent scriptural case, which he finds in Deuteronomy 30:19. There Moses expends some of his last words to plead with Israel: 'choose life for yourself, so that you may live'. Structurally, 7:127–129 is very close to 7:19–25. From this parallel we can deduce that 'choosing life' essentially means doing Torah (7:21).¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, 'Life' in 4 Ezra takes on the connotation of personal immortality (7:96).¹⁵⁵ If Life is not chosen, death is

153. Willett 1989, 66; de Villiers 1981, 361.

154. On the parallel structures of 7:19–25 and 7:127–131, see Stone 1990, 256.

155. Burkes 2001, 59.

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inevitable. This is Uriel's assessment of the situation: 'But they [Israel] did not believe him, or the prophets after him, or even myself who have spoken to them. Therefore there shall not be grief at their damnation...' (7:130–131).

Surely important for Uriel's argument is that Moses spoke these words to the covenant community *after* they had been given both the promises and the Law. For while Ezra can affirm that God judges sin with death (3:7–11), he insists that Scripture illustrates how God grants Israel indemnity. Moses' words provide Uriel with a strong retort: covenant promises do not exempt Israel from the principle that Life is won through an exertion of the will, since the realisation of the promises is contingent on obedience.

It has become popular over the past 30 years to stress how Israel's Law and her obedience take place within a context of God's covenant, and rightly so. However, this fact does not demand the relationship between covenant and obedience that is often assumed; namely, that human obedience is simply a grateful response to God's covenant and that election and promise remain operative irrespective of law-observance. The temporal priority of Abraham's election does not preclude the possibility of the covenant promises being conditioned on covenant obedience. In fact, for Uriel, even that temporal priority is questionable. For eventually Ezra starts to concede Uriel's point and puts it back to God as a complaint: 'you have ordained in your Law that the righteous shall inherit these things, but that the ungodly shall perish' (7:17). Uriel responds:

You are not a better judge than God, or wiser than the Most High! Let many perish who are now living, rather than that the law of God which is set before them be disregarded! For God strictly commanded *those who came into the world*, when they came, what they should do to live, and what they should observe to avoid punishment. Nevertheless they were not obedient... (7:19–22)

Uriel insists that it is reasonable to let the wicked, including those within the covenant, perish, because from the beginning of creation the structure of creation has been that people should do something in order to live and observe something to avoid punishment. God has not repealed his creational ordinance, not for Israel, not for anyone:¹⁵⁶

156. The debate over Scripture also shows up in Ezra's pleas for a representational model. Ezra sees in Scripture that there are times in history where the righteous are able to intercede for the wicked (7:106–110). Perhaps God could even look on the deeds of the righteous while overlooking the wicked's sins (8:26–31). With respect to final judgement and the world to come, Uriel's hermeneutic does not allow for such representation. Each individual must choose life.

When the Most High made the world and Adam and all who have come from him, he first prepared the judgement and the things that pertain to the judgement... For this reason, therefore, those who dwell on earth shall be tormented, because though they had understanding they committed iniquity, and though they received the commandments they did not keep them, and though they obtained the Law they dealt unfaithfully with what they received. (7:71–72)

Importantly, in these texts we see that Adam disobeyed ‘statutes’ (7:11); humanity ‘received the commandments’, ‘denied his covenants’ (7:24), and dealt unfaithfully with ‘the Law’ (7:72).¹⁵⁷ There is an organic relationship between the obedience-life pact that God made with Adamic humanity and the covenant that God gave to Israel.¹⁵⁸ In both one lives or dies by obedience to Torah.¹⁵⁹ The strength of his scriptural reasoning, therefore, is that the principle of conditionality contained within Deuteronomy 30:19 can be seen *prior to* Abraham’s election and *after* the covenant and Law are given. Moses’ words are simply a reaffirmation of this Adamic principle to the covenant community. So while Ezra’s initial understanding of the covenant testifies to the fact that there were Jews who did not make covenant promises contingent on law-observance in their reading of Scripture, this hermeneutic was unacceptable to others, including our author.¹⁶⁰ For him, Deuteronomy 30:19 provides Scripture’s hermeneutical key.

Longenecker posits three ways of interpreting covenant, law, and salvation in 4 Ezra: 1) ‘covenant confirmation’ (God’s grace and faithfulness to ethnic Israel is secure); 2) ‘covenant redefinition’ (the covenant and God’s grace are narrowed to a faithful remnant); and 3) ‘covenant abrogation’ (the covenant is null and void and salvation is now based on individual efforts to accumulate works of righteousness).¹⁶¹ Initially, and in large agreement with Sanders, Longenecker suggested the third option: ‘Uriel removes obedience to the law from its traditional context, so that it no longer symbolizes the response to God’s love by one who has already experienced grace within the covenant community.’¹⁶² Subsequently Longenecker adjusted his thesis,

157. Stone 1990, 194. On the substance of Torah being known to all humanity, see Jervell 1960, 43–44; cf. Schnabel 1985, 144; Elliott 2000, 104.

158. The author might be drawing on a tradition of interpretation of Hos 6:7. For another explanation, see Hogan 2007, 541.

159. This makes better sense of Willett’s (1989, 143n69) observation that ‘Ezra’s concern for the wicked is nothing more than a natural extension of his concern for Israel’; contra Thompson 1977, 267–269; Longenecker 1995, 46–47.

160. Bauckham 2001, 164: ‘It is important to appreciate in what an eloquent and appealing form Ezra voices an inclusive covenantal view of God’s gracious and forgiving relationship with Israel.’

161. Longenecker 1995, 31–32.

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opting for a version of the second category: 4 Ezra redefines covenant theology so that it requires ‘rigorous and exacting standards’, its benefits are ‘restricted to the ranks of exceptional people’, the concept of ‘mercy’ and ‘a robust theology of grace’ virtually absent.¹⁶³

It is noteworthy that Longenecker’s categories, along with his analyses, assume a normative definition of ‘covenant’ which is unambiguously present neither in the biblical literature, nor ANE parallels, nor Second Temple period. The relationships that covenants established were often assumed to be predicated upon mutual obligations. Failure to live up to these would evoke sanctions and even forfeit one’s share in covenant promises.¹⁶⁴ Uriel has not removed ‘the law from the context of God’s covenant mercy’, nor has he ‘redefined’ covenant. Rather, by emphasising the contractual provisions of the covenant relationship, he has simply related Law and covenant in a way that fails to meet the expectations of those who downplay the conditional elements of covenantal treaties and thereby define ‘covenant’ in an overly restricted fashion.¹⁶⁵

4.4.1.3. Ezra’s Complaint: Anthropological Pessimism

Ezra’s anthropology gives him another reason to question God’s righteousness. He believes that when God gave Israel the Torah, he did not establish her as a competent moral agent (3:20). And this is not simply a problem for Israel, but a problem with humanity: ‘For the first Adam, burdened with an evil heart, transgressed and was overcome, as were also all who were descended from him’ (3:21).¹⁶⁶ If the reality of the situation is that Adam’s corruption pervades everyone, including Israel, then the prospects for salvation are slim:

O sovereign Lord ... Blessed are those who are alive and keep your commandments!
But what of those for whom I prayed? For who among the living is there that has not sinned, or who is there among mortals that has not transgressed your covenant? And now I see that the world to come will bring delight to few, but torments to many. For an evil heart has grown up in us, which has alienated us from God, and has brought us into corruption and the ways of death ... and that not just a few of us but almost all who have been created! (7:45–48)

162. Longenecker 1991, 98. For Sanders (1977, 409) 4 Ezra puts forward legalistic perfectionism because of a collapse in covenantal perspective. See also Collins 1984, 162.

163. Longenecker 1995, 100; cf. Collins 1984, 162.

164. See Kline 1963, 13–43, esp. at 17, 23–24, 38–39. See also Freedman and Miano 2003 and references there.

165. So, rightly, Bauckham 2001, 170: ‘[I]t is not clear that the conception of the covenant that emerges from *4 Ezra* is novel in itself.’

166. On sin and corruption in 4 Ezra, see Stone 1990, 63–65.

After Ezra begins to concede that life is contingent upon obedience, he becomes bothered by a more fundamental question: What implication does this have for a world held captive to an evil heart?¹⁶⁷ Without his pessimistic anthropology, Ezra might have been able to stomach the absolute necessity of obedience, but in the competition between the evil heart and the Law, the evil heart was sure to win.¹⁶⁸ The harsh reality of human corruption means that ‘few’ will be saved.¹⁶⁹ This is unacceptable.¹⁷⁰

For it would have been better if the dust itself had not been born, so that the mind might not have been made from it... For all who have been born are involved in iniquities, and are full of sins and burdened with transgressions. And if we were not to come into judgment after death, perhaps it would have been better for us. (7:63, 67–69)

Likewise:

This is my first and last word: it would have been better if the earth had not produced Adam, or else, when it had produced him, had restrained him from sinning. For what good is it to all that they live in sorrow now and expect punishment after death? O Adam, what have you done? For though it was you who sinned, the fall was not yours alone, but ours also who are your descendants. For what good is it to us, if an eternal age has been promised to us, but we have done deeds that bring death? (7:116–119)

Ezra’s question about God’s covenant faithfulness is now linked to a more fundamental question regarding God’s integrity in creating the world. Surely it would have been more righteous to leave the world uncreated, than to create a world in which the evil heart reigns and few are saved.

4.4.1.4. *Uriel’s Response: God’s Sovereign Prerogative*

An undercurrent in almost all Uriel’s responses is that divine transcendence makes Ezra’s questions inappropriate. First, this can be seen when, in a manner reminiscent of the book of Job, Uriel poses cycles of rhetorical questions to highlight the limitations of human knowledge (4:5–11; 5:36–40).¹⁷¹ God’s sovereign prerogative, along with the epistemological polarity

167. Most commentators note a change in Ezra’s perspective mid-way through chapter 9 (e.g., Willett 1989, 54, 62, 65–66; Longenecker 1995, 25–26, 59–64). I suggest that one can also detect a minor, gradual change leading up to this section; so also Stone 1990, 24–28, 228, 280–83; Bauckham 2001, 162.

168. On 3:22, see Bogaert 1969, 404.

169. See Burkes 2003, 195.

170. Hayman 1998, 15; Burkes 2003, 194.

171. Willett 1989, 59; Collins 1984, 201.

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between humanity and God, was meant to overwhelm Ezra's concern that God has not created and sustained the world with integrity. The more existentially satisfying outcome of this knowledge comes only after Ezra resigns himself to the reality of God's rule and is thereby enabled to imbibe Uriel's revelations concerning the eschaton (13:57–58).¹⁷²

So, secondly, Uriel responds to Ezra by noting that God is entitled to decide when to enact his saving righteousness on earth. In God's wisdom, this will occur only at the inauguration of the last days (4:36–37; 6:5–6, 25; cf. 11:39–46). Being corrupt, the present world order is not an appropriate place for the righteous to receive their reward.¹⁷³ The vindication of the righteous must be postponed until the time when God decisively puts an end to all evil (4:27–32).¹⁷⁴ Only then can Ezra expect a resolution to the evil heart:

It shall be that whoever remains after all that I have foretold to you shall be saved and shall see my salvation and the end of my world ... and the heart (*cor*) of the earth's inhabitants shall be changed (*mutabitur*) and converted (*convertetur*) to a different spirit. For evil shall be blotted out, and deceit shall be quenched; faithfulness shall flourish, and corruption shall be overcome, and the truth, which has been so long without fruit, shall be revealed. (6:25–28)¹⁷⁵

For the author of 4 Ezra the transformation (*mutabitur/convertetur*) of the human 'heart' is an eschatological reality. But this does not mean, however, that humans are unable to obey. Twice after Ezra complains concerning humanity's fate, Ezra is emphatically commanded not to consider himself among the wicked (7:76; 8:47). Ezra's anthropology is so negative and his introspective conscience so forceful that he believes he too will not enter the future world. Uriel's rebuke, however, suggests that Ezra's conscience and anthropology have led him astray. So while Uriel never denies that only a 'few' will be saved (8:3), he does offer a subtle critique to Ezra's overly pessimistic anthropology.¹⁷⁶ In combination with the eschatological hope offered through apocalyptic visions, this corrective seems to have been a key factor in Ezra's new perspective. He is now able to come to grips with the inadequacy of human knowledge and take comfort in the hope Uriel offers.

172. Longenecker 1995, 62, 66–67; Stone 1990, 24–25.

173. Stone 1990, 193. Longenecker (1991, 156–157; 1995, 46) suggests that God does not give grace in the present age. This is not quite right. God's love to Abraham, the gift of Torah, and the visions that Ezra receives are gifts of love. Nevertheless, God's gifts of rewards for and the vindication of the righteous, along with cosmic renewal, await the coming age; see further Seifrid 1992, 134.

174. Willett 1989, 67.

175. 4 Ezra 6:26 resembles Ezek 11:19 and 36:26 and is most likely related to them (Stone 1990, 124).

176. Cf. Willett 1989, 70–71.

4.4.1.5. Resolution

Even though Ezra's heart is still troubled, his address to God beginning in 9:27 should not be taken as a complaint.¹⁷⁷ In stark contrast to the previous episodes, Ezra puts the blame of lawlessness onto the 'fathers' who 'did not keep what had been sown in them', rather than on the inadequacy of God's gift of Torah (9:32–33). In fact, these verses represent a vindication of God's gift which 'does not perish but remains in its glory' despite the sinfulness of those who possess it (9:34–37).¹⁷⁸ Ezra's confidence in God's righteousness is demonstrated in his interaction with a distressed woman whom he encounters in a vision: '[K]eep your sorrow to yourself, and bear bravely the troubles that have come upon you. For if you acknowledge the decree of God to be just, you will receive your son back in due time ... shake off your great sadness and lay aside your many sorrows, so that the mighty One may be merciful to you' (10:15–16, 24). Ezra's words resemble the perspective of Uriel:¹⁷⁹ he has come to accept the conditionality of the covenant, the reality of Israel's failure, and God prerogative to rule the universe. It is only after accepting this outlook that Ezra is suited to receive God's mercy, which is offered to him in the visions that follow.¹⁸⁰

4.4.2. Moral Competence

Initially, the moral impotence Ezra associated with the evil heart caused him to question God's righteousness in judging those who lacked the ability to obey. Without dismissing every aspect of Ezra's charge, our author nevertheless puts into Uriel's mouth a corrective to this erroneous view. While in agreement that humanity is plagued by an evil heart which will not be cured until the eschaton (6:26), nevertheless, with great effort humans remain sufficiently equipped to overrule the evil heart and accomplish Torah (7:92).¹⁸¹ The ten tribes serve as an example, who by se-

177. See the arguments by Longenecker 1995, 62–64.

178. Willett 1989, 71; Longenecker 1995, 62–63.

179. Longenecker 1995, 63–64.

180. For our purposes it is unnecessary to discuss the visions of chapters 11–13 in detail. It is sufficient to note that in the future God will vindicate an obedient remnant, remove their evil heart, and establish righteousness. On the remnant theme, see Bauckham 2001, 166; Stone 1989, 103–104.

181. Longenecker 1995, 47; Bauckham 2001, 165; Seifrid 1992, 134.

parating from gentile nations are thereby enabled to keep Torah (13:41–42).¹⁸² Thus with considerable resolve (‘they formed a plan’) and in the right conditions (separation), Ezra’s readers could also obey.

By prioritising Deuteronomy 30:19 in his reading of Scripture, our author maintains that only the law-observant will receive an inheritance in the new world.¹⁸³ If this is few, so be it; God created the world so that only those who ‘labouriously served the Most High and withstood danger every hour so that they might keep the law’ will be saved (7:89).¹⁸⁴ In the end, Ezra accepts that Torah-revelation and willpower sufficiently equip persons for faithfulness: ‘If then I have found favour before you, send the Holy Spirit to me, and I will write everything that has happened in the world from the beginning, the things which were written in your Law, *that men may be able to find the path, and that those who wish to live in the last days may live*’ (14:22). Ezra’s final exhortation reinforces the author’s hermeneutic: ‘If you, then, will rule over your minds and discipline your hearts, you shall be kept alive, and after death you shall obtain mercy’ (14:34).¹⁸⁵ A steadfast will and a mind that understands Torah are the two faculties necessary to effect obedience.¹⁸⁶

4.4.3. Gift, Grace, and Human Agency

Our author’s prioritisation of the human will and Torah in effecting obedience, along with his postponing of the reconstitution of the human heart until the eschaton, might suggest that his position is bereft of ‘grace’. As we just saw in the final clause of 14:34, however, this is incorrect.¹⁸⁷ In the future the righteous can expect to be the recipients of divine mercy. When God

182. Bauckham 2001, 168–169. Interestingly, the place where the tribes go is called Arzareth (13:45), which most likely comes from ארץ אחרת (‘another land’) in Deut 29:27. In that text, ‘Arzareth’ is the place where God scatters Israel in anger. Importantly, Ezra is told that when Moses was on the mountain he received revelations about the ‘end of times’ and was commanded: ‘These words you shall publish openly, and these you shall keep secret’ (14:6). ‘Openly’ and ‘secret’ probably reflect גלה and סתר of Deut 29:28. The ten tribes, therefore, are part of the ‘secret things’ of which Deut 29:28 speaks (Bauckham 2001, 168n85, 171n92). Like Qumran, the secret things are given to a special group. As we will see with Paul, סתר refers to a ‘secret’ group that God will reveal at the eschaton as those he is saving.

183. Esler 1994, 118.

184. Perhaps the ten tribes reflect a qualification to Uriel’s earlier agreement that only ‘few’ would be saved (Bauckham 2001, 167). Nevertheless, the ten still represent a paragon of righteousness (13:41–47); so Longenecker 1995, 81.

185. Collins 1984, 168.

186. Knowles 1989, 273; Burkes 2003, 211, 215.

187. So Seifrid 1992, 135.

does reveal his salvation, the transformation of humanity and removal of their evil heart will result in flourishing faithfulness (6:25–28). While mercy is not earned, it can be ‘obtained’ (*consequemini*) through ruling over the mind and disciplining the heart (14:34). Nevertheless, salvation is not something that can be achieved solely by human resolve, irrespective of the divine agent. God spares the righteous ‘with great difficulty’ and perfects them ‘with much labor’ (9:21–22). He intervened on behalf of the ten tribes to vouchsafe their journey (13:43–47). We can even assume that the tribes are forgiven for their previous failure to keep the law (13:40, 42).

But while salvation and grace are not completely absent from the present age, it is still the righteous to whom God is gracious—‘to those who have turned in repentance to his law’ (7:133). While these words come from Ezra before his new found perspective in 9:27, ‘some things’ he spoke up to that point are true (8:37). One of those things is that by his own creative intention, God has designed to give his salvific gifts to those who are qualified, to those who are righteous; but not to the wicked (8:38–39).

The gift-logic of the book can be demonstrated by looking at Ezra himself. Ezra’s fittingness for revelation is continually emphasised. For instance, in 5:12–13 Ezra receives revelation; yet in order to hear ‘greater things’ he must ‘pray again’, ‘weep’, and ‘fast for seven days’. He receives the same instruction in 6:31. The text goes on: ‘for the Mighty one has seen your uprightness and has also observed the purity that you have maintained from your youth, *therefore* he sent me to show you all these things...’(6:32–33). While Ezra’s receiving greater revelation was contingent on his preparation, the bare fact that he receives revelation is consonant with his uprightness. Moreover, after Ezra comes to the place where he accepts God’s righteousness, he is judged ‘worthy to be shown the end of the times’ (12:9). Even Ezra’s initial complaints and prayers are heard because he is ‘worthy’ (*dignum*, 13:14). So because his spirit searches out the ways of the Most High (12:4), he is a fitting beneficiary of God’s gifts.¹⁸⁸

Likewise, Ezra is told to impart this knowledge to suitable recipients, to teach only ‘the wise ... whose hearts you know are able to comprehend and keep these secrets’ (12:37–38). Only twenty-four of the books Ezra records can be handed out indiscriminately. However, since it is improper to distribute some revelation to the ‘unworthy’ (*indigni*), seventy books are reserved for

188. This same pattern is evident in 2 Bar (e.g., 20:3–6; 38:1–4; 54:4–5).

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the 'worthy' (*digni*), in whom is 'the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the river of knowledge' (14:45–47). If this is the case, it would be odd to find Abraham as an exception: God loved him and revealed to him the end of the times precisely because he too was worthy (3:14).

The pattern of gifting suitable recipients is also evident when God gives a gift that confers the ability to obey. For example, God offers Ezra his holy spirit in the form of a drink to enable Ezra to write the Scriptures (14:38–39). Consequently, Ezra's 'heart poured forth understanding and wisdom increased in [his] breast' (14:40). But the larger context makes clear why Ezra ultimately found 'favour' (*gratiam*) before God (14:22):

you have forsaken your own ways and have applied yourself to mine, and have searched out my law; for you have devoted your life to wisdom, and called understanding your mother. Therefore I have shown you this, for there is a reward laid up with the Most High. (13:54–56)

Ezra's life qualifies him to receive the interpretation; it also provides the rationale for his 'reward'. It would only seem reasonable to assume that God's gift of the holy spirit correlates with Ezra's desire to reciprocate by passing the revelation on to others.

By performing mighty acts on behalf of the ten tribes, God enables the tribes to separate from the nations so that they can keep the Law. Here again, God performs these gracious enabling acts for those are sufficiently capable of desiring and, at least partially, effecting obedience, demonstrated in their prior resolve to keep the Law in spite of difficulty and personal loss. From the examples above we can see the logic behind God's gifting: God's mercy, his 'grace', extends to the worthy. This dynamic is also at play in salvific gifts. The analogy of precious and worthless material in 7:51–52 correlates with the concept of 'worth' with salvation. Even Ezra's initial confession that 'our life is like a mist, and we are not worthy to obtain mercy' in 4:24 presupposes a framework where mercy is predicated upon worth. And in 4 Ezra the worth of the gift-recipients always manifest itself in Torah-obedience.

This conclusion does not deny 4 Ezra a theology of grace;¹⁸⁹ it is only to insist that in 4 Ezra there is a logic behind God's gifting, a logic quite at home in the gift-exchange system of the ancient world.¹⁹⁰ In fact, the only way one can say that 'the author has had to abandon his belief in

189. Similarly, Bauckham 2001, 173; Seifrid 1992, 135.

190. On the ancient benefaction system, see Harrison 2003, 26–95, 167–209.

one of the characteristic qualities of that God',¹⁹¹ his graciousness, is by assuming and expecting a definition of grace that would have appeared very idiosyncratic in antiquity, namely one that sets grace and worth in antithesis. But this idiosyncratic definition should not be the standard by which forms of 'grace' are judged in and around the Second Temple period, not least in 4 Ezra.

4.4.4. Conclusion

In sum, 4 Ezra represents one Jew's arguments for the necessity of obedience shortly after the destruction of the Second Temple. It rejects the notion that covenant can be prioritised over law-observance in a way that negates the absolute necessity of the latter. Also rejected is the belief that God's gift of Torah was somehow deficient or that humans are now incapable of resisting the evil heart. It is still within human capacity to seek to obey God. If it does so happen that such capacities are only partially competent to *effect* obedience, God offers his grace and mercy to aid those who seek him. In addition, God offers the promise of vindication, personal renewal, and eschatological blessing in the age to come, including the *eschatological* transformation of the heart (6:26). 4 Ezra thus demonstrates yet another way an ancient Jew could correlate grace and works, divine and human agency.

4.5. Summary and Conclusion

Our study of the Apocrypha and Pseudopigrapha gives further testimony to how Deuteronomy 30:1–10 informs various Jewish understandings of the solution to human failure. Since behind human transgression lurks the deeper problem of the corrupt heart, for all these writers full moral competence comes through some sort of reconstituted Self. This new Self is sometimes pictured as being inaugurated or anticipated with heart-renewal, only to be consummated at the eschaton (2Bar). Other times, heart-circumcision and a renewed ability remain a future hope (Baruch; Jub), even something acquired in the new world (4Ezra). Whatever the case, the new

191. Longenecker 1995, 100.

Summary and Conclusion

Self does connote a new sense of agency. We have also seen how this promised restoration was read alongside Ezekiel and/or Jeremiah. As such, restoration is often associated with the gifts of a 'new heart', 'new spirit' and 'Holy Spirit'.

This literature witnesses to both divine and Israel-priority readings of Deuteronomy 30, which turn out to be more like poles on a spectrum than two distinct interpretative options. This is due to the fact that while all these texts envision some problem with the human heart, from book to book the depth of this problem differs. Nevertheless, most of our authors assume that, although imperfect, at least some retain the capacity to fulfil moral obligations, whether in part or in full. In 4 Ezra all of humanity falls into this category. In Jubilees and possibly 2 Baruch the scope is drastically reduced to Israel, or even a righteous predetermined remnant within Israel. What these authors have in common is the belief that Deuteronomy 30 is directed at people who maintain a certain degree of competence as moral agents. In denying any ability to respond to God to untransformed Israel, Baruch stands on the radical end of the spectrum; especially since Israel would provide the *best* example of moral competence.

But even in those text where obedience is a necessary condition for restoration, it is never a sufficient condition: in every case God's grace is also necessary, both to the restoration process and to the act of obedience itself. Even describing humans as only *partially* competent implies divine agency's crucial role: since humans are unable to accomplish what is necessary by their own powers, God's grace must provide what they lack. Yet while grace is undeserved, it nearly always correlates with human action and is dispensed to those who suitably qualify. Anything else might make God out to be capricious and prodigal. And so while divine and human action are both necessary, in most texts neither are sufficient conditions for Life.

Chapter 5

PHILO

5.1. Introduction

Philo of Alexandria has left his legacy in a collection of works that give us access to his tireless desire to bridge the gap between his Jewish heritage and Hellenistic setting. Through philosophical reflection and scriptural reasoning, Philo's ambition was to demonstrate Moses' Torah as the masterpiece which gentile treasures could only replicate. Exegesis thus functioned at the heart of his integrative project, and Deuteronomy 30 stands among those texts on which Philo regularly meditated. As we shall see, his reading of that text provides a bridge into his philosophically and theologically informed perspective regarding humanity's capacity for obedience, or more accurately, the spiritual pilgrimage of the soul.

5.2. Deuteronomy 30 and Restoration

5.2.1. The Necessity of God's Mercy

In his work *De praemiis et poenis*, much of which is based on Deuteronomy 28–30, Philo advances his view that good lives are rewarded and bad lives punished (1–3). On this basis he encourages those whose souls are 'not altogether hard and stoney (μη πανυ σκληραις και αποκροτοις) ... not to despair of transformation for the better or of a return, as it were, from the dispersion of the soul

which evil has cultivated, to virtue and wisdom' (*Praem.* 114–115).¹ Philo grounds his hope for self-reform in the mercy of God: 'For (γάρ) whenever God is merciful, he makes all things easy...' (*Praem.* 115). His analogy of 'soul-dispersion' borrows from the first part of Deuteronomy 30.² Encouraged by Deuteronomy 30:4, Philo notes how 'by one single word of command' God 'could easily gather those carried off to the extremities of exile to any place he should will' (*Praem.* 117). Thus there is reason to be confident that 'the Saviour who shows mercy will gather the soul after its long wandering ... and guide it easily from a trackless waste onto a road, when/where it has determined to flee without ever looking back...' (*Praem.* 117).

While the scriptural text specifically addresses the sins and displacement of a nation, Philo finds a microcosm of this plot in the soul. His analogy, of course, is not foreign to the text itself; in LXX Deuteronomy 29:17–18 exile begins with an individual's mind turning from God (τίνος ἢ διάνοια ἐξέκλινεν ἀπὸ κυρίου). There is, as it were, an invitation to read this text in individualistic terms. Taking up that invitation, Philo has found an assurance for the possibility of personal renewal that is only attainable by divine mercy.

A similar hermeneutic is at work in Philo's reading of Deuteronomy 4:29, a text similar to Deuteronomy 30. In *De fuga et inventione*, Philo concludes his explanation of the second possible relationship between seeking and finding—when one both seeks and finds—with a reference to that text:

And this also is written among the hortatory precepts, for, it says, 'You shall turn unto the Lord your God, and shall find him, when you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul.'

This quote follows a series of scriptural examples in which God provides for people who seek his truth: God 'showers down heavenly wisdom ... upon all the intellects which are properly disposed for the reception of it, and which are fond of contemplation' (*Fug.* 138); God enlightens the soul 'which is endowed with sight, shining upon it with the beams of truth' (*Fug.* 139); God

1. Translations are my own, unless otherwise noted.

2. Verbal resonances include: ψυχή, συνάγω, ἐλεέω, διασπορά (cf. Deut 30:2–4). Furthermore, ἐσχατιαῖς ἀπωκισμένους suggests Deut's idea that the dispersion would be from one end of the heaven to the next (30:4). In both texts, God shows mercy (ἐλεέω), gathers (συνάγω) and leads (ἄγω/εἰσάγω cf. Deut 30:5). In both there is an end to sin (compare the person who stops sinning (ἁμαρτάνω) in *Praem.* 117 with the healing of ἁμαρτία in Deut 30:3). Philo refers to this text elsewhere (e.g., *Conf.* 197) and references the end of the chapter earlier in *Praem.* The allusion is also suggested by Scott 1995, 565n66.

‘delights people the moment they begin to examine’ (*Fug.* 141). Deuteronomy 4:29 sets out the principle directly: People who ‘seek’ for God wholeheartedly will find him.³

Successful finding, however, is not due to sufficient capacities within a seeker: the ability to seek does not entail the ability to find. Rather, the reason that seeking does not become ‘ineffectual’ (*ἀτελής*) is because God, ‘on account of his merciful nature, comes to meet (*προϋπαντῶντος*) those who strive to see, manifesting himself by virgin graces’ (*Fug.* 141). As with *De praemiis et poenis* 114–117, the efficacy of human action is attributed to the mercy of God. Nevertheless, God’s ‘graces’ (*χάριτες*), as all Philo’s examples show, are given precisely to those who seek.⁴

5.2.2. The Necessity of Human Intent

If Philo insists that God’s mercy is the grounds for human possibility, he is equally clear that the objects of God’s mercy are precisely...

...those who being ashamed, seek to pass over from intemperance to self-control; and who reproach a life [worthy] of blame and loathe as many filthy idols as they have impressed upon their souls; and who are zealous for a tranquil state of emotions and run after a peaceful and quiet [way] of life. (*Praem.* 116)

Moses’ promise is not for souls which are *πάνυ σκληραῖς καὶ ἀποκρότοις ψυχαῖς* (*Praem.* 114), but for those absolutely determined to flee (*ἀμεταστρεπτι φεύγειν διεγνωκότα*, *Praem.* 117). Notably, this assertion finds credence in Scripture itself. As I demonstrated, it is possible to read God’s restorative mercies in Deuteronomy 30:1–10 as predicated upon people’s wholehearted turning, and this is precisely what Philo has done.⁵ Thus if God has ‘mercy on whom he will have mercy’ (Ex 33:19), for Philo those on whom God has mercy are indubitably those who strive for restoration. And if one were to ask about those who lack all ability to turn to God but still find him, the answer would be that Philo does not conceive of such people. While one might expect these to fall under the category ‘those who do not seek and yet find’, this only applies to ‘the self-taught and self-instructed wise men’, who were born with innate ability (*Fug.* 166). As such, ‘self-

3. Notable, however, is that Philo can elsewhere speak of many who desired repentance, but were not granted it (*Leg.* 3:213). Likewise, there are some people who are unable to achieve perfection (Sadlow 2008, 517).

4. As Zeller (1990, 154) notes, in Philo God’s grace always corresponds with human virtues.

5. See section 2.2.1. (pp.19–21).

taught' can be somewhat misleading; more fundamentally, they were taught through God's creative gifting (*Fug.* 69–170).⁶ Seeking is unnecessary for such people, but not impossible. So while neither are sufficient in themselves, God's grace and human desire are both necessary conditions for personal restoration. Consequently, no hope is offered to people who lack the will to reform and are bereft of virtue.

Divine mercy and human desire are also necessary for national renewal. At the conclusion of *De praemiis et poenis*, Philo envisions a national *διασπορά* on account of Israel's idolatry (162). However, the situation can be remedied: If people 1) take (*εάν...δέχωνται*) Moses' words about the curse as admonitions and 2) change, feeling shame in their whole soul, then they will obtain goodwill from a merciful God (*Praem.* 163). A string of participles explain how 'changing' (*μεταβάλλω*) entails reproaching error (*κακίσαντες*), as well as confessing (*έξαγορεύσαντες*) and admitting (*όμολογήσαντες*) sin with a purified mind (*διανοία κεκαθαρμένη*). So radical and palpable is this renewal (*μεταβολή*) that Philo foresees it inciting the people's masters to release them (*Praem.* 164). As a result, they return to the land in prosperity, while the curses are transferred to their enemies (*Praem.* 168–169).

Most likely this narrative also alludes to Deuteronomy 30,⁷ where people take (*δέξην*) Moses' exposition into their hearts and turn wholeheartedly.⁸ Once more we find Deuteronomy 30:4's idea of being exiled to the earth's extremities. Section 168 recalls Deuteronomy 30:5 and 9, where Israel returns to the land of her fathers, becomes fruitful, and is blessed beyond her fathers. Section 169 echoes the reversal of fortune in Deuteronomy 30:7.⁹ Reverberations become stronger when we consider how the concept of turning to one's heart in Deuteronomy 30:1 can imply confession and remorse,¹⁰ and when we observe the possibility that the concept of *διάνοια κεκαθαρμένη* alludes to LXX Deuteronomy 30:6.¹¹ On this basis, it seems safe to conclude that under the guidance of Deuteronomy 30, Philo anticipates a national restoration.¹²

In the struggle for redemption, people have three *παρακλήτοι*: 1) the kindness of God 2) the

6. See further, Witmer 2008, 47–49; cf. Roetzel 1986, 331–334.

7. Borgen 1997, 278.

8. Deut 30:2: *έπιστραφήση...έξ όλης τής ψυχής σου*; cf. *Praem.* 163: *...όλη ψυχή μεταβάλωσι*.

9. Scott 1995, 569.

10. See Werline 1998, 16. Though the LXX does not render this phrase as such, the idea may still be communicated.

11. *περικαθαριεί κύριος τήν καρδίαν σου...*

12. However, this is a minor theme in Philo (Halpern-Amaru 1986, 65–93).

holiness of the founders 3) and personal reformation (*Praem.* 166–167). While all are important, the final ally holds a place of prominence since it activates the other two. Moral reformation is therefore the *sine qua non* of restoration. As we saw with personal renewal, national restoration is dependent upon human willingness to change, and here human agency takes precedence over divine mercy.¹³

5.2.3. Grace, Gift and Reciprocity

The relationship between the necessary conditions of divine and human acts is illuminated by exploring the mechanics underlying Philo’s conception of gift-exchange. With respect to his reading of Deuteronomy 30, the correlation between gift and reception is most clearly set out in *De Somniis* 2:169–179. Here Philo encourages his readers to attain the virtue of joy through contemplation. Even God demonstrates this virtue when he ‘rejoices’ at the human race departing from sins and voluntarily (*ἐκούσιος*) inclining towards righteousness (*Somn.* 2:174). Deuteronomy 30:9b–10 supports his claim:

‘For,’ [Moses] says, ‘the Lord your God will return, that he may rejoice over you for good as he rejoiced over your fathers, if you will hear his voice to keep all his commandments and his ordinances and his judgments which are written in the book of this law.’ (*Somn.* 2:175)

Though Philo cites the LXX almost verbatim, in its new setting these words no longer describe God’s restoration of Israel, but his delight in the entire human race (*τὸ ἀνθρώπων γένος*) whenever they are willingly disposed towards righteousness (2:174). If one wants ‘God to rejoice’, then ‘be joyful yourself ... rejoice to receive as many good things as he gives you’ (*Somn.* 2:176). The point is that God rejoices over *anyone* whose contemplative mind joyfully receives his gifts. Section 177 further explicates (*γάρ*) the reason: God rejoices to give when the recipients are *ἄξιοι χάριτος* (‘worthy of grace’).

Rather than suggesting that people earn God’s gifts, *ἄξιοι χάριτος* specifies what makes a *suitable* beneficiary (here, to have a mind voluntarily turned toward righteousness).¹⁴ That there are

13. Scott 1995, 567.

14. See Barclay 2009, 11–12.

prerequisites for the giving and receiving of gifts was as logical in Philo's day as it is in our own.¹⁵ To give a gift that is incapable of being received is nonsensical. Why then would one expect God to give to unsuitable beneficiaries? Such a rationale underlies the logic of Philo's next statement: 'unless you suppose that those who are living in a culpable manner can rightly be said to provoke God's anger; and yet those who are living in a praiseworthy manner do not make him rejoice' (*Somm.* 2:177).¹⁶ Philo contends that God's acts are reasonable and the structure of his argument (εἰ μὴ νομίζεις) takes for granted that his audience agrees. To assume that God would give to an unsuitable recipient is irrational (cf. *Spec.* 1:43–44).

What we have seen in Philo's reading of Deuteronomy 30 regarding the interrelationship of divine and human agency and of gift and reciprocity is further borne out in his section on repentance (*Virt.* 175–186). Philo defines 'repentance' (τὸ μετανοεῖν) as an act where one stops glorifying things less-than-God in order to revere God. This conversion, the most basic form of repentance, is accompanied by a 're-ordering' (μεταρρομίζομαι) of the entire life—from a sinful, vile life to a blameless, virtuous life.¹⁷ The first person plural pronouns indicate that 'reordering' is for Jews as much as it is for potential proselytes (*Virt.* 183).¹⁸ Deuteronomy 30:11–14 shows how every aspect of one's faculties should be brought into harmony and once this happens, a person becomes simultaneously loved by God (θεοφιλῆς) and a God-lover (φιλόθεος, *Virt.* 184; cf. *Post.* 85).¹⁹

For Philo there is a delicately balanced interplay between divine and human love to which Scripture itself bears witness:

You chose God today to be your God and the Lord chose you today to be his people.
τὸν θεὸν εἶλον σήμερον εἶναί σοι θεόν, καὶ κύριος εἶλατό σε σήμερον γενέσθαι λαὸν αὐτοῦ.
(*Virt.* 184)

15. See Harrison 2003, 120–123.

16. Delling (1984, 29) implies that this principle is manifest in Philo's consideration of Torah, since God gave Torah to a people who were capable of 'seeing' (*QE* 2:42); cf. *Her.* 78–79. And while seeing itself is a gift, seeing is given to those who labour severely (*Mut.* 81–82).

17. See Laporte 1995, 97.

18. Riesner 2000, 241; Bekken 2007, 32–33, 90–94. Bekken, however, goes on to argue that 'the application of Deut 30:11–14 to Jews and Gentiles has the function of drawing the line from conversion from paganism to Judaism to conversion within the Jewish nation' (112). If such harmony is a 'membership requirement', as Bekken assumes, then one wonders on his analysis what makes this 'Jew' who converts, a Jew in the first place.

19. Philo communicates this maxim through an εἰ + optative conditional construction.

In Deuteronomy 26:17–18, the acts of divine and human selection represent a beautiful exchange of ‘reciprocity’ (ἀντίδοσις, *Virt.* 185). If the interrelation between divine and human choice remains ambiguous, section 185 clarifies each participant’s roles: ‘when a person hastens to serve the One who exists, then God, without delay, takes the one who pleads as his own; God goes ahead to meet the intentions of the one who genuinely and sincerely comes to serve him’.²⁰ Philo again discloses his prioritisation of human choice²¹ and specifies that choice as the proper worship of God (θεραπεύειν τὸ ὄν).²² As in *De fuga et inuentione*, we see again how God fittingly responds to those who actively and authentically desire him. Yet here God’s responsiveness extends even to the influence of human ‘desire’ (βούλημα). When the βούλημα is exercised, God reciprocates by aiding the βούλημα.²³

5.2.3.1. *Gift and Reciprocity: Implications for Human Agency*

On the one hand, Philo’s gift-dynamic assumes that humans need God’s grace in order to follow him; on the other, human reception of grace requires a degree of participation and assumes that humans meet certain qualifications. Such a depiction sharpens the question of just how much moral competence the human agent possesses.

Human Competence: As biblical history demonstrates, God’s blessings are not for those who simply hear the word, but for those who obey.²⁴ In *De praemiis et poenis* 79, Philo paraphrases Scripture’s testimony:

‘If ... you keep the divine commandments, being obedient to the injunctions, and receive the things that are explicitly stated, not merely to the point of listening, but if you ‘fulfil’ (ἐπιτελήτε) them through the deeds of your life, you shall have the first reward (δωρεά)—victory over your enemies...’

20. Similarly, *Leg.* 3:214–215; cf. 3:105–06.

21. So Carson 1981a, 159.

22. This choice is brought into further relief by *Spec.* 2:166, where Israel’s choice to worship represents the rectification of humanity’s great folly: ἐπληρωθῶσατο, κυριώτατα φάναι, τὸ Ἰουδαίων ἔθνος ... τοῦ δ’ ἀγενήτου καὶ αἰδίου μόνον τὴν θεραπείαν ἐλόμενον.

23. Contra Bekken (2007, 109), who asserts that Philo ‘wants to emphasise that the people of God are constituted by an initiative taken both by the convert and god.’

24. Compare *Conf.* 197, where Deut 30:4 demonstrates how God cherishes virtue and destroys wickedness.

The precise statement of Moses to which Philo appeals is not clear, but he appears to have Deuteronomy 28:1 in mind.²⁵ Importantly, the ‘quotation’ continues uninterrupted with a paraphrase of Deuteronomy 30:11–14:

...for the commandments are not too difficult or burdensome for the powers of those who enact them, neither is the good removed far away, either across the sea or at the extremities of the land, so as to require a long and toilsome journey. Nor has it suddenly journeyed from here to heaven, in captivity, so that [the keeping] of these commands is barely able to be attained by certain men, being raised on high and winged; but [obedience] is near and very close, being established in three parts of each of us, in the mouth, and heart, and hands. This is figurative for the speech, the mind, and the actions. (*Praem.* 80)

Generally, Philo does not question one’s ability to will, to act, or to speak in a way that meets the conditions for grace-reception and Deuteronomy 30:11–14 provides the anthropological rationale for Moses’ exhortation to obedience. It is therefore within human ‘power’ (δύναμις) to fulfil the hearing of the Law through performance and thus receive God’s δωρεά. In fact, the very reason Deuteronomy 30:15–19 was recorded was on account of human freedom (*Deus* 49–50).²⁶ Being created with both knowledge and freedom of choice, humans are obliged (ὀφείλω) to exercise their reason and choose the good.

This is also evident in the section in *De virtutibus* mentioned above, which stresses that changing (μεταρροῶζω) is within the realm of human capability with words and themes from Deuteronomy 30:11–14:²⁷

For this deed is not difficult, neither is it far removed, neither is it up in the air nor in the extremities of the earth nor beyond the great sea so as to be impossible to take; but it is near, dwelling in three parts of us, mouth, heart, and hands, which symbolise words and intentions and actions. For the mouth is a symbol of speech, and the heart [is a symbol] of plans, and the hands [are a symbol] of actions...(*Virt.* 183)

While the content of repentance has been emptied of Torah-specificity and refilled with ‘virtue’, Philo nevertheless maintains on the basis of Deuteronomy 30:11–14 that repentance remains a live option.²⁸ Likewise, in *Quod omnis probus liber sit* Philo voices his concern that people search for

25. LXX Deut 28:1 has the corresponding terms: ἐντολή, φυλάσσω, and ἀκοή. The nations are said to be given (δίδωμι) to Israel (v7), and Philo calls these ‘blessings’ (εὐλογία); cf. Bekken 2007, 117; Borgen 1997, 261–264.

26. However, see below on the fragments from a homely on Deut 30:15, 19, which can be found in Harris 1886, 8.

27. ‘This deed’ refers to conversion (Bekken 2007, 33). On the verbal resonance, see Bekken 2007, 29–30.

28. Birnbaum (1996, 151) believes Philo has ignored the condition of obedience and replaced it with the harmony of thoughts, words, and deeds. However, for Philo such harmony defines obedience (*Praem.* 79–81).

all types of pleasures, but when it comes to virtue no search is made (65–67). Yet, Moses tells us that such a search is not even necessary because virtue is ‘in your mouth, in your heart, and in your hand’ (68). Deuteronomy 30:14 shows that while ‘words’, ‘actions’, and ‘intentions’ need to be cultivated by constant care, virtue is still attainable by those who work for it (*Prob.* 69). In sum, Philo’s various interpretations of Deuteronomy 30:11–14 unambiguously establish humans as competent moral agents.²⁹

Qualified Human Competence: Philo’s statements about humans as competent moral agents, however, must be read in light of what we have already seen about the necessity of God’s grace. For while humanity possesses the ability to seek God, seeking is not sufficient in itself. In several texts we have surveyed, God responds to a naturally insufficient human endeavour with an act that makes individuals effective in accomplishing their task—whether that act deals specifically with repentance and restoration, or more generally with seeking virtue and God.

While Philo generally believes that people are partially competent moral agents (capable of seeking but not of finding), this is not true for everyone. The first group with which he deals in *De fuga et inventione*—those who neither seek nor find—while at one time ‘possessing power to see sharply’, have become blind and ‘debased their reason by ignorance and indifference’ (*Fug.* 121). These people have completely lost the ability to perform an act which incites God’s response. LXX Deuteronomy 29:4 applies to them: “such men have not hearts to understand, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear,” but make the whole of their life blind, and deaf, senseless and mangled in every way’ (*Fug.* 123). Moral competence can thus be lost through poor decisions.

Finally, it is important to note that there are places where Philo will radically relativise human agency even to the point of near denial. Among the fragments of Philo’s writings is a homely on Deuteronomy 30:15–19 where he states that while it is good for a person to choose life, such choices are made through the thoughtfulness of God (ἐπιφροσύνην θεοῦ). In his exposition, he puts God forward as the *sole* source of causation (cf. *Mut.* 155). All created agencies are therefore rendered inactive and passive. In *De cherubim*, he notes that it is a special attribute of created beings, including humans, to be passive, acted upon (77). What then can account for Moses’ com-

29. See *Mut.* 237, where Philo references Deut 30:12–14 to prove Μωυσῆς διδάσκων, ὅτι ἡ ἀγαθοῦ κτήσις οὔτ’ ἀδύνατός ἐστιν οὔτε δυσθήρατος (236).

mand: ‘choose life’? It is only explainable as an imperative given to those who have not yet been initiated into the deeper realities about God’s sovereignty, which Philo calls ‘the great mysteries’. For Philo, strictly speaking, all power must be attributed to God since he gives blessings to the worthy (*δωρουμένου τοῖς ἀξίοις τὰ κάλλιστα*).³⁰ His primal gifting demands that all good be traced back to him.³¹

While Philo certainly has no investment in modern conceptions of an autonomous will, ‘free’ from God and possessing power to choose the contrary,³² there are reasons which warn against finding in his extreme language an absolute denial of human agency. As H.A. Wolfson points out, Philo’s opening comparison in the fragment is between the happiness of one who chooses, and the greater happiness of the one for whom God ‘brings it [i.e., the choice] over to himself and improves it’. This statement seems to be communicating something similar to what we saw in *De fuga et inventione* 139–141 and in *De virtutibus* 185: while the soul chooses the Good, human choice cannot take effect autonomously, without God establishing the efficacy of that choice so that it does bring Life.³³ Furthermore, a denial of human agency would stand in contrast to what he affirms throughout his writings. Philo’s statements about human passivity are best understood as a relativisation of human agency vis-à-vis God.³⁴ His concerns are two-fold. On the one hand, philosophically, he wants to safeguard God’s absolute sovereignty over the created order as the *αἴτιον* of all good things;³⁵ on the other, pastorally, he wants to root out an improper outcome which might result from his own view that humans are genuine agents—pride.

Yet it may be that more than rhetorical needs drive Philo to attribute causation exclusively to God. Perhaps this arises from the very structure Philo employs to relate divine and human agency. Note D. Winston’s summary of how Philo thinks humans derive their agency:

...insofar as man shares in God’s Logos, he shares to some extent in God’s freedom. That this is only a relative freedom is actually emphasized by him when he says that God

30. This is from the fragment on Deut 30:15–19. I take *δωρουμένου* as an exegetical participle.

31. See further, *Deus* 107; *Virt.* 94. As Harrison (2003, 121) notes, for Philo, the ‘entire creation is a eulogy to [God’s] grace.’ So also, Barclay 2009, 10–11. Cf. Wolfson (1947, 1:444), who takes *ἀξιος* as implying some prior act of ‘free will’. As Barclay notes, *ἀξιος* does not demand this.

32. So Barclay 2009, 18; contra Wolfson (1947, 1:436–1:437), who maintains that the will is absolutely undetermined in Philo.

33. Cf. Wolfson 1947, 1:445; Zeller 1990, 70.

34. See Winston 1984, 377; Zeller 1990, 70n147.

35. Again, see the fragment in Harris 1886, 8.

gave man such a portion of this freedom ‘as man was capable of receiving’ and that he was liberated ‘as far as might be’.³⁶

If Winston is correct, then this way of relating the two agencies approaches the model J.M.G. Barclay has called *kinship*.³⁷ On such a model, closely associated with Stoicism, God shares a portion of his own being with humanity.³⁸ Divine and human agencies are thus undifferentiated in character and the two operate within the same causal nexus.³⁹ In so far as all human agency is a kind of borrowed divine agency, all human acts are divine acts in which humans passively participate. Nevertheless, the fact that they do partake in the divine causal power makes them ‘an active though subordinate partner of God.’⁴⁰ For Philo, this relative freedom is enough to endow humans with moral responsibility and absolve God of moral culpability.⁴¹

5.2.3.2. *Gift and Reciprocity: Implications for Human Boasting*

Significantly, Philo is convinced that the subtle interrelationship between divine and human agencies rules out any grounds for boasting. Prior to his section on repentance, Philo warns people about the dangers of pride, drawing on Deuteronomy 12. There Moses is reflecting on how a person’s possessions can lead to arrogance. Preventive care starts with remembering God (*Virt.* 163). Specifically in Deuteronomy 8:18 Moses reminds Israel that God ‘gives strength to acquire power’ (δίδωσιν ἰσχὺν ποιῆσαι δύναμιν, *Virt.* 165). While Moses is specifically referring to ‘wealth’, Philo broadens the meaning to note how ‘vigour’ (εὐτόνον) and ‘strength’ (ῥωμαλέον) are divine gifts. Philo’s purposes are not primarily theological but pastoral. For Philo, God is ‘the cause of all things’ (*Fug.* 141)⁴² and humanity’s ultimate dependence upon his gifts should remind them of their weakness apart from him (cf. *Leg.* 3:136).

Of course when Philo attributes everything to God, this must be qualified since elsewhere he emphatically maintains that God is not the cause of evil (e.g., *Conf.* 180).⁴³ Philo either means that

36. Winston 1984, 380.

37. See Barclay 2006b, 6–7.

38. See, e.g., *Deus* 48–49.

39. See further Barclay 2006b, 6; Winston 1984, 373–377; Engberg-Pedersen 2006, 122–124.

40. Winston 1984, 380.

41. See Winston 1984, 380.

42. See further Winston 1974.

43. Through the identification of intermediate agents, Philo seeks to remove God from the immediate cause of punishment (Carson 1981a, 152–153).

all things can be traced back to God as their first cause, or that God is the cause of all *good* things. If human dependence upon God is based on the latter, then the picture that emerges is one in which both divine and human agencies are extended to a certain point in all good acts, but only divine agency completes the act. Whatever the case, it would be wrong to infer from God's responsiveness that he is determined by humanity in some ultimate sense. Accordingly, if Philo's reading of Deuteronomy shows us that people are capable of seeking God and of virtuous lives, it also reminds us that humans are always ultimately dependent upon God to exercise that virtue;⁴⁴ for it is God himself who both creates people with good dispositions and effects virtues' fruition.⁴⁵ The gift-exchange dynamics rule out all grounds for boasting.

5.2.4. Summary: Deuteronomy 30 and Restoration

In sum, Philo's reading of Deuteronomy 30 gives us insight into his scriptural hermeneutic and theology. Philo reads the initial narrative of Deuteronomy 30 as a consortium of divine mercy and power that offers hope to those who wholeheartedly desire change. If people will turn to God and exercise virtue, they will receive God's salvific gifts. While humans do not in and of themselves possess the sufficient capacities to perform acts that are acceptable to God, God delights to aid persons who desire him, even strengthening their desire and making their seeking efficacious. Consequently, Philo offers hope for the soul with even the smallest seed of virtue (*Praem.* 172).

Yet Philo also believes that such hope is reserved for those poised to leave vice. While never autonomous, humans are competent to turn their wills toward God, opening themselves to the reception of his grace and thereby achieving virtue through God's empowerment. Human competence and the extension of God's agency over all that is good, even over human competence, is not in tension for Philo. While God's agency is foundational for human agency, very rarely will Philo deny humans the ability to enact genuine obedience,⁴⁶ even an obedience which elicits God's response. The general picture that arises out of Philo's anthropology is that human agency

44. Laporte 1983, 4–5.

45. See Barclay 2006a, 141–146; cf. Winston (1974, 56–57), who construes Philo's position as 'ethical determinism'.

46. Hay (2001, 374–375) notes that for Philo 'the Mosaic Law is valid for all humanity ... [and] is not beyond human strength...'

is both intact and, with respect to good works, in non-contrastive relationship to God's own agency.⁴⁷ Though Philo possibly refers to the purified heart of LXX Deuteronomy 30:6 in *De praemiis et poenis* 163, he construes it as a condition for mercy.⁴⁸ It would not seem from his reading of Deuteronomy 30 that created agents require transformation to obey God. However, a more thorough picture of the relationship between human transformation and moral competence requires a broader consideration of Philo's use of the heart-circumcision metaphor.

5.3. Philo and Heart-Circumcision

5.3.1. Physical Circumcision and Heart Circumcision

Though Philo does not unambiguously allude to Deuteronomy 30:6 in any of his references to that chapter,⁴⁹ he does show an interest in the heart-circumcision/purification motif. In fact it is hard for Philo to read of one circumcision without seeing two: one concerning the penis and the other concerning reason (*QG* 3:46; *Spec.* 1:6).⁵⁰ To perform this second circumcision is to cut away arrogant and resistant thoughts, to rid oneself of evil passions (*QG* 3:46; *Spec.* 1:305–06; *Migr.* 92; cf. *Fug.* 91).⁵¹ It is connected to physical circumcision in that physical circumcision was also commanded to keep (male) prides in check (believing that males bring the most significant component to procreation) (*QG* 3:47). Furthermore, both circumcisions excise excessive pleasures that confuse the mind. Finally, both objects of circumcision are generative organs: the first generates offspring and the second generates thoughts, 'the most generative (force) of the heart' (*QG* 3:48; cf. *Spec.* 1:6). Since Philo sees the heart as the seat of the mind, to circumcise the mind

47. Compare Wolfson 1947, 1:441, who assumes a competitive relationship.

48. See Borgen 1997, 276–277.

49. See, however, the possibility in *Praem.* 163. This absence is, in part, accounted for by his dependence on the LXX.

50. The only place Philo mentions physical circumcision without a discussion of heart-circumcision in the surrounding context is *Sobr.* 8 and possibly *Somm.* 2:25; however, see below on the latter. Philo's discussion in *Spec.* overlaps a great deal with his exegesis in *QG* 3:46–52; see further Hecht 1984, 69–71.

51. Compare Boyarin (1994, 26–27), who fails to discern the influence of the scriptural texts which stand behind such thinking.

is also to circumcise the *καρδία* (*Spec.* 1:6). If Philo believes that the mind is superior to the body and thus presents the superior circumcision, he still maintains that both circumcisions are necessary; neither figurative interpretation nor symbolic metaphor should lead a person to disavow physical requirements (*Migr.* 92).

5.3.2. Heart-Circumcision, Transformation, and Perfection

From the above, we can begin to detect the implications that heart-circumcision will have on a human agent: circumcision of the mind/heart results in a changed disposition which facilitates obedience. In *De specialibus legibus* 1:304 Philo addresses those who do not exhibit virtue because they are *ἀπερίτμητοι τὴν καρδίαν*. That virtue is readily available (*πάρειμι*) only exacerbates the un-circumcised's culpability. The admonition in LXX Deuteronomy 10:16 'Circumcise your hard-heartedness' applies to such people; for a circumcised heart would produce a mind that is easy to manage, 'submitting to the laws of nature' (1:305–6). Given that for Philo the *νόμος φύσεως*, the Mosaic law, and the virtues are interconnected so as to be almost indistinguishable (*Mos.* 2:48; *Spec.* 4:133–134),⁵² one can see how heart-circumcision effects an interior change that aids an individual's obedience.

We can elucidate the kind of change Philo envisions when we turn to a passage in *Legum allegoriae*, which distinguishes a 'Perfect Man' from one who is still advancing toward perfection (3:140). The 'Perfect Man' becomes such as he cuts out (*ἐκτέμνων*) the whole of his anger from his soul, thus making it manageable.⁵³ Again Philo indicates that eradicating evil thoughts will make the Self compliant. But now we learn that the person who does this becomes a 'Perfect Man'. What does this phrase mean and what might it tell us about the transformative value of heart-circumcision?

In a recent article on human perfection, M.L. Sadlow points out how Philo believes it is his job to help people on their way toward perfection.⁵⁴ The patriarchs provide us with different models for reaching this goal (*Abr.* 52–54; *Congr.* 34–38; *Somm.* 1:168).⁵⁵ Abram reaches perfec-

52. Barclay 1996, 172; Runia 2001, 106–107; Birnbaum 2006, 250–255.

53. On the anthropological constitution of this perfect man, see *Somm.* 2:234.

54. Sadlow 2008, 504.

55. Sadlow 2008, 509.

tion through learning. First he studies nature, but then advances to contemplating God, eventually becoming a sage.⁵⁶ When Abram reaches the point of perfection he is reconstituted as a new person, marked by a changed name—Abraham (*Mut.* 270). Elsewhere Philo tells us that the nature of a ‘Perfect Man’ is of distinct ontological status: he is ‘neither God nor man, but ... something on the border between uncreated and perishable nature’ (*Somm.* 2:234).⁵⁷ Isaac, unlike his father, did not require this transformation; he is the exemplar of a small, privileged group known as the ‘self-taught’ (*Sacr.* 6; *Cher.* 1–10).⁵⁸ Since these are *born* in possession of virtue, they do not provide a model for seeking.⁵⁹ Finally, there is Jacob, the labourer. He obtains virtue through the blood, sweat, and tears of apprenticeship (*Congr.* 69). While his journey is characterised by ups and downs, through perseverance he too can reach perfection.

This sketch provides a window into Philo’s understanding of heart-circumcision. First, since in *Legum allegoriae* 3:140 perfection is correlated with what Philo calls heart-circumcision elsewhere, then it follows that a heart-circumcised person is ‘neither God nor man, but ... something on the border between.’ The second thing a correlation between perfection and heart-circumcision suggests is that there are at least three ways that one might attain heart-circumcision: through birth, through study, or through moral discipline, with the latter two being the more ordinary routes.⁶⁰ Once perfection is reached, one becomes virtuous by nature. Consequently, heart-circumcision holds eternal value; for it inclines the will towards virtue, *which is necessary for eternal life*. Commenting on Genesis 17:14, Philo notes how ‘the soul that is not circumcised of the vices of the flesh cannot be saved’ (*QG* 3:52). He pities those who do not drink from the labours of virtue because virtue is able ‘to immortalise’ (*ἀθανατίζω*, *Spec.* 1:303). Obtaining heart-circumcision is therefore critical and must be acquired for Life.⁶¹

56. Importantly, *Somm.* 2:169–179 sets forth contemplation as the condition for gift-reception.

57. While Burnett (1984, 453–458) discusses those who reach perfection as experiencing a rebirth of the soul, before death he seems to confine rebirth to the ethical sphere (456). From *Somm.* 2:234, it is better to conceive of Philo’s ‘perfect man’ as existing in an in-between-state before full rebirth at death.

58. See also *Op.* 148; *QG* 1:8; *Leg.* 3:135.

59. However, Isaac’s virtues can be emulated (Hay 2001, 366n31).

60. Sadlow 2008, 511; Witmer 2008, 44–47.

61. Cf. Burnett 1984, 464–467.

5.3.3. The Agent of Heart-Circumcision

Like most of his concepts, the picture that emerges from Philo regarding heart-circumcision and human agency is not altogether straightforward. Though the circumcising agent is often left grammatically ambiguous, most contexts indicate that Philo expects humans to remedy their obstinate heart. For instance, as with *De specialibus legibus* 1:305–6, in *QG* 3:46 Philo explains heart-circumcision with a reference to LXX Deuteronomy 10:16. In accord with that verse, which expects humans to perform the removal, Philo claims that in doing this ‘you [his audience] shall make the sovereign part free and unbound.’ Likewise, in *QG* 3:48 physical circumcision shows that ‘one ought to cut off other desires as well.’ Furthermore, in *De specialibus legibus* 1:10 circumcision is a symbol of ‘knowing himself’ (γινῶναι τινα ἑαυτόν) and ‘casting off’ self-conceit.⁶² Thus Philo attributes symbolic circumcision (e.g., heart-circumcision) to human agents, which makes sense given his dependence on LXX Deuteronomy 10:16. This conclusion is also congruent with the impression Philo gives in *QG* 3:48 and in the examples of Abraham and Jacob; namely that heart-circumcision is performed through the study of or obedience to Torah.

There are a few notable exceptions which might attribute heart-circumcision to other agents.⁶³ In *De somniis* 2:25, Philo compares reaping a harvest to being ‘twice circumcised’ (δὶς περιτέμνειν), a comparison probably invited by Leviticus 19:23.⁶⁴ Encouraged by an infinitive absolute construction, ἀγνείαν ἀφαγνίζεσθαι,⁶⁵ Philo goes on to speak of the purification of the soul that has already been purified: τὴν κάθαρσιν τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτὴν καθαίρεσθαι. This ‘double purification’ can also be called a ‘circumcision of circumcision’ (περιτομῆς περιτομήν) and occurs whenever a person delivers his soul to God to make it bright. Rightly, these individuals do not trust their own ‘competence’ (ικανός) to wash and purify a stain-filled life without θείας ἐπιφροσύνης (‘divine guidance’). At first, it seems as though Philo might be suggesting that hu-

62. The reflexive pronoun ἑαυτόν, following an infinitive with accusative subject, indicates that we should take the adjoining verb, ἀπόσασθαι, reflexively as well. Likewise, in *Spec.* 1:305 περιτέμνεσθε and ἀποκείρασθε seem to describe something people do to themselves.

63. *QG* 3:51 might make the divine word out to be the circumcising instrument.

64. Philo alludes to Lev 19:9 in section 23. He also references Lev 19:23 in *Leg.* 1:52 and *Plant.* 95, 113.

65. See LXX Num 6:2.

mans perform the first purification while God enacts the second. But this would misunderstand his point. Rather, Philo's claim is that *when* people acknowledge their dependence upon divine guidance, they become doubly purified. The second circumcision is *the realisation of divine assistance itself*.⁶⁶ Philo insinuates that *both* acts are performed by a human who is dependent on divine agency. Since humans are always reliant upon divine power, the two agencies are not mutually exclusive.⁶⁷

Finally, there are the God-born, like Isaac, who are *sui generis* in their natural perfection. They owe this to creation itself, and thus to God's creative agency. However, the metaphor of heart-circumcision does not easily apply to these exceptional humans since it always assumes the eradication of defect, the reconstitution of the individual. The God-born, however, were never *reconstituted*, they were simply *constituted* and have remained so. Thus while we may trace their nature and obedience to God's creative agency and primal gifting, it would be inaccurate to say their hearts were circumcised, either by themselves or by God.

5.4. Conclusion

In conclusion, there are two notable ways this study on Philo contributes to our overall investigation. First, Philo expands our models for thinking about agency and causation in the ancient world. For Philo, God is always the ultimate, primary, and first cause. In this light, human agency will invariably appear borrowed, relativised and 'passive'. Notwithstanding, human 'passivity' does not indicate inactivity, nor does it imply that humans are not themselves agents. Nevertheless, the very fact that on Philo's sophisticated construal humans only derive agency by partaking in God's own agency should always engender humility. Thus with greater perspicuity than we

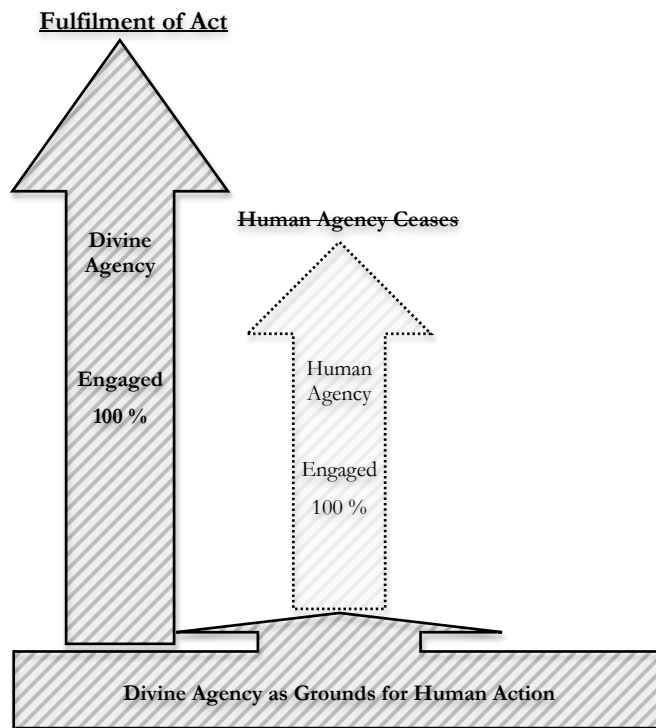
66. Circumcision takes a similar 'symbolic' meaning in *Spec.* 1:10–11: God is the true cause of all things and we must eradicate any thoughts that suggest otherwise (Barclay 1998, 539); cf. *Cher.* 74–77, 99–109.

67. Importantly, the link Philo draws between double-purification and double-circumcision indicates that he would not have had difficulty aligning heart-purification in LXX Deut 30:6 with symbolic circumcision. Thus his prioritisation of human agency in heart-circumcision cannot be attributed solely to his dependence on the LXX. Theological hermeneutics are also at play.

Conclusion

have heretofore seen, Philo opens up the possibility of conceiving of divine and human agency in non-contrastive and yet asymmetrical terms.

A textured understanding of agency in Philo must also recognise that while humans are customarily depicted as being endowed with effective moral capacities, in any given act they might not be fully capable of achieving a creative effect. In *De fuga et inveniione*, for instance, we saw that the ability to seek does not necessarily entail the ability to find. So while divine and human agency are non-contrastive and related by kinship, the share of competency which God bestows on humans can ultimately be ‘ineffectual’ (ἀτελής) for the fulfilment of an act. Without having their agencies relate in inverse proportion, it is as if God and the human are both fully engaged in a work up to a certain point, at which time human agency falls out and God is the sole agent involved in bringing the work to completion. This can be illustrated as follows:



In many cases humans are dependent upon God, not only because their agencies are grounded upon his own generative energies, and not only because human agency represents a share in divine agency,⁶⁸ but also because his agency is necessary to bring their endeavours to fruition.

Secondly, this investigation has given us insight into Philo's conception of humanity's capacity for obedience, obedience's relationship to personal transformation, and how these subjects fit within the economy of salvation. Philo's reading of Deuteronomy 30 complies with his overall theological interests. His chief concern is the soul's approach to God and his aim is to help people on this ascent.⁶⁹ It is unusual for him to deny humanity's moral competence and Deuteronomy 30:11–14 justifies his view. There are a few who have forfeited their potential, and here LXX Deuteronomy 29:4 applies. When Philo occasionally feels it necessary to dismiss human agency, he does so primarily for philosophical reasons. He has not been led to such a place because of a desire to praise God (as we saw at Qumran), or because of an overwhelming conviction about humanity's sin (as we saw in Baruch), nor even because of a personal experience of God's grace. His concern with divine causation is to show a coherent rationale behind the universe. Once we bracket this motive out, we see in fact that Philo is unwilling to dispense with human agency. Nevertheless, for all humanity's virtue-seeking capacities, no one ascends to God without his enabling grace.

For Philo, divine gifting and the logic of the universe meet in salvation's economy. Moses' laws reflect a cosmic, God-given moral order. Present and eschatological blessing are contingent upon conformity to that order.⁷⁰ It would therefore be unreasonable for God to act contrary to this order by giving his grace to the unreceptive. God's gifts are thus reserved for those who are *ἄξιοι χάριτος*, including the graces which are necessary to find him. This does not take away from the 'gracious' character of divine gifting: God's gifts are never 'deserved'. And yet to receive God's grace, individuals must open themselves as suitable recipients to what is on offer.

Such suitability is most transparent in those who are, or have become, *ὁ τέλειος*. While a few are born this way, most who reach this height do so by the eradication of their evil desires, which

68. In the diagram, the diagonal lines across the figures illustrate how divine and human agency are the same in kind, though different in degree.

69. See Hay 2001, 365–369, esp. 365–366.

70. Borgen 1987, 28.

Conclusion

in Philo is equivalent to heart-circumcision. Through progressive stages of developmental achievement, all humans apart from the 'earth-born' are able to arrive at a place where they are reconstituted as harmoniously perfect agents—totally led by God. In such a person is a house suitable for God to inhabit.

III. PAUL

Our study of the Jewish Scriptures and of the interpretative traditions in Second Temple Judaism questions the assumption that Paul bypasses Deuteronomy 30:1–10 and even invites a reconsideration of how that text, along with Jeremiah 31 and Ezekiel 36–37, might have influenced his conceptions about divine and human agency. In chapter 6, I will seek to substantiate Paul’s reading of Deuteronomy 30:1–10 through an investigation of Romans 2:17–29. While that small section houses some of the apostle’s most radical statements, it is my contention that these are nothing less than his own reading and wrestling with Scripture. Examining Paul’s hermeneutic will not only throw fresh light on his argument, it will also begin to answer questions about the way he structures divine and human agency.

Chapter 7 investigates how the conclusions reached in Romans 2:17–29 interact with larger themes in Pauline theology, particularly as he develops his argument in Romans. This task involves two primary considerations. First, I want to trace Paul’s reading of these scriptural narratives throughout the Pauline corpus. Second, I want to show the ways in which the conclusions from Romans 2 regarding grace and agency are confirmed and enriched when set in this wider context.

Chapter 6

PAUL'S READING OF DEUTERONOMY 30 IN ROMANS 2:17–29

6.1. Introduction: Establishing the Connection

Our foray into the apostle's reading of heart-transformation narratives begins in Romans 2:17–29. Although commentators generally recognise Paul's reliance upon scriptural traditions for the concept of heart-circumcision,¹ surprisingly few entertain the question of whether or not specific texts have influenced him.² The aim of this chapter is to show how Romans 2:17–29 draws heavily on Deuteronomy 29–30. By imaginatively reconstructing Paul's reading of those chapters, we can begin to uncover how he expounds the agency dynamics contained therein. But first it needs to be established that Paul actually alludes to Deuteronomy 29–30 here. The reasons for assuming an intertextual relationship are as follows:

1) *Common Vocabulary*: Romans 2 shares with Deuteronomy 30 the concept of *περιτομή καρδίας* (heart-circumcision).³ While the reference could recall a number of related passages (e.g., Deut 10:4; 30:6; Jer 4:4; 9:25), Deuteronomy 30:6 is most evidently the primary referent. Texts such as Jeremiah 9:25 and Ezekiel 44:7–9 may be excluded on the grounds that they speak of the *ἀπερίτμητοι καρδίας*, while Paul only speaks of the circumcised heart. Further, the unique pairing

1. E.g., Dunn 1988, 1:127; Cranfield 1975, 1:172; Stuhlmacher 1994, 49; Keck 2005, 85.

2. Exceptional are Berkley (2000) and Schreiner (1998, 136n3), though the latter only suggests Deut 27–30 are in the background.

3. While the LXX renders 30:6 *καὶ περικαθαριεῖ κύριος τὴν καρδίαν σου*, LXX 10:16 bears *περιτεμεῖσθε*. The close thematic and lexical correspondence between 10:12–16 and 30:6–8 suggests *למ* as underlying both texts. It appears that the LXX has chosen 'cleanse' in 30:6 to avoid what would have been an unfamiliar metaphor for its Greek readers. This was not possible in 10:16, as the object of the circumcision was not merely 'heart' but 'fore-skin of your heart'. On Paul's reliance on a Hebraizing revision of the Old Greek, see Stanley 1992, 167–69, 255n12, 256n15.

of κρυπτά and φανερά in Romans 2:28–29 recalls LXX Deuteronomy 29:28—the only instance of this combination in any form in the Old Greek. *Unusual* and *specialised* vocabulary highlights *verbal connections* with Romans 2:27–29.⁴ Less specialised vocabulary links are present when Paul writes of the one who ‘keeps the righteous requirements of the Law’ (ἐὰν ... τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου φυλάσῃ, v26). This phrase echoes Deuteronomy 30:10 where Israel is exhorted φυλάσσεσθαι ... τὰ δικαιώματα αὐτοῦ ... ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τοῦ νόμου τούτου.⁵

2) *Availability* and *Recurrence*: Paul's explicit citations of this text elsewhere in Romans demonstrate that the source was available and reoccurs in his letters.⁶

3) *Common Linear Development* and *Thematic Coherence*: Deuteronomy 29:18 warns of an individual who, upon hearing the threat of the curse, presumes upon God's mercy and says: ‘He/it will be kind to me, for I am walking in the error of my heart’. The irony is that God will not be merciful: the covenant curses will be enacted and the entire nation sent into exile (29:19–27). God, however, will bring his people out of exile, rejoice over them, circumcise their hearts and they will keep the Law.

At least since Romans 2:17, Paul's argument is aimed at one who calls himself a Jew. Like the individual in Deuteronomy 28:18, this Jew is presumptuous: he boasts in God and in Torah (2:17, 23), persuaded that he is qualified to lead others (v19). By applying LXX Isaiah 52:5 to this figure, Paul paints his fellow countryman in exile: ‘For on account of you the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles.’ As S.J. Gathercole has noted, ‘this Jew is not merely an individual but a representative of the nation.’⁷ As in Deuteronomy, themes of exile are immediately followed by obedience to the Law, heart-circumcision and praise from God (vv26, 29).

This evidence offers an adequate basis for assuming that Romans 2:17–29 alludes to Deuteronomy 29–30.⁸ By putting Romans 2:17–29 into dialogue with its scriptural background, we can now determine how Paul might have read those chapters. To do this, I will examine the overlapping motifs between the texts to work out how they converge. Since the relationship between Paul's thought and Scripture is the primary focus of this study, not every exegetical question will

4. Berkley 2000, 99.

5. Likewise, in 30:16 Israel is commanded φυλάσσεσθαι τὰ δικαιώματα αὐτοῦ.

6. E.g., Deut 29:4 in Rom 11:8; Deut 30:12, 14 in Rom 10:6, 8.

7. Gathercole 2002, 199.

8. Berkley 2000, 106–107.

be addressed. Instead, the focus is on what appears to be a controlling issue in both texts: eschatological life.

6.2. The Way to Life and Fulfilling the Commands

The motif of judgement is pervasive in Romans 2. It is referenced in every verse up through verse 13 and again in verse 16. With discussion of eschatological judgment comes the topic of eschatological life. Paul writes that those who seek glory, honour, and immortality will be given ‘eternal life’ (ζωὴν αἰώνιον, vv6–8), a motif which continues in verses 25–29. Commenting on verse 29, Schreiner rightly notes how ἔπαινος denotes the eschatological reward of eternal life.⁹ Likewise in verse 26, λογισθήσεται—as future passive—describes an eschatological reckoning by God since ‘the true Jew is an eschatological phenomenon.’¹⁰

To live into the eschatological age is to attain Life. In Deuteronomy 30, Life is given to those who turn and obey God, ‘to keep and to do all his commandments and his righteous decrees’ (φυλάσσεσθαι καὶ ποιεῖν πάσας τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ δικαιώματα αὐτοῦ, v10). Following Deuteronomy, Paul reasons that only those who keep the righteous decrees of the Law (ἐὰν ... τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου φυλάσση) will be finally counted (λογισθήσεται) as God’s people and given Life (2:26, 29). As with several of his contemporaries, Paul has read Deuteronomy 30 with reference to eternal life.¹¹ Also like his contemporaries, Paul makes Life contingent upon obedience.¹² Despite common assumptions, this is not uncharacteristic. Paul has just said that God gives eternal life to those who persist in good works (2:7); in 6:22, Life is the τέλος of holiness and in 8:13 it is conditioned upon mortifying the deeds of the body. Only those who sow to the Spirit reap life (Gal 6:8), while those who gratify the Flesh will not (5:21). There is in Paul a moral im-

9. Schreiner 1998, 140.

10. Käsemann 1980, 74. So also Barrett 1962, 59. Dunn (1988, 1:122) notes that the future could be logical but is ‘probably temporal’; similarly, Moo 1996, 169n17.

11. See earlier discussions on the eschatological interpretations of Deuteronomy 30 at 4QMMT, 2Bar 78:6–7, and 4Ezra 7:96, 129.

12. This is evident, without exception, in every text studied. See, e.g., at Qumran (4QMMT C30; CD 3:12–20, 7:4–9; Pseudo-Ezekiel [4Q385 f2:1–9]); Bar 3:14, 4:1; 2Bar 82:2–6; 4 Ezra 7:17–22 and the discussion of perfection in Philo.

perative on which Life is somehow dependent. But what is this imperative and who, if anyone, does Paul believe satisfies it? Deuteronomy 30 provides insight into both questions.

6.2.1. Fulfilling the Law as Adherence to the *Shema*

If in Romans 2:25 Paul insist that only those who fulfil the Law are the eschatological and hence ultimate Jews, in 2:26 he goes further by saying that it is possible for such a person to be uncircumcised (v26)!¹³ The question of what Paul means by 'keeping the commandments' and how exactly this can exclude circumcision has bemused many exegetes (cf. 1Cor 7:19). A related question is whether or not he has actual people in mind. On the one hand are those who believe Paul means perfect conformity to Torah's demands. Paul would then be speaking only hypothetically—for no one could perfectly perform Torah—and his argument is that a simple transgression invalidates covenant membership and eschatological standing.¹⁴ On the other hand are those who think that the phrase describes general conformity to the covenant. Whether this is defined as 'faith',¹⁵ 'obedience',¹⁶ 'status',¹⁷ or something else, Paul is not presenting a hypothetical situation but referring to actual Gentiles.¹⁸

So exactly what does Paul mean when he refers to a Gentile who 'keeps the righteous requirements of the Law' (ἐὰν ... τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου φυλάσση) and 'fulfils the Law' (τὸν νόμον τελοῦσα)? The fact that both phrases function as counter-descriptions of the 'transgressor' (παραβάτης, vv25, 27) suggests that they hold a similar meaning.¹⁹ As noted earlier, ἐὰν ... τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου φυλάσση echoes Deuteronomy 30:10 which describes Israel's satisfaction of the *Shema* in light of the restoration. If Paul has carried forward this meaning then he probably does not have perfect conformity to every Mosaic stipulation in mind. But 'covenant status' is not in view either. Since Paul is reading Deuteronomy 30, he most likely describes someone who

13. My choice of 'ultimate', rather than 'true' or 'real', reflects the eschatological nature of Paul's description. See also CD 3:3–4, which speaks of the Sons of Zadok being the 'chosen of Israel' who will 'appear' at the eschaton as the ultimate Israel.

14. E.g., Moo 1996, 168–169; Bell 1998, 193–195.

15. Barrett 1962, 58.

16. Stuhlmacher 1994, 48.

17. Wright 1996, 138–39.

18. So Cranfield 1975, 1:173.

19. Schreiner 1998, 136.

loves and obeys God wholeheartedly.

6.2.2. Israel's Failure and Paul's Interlocutor

The question of what type of obedience Paul thinks is required is bound up with the question of what he means by *παραβάτης*. What is the precise breach that invalidates his interlocutor's circumcision and leaves him condemned? Deuteronomy 29–30 give us a hint. There, the curses which form the backdrop to restoration come because Israel's heart is neither loving nor obedient, but 'wandering' (*ἀποπλανήσει*, LXX 29:18). She 'will forsake the covenant' (*κατελίποσαν τὴν διαθήκην*, LXX 29:24) and choose Death (30:15). Importantly, it is *not* transgression of specific Laws which enacts the sanctions; rather, Israel's complete negligence in responding to *YHWH* due to a lack of 'a heart to know, and eyes to see, and ears to hear' (LXX 29:3) precipitates her dispersion.

Remarkably, Paul believes this to be the very situation of his Jewish non-Christian contemporaries; the words of LXX Deuteronomy 29:3 still apply to 'this very today' (*ἕως τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας*, Rom 11:8).²⁰ By depicting his interlocutor in exile (Rom 2:24), Paul discloses his belief that his dialogue partner is no exception and seeks to convince him of this reality. The problem is not that his interlocutor has presumed to accomplish Torah in its minute detail when, in fact, he has not. Still less is Paul concerned about an overly restricted, ethnocentric theology of mercy.²¹ Instead, Paul's reading of Deuteronomy 29–30 leads him to be critical of his contemporary's unresponsiveness to God, and the 'transgression' committed is nothing less than forsaking the covenant.²²

This supports Gathercole's conclusion that 'Paul is essentially dealing with a dialogue partner

20. So Watson 2004, 435: 'In Paul's reading of this text, the Israel of his own day is in exactly the same situation as the Israel addressed by Moses in the land of Moab.' This is where I fundamentally disagree with Thorsteinsson's (2003 211–231 esp. at 217–221, 226) proposal that Paul is in dialogue with a circumcised Gentile proselyte. It is hardly convincing that Paul's charge of *ἱεροσυλεῖν* would be any more agreeable to that figure than to a native born Jew.

21. Rightly Bell 1998, 193; contra Dunn 1988, 1:122. To be sure, Paul's argument has the *effect* of discounting circumcision as the identifying mark of the people of God, but that is not his primary purpose. The *γάρ* in v25 denotes that Paul is continuing his argument, introducing the Gentile as further support of the spiritual bankruptcy of his interlocutor, not to argue for Gentile legitimacy in the covenant.

22. While Keck (2005, 86) is right to note that disobedience is not necessarily apostasy, here Paul is concerned with deeper matters than acts of disobedience.

... *who is unrepentant*, and (though not visibly) an apostate.²³ Gathercole helpfully reminds us that such apostasy would have forfeited the efficacy of cultic elements such as the temple sacrifices and circumcision since these 'did not function *ex opere operato*'.²⁴ As Paul insists, circumcision is not a ticket to Life, and failure to attain Life is as good as never having been circumcised (v25). Consequently, his interlocutor could not point to his circumcision for assurance since it only denoted a broken covenant.²⁵

The view that Paul was attacking contemporaries who presumed to perform Torah comprehensively has provided those who embrace the New Perspective a convenient whipping boy over the last 30 years. Yet, to describe the religion of Paul's interlocutor as one characterised by repentance, atonement, and forgiveness is extremely misleading as well, since it skirts Paul's *reading* of Israel's condition.²⁶ It is important to realise that without eyes to see, ears to hear, or a heart that understands, Paul believes that his interlocutor lacks the capacity to be an effective moral agent. Paul's disagreement with his interlocutor, then, is precisely over his interlocutor's responsiveness to God, something Paul believes is all too absent.

6.3. Heart-Circumcision and the Reconstitution of the Moral Agent

As we have seen, in Romans 2:25–29 those who are regarded as the eschatological people of God are those who are obedient. Yet in verse 29, the one who receives eschatological blessing is

23. Gathercole 2002, 206, emphasis his.

24. Gathercole 2002, 210. So also Käsemann 1980, 72: 'Paul does not recognize any sacraments that work *ex opere operato*... If they do not open the path of obedience, their *ὠφέλεια* is illusory.'

25. Murray 1959, 85–86: 'The practicing of the law is thus equivalent to the keeping of the covenant. Transgression of the Law which makes circumcision uncircumcision is the unfaithfulness to covenant obligations which in Old Testament terms is called the breaking of the covenant... When these obligations are neglected and violated, circumcision has become uncircumcision and the outward sign is bereft of its significance.'

26. Beyond Paul's reading, a second element to be considered is the redemptive-historical. As Schreiner (1998, 134) correctly notes, 'The only way for sins to be forgiven, now that Christ has come, is through the death of Christ.' Thus, while Paul is arguing from a common scriptural heritage, he is by no means arguing on his interlocutor's terms. This seems more adequate to me than, e.g., Keck (2005, 84), who thinks silence about the Temple is evidence that the interlocutor is a diaspora Jew.

also described as being circumcised of heart. How do these two concepts relate in Paul's thinking?

6.3.1. Heart-circumcision and Obedience

In discussing Paul's use of heart-circumcision in Romans 2:29, Hays comments, 'The jarring metonymic image ... appears both in Deuteronomy and in Jeremiah as a way of calling Israel to radical, wholehearted obedience...'²⁷ While Hays is correct—Deuteronomy and Jeremiah do employ the image for this purpose (Deut 10:16; Jer 4:4)—in Deuteronomy 30:6 the metaphor *functions* differently. There, Life is the result of love, which is a consequence of YHWH's revolutionising work. It is by circumcising the heart that YHWH *establishes* 'radical, wholehearted obedience.'

As we have seen, on one possible reading of Deuteronomy 30:1–10 that is evidenced in *some* Second Temple literature, heart-circumcision stands logically prior to any compliance on Israel's part and Deuteronomy 30 bears witness to a divine saving initiative that reconstitutes moral agents, creates Life out of Death, activates reciprocity, and refashions a command into a promise. When Paul alludes to this text in Romans 2, he evokes these dynamics. For Paul believes God's invasive rescue mission promised in the Scriptures is coming true through Christ and Spirit (Rom 1:2–4), and when he says heart-circumcision occurs *ἐν πνεύματι*, he associates it with these eschatological realities (2:29).²⁸ Until the heart is circumcised, obedience is impossible since all humanity would remain enslaved to sin (6:17), and 'their foolish hearts darkened' (*ἔσκοτίσθη ἡ ἀσύνητος αὐτῶν καρδία*, 1:21; cf. 1:24; 2:5). In stark contrast to this impotent agent is the eschatological Jew, who 'has received from God the Spirit and circumcision of the heart *so that he no longer turns away* from his creator.'²⁹ The reason (*γάρ*) this individual is able to perform Torah (2:26–27) is precisely because God has circumcised that individual's heart (v29). Deuteronomy 30 thus testifies to God's transformative gift revealed in Christ, a gift which reconstitutes humans as competent moral agents by the Spirit.³⁰

27. Hays 1989, 44.

28. So Cranfield 1975, 1:175n3: 'That *πνεῦμα* here denotes the human spirit is unlikely, since the inwardness of this circumcision is already adequately expressed by *καρδίας*. Moreover, in 7:6, and 2Cor 3:6 (two other Pauline passages in which *πνεῦμα* and *γράμμα* are contrasted) *πνεῦμα* refers to the Holy Spirit'. Cf. Barrett 1962, 60: 'in a spiritual way'.

29. Stuhlmacher 1994, 50, my emphasis.

It is on account of such generating power that Paul now describes those united to Christ as no longer enslaved to Sin, but obedient *ἐκ καρδίας* (Rom 6:17).³¹ This phrase echoes Deuteronomy's description of Israel who, having been freed from slavery, fulfils the *Shema* at the restoration: 'You will obey his voice ... from the whole of your heart' (*ὑπακούση τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ... ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου*, Deut 30:2). While Paul has glossed YHWH's voice as 'the imprint of teaching' (reflecting his Christological view of revelation), he nevertheless applies the language of *Shema*-fulfilment to believers (Rom 6:17).³² Such obedience Paul will later summarise with another important word that stands at the center of Deuteronomy—love (Rom 13:8). There is therefore good reason for taking the *ἀκροβυστία* in Romans 2:26–27 as a Gentile Christian who, on account of the gifts of Christ and Spirit, satisfies the *Shema* through wholehearted, love-filled obedience.³³

6.3.2. Heart-circumcision and the Ultimate Jew

Now we can begin to see how heart-circumcision relativises physical circumcision for Paul. Since obedience is a necessary condition for membership in God's eschatological people, and since heart-circumcision is the sufficient condition for obedience, heart-circumcision is determinative in defining those who will be called 'Jew' at the eschaton. This seems to be the logic behind verse 29: 'The [ultimate] Jew is in the concealed, and [ultimate] circumcision is heart-circumcision' (*ὁ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ Ἰουδαῖος, καὶ περιτομὴ καρδίας*).³⁴ But Paul's claims are not all positive—defining what a

30. Due to his belief that Paul here relies on Deut 12, Stowers (1994, 156) denies that Paul is describing an 'eschatological miracle'. Unfortunately, Stowers does not demonstrate what criteria he has used to determine this allusion.

31. Significantly, this is the only place in the undisputed letters where Paul pens *ἐκ καρδίας*. Cf. 1Tim 1:5; 2Tim 2:22.

32. On 6:17, see the discussion in section 7.4.2.1. below (pp.212–218).

33. Compare Bell (1998, 195–200), who believes that the context and Paul's odd terminology supports the hypothetical reading. However, the terminology is easily accounted for by the scriptural allusion. Similarly, Moo (1996, 168) argues from the Pauline language and 'distinction between faith on the one hand and "the Law," "works," and "doing," on the other,' that this could not be a reference to Christians. While Moo does note that Paul's *ἐὰν ... τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου φυλάσση* reflects Deut 30:10, he uses this as an argument in favour of a non-Christian Gentile reading since it parallels other phrases of 'doing' in Deut (170n21). But *φυλάσσεσθαι ... τὰ δικαιώματα αὐτοῦ* is also in parallel with *ὑπακούση τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ... ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου* in Deut 30:2, a phrase which Paul is happy to apply to Christians (Rom 6:17).

34. Paul's terse phrases must be reconstructed, yet this has little consequence on the sense of the verses.

Jew is—he also states what a Jew is not: ‘an [ultimate] Jew *is not* in the revealed’ (οὐ γὰρ ὁ ἐν τῷ φανερωῖ Ἰουδαῖός ἐστιν). Here Paul goes beyond making heart-circumcision a necessary condition for obedience, and thus a necessary condition for Life: if *Gentiles* are able to be regarded as Jews (v26), then heart-circumcision is both *necessary* and *sufficient* for membership in God’s eschatological people.³⁵ Though not meaningless, circumcision’s value is limited to signifying a deeper reality: heart-circumcision.³⁶ It is, however, possible for the thing signified to exist without the signifier—Paul’s most radical position.³⁷

While Paul’s experience of worshipping in Spirit-filled Gentile communities provides some rationale for his view, Scripture, and Paul’s reading of it, has also had a commanding effect on him. Perhaps even this conviction was nourished by Deuteronomy 29–30. For between chapters 29 and 30 of Deuteronomy stands one of the most enigmatic verses in all of the Jewish Scriptures: ‘The things which are concealed (τὰ κρυπτά) [belong] to the Lord our God, but the things which are evident (τὰ ... φανερά) [belong] to us and to our children forever, to do all the words of this Law’ (LXX 29:28). It appears that in Romans 2:28–29 Paul presses Deuteronomy’s cryptic contrast between τὰ φανερά relating to humanity and the τὰ κρυπτά relating to God into service. A key theme throughout Paul’s indictment is the disparity between divine and human judgement (e.g. 2:1–3; 3:4–8; 4:2; 8:31; 14:3–4).³⁸ Paul gathers from LXX Deuteronomy 29:28 that while τὰ φανερά count for humans, τὰ κρυπτά prevail before God. Physical circumcision falls into the former category because its transforming work is immediately/visibly apparent and those transformed as such receive their praise from other humans (Rom 2:29). However, God’s reconstituting work is ultimately known only to him. As part of τὰ κρυπτά, all who embody such a work will receive his praise (v29).³⁹

Quite exceptionally, Berkely also perceives Paul’s reliance upon Deuteronomy 29:28 for his ἐν τῷ φανερωῖ/ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ contrast and believes ‘Paul appropriates this language to show that

35. Barclay (1998, 545) also notes how radical it was for Paul to make obedience to the commandments a sufficient condition. While I fundamentally agree, I focus on ‘heart-circumcision’ since, in light of Deut 30, it is more foundational than obedience.

36. Stowers 1994, 155.

37. Contrast Jubilees 15:26, where failure to circumcise breaks covenant and accrues wrath. See also Philo (*Migr.* 92).

38. Dunn 1988, 1:79.

39. The interplay between the acts being ‘evident/concealed’ and the people being ‘evident/concealed’ has to do with the acts’ transforming quality. Once someone receives circumcision/heart-circumcision, *that person* is different.

the hidden or inward things of the heart, rather than the external marks of the written Law, are what identify the people of God.⁴⁰ But it needs to be said that the contrast is not *primarily* between the internal and the external; rather, it is between that which is known to and accepted by God and humans respectively. Take, for instance, Paul's use of these terms in 1 Corinthians 14:24–25:

But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, the concealed things of his heart (τὰ κρυπτά τῆς καρδίας αὐτοῦ) are made evident (φανερὰ), and so falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.

Here, knowledge is revealed through the divine gift of prophecy which discloses things that would otherwise only be known to God. A similar relationship between divine and human knowledge appears in 1 Corinthians 4:5:

Therefore do not judge before the time when the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things that are concealed (τὰ κρυπτά) in the darkness and make evident (φανερῶσει) the purposes of [human] hearts. And then praise (ἔπαινος) will be to each from God.

Paul exhorts the church to put off judging because human judgement is based upon partial evidence. When God distributes eschatological 'praise', however, τὰ κρυπτά will be taken into account.⁴¹ The contrast, then, is not between a religion of outward, external rites and a religion of internal, individual, spirituality,⁴² nor is it between ethnocentricity and universality;⁴³ rather, there is a disparity between the things which are accessible to humans (and hence on which they base their judgements), and the things which are ultimately only open to and will count before God.⁴⁴

If this is so, perhaps we can take Paul's use of Deuteronomy 29:28 a step further by noting that in Paul's perspective the concealed thing which God accepts in Romans 2:25–29 constitutes a *life-giving, divine act*, while the thing which humans accept regards something executed by human agents, and which has left human unresponsiveness intact. It would seem that Paul does not solely downplay circumcision's value because it is 'evident'; he denigrates it because it is not a

40. Berkley 2000, 99–100.

41. Cf. 2Bar 83:3–4.

42. Boyarin(1994, 78) is quite mistaken to call Paul's φανερός/κρυπτός contrast 'purely Hellenistic'.

43. So Dunn 1988, 1:125.

44. So Käsemann 1980, 77: 'The praise of the true Jew does not come from humans but from God *who alone knows* and judges τὰ κρυπτά τῶν ἀνθρώπων' (emphasis mine).

newly creative work of God.

Though we can now start to see why Paul places a premium on heart-circumcision and why the ultimate Jew is presently ‘concealed’, it remains to be seen how Paul could read Deuteronomy 30 with integrity and still conclude that these qualities belong to Gentiles. D. Boyarin states the problem well when, after reading Paul’s assumption that an uncircumcised person could keep Torah, he exasperatedly retorts, ‘[B]ut keeping the Law while being uncircumcised is simply an oxymoron from the perspective of Rabbinic Judaism, because being circumcised is part of the Law.’⁴⁵ However, when accessing Paul’s radical move, we must remember that Deuteronomy 29:28 is the bridge between exile and restoration, and for Paul, between Death and Life. While circumcision was the sign of the covenant, in Deuteronomy 29 Israel forsook that covenant (29:24), therein invalidating her covenant sign. To bring Life out of Death, God would need to perform an unprecedented work whereby he establishes Israel as an obedient agent in order to secure her Life. Surprisingly, in describing this generative act the only circumcision Moses mentions is heart-circumcision. Important for Paul would be the absence of any reference to physical circumcision. In fact, *not once in Deuteronomy is physical circumcision mentioned!* While Boyarin is correct, from the perspective of Rabbinic Judaism Paul’s statements would appear oxymoronic, Paul does not need to rely on allegorical methods of interpretation to reach his conclusion.⁴⁶ Instead, J.M.G. Barclay argues:

[I]n utilizing the biblical metaphor of heart circumcision, Paul radicalizes its import, not by superimposing some other discourse concerning ‘interiority’, but by prioritizing the metaphorical sense over the literal and expanding its field of reference to include heart-circumcised Gentiles.⁴⁷

Barclay is right to suggest that Paul is not importing a foreign discourse here. But as a reader of Deuteronomy, neither does he need to radicalise heart-circumcision’s import by prioritising the metaphorical over the literal; all he has to do is exploit a conspicuous silence in the text. To be sure, Paul takes the heart-circumcision metaphor much further than Deuteronomy has envisioned when he includes Gentiles; nevertheless, it seems that (1) the enigmatic statement of Deuteronomy 29:28, (2) the necessity of a new work initiated by YHWH which lacked any reference to physical circumcision, and (3) Deuteronomy’s silence on the subject as a whole, could all have

45. Boyarin 1994, 96, emphasis his.

46. Boyarin 1994, 96.

47. Barclay 1998, 552.

worked to leave Paul with enough space to read Deuteronomy 30 as testifying to a divine gift so disruptive that it would transform the very being and make up of the people of God.⁴⁸

6.3.3. Heart-Circumcision and the New Covenant

Paul closes his description of the ultimate Jew by associating heart-circumcision with the Spirit over against the Letter (*ἐν πνεύματι οὐ γράμματι*). Though we will explore the meaning of this contrast in the next chapter, for now it is important to note the intertextual connections involved in Paul's reading strategy. In an earlier letter, Paul closely associates the Spirit/Letter contrast with the 'new covenant' (2Cor 3:6). While at first glance an association between new covenant and Spirit might appear odd, we have already uncovered an interpretative tradition which reads Jeremiah's promise alongside Ezekiel's prophecy of a divine Spirit. Significantly, we have often seen these two motifs converge in allusions to Deuteronomy 30.⁴⁹ Paul's description of heart-circumcision *ἐν πνεύματι οὐ γράμματι* in Romans 2:29, then, suggests that he falls into this interpretative tradition. Like some of his contemporaries, Paul read Deuteronomy 30 alongside Jeremiah's new covenant and Ezekiel's Spirit-gift.

6.4. Conclusion

In sum, it has been argued that Paul read Deuteronomy 30:1–10 as the assurance that in the future God would transform humans by Christ and Spirit. This transformative element informs Paul's debate with his interlocutor. Underlying his argument is that *the reason* his interlocutor transgresses the Law (Rom 2:25, 27) is because he is *unable* to obey it. Failing to embrace God's

48. Berkley(2000, 99–100) goes too far when he states, 'The possibility of gentile inclusion in the people of God was always "hidden" with God.' On Paul's reading, *τὰ κρυπτά* can also describe Jews. What I am proposing is that *the fact* of God accepting *τὰ κρυπτά* over against *τὰ φανερά* allows Paul to read this text as hinting at—*by suggesting the possibility of*—Gentile inclusion. Nevertheless, Gathercole (2002, 207), against those who claim Paul's primary interest in 'the universal', rightly contends: 'Paul is not merely redefining these terms so that they include (some) gentiles; he is also redefining them in such a way as to exclude many Jews.'

49. See above on, e.g., Bar 2:30–3:7; Jub 1:15–21; *Barki Nafshi* and *Words of the Luminaries*.

Conclusion

gift in Christ, even as a Jew he remains incompetent as a moral agent (LXX Deut 29:3; Rom 11:8) because, as the next chapter demonstrates, any obedience this Jew can offer must be done in reliance upon the Flesh (Rom 7:5; cf. Phil 3:3).

If Paul here combats the claim that circumcision ‘profits’ at the judgement,⁵⁰ he is at the same time repudiating any notion that circumcision ‘profits’ with respect to obedience.⁵¹ Unlike some, Paul cannot accept that circumcision renders individuals as competent moral agents.⁵² His reading of Deuteronomy 30 working in concert with his experience of the Christ compels him to restrict all such power to God’s heart-circumcising enterprise. Thus if for Paul it is only the obedient who attain Life, those who obey are always and only those who have been radically reconfigured by God’s forerunning grace manifest in Jesus Christ and communicated by his Spirit.⁵³

Paul’s move is not as novel as it might at first appear. The author of Baruch, the covenanters at Qumran, and Philo all take Deuteronomy 29:3 (4) to denote moral incompetence. What is more, the former two even apply this verse to Jews who have not received God’s promised gift. In Baruch, all remain incompetent as God has yet to give the new heart. Situating themselves at a later point on the redemptive narrative, the Qumran community apply 29:3 to those who refuse to search out God’s gift, a gift which has come in the form of their teacher’s instruction.

Paul shares much in common with these two interpreters. With Baruch, Paul believes that without God’s gift humanity remains incompetent as moral agents. With Qumran, he is convicted that the gift has already been revealed, and that those who do not accept that revelation are thereby shown to be incompetent. But whereas at Qumran God’s revelation is mediated *through* a person who discloses a divinely authorised hermeneutic, in Paul the revelation *is* a person, whose life holds far-reaching hermeneutical implications. At Qumran God’s revelation furnishes the

50. So Moo 1996, 167; Stuhlmacher 1994, 48–49.

51. Paul’s words would certainly also speak against reliance upon Jewish distinctiveness (Dunn 1988, 1:119), but they speak against much more.

52. As we have seen, a defective moral competence was sometimes thought to be remedied through the possession or keeping of the Law (e.g., CD 2:14–3:3; Jub 25:7), and many believed that possession of the Law indicated that people had sufficient capacities for obedience (4Ezra 14:22; Philo, *Praem.* 80). Certainly, in this regard, circumcision would have been considered one of the chief laws which capacitated people for obedience. See Jub 15:28–32; Tg Cant 3:8; Gen Rab 11:6; 46:4–5.

53. Gathercole (2002, 128) surmises that Paul redefines the relationship between the believer and Torah by making Torah fulfillment ‘a by-product rather than the goal of Christian obedience.’ Reverberations of Deut 30 verify his inclination.

only lens through which to see a Law that dictates acceptable human action. The revelation of the Christ, however, presents the Law as a witness to an event which founds human action by bringing that action into intimate relationship with the saving agency of God.

Another point of comparison concerns the uses of τὰ φανερά/τὰ κρυπτά from Deuteronomy 29:28. As we have seen, Paul is not the only reader who has been influenced by this verse. In CD (3:12b-16) and in 4 Ezra (14:6), τὰ κρυπτά/סתר denotes an eschatological revelation that is hidden from the majority of Israel, but given to a privileged few. Keeping with its understanding of God's gift, the Qumran community understands τὰ κρυπτά/סתר to refer to *Halakhab*, disclosed to the righteous for obedience. For 4 Ezra τὰ κρυπτά/סתר are 'signs', one of which is a 'secret' group, the 10 Tribes, that will vindicate God at the eschaton as the rewarder of the obedient. Paul also speaks of the divine gift in revelatory terms (Rom 1:17), and believes that τὰ κρυπτά/סתר bespeaks a group of people who are revealed at the eschaton and demonstrate God's righteousness. But his understanding and experience of God's gift necessitates that τὰ κρυπτά include Gentiles who have been made righteous through God's heart-circumcising initiative and who on account of that initiative receive his praise. An initial comparison of Paul's reading of Deuteronomy 29–30 with these other Jewish readings suggests that, for all their similarities, the precise ways in which Paul and fellow Jews understand grace and its implications for agency are by no means identical.

Chapter 7

PAUL'S READING OF RESTORATION: FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

7.1. Romans 7:5–6: A Critical Link

We continue to fill out Paul's reading of Israel's restoration narrative by focusing on Romans 6–8. Romans 7:5–6 provides the crucial starting point. Paul's well-known, though rare, contrast between Spirit and Letter associates the two texts at a thematic and linguistic level. Since this contrast appears only one other time (2Cor 3:6), it is reasonable to assume that the two occurrences in Romans are interrelated. What is more, after 2:28–29 Paul's prominent Flesh/Spirit antithesis does not appear until 7:5–6. The two passages also share somewhat parallel structures.

2:28–29	7:5–6
v28: For the [ultimate] Jew is not in the evident, nor is [ultimate] circumcision in the evident and <u>in the Flesh</u> (ἐν σαρκί).	v5: For when we were <u>in the Flesh</u> (ἐν τῇ σαρκί), the sinful passions were working in our members through the Law to bear fruit for Death.
v29: Rather the [ultimate] Jew is in the concealed, and [ultimate] circumcision is heart-circumcision, <u>in the Spirit, not in the letter</u> (ἐν πνεύματι οὐ γράμματι).	v6: But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve <u>in newness of the Spirit, not in the oldness of the letter</u> (ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος καὶ οὐ παλαιότητι γράμματος).

Romans 2:28 and 7:5 both depict aspects of existence 'in the Flesh', followed by the contrasting (ἀλλά/νυνὶ δέ) existence 'in the Spirit' (2:29; 7:6). In both the emphatic negation 'not the letter' sharpens the disparity between the two realities. While the additions καινότητι and παλαιότητι in

7:6 fill out the contrast along temporal lines, the structural semblance and thematic overlap between 2:28–29 and 7:5–6 imply that they address similar concerns. Romans 7:5–6 thus provides a foray into the maturation of ideas that were introduced and presupposed in 2:25–29.

Romans 7:5–6 also serves as an important structural marker in Paul's argument. Verses 5 and 6 provide the respective thesis statements for 7:7–25 and 8:1–13. The former passage describes existence in the Flesh with particular reference to the triad of Law, sinful desires, and death. The latter passage expounds Christians' new life in the Spirit as a result of Christ's eschatological work. Yet even while these verses primarily point forward, they do not exclusively do so. The terms *παλαιότης* and *καινότης*, for instance, link back to the previous chapter's discussion of *ὁ παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος* (6:6) and *καινότητι ζωῆς* (6:4, 6). Being released (*κατηργήθημεν*) from the Law via death reminds the reader of how the body of Sin was nullified (*καταργηθῆναι*, 6:6) through Christ's death. Further, the term *μέλος* (7:5) appears four times in chapter 6. Even the *ὅτε ... οὐκ ἔστιν* structure builds upon the contrast Paul set up in chapter 5 between two great aeons, here marked by Flesh and Spirit.¹

Romans 7:5–6 is thus a pivotal text. With an eye in both directions, we will see how it encapsulates the perspective of moral agency Paul puts forward in chapters 5–8. While scholars often note the eschatological and/or redemptive-historical underlay of these chapters, scant attention is paid to how Israel's restoration narratives might have influenced them.² Given the strong affinities between Romans 7:5–6 and 2:25–29, it is possible that these later chapters also exhibit Paul's scriptural reflection. Thus with particular attention to restoration reverberations and in light of Paul's theological outlook, I now seek to unpack each side of the contrast: moral agency in the Flesh (v5) and in the Spirit (v6).

7.2. Moral Agents in Eschatological Contrast

1. Jewett 2007, 437–438.

2. E.g. Schreiner 1998, 267–269, 299; Moo 1996, 314, 351; Jewett 2007, 372, 437; Dunn 1998, 471. However, compare Wright 2002, 525, 533, 536.

Before developing Paul's Flesh/Spirit contrast, we must first understand his world-picture. The ὅτε ... νυνὶ δέ structure of 7:5–6 functions as an interpretative signal pointing the reader back to the hostile world-stage set up in 5:12–21. Lining up on one side are the powers Sin and Death. Sin entered the world through Adam, resulting in death (5:12). From then on Sin 'reigned' (βασιλεύω, 5:21; cf. 6:6, 12) in death and 'rules' (κυριεύω, 6:14) over the world as it exists outside of Christ. Death, though not as active as Sin, nevertheless, entered the world and co-reigns with Sin (5:14, 5:17). Both powers now hold the cosmos under their sway.³

In 7:5 Paul connects these powers with his concept of 'Flesh' (σάρξ). It is precisely those who are 'in the Flesh' (ἐν τῇ σαρκί) that Sin is able to coerce (Rom 7:5) and the outlook of the Flesh is Death (Rom 8:6). Sinful desires and acts are attributed to and characterised by the Flesh (8:13; Gal 5:17, 19). Furthermore, Flesh is in antithesis with and hostile to Spirit (7:6; Gal 5:17). If Sin and Death entered the world through Adam and exerted their destructive rule, the temporal extent of this rule can be called an 'aeon' or 'age' and spatially a 'world'.⁴ Within this world-aeon, Sin is an effective agent capable of producing (καρποφορέω, 7:5) deadly fruit and of bringing about (κατεργάζομαι, 7:8) sins in all those subjugated to its dominion.⁵

On the other side of the conflict are the powers of Grace, Righteousness, and Spirit. With the events associated with the Christ-apocalypse, a new rule and 'world-aeon' has dawned. In opposition to the Sin-Death-Flesh aeon is the reign of Grace, which is characterised by Righteousness, Life and the Spirit. νυνὶ δέ in 7:6 is but one of a number of repeated constructions which Paul employs to convey the stark contrast between what was *then* in the aeon before Christ and what is *now* as a result of Christ's obedience.⁶ The 'transfer' of humanity from one rule to another is most fruitfully comprehended from within this eschatological, old creation/new creation framework.⁷ In order to elucidate the competency that Paul believes the moral agent to possess in the new world-aeon, we must first consider the nature of its enslavement under the old.

3. Moo 1996, 374; Schreiner 1998, 304; Käsemann 1980, 165; Dunn 1988, 1:306.

4. The phrases, however, are synecdochic.

5. Sin should not be separated from specific acts (Wilckens 1978, 172–173).

6. See, e.g., Gal 1:4; 3:23–25; 4:4, 8–9; 6:15; Rom 3:21; 5:12–21; 6:17; 8:1–4; 16:25–26; 1Cor 15:20–28, 42–49; 2Cor 5:17; 6:2.

7. As Schnelle (Schnelle 2001, 63–64, 70) correctly emphasises. As Stuhlmacher (1967a, 1) suggests, the technical term *καινή κτίσις* comprises all the main themes of Paul's theology. For various portrayals of the eschatological structure of Paul's thought, see de Boer 1988; Martyn 1997d; Beker 1980, 135–181; Ridderbos 1977, 44–68; Voltenweider 1989, 375–396. For earlier works, see Schweitzer 1930 and Vos 1979; 1980.

7.3. Life in the Flesh: Moral Agents in the Old Aeon

7.3.1. The Misuse of Human Agency and Enactment of Divine Judgement

Romans 1:18–32 graphically presents the consequences a misuse of human agency had upon the world. The suppression of the knowledge of God and refusal to glorify him is the precise reason (διό) for the current world-scene (1:21–24).⁸ This primal and perpetual act of rebellion is matched by a divine response. Three times, Paul says, God ‘handed over’ (παρέδωκεν) humanity: He hands them into ‘uncleanness’ (εἰς ἀκαθαρσίαν, 1:24), into ‘dishonourable passions’ (εἰς πάθη ἀτιμίας, 1:26), and into a ‘worthless mind’ (εἰς ἀδόκιμον νοῦν, 1:28).⁹ Humans are not simply passive, however; those handed over accomplish (κατεργαζόμενοι) sinful acts themselves (1:26–27), doing (ποιοῦσιν) and approving (συνευδοκοῦσιν) what is contrary to God’s will (1:32).

B. Gaventa has recently elucidated the importance of the three παρέδωκεν clauses in Romans 1. She begins by noting how in the LXX παραδίδωμι is frequently used of handing over an individual or people to a third party, and often in conflict-situations.¹⁰ The prophets, for instance, regularly warn of God handing Israel over to a foreign power on account of covenant faithlessness.¹¹ These and similar warnings fit the context of Romans 1,¹² where God punishes humanity for infidelity by ‘handing them over’ to something else.¹³ With this vital background established, Gaventa demonstrates what that object is by noting the close relationship between the παραδίδωμι clauses in Romans 1 and Paul’s depiction of Sin in chapters 5–8.¹⁴ Most formidable among her arguments is that the ‘uncleanness’ (ἀκαθαρσία) into which God hands humans over (1:24) is depicted as an enslaving power in 6:19. Significantly, enslavement to uncleanness is

8. On humanity’s meta-Sin, see Schreiner 2006, 106.

9. In this regard, Paul differs starkly from those at Qumran since, as Ridderbos (1977, 92) notes, ‘Paul does not go back to an original dualism between God and the world, or between God and the powers.’ On the ironic correspondence between sin and its penalty, see Gathercole 2006, 162–166.

10. E.g., Deut 2:24, 30, 31, 33; 3:2, 3; 7:2, 23, 24; 20:13; 28:7; Jos 2:14, 24; 6:2, 16; 7:7; 8:18.

11. See, e.g., Jer 21:10; 22:25; 24:8; 39:28; Ezek 11:9; 16:27; 21:36.

12. E.g., Ex 23:31; Lev 26:25.

13. Gaventa 2007, 115.

14. Gaventa 2007, 118–120.

sandwiched between two descriptions of enslavement to Sin.¹⁵

6:17: ἦτε δοῦλοι τῆς ἀμαρτίας

6:19: παρεστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῆ ἀκαθαρσία

6:20: ὅτε γὰρ δοῦλοι ἦτε τῆς ἀμαρτίας

Sin and Uncleaness reference the same enslaving power. Thus Gaventa concludes that in Romans 1 God handed humanity over to nothing less than the anti-God power Sin.¹⁶

Regardless of whether we should understand Sin in Paul as a demonic force,¹⁷ Gaventa's thesis offsets those theories which find discrepancies in the Pauline sin-concept,¹⁸ as well as those which limit sin to specific acts.¹⁹ God does not merely hand humans over into sinful acts, but more fundamentally into states of being. Thus we read how those who were handed over 'were filled with' (πεπληρωμένους) all manner of corruption (1:29–31). The enumeration that follows, with its cascade of nouns and substantival adjectives, does not detail human activity so much as sketch a decadent disposition. Of course the two are intimately related—internal disposition gets worked out in external acts—but it is important to note that by judging humanity God altered its moral composition and therein its capacity to live righteously.²⁰ Life in the Flesh entails the inescapable horror of being subjected to a distorted disposition, which is epitomised in the degradation of the νοῦς and καρδιά.²¹

15. The slavery metaphor runs throughout Rom 5–8. Having been handed over, humanity is now *σάρκινος ... πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἀμαρτίαν* (7:15) (Stowers 1994, 281).

16. Note that Gaventa (2007, 134) does not mean that Paul believed in 'a literal character by the name of Sin.'

17. See Beker 1980, 145, who labels the powers 'ontological'. For similar understandings, see Dibelius 1909, 122; Laato 1995, 76; Käsemann 1980, 198; and the monograph by Umbach 1999; cf. Watson 2007, 280, who labels the power 'quasi-demonic'. Recently, Westerholm (2006, 79) has argued against understanding sin as a demonic force, writing how 'each reference that might tempt one to think of "Sin" as a demonic force is surrounded by others that militate against the notion' (see also 2004a, 394). Nevertheless, elsewhere Westerholm (2004a, 380) concedes that 'the human dilemma goes beyond the concrete sins that humans commit', and that such sins 'reflect their belonging to an age gone wrong, dominated by sin and, indeed, by powers that are not God.' For other arguments against understanding sin as a power, see Röhser 1987 esp at 103–129; Kaye 1979, 56. For a socio-cultural reading of Paul's sin-concept, see Carter 2002.

18. This view was first made prominent by Dibelius 1909.

19. See, e.g., Kaye 1979, 56; Stowers 1994, 177; Räisänen 1987, 99n29.

20. While some interpret *παρέδωκεν* as divine permissiveness, weakening God's active role (Wilckens 1978, 1:108; Dunn 1988, 1:73; Wright 2002, 433), the active verb and the otherwise superfluous repetition of *ὁ θεός* highlight God's agency (Gaventa 2007, 113–118).

21. If some interpretations are in danger of truncating Sin, the 'apocalyptic' view which Gaventa represents risks downplaying this important anthropological component. Note Gaventa's (2007, 127–128) comment that 'What may at first glance seem an exaggeration will, in my judgment, illumine the apocalyptic struggle...' I wonder if in illuminating the apocalyptic struggle she has not obscured Paul's motif that humans are enslaved from *within* as well.

7.3.1.1. *Corruption of the Nous*

Most are in agreement that νοῦς is not a particularly Hebraic concept and its appearance in some Jewish literature reflects these texts' Hellenistic environment. In classical anthropology the νοῦς was considered to be the superior part of the tripartite Self. Since Paul uses terms and concepts in ways that seem to fit this mindset (e.g., 1Thess 5:23; 2Cor 4:16; Rom 7:18–25), he is sometimes thought to have wholly adopted the Greek viewpoint.²² A comparison of Paul with Philo, a Jewish contemporary who imbibed Platonic assumptions, casts some doubt on this thesis.

Reflecting on God's warning to Adam and Eve, Philo distinguishes between two kinds of death: the death which faces everyone, namely separation from the body, and the death of the soul in particular, which happens when the soul becomes 'entombed in passions and all kinds of evil' (*Leg* 1:105–6). Philo explains how soul-death ...

... is practically the antithesis of the death which awaits us all. The latter [i.e, physical death] is a separation of combatants that had been pitted against one another, body and soul, to wit. The former, on the other hand, is the meeting of the two in conflict. And in this conflict the worse, the body, overcomes, and the better, the soul, is overcome. (*Leg* 1:106–107, *LCL*)

In line with Platonic presuppositions, Philo describes soul-death as the joining of body (with its passions and vices) to the soul (with its rationality and virtue) in such a way that body suppresses soul.²³ This death is antithetical to what happens in physical death; for while soul-death means slavery, physical death means freedom since bodily passions no longer subjugate the virtuous soul.

In 2 Corinthians 4:16 Paul appears to make a similar Platonic distinction, contrasting 'the outward Self' (ὁ ἔξω ἄνθρωπος) and 'the inward Self' (ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος). Several features in Paul's discourse strike one as curious, however. First, though his statement regarding the outward and inward Self comes as an explanation of what lies in verses 7–15, there Paul writes that both the death and life of Jesus are at work ἐν τῷ σώματι (4:10–11). Likewise, verses 8–9 describe neither

22. See, more recently, van Kooten 2008; Wasserman 2007. See n84 below.

23. For an accessible overview, see Keener 2008, 216–218.

the outward nor inward Self but the whole person viewed as both outward and inward who experiences ‘consternation but not despair’, etc. Second, only a few verses after the outward/inward contrast Paul expresses anxiety over being naked, i.e., existing without a body (5:2–4). His reflex stands in sharp contrast to Philo and indicates that Paul does not plot his anthropological terms on the traditional Greek map.²⁴ Further evidence of Pauline reappraisal is found in Romans 1:24. Rather than locating the *ἐπιθυμία* in the body or flesh, Paul relates it to the *καρδία*.²⁵ In fact, *αἱ ἐπιθυμιαὶ τῶν καρδιῶν* come to expression in the dishonouring of the body (*σώματα*), not the reverse. In these examples Paul does not fall neatly within Platonic paradigms. Though he often makes distinctions through his employment of various terminology, on the whole such distinctions strike one as more aspectival than partitive.²⁶ Accordingly, *νοῦς*, *καρδία*, *σῶμα*, *ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος*, and *ὁ ἔξω ἄνθρωπος* provide ways of contemplating humanity from a particular vantage point or of viewing humans as they function in distinct manners. What then is the role of the *νοῦς* in Paul?

Though the term is difficult to specify, when Paul uses *νοῦς* he seems to depict the Self in its thinking and deliberating as it perceives God and his world.²⁷ Important for our purposes is that at the climax of the three *παραδίδωμι* clauses in Romans 1, God hands humanity over to a *ἀδόκιμος νοῦς*. Since humans failed to judge God fit (*ἔδοκίμασαν*) for worship, ‘becoming futile in their deliberations’, God consigned them to a mind that is unable to judge what is fitting (*ἀδόκιμον*, 1:21, 28). The infinitive clause *ποιεῖν τὰ μὴ καθήκοντα* indicates that the inability to determine what is fitting results in a failure to practise what is befitting. Thus if *νοῦς* refers to one’s intellectual and rational capacities, then those capacities are integrated into the entire person and determinative in human action.²⁸ Tragically, 1:28 informs us that the *νοῦς* exists in a degenerate state.

24. See Betz 2000 esp. at 334, 340–341; Markschies 1997, though I slightly disagree with both on the meaning of *ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος*. See also Warne 1995, 30–31; Longenecker 1964, 48.

25. Compare the discussion of Plotinus by van Kooten (2008, 370–374). van Kooten is mistaken in asserting that for Paul the inward man is ‘sinless’ (373) and that ‘the body poses the main and only threat to man’ (382).

26. Bultmann 1952, 1:209.

27. Dunn 1998, 1:74; Ridderbos 1977, 118. Perhaps on the basis of 1Cor 1:10; 14:14–19, there is some merit to Jewett’s (1971, 365, 450) specification of the *νοῦς* as the ‘constellation of thoughts and beliefs which ... provides criteria for decision’ and acts as ‘the agent of discernment and communication’; cf. Dunn 1998, 74n101.

28. Gutbrod 1934, 52; Dunn 1998, 74; Brown 1995, 146; cf. Brown 1995, 166. See Rom 14:5; 1Cor 1:10; cf. Rom 8:6–7; Phil 2:2–5.

7.3.1.2. *Corruption of the Kardia*

In Romans 1 failure to worship God is not only reflective of a debased νοῦς, but also of a dark and foolish 'heart' (καρδία, 1:21). Here and elsewhere the καρδία is closely related to the νοῦς. As with νοῦς, the καρδία is the place where things are decided (προαιρέω, 2Cor 9:7) and settled (ἵστημι, 1Cor 7:37). In 2 Corinthians 3:14–15 Paul claims that the Israelites' 'minds' (τὰ νοήματα) were hard on account of a veil, but then says the veil remains 'upon their hearts' (ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν).²⁹ The close relationship between καρδία and νοῦς might suggest synonymity.³⁰ However, since καρδία not only relates to thinking and deliberation, but also to the emotional life (Rom 9:2; 10:1; 2Cor 2:4; Phil 1:6–7), and to the elemental desires, motivations and convictions which form the basis of belief and action (Rom 5:5; 6:17; 10:9–10; 1Cor 4:5),³¹ καρδία appears to be a more central,³² fundamental, and inclusive category than νοῦς,³³ even encompassing the νοῦς itself. While both can be categorised as 'the inward Self' in that both refer to the person only as she is ultimately ascertainable to herself and/or God,³⁴ the heart depicts the pre-functional disposition:³⁵ 'what man *is* is determined by the quality of his heart.'³⁶

In Romans 1, however, Paul describes the heart as ἀσύνετος ('senseless'). In Sirach 15:7 ἀσύνετος is used of those sinners who will never perceive or lay hold of Wisdom. Later in Romans, Paul references Scripture to note how God will make Israel jealous and angry by a nation that is ἀσύνετος (10:19). With the help of Isaiah, he interprets the meaning:

εὐρέθην ἐν τοῖς ἐμὲ μὴ ζητοῦσιν, ἐμφανῆς ἐγενόμην τοῖς ἐμὲ μὴ ἐπερωτῶσιν.

29. See also the parallel between καρδία and νόημα in Phil 4:7.

30. So van Kooten 2008, 365, 374; cf. Bultmann 1952, 1:220–1:221.

31. Cf. Bultmann (1952, 1:222).

32. On Dunn's (1998, 73–74) count, καρδία appears 52 times in Paul, whereas νοῦς appears 21.

33. Ridderbos 1977, 119; Dunn 1998, 75.

34. Bultmann 1952, 1:222. In Rom 7:22–23 ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος and νοῦς are interchangeable though probably not identical (Markschies 1997, 281). In 2Cor 4:16 ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος refers back to 4:6–7, to the process taking place on the καρδία, which is not immediately evident (cf. 5:12). In contrast, ὁ ἔξω ἄνθρωπος describes the Self viewed phenomenally, as an observable reality. On this theme, see section 6.3.2. above (pp.177–181). See also Rom 8:27; 1Cor 4:5; 14:25; 1Th 2:4. Compare 2Cor 3:2 where what is on the heart is known and read by all. This, no doubt, is because what is on the heart becomes manifest in lives.

35. I am indebted to Gaffin (2006, 55), for this term. Acting out of a pre-functional disposition is what gives 'from the heart' the sense of sincerity.

36. Ridderbos 1977, 120, emphasis his; so also Jewett 1971, 448.

I was found by those who do not seek me, I made myself visible to those who do not ask for me. (Rom 10:20)

By putting these quotations together Paul, like Sirach, implies that *ἀσύνετος* characterises those who neither seek nor ask for God. As with the mind, the human heart has been disfigured beyond recognition: it is insensitive and lacks the capacity to receive from and respond to God aright (cf. Rom 2:5).

It seems commensurate with this evidence to conclude that at least one primary reason why Paul can describe Sin as a power in Romans 5–8 is precisely because the human disposition has become so corrupt as to render humans absolutely incapable of good as Paul defines it. This is not to deny or to undermine Sin’s cosmological dimension;³⁷ it is simply to view anthropology as an elemental component of the cosmic landscape.³⁸ In Pauline conception Sin influences humanity from within as well as from without. So H. Ridderbos notes:

The bondage of sin to which man is subjected, his condition of death because of the divine wrath, is not only determined by the depravity of the inner man as its effect on ‘the body’; rather, one must say that the reverse is not less characteristic ... that sin, as it were, lays hold of the body ‘from without’ and thus subjects the entire man to itself as a slave.³⁹

As with the Treatise on the Two Spirits so in Paul it is fundamentally misguided to pit anthropology against cosmology. And since cosmology is so intimately connected with historical epochs in Paul, it is also wrongheaded to contrast anthropology and redemptive-history/eschatology. It is only by keeping this macro-structure in view that we are able to consider adequately Paul’s portrayal of the degradation and rectification of the human agent.

7.3.2. Moral Agents Enslaved to the Power of Sin

Romans 6 brings to the fore the implications of the dark dominion of Sin and Death for human agents living in the ‘present evil age’ (cf. Gal 1:4). Paul holds that the ‘old Self’ (*ὁ παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος*), the former existence of those in Christ, was ‘enslaved to Sin’ (6:6). Since for Paul it is

37. So 8:19–23. Note also the neuter *τὰ πάντα* in Gal 3:22.

38. Ridderbos 1977, 92: ‘It is this conception of cosmos which in principle determines Paul’s view of human nature outside Christ.’

39. Ridderbos 1977, 124.

a commonly understood principle that a person is a slave to whomever she obeys (v16), enslavement assumes a degree of active submission on the slave's part. As agents under Sin's lordship, the Roman Christians lived in Sin (v6) and presented their members to it in ever increasing degrees of lawlessness (v19). Moreover, there are only two possibilities of lordship: loyalty is directed 'either to Sin unto death *or* to Obedience unto Righteousness' (v16), which six verses later Paul will clarify as allegiance to God.⁴⁰

From such statements one can infer that unless people have been released from Sin to serve God they will inevitably serve Sin. Sin's dominion over the Flesh is so potent that humans act in concert with Sin. While those in the Flesh 'perceive' (φρονῶσιν), they perceive 'according to the Flesh' (κατὰ σάρκα; 8:5; cf. 1Cor 1:21, 2:12).⁴¹ In 5:20, the increase of Sin is parallel to the increase of the 'trespass', suggesting that as Sin's power grew so did the sins of humanity. It would appear, then, that the agencies of Sin and humanity are set in a direct, positive relationship. The result of this sad state of affairs is a humanity hostile toward God (1:21). The old Self is neither able to submit to God's Law nor to please God (Rom 8:7–8).⁴² Human hearts have become dark, senseless (1:21), hard (σκληρότης) and unrepentant (ἀμετανόητος, 2:5).⁴³ Bound by Sin, humans are so incapable of righteousness that Paul considers them 'free' (ἐλεύθερος) from it (6:20). Thus while personal agency appears to remain intact, for Paul the power of Sin directs and thus profoundly qualifies that agency. In short, those handed over to the power of Sin are now incompetent moral agents and any summons to obedience which does not entail the rehabilitation of the human agent will inevitably go unheeded.

7.3.3. Israel in the Aeon of Flesh

A question must be raised at this point: What about Israel? While it is not unprecedented for Second Temple Jews to describe the Gentile world as incapacitated,⁴⁴ surely Paul, like his con-

40. Tannehill 1967, 16: '[I]t is basically God to whom one is enslaved when enslaved to grace, obedience, and righteousness.'

41. On Paul's use of φρονέω, see below at 220–221.

42. Cf. 1Cor 2:14.

43. Cf. Eph 4:17–19.

44. See e.g., Jub 15:30–32 and the chapter on Qumran.

temporaries, believes that Israel or a sect within Israel forms an exception to this rule? It is one thing for Paul to regard his interlocutor as a covenant breaker; quite another to assert that he was bound to be one. Yet this is exactly what Paul assumes. Since, as we saw in the last chapter, heart-circumcision, not physical circumcision, is necessary for obedience, in Romans 2:25–29 Paul implicitly denies that physical circumcision grants the capacity for obedience. Paul is thus repudiating more than Jewish advantage at the judgement: to be marked out as a Jew does not constitute a person as an agent sufficiently capable of obeying God.

The question that arises in 3:1—What then is exceptional (*περισσόν*) about being a Jew or what is the profit (*ὠφέλεια*) of circumcision?—carries forward this theme (cf. *ὠφελέω*, 2:25).⁴⁵ The word *περισσός* may further indicate that advantage at the judgement is not the only concern. Elsewhere in the New Testament *περισσός* or its verbal form denote ‘the superabundance of the new age’.⁴⁶ Paul himself utilises a verbal form (*ὑπερπερισεύω*) to characterise life in Christ (Rom 5:20; 2Cor 7:4), and in Matthew 5:20 *περισεύω* refers to the ‘surpassing’ righteousness of kingdom members. In John 10:10 *περισσός* refers to the ‘abundant life’ that Jesus offers. Coming after a discussion about the ability to complete Torah which the heart-circumcised possess over against those physically circumcised, it would make sense that the objection behind the question *Τί οὖν τὸ περισσὸν τοῦ Ἰουδαίου* stems from a Jewish assumption that, comparatively speaking, Jews possess an extraordinary ability to obey God.⁴⁷

While not denying that Jews have certain comparative advantages,⁴⁸ importantly, Paul does not list moral competence as one of them.⁴⁹ Thus the question of whether or not Jews possess capacities sufficient for obedience remains and is sharpened:⁵⁰ if it were true that Jews could not obey, then would their unfaithfulness not put God’s faithfulness into question (3:3)?⁵¹ Paul re-

45. Compare those who think Paul has lost his way; e.g., Dodd 1932, 46–48; Räisänen 1986. Although he does not believe that Paul is responding to objections, Cosgrove (1987, 92) helpfully affirms that 3:1–8 carries on the discussion of 2:25–29 and works to establish that ‘all are under the power of Sin’.

46. Jewett 2007, 241–242.

47. That the interlocutor’s questions serve as objections (not points of clarification) is evident from Paul’s emphatic negations: *μὴ γένοιτο* (vv4, 6). Overlooked by many commentators is that the conditional clauses do not indicate the interlocutor’s actual agreement with Paul’s premises, only that he is agreeing *for argument’s sake*. Nothing in the text suggests that this Jew has adopted Paul’s view-point; contra Wilckens 1978, 1:164; Jewett 2007, 242; Cosgrove 1987, 94.

48. *πολύ* probably refers back to *τὸ περισσόν* (Jewett 2007, 242).

49. Cf. Rom 9:4–5.

50. Dunn 1988, 1:132; cf. Jewett 2007, 243.

jects such a conclusion, contending that God cannot be indicted because his gifting was not reciprocated (3:4–8).⁵² Yet Paul knows that this answer does not satisfy the heart of the issue raised in 2:25–29: Can Jews be distinguished from Gentiles in their ability to obey?⁵³ So the question is repeated in 3:9 with the issue of moral competency more pointedly in view: ‘Do we [Jews] have an advantage (προεχόμεθα, 3:9)?’⁵⁴ Paul now answers with a firm denial: οὐ πάντως.⁵⁵

Paul’s explanation (γάρ) reveals that his response touches directly on the question of moral competence: ‘We have already charged (προητιασάμεθα) that all are ὑφ’ ἁμαρτίαν (‘under Sin’) Jews and Greeks alike’. προητιασάμεθα looks back to Paul’s argument from 1:18 forward; ὑφ’ ἁμαρτίαν characterises the situation of humanity after God handed them to the anti-God powers. ὑφ’ ἁμαρτίαν should thus be rendered ‘under the power or reign of Sin’ and indicates that all humans are Sin’s slaves.⁵⁶ The scriptural catena which follows only serves to demonstrate this fact (3:10–18).⁵⁷ Again, the anthropological dimension cannot be overlooked:⁵⁸ They ‘do not understand’ or

51. Following a comment about God having entrusted (ἐπιστεύθησαν) his word, and in light of 2:25–27, ἀπιστία reflects disobedience to the covenant (Käsemann 1980, 79; Dunn 1988, 1:131). Some interpreters think that the unfaithful ‘some’ (τινες) refers to Torah-faithful, Messiah-rejecting Jews; see, e.g., Cosgrove 1987, 92, 102; Räisänen 1986, 189–191. The distinction between covenant breaking and unbelief is suspect, however. In my opinion, nothing in Paul warrants the assumption that he believes there are Jews who were both Torah-faithful and Christ-rejecting (on the question of Rom 7, see section 7.3.5., and on Phil 3:6, see section 7.5.3.). The fact that they reject Christ means they are uncircumcised of heart and thus unequipped to obey. Cosgrove spells out this line of reasoning only to reject it (102–103). He admits that while this could be inferred from 2:27–29, Paul never ‘proves’ that Jews are unable to keep Torah apart from the eschatological Spirit and reasons that if Paul wanted to imply this, he would need to avail himself of language from Ezek 11:19 and 36:26ff (103n36). As the present thesis argues, however, Ezek 36:26–27 is in the background of 2:27–29. Furthermore, it is a mistake to think that Paul would give empirical evidence to ‘prove’ Jewish sin. Paul is not so naive as to think that he and his contemporaries share an epistemological outlook (Cf., 1Cor 2:14; see also pp.220–221 below). He therefore does not seek to ‘prove’, only to ‘charge’ (προαιτιόμαι, 3:9).

52. Note the πιστεύω/ἀπιστέω contrast.

53. I assume that Paul is continuing to address Jews in vv5–8, even while the question is framed generically.

54. The text critical problems are not insurmountable. Most assume that the readings in the UBS⁴ and NA²⁷ are correct and others seek to clarify. Translating προεχόμεθα is difficult, but this has little bearing on our concerns since, either way, Paul’s goal is the declaration that Jews, with Gentiles, are ὑφ’ ἁμαρτίαν. I have followed the majority of scholars and English translations by taking the middle as holding an active sense.

55. Wilckens 1978; Käsemann 1980, 86; Murray 1959, 102; Wright 2002, 457; cf. Cranfield 1975, 1:190. The difficulties between 3:1 and 3:9 ease if we realise that Paul is answering the question in 3:1 as regards advantages in general, and 3:9 regards advantages with respect to moral competency and judgement in particular; cf. Stowers 1994, 173–174. The repetition of the question does not break down the diatribal logic as long as we remember that this is an imaginary dialogue partner, in whose mouth Paul places words to further the argument (*pace* Jewett 2007, 257).

56. Käsemann 1980, 86; Wright 2002, 457; Fitzmyer 1993, 331; Moo 1996, 201.

57. See further Keck 1977.

58. Schreiner 1998, 164.

‘seek God’; they have ‘turned aside’ and become ‘useless’; their ‘mouths are full of cursing’.

In 3:1–9 Paul has not drifted from the topic of the debilitating effects of Sin to questions about Jewish status at the judgement.⁵⁹ For Paul, questions of status, judgement, and the competency of moral agents are intimately connected. Since non-Christian Israel is uncircumcised of heart and without the power of the Spirit, she remains enslaved to Sin. As *ὁ παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος*, she continues in the Flesh (7:5) and, like Gentiles, her mind is hard and a veil covers her heart (2Cor 3:14–15).

7.3.4. Israel’s Law in the Aeon of the Flesh

If we were to put Paul into imaginary dialogue with any one of his Jewish contemporaries, surely the first objection not a few would raise is: What about the Law? Several of the works we have surveyed depict the Law as a testimony to their capacity to obey, if not as the sufficient enabler of obedience itself.⁶⁰ For them Deuteronomy 30:11–14 means precisely that at Sinai, Israelites were constituted as competent moral agents. On Paul’s reading, however, Israel’s story proves the opposite: since Torah the trespass only increased (Rom 5:20). His view becomes clearest in Romans 7:7–25.

Romans 7 sets up a basic scenerio of two competing agents: The *ἐγώ* (i.e., the Self) and Sin. In the history of exegesis, the identity of this *ἐγώ* has lead to much bewilderment.⁶¹ And yet identifying the *ἐγώ* and its history is not nearly as important for understanding this passage as the function of the *νόμος* in history.⁶² In and of itself, the *νόμος* is divine (v22), holy, righteous, and

59. It is typical of nearly all interpreters to conclude that Paul is demolishing the notion that Jews have an advantage at God’s judgement. Wright (2002, 457n85), for instance, argues that since *προεχόμεθα* refers to position and status, Paul is not concerned with moral behaviour. However, my analysis shows that judgement is not Paul’s only concern. From 2:25–29 we see that at issue is that Jews were no better off in regards to obedience, *and as such* would be condemned (cf. 2:12–13).

60. For references, see above at p.182n52. See also 4Macc 2:6–3:2.

61. If Paul is speaking about himself as a Christian, or of Christian existence, he could only be speaking of the Christian life perspective, apart from union with Christ. In other words, Paul would then be presenting the Christian experience hypothetically as ‘I and I alone’ (which *τοῦτ’ ἔστιν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου* in v18 and *αὐτὸς ἐγώ* in v25b might suggest; see particularly the argument of Seifrid 1992, 226–237; see also the translation in Dodd 1999, 104 and comments in Jewett 2007, 473), which could never be true of reality *ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ* (8:1). Regardless of whether or not Paul is describing himself as a Christian, his description is from a Christian vantage point; see Stuhlmacher 1994, 115; Chester 2003, 183–195, and section 7.3.5.3. below.

62. Beker 1980, 238–239; Moo 1996, 424; Schreiner 1998, 358; Wilckens 1978, 2:75. As Räsänen (1992, 97) summarises: ‘In 7.7–8.4 Paul wants to prove two things: (1) the law is good; (2) it is powerless.’ This is not to deny

good (v12); it is even spiritual (v14) and unto Life (εἰς ζωὴν, v10). One would then expect the νόμος to help the ἐγὼ in the battle against Sin. It all the more shocking, therefore, when Paul says the νόμος emphatically did not support the ἐγὼ. Quite the opposite: the νόμος assisted Sin and contributed to the Self's demise. 'Through the commandment' Sin wrought all kinds of covetousness, deceived, and killed the ἐγὼ (vv8, 11). It is not in spite of, but by the very means of the νόμος that Sin exerts its influence (cf. 1Cor 15:56).⁶³ Paul's point: Sin's power is so strong, its agency so efficacious, that neither the ἐγὼ nor the νόμος could match it.

Paul seems to be drawing on and integrating two scriptural stories.⁶⁴ The earliest story concerns Adam.⁶⁵ When Paul reflects on a time without Torah, when Sin was dead and humanity alive (7:8–9), we are reminded of Genesis 2:7, when God breathed into humanity the breath of life and humanity became alive.⁶⁶ With the giving of the (single) command, Sin sprang to life and the ἐγὼ died. The commandment to which Paul refers is the Tenth (7:7). Like other Jewish interpreters he connects the Torah given at Sinai with the story of the first humans.⁶⁷ In this version, the role traditionally attributed to Satan is recast as the mischievous character Sin.⁶⁸ Sin deceived (ἐξηπάτησεν) humans and killed them.⁶⁹ Thus Sin co-opted the νόμος, through the νόμος gained strength, and even used the life-preserving command to bring Death (7:10–13; 7:24).

The Adamic story is not the only backdrop: there is also the story of Israel constituted under Torah. That Paul is alluding to the experience of Israel is clear from his quotation of the Tenth commandment and his application of that commandment to the Adamic narrative.⁷⁰ Further-

anthropological questions, however; see Weber 1987, 149, 163. Cf. Vollenweider 1989, 345n292, who restricts the Law's importance here to its association with Sin.

63. Ridderbos 1977, 145.

64. Ridderbos 1977, 144–145; Chester 2003, 186–187; Wright 1991, 197, 227; Meyer 2004, 70–71.

65. Cf. Käsemann 1980, 196–197; Dunn 1988, 1:383.

66. Gathercole 2006, 168.

67. See above on 4Ezra 7:11, 24, 72 (pp.137–140). For a tradition of interpretation which relates the sin of the golden calf to Adam's sin, see Vollenweider 1989, 258. On the link between Adam and ἐπιθυμία in Jewish interpretation, see Dochhorn 2009; cf. Theissen 1987, 204–206; Ziesler 1988. One should not assume that Paul believed Adam knew Torah as Torah, which would in fact undermine his argument in Gal 3–4. Rather, Paul is able to draw an analogy between the substance of Torah given at Sinai and the commandment given to Adam. See, for instance, his comment in 5:13–14 that until Moses people did not sin in the likeness (ὁμοιώματι) of Adam, but after Moses they did. See further Seifrid 1992, 149; cf. Dunn 1988, 1:379; *pave* Moo 1996, 428–429.

68. Dochhorn 2009, 69; Dunn 1988, 1:381.

69. Cf. LXX Gen 3:13: ὁ ὄφις ἠπάτησέν με καὶ ἔφαγον. On the linguistic difference between ἐξαπατάω and ἀπατάω, note 2Cor 11:3; 1Tim 2:14.

70. See Moo 1996, 428; Meyer 2004, 70–71.

more, Paul's juxtaposition in verse 6 between *πνεῦμα* and *γράμμα* elsewhere reflects a distinction between the realities brought into existence by Christ and the Mosaic covenant respectively (2Cor 3:6), or between Christ and that which marks one as a member of the Mosaic covenant (Rom 2:29).⁷¹ If for Paul the *νόμος* has become aligned with Sin, membership in the Torah-constituted people could not possibly facilitate obedience.⁷² Under Sin's influence, Torah is simply unable to bring Life (cf. Gal 3:21). Rather than empowering Israel, Torah compounded Israel's handicap in its fight against Sin. As such, Israel remains without the capacity to obey.

7.3.5. Israel's Will in the Aeon of the Flesh

If 7:7–12 describes the ineptitude of Torah under Sin's mastery, 7:13–25 painfully details how that ineptitude plays out in the Self's struggle with Sin.⁷³ As the *γάρ* in verse 14 suggests, verses 14–25 explore the question raised in verse 13: How could Death, instead of Life, result from the good Law?⁷⁴ Bultmann perceptively noticed how 'Life' and 'Death' continue to play an important function in verses 14–25 through their relationship to 'good' and 'evil'.⁷⁵ His observation was sharpened when F. Watson pinpointed Deuteronomy 30:15 as the scriptural source of Paul's coordinates: 'the first part of Paul's analysis is determined by the life/death polarity (Rom.7.7–12), whereas the second part is determined by the good/evil polarity (7.13–25) ... the construction of Paul's argument mirrors exactly the pairs of opposites with which Moses summed up the meaning of the law.'⁷⁶ All this suggests that in verses 13–25 Paul continues to describe the *ἐγώ* under the Law in the light of Israel's story and the verses most pointedly address an Israelite.⁷⁷

When Paul reflects on the inability of the *ἐγώ* to overcome Sin and obey God, he specifically says that although the *ἐγώ* wants (*θέλω*) to do good, it practises (*πράσσω/ποιέω*) evil; that it continually carries out that which it does not want (vv15, 16, 19); and that accomplishing the good is

71. Furthermore, Watson (2000, 163–168; 2004, 356–380) has argued that Paul is reflecting on the wilderness narratives.

72. Rightly, Dunn 1988, 1:381.

73. See further Watson 2004, 375; Dochhorn 2009, 60–61.

74. Chester 2003, 190–191. On the connection between the two sections, see also Wilckens 1978, 2:85; Watson 2004, 375.

75. Bultmann 1961, 152–155, followed by Meyer 2004, 72.

76. Watson 2004, 507–508.

77. Contra Stowers (1994, 258–284), who believes that Paul is utilising Jewish stereotypes about Gentile *akrasia* to mimic a Gentile.

not within reach (v18). These statements raise several interrelated questions: What precisely prevents this ἐγώ from obeying Torah? How is it that a person can θέλειν something, but not actually accomplish it? And how for that matter can a person accomplish something they explicitly do not θέλω? At least on the surface, these confessions contain an inherent contradiction: The ἐγώ states plainly that it does not want/will the evil it does; and yet, it actually does evil intentionally, thus voluntarily. The conundrum: the ἐγώ that denies its desire for evil *could only have performed evil if it wanted to perform it*.⁷⁸ What then is the precise division in human experience which is being portrayed? Various answers have been given to this complex set of questions. For heuristic purposes, I have divided them into three basic approaches.

7.3.5.1. *The Will as Divided: The Traditional Approach*

On a traditional interpretation, what many consider a 'straightforward' reading, the good intentions of the ἐγώ do not reach fruition because the will fails to perform that which it sets out to do. Perhaps the most sophisticated and historically situated version of this interpretative line is set out by S. Stowers. Detecting an allusion to a proverbial Medean saying, Stowers believes that Paul is drawing on and interacting with the *akrasia* (weakness of the will) tradition.⁷⁹ 'Ancient moralists', Stowers notes, 'debated as to whether akrasia ... was caused by ignorance and false belief or by passions inherent in human nature.' The former position is Stoic, while the latter is Platonic. Since for Paul knowledge of Torah does not solve the problem of *akrasia*, Stowers reads Paul as siding with 'the popular and Platonic view against the Stoics': for Paul *akrasia* is a result of 'desire arising from passions (similar to our emotions and appetites).'⁸⁰

On this line of interpretation these verses describe competing desires within a human agent.

ὁ θέλω	(Desire 1)
οὐ ... τοῦτο πράσσω	(Desire 2)
ὁ μισῶ	(Desire 1)
τοῦτο ποιῶ	(Desire 2)

78. Van Den Beld 1985, 500.

79. Stowers 1994, 39; so also Engberg-Pedersen 2000, 244, 368–69n27.

80. Stowers 1994, 279; see further Wasserman 2007, 803–804, who takes a similar line but attributes the actions to ἀκολασία (806–808, 810). Compare Engberg-Pedersen 2002a, who gives a Stoic reading.

Paul's seemingly contradictory statement is resolved by posing a 'split-personality' within the *ἐγώ*. The split involves 'mutually incompatible wants' which the *ἐγώ* cultivates within itself.⁸¹ In part, *akrasia* can be explained as a conflict between short-term, transitory desires [Desire 2] and long-term, life-purpose desires [Desire 1].⁸² At the same time Stowers detects a conflict between 'irreconcilable long-term desires'—the desire to follow two 'laws', one of God (Desire 1) and the other of sin (Desire 2).⁸³ On his account, the Self's identification with good desires, and non-identification with evil desires, reflects an ancient anthropology where 'the true self is identified with the mind or rationality and the lower or false self identified with the body or the flesh.'⁸⁴ An alternative or complementary explanation is what T. Engberg-Pedersen calls the 'process of disassociation': though recognising its inherent sinful disposition, the *ἐγώ* identifies with its good desires and refuses to identify with evil ones.⁸⁵

While seemingly cogent, on closer inspection problems arise within the traditional interpretation. For one, the *ἐγώ* is never said to will multiple things: 'good' and 'evil' are not two objects of *θέλω*. To the contrary, verse 19 unambiguously denies that the *ἐγώ* wills the evil it practices (*ὁ οὐ θέλω κακόν*). Furthermore, as Bultmann observed, it is not the case that the willing is sourced in some good powers, while evil practice comes from the flesh; both emanate from the flesh.⁸⁶ The *ἐγώ* is not partly, but in its entirety sold under Sin (v14).⁸⁷ 'Good' does not dwell in the *ἐγώ* (v18) for the simple reason that Sin has occupied that space (vv17, 20).⁸⁸ Thus to accomplish the good is not present (v18). The lack of explanatory power in the traditional approach warrants a con-

81. Van Den Beld 1985, 515. See recently Jipp 2008, 240.

82. Stowers 1994, 280, here following Van Den Beld 1985, 510–515.

83. Stowers 1994, 280–281.

84. Stowers 1994, 279. Two recent works seeking to map a Platonic anthropology onto Paul argue that the inner man, mind, and spirit all refer to the rational part of the soul. According to Wasserman (2007, 812–813), the speaking 'I' represents the mind because it reasons, reflects, and makes accurate judgements. The mind in Rom 7 is fundamentally good but ineffectual because it is enslaved by the passions. van Kooten (2008, 382) shares the view that 'the body poses the main and only threat to man, as it might be the gateway of sin.' However, he is more optimistic than Wasserman, believing that the mind here represents 'the *proper* functioning of the restored mind' (373n52, italics original). On van Kooten's reading, the I 'is equipped to wage war against the temptation' and thus 'able to restrict the effectiveness of the involuntary impulse' (383). This reading is implausible, however. Vv14–24 suggest just the opposite: the Self perpetually loses the battle to Sin, does not do what it wants, and is made a captive.

85. Engberg-Pedersen 2000, 244–245.

86. Bultmann 1961, 151.

87. This presents the fundamental problem for Wasserman 2007, 812–813. The 'I' cannot refer solely to the mind and remain 'good' when it is both sold under Sin and has Sin inhabiting it (vv17, 20).

88. See the discussion in section 7.3.5.4. below (pp.205–208).

sideration of other options.

7.3.5.2. *The Will as Misdirected: The Bultmannian Approach*

An alternative to the traditional approach was forcefully asserted by R. Bultmann.⁸⁹ According to Bultmann the traditional reading fails to understand that Paul speaks of an act that 'is absolutely and in principle perverted', not simply of a failure to 'fully and constantly' obey.⁹⁰ Since Philippians 3:6 testifies to the fact that many Jews did fulfil the law, 'the discrepancy between "willing good" and "doing evil" cannot describe a discrepancy between affirmation of the law's requirement by the will (conscience) and violation of that same requirement in action.'⁹¹ What then is the split of which Paul speaks? Bultmann believes that this can only be understood when one realises that 'the object of "willing" is not the fulfilling of the "commandments" but "life".'⁹² The problem is that the very 'willing' of Life is evil and thus results in Death.⁹³

ὁ θέλω	(Goal: Life)
οὐ ... τοῦτο πράσσω	(Accomplishment: anti-Life)
ὁ μισῶ	(anti-Goal: Death)
τοῦτο ποιῶ	(Accomplishment: Death)

On such a reading 'I do not know what I am bringing about' means that the person does not realise that his willing results in death and *κατεργάζομαι* does not refer to transgression but to 'the result of doing ... namely, death.'⁹⁴

In support of his reading, Bultmann insist that Paul never suggests that 'transgression' is the problem. Rather '[w]hat is emphasised is that by means of the "commandments" desires are awakened; and these are awakened *whether the commandments are transgressed or fulfilled*.'⁹⁵ Paul's problem with the Law is that it necessarily entails 'a seeking after one's own righteousness.'⁹⁶ In sum, Paul's polemic is emphatically not against any failure to keep the Law, but against a zeal which

89. Bultmann predates the exponents of the traditional approach we surveyed.

90. Bultmann 1961, 148.

91. Bultmann 1961, 148.

92. Bultmann 1961, 152.

93. Bultmann 1961, 154.

94. Bultmann 1961, 155.

95. Bultmann 1961, 154, emphasis mine.

96. Bultmann 1961, 149.

seeks after self-establishment.⁹⁷ The ‘split’ described is between the object willed, Life, and the result, Death.⁹⁸

While Bultmann shows up weaknesses in a traditional reading and while his analysis holds some key exegetical insights, his overall project is unsustainable. One can dislocate ἐπιθυμία from transgression only by overlooking the context. When Paul follows the statement ‘I would not have known ἐπιθυμία’ in verse 7 with ‘unless the Law said, οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις’, he shows that he is not speaking of ‘desire’ generally but of coveting in particular. Thus when verse 8 says that Sin accomplished πᾶσα ἐπιθυμία in the ἐγώ, the context would have us understand these desires as a violation of the Tenth commandment.⁹⁹ Furthermore, to interpret ἐπιθυμία as a single desire, the will to self-assertion, makes the force of the attributive πᾶσα difficult to decipher. Finally, as Räisänen points out, Paul does not seem to equate desire with sin here, but sees it as an example of sin,¹⁰⁰ or better, as an example of the general principle that Sin uses the Law to provoke various sinful passions (cf. 7:5). Bultmann’s nomistic approach does not provide an adequate explanation of the text.

7.3.5.3. The Will as Deceived: S.J. Chester’s Approach

This study develops an interpretative option put forward by S.J. Chester.¹⁰¹ For Chester, Romans 7:7–25 represents Paul’s reconstructed biography. Paul is able to see things about the fleshly ἐγώ in light of the Christ event that are otherwise wholly absent from the Self’s perception. On this reading it is imperative that one follow the full implications of what Paul says in 7:11, namely that Sin *deceives*. Yet the ability to recognise deception (either in oneself or in another) assumes that the speaker does not speak from a deceived standpoint. There is therefore dissonance between Paul’s description and the Self’s perception;¹⁰² the description is the result of Christ-sight.¹⁰³ In other words, it is only through ‘Christ-sight’ that Paul is able to discern that the

97. For a recent version of this reading, see Jewett 2007, 255–273 and his earlier 1971, 400.

98. Bultmann 1961, 155.

99. So Ridderbos 1977, 145–146; Wilckens 1978, 2:80–2:81; Westerholm 1984, 237.

100. See Räisänen 1992, whose entire article represents a critique of Bultmann’s position.

101. For his full discussion, see Chester 2003, 183–195; cf. Lambrecht 1992, 86–87.

102. In v15 Paul writes ‘I do not ‘know’ (γινώσκω) what I accomplish’. But in vv17–18 the Self ‘knows’ (οἶδα) that sin, not good, inhabits and accomplishes evil. Vv17–18 thus describe the anatomy of the deception with clear eyes.

103. Hence for Chester this is Paul’s reconstructed biography. I prefer ‘Christ-sight’ instead of ‘hindsight’ to show

ἐγώ is deceived and breaks the Law (7:11).¹⁰⁴ Christ-sight reveals that Sin put the ἐγώ into epistemological confusion where it does not 'know' what it 'accomplishes' (ὁ γὰρ κατεργάζομαι οὐ γινώσκω, v15).¹⁰⁵

Since Paul's Christian outlook reveals new dynamics that introduce a tension not present otherwise, the 'split' existence of the ἐγώ is better interpreted in light of this two-fold perspective.¹⁰⁶

ὁ θέλω	(Deceived Perspective: I will the good)
οὐ ... τοῦτο πράσσω	(Christ-Sight: The ἐγώ wills and practises evil)
ὁ μισῶ	(Deceived Perspective: I hate evil)
τοῦτο ποιῶ	(Christ-Sight: The ἐγώ wills and does evil)

While the ἐγώ truly believes itself to be obeying the Law, through 'Christ-sight' Paul perceives that in actuality the ἐγώ neither does what it believes itself to be doing nor wills what it believes itself to be willing. Blinded by the god of this age (cf. 2Cor 4:4), the ἐγώ is deceived about indwelling Sin (7:18, 20).¹⁰⁷ With respect to its desires, the ἐγώ is more confused than divided.¹⁰⁸ The crux of the 'split' lies between the conscious, thinking ἐγώ, and the unconscious, acting ἐγώ.¹⁰⁹ The former represents how the ἐγώ sees itself (i.e., I believe that I am willing good). The latter represents how 'Christ-sight' sees the ἐγώ (Sin deceived the ἐγώ so that it unknowingly wills evil). If verses 22–25 depict two parts of the Self waging war, this construction is a result of two

that this perception is not strictly temporal or biographical so much as eschatological: it stems from one's perception in union with Christ. While in basic agreement with Chester, I do not see biographical elements as intrinsic to Paul's discussion.

104. Chester 2003, 190: 'Paul now knows that, through the commandment, sin wrought in him *πᾶσα ἐπιθυμία* ... He now considers that sin was rampant in his life, whereas previously this went unrecognised'; so also p.186.
105. Chester (2003, 193n152) and Schreiner (1998, 373n3) both reject Bultmann's suggestion that *κατεργάζομαι* refers to the result of the transgression, rather than the transgression itself. By locating these terms' scriptural roots in Deut 30:15–20, however, Watson (2004, 507–508) allows us to cut through this dichotomy. In Deut 30:19–20 the choice of life is defined as: *ἀγαπᾶν κύριον ... εἰσακούειν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ*. Here choosing an outcome is closely related to one's mode of conduct. The conduct *is* the choice!
106. One objection to reading the 'I' as Israel or an Israelite is that this imposes an 'introspective conscience' on Judaism that did not exist (Jewett 2007, 442). However, the 'introspective conscience' could simply result from 'Christ-sight'.
107. Consequently, Paul's position has points of contact with both Stoic and Platonic understandings of ineptitude (ignorance and corruption, respectively) without falling neatly into either camp.
108. Chester is somewhat unclear as to whether the Self truly wills good or whether the deception means precisely that the 'good' willed is actually 'evil'.
109. Gathercole 2006, 166–167.

very different epistemological perspectives on the same reality. The ἔσω ἄνθρωπος and νοῦς concern the thought world of an ἐγώ *who is both deceived and enslaved*.¹¹⁰

Perspective of the Deceived Self

<p>According to the thoughts of the ἐγώ, it not only delights in God's Law, but serves it.</p>	<p>7:22 κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον: // συνήδομαι ... τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ 7:25 αὐτὸς ἐγὼ τῷ μὲν νοῦ... // δουλεύω νόμῳ θεοῦ</p>
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Perspective of Christ-Sight

<p>Christ-Sight reveals that through a covert operation Sin is at war with the mind and holds the entire ἐγώ captive.</p>	<p>7:23 βλέπω // ἕτερον νόμον ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου ἀντιστρατευόμενον τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ νοῦς μου καὶ αἰχμαλωτίζοντά με ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τῆς ἁμαρτίας τῷ ὄντι ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου. 7:25: τῇ δὲ σαρκί //δουλεύω ... νόμῳ ἁμαρτίας</p>
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One objection that could be raised against this reading is that in 7:7 Paul claims that the Law actually brings the knowledge of sin. This appears to conflict with a reading which effectively makes the Self unaware of its sinful actions. However, one can know something about what constitutes sin in principle all the while being deceived with regard to one's own specific actions.¹¹¹

110. Thus Wasserman (2007, 814) is correct to suggest that 'Romans 7 does not simply describe internal struggle and conflict but rather explains the mind's total defeat.' Paul is thus closer to ἀκολασία than ἀκρασία. Wasserman (with van Kooten) is wrong to assert the mind's basic soundness, however. Neither author takes into account the deception of the Self and the dissonance entailed in Paul's description. Better is Keener 2008, 218–219.

111. Compare Chester, who appears to give two solutions. (1) This knowledge is retrospective knowledge (2003, 188–189; similarly, Theissen 1987, 231). (2) 'Paul does not mean that the very existence of sin or, indeed, all knowledge of sin that Paul gained only after his conversion is the use made of the law by sin (7:8–11)' (189). The first suggestion is improbable given that Paul is most likely speaking about the time when the commandment came (vv7–9). It is difficult to know what to make of the suggestion that the 'I' also failed to recognise how Sin used the commandment to bring it into *conscious* Law-breaking, since earlier Chester states: 'Given that it is the commandment, shortly to be defined as holy and righteous and good, that provides sin with the opportunity to

That something similar is going on in Romans 7 finds support in Paul's use of the terms *ἔσω ἄνθρωπος*, *νοῦς*, and *μέλος*. While the former two concern the unseen life of the Self as thinking, the latter concerns the Self as acting. Regardless, if there *is* a tension, it is a tension for *any* reading and can only be ignored by overlooking the deception motif altogether. The advantage of Chester's interpretation is that it takes this motif seriously.

7.3.5.4. *The Incompetent Agent in Romans 7*

We are now in a position to see that Romans 7 does not present us with an upright will that is free in its direction and unscathed by Sin. We begin by noting that for Paul there is no such thing as an independent will. Humans are always caught up into larger networks of power.¹¹² This is no less true for the agent in Romans 7. As Käsemann insists, verse 14 provides the heading to verses 15–25: *ἐγὼ ... σάρκινός εἰμι πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν*.¹¹³ Here the slavery motif of chapter 6 is carried forward so that the entirety of the Self is captive 'to the law of Sin' (*τῷ νόμῳ τῆς ἁμαρτίας*, 7:23; cf. v25b) and must be set free from 'from the law of Sin' (*ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας*, 8:2). Accordingly, the 'inner man' (v22) and 'members' (v23) are but two aspects of an undivided Self which is in bondage to Sin.¹¹⁴ The fleshly agent wholly operates under Sin's influence.¹¹⁵

By recognising that human agents function within networks of power, we can better interpret the peculiar confession in 7:17 and 20: 'it is no longer I who accomplish it [evil] but Sin which dwells in me.' Such a statement is not a denial of human agency—for on Paul's account slavery assumes obedience to a master (6:16)—but a denial of the human agent's independent

deceive the pre-conversion self, *it is difficult to see how the deception can involve anything other than a failure to recognise certain actions as transgressions of that commandment* (186). On what basis can we distinguish between certain actions that the 'I' unrecognised as sin and others which the 'I' committed consciously as sin? Cf. Gathercole 2006, 171.

112. As Warne (1995, 58–59) states: 'Hebrews viewed the human person primarily in relation to other totalities within the cosmic order.' On how this relates to Paul's thought, see Käsemann 1971a. These insights have recently been developed in some interesting ways by Engberg-Pedersen (2009).

113. Käsemann 1980, 200.

114. Meyer 2004, 76; Lichtenberger 2004, 157–158; cf. the earlier work of Kümmel 1974, 135–137.

115. A common argument against taking the *ἐγὼ* as a through and through fleshly individual is that it contradicts what Paul says about the mind of the Flesh in 8:5–7 (Laato 1995, 114–121, 123). This objection will not stand. Rom 8:7 says that the mind of the Flesh is hostile to God because it cannot submit (*ὑποτάσσω*) to God's Law, not because it is unable to delight (*συνήδομαι*, 7:22) in his Law or acknowledge its goodness. Besides, if my interpretation is correct, the *ἔσω ἄνθρωπος* and *νοῦς* concern the thought life of a *deceived* person.

operations.¹¹⁶ While human agency retains its integrity, it is so bound up with higher networks of power that human accomplishment can be attributed without reservation or qualification to that power. Here Paul evidences the structures of thought we saw in the Scrolls (1QS 3–4) and in Jubilees (11:5); namely that humans are influenced by supra-human powers, and that their agencies coincide and are set in a direct, positive relationship.¹¹⁷ Notably, Paul speaks similarly about his own agency under the power of grace (1Cor 15:10).¹¹⁸ The fleshly agent of Romans 7, however, is under Sin and determined by Sin’s governance.

Romans 7:17 and 20 thus mark an important development in and modification to Paul’s slavery metaphor. The captive Self, Paul indicates, is a possessed Self, in-dwelt by the very master that enslaves it (cf. 8:2, 9–11). Human agency is connected with Sin at a pre-functional level. Furthermore, Sin’s claim on this individual is total: ‘Good does not dwell in’ that person (7:18).¹¹⁹ In keeping with his emphasis on the mutual exclusivity of masters (6:16–18), the residence of Sin implies ‘the non-residence of good’.¹²⁰ In such a situation, the human agent lacks the moral hardware to obey.

It is possible that Romans 7:18 represents an ironic allusion to the new covenant and if so this only sharpens the point. Paul has already identified the commandment as *ἀγαθή* (‘good’) in 7:12. Although switching to the neuter in verse 13 broadens the discourse, Paul, nevertheless, refers to the commandment metonymically as ‘the good’ (*τὸ ἀγαθόν*).¹²¹ If *ἀγαθόν* still retains con-
tiguity with *ἡ ἐντολή* when it appears again in verse 18, then the confession ‘the good does not dwell in me’ is a way of communicating that the commandment has not been placed within (cf. Jer 31:33)!¹²² Since to have Torah within is to have an obedient disposition, the *absence* of the commandment within would suit a discussion about the incompetence of moral agents in the

116. Assuming a competitive relationship, Meyer (2004, 73–74) thinks that the Self’s agency is negated.

117. Possibly significant here is the phrase *τὰ ἔργα τῆς σαρκός* (Gal 5:19). That the genitive should be taken as a subjective genitive/genitive of production (the flesh’s workings/the works that the Flesh produces) is suggested by the parallel *ὁ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος* (5:22), supporting the notion that the actions of the Flesh and humans coincide.

118. On agency dynamics in 1Cor 15:10, see Barclay 2008, 377–378. While one can see how Rom 7:17, 20 would seem to support the view that Paul adopts Platonic notions about the Self (see p.200n84 above), it is extremely difficult to comprehend 1Cor 15:10 on such assumptions.

119. On this translation, see Keck 1999.

120. Keck’s (1999, 74) phrase.

121. *ἡ ἁμαρτία ... διὰ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ... ἡ ἁμαρτία διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς*.

122. Of note is that instead of referring to a single *תורה*, in LXX Jer 38:33 God places ‘laws’ (*νόμους*) into the mind and writes them (*αὐτῶν*) on the heart. The plural suggests that specific laws are written, i.e., commandments.

Flesh.

Contemporary scholarship shies away from the conclusion that this *ἐγώ* is incapable of responding to God. In large similarity to the approach taken above, J.L. Martyn and P.W. Meyer agree with the present thesis that 'the tragic element in Romans 7 does not ... arise from a divided self...',¹²³ but that this dismal existence stems 'from the self's enslavement to the power of Sin', from 'Sin's power to deceive via the Law, the result being that [humanity] accomplishes the opposite of what [it] intended'.¹²⁴ Nevertheless, both scholars deny the impotence of the *ἐγώ*. Meyer, for instance, bemoans the reformation tradition's influence and finds nothing in these verses to suggest 'despair over one's inability to live up to the demanding requirement...'¹²⁵ Likewise, Martyn writes: 'Paul's argument attaches impotence not to the human will, but rather to the Law.'¹²⁶ Such conclusions pose false dichotomies. While Paul certainly believes that Sin has compromised Torah and thus deals with something 'far more serious than a mere impotence of the human will',¹²⁷ his entire discussion presupposes the insufficiency of human capacities to effect obedience. The Law's powerlessness on account of the Flesh concerns its inability to equip fleshly individuals to fulfil the divine requirement (7:5; 8:3–4). Paul's point in Romans 7:14 is precisely that when the spiritual Law falls on a fleshly, Sin-possessed disposition, it does not find fertile ground and the result is Death.¹²⁸ Romans 7 does not need to make explicit that the *ἐγώ* is 'unable to do what he wishes' in order to communicate the Self's inability to obey God;¹²⁹ for this is already *implicit* in the confession *ὁ οὐ θέλω κακὸν τοῦτο πράσσω* (v19). Moreover, the *ἐγώ* represents the situation of someone in the Flesh (7:5), whose inability to obey God is explicitly pronounced in 8:7–8:

123. Here Martyn 1997b, 272; see also Martyn 1997b, 272–274; Meyer 2004, 70–74.

124. Martyn 1997b, 272, emphasis removed.

125. Meyer 2004, 71. Somewhat inconsistently, Meyer will write only three pages later: 'The thought of these verses [15–20] is exactly the same as in vv.10b-11, only now it is not the Mosaic Torah but *the religious self devoted to it that is powerless to achieve what it longs for...*' (74, emphasis added). While on Meyer's reading 'what is longed for' is eternal life, nevertheless, his statement would seem to attach impotence to the human will.

126. Martyn 1997b, 273–275.

127. So Martyn 1997b, 273.

128. See Betz 1990, esp. at 135, 180–181.

129. Cf. Martyn 1997b, 274.

The outlook of the Flesh is hostile toward God, for it does not submit (οὐχ ὑποτάσσεται) to God's Law, neither is it *able* (οὐδὲ ... δύναται); and those in the Flesh are *unable* (οὐ δύνανται) to please God.

Such evidence forces the conclusion that the ἐγώ in Romans 7 is wholly incompetent, and Paul gives no ground to those who would 'view the Law as an agent of transformation'.¹³⁰

It is important to realise that Paul's understanding of Israel's hardening (πωρώ) is not primarily an empirical observation: it is formulated through his reading of Scripture in light of the Christ event. With Deuteronomy 29:3, Paul maintains that 'God gave [Israel] a spirit of stupor, having eyes that do not see and ears that do not hear' (Rom 11:7–8). Hostile to God and unable to submit to his Law, they will inevitably commit sins and even abandon the covenant.¹³¹ Accordingly, Paul is certain that Jews are under God's just condemnation because they remain in a community characterised by moral ineptitude (Rom 3:19–20).¹³²

7.3.6. Summary and Conclusions

I have now sketched out the implications of one side of Paul's contrast: life in the Flesh. Under the regime of Sin, human actions are determined by sinful passions that are themselves exacerbated by Torah. The phrase 'sinful passions' (τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν) reflects the corruption of that which drives human activity.¹³³ The implications this holds for Paul's reading of Israel's restoration narrative and human agency in that narrative are noteworthy and can be thrown into relief by comparing him with the other interpreters we have studied.

Like Qumran, Jubilees, 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch, Paul believes that Israel's fall is a result of her corrupt nature. While Qumran and Paul both hold to a doctrine of absolute moral incompetence, at Qumran this only applies to the Sons of Darkness. Neither there, nor in any of the other works just mentioned, is anthropological perversion or demonic influence taken so far as to deny Israel certain measures by which she can stay evil powers and overcome the malign heart. In 2

130. Schreiner 1998, 358. See also Moo 1996, 438: 'Paul has in mind the tendency of some Jews to accord to the Mosaic law life-giving power'. Ridderbos 1977, 147: 'All that is depicted here has no other purpose than to say that man cannot live from the strength of the law, but has died and still dies.' The question in v13 is telling in this regard. Compare the conclusions of Jipp 2008, 253–257.

131. Rightly, Schreiner 1998, 150.

132. Similarly, Watson 2004, 348; Thielman 1994, 126–127.

133. Michaelis (1967) notes how παθήμα indicates passivity—one is controlled or subdued by the sinful passions.

Baruch and 4 Ezra, for instance, the heart's corruption, while making obedience arduous, in no way rules obedience out as a possibility. Moses' offer of Life and Death remain extended to a people who can reform their wills and obey (Deut 30:15, 19). Paul, in contrast, believes Moses' offer was directed at a people who remained in the Flesh and under the power of Sin (7:5, 14). For him it was inevitable that, like Adam before her,¹³⁴ Christ-less Israel would transgress the commandment and follow the path of 'Death' and 'Curse' instead of 'Life' and 'Blessing'.¹³⁵ Bondage to foreign nations pales in comparison to the bondage she was experiencing under the powers of the old aeon. Lacking both a reconstituted will and deliverance from the anti-God powers, the Israel of Paul's day was no better off than the generations of covenant-breakers before her.

Undoubtedly, at this point, the author of Jubilees would insist how the uniqueness of Israel, her separateness from other nations maintained to a large extent by circumcision and food laws, could protect her from demonic influence and assist her in keeping Torah (Jub 15:30–32; 22:16, 19–22). For Paul, however, circumcision and other 'boundary defining' laws provide no recourse against the Flesh (Rom 2:25–3:9; Gal 4:8–11; 5:2, 16), and thus in no way mitigate the incompetence of moral agents. Thus even if one could imagine Paul conceding a historic return from exile, he would never admit that Israel could be released from covenant curse through renewed efforts at law-keeping (Gal 3:10; cf. Rom 8:3).¹³⁶ In fact, for Paul, Israel needed to be released from Torah itself, since even it had been possessed by Sin (Rom 7:4, 6).¹³⁷

At Qumran 'restoration' is due in large measure to the Sons of Righteousness' reflection on Torah under the guidance of their Teacher, but also to acknowledging sin (CD 1:8–9).¹³⁸ Paul, however, would insist that until one turns to Christ, a veil remains over the heart whenever the Scriptures are read (2Cor 3:14–16). Moreover, his extreme position concerning Sin's ruinous effects on the noetic faculties makes acknowledging sin somewhat problematic. Besides, in Paul's

134. As Wright (1980, 152) so astutely noted, the problem is 'the hidden Adam in Israel'.

135. This conclusion supports the hypotheses of Noth (1966, 119, 129–131); Eichholz (1977, 247); Scott (1993, 213–215) and Thielman (1989, 67–68, 72; 1994, 127–129), in so far as all conclude that Paul views Israel as under a perpetual curse.

136. See Hafemann 1995, 182, 442.

137. So also Schnelle 2001, 67. The conclusion that the Law that one dies to is the *Sin-Possessed* Law is clear from 7:7–25 and not dependent on textual variants which read 'Law of Death' (e.g., D F G).

138. Something Qumran shares with 2 Baruch (78:6).

dark world wholehearted sorrow and confession only result in more death (2Cor 7:10). A scenario in which God restores Israel on the basis of good intentions, as Philo suggests (*Virt.* 185), would hardly be amenable either.¹³⁹ The one ally Paul appears to have is the author of Baruch. But even though those two mavericks share an unyielding stance on Israel's depravity, even Baruch does not go so far as to make the Torah itself in need of redemption. In the final analysis, the picture Paul paints reveals 'the absolute necessity of another moral power than that of the I-myself, the *nous*, the inward man.'¹⁴⁰ What is required is a power that can engender a more radical, fundamental change—the harbinger of new creation.

7.4. New Creation: The Reconstitution of the Human Agent in Christ

Having established the nature of life in the Flesh (7:5), we are now in a position to consider how Paul conceives of liberation from Sin, and how human agency functions in its liberated existence. This brings us to the $\nu\nu\iota \delta\acute{\epsilon}$ of 7:6 and the explication of servitude 'in newness of the Spirit'.¹⁴¹ Romans 7:5–6 concludes a somewhat convoluted analogy regarding the principle that death enables marriage partners to unite to another. Paul's point: having died to the Sin-possessed Law through the body of Christ, believers are now united to Christ (v4). Rather than bearing fruit to the anti-God powers (cf. v5), this union has the purpose of offering fruit to God. Paul's statements in verse 6—release from slavery and service in newness of the Spirit—are predicated upon the previous chapter's discussion of union with Christ. If we are going to understand how Paul conceives of Christian liberation and new life in the Spirit, we must start there.

139. So Westerholm 2004a, 384: 'Paul clearly thought sinners lacked the capacity and even the inclination to so repent.'

140. Ridderbos 1977, 130. See also Fitzmyer 1993, 464.

141. So Jewett 2007, 437: 'The turn of the new creation is indicated by $\nu\nu\iota \delta\acute{\epsilon}$...'

7.4.1. Union with Christ and the Recreation of the Moral Agent

Romans 6 opens with the rhetorical question that arises from a faulty conclusion based on the relationship Paul constructs between the Law, Sin, and Grace in 5:20–21: ‘What are we saying then: “Let us remain in Sin so that grace may increase?”’ If one’s prior assumption is that Torah was intended to stay the trespass, it is easy to see how once Paul denies it this function there is nothing left to empower the human agent. A lacuna appears in Paul’s system.¹⁴²

Paul firmly denies that believers should continue sinning by pointing his readers back to the Christ event. It is from the implications of this event that he reasons with believers about their current status as moral agents. The recurrence of expressions with the prefix *σύν* demonstrate that Paul’s main theme is the believer’s participation in Christ’s once-for-all, aeon-breaking, world-shattering event. On the one hand, believers are in union (*σύμφυτος*) with Christ’s death: They were ‘co-crucified’ (*συσταυρόω*, 6:6) and ‘co-buried’ (*συνθάπτω*, 6:4) ‘with him’ (*σύν αὐτῷ*). For Paul ‘when Christ died, they died, and his death was their own’ (cf. 2Cor 5:14).¹⁴³ Being joined to Christ through baptism thus marks a believer’s decisive break with the old world-aeon (6:3–4).¹⁴⁴ The cosmos is thereby crucified to the believer and the believer to the cosmos (Gal 6:14). The implication is that since Christ’s death was a death to Sin (6:10), those united to Christ have also died to Sin’s reign and been transferred out from under Sin’s dominion (6:2, 7; cf. v9).

On the other hand Paul speaks of participation in Christ’s resurrection. Verses 5 and 8 assume that those united to Christ’s death shall also be raised and live (*συζῶω*) with him in the new creation. Since verses 5 and 8 depict a future resurrection, there is some question as to when believers start to participate in this new world. Should we conclude that while believers presently participate in Christ’s death, participation in his resurrection remains only a future pledge? In Colossians (2:12–13; 3:1) and Ephesians (2:5–6) believers have been raised with Christ in some sense already. Is there any hint of this in the undisputed Pauline letters, or are the two

142. See Kirk 2008, 108; Dunn 1988, 1:326.

143. Ridderbos 1977, 207; so also Tannehill 1967, 27; cf Dunn 1988, 1:316–318, 330–331; Schnelle 2001, 63–65.

144. As Jewett (2007, 398) notes, burial is the ‘point of no return’. On the role of baptism, see Schreiner 1998, 335–336; Käsemann 1980, 163.

incompatible?

In 6:4 Paul argues that Christians were united to Christ in death in order that (ἵνα) just as Christ was raised they also might walk in newness of life. The ὡσπερ ... οὕτως καί structure draws a comparison between Jesus' own resurrection and the newness of life in which believers now walk. What unites the comparison is a description of eschatological existence after death. After Christ died, he was raised 'through the glory of the Father' (διὰ τῆς δόξης τοῦ πατρὸς).¹⁴⁵ Here 'glory' associates Christ's resurrection with the power of the eschatological age (cf. 1Cor 15:40–43). Likewise, the phrase ἐν καινότητι endues believers' lives with eschatological 'newness'. In 7:6 this newness is described as καινότητι πνεύματος—the Spirit being closely associated with resurrection life (cf. 1:4). Thus while believers have yet to be raised in their mortal bodies (Rom 8:11), the consideration of faith (and not of sight) is that they are already 'dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus' (6:11).¹⁴⁶

These preliminary observations lay the groundwork for a discussion of the reconstitution of the moral agent. Since it is the contention of this thesis that Paul's understanding of human agency is not only informed by the Christ event but also by Scripture, and more particularly by a dynamic interplay between the two, by exploring his reading of sacred texts we will be able to press deeper into his conceptions of divine and human agency.

7.4.2. Union with Christ as the Fulfilment of Scriptural Promise

7.4.2.1. Union with Christ and the New Covenant

Should believers sin now that they are free from the Law and under Grace? This is the question Paul addresses in 6:15–23. In response, he reminds his audience of three things: 1) individuals are enslaved to whomever they obey (v16); hence, the impossibility of serving Sin while being enslaved to God. 2) Christians are enslaved to God and not in a neutral position (vv17–18). 3) Enslavement to Sin results in shame and Death; enslavement to God results in sanctification and

145. Moo 1996, 367n72.

146. On believers being joined to the new creation, see particularly Stuhlmacher 1967a, 28. Compare Meyer 1979, who argues that believers do not participate in the new creation. Cf. Dunn 1988, 1:330: 'There is clearly implied a sharing in some degree in Christ's risen life...' Yet elsewhere Dunn states '...however much [believers] share in Christ's death they do not yet share in Christ's resurrection' (332). Similar is Schnelle (2001, 64–65) for whom the power of the new world 'spills over' (hineinwirkende) into the present (64n24).

Life (vv21–23).

In the midst of this emancipation discourse, Paul says that the direct result of God's act in Christ is that Christians have become obedient from the heart εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδασκῆς (v17b). Significantly verse 17b marks the only undisputed place where Paul pens ἐκ καρδίας and the action which flows from the heart is 'obedience' (ὑπακούσατε). As noted earlier, this echoes Deuteronomy's description of Israel who, having been released from slavery, fulfils the *SHEMA* at the restoration: ὑπακούσῃ τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ... ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου (Deut 30:2).¹⁴⁷ If this allusion has been overlooked by scholars, it is not for lack of comment on these words. In fact, both the syntax and meaning have been so bewildering that some even reject 17b as an interpolation.¹⁴⁸ But as one such commentator admits, removing 17b does not resolve every syntactical problem.¹⁴⁹ Besides, this solution lacks textual support. Yet most who reject verse 17b do so because it does not seem to square with Paul's thought. My contention, however, is that if we set aside any *a priori* assumptions about what Paul could and could not write, and pay attention to his allusion, then a fairly coherent interpretation emerges.

The first syntactical problem that arises concerns the object of obedience. The verb ὑπακούω normally takes a dative or genitive, but here has an accusative (τύπον) as its object. However, R. Gagon notes how 'in Greek it is perfectly legitimate to incorporate the antecedent into its relative clause. In such cases the antecedent is often placed at the end of the clause, without the article.'¹⁵⁰ Here the separation of syntactical elements has resulted in a case of inverse attraction, the antecedent being attracted to the case of the relative pronoun.¹⁵¹ Thus we find εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδασκῆς.

While the combination of the verb παραδίδωμι with διδασκῆ might suggest the idea of some handed-down-tradition (cf. 1Cor 11:2, 23; 15:3), here τύπον διδασκῆς is not 'handed over' to Christians, but 'you' [Christians] are 'handed over' (παρεδόθητε) to τύπον διδασκῆς. To understand the

147. See above at p.177.

148. Bultmann 1947, 197–202; Zeller 1985, 127–128; and most recently Jewett 2007, 419. As such, 17a 'Thanks be to God that being slave of Sin...' is picked up at v18.

149. Jewett 2007, 418. As Beare (1958, 206) observed: 'if we once start to tidy up St Paul and eliminate his oddities of rhetoric, it is hard to say what we shall have left!'

150. Gagon 1993, 668. See the numerous examples in Blass 1961, §294.

151. Wallace 1996, 339; cf. Blass 1961, §294(5). The two differ only with respect to classification.

dynamic of Paul's words we must remember how Paul uses *παραδίδωμι* elsewhere in Romans. Earlier we noted how God 'handed over' humanity to (*εἰς*) the anti-God power Sin (1:24, 26, 28). The verb is used two other times outside 6:17, both of God 'handing over' Jesus on behalf of (*ὑπέρ*) Christians (8:32), particularly because of (*διὰ*) their trespasses (4:25). From these five occurrences a pattern emerges: As an act of judgement God handed over humanity to Sin's slavery. As an act of redemption God judged Sin by handing Jesus over to death (Rom 6:6; 8:3). Romans 6:17 moves the drama one step forward. On the logic of 6:16, slaves released from one master must take another; neutrality is ruled out.¹⁵² By using *παραδίδωμι* in this context Paul communicates that through the death of Jesus God has reversed his former act of judgement, releasing Christians from captivity by placing them under a new master (*εἰς ὅν*).¹⁵³ While at first glance *τύπος διδαχῆς* appears to be a strange master, Paul has already described Christians' master as Obedience (v16), goes on to describe their master as Righteousness (vv18, 19), and climatically as God (v22).¹⁵⁴ By presenting *διδαχή* as a power into which humans are handed over, Paul creatively enlists one more metaphorical expression to communicate God's saving rule over Christians. And yet even if this is so, the question remains: What does *τύπον διδαχῆς* mean and what does Paul gain by saying that Christians have become obedient to it particularly?

From Paul's use of *τύπος* elsewhere, a few options present themselves. Paul could refer to an impersonal 'standard' of teaching present in the early church. In this baptismal context, such a 'standard' could refer to doctrinal codification,¹⁵⁵ or more likely to a specific 'model' or 'example' of conduct. This model then either issues forth from the teaching or is simply the content with which the teaching is concerned (cf. 1Thess 1:7; Phil 3:17).¹⁵⁶ Cranfield modifies this option by taking *τύπον διδαχῆς* as a 'mould' which consists in teaching and shapes the lives of those who give themselves to it.¹⁵⁷ The difficulty with Cranfield's view comes when it smuggles in some notion of *believers* 'giving themselves' over to the mould through obedience. Here Paul is specifically

152. Käsemann 1980, 180.

153. Beare 1958, 206–207.

154. Beare 1958, 207.

155. Some detect here a contrast, either between Paul's own gospel and other teachings, or between Christian and Jewish teaching (e.g., Käsemann 1980, 181–182; Moo 1996, 402). While the former lacks contextual support, the latter might find it in 6:15.

156. Fitzmyer 1993, 449–450; Stuhlmacher 1994, 94; Wilckens 1978, 2:36–2:37.

157. Cranfield 1975, 1:324. See also Beare 1958, 209–210.

concerned with what *God* accomplished through a transfer of lordship, the very basis of obedience and reason for thanksgiving.¹⁵⁸ The other options are problematic as well; they struggle to explain how διδαχή, an impersonal referent, could serve as an 'example'. Besides, an impersonal referent does not correlate with Paul's personal references to τύπος elsewhere. For this reason Dunn has suggested taking τύπον διδαχῆς as an allusion to Jesus, the 'pattern' of obedience.¹⁵⁹ Although certainly at home in Paul's theology, grammatical and contextual grounds rule out Dunn's proposal: it is difficult to make Jesus the antecedent of ὄν;¹⁶⁰ and this transfers the emphasis from what God accomplished to how humans should respond.

R. Gagon has proffered yet another option. He suggests that since τύπος originally comes from the verb τύπω (to strike), it most naturally refers to the 'imprint' made on the mind or heart by the teaching. In support he marshals a host of Greek philosophers, as well as Philo.¹⁶¹ A few examples from the latter demonstrate the plausibility of his suggestion. First, Philo says that at creation God's 'divine nature stamped (ἐνεσφαιρίζετο) her own impression (τύπους) in an invisible manner on the invisible soul, in order that even the earth might not be destitute of the image of God' (*Det.* 86). In context, Philo is arguing that the human soul acts reasonably because God impressed his image on it. Elsewhere Philo claims that on account of idolatry Moses taught people about God's sovereignty and in so doing 'stamped deep impressions on [their] minds (τύπους ταῖς διανοίαις), engraving piety [in them] (ἐγχαράττων οσιότητος, *Spec.* 1:30). In both examples an impression on the soul/mind informs human ability and action. In *Spec.* 1:30, teaching itself writes obedience on people's minds so that they obey. Noting the 'strong link between teaching and the imprint (τύπος) left by such teaching on the inner person', Gagon proposes that Paul's use means something similar and even correlates with Jeremiah's promise of the Law engraved on the heart, Ezekiel's new heart (*Ezek* 11:19–20; 36:26–27), and the circumcised heart of Deuteronomy 30:6.¹⁶²

This study strengthens Gagon's hypothesis. As already noted, ἦτε δοῦλοι τῆς ἁμαρτίας

158. So Gagon 1993, 680. Even Paul's awkward syntax—passive with εἰς ὄν—serves to emphasise the divine act (Schreiner 1998, 336).

159. Dunn 1988, 1:343–1:344.

160. See further Gagon 1993, 676–677.

161. See in particular Gagon 1993, 682–685.

162. Gagon 1993, 685.

ὕπηκούσατε δὲ ἐκ καρδίας in Romans 6:17 recalls Deuteronomy 30:2 where enslaved Israel obeys (ὕπακούω) God ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας. Paul here picks up his reading of Deuteronomy 30 from 2:25–29. There I suggested that the Spirit/letter dichotomy intimates how Paul follows an interpretative tradition which conflates Deuteronomy 30 with Jeremiah’s new covenant and Ezekiel’s eschatological promise (cf. 2Cor 3:3–6). Important to remember is that all these texts forecast that when God delivers Israel from exile, he will perform a work on people’s hearts to establish them as obedient agents—either through heart-circumcision, a heart-and-spirit-gift, or by writing Torah on the heart. Although it lacks direct verbal links, τύπον διδαχῆς conceptually fits as an allusion to the latter. In contradistinction from the fleshly agent in 7:18 is the Christian,¹⁶³ who, having been freed from slavery, obeys God’s διδαχὴ wholeheartedly.¹⁶⁴ What accounts for this obedience is God’s inscribing διδαχὴ on the Christian’s heart.

If this is so, then διδαχὴ appears to provide a functional equivalent for νόμος in LXX Jeremiah 38:33. From Paul’s uses of διδαχὴ and διδάσκω elsewhere it is difficult to know what to make of this substitution and how it helps to define the content of what is inscribed.¹⁶⁵ We might find a clue from Paul’s reference to Christian’s as θεοδίδακτοι in 1 Thessalonians 4:9 (cf. Is 54:13). There the divine teaching specifically concerns love for one another. What makes this suggestive for our purposes is that in the previous verse God is described as the one who gives the Holy Spirit to you (τὸν θεὸν τὸν καὶ διδόντα τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ τὸ ἅγιον εἰς ὑμᾶς, 1Thess 4:8), an allusion to Ezekiel 36:27/37:14.¹⁶⁶ Thus very close to one of Paul’s allusions to Ezekiel’s restoration narrative, divine διδαχὴ is specified in terms of the love-command. As we will see, this command is also read into Paul’s interpretation of Ezekiel 36:26–27 at Romans 8:3–4.¹⁶⁷ If Paul has that narrative in mind in Romans 6:17, then perhaps the teaching which is impressed by God is nothing other than love for one another.

There is more to be said about 6:17, which incidentally strengthens this conjecture. In the di-

163. On the possible allusion to the new covenant in 7:18, see p.206 above.

164. It is worth noting that **A** contains a textual variant at 17b which reads ἐκ καθαρᾶς καρδίας. Perhaps a scribe was familiar with the concept from the interpretative tradition of Deut 30:6, since ומל יהוה אלהיך את לבבך gets translated περικαθαριεὶ κύριος τὴν καρδίαν σου in the LXX. Cf. 1Tim 1:5; 1Pet 1:22.

165. Paul uses the terms somewhat generically (e.g., Rom 2:20–21; 12:7; 16:17; 1Cor 2:13; 11:14) and occasionally to refer to teaching on Christian living (Rom 15:4; 1Cor 4:17).

166. See Deidun 1981, 19; Witmer 2008, 157; Beale 2003, 123.

167. See the discussion on p.224.

vine-priority reading of Deuteronomy 30, we noted a particular interplay between divine and human agency which intersects at the human heart. It is probably not a coincidence that only a chapter before describing Christians as obedient from the heart (6:17), Paul spoke of God's love penetrating their hearts by the gift of the Spirit (5:5): *ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκέχυται ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου τοῦ δοθέντος ἡμῖν*. The combination of pouring (*ἐκχύνω*) with Spirit (*πνεῦμα*) immediately reminds one of Joel 3:1: *καὶ ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου*. But in many ways Paul's words reflect Ezekiel 36. Ezekiel reminds the Israelites how their sin resulted in an outpouring (*ἐκχέω*) of God's wrath (LXX Ezek 36:18). God will reverse this situation when he sprinkles water on his people, gives them a new heart (*καρδία*), and places ['gives'] his Spirit in them (*τὸ πνεῦμά μου δώσω ἐν ὑμῖν*, vv25–27). Allusions in Romans 5:5 in combination with allusions in 6:17 present a interplay approximating divine-priority readings of Deuteronomy 30, Jeremiah 31, and Ezekiel 36. For Paul, the outpouring of divine wrath is extinguished through an outpouring of divine love. But rather than speak of heart-circumcision, in 5:5 this love finds expression in Ezekiel's promised Spirit-gift. God's sending his Gift into human hearts is then reciprocated in 6:17 by wholehearted obedience, which has its end in Life (v22).

God pours love/Spirit into the heart > leads to human love/obedience from the heart > leads to Life.

Thus if Paul can trace obedience back to heart-circumcision (2:25–29/ Deut 30:6), he can also attribute it to an internal divine inscription (6:17b/ Jer 31:33) or to God's Spirit-gift (5:5/ Ezek 36:26–27).

While accepting Gagon's explanation of *τύπος*, R. Jewett nevertheless considers 6:17b an interpolation because the language of obedience from the heart is foreign to Paul, and because the idea of learning doctrinal instruction fits neither the context nor co-text.¹⁶⁸ However if Paul is alluding to restoration narratives to describe the Christ event, then the peculiar language is explicable by the scriptural reverberations, which serve to speak of something far more profound than Christians remembering commands and obeying them because of doctrinal instruction. As an interjection of thanksgiving to God, Paul celebrates God's gospel initiative to established obedient agents through Christ and Spirit. Even if the scriptural language appears peculiar because it gets

168. Jewett 2007, 418–419.

subsumed by Paul's Gospel explication, buried beneath the surface of 6:17 lies a reading of Deuteronomy, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Such a reading is brought into clearer focus in Romans 8:1–11.

7.4.2.2. *Union with Christ and Ezekiel's Restoration Narrative*

While many have suggested similarities between Ezekiel 36–37 and Paul's Spirit language in Romans 8, commentators have done little to substantiate the allusion or to ask how Paul's engagement with Ezekiel has informed him. A recent exception is J.W. Yates, who firmly establishes Ezekiel's influence.¹⁶⁹ Note, for example, the lexical correspondence between Ezekiel 36:26–27 and Romans 8:4.

Romans 8:4: ἵνα τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου πληρωθῇ ἐν ἡμῖν τοῖς μὴ κατὰ σάρκα περιπατοῦσιν ἀλλὰ κατὰ πνεῦμα	LXX Ezekiel 36:26–27: καὶ δώσω ὑμῖν καρδίαν καινὴν καὶ πνεῦμα καινὸν δώσω ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ ἀφελῶ τὴν καρδίαν τὴν λιθίνην ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν καὶ δώσω ὑμῖν καρδίαν σαρκίνην καὶ τὸ πνεῦμά μου δώσω ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ ποιήσω ἵνα ἐν τοῖς δικαιομασί μου πορεύησθε καὶ τὰ κρίματά μου φυλάξησθε καὶ ποιήσητε
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Though uses of the terms vary, both texts reference δικαίωμα ('righteous requirement/s'), σάρξ ('flesh') and πνεῦμα ('Spirit'). A less exact parallel is that while Ezekiel speaks of κρίματα ('decrees'), Paul has just declared that there is no 'decree against' (κατάκριμα) those in Christ (8:1). Furthermore, both texts denote life-style with 'walking' terminology (περιπατέω/πορεύομαι).¹⁷⁰

The broader contexts of both passages strengthen the link. While Ezekiel says that God will place his Spirit in people (τὸ πνεῦμά μου δώσω ἐν ὑμῖν), Paul tells believers 'the Spirit of God dwells in you' (πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν, 8:9). Ezekiel dramatises this divine act in chapter 37, where God pledges to the dead exiles:¹⁷¹ 'I will bring to you the Spirit of life' (πνεῦμα ζωῆς, 37:5). Strikingly similar is Romans 8:10: 'though the body is dead (νεκρόν) on account of sin, the Spirit is life (πνεῦμα ζωῆ) on account of righteousness.'¹⁷² In both texts this life-Spirit refers to God's

169. Yates 2008, 144–145. This study builds on his analysis. See also Bertone 1999, 82–84.

170. Yates 2008, 144.

171. 37:9: εἰς τοὺς νεκρούς.

172. Compare Fitzmyer 1993, 491; Wilckens 1978, 2:132–2:133, who take πνεῦμα anthropologically.

Spirit (*πνεῦμα μου*, Ezek 37:6/ *πνεῦμα θεοῦ*, Rom 8:9), and the Spirit's indwelling leads to Life:¹⁷³

Ezekiel 37:6: *δώσω πνεῦμά μου εἰς ὑμᾶς καὶ ζήσεσθε*

Romans 8:11: *εἰ δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ ἐγείραντος τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐκ νεκρῶν οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν, ὁ ἐγείρας Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ζωοποιήσκει καὶ τὰ θνητὰ σώματα ὑμῶν*

This evidence adequately demonstrates Paul's dependence on Ezekiel in Romans 8:1–11.¹⁷⁴ Assuming this scriptural background, I now aim to show how Paul understands union with Christ as participation in the fulfilment of Ezekiel's promise.

Union with Christ and the Indwelling Spirit: In Ezekiel resurrection marked the time when God would newly create Israel by placing his Spirit within her. Informed by this narrative, Paul says twice that the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead now resides in believers (8:9, 11). At first glance it appears that Paul has inverted Ezekiel's narrative sequence since the Spirit's indwelling precedes believers' own resurrection (v11). It is important to note, however, that in Ezekiel the giving of the Spirit does not follow, but is concomitant with the resurrection. Keeping in mind that Christ's resurrection marks the beginning of one general epochal event (1Cor 15:22–23),¹⁷⁵ like Ezekiel Paul believes that God pours out his Spirit *during* the resurrection; i.e., between the time of Christ's resurrection and the resurrection of all believers. Since the outpouring of the Spirit is integral to the Resurrection event, through receiving the Spirit believers themselves begin to share in that event. Paul's identification of Christ with Spirit only develops this thesis.

Paul posits a close relationship between the risen Christ and the Spirit (cf. 1Cor 15:45). So close are the two that Paul reasons from the Spirit being in you (*πνεῦμα ... ἐν ὑμῖν*, 8:9) that the resurrected Christ is in you (*Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν*, 8:10). This does not make the Spirit and Christ identical or absolutely indistinguishable in their roles.¹⁷⁶ Nevertheless, the Spirit which inhabits believers is nothing less than the Spirit of Christ (*πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ*, 8:9). Paul's union doctrine entails mutual-penetration: those in Christ Jesus (*ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*, 8:1) have Christ in them (cf. Gal

173. This way of putting the matter intentionally bypasses the thorny issue of whether or not *διά* should be read with a genitive or accusative in the final clause: *διὰ τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος [τὸ ἐνοικοῦν] αὐτοῦ πνεύματος ἐν ὑμῖν*.

174. Contra Käsemann 1980, 216.

175. As an incorporative and representative figure, Christ stands as the first-fruits and first-born of all those to be resurrected, 'the actual beginning of th[e] general epochal event' (Vos 1979, 45).

176. For instance, there is a distinction in their work of intercession (8:26–27, 33–34). See further Gaffin 1998, 184–185.

4:19; Col 1:27; Eph 3:16–17)¹⁷⁷ and are thereby united to his resurrection existence.¹⁷⁸ This union delimits a believer's present participation in the fulfilment of Ezekiel's restoration promise.¹⁷⁹

Transformation and the Indwelling Spirit: In 8:5–8 Paul elaborates on 7:5–6 by describing two groups of people as they relate to the antithetical power spheres of Flesh and Spirit. The contrast is set out as follows:

- v5a: existing according to the Flesh/according to the Spirit
- v5b: perceiving the things of the Flesh/of the Spirit
- v6: the outlook of the Flesh/Spirit
- vv8–9: existing in the Flesh/in the Spirit.¹⁸⁰

Whereas 8:4b concerns behaviour,¹⁸¹ verses 5–9 ground behaviour in location. As the antithesis demonstrates, those who exist *κατὰ σάρκα* (v5) exist in the power sphere of the Flesh (v8); those who exist *κατὰ πνεῦμα* (v5) exist in the sphere of the Spirit (v9). Again, humans are shaped by their environments.¹⁸² Verses 9–11 demonstrate this by claiming that to be *ἐν πνεύματι* is to be personally inhabited by the Spirit. As with the powers of the old age (7:17, 20), so here being brought under a new Lord is to be inhabited by that Lord. Verses 5–6 present another way in which humans are so fashioned.

Paul says people *φρονοῦσιν* according to the sphere in which they exist (*ὄντες*). The verb *φρονέω* means to think about something in a particular manner, from a particular perspective.¹⁸³ Elsewhere, Paul says that one can 'perceive' (*ἐφρόνουν*) things as a child (1Cor 13:11); that is one can have a child's outlook. The Christian community is exhorted to share Christ's 'outlook' (Phil 2:5). And Paul relates his 'perception'/'outlook' to what is in the heart (Phil 1:7). As in these cases, so here Paul is not speaking about the ability to reason, of intellectual capacities, or of an anthropological function which is now restored to believers.¹⁸⁴ Importantly, he does not share

177. See Käsemann 1980, 221–222; Cranfield 1975, 1:389; cf. Moo 1996, 491; Dunn 1988, 1:429.

178. So Yates 2008, 162–163; contra Meyer 1979.

179. Though Paul will not say that believers have experienced *ἀνάστασις*, which for him denotes bodily resurrection, as Kirk (2008, 116) reasons: 'in some ways, asking if the believer is already thought to be raised with Christ in these verses [Rom 6:1–7:6] misses the point... The central point is that believers have been united to Christ, who died and who was raised. This means that in Christ, believers participate now, proleptically, in the benefits which will be theirs fully in the age to come, including resurrection life.' Similarly, Schnelle 2001, 65.

180. Following Moo 1996, 486.

181. 8:4 is addressed below.

182. Jewett 1971, 486; Schreiner 1998, 410–411; Deidun 1981, 75–76.

183. The three categories listed in BDAG share this in common.

the platonic assumption of a universal rationality as if there were only *one* way to reason; *both* those who exist according to the Flesh and those according to the Spirit φρονοῦσιν, yet they do so in very distinct ways, according to distinct dispositions, worldviews and presuppositions.¹⁸⁵ And while differing outlooks bring different things (τά) into focus (cf. 1Cor 2:13–14), Paul's concern is not so much on the things perceived, or even on the act of perceiving itself; rather, as his turn to the nominal form φρόνημα indicates (vv6–7), his interests lie with the basic orientation out of which one thinks—one's *Weltanschauung*.¹⁸⁶

Paul, therefore, insists that one's outlook is constructed in relationship to one of two controlling power-environments. J.L. Martyn has pointed out the 'inextricable connection' Paul makes 'between eschatology and epistemology'.¹⁸⁷ This is apparent in verses 5–7: one perceives either κατὰ σάρκα—according to the old age standards and with old age faculties—or κατὰ πνεῦμα—in light of the new creation and by the power of the Spirit.¹⁸⁸ Flesh and Spirit entail an epistemological foundation as each influence the basic faculties their subjects possess. To exist in the Flesh is to possess an unfit mind that is unable to discern that which is, according to the Spirit's standards, befitting. Those who exist in the Spirit have survived an epistemic crisis,¹⁸⁹ wherein the Spirit, through the apocalypse of Christ, has ruptured the former φρόνημα and replaced it with a new outlook. Possessing this new φρόνημα, believers are no longer determined by the powers and standards of 'this age'. Through a newly created νοῦς, they undergo a process of transformation so that they are able to judge fit (δοκιμάζειν) the befitting (12:2; cf. 1:28). This agent stands in stark contrast to the deceived agent of Romans 7, who is oblivious to Sin's mastery, is disoriented about what is good, and misconceives his own actions. Here we find that God, through the Spirit, conquers the deceiving power of Sin and thereby opens up new noetic possibilities.¹⁹⁰

184. Pace Wasserman 2008, 409–410; van Kooten 2008, 384–385; cf. Engberg-Pedersen 2009, 193.

185. Perhaps in this way, Paul's ancient beliefs are closer to post-modern sensibilities than to modern ones.

186. Brown 1995, 142–143. On φρόνημα see BDAG; Bertram 1964, 232, 234; Keener 2008, 211. That Paul understands τὸ φρόνημα τοῦ πνεύματος to be an outlook that is determined by God's Spirit, and not an awakened human capacity, is apparent from v9, where those 'in the Spirit' are indwelt by the divine Spirit and, in turn, possess the 'outlook of the Spirit'.

187. See Martyn 1997c here 92.

188. On how the cross fits into Paul's epistemological framework, see Brown 1995.

189. For a description of this crisis through cognitive dissonance theory, see Brown 1995, 157–160; Theissen 1987, 387.

Obedience and the Indwelling Spirit: For Ezekiel God's provision of his life-giving Spirit and a heart-transplant would provide the basis for Israel's obedience. Paul's conviction is that through the sending of the Son, God is honouring that promise. Just as Ezekiel foresaw how those inhabited by the Spirit would keep God's requirements (*δικαιώμασιν*, 36:27), Paul says that as a result of God's act in Christ the righteous requirement of the Law is fulfilled by/in/among believers (*τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου πληρωθῆ ἔν ἡμῖν*, 8:4). Paul's claim has caused interpreters difficulty. The basic interpretative options normally taken divide neatly into forensic and transformative readings. According to the forensic reading 'the requirement of the Law' refers to the Law's penalty which Jesus' death removes. To have this 'fulfilled in/among us' is to have Christ satisfy that demand for us.¹⁹¹ A transformative reading understands the clause not so much as what God has done for humanity, but what he is doing in and through humanity. Accordingly, the fulfilment of the righteous requirement describes the obedience of Spirit-transformed believers.¹⁹² The intertextual background adjudicates between these and helps to solve exegetical dilemmas.

If Paul is drawing on Ezekiel 36:26–36, the forensic reading should be ruled out. Ezekiel foretells how when God releases Israel from slavery, he will send his Spirit to *make* (*עשיתי/ποιήσω*) people walk (*ללכו/πορεύθητε*) in his requirements (Ezek 36:27). When Paul proclaims that God's liberating initiative 'in Christ Jesus' set believers free so that the righteous requirement might be fulfilled in/by those who walk according to the Spirit (cf. 6:6, 18, 22), he follows Ezekiel precisely.¹⁹³ While the passive *πληρωθῆ* is often understood as a key argument against the transformative interpretation,¹⁹⁴ Ezekiel's agency dynamics help to explain this.

Three points emerge from Ezekiel's construction: 1) Human agency is dependent upon divine initiative. 2) The Spirit does not just make obedience possible; it creates obedient agents. 3) While the relationship between divine and human agency remains obscure, the Spirit's indwelling suggests more than a simple two step process where God transforms humans who then obey.¹⁹⁵

190. See Scroggs 1993, 168–170.

191. On the forensic interpretation, see Moo 1996, 481–484; similarly Keck 1980, 51–53; Käsemann 1980, 217–219; Fitzmyer 1993, 487–488; Wright 1991, 211–213; cf., Dunn 1988, 1:423–1:425.

192. On the transformative interpretation, see, e.g., Cranfield 1975, 1:384; Jewett 2007, 485–486; and especially Schreiner 1998, 405–406.

193. So Yates 2008, 168–169.

194. e.g., Moo 1996, 483; Käsemann 1980, 218.

195. See section 2.3.2. (pp.36–40).

Guided by this, in Romans 8:4 a *ἵνα* clause grounds human action in God's liberating act. By following the *ἵνα* with an aorist passive instead of an active verb, Paul makes fulfilment directly contingent upon the divine act. At the same time, this de-emphasises human agency. The final clause is thus somewhat surprising: Paul uses *περιπατοῦσιν*, a present active participle which highlights human action, to define those whose action he has just downplayed!¹⁹⁶ Yet even here human agency does not function autonomously as it is tempered by being 'according to the Spirit'.

Without denying or effacing human agency, Paul's various qualifications strain to secure divine agency as the basis for obedience. The present active participle combines with the specification *κατὰ πνεῦμα* to communicate that human obedience is perpetually bound to and dependent on divine agency. Presupposed here is Paul's belief that the resurrected Christ inhabits believers via the Spirit (vv9–11). His earlier claim that Christ rose *οὕτως καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς περιπατήσωμεν* (6:4), also explained as living *ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος* (7:6), is most comprehensible if predicated upon a dynamic coinherence between the agencies of Christ and those in union with him. Through somewhat paradoxical statements, 8:4 intimates this dynamic: The Spirit fulfils the righteous requirement of the Law by vivifying and animating those 'in Christ'.¹⁹⁷ Possession of the Spirit thus assumes a new and non-contrastive relationship between the divine and human agent.

But a question remains: why has Paul abandoned Ezekiel's plural 'righteous requirements' to speak of a singular 'requirement' of the Law? Amongst those who follow the transformative interpretation a variety of hypotheses exists. The righteous requirement could refer to

- 1) the divine will as the unifying principle of the Law;¹⁹⁸
- 2) Torah minus ethnocentric ordinances such as circumcision, sabbath, and food laws;¹⁹⁹

196. Though possible, the transformative reading does not require that one take the participial clause instrumentally; cf. Cranfield 1975, 1:385. The fulfilment of the Law can simply characterise those who walk according to the Spirit. Cranfield (1975, 1:385), nevertheless, is correct to note that the clause is not to be understood 'as though the meaning were "in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, provided we walk..." [contra Fitzmyer 1993, 488]... nor yet as describing us as we are independently of ... the divine action described in v. 3 (as though our so walking were ... our independent and meritorious work).'

197. On the importance of *πληρόω* in supporting this dynamic, see Westerholm 1986. Moo (1996, 485n70) suggests that *κατὰ πνεῦμα* 'probably has the connotation "directed by".'

198. Jewett 2007, 485; Schreiner 1998, 407; Cranfield 1975, 1:384.

199. Dunn 1988, 1:423; Sanders 1983, 100–102; cf. Longenecker 1991, 246–250, who helpfully focuses on the eschatological element.

- 3) the love command as a summary of Torah;
- 4) the Tenth Commandment.²⁰⁰

While there may be some logic to View 2 from Paul's letters, it feels arbitrary and in context Paul is not concerned with ethnocentrism. View 4 finds contextual support in that the Tenth Commandment is the closest spoken of (7:7), and also has the benefit of corresponding to the LXX, where *δικαίωμα* (singular) generally refers to a specific command.²⁰¹ Notwithstanding, fulfilling the command not to covet struggles to fit the general description of Christian living. This leaves options 1 and 3. Since the primary difference between 1 and 3 is the specificity of 3, many who choose option 1 do so on the basis of insufficient evidence otherwise.²⁰²

Evidence for understanding the singular *δικαίωμα* as a reference to the love command is as follows:²⁰³ First, Romans 8:2–4 and Galatians 5:13–16 hold a similar sequence of thought; the latter says that the singular (*ἐνί*) command to love in Leviticus 19:18 fulfils (*πεπλήρωται*) the whole Law (cf. 6:2). Second, Paul goes on to say that the person who loves fulfils the Law (*νόμον πεπλήρωκεν*) in Romans 13:8 as well. Thus every other time where the roots *πληρώω* and *νόμος* appear in combination in the Pauline corpus, the reference is to love.²⁰⁴ As if to clear up any remaining confusion regarding which 'law' love fulfils in 13:8, Paul follows up his statement with a list of commandments from the Decalogue. These various commands, Paul says, are summed up under (*ἀνακεφαλαιώω*) the single command to love from Leviticus 19:18. Since love does no harm, it can be concluded (*οὐν*) that the fulfilment of the Law is love (*πλήρωμα ... νόμου ἢ ἀγάπη*, 13:10). From this evidence it is quite clear that for Paul the heart of Torah finds its richest expression in Leviticus 19:18; and furthermore to keep that command is to satisfy the demand of 'the whole Law'. It would only make sense that in Romans 8:4, the only other context in which Paul combines *πληρώω* and *νόμος*, the single command in view is the requirement to love.²⁰⁵

200. Ziesler 1987.

201. See Ziesler 1987, 78–79.

202. So Yates 2008, 168; Schreiner 1998, 407. For those who object to this reading because 'love' is not part of the context, see, e.g., Käsemann 1980, 218; Ziesler 1987, 78.

203. H.W.M. van de Sandt put forward the fullest argument for this position in two 1976 articles: 1976a; 1976b.

204. Note the comparison in Sir 2:16: *οἱ φοβούμενοι κύριον ζητήσουσιν εὐδοκίαν αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ ἀγαπῶντες αὐτὸν ἐμπλησθήσονται τοῦ νόμου.*

205. van de Sandt finds analogies to Paul's statements in Rabbinic summaries of the Law. Though somewhat tenuous, this may indicate that it was unnecessary to mention 'love' specifically in the context of Romans 8:4.

The intertextual background of Romans 8:4 evokes an interpretative tradition which supports this thesis. Romans 8:4 provides an intertextual link to Ezekiel 36:26–27. In the previous chapter, we saw how in Romans 2:25–29 Paul follows an interpretative strategy which reads Ezekiel 36–37 with Deuteronomy 30:1–10. Paul's assertion about the one who keeps (φυλάσσω) and completes (τελέω) τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου not only draws on the descriptions of the returnees in Deuteronomy 30:10 and Ezekiel 36:27,²⁰⁶ it also sounds strikingly similar to Romans 8:4. While both Ezekiel and Deuteronomy describe the returnees' obedience in terms of walking in the righteous requirements, in Deuteronomy the returnees' behaviour is *also* expressed as love (30:6). Deuteronomy then opens up the possibility for its interpreters to summarise the heart-circumcised's obedience in terms of this single expression.²⁰⁷ On balance, then, given Paul's own propensity to encapsulate the Law in the love command, it is quite plausible that he accepted Deuteronomy's invitation and therefore describes believers as the inheritors of the promise who actualise that single righteous requirement. This complies with Barclay's conclusion that Paul uses πληρώω 'to describe the total realization of God's will in line with the eschatological fulness of time in the coming of Christ.'²⁰⁸ While humanity in the Flesh was incapable of submitting to Torah, in Paul's mind, the Spirit-generated love of believers fulfils (i.e., accomplishes in a way that fully satisfies) the prophetic characterisations of Torah-obedience at the restoration.²⁰⁹

206. Compare:

Deut 30:10: φυλάσσεσθαι καὶ ποιεῖν πάσας τὰς ἐντολάς αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ δικαιώματα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰς κρίσεις αὐτοῦ τὰς γεγραμμένας ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τοῦ νόμου τούτου ἐὰν ἐπιστραφῆς ἐπὶ κύριον τὸν θεόν σου ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου

Ezek 36:27: καὶ τὸ πνεῦμά μου δώσω ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ ποιήσω ἵνα ἐν τοῖς δικαιώμασίν μου πορεύησθε καὶ τὰ κρίματά μου φυλάξησθε καὶ ποιήσητε

207. 1Thess 4:8–9 might well reflect Paul's seminal thoughts on this matter.

208. Barclay 1988, 140.

209. Cf. Betz 1990, 169, 178, 183–184; Westerholm 1986, 236. Focusing on 2Cor, Blanton (2007, 188, 204–205, 210–212) sets Paul in stark contrast to Jubilees, 1QS, and Hebrews, arguing that while the latter retain the connection between new covenant, spirit, and Torah—only disputing over the *contemporary application* of Torah—Paul disconnects Torah from new covenant and spirit (cf. 207). However, we see here that Paul is closer to his contemporaries than Blanton makes out. Instead of cutting out Torah altogether, Paul believes that the Scriptures themselves show how the rule for the eschatological application of Torah is love. See Betz (Betz 1990, 174–178), who rightly notes Torah's eschatological nature. Compare Vollenweider 1989, 21, who believes freedom in the new creation entails absolute freedom from Torah. On the prophetic connotations of πληρώω, see Barclay 1988, 138–142; Moule 1967.

7.4.3. Summary and Conclusions

Our consideration of the other side of Paul's contrast in 7:6 has shown how the incompetence of the Flesh to produce anything other than death has found its solution in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This solution was testified to in the restoration narratives of Deuteronomy 30, Jeremiah 31, and Ezekiel 36–37. Paul maintains a divine-priority reading of those texts throughout as it is only by God's liberating initiative of sending Christ and Spirit that humans are set free from the hopeless existence depicted in 7:5. The divine acts of heart-circumcision and Torah-inscription signal to Paul that far from being morally incompetent, those in Christ have been newly created as competent moral agents, possessing faculties that are able to hear and respond to God. Further, God's sending of the Spirit into human hearts suggests that human agency is permanently bound up with and dependent upon divine agency. Phrases like *ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς*, *ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος*, and *κατὰ πνεῦμα* evoke this dynamic relationship. Such Spirit-established lives, characterised as they are by love, meet God's intention for humanity.²¹⁰

7.5. Paul's Reading of Restoration Outside Romans: A Brief Note

Though Romans has served as our focal point, Paul's reading of these restoration narratives stands behind other texts where the issue of divine and human agency arises. Two examples will serve to supplement these conclusions: 2 Corinthians 3:5–6 and Philippians 3:3. Without an exhaustive examination of either text, I aim to demonstrate that themes in both resonate with the findings above.

210. Rightly, Dunn (1988, 1:418) sees 8:4 as a fulfilment of God's 'original creative purpose in making man'.

7.5.1. Competency and the New Covenant: 2 Corinthians 3:5–6

The various issues which brand 2 Corinthians 3 a battleground for Pauline studies cannot be addressed here. Our present goal is twofold: 1) to establish that Paul reads Ezekiel 36–37 with Jeremiah 31:31–34; and 2) to relate this scriptural reflection to his view of moral competence.

The reverberation of Jeremiah's new covenant is commonly accepted: *διαθήκην καινήν* is only mentioned in LXX Jeremiah 38:31, and 3:3 mentions writing on the heart (*ἐγγεγραμμένη ... ἐν ... καρδίαις*, 3:3; cf. LXX Jer 38:33). Paul's contrast between 'stony' (*λίθινος*) tablets and tablets of 'fleshy hearts' (*καρδίαις σαρκίνοις*, v3) also intimates Ezekiel 36:26.²¹¹ Although Ezekiel lacks a reference to *πλάξ*, God will replace the 'stony heart' (*καρδίαν τὴν λιθίνην*) with a 'fleshy heart' (*καρδίαν σαρκίνην*) and in the LXX, *καρδία*, *λίθινος*, and *σάρκινος* intersect only in Ezekiel's restoration promise. Moreover, in verse 6 Paul says that the Spirit gives life (*ζωοποιεῖ*), reminiscent of the connection between Spirit and life in Ezekiel 37.²¹² Again, Paul manifests an interpretative trend which reads Ezekiel's promise with Jeremiah's new covenant.

Paul draws on these texts to explain his ministerial competence.²¹³ The varied adjectival, nominal, and verbal forms of *ικανός* in verses 5–6 highlight Paul's subject as he continues to address the question: *καὶ πρὸς ταῦτα τίς ικανός* (2:16b)?²¹⁴ The energy which founded the Corinthian community is not naturally sourced in humans: it is not derived 'out of themselves' (*ἄφ' ἑαυτῶν*), and as such, nothing (*τί*) should be 'regarded' (*λογίσασθαι*) as coming 'from themselves' (*ἐξ ἑαυτῶν*).²¹⁵ Apostolic competence, rather, comes from (*ἐκ*) God. This final affirmation corrects

211. Räisänen 1987, 243; Hays 1989, 128–129. While Ezek 11:19 coheres with 36:26, the latter is more likely in view (Yates 2008, 109).

212. See Stockhausen 1989, 67–70.

213. See Hafemann 1995, 29–35, 97; Blanton 2007, 201–202.

214. Furnish 1984, 177.

215. 1Cor 3:5 is the only place where Paul uses *ἀπό* or *ἐκ* + reflexive pronoun. Elsewhere in the NT, the former construction is used to denote acting on one's own authority (Lk 12:57; Jn 5:19; 5:30; 7:17–18; 8:28; 16:13). Other times it describes an independent agency. The construction is set in contrast to the Father abiding and working in Jesus (Jn 14:10). Likewise no branch is able to bear fruit 'of itself', but must draw its life from something else (15:4). One can see or think 'for oneself' (Lk 21:30; Jn 18:34). In Jn 10:18 the construction denotes both authority and agency. *ἐκ* + reflexive pronoun is only used one other time and denotes authority (Jn 12:49). In Philo the statistics are inverted: *ἐκ* + reflexive pronoun appears 100x and *ἀπό* only 35x. *ἐκ* can be used to speak of ac-

the two previous statements.²¹⁶ Consequently, *neither* ministerial competence *nor* its results come from ministers.²¹⁷ While Paul seems to imply 'the basic incapacity of the instrument chosen by God',²¹⁸ he continues, somewhat surprisingly, to affirm the competence that the apostles genuinely possess: God 'made them competent' (ἰκάνωσεν, v6); they 'have' it (v5a); it is theirs (v5c).²¹⁹ What accounts for Paul's denial in verse 5b? Would it not be more reasonable to assume that since being made competent, the agency of these ministers effect results?

The answer lies precisely in the fact that they are ministers of *the new covenant*, which is characterised by the life-giving Spirit.²²⁰ As effective agents, new covenant ministers ally with God in a non-contrastive, yet wholly dependent way. While they co-labour (συνεργέω) with God (6:1), the eschatological communities resulting from *their* work (διακονηθεῖσα ὑφ' ἡμῶν) originate *from* Christ *through* the Spirit (3:3).²²¹ To simply say that God works alongside them, however, would be inadequate since God reveals his knowledge *through* (διὰ) them (2:14). Whatever else remains puzzling, new-covenant-competency is a dependent competency by definition, with the ground of its confidence secured 'through Christ and before God' (v4).²²² And such agency dynamics rule out the possibility that those made competent by God ever become independent actors.²²³ Thus while Käsemann is correct when he says that God 'always works with instruments which are in themselves incapable of serving him',²²⁴ new covenant ministers are never 'in themselves'.²²⁵ This

complicating something by intrinsic power (*Opif.* 9, 23) or qualities (*Opif.* 21–22). ἀπό + reflexive pronoun denotes independent agency, working out of one's own resources (*Opif.* 72).

216. ἐκ links the clause back to 5b, while ἡ ἰκανότης ἡμῶν links to 5a (ἱκανοὶ ἐσμεν).

217. Thus, with Thrall, I understand τι ὡς ἐξ ἑαυτῶν as a sense unit to mean 'any part of his apostolic work' (1994, 1:229–1:230; see also Barrett 1973, 109, 111; Furnish 1984, 173; Martin 1986, 44). Yet it is inaccurate to say 5a–b represents 'a conflation of two ways of expressing the same basic thought' (*pace* Thrall, 230).

218. Käsemann 1971b, 150.

219. The question of what kind of answer 2:16b implies misses the point (on the positive side, see Thrall 1994, 2:209–2:210; Hafemann 1990, 90; Fee 1994, 298; Martin 1986, 52–53); for a qualified negative, see Furnish 1984, 190; Barrett 1973, 103–104, 111). Paul's views of agency presented in vv5–6 make it so that a simple yes or no are both inadequate. The fullest answer is found in a qualified yes *and* no.

220. So Fee 1994, 304.

221. With most, I take ἐπιστολὴ Χριστοῦ to denote origin or source; πνεύματι as instrumental.

222. On the theme of being in God's presence via the Spirit, see Renwick 1991, 61–74.

223. Compare Crafton 1991, 62, whose agent/agency distinction ends up denying Paul competence altogether (see esp. 79n1). Under his definitions, an agent is someone who performs an act, while agency is the means or instrument of another's action (28–28, 61). What Crafton fails to consider is how Paul could function as both *at the same time in the same act*. The argument of this thesis is that reconstituted persons in Christ are agents precisely as they function as God's agency. Vollenweider (1989, 271, 283) manifests a similar tendency to downplay Paul's agency.

224. Käsemann 1971b, 150.

225. If in 3:3 Paul is suggesting that he was an amanuensis, then Thrall (1994, 225) believes this conflicts with the

brings us to matters at the core of Paul's letter/Spirit contrast.

7.5.2. Brief Excursus on Letter/Spirit Contrast

Having dealt with all three contexts (e.g., Rom 2:29; Rom 7:6; 2Cor 3:6), we can unpack the letter/Spirit antithesis more fully. The various interpretations of Paul's *γράμμα*/*πνεῦμα* antithesis divide into subjective and objective approaches. Understood subjectively, *γράμμα* and *πνεῦμα* depict two hermeneutical strategies. In its historically prominent form, Paul contrasts the plain, literal sense (*γράμμα*) with the inward, spiritual meaning (*πνεῦμα*). More plausible to modern interpreters is the view that takes *γράμμα* as a misinterpretation or misuse of Torah—when one reads the text legalistically to promote external performance—whereas *πνεῦμα* suggests a correct understanding of Torah.²²⁶ In the objective interpretation *γράμμα* and *πνεῦμα* stand either for two approaches to salvation—Law and Gospel—or metonymically for two covenants.²²⁷

The present context as well as the eschatological elements in Paul's other uses support an objective interpretation. Here, *γράμμα* serves as a word-play that links back to Paul's comparison between two forms of writing (*ἔγγεγραμμένη*, v3).²²⁸ The juxtaposition concerns both the instruments used for writing (Spirit or ink) and the tablets upon which the letters are written (hearts or stone).²²⁹ Since the reference to stone tablets foreshadows a discussion of the Mosaic covenant (3:7–18), *γράμμα* most naturally refers to Torah, particularly as it exists in a written form. As an engraved document, Torah kills (vv6–7). *πνεῦμα* also refers back to verse 3, but to *πνεύματι θεοῦ ζῶντος*. God's Spirit, which incises believers hearts, gives life (v6). As such, *γράμμα* and *πνεῦμα* represent aspects of the old and new covenants respectively (vv7–8).²³⁰ But the question remains: What is the precise contrast that Paul highlights between these covenants?

Since Torah was written by God (cf. Ex 31:18; Deut 5:22; 9:10–11), the contrast cannot be found in their respective authors.²³¹ S. Westerholm sees the difference in covenantal obliga-

letter being inscribed by the Spirit. Once we conceive of divine and human agency in non-contrastive terms, however, this tension disappears.

226. See, e.g., Barrett 1973, 112–113; Käsemann 1971b, 146–147; Cranfield 1975, 1:339–1:340.

227. Similar is Vollenweider (1989, 271), for whom there is a contrast in Powers.

228. Hays 1989, 130.

229. Furnish 1984, 195.

230. Cf. Murphy-O'Connor 1987, 116–117.

tions.²³² The weakness in this approach becomes apparent when he spells out the contrast as 'obligation to the laws of Torah (...) as opposed to service by God's spirit.'²³³ The disparity in this formulation is telling: if the contrast were simply about obligations, then obligation to the laws of Torah would most naturally oppose *obligation to the Spirit's demands*. But this is problematic; for Paul the fruit of the Spirit eschatologically satisfies one of Torah's commandments (Lev 19:18)!²³⁴ On the other hand, service *by the Spirit* (i.e., service empowered by the Spirit) is more naturally opposed to service empowered by Torah. Such a contrast is more promising since it is better suited to both the context and scriptural background.

First, Paul's discussion concerns the competence of new covenant ministers as eschatologically established Spirit-ministers (v6). In verse 7 Paul develops his point that the 'the letter kills' by noting how ministry characterised by the engraved document represents *ἡ διακονία τοῦ θανάτου*.²³⁵ Likewise, 'the Spirit gives life' is important because ministry characterised by the Spirit is *ἡ διακονία τῆς δικαιοσύνης* (v9), which might also be labelled *ἡ διακονία τῆς ζωῆς* (cf. Rom 8:10). As in Romans 7:6, Paul is here speaking about two types of service/ministries as they operate in two distinct aeons.²³⁶

Second, the scriptural background supports the theory that the essence of Paul's antithesis lies in the covenants' respective abilities to empower their members. Ezekiel 36 and Jeremiah 31 promise a time when people will obey God, not because there will be different requirements, but because God will renovate people, supplying them with new resources for fidelity. In verse 3, the foundation of the antithesis, the new covenant is set apart in that it was written by the Spirit and on human hearts—both animate and active. Old covenant ministry, however, is written with ink and on stone—both inanimate.²³⁷ The new covenant lies on the animate side of the comparison. Since the Spirit alone can write on the human heart, vis-à-vis *γράμμα, πνεῦμα* plays up a contrast

231. See further Watson 2004, 282–286.

232. Westerholm 1984, 241.

233. Westerholm 1984, 239–240, here 240, regarding 7:6.

234. See the discussion on Rom 8:4 above (pp.222–225).

235. As Watson (2004, 286–291) has argued, the events of Ex 32 best explain Paul's dictum. Nevertheless, the import of the dictum cannot be confined to those events.

236. So Westerholm 1984, 240. Consequently, the genitives *γράμματος* and *πνεύματος* most likely refer to the *ministry* of the new covenant, not simply the new covenant; see further Westerholm 1984, 247n32; Hafemann 1995, 157–158. The difference, however, is not so substantial (Hafemann 1995, 158n197).

237. As noted by Harris 2005, 264.

between the agencies of the two covenants:²³⁸ The *agency* of the new covenant includes a creative *Agent*.²³⁹ So those who serve in Spirit-ministry are preternaturally equipped to effect transformation because the divine agent is directly involved in their ministry endeavour.²⁴⁰ Via the Spirit new covenant communities experience an unflagging glory whereby they are sustained and transformed (vv18).²⁴¹ The Mosaic covenant, however, lacks this ongoing vitality; its glory is fading and powerless to effect lasting change (vv7–14).²⁴²

Thus while strictly speaking the terms *γράμμα* and *πνεῦμα* denote an objective antithesis between two covenants in eschatological contrast, Paul betrays an interest in their subjective implications. The contrast differentiates between Torah-human and divine-human activity; for while *πνεῦμα* entails God's power operating in and through human existence, *γράμμα* does not.²⁴³ Therefore, the fact that *γράμμα* does not stand for the legalistic perversion of Torah does not preclude its association with 'purely human achievement'.²⁴⁴ Neither is Paul's use of the antithesis unrelated to hermeneutics; as R. Hays notes, 'when God's Spirit-inscribed people encounter Scripture, a transformation occurs that is fundamentally hermeneutical in character',²⁴⁵ which is no doubt related to the epistemological reshaping that comes through encountering the cross (vv14–18). In other words, the agency of the Spirit effects the competency of the reader, just as it does the competency of the minister (vv3–13) and the competency of the Christian community (Rom 2:25–29; 7:5–6). This is unsurprising: it is Paul's Christologically-informed, Spirit-inspired reading of Scripture that breathed life into these very ideas.

238. Similar to Hafemann's (1995, 172–173) 'functional contrast'.

239. Rightly, Deidun 1981, 205: 'The basic objection Paul has to the Mosaic Law is not that it was not interior, but that it is not God.'

240. Thrall 1994, 1:234–1:235.

241. On the permanence of new covenant glory in comparison to the old, see Watson 2004, 291–298 and also section 2.3.1.2. above (pp.34–36).

242. Though he plays down the objective and ontological features of the contrast, my conclusions are very similar to those of Hafemann 1995, 163–173, 177–184; see also Deidun 1981, 203–207; Kamlah 1954.

243. Rightly Barrett 1973, 113.

244. Cf. Thrall 1994, 1:235.

245. Hays 1989, 131. See also Stochkausen (1989, 8–9), Betz (1990, 181) and Watson (2004), who develop and refine the earlier hypothesis that for Paul Scripture speaks with a two-fold voice; see Koch 1986, 331–353; Käsemann 1971b; Kamlah 1954.

7.5.3. Heart-Circumcision and Worship in Spirit: Philippians 3:3

Reflecting on other situations and in an effort to offer some preventative medicine, Paul warns the Philippians about the ‘dogs’, ‘the workers of evil’, ‘the mutilators’ (3:2). With the mention of ἡ περιτομή in verse 3, it becomes apparent that his exhortation concerns those who advocate Jewish customs. In shocking reversal Paul identifies these advocates with unclean dogs and reduces their circumcising to mutilation. ‘We [Christians]’ (ἡμεῖς), Paul says, stand in the sharpest contrast to the mutilators.²⁴⁶ Rather than being unfit for service, ‘we’ serve (λατρεύω) by the Spirit;²⁴⁷ rather than relying on the Flesh, ‘we’ boast in Christ (v3). Not giving an inch, Paul believes that the epithet ἡ περιτομή²⁴⁸ most aptly applies to Spirit-filled communities, uncircumcised Gentiles and all!²⁴⁹

While it is difficult to draw a direct link between Philippians 3:3 and any particular text from Paul’s heritage, there are striking similarities between this text and his reading of the restoration narratives above. Paul’s bold redefinition of the people of God, particularly as it concerns circumcision, reminds one of Romans 2:28–29, where the only circumcision that ultimately matters is associated with the Spirit.²⁵⁰ Spirit rivals Flesh in both texts. As noted earlier, Romans 2:25–29 evokes a narrative wherein God circumcises the heart to render those in Christ competent moral agents. Any empowerment that might be circumscribed within circumcision-boundaries Paul re-assigns wholly to the Spirit. Defining the people of God there is intimately connected with the constitution of God’s people, with their capacities in the Spirit over against the Flesh. We heard remixes of this song play through Romans 7:5–6 and 2 Corinthians 3:3–6, both of which assert that only living under the eschatological power of grace equips one for service. Are similar con-

246. While Fowl (2005, 148) warns that ‘we should be careful of assuming that every assertion Paul makes here is directly designed to counter some assertion made by “the mutilators”’, Paul’s emphatic ἡμεῖς, along with his use of κατατομή and περιτομή set verse 3 in contrast to ‘the mutilators’.

247. While I think text-critical considerations favour οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες, the variant textual traditions have little bearing upon our purposes.

248. Bockmuehl 1997, 185.

249. ἡμεῖς suggests that Paul is not simply referring to uncircumcised Gentiles, but to the character of Christian communities generally, for he is circumcised.

250. See the discussion the previous chapter (section 6.3.2.). Note the similar juxtaposition between Spirit and circumcision (though the term is not used) in Gal 3:2–3.

cerns at work here?

We can answer this question by looking at the contrast in verses 2 and 3. The marks distinguishing Pauline communities from their opponents as 'the circumcision' are Spirit-service and Christ-boasting. In the LXX, *λατρεύω* most often denotes Levitical 'service' in the temple cult.²⁵¹ Paul's metaphor suggests that Christians are qualified for lives set apart in devotion to God (cf. Rom 12:1–2), whereas the mutilators are not.²⁵² What distinguishes Christian service is that it materialises *πνεύματι θεοῦ*. As G. Fee has argued, the most natural way to take the dative is instrumentally.²⁵³ God's empowering Spirit thus distinguishes Pauline communities from 'the workers of evil' (*τοὺς κακοὺς ἐργάτας*).²⁵⁴

Aimed at advocates of Jewish customs, *κακοὺς ἐργάτας* probably intends a specific critique of their *ἔργα νόμου* ('works of the Law', Gal 2:15, 3:2, 5, etc).²⁵⁵ Over the last 20 years *ἔργα νόμου* has been commonly understood as a reference to ethnic boundary and status markers. When this is emphasised the confidence that the advocates place in the Flesh is interpreted as an exclusive ethnic boast.²⁵⁶ But to restrict Paul's critique to nationalistic pride becomes problematic when all the contradistinctions are taken into account. By contrasting the advocates with *οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες*, Paul critiques the *entire lives of his opponents as engendered by the Flesh*. While the confidence placed in the 'Flesh' in verse 4 is doubtless connected to the circumcision being imposed on Gentile Christians, Paul saw behind this imposition 'a total mindset that is opposed to the Spirit...'²⁵⁷ Failing to recognise and trust in God's eschatological provision, circumcision advocates necessarily depend upon, and lead their disciples to depend upon, resources that remain captive to Sin.²⁵⁸ Paul thus contrasts two types of competency: a competency which is dependent on and

251. Fee 1995, 299–300.

252. See Hooker 1994, 524, who notes how Lev 21:5, 18–23 and Deut 23:1 exempt those with physical deformity from priestly service; see also Fowl 2005, 148. Significantly, Israel's charter called her to be a royal priesthood (Ex 19:6).

253. Fee 1994, 21–24, 753.

254. Bockmuehl 1997, 192.

255. Silva 2005, 147–148; Bockmuehl 1997, 188–189.

256. See, e.g., Bockmuehl 1997, 188–189.

257. See the astute observation by Silva 2005, 149. Note also Hooker 1994, 525: 'The argument in this chapter seems to suppose a more subtle danger, that of putting confidence "in the flesh."'

258. See Fee 1994, 752; Silva 2005, 149. Compare Bockmuehl 1997, 191–193: '[T]he contrast is between the true circumcision whose service is empowered by and directed towards the Spirit of God, and those whose service is narrow-mindedly focused on the "works of the law" as defining their service and status before God' (192).

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empowered by the Flesh and one which relies on and is empowered by the Spirit.

Bockmuehl and Fowl insist that Paul is not setting Christianity as over against Judaism here, as if his communities have somehow replaced Israel or become the ‘true’ Israel.²⁵⁹ Rather, ‘Paul’s assertion seeks to locate the worship of the Christian community in Philippi already within the true worship of the God of Israel apart from circumcision...’²⁶⁰ While this may be, we should not confuse the issue. Although Paul is not here setting Christianity in antithesis to Judaism, he *is* setting those who live by the power of the Spirit in opposition to those who live by the power of the Flesh. For Paul this opposition stands whether those who live by the Flesh are Jewish-Christians (like his opponents) or something else. That this holds for non-Christian Jews is apparent in verses 4–11. There, as Westerholm notes, ‘Paul equates [his opponents’] position with his *pre-Christian* past.’²⁶¹ Whatever achievements Paul had under the Torah were gained *ἐν σαρκί*.²⁶² Paul was acting neither *with*, nor *in*, nor *before*, but *against* God (v6a; Rom 8:7–8)!²⁶³ Under the Lordship of Christ (3:20–21), however, Paul and his communities have received from God a new moral competence, one which remains in dynamic-dependence upon the agencies of Christ and Spirit (1:11; 2:12–13; 3:9–10; 4:13).

7.6. Summary and Conclusions

Our exploration into Romans 7:5–6, along with our brief consideration of 2 Corinthians 3:5–6 and Philippians 3:3 confirms and develops the conclusions reached with regard to Romans 2:25–29.²⁶⁴ Even while the terms Paul chooses to borrow fluctuate, his allusions show how the three-fold witness of Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel attests to what God is now accomplishing for those in union with Christ. If Paul understood the Christ event as the solution to human incompetence, then Paul’s interpretation of the significance of that event takes shape under the

259. Bockmuehl 1997, 191; Fowl 2005, 147.

260. Fowl 2005, 148.

261. Westerholm 2004a, 384n47, emphasis original.

262. Westerholm 2004a, 403.

263. Paul’s ‘blameless’ Torah-righteousness must be assessed through this hermeneutical lens.

264. Similarly, see Käsemann 1971b, 146.

guidance of these ancient voices. Among other things, those texts influence Paul's Flesh/Spirit and letter/Spirit antitheses, which set anthropology and agency in eschatological contrast. To live in the Flesh is to live under the old aeon, void of the Spirit's creative energies. Independent from the Spirit, humans necessarily rely on their own debased faculties, which are themselves under the jurisdiction and influence of Sin. Letter, closely connected with Flesh, describes human agency as it is empowered by the Law. Since the Law cannot empower, like physical-circumcision service in the letter is a purely human enterprise. Spirit, on the other hand, evokes God's dynamic activity which initiated a new world and summons incompetent agents into that world. This process of 'world-switching' grants believers fresh ontological grounding for obedience:²⁶⁵ the anthropological framework of those who were once inhabited by Sin (Rom 7:17) is now being restructured according to Christ's eschatological status (Gal 4:19).²⁶⁶ Through the indwelling Spirit, recreated believers no longer live according to the Flesh, but according to Christ's Spirit which indwells them, and according to the new creation which the Spirit typifies.

265. For the term 'World-switching', I am indebted to Scroggs 1993, 170.

266. So Käsemann 1980, 223: 'If the indwelling of the Spirit is spoken of here as sin is in 7:17ff., in both cases radical possession is indicated which also affects our will according to 5:5.' However, Lutheran sensitivities prevent Käsemann from affirming any ontological change in the believer (1980, 167). For a discussion of the ontological implications of participation in the new creation, see Stuhlmacher 1967a; Schnelle 2001, 67–69.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSIONS

This study has sought to show how Paul's reading of Scripture informed his conceptions about divine grace and human agency. At the same time, it has endeavoured to set those conceptions into Paul's ancient context and ask how they have been reshaped according to his particular experience of God's grace in Christ. As such, this analysis addresses two underdeveloped topics in Pauline research and the interplay between them. I now offer some conclusions about these themes and reflect on how they might contribute to larger discussions.

8.1. Conclusions Regarding Paul's Reading of Scripture

On one level this work represents an investigation into Paul's reading of Scripture. We have seen that Paul, like other Jews, read Ezekiel's expectation of a Spirit and Jeremiah's hope of a new covenant together with Deuteronomy 30:1–10. In those texts an act on the heart rectifies the moral competence of the human agent, which gives rise to the following pattern:

An act on the heart > *leads to* obedience > *leads to* Life.

This is no less true in Paul. But he believes those narrative promises have expressly come true in God's sending of Christ and Spirit. We can summarise Paul's interpretation by answering the following questions:

1) *What agent performs the transformative act?* For Paul the agent who transforms human existence is God himself. It is God who pours out his love into human hearts, gifts people with his Spirit, and by that same Spirit circumcises hearts and implants in them a faithful disposition.

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Though Paul would share this conviction with some Jewish interpreters (Bar, Jub, 4Ezra), it would distance him from others who conceive of the act in some synergistic fashion, whether that is understood in terms of one agent and then Another (2Bar) or one agent with Another (Qumran, Philo).

2) *When do these things take place?* Like the authors of 2 Baruch (78:6–7) and 4 Ezra (6:25–28),¹ Paul understood the hope of restoration as a thoroughly eschatological phenomenon associated with the age to come. Yet, he also believes that with the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the giving of the Spirit, new creation encroached upon the present age. Thus unlike 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra, Paul proclaims God's *transformative* grace here and now.

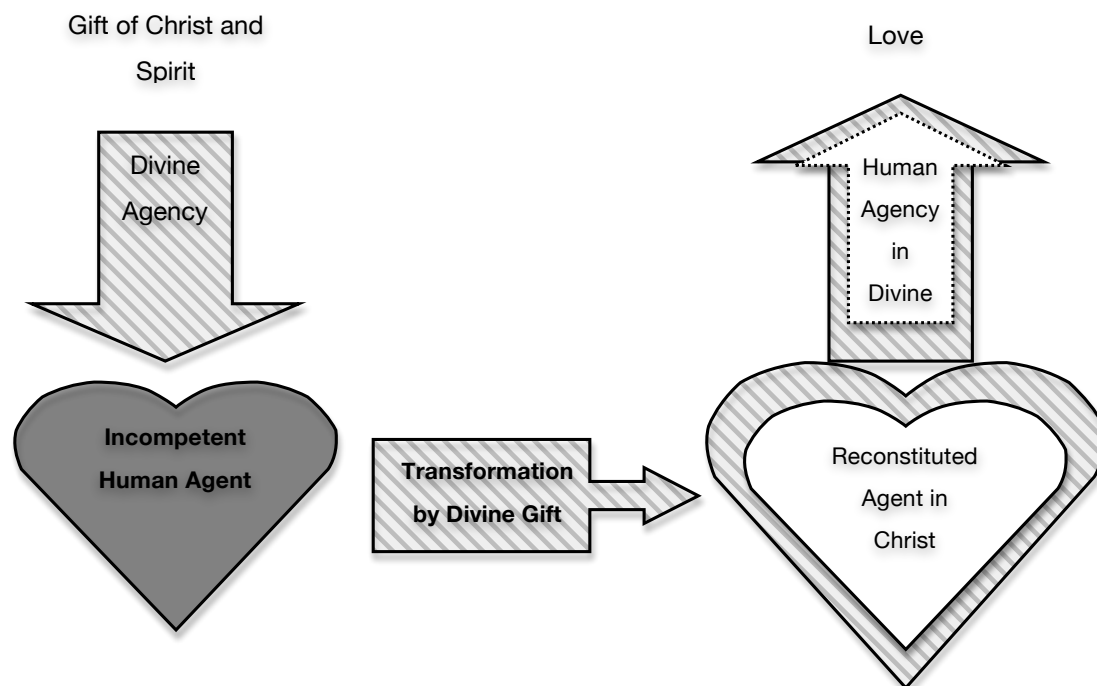
3) *What does Paul understand the scriptural metaphors to signify?* For Paul the scriptural metaphors point to and illuminate life in Christ. The violent act of heart-circumcision that would cut away all that is stubborn and callous finds its fullest expression in the terrifying yet liberating experience of being co-crucified with Christ. At that rift the rebellious 'I' dies: it is severed from the world with which it so identified and is now determined by God's new creation (Gal 2:20; 6:14–15; 2Cor 5:17). Ezekiel's gift of a divine, life-giving Spirit has been revealed as none other than the Spirit of the risen Lord (1Cor 15:45), who inhabits believers and energises their existence (Rom 8:2–11). The promise of Torah that is written on hearts to make people predisposed to its demands is fundamentally realised in believers living out the love imprinted within them. Those who receive these gifts are thereby enabled to fulfil God's created intention for humanity as they worship him and love one another. Their end is eternal Life.

4) *Whose agency and initiative is being prioritised?* In contrast to most Jews, on Paul's reading Scripture confirms the horrific reality that human agents are utterly incompetent. Bereft of eyes that see, ears that hear, or understanding hearts, they lack the faculties to respond to God effectively. Given this situation, resolution could not be on account of any acceptable human act. Rather, for Paul, human emancipation must be born out of God's unconditioned saving intervention as expressed in the Christ event.²

1. Possibly Jub 1:15–24.

2. For a comparison of Paul with other Jews at this point, see the summary sections on pp.181-183 and 208-210 above. Here lies one crucial difference between this study and that of Thielman 1994, 245, who believes that the differences regarding Paul and his contemporaries understanding of Israel's story had to do with which act they were living in. Our study has shown that the disagreement is also over whose agency initiates the redemptive

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From these answers it becomes apparent that what is primarily distinctive about Paul's reading strategy is its thoroughly Christological shape. Though Paul will occasionally use scriptural language to speak of God's grace in Christ (e.g., heart-circumcision; teaching being inscribed on the heart; God's Spirit-gift; wholehearted obedience; a new covenant), most often he chooses terms from the Christ event itself: of being crucified with Christ (Gal 2:20, Rom 6:6); united to Christ in his death and burial (Rom 6:3–5); of being clothed with him (Gal 3:27); of Christ in you (Rom 8:10; Gal 4:19); of beholding his glory (2Cor 3:18, 4:6); of participating in his resurrection power (Rom 6:4–5, 11; Phil 3:10); and of new creation (2Cor 5:17; Gal 6:14–15). If in many of these cases the lines between promise and fulfilment blur, this only strengthens the assumption that a dynamic relationship exists between Paul's Christian convictions and the Scriptures he read: neither is dispensable, both mutually inform one another.³

And yet one senses that the functional influence that Christ and Scripture had upon one another is not equally weighted. If Paul's reading of Deuteronomy 30 does not violate the text, neither is it straightforward. By attributing the saving initiative to God, by inferring circumcision's dispensability, and by understanding the concealed things as a reference to God's work in

event.
3. See Watson 2004, 16–24.

the inner man which encompasses Gentiles, Paul reads Deuteronomy in a very peculiar fashion. But this is not to conclude that Paul arbitrarily imposed his experience upon these texts; that would deny the very thing he believed still gave those writings validation, namely the potential for his ancestral tradition to reveal more to him about the gospel than he had previously known. This study, then, confirms F. Watson's central thesis that in searching the Scriptures for their witness to the gospel, Paul was at the same time shaped by those Scriptures.⁴ Where this study disagrees with Watson is in his conclusion that Deuteronomy 30:1–10 is excluded from the Christological harvest of texts from which Paul gleaned. For we have seen how Paul believes that the voice of the righteousness by faith resounding through Deuteronomy 30:11–14 is also present in 30:1–10. That scriptural hope has become a Christian reality via Christ and Spirit.⁵

8.2. Conclusions Regarding the Pauline Integration of Grace and Agency

Our investigation into Paul's reading of Scripture has brought issues regarding the relationship between grace and obedience into clearer focus. Any adequate analysis of how Paul integrates these two fundamental elements must take into consideration his conceptions of moral competence, human transformation, and the multiplex way in which he structures divine and human agency.

8.2.1. Moral Competence and Human Transformation

For Paul there are fundamentally two types of moral agents, absolutely distinguishable by their competence. First, there is the Adamic agent. Though at one time possessing capacities sufficient to bring about obedience, the Adamic agent's misuse of those capacities led to their termination.

4. Watson 2004, 16; cf. Hays 1989.

5. On the possible coherence between Paul's reading of 30:1–10 and his rewriting of verses 12–14 in Rom 10:6–8, see my forthcoming essay: 'The Vindication of Agents, Divine and Human: Paul's reading of Deuteronomy 30:1–14 in Romans'.

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Handed over to the anti-God powers, Adamic humans are now determined, inside and out, by those powers' influence. A debased constitution exacerbates the dilemma: a corrupt will accounts for their continual insubordination; a deceived mind explains why they are incogniscent of this reality. Thus we see how God judged Adamic rebellion by removing the creaturely capacity for obedience.

Unlike post-Kantian perspectives, Paul's apocalypticism does not oblige him to think that a moral 'ought' implies a human 'can'.⁶ While obedience may come as a command, it is emphatically not an option. If Adamic agents are ever to be sufficient, competent agents, it would take nothing short of an act of new creation. Fortunate for Paul, the God who removed creaturely competence also raises the dead, provides hope beyond all hope, and calls things that do not exist into existence (Rom 4:17–18). By that same call, Paul believes, God is eschatologically recreating moral agents.

Paul's vision of transformation, understood in terms of conformity to Christ, holds anthropological ramifications. As believers are transferred into the realm of the Spirit via Christ's death and resurrection, they begin to participate in this new world and be reshaped by it. With renewed minds and transformed hearts these agents are capable of both thinking and willing in ways that please God. With hearing ears and understanding minds they are morally addressable.⁷ While most fundamentally transformation is depicted as a one-time-event—a definitive moment when believers die with Christ, are circumcised of heart, epistemologically reoriented, and indwelt by God's Spirit—this definitive event enlists believers' active participation in an ongoing process of recapitulating the self-giving and life-receiving pattern embodied in the Christ event (Rom 12:2; 2Cor 4:16), a narrative trajectory which culminates in bodily transformation at the resurrection (1Cor 15:51–52; Phil 3:20–21). For Paul it is this reciprocal relationship of giving and receiving, a relationship set in motion by the divine initiative, on which human competency is founded. Paul's perspective, it would thus appear, sits uncomfortably with many substantialist notions regarding the Self: a Self which exists complete, apart from the acts and relations which make up

6. This phraseology is taken from an unpublished paper given by J.L. Martyn entitled: "The newly created moral agent in Paul's letters" (SBL, 2007).

7. Martyn 2002, 91: 'Paul is confident that every one of his imperatives is spoken to persons in a community inspired by the Spirit of Christ, and for that reason addressable in the sense of being able obediently to hear God's imperative, to be thankful for it, and to act on it.'

this new existence.⁸ Rather, Pauline imperatives are predicated upon the fact that, clinging to God through Christ, his communities have been *freed* to obey, and are *continually freed* to obey by the Holy Spirit.⁹ The newly created moral agent is constituted as such precisely as she stands in ongoing relation to God through the reception of his gift (cf. Gal 3:2–5); and, for this very reason, the reconstituted agent can never and will never be an autonomous agent.

Here is the point at which Paul would seem to differ most sharply from Baruch, two authors who otherwise share much in common. Though Baruch believes that incompetent Israel will be reconstituted by God as a competent moral agent, he shows little concern over the issue of whether or not divine agency and recreated human agency coincide or coinhere in human obedience. Paul, on the other hand, seems everywhere at pains to make clear that though recreated human agents are competent agents, they are in no sense independent agents.

8.2.2. Human Obedience and Divine Agency

If for Paul believers are summoned into an active participation in relationship with God, such participation being an integral component of salvation and necessary condition for eschatological life, this activity must be understood in light of the particular way God's grace takes shape in Christ and Spirit. We have seen that on the basis of Ezekiel Paul understands the Spirit-gift as part and parcel of union with Christ. Consequently, in Pauline thought God's agency remains affixed to human agency long after the initial recreative work is done. Two things are notable about this bond, both of which contribute to our understanding of obedience in Paul.

8.2.2.1. *Human and Divine Agency in Dynamic Integration:*

First we see how Paul creatively strains various grammatical and linguistic techniques to communicate that divine and human agency exist in dynamic integration. Most prominent is probably his startling employment of active and passive verbs. In Romans 8:3–4 those who actively walk according to the Spirit have the requirement passively fulfilled in them. This describes

8. For a discussion of substantialist ontology, see McCormack 2002, 149–156, although his work has a particular concern for agency questions in Barth.

9. This way of putting it is indebted to Nimmo 2007, 99.

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in miniature the substratum of Galatians 5:13–6:10, where the fruit of the Spirit is realised precisely as believers actively walk (*περιπατέω*) and are passively led (*ἄγεσθε*) by the Spirit (5:16, 18, 25).¹⁰ Even so, only those who sow to the Spirit reap Life (Gal 6:8). Later in Romans, Paul will urge his hearers to ‘be transformed’ (*μεταμορφοῦσθε*, 12:2). He will speak of the Galatians ‘coming to know God’ (*γνόντες θεόν*), only to re-express this as ‘being known by God’ (*γνωσθέντες ὑπο θεοῦ*, Gal 4:8). And while Paul speaks of being passively *co-crucified* with Christ (*συνεσταυρώθη*, Rom 6:6; Gal 2:19) so as to be no longer held captive to the Flesh and its ‘passions’ (*πάθημα*, Rom 7:5), he is certain that those who belong to Christ *have themselves crucified* (*ἑσταύρωσαν*) the flesh with its ‘passions’ (*παθήμασιν*, 5:24). All these examples suggest that a believer’s works arise out of two interconnected agencies.

The divine agent’s connectedness to the human agent in Christ is also expressed through a variety of prepositions. Paul says that the divine agent acts with (*σύν*, 1Cor 15:10), in (*ἐν*, Phil 2:13; Gal 2:20; 1Thess 2:13; 2Cor 13:3; Cf. Col 1:29) and even through (*διά*, 2Cor 2:14; Rom 15:18) the human agent. So intimate is this relationship that Paul can even make divine and human agents effectively the subjects of the same act. The Corinthians are in some senses both Christ’s and Paul’s letter (2Cor 3:3). And it seems that it is exactly as Paul taught the Thessalonians that they were taught by God (1Thess 4:1, 9; cf. 1:5, 2:13). Paul’s own striving with the Philippians for their progress constitutes the good work that God is working in them (1:6, 25–26).¹¹ It is as Paul is suffering in labour that God forms Christ in the Galatians (Gal 4:19).¹² *When* we cry ‘abba’, the Spirit bears witness (Rom 8:15–16), and cries ‘abba’ (Gal 4:6). Divine and human agencies coincide in these effects.

So deeply does the divine agent work within the human that in some places Paul will seemingly even deny human agency altogether. So, for instance, in 1 Corinthians 15:10 Paul’s own labours substantiate how God’s grace took effect in his life. While initially he seems to view these labours as the *evidence* of God’s grace in so far as he worked in grateful *response* to God (who gifted him in spite of his persecuting the Church), surprisingly we learn that the subject of the labours is *οὐκ ἐγὼ δὲ ἀλλὰ ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ [ἡ] σὺν ἐμοί*. To describe these labours as ‘response’ is

10. See Barclay 2008, 383; 1988, 225–227. See also Martyn 1997a, 531–32, 42–43.

11. Eastman 2007, 11.

12. See Eastman 2007, 118–121.

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somewhat inappropriate as it is not Paul, the independent agent, who acts, but grace with him. And if this is evidence of saving grace, then it is *direct evidence*, in no way inferential by being one step removed from the grace itself. Possibly more radical is Galatians 2:19–20.¹³ Co-crucifixion eradicates the agency of the pre-Christian Paul so that it is no longer Paul who lives. On the other side of execution stands a reconstituted Self, not independent from, but in inseparable union with Christ. Thus for Paul co-crucifixion results in co-habitation so that the life the Christian now lives is a life penetrated and animated by Christ and Spirit.

These statements do not undermine the integrity of human agency. Paul is not an occasionalist who thinks that humans are simply the vessel for divine acts.¹⁴ A denial of human agency would make incomprehensible much of what we have seen above regarding a human's necessary work. Furthermore, in some sense Paul can still say that *he* labours harder than any; that *he* now lives in the flesh; and that *he* ministers and teaches. The function of 1 Corinthians 15:10 and Galatians 2:19–20 is not to deny human agency, but to rule out the notion of autonomy, as well as to secure God's agency as the *foundation* for Christian lives. But in Paul's mind the agency of the Spirit reinforces rather than negates human responsibility.¹⁵ This is because the two agents exist in an essentially non-contrastive relationship: they neither relate in inverse proportion, nor in simple one plus one addition. They coinhere, yet the basic integrity of each remains.

8.2.2.2. *Human Agency is Ultimately Dependent on Divine Agency:*

However much one insists that, for Paul, divine agency does not damage the integrity of human agency, neither are his agency conceptions egalitarian. It is notable that Paul's negations do not run the other way round. We could not imagine him saying: 'it was not grace that worked, but me alongside grace.'¹⁶ For Paul the human agent always remains dependent on the divine agent. Thus in Philippians 2:12–13 both the willing and doing of Christian work is grounded in (γάρ) God's working in them. A chapter later Paul says that he vigorously seeks to apprehend (καταλάβω) the goal precisely because (ἐφ' ᾧ) he has been apprehended (κατελήμφθην) by Christ

13. Barclay 2008, 379: 'Here it is not a case of who is "working" but, more basically, who is "living".'

14. See Tanner 1988, 85–86. If by calling human works 'evidential' one implies that humans are an inactive conduit of divine acts, this is yet another sense in which 'evidential' may be misleading.

15. Barclay 1988, 226.

16. So also Barclay 2008, 384.

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(Phil 3:12).¹⁷ Human love and obedience flow from the heart because God has poured out his love into and circumcised human hearts (Rom 2:26–29; 5:5; 6:17). Human ability is secured in the one who endues strength (Phil 4:13). Since God is powerful in the Corinthians (*δυνατεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν*), they live by his power (*ἐκ δυνάμεως*, 2Cor 13:3–4). It is only because the Spirit bears the fruit of goodness and gentleness (Gal 5:22–23), that Paul expects the Galatians to restore in gentleness (Gal 6:1) and do good to all (6:10).¹⁸ In these examples, divine and human agency are set in a direct, positive relationship. As God’s activity increases so does humanity’s. Even still, so much is ministerial competence not derived out of (*ἀπὸ*) humans that even after God makes them competent the effects of their works remain in an important sense not ‘of them’ (2Cor 3:4–5). The self-determination of the moral agent finds its beginning and basis in God’s own non-coercive, self-determining love.¹⁹

In sum: Paul believes that human agents are remade as competent moral agents in relationship to Christ. He expects that believers can accomplish the Spirit’s demands of wholehearted love and obedience. This is not to say that vis-à-vis the divine agent, recreated agents are ever sufficient in themselves; only to say that they have been newly created as sufficient causes in relation to the rest of the created order. However, when divine agency is taken into account, they are not in and of themselves sufficient, but relate to God in a non-contrastive, yet wholly dependent (asymmetrical) fashion. God enables, but God does not simply enable. God empowers, but God does not simply empower. The divine agent is presently and permanently active in effecting the believer’s obedience.²⁰ Put differently, with respect to obedience God is not the first link in the chain of related causes; rather, God is the sustainer of those created causes, whose agency even extends to created causes’ created effects. Correspondingly, divine and human agency coinhere, but this in no way damages the integrity of the human agent.²¹ On Paul’s count, eschatological agents do not become less, but more fully human as God acts, and are constituted as agents pre-

17. On taking *ἐφ’ ᾧ* causally, see Rom 5:12; 2Cor 5:4; see further Silva 2005, 176.

18. Eastman 2007, 171.

19. Nimmo 2007, 99.

20. Commenting on 1Thess 4:8, Deidun (1981, 56) writes: ‘God’s interior activity is here seen as continuous (*διδόντα*, present tense). God’s intervention is not simply a single act that affected the Christian in the past, but a divine activity that is constantly impinging on the core of his personality. Through Baptism, man is not simply sanctified and then left *alone* with his (now transformed) personality; rather, he remains in *constant* union with a divine source of activity.’

21. Hays (1983, 224) speaks of an ‘overlay of Subjects’.

cisely as they function as God's agency.

If then Paul employs various modalities, terms, and conceptions, it is only because the subject matter is captured by none but potentially illumined by all.²² Though in many ways it strains our language just as much as it strained Paul's to describe the precise integration of divine and human agency, by ruling out some common ways of framing the two we can sharpen our focus. First, Paul does not believe that divine and human agency are in competition with one another so as to relate in inverse portion. Divine agency negates neither humans' agency nor their responsibility (Phil 2:12–13; Gal 6:8). Neither does Paul believe that the two agents work alongside one another, offering two independent contributions. Nor even do the two agents synthesise into a third new thing. Rather than conceiving divine and human agency as '*one or the other*' or '*one plus the other*', '*one beside the other*', or '*one becoming the other*', for Paul human works are taken up and established in the divine work: '*one in the other*'.²³ In this way Paul's principal belief about grace—that humans participate *in* Christ—transforms his understanding of obedience.

8.2.3. Implications for Pauline Theology

We can begin to see how Paul's re-conceptualisation of human agency in Christ has implications for the ways in which grace and works are conceived in Pauline Theology.

8.2.3.1. Understanding the Pauline Antithesis

If Paul does not fundamentally conceive of divine and human agency in competitive terms, where does that leave his antithetical statements about grace/faith and works/law (Rom 4:4–6, 16; 9:16, 32; 11:6; Gal 3:2). On a traditional reading these antitheses encapsulate the way Paul radically dichotomises divine and human agency, making salvation wholly dependent on the former.²⁴ More recent attempts to place Paul in his historical context are suspicious of the traditional reading. For K. Stendahl, questions about divine and human agency arise out of later Western concerns and 'Paul's references to the impossibility of fulfilling the Law is [sic] part of a

22. My language is indebted to Hunsinger 1991, 202.

23. Schnelle (2001, 68) locates the believer 'im Wirkungsfeld' of God.

24. Watson 2006, 99.

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theological and theoretical scriptural argument about the relation between Jews and Gentiles'.²⁵ Similarly, N.T. Wright insists "Justification by works" has nothing to do with individual Jews attempting ... [to pull] themselves up by their moral bootstraps'; Paul's debate is unconcerned with the issue of 'nomism' or '*Menschenwerke*'.²⁶ In other words, the proper relationship between divine and human agency was not at stake. How could it be? Paul himself expects works.²⁷ What distinguishes Paul's concerns from fellow Jews are the particular works required.²⁸ As Watson notes:

The antithesis between faith and works does not express a general theoretical opposition between two incompatible views of the divine-human relationship. Rather, it articulates the Pauline conviction that the church should be separate and distinct from the Jewish community... There is no question of an antithesis between a passive reception of the gift of salvation followed by secondary active consequences... The faith/works antithesis is not an antithesis between faith and morality-in-general, but an antithesis between life as a Christian, with its distinctive beliefs and practices, and life as an observant Jew.²⁹

The current tendency is thus to soften the grace/works antithesis, warning against reading modern considerations about agency into Paul. In the current climate, one senses that anyone trying to relate the antitheses to the issue of human salvation out of a common predicament is automatically regarded to be deeply misguided.³⁰ How does the present study contribute to this debate?

This study has attempted to set Paul's view of agency in its ancient context. In doing so, we have seen that for Paul human agents are always caught up into larger networks of power and function within 'other totalities within the cosmic order'.³¹ These totalities affect humans in at

25. Stendahl 1976, 81, 131, which is a republication of 'Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West' (1963). Compare Räisänen 1987, 169–177. Likewise Engberg-Pedersen 2002b, 127, 139.

26. Wright 1997, 119; see also his 1978, 71; 2002, 479.

27. The objection felt by many is voiced by Stowers 1994, 188: 'Usually commentators take "works of the law" as equivalent to doing the law or living by the law. Often they further abstract "works of the law" to mean human effort, activity, or achievement. But Paul assumes that activity, religious achievement, and good works are both proper and essential'; see also Räisänen 1987, 184, 186.

28. See Dunn 1998, 355; Dunn 2005a, 105. Others now take *πίστις* as faithful obedience, which further undermines any distinction in agency; see, e.g., Stowers 1994, 199–203. Compare Kertelge 1966, 225.

29. Watson 2007, 122–123. However, Watson is more nuanced than most. He notes how the two communities conceive of agency dynamics differently because Paul has a conversionist theology and thus a dynamic view of grace as opposed to a static one. He rightly highlights how in Paul 'faith is dependent on and generated by the *kerigma* ... and not a spontaneous decision that any one could in principle make, entire of their own volition' (122). Nevertheless, for Watson, this is not what Paul's antitheses are about.

30. See Stendahl 1976, 26, 86.

31. Warne, 1995, 58–59.

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least two ways. First, human anthropology is inextricably bound up with cosmology. The Adamic agent is *ψυχικός*, a component of the world which is consigned to Sin (Gal 3:22). The Christian, however, is *πνευματικός*, a component of God's new creation (2Cor 5:17). Secondly, the totalities within the cosmic order include other active agents, whose agencies are set in a direct, positive relationship to human agency.

Putting Paul's views in their ancient context holds two important implications for the current discussion on the Pauline antithesis. On the one hand, dichotomies between divine and human agency are not unqualified. Paul's denials of human agency in sinful acts (Rom 7:17, 20) and in good works (1Cor 15:10; Gal 2:20) should not be understood as absolute denials,³² but serve a particular function of highlighting human agency's entanglement with higher powers. On the other hand, Paul believes that there are *two* worlds with *two* sets of powers. These worlds and powers stand in the starkest contrast to one another. In so far as persons are aligned with one power, they are at enmity with another. Human freedom is always simultaneously a form of slavery and conversely, human slavery entails some kind of freedom (Rom 6:18, 20, 22).³³ Thus we find an antithesis in Paul that lies more along the axis of world-powers than between divine and human agencies.

Nevertheless, those who are enmeshed in Sin are necessarily at enmity with God. Until humans have been liberated by being brought under God's saving reign, their agency must be set in antithetical relation to God's agency so that one is either justified by works of law or by faith of Christ. With respect to God's justifying act, initiative and priority, it would seem that Paul *does indeed* play off divine grace over against human works.³⁴ But now, God has begun to create of his own power and initiative agents that work in concert with the divine will.³⁵ And so in large agreement with Watson:

32. Compare Stendahl (1976, 93) who thinks Paul's argument in Rom 7 acquits the 'I'. See also Martyn 2002, 95.

33. Schnelle 1996, 86: 'If in antiquity freedom and slavery were mutually exclusive, in Paul they are mutually dependent'.

34. Ridderbos 1977, 179: '[T]he contrast "faith" and "works," ... is not to be understood in any other way than as a contrast between the grace of God on the one hand and human achievement as the ground of justification on the other. That faith and works, however, are mutually exclusive only in this sense, but for the rest, where meritoriousness is not in question, belong inseparably together, is evident from the whole of Paul's preaching.' This gets at the dynamic even if we might quibble with the term 'meritoriousness'.

35. So Eastman (2007, 59), who notes how 'in Christ' softens the 'absolute distinction' between divine and human agency.

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In the (more numerous) passages that speak of the practice of the Christian life, there is little if any sense of a potential tension between appeals to human and to divine agency. It is therefore wholly misguided to seek to impose the characteristic structure of Paul's righteousness by faith language on Pauline discourse in its entirety.³⁶

And yet even in descriptions about the Christian life, as our investigation of the Flesh/Spirit antithesis has shown, Paul retains an unyielding conviction that humans are ever dependent on divine agency, that this dependence corresponds to their initial reception of grace (Gal 3:2–5), and that this life of dependent-competence can be pitted against self-reliant-incompetence.³⁷ This study, then, supports and even intensifies a Pauline antithesis between divine and human agency, while at the same time limiting its scope.

8.2.3.2. The Place and Value of Christian Works in the Pauline 'Pattern of Religion'

God's participation in human agency fundamentally alters the character of Christian 'works'. For Paul, obedience does not function as a human's independent offering to a get-in-by-grace, stay-in-by-works scheme. One problem with discussions about the necessary role of obedience in Paul is that they often conceive of grace in either negative or static terms: grace *cancel*s the penalty of sin or simply functions as a status which one maintains through proper living in order to escape judgement. On this understanding, to 'fall from grace' is to remove oneself from the sphere of those who will be forgiven. But in Paul, grace is limited neither to an offer of salvation, nor to God's present or future justifying act, nor even to God's initial reconstituting work itself. Grace is that dynamic, creative and recreative power which operates in and through believers, founding their will to act and even bringing those acts to fruition.³⁸

Recently, J.D.G. Dunn has queried whether it might be appropriate to call the Pauline pattern synergistic since Paul calls his hearers to an obedience that is to some degree a condition of

36. Watson 2006, 102.

37. Compare Barclay 1988, 240–242. Barclay (251) goes on to insist that 'in Galatians *and* in Romans there are no clear indications that Paul is concerned with individual legalistic attitudes' (emphasis original). But this all depends on what constitutes 'individual legalistic attitudes'. If legalism is reliance upon a power which is 'merely human', Barclay's definition of the Flesh (240), then it is hard to escape the conclusion that in Paul's perspective non-Christians (including Jews) were legalistic by default.

38. Dunn (2005c, 80) notes how Paul was not unaware that his emphasis on obedience 'could lead to reliance upon and pride in achievement. But that clearly did not prevent him from urging such responsibility upon believers.' Indeed, yet it is striking that often in those very places where one would expect him to emphasise human agency, he mentions divine agency in the same breath (e.g., Phil 2:12–13)!

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eternal life.³⁹ While synergism might helpfully convey the real role believers play in salvation, to the extent that it suggests that humans either work independently of the divine agent (one plus another), or that divine and human contributions stand in inverse proportion to one another (one not another), it remains inadequate as a characterisation of Pauline obedience.⁴⁰ Similarly, to simplify Paul's understanding of Christian experience, as M. Hooker does, to 'God's saving grace evokes man's answering obedience'⁴¹ equally risks pauperising Pauline conceptions. For Paul obedience does not start where grace ends. Any response on the part of a human agent, as J.L. Martyn insists, 'is emphatically *not a separate step*, one that is separate from the continuing causative activity of the divine agent ... for this invasive God *consistently participates in human morality*...'⁴² If, therefore, human works are a necessary condition for eschatological life,⁴³ then God's grace in Christ refashions even the notion of conditionality itself, since grace provides the sufficient condition for obedience.⁴⁴

If synergism does not adequately describe the place of obedience in Paul what about monergism? Does this not more accurately fit Paul's thinking in so far as it emphasises the role of the divine agent in founding and sustaining obedience?⁴⁵ While in these ways monergism appears less problematic, it is not without difficulties since it carries the risk of making Paul out to be an occasionalist, of perverting the integrity of human agency, of rendering a believer's works ultimately inconsequential, and of a 'one and not the other' construct. Perhaps, then it is better to follow J.M.G. Barclay's suggestion and label Paul's view energism,⁴⁶ since God is *ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν*

39. Dunn 2005c, 71–72. So also Winninge 1995, 334.

40. So Barclay 2008, 384, 388n38; O'Brien 2001, 265.

41. Hooker (1990, 157), who with Garlington (1991, 265) and Yinger (1999, 289) agrees materially with Sanders on the relationship between grace and works in Paul; see Sanders 1977, 513, 515–518, 543. While all these authors give some credence to Pauline agency dynamics with mention of the Spirit, they seriously downplay the implications of these dynamics for understanding the Pauline 'pattern'.

42. Martyn 2006, 182, emphasis his. See also Barclay 1988, 227.

43. See Donfried 2002, 263–268.

44. Dunn (2005c, 78) asks rhetorically: 'Does that make any difference to the implication of a degree of conditionality in Paul's understanding of the judgment of believers?' He seems to think not. More strongly, by focusing upon the end point rather than the beginning point of salvation, VanLandingham (2006, 335) concludes: 'The Last Judgment is not ... even over what the Holy Spirit has done in the believer'; but a judgment over the individual's accomplishment. Unfortunately, VanLandingham fails to consider how, for Paul, the Holy Spirit's work in a believer is inseparable from what believers do. Neither does he ask the question of how in the process of salvation the beginning and middle reshape what otherwise might appear as a traditional end. Compare Gathercole 2002, 264.

45. Hagner 1993, 122. So also Laato (1995, 77, 167) and Eskola (1998, 272, 296–297).

46. Barclay 2008, 388n38.

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ὑμῖν καὶ τὸ θέλειν καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν ὑπὲρ τῆς εὐδοκίας (Phil 2:13).

Scholars coming out of a broadly reformed tradition often describe Christian works as evidential. So Ridderbos calls works ‘indispensable as the demonstration of the true nature of faith and as the evidence of having died and been raised together with Christ.’⁴⁷ For Schreiner works ‘do not constitute an earning of salvation but are evidence of a salvation already given’ because they ‘manifest the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer’s life.’⁴⁸ R. Gundry believes that Paul ‘makes good works evidential of having received grace through faith, not instrumental in keeping grace through works.’⁴⁹ At one level, there is nothing wrong with these formulations and one can see how for Paul a believer’s works evidence saving grace. In Romans 2:25–29, it is through obedience that one detects the ‘concealed’ circumcised heart, which is another way of describing union with Christ—the essence of salvation. Thanks is given to God in Romans 6:17 for obedience, which demonstrates that these Christians have been handed over to the imprint of teaching—another reference to Paul’s union doctrine.

Care must be taken, however, with this formulation; for works are never simply evidential. In so far as union with Christ establishes persons in the new creation—Paul’s most basic conviction about salvation—it also establishes them as obedient agents. Obedience thus becomes the realisation of the new creation in a person’s life. Furthermore, while grace founds obedience, and is thus *logically* prior to obedience, it retains contemporaneity with obedience.⁵⁰ Seen this way, the evidential value of obedience lies in the fact that it is a constituent element of saving grace, not because obedience is grace’s biproduct or its detached witness. To make this latter mistake borders on making works dispensable, which is a grave distortion of the Pauline vision.⁵¹ J.D.G. Dunn is thus entirely right to note how ‘in Paul’s soteriology, faith and the Spirit do not reduce or remove the human responsibility of obedience (Rom. 1.5; 15.18; 16.19; 1 Cor. 11.16; 2 Cor. 10.5–6; Phil. 2.12; 2 Thess. 3.14), and the expected outcome is not simply imputed righteousness but *transformed persons*.’⁵² Yet at the very same time, Paul’s focus on obedience does not detract in

47. Ridderbos 1977, 180.

48. Schreiner 1993, 203–204.

49. R. Gundry 1985, 11. Compare Yinger 1999, 175, 202–203, who appears to use ‘evidential’ in a slightly different fashion.

50. J.M. Gundry (1990, 44, here 270) rightly speaks of lives evidencing God’s ‘continual salvific work in them’.

51. Thus R. Gundry (1985, 35) is right to repudiate a view that sees ‘good works as a *means* of retaining salvation’, but is wrong to conclude that they ‘are only (but not unimportantly) a sign of staying in.’

52. Dunn 2005c, 76, emphasis his.

the least from divine grace, but specifies both that in which that grace consists and how grace reaches its goal in the establishment of obedient lives. Grace is actualised in works.

8.2.4. Implications for Paul and Judaism

Throughout this study, I have tried to shed some light on Paul by comparing him with his Jewish contemporaries. A few points are worth highlighting, particularly regarding their views about grace and agency.

8.2.4.1. *The Relationship between Grace and Agency in Obedience*

The first thing to note is that every author we have studied, including Paul, holds that grace *and* works are necessary. Yet from one author to the next we can see palpable differences in the way the two concepts integrate. In 2 Baruch, for instance, grace and obedience are both necessary for salvation, but they remain completely separate and distinguishable. 4 Ezra is similar since there moral agents operate autonomously, even though God overlooks the feebleness of their works, and possibly aids those works to make them acceptable. In Jubilees God's grace is manifest in the giving of the covenant, which creates space for the possibility of obedience and protects its members from demonic hindrances. In Baruch, works depend on grace because grace secures obedient agents, who then go on to fulfil the condition of obedience independently. On Philo's understanding, human agency is akin to divine agency and in this way is directly related to and dependent on it. God even strengthens the willingness of those who exercise their share in the divine gift and God's agency is necessary for works to take effect, but grace does not guarantee that humans will appropriate their share in the divine gift.

There is a large amount of overlap between the structures on which Paul and those at Qumran relate grace and agency. At first glance, they could even appear identical: in both divine and human agencies are set in direct, positive relation; in both they coexist and coinhere; in both the integrity of the human agent is ultimately maintained. However, in Paul the loss of moral competence that all humans possess is a result of disobedience, whereas at Qumran it is only the Sons of Darkness who lack such capacities, and this results from the dualistic structures of the universe. Furthermore, by locating the event of becoming righteous at creation, terms like grace

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and salvation take on different associations at Qumran than they do for Paul. Consequently, unlike Paul, Qumran does not foresee grace bringing about a fundamental reconstitution of the Sons of Righteousness in this age; instead the righteous were created uniquely with a good inclination, they have been given the necessary instruction to live, and at the consummation they will be transformed. For Paul, however, everyone who is able to offer obedience, without exception, was at one time incompetent. If humans are able to obey, this is because God is recreating human agents by bringing them into a dynamic relationship with Christ.

8.2.4.2. The Logic of Gift

Second, by setting readings of Deuteronomy 30 alongside one another we have been able to illuminate many similarities and differences amongst and between Paul and his contemporaries. While every author affirms some problem with the human heart, the depth and scope of this problem would have been contested. Even with this disagreement, most would argue that Deuteronomy 30 must be directed at people who maintain a certain degree of competence as moral agents, corresponding to a reading that prioritises Israel's initiative. If there are necessary conditions placed upon Israel to elicit restoration, Israel must be able to fulfil those conditions if restoration is to come about.

It is crucial to note that such conditionality is not incompatible with the belief that salvation is an act of grace.⁵³ B. Longenecker rightly objects to the idea that Jews viewed God as somehow 'obligated' to save them because of their works.⁵⁴ We have continually seen how in Israel-priority readings God's gifts, on which humans have no claim, remain essential to salvation. Yet these gifts, while undeserved, nearly always correlate with something in humanity, whether that be repentance (2Bar; 4Ezra), love for learning (Qumran), good intentions (Philo), order of birth (Jubilees), and so on. While sometimes correlations might secure some worthy achievement in the recipients (2Bar; 4Ezra), at other times the desire is simply to harmonise God's grace with a rational universe (Jubilees; Philo). Whatever their various motivations, by providing a rationale for grace these Jews would have been able to protect God from the charge of capriciousness and secure a well ordered world.⁵⁵ Consequently, even though works do not *obligate* God to save, this

53. So Westerholm 2004a, 443–444.

54. Longenecker 1995, 30.

55. Sanders 1977, 98; Westerholm 2004a, 345.

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does not mean, as Longenecker would have us believe, that ‘worth’ was never a reason for delimiting to whom God bestowed the gift of salvation.⁵⁶

By reading Deuteronomy 30 in a way that prioritises divine agency and initiative, Paul, with the author of Baruch, represent the minority report. His reading involves presuppositions that stand in the sharpest of contrast to the other interpreters. Unlike many in the ancient world, Paul did not understand God’s grace-gift coming to ‘worthy recipients’.⁵⁷ To the contrary, God’s love flows freely to the ungodly (*ἀσεβείς*, Rom 5:6), to sinners (*ἁμαρτωλοί*, Rom 5:8), to enemies (*ἐχθροί*, Rom 5:10). By refusing to correlate God’s gift with qualifications, Paul again shows himself to be a radical Jew, choosing a somewhat strange option out of the various ways in which grace and agency might be related.

It is important to remember that in the ancient world social, communal, and economic networks all depended upon cycles of reciprocity. Since to give a gift was to establish a relationship upon which the very fabric of society was based, it was assumed that a recipient was able to reciprocate. Paul’s view would thus appear to unravel these crucial networks. The seriousness of this threat is only compounded when one considers the ramifications this might have for relationship with a covenant God. Is YHWH then a disinterested giver? Does his grace operate irrespective of covenant, without the expectation or desire for relationship(!)? How would Paul respond to the charge that his God expects no ‘return’, and therefore desires no relationship?

Convincing or not, Paul would no doubt exclaim: *μή γένοιτο* (cf. Rom 6:1–2, 15)! Grace is unconditioned but not unconditional: it comes without preconditions and correlates with nothing other than God’s own Self-determination to love the ungodly; however it expects that the ungodly will not stay as such and demands of them the obedience of faith. But while Paul believes that God expects reciprocity, the reciprocity that personal relationships demand is not something latent within humans which God draws out by his grace; rather, by uniting people to his Son, God’s grace activates the reciprocity of obedience.⁵⁸ As Käsemann noted: ‘Paulus kennt

56. Longenecker 1995, 30.

57. See Harrison 2003, 224–225, 348. So also Thurén 2000, 170: ‘in standard Greek *χάρις* is not equal to the Pauline, undeserved grace, but means something favourable in general. The semantic limitation of grace to the opposite of personal merits is rather Pauline...’ Or perhaps more accurately: ‘the opposite of *suitability*’.

58. Throughout this study, I have consciously adopted vocabulary and concepts from current ‘gift’ discussions. While I am not able to engage into the exciting conversation taking place amongst many philosophers, theologians and historians, there is reason to believe this study offers a contribution, since questions of agency loom

keine Gabe Gottes, die uns nicht zum Dienst verpflichtete und unsern Dienst ermöglichte.⁵⁹

This brings us to a final point. It is notable that, unlike Philo, Paul was not driven to his formulations about grace and obedience on account of philosophical presuppositions. And while, as in Baruch, Paul's view of human sin does rule out moral competence, this does not seem to be, in the first instance, the reason for Paul's radical perspective. Neither are Paul's constructions of pervasive depravity and utter reliance upon grace primarily motivated by the specific purpose of praising God, as we saw at Qumran, though they no doubt can function that way.⁶⁰ Rather the Pauline 'logic' (if we can speak thus; cf. 1Cor 1:18–31), his prioritisation of divine agency, is inseparably linked to his own personal experience of being confronted with the revelation of grace as a persecutor of the church. It would be difficult to overestimate the impression this disruptive event, along with the unnerving experience of witnessing Gentiles in charismatic worship, left on Paul's theology and hermeneutic.

In conclusion: Paul and his contemporaries hold much in common, not least of which is a belief in the necessity of grace. But upon closer consideration, we can see how the precise forms grace took, the functions it performed, and the spheres in which it operated, and the conditions upon which it was given, differed markedly, allowing for the possibility of vehement disagreements between fellow Jews, not least over the character and function of obedience. It is more likely that rather than being immune from such debates, Paul's own radical views would have placed him at the heart of them. The scholarly assumption that 'grace' was a monolithic concept in antiquity threatens to reduce the varied and complex presentations we have seen to the truism that 'all Jews believed in grace', or, and perhaps worse, of limiting a theology of 'grace' to a small few, or even one—Paul!⁶¹ The consequence is not only a distorted picture of ancient Judaism,

closely beneath the surface. Milbank (1995, 136–137), for example, says that the Bible envisions God's gifts being met by an 'active reception' and 'gift-exchange' as opposed to passive reception and unilateral gifting. From my own research, however, I would suggest that Paul's complex notions of divine and human agency provide a model beyond the reductionistic unilateral-gift/gift-exchange dichotomy. For Paul, reception of grace must be what might be called an 'activated reciprocity' rather than an active reception because the grace receptors are defunct. It is therefore only through an operation of restructuring grace that humans can be active recipients, participants in the circle of gift that substantiates relationships, vertical and horizontal. For a historical response to Milbank to which I am partly indebted, see Billings 2007.

59. Käsemann 1961, 368–369. The English translation (Käsemann 1969, 170) distorts the meaning somewhat: 'Paul knows no gift of God which does not convey both the obligation and the capacity to serve'. The gift does not 'convey'; the gift itself obligates and capacitates service.

60. See Rom 11:33–36; 1Cor 1:31.

61. The dividing lines between the former and latter tendencies fall neatly along those pro-Sanders and contra-

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but a domestication of the apostle himself. Rather than saying that while Paul believed in grace, his Jewish contemporaries did not, this study suggests that it is far more accurate to see that in Paul the ordinary meaning of terms like grace, reciprocity, obligation, condition, freedom, and even obedience are at once included, canceled, and transcended in light of his experience of God-in-Christ.⁶²

Sanders respectively. It is unfortunate that often both suffer from simplistic and monolithic definitions of grace.
62. My language here is indebted to Hunsinger 1991, 200.

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