

THEOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

GEORG STRECKER

**THEOLOGY
OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT**

German Edition edited and completed by
Friedrich Wilhelm Horn

Translated by M. Eugene Boring

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Foreword

From 1975 on, Georg Strecker had in view two large scholarly publications that he labored to complete by the time of his retirement from the university: "Ethics of the New Testament" and "Theology of the New Testament." A timely completion of these two books was delayed by a variety of obligations and projects, such as his commentaries on the Johannine Letters and the Sermon on the Mount, his publications on the Pseudo-Clementine literature and the compilation of a concordance on these documents he had already begun during his doctoral study. The basic ideas he intended to pursue in each book are found in the essays "Strukturen einer neutestamentlichen Ethik," *ZThK* 75 (1978) and "Das Problem der Theologie des Neuen Testaments," *WdF* 367 (1975).

A severe illness that led to his death prevented the author himself from completing either work. When Georg Strecker learned that the physicians had given him only a few weeks to live, he asked me to bring his "Theology of the New Testament" to completion. The preliminary work on his "Ethics of the New Testament" had not proceeded far enough that its publication would be possible in the foreseeable future.

At this point in time the main sections of the "Theology of the New Testament" were essentially complete in manuscript or dictation on cassettes. Only the sections E. IV, F. II-III had no preliminary work; for them I alone am responsible. The manuscripts were then thoroughly edited. Here the guiding principle was that those sections completed by Strecker would receive no essential changes in their content, including those places where I would set the accents differently or would argue in a different manner. To be sure, there was additional work to be done in the footnotes and the bibliographies of secondary literature. Moreover, all citations and references were checked, corrected where necessary, and supplemented. Many file folders filled with notes accumulated over the years were reviewed. For the selection of material from these and its insertion into the text I alone bear the responsibility. Much of this had already been mentioned in Strecker's *Literaturgeschichte des Neuen Testaments* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992); English translation, *History of New Testament Literature* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1997). The reader is thus explicitly referred to this work.

Georg Strecker reported on his proposed structure for the "Theology of the New Testament" at the meeting of the SNTS in Madrid, 28 July 1992.

The introductory sentences of that lecture may well be repeated here: "The structure I am presenting is based on the final form of the New Testament texts, and is thus intentionally a theology of the New Testament oriented to redaction criticism. This means that each New Testament writing is evaluated according to its particular theological conception, so that the term 'theology of the New Testament' more precisely means the complex of theologies in the New Testament. Characteristic for a theology of the New Testament in redaction-critical perspective is the relation of synchrony and diachrony. The theological distinctiveness of the New Testament authors to be arranged synchronically stands against the background of an earlier tradition that is to be seen diachronically, which for its part is stamped by a number of different theological conceptions. The presentation of the theologies of the New Testament authors is thus to be done in such a way that takes account of their reception and interpretation of this earlier tradition."

The completion of this *Theology of the New Testament* would not have been possible without much help given in a generous and cooperative spirit. The administration of the United Theological Seminary in Göttingen provided personnel and organizational help. As representatives of the many students and graduates who provided help over the past years the following may be named: Heidi Abken, Martina Janßen, Frank Kleinschmidt, Christina Lange, Elke Rathert, and Manfred Sablewski. Jörg Sievert may claim for himself the Pauline *περισσότερον αὐτῶν πάντων ἐκοπίασα*. Gisela Strecker and retired pastor Klaus-Dietrich Fricke checked all the references and provided help in editing the language and style of the manuscript. Margret Lessner provided the final version for the press. During the long sickness preceding the death of Georg Strecker she worked unselfishly to complete the *Theology of the New Testament*, disregarding her own concerns, and thus like those named above deserves the readers' gratitude.

Since 1996, when this *Theology of the New Testament* first appeared, New Testament scholars have repeatedly asked for an English translation. I am grateful that Professor M. Eugene Boring, Fort Worth, has accepted this assignment. For twenty-two years he was friend and colleague of Georg Strecker, spending his sabbatical leaves and summer research visits in Göttingen. The many conversations during this extended time allowed him to become thoroughly acquainted with the theological work of Georg Strecker.

Mainz, January 2000

Friedrich Wilhelm Horn

Translator's Preface

First, a personal note: I first met Georg Strecker at the AAR/SBL meeting in Los Angeles in 1972, at which time he graciously facilitated my first sabbatical visit to Göttingen in 1973. Over the years we became close friends during my several visits to Göttingen. He celebrated his sixtieth birthday in our home in Fort Worth in 1989. I was among the small group that celebrated his sixty-fifth birthday in Göttingen in 1994, when he already knew it would be his last. I am glad to have translated this book not only because of its inherent importance for the discipline of New Testament studies and Christian theology, but as a final expression of the respect and affection in which I held Georg Strecker.

Citations from the Bible are taken from the New Revised Standard Version unless the context calls for a different translation to retain the nuance reflected in the author's discussion, in which case I have translated the German or made an independent translation of the Greek text. Other ancient sources are generally cited according to standard English translations. I have sometimes adjusted the citation references accordingly. I have occasionally inserted a translator's note to clarify the meaning when the standard English translation differs from the German text cited by Strecker. A few printer's errors and mistaken Scripture references in the original have been corrected without notes. Abbreviations follow the standard format of TRE and/or JBL.

The reader may be grateful to the following members of the academic community of Brite Divinity School and Texas Christian University who assisted in the enormous task of adjusting the bibliography to English titles and pagination, and editing, proofreading and indexing the whole: Lana N. Byrd, Edward J. McMahon, Monica S. Meyers, Teresa Palmer, Joseph A. Weeks, and Brenda J. Wilson. To Frau Gisela Strecker, who carefully read and annotated a substantial part of my translation, I extend my special thanks. It has been a pleasure to work with Dr. Hasko von Bassi, Dr. Volker Gebhardt and Herr Klaus Otterburig of Walter de Gruyter, as well as Herr Wolfram Burckhardt.

Fort Worth, 3 March 2000

M. Eugene Boring

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"For we cannot do anything against the truth,
but only for the truth." (2 Cor 13:8)

Introduction

1. What is "Theology of the New Testament?"

Bultmann, R. *Theology of the New Testament*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951, 1955. 2:237-251.

Kattenbusch, F. "Die Entstehung einer christlichen Theologie. Zur Geschichte der Ausdrücke *Θεολογία*, *Θεολογεῖν*, *Θεολόγος*," *ZThK* 11 (1930) 161-205; also in *Libelli* 69, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1962².

Strecker, G. "Das Problem der Theologie des Neuen Testaments," in G. Strecker, *Eschaton und Historie. Aufsätze*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979, 260-290; also in G. Strecker, *Das Problem der Theologie des Neuen Testaments*. WdF 367. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1975, 1-31.

Theology has been assigned the task of illuminating the meaning of the myth that expresses transcendent reality in the language of this world. This is the interpretation already given in the oldest example of the word "theology" (*θεολογία*) in Plato's Dialogue "The Republic," (Resp 379 A). Here Plato has his teacher Socrates inquire about the "characteristic features of teaching about God" (*τύποι περὶ θεολογίας*). Accordingly, theology has to do with myths; to it is assigned the task of bringing out the deeper meaning of the stories about the gods. Education in the fine arts can help us to perceive this meaning. Accordingly, theology has the goal of laying bare the structures on which the myth is based, and such a course of investigation—when it happens in the right educational context—has a political consequence. In both the Platonic and Aristotelian systems philosophy is the real science that deals with the world and human beings, so that they attribute to theology only a lesser, provisional rank in their systems. Stoicism, on the other hand, places theology in the last place in a series of philosophical disciplines (dialectic, rhetoric, ethics, politics, physics, theology);¹ on this basis theology can be considered the "crown" of the Stoic system. Since it follows immediately after "physics," it also stands for "metaphysics," which not only names its place in the series following physics, but can also affirm that the theological question addresses that which transcends physics. According to the Stoic understand-

¹ As in Cleanthes of Assos, the successor of Zeno, founder of the Stoic school (d. ca. 232 B. C. E.). Cf. F. Kattenbusch, *Entstehung* 9-10.

ing theology deals with those unavoidable issues that essentially concern human being as such. Humans know that they are determined by the universal law of the world, *physis* (nature), that is identical with the divine reason (*νοῦς*). The individual human being must shape his or her life in harmony with this divine cosmic reason. Theology speaks of such an orientation to the world, understands human being as a constituent element in the order of the cosmos.

The term "theology" is not found in the New Testament. It occurs for the first time in Christian literature in the writings of the Church Fathers: in the second century in Justin (*Dial* 56.113), and then in Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius. Here it has the general meaning "teaching about God" and reflects a Hellenizing of Christian faith that in the post-apostolic age was smoothing out the differences between early Christian and Greek-Hellenistic thought. In contrast, in the New Testament there is not yet an intentional rational adjustment to the thought of the ancient world. The New Testament authors do not speak philosophically of God in a distancing manner, just as they are not concerned to present their faith systematically. It is rather the case that each document addresses a concrete situation. This is what Paul does in his letters, rightly described as "occasional writings." In them he tailors the message entrusted to him, the gospel, to his particular churches, and understands such mission as a "power of God" (*Rom* 1:16). His goal is not an abstract reflection on the Christian faith, but the dynamic proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

However, the message declared in the New Testament is not presented apart from a systematic structure. As the whole person is claimed by this message, human feelings are included as an element of the reality of faith. But Christian faith, according to New Testament understanding, is not identified solely with a "feeling of dependence," but includes and opens up the understanding. Since all expressions of religious experience imply structures of believing comprehension, even if the authors of the New Testament documents were not necessarily aware of this in particular cases, such cognitive structures were also fundamental to the New Testament's witness of the act of God in Jesus Christ. Such structures are the subject of the following inquiry. In this process it is to be noted that the New Testament authors speak and write as those who have themselves been grasped by this subject matter, and in their testimony want to bring to speech something that is of ultimate concern both to them and their fellow human beings.

It is also the case that the adopting of the customary designation for this presentation does not mean that its goal is to delineate "the" theology of the New Testament, since the theological unity of the New Testament documents suggested by this term cannot be presupposed. It is rather the case that in the writings of the New Testament we are met with a multi-

plicity of theological conceptions. These are to be investigated and presented according to their own structures of thought, in relation to their own historical and literary contexts. Especially, the specific affirmations of the New Testament authors, the "redactors" of the traditional materials, are to be highlighted by a diachronic and synchronic correlation of the textual tradition. Accordingly, the goal is not a history of early Christian religion or of early Christian theology, as imagined by the liberal theology of the late nineteenth century. This approach supposed it could draw a historical line from Jesus through the earliest Palestinian church, then the Hellenistic church, then to Paul and the later Christian authors, showing that it was more interested in historical developments than in the theological affirmations of the New Testament tradition.² In contrast to this approach, we intend here to investigate the theological conceptions advocated by the New Testament authors on the basis of the theological (church) traditions they had received.

The New Testament canon is presupposed as a historically-conditioned construct that participates in all the relativities of history, including the phenomena involved in the history of literature. In presenting a theology of the New Testament there are good grounds to consider going beyond the canonical boundaries and, for example, to include reflection on the theological expressions of the Apostolic Fathers or the early Christian apologists. However, once this approach is adopted, it is difficult to limit the number and amount of material included from extra-canonical documents contemporary with and later than the New Testament, so that a relative limitation of our study to the canonical documents and their theological presuppositions is to be preferred on practical grounds. The New Testament, in its given extent, is the foundation of the history of Christian dogma and theology. The acceptance of it as the oldest documents of the Christian faith is the presupposition of the Christian life in theory and practice, especially in the church's worship. In this connection the critical function of the New Testament should also become clear. That the New Testament has something to say to our present is not the least important dimension of its claim and demand. In listening to what is said in Scripture, the church understands itself as an "ecclesia semper reformanda," assures itself afresh of its origin, and lets itself be critically asked whether in the concrete form in which it presently appears it is in line with this foundational claim and demand. A biblicistic interpretation cannot do justice to this claim and demand, since it does not reflect the tension between the past reference of the text and the present reality of the church. It is absolutely indispensable that the church in its current form and

² Cf. W. Wrede, *Über Aufgabe und Methode der sogenannten neutestamentlichen Theologie*, Göttingen 1897; reprinted in G. Strecker, ed. *Das Problem der Theologie* 81-154.

contemporary Christian self-understanding must allow itself to be measured by this claim and demand and make its journey of faith in a thorough encounter with the New Testament text, a journey that leads from knowledge of the texts through acknowledging them and finally to confession [Erkennen/Anerkennen/Bekennen]. This is the basic intention of the New Testament writings themselves (cf. John 20:31).

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The term "Biblical Theology" was rarely used prior to the Enlightenment, but even then referred to a common idea, presupposing the unity of the Old and New Testaments. Thus in 1671 it designates the "collegium biblicum" of Sebastian Schmidt, a textbook of Christian doctrine harmonizing statements from the Old and New Testaments under the headings of the standard theological topics. This procedure presupposes the orthodox view of the inspiration not only of the biblical message as a whole, but every detail of Holy Scripture ("verbal inspiration"). The Bible is regarded as a unity, a book of divine revelation free of all contradiction. The biblical authors were guided by the Holy Spirit and produced documents that were a secure foundation for Christian dogmatic theology.

The construction of a "biblical theology" so understood proceeds on the basis of three fundamental presuppositions:

1. *The unity of the Old and New Testament.* In this view there is no material difference between the Old and New Testaments. Both Testaments contain the one revelation of God. Fundamental is the dogma of "non-contradiction:" the traditions found in the Old and New Testaments do not contradict each other. In those places where tensions and contradictions appear to be present, the task of the exegete is to show that they harmonize.

2. *The integrity of the biblical canon.* The canon of the Old and New Testament is presupposed to be a separate body of material complete in itself. It is only by considering the Bible in such isolation that it can be seen as a book of revelations that cannot be questioned. Interpretation proceeds without reflecting the connections between biblical documents and other Jewish literature of antiquity. This approach leaves out of consideration the writings that emerged in the church contemporary with the New Testament, the early Christian extra-canonical literature.

3. *The identity of biblical teaching and dogmatic theology.* No basic distinction was made between Scripture and dogmatics. This is the presupposition of the topics of Christian faith composed of materials from the Old and New Testaments, in material agreement with the position of theology prior to the Enlightenment.

The following history of the discipline "theology of the New Testament" is to be understood as the history of the criticism and dissolution of the previous idea of a "biblical theology."

On 1: The material unity of the Old and New Testaments was first subjected to critical review under the influence of Enlightenment theology by Johann Philipp Gabler. His lecture on March 30, 1787, at the University of Altdorf bore the title "De iusto discrimine theologiae biblicae et dogmaticae regundisque recte utriusque finibus" ("On the Proper Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology and the Proper Determination of the Goal of Each"). Even if Gabler did not abandon the idea of a biblical dogmatic, but derived the topics of dogmatic theology from a comparison of several biblical passages, he still attended to the historical distinctions and material differences among the individual authors. In distinction from orthodox doctrine, he no longer advocated the view of divine inspiration of the Scripture that guaranteed the material unity of the Old and New Testaments. This is opposed to the historical awareness that distinctions must be made between individual periods of the old and new religion. This opened the way for a developmental model that—instead of attempting to ground timeless dogmatic truths from the bible—brought out the importance of the temporally-conditioned, historical situation of the Old and New Testament conceptions.

On 2: The "integrity of the biblical canon" had already been placed in question in the reformation of Martin Luther by the application of the hermeneutical principle "that which promotes Christ" ("Was Christum treibet").³ A critical study of the canon from the perspective of the history of literature had been initiated by J. Ph. Gabler in the course of presenting his "system of a biblical theology" that not only called attention to linguistic and material distinctions between individual biblical authors, but took the apocryphal writings into consideration. Such historical relativizing of the biblical canon was continued in the model of historical dialectic advocated by Ferdinand Christian Baur. With his assignment of individual New Testament writings to a corresponding developmental stage of the Christian religion, he thereby decided what in the New Testament testified to the authentic meaning of the gospel, and thus what was of canonical authority. The "history of religions school" then followed this path consistently to the end. For it, the explanation of a text meant "placing it in the context of its historical development."⁴ From this point of view, both the concept and delimitation of a canon became a problem. Thus Gustav Krüger objected to "operating with the concept 'New Testament' in any form when one is making a historical study of a period that does not yet know a 'New Testament'."⁵ W. Wrede draws the inference that historical interest requires that "*everything be taken into consideration that historically belongs together within the whole of early Christian literature.*" Accordingly, the boundary for the material the discipline deals with is only to be drawn where the literature itself indicates a real break.⁶

On 3: With regard to the identity of biblical and dogmatic theology, the Reformation principle of "sola scriptura" already distinguished between the authority of the Scripture and its exposition in dogmatic theology or church tradition, even if this had not been systematically thought through.⁷ If Sebastian Schmidt could still use biblical texts as "dicta probantia" for his book of Christian doctrine while presupposing the unity of Scripture and dogmatics, in Pietism a process is already beginning in which the plain meaning of the biblical text competes with scholastic, dogmatic theology.⁸ The historical thinking of the Enlightenment had already led

³ M. Luther, *Vorrede auf die Epistel S. Jacobi und Jude*, WA.DB 7, 385.

⁴ W. Wrede, "Das theologische Studium und die Religionsgeschichte," in *Vorträge und Studien* (Tübingen 1907) 75.

⁵ G. Krüger, *Das Dogma vom Neuen Testament*, (Giessen 1896) 10.

⁶ Wrede, "Über Aufgabe und Methode," 86.

⁷ Cf. M. Luther's debate with the four-fold meaning of Scripture of medieval church tradition (WA Tr 5,5285; WA 7,97,23f); also WA 39/I, 47,19f (along with numerous applications in the context of scriptural expositions).

⁸ Cf. e. g. A. F. Büsching, *Gedanken von der Beschaffenheit und dem Vorzuge der biblisch-dogmatischen Theologie vor der alten und neuen scholastischen*, (Lemgo 1758).

J. Ph. Gabler to a consistent distinction between a historical biblical theology and a dogmatic didactic theology. The former is oriented to human and temporally-conditioned doctrinal forms; the latter deals with "the Christian religion of all times." So also in his portrayal of scriptural teaching a distinction is made between general concepts with their abiding form, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, their limitation to a particular period or to particular form of teaching, a distinction between "that which was truly divine in the utterances of the apostles and that which was incidental and purely human." In this distinction an important task is assigned to the criterion of reasonableness.⁹

The "methods of doctrinal concepts," as practiced in New Testament theology at the close of the nineteenth century,¹⁰ attempted to answer the question of what in the Bible is to be considered the lasting statements of faith and what is to be considered only incidental accompanying baggage. It had the task of reconstructing the doctrinal concepts of the individual New Testament authors as completely as possible, and the merit of thereby portraying the individuality of the New Testament authors. But it fell into the twin dangers—as W. Wrede rightly objected—of (1) overrating the minimal basis in the texts for such a project and (2) subjecting the New Testament texts to a homogenization that threatened to neglect not only their concrete situation and historical development, but also the "power of religious sentiment" of New Testament thought.¹¹ To be sure, Christian faith is not to be identified with religious sentiment, but contains an "understanding," the basic characteristics of which are to be discerned especially from its historical concretion, especially in literary-historical forms, not least as these are recognized in the contrast between elements of Christian tradition and their redactional reformulation. A consistent differentiation between biblical teaching and dogmatic theology, especially when directed by a "disinterested striving after knowledge,"¹² would have the result that the theological affirmations of the New Testament would appear only in the context of a "history of early Christian religion."¹³ Such incorporation of New Testament theology into general history, which is thoroughly justified when viewed from outside, would neglect the distinctive message of the documents placed together in the New Testament canon and fail to take note of the believing self-understanding of their

⁹ J. Ph. Gabler, "Über die rechte Unterscheidung zwischen biblischer und dogmatischer Theologie und die rechte Bestimmung ihrer beider Ziele," in G. Strecker (ed.), *Das Problem der Theologie* 41f.

¹⁰ Examples: B. Weiss, *Lehrbuch der Biblischen Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, (Berlin 1868), 1895⁶, § 2, pp. 6ff; H.J. Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der Neutestamentlichen Theologie* I,II, Tübingen 1911², especially I, 20-26.

¹¹ Cf. W. Wrede, "Über Aufgabe und Methode," 91f.

¹² *Ibid.* 84.

¹³ *Ibid.* 153f.

authors. "Dialectical theology" was right in objecting to a narrowing of the exegetical task in the direction of historicism and liberal theology. Thus Karl Barth emphasized the claim of the New Testament authors to be witnesses of the "Word of God,"¹⁴ and Rudolf Bultmann attempted to portray the theological thought reflected in the New Testament documents with the help of "existentialist interpretation."¹⁵ This interpretation derives from the New Testament text a self-understanding that is not to be identified with general human self-awareness, but rather can lead to the opening of one's eyes to reality. The self-understanding of the believer implies, with the question of the source and destiny of human existence, both a turning to the world and a diastasis over against the world. This self-understanding has received a variety of expressions in the New Testament documents, but is always oriented to the Christ-event.

The Christ-event to which the early Christian kerygma testifies is the decisive point of orientation from which the theological conception of the New Testament authors proceeds. The kerygma is not to be subordinated to the schema of a "biblical theology." The kerygma breaches the material unity of Old and New Testaments, since despite the continuity with Old Testament tradition, from the point of view both of literary history and theology the New Testament stands in a relation of discontinuity to the Old Testament. The kerygma is not the guarantee of the integrity of the biblical canon, since the material content it affirms not only stands in diastasis to the Old Testament, but also in the New Testament is interpreted in different ways. And the kerygma is not the self-evident presupposition of the unity of biblical and dogmatic theology. Rather, the New Testament kerygma assigns to dogmatic theology the task of investigating and developing the unity of theology in the past and the church's present. If, in the juxtaposition to the religious and profane literature of Hellenism, as also in comparison with the writings of the Old Testament and Judaism, the distinctive features of the New Testament's message of the Christ are perceived, then this means that as a result of the consistent historicizing, as developed by the liberal history-of-religions school, and at the same time applying the results of dialectical theology, the assignment must read: "Theology of the New Testament."

¹⁴ K. Barth, *Der Römerbrief*, München 1922².

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A.

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a) Preliminary Methodological Comments¹

The theology of the New Testament can be outlined from chronological or systematic points of view. Considerations of both chronology and subject matter speak in favor of beginning with the writings of the apostle Paul.

Chronological: Although the New Testament Evangelists refer back to an earlier time, the life of Jesus, and make this the subject of their narratives, they themselves belong to the second and third Christian generations, so that their theological conceptions reflect the situation of a later time. In contrast, the letters of Paul are the oldest writings of the New Testament. If one understands the theology of the New Testament as a theology of the New Testament documents, then beginning with the Pauline letters immediately suggests itself. It should not thereby be overlooked that older traditions have been worked into the New Testament writings; these traditions were set forth in the literary contexts appropriate to their function, as explicated by "redaction criticism."²

¹ Cf. E. Käsemann, "The Problem of a New Testament Theology," *NTS* 19 (1973) 235–245, 243; G. Strecker, "Das Problem der Theologie des Neuen Testaments," 29–31; H. Hübner, *Biblische Theologie* 32 note 73.

² Cf. below under A. I.—With regard to understanding the unity of the New Testament it would doubtless be more beneficial to begin with the kerygma of earliest

Subject matter: Paul is the only New Testament author who not only implies a theological system in his writings but who also has to a considerable extent worked out his thought systematically. Even though Romans should not be described as a "christianae religionis compendium" (Melancthon), since it by no means addresses the whole range of topics of traditional dogmatics, it is still by far the most systematically developed theological writing of the New Testament. If on this basis Paul is the outstanding Christian theologian of the New Testament, this means that a theology of the New Testament which does not intend to neglect the later effects (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) of the New Testament writings including their present significance must take account of this central position of Pauline theology. This suggests the apostle to the Gentiles as the beginning point of New Testament theology, especially in a setting within a reformist church.

b) Sources

1. Secondary Sources

Among the texts important for understanding the presuppositions, foundations, and connections of Pauline theology, to be named in the first place is the *Acts of the Apostles*. In this document Luke depicts the course of Paul's life, his mission to the Gentiles up to his arrival in Rome (Acts 13:1–28:31). Individual comments prior to this already refer to Paul (Acts 7:58; 8:1, 3; 9:1ff; 11:25–30). The picture of Paul derived from these reports is not only embedded within the temporal framework of the Pauline missionary journeys but also contains basic theological statements. Thus in the "Areopagus speech" (Acts 17:22–31), a natural theology dependent on Stoic tradition is placed in the mouth of Paul (cf. 17:28: "For we too are his [God's] offspring."). Moreover, in Luke's portrayal Paul conducts his mission under the authority of the twelve Jerusalem apostles. The Apostolic Decree (15:23–29 and 21:25; contrast Gal 2:1–10) arranges for Paul to conduct his Gentile mission by subjecting his converts to a minimal

Christianity rather than with the New Testament documents themselves. However, the term "kerygma" (originally, the "herald's message") has no one clear definition (cf. H. Conzelmann, *Theology* 8: the proclamation of the "earliest church," though Conzelmann gives a different definition in his "Was glaubte die frühe Christenheit?," *Theologie als Schriftauslegung. Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament* (BEvTh 65) Munich: Kaiser, 1974) 106–119: "early Christian confessional formulae." Cf. also W. Thüsing, *Die neutestamentlichen Theologien und Jesus Christus, I. Kriterien* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1981) 47–52, according to whom the New Testament documents different "interpretations of the kerygma of Jesus Christ" and the individual writings of the New Testament represent "new interpretations of the kerygma." The concept of the kerygma itself, however, remains an abstraction.

program of Jewish Christian observance of the ceremonial law. Just as this is the precondition of the mission of Paul and Barnabas among the Gentiles, so also in the Acts portrayal Paul himself avoids giving the appearance that he neglects the Jewish law in carrying out his mission (Acts 16:3; 21:26). This is not the historical apostle, as we know him from the Pauline letters, but a Lucan Paul. His goal is to preserve the unity of the history of salvation between Judaism and Christianity, between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. He is committed to a fundamental harmony and attempts to practice his harmonizing approach in dealing with the Jerusalem church in matters of both organization and theology. He is willing to sacrifice his own life for the sake of this harmony. In contrast, the authentic Pauline letters show Paul in conflict with opponents who appear both within and outside his churches; likewise, his relationship to the Jerusalem church is not free from tensions (cf. Gal 2:11ff). The authentic Paul places the claim of truth over ecclesiastical and theological harmony, places freedom over the requirements of organization, the authority of the Spirit over unconditional obedience to ecclesiastical rules. He claims to possess the Spirit no less than his opponents (2 Cor 6:6; 11:4), and to be fundamentally no different from the Jerusalem apostles in having seen the Risen One (1 Cor 15:7–11).

The author of Acts is not to be given sole responsibility for the formation of this picture of Paul. He can hardly have been a companion of Paul but belongs to the second or third Christian generation. He was later identified with a companion of Paul whose name we know from Philemon 24 and who was known as "Luke the physician" according to Colossians 4:14. The accounts provided by the author of Acts obviously derive from secondary tradition, mediated by the pre-Lucan churches who had already reworked the picture of Paul. This can be recognized from the Acts accounts of Paul's conversion (Acts 9, 22, 26). Here the author has a legend he had found in the tradition that he has elaborated into three different versions and inserted at appropriate places in his work. In the process he also shortened it with each retelling, in order to avoid repetitions. This depiction goes back to a tradition that prior to its incorporation into Acts had been composed as a legend honoring Paul—an idealizing, edifying story of the transformation of the persecutor into an outstanding advocate of the faith, the apostle to the Gentile world. Its legendary character is clarified by a comparison with authentic Pauline statements (Gal 1:15–16), as it is by comparison with Hellenistic-Jewish traditions of the conversion of the persecutor (2 Macc 3; cf. also Acts 10:1–48; Joseph and Aseneth 1–21). Adjustment to the ideas of a later generation is also indicated by those elements of legendary Pauline tradition that Luke has worked into the Acts narrative (e. g. Acts 13:8–12; 19:11–12; 14–16; 22:3), not the least of which are the authentically Lucan touches in his portrayal of the Pauline missionary journeys.

It is likewise the case that the *Pastoral Letters* (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus) do not represent the authentic apostle. Despite apparently concrete details from the life of Paul (e. g. 2 Tim 4:13; Tit 3:12–13), these do not reflect the "historical Paul" but belong to a picture of Paul that originated about the end of the first century. The Paul of the Pastoral Letters is the church teacher who transmits right doctrine to his students. His acknowledged apostolic dignity serves to counteract the "false teachers" with an authoritative churchly claim. He supports the ecclesiastical officials, the bishops, presbyters, deacons, and widows, in this struggle, for he is the first link in an apostolic chain of tradition, the individual members of which have "certainty" by their connection with him. They have this confidence not only in opposing the attacks of heretics but also in dealing with questions of truth within the churches, in that they can appeal to his incontestable authority.

Likewise the *Second Letter to the Thessalonians* was written under the name of Paul. Presupposing the unity of this writing, the Paul of 2 Thessalonians stands close to the Paul of the Pastoral Letters. In both the Pastorals and 2 Thessalonians appeal is made to the authority of Paul in order to ward off false teaching. In 2 Thessalonians Paul's authority is used in order to tone down the Christian-prophetic announcement of the immediate arrival of the parousia and to curb the expectation of the imminent end (2 Thess 2:2). Thereby the author obviously intends to correct 1 Thessalonians, in which an unbroken, acute expectation of the parousia is found. In contrast, the Paul of 2 Thessalonians is like an apocalyptic visionary who provides instruction on the phases of the end times, who would like to calm down a disturbed church that has been upset by a view of the coming end of all things. This fits the situation of a church that had long before resolved for itself the problem of the delay of the parousia but has now been confronted with a newly awakened apocalyptic enthusiasm. Accordingly, 2 Thessalonians cannot have been written much earlier than the Pastoral Letters. Even though the authentic Pauline letters reflect different positions with regard to the question of the nearness of the parousia, which let us perceive some development in the theology of Paul,³ the authentic apostle is still far removed from the apocalyptic views of 2 Thessalonians, which claims his authority in order to solve the problems of a later epoch.

The picture of Paul mediated by the letters of *Colossians* and *Ephesians* is just as different from that of the authentic Pauline letters as that found in the Pastorals and 2 Thessalonians. This is seen, for example, in the stereotypical appeal to the confession and to Paul's apostolic office. Reference back to this authority goes beyond that which the historical Paul

³ See below A. V.

presupposed as a matter of course, with regard both to the confessional tradition and the apostolic authority he claimed for himself. In addition, the arena of theological reflection is expanded and refined at the same time. It is expanded to the extent that Colossians and Ephesians profess a cosmological function of the Christ. According to Colossians 1:15 Christ is the "firstborn" (πρωτότοκος) of creation and at the same time its mediator. He has already won the eschatological victory over the cosmic powers, for he is also the firstborn of the dead (Col 1:18). As the resurrection hope is grounded on this cosmic function of the Christ, this can be understood as an expansion of the understanding of the cosmological christological statements made by Paul.⁴ Alongside this is found a more refined reflection in comparison with Pauline theology. While in the authentic Pauline letters it is often not easy to determine the boundary between the individual and the Christian community, for in them the individual church member is addressed at the same time as the church as a whole and conversely the address to the whole church also includes the individual, by contrast in Colossians and Ephesians a further distinction has been made so that the ecclesiological aspect steps into the foreground in regard both to linguistic usage and theology. Now it is primarily the church that is addressed. We may take Colossians 1:24 as an example: the body of Christ is identified with the *ecclesia*. The christological universalism leads to corresponding consequences in ecclesiology, i.e. to an ecclesiological universalism. The apostle himself is now placed in this frame of reference; he too has an assignment for the whole of creation. In this connection is to be seen the most important difference between Colossians and Ephesians on the one side and the authentic Pauline letters on the other side: Christ is understood as the "head" (κεφαλή) of the church, the church as the "body" (σῶμα) of Christ (Col 1:18; Eph 1:22–23; 4:15; 5:23). Such a distinction is not possible for the authentic Paul; it is rather the case that he identifies the church with the body of Christ, i.e. with Christ himself (Rom 12, 1 Cor 12). So also in Colossians and Ephesians the understanding of Paul's apostleship is determined by the distinction between the church as the body and Christ as the head. It signals a change in Pauline thinking when Paul is placed within the field of tension between the cosmic Christ and the universal *ecclesia*. His apostolic office has been ecclesiasticized. With this point of departure, it is but a step to judge that Colossians and Ephesians were not written by Paul himself. This conclusion is unavoidable for Ephesians, which has Colossians as a source. This conclusion is not to be ruled out for Colossians as well, although here other factors are to be named that stand closer to the authentic Pauline

⁴ Cf. 1 Corinthians 2:8; 8:6; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Galatians 4:3, 9; Philippians 2:10.

letters (e. g. the epistolary conclusion of Colossians 4:7–17, that manifests great similarity to Philemon 23–24).⁵

2. *Authentic Pauline Letters*

1. *1 Thessalonians*. The oldest document in the New Testament is the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians, the literary integrity of which is to be presupposed. Here we find an expectation of the near end advocated (1 Thess 4:13ff; 5:1ff) that is not repeated in this manner in the later Pauline letters. Moreover, essential elements of Paul's thought in the later letters are not found (e. g. Paul's understanding of the law and of justification). The specific way in which the expectation of the parousia is expressed in 1 Thessalonians gives a first indication of an awareness of the delay of the parousia. This places 1 Thessalonians at the chronological and material beginning point not only of Pauline eschatology but of Paul's theology as such.

2. *1 and 2 Corinthians*. The two Corinthian letters are the remnants of a more extensive correspondence that Paul carried on with the Corinthian church. 1 Corinthians 5:9–11 refers to an older letter to the Corinthians that has been lost. Second Corinthians also points to the existence of a series of several letters, even though the results of detailed literary analysis remain disputed. The final section of 2 Corinthians (chaps. 10–13) contains the "painful letter" written after the visit of Paul to Corinth between 1 and 2 Corinthians. The "painful letter" was followed by the "letter of reconciliation," essentially preserved in 2 Corinthians 1–8 (9). The apostle who becomes visible in this correspondence defends his commission over against the disputing groups in the Corinthian church. In Corinth there was not only a Pauline party but a Petrine party and an Apollos party; it is less likely that there was a "Christ party" (1 Cor 1:12; 3:4). Paul directs his Corinthian correspondence especially against attacks that had been launched against him by pneumatic-enthusiastic circles within the church. Paul was concerned with the order of the church and its stance within the world. In debate with those who dispute a future resurrection of the dead (1 Cor 15) he affirms the eschatological horizon of the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This kerygma grounds Christian hope and legitimizes the apostle's message of reconciliation, as he

⁵ Cf. the introductions to the New Testament. The assumption that Colossians represents a later development of Pauline thinking and style (e. g. A. Wikenhauser, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, Freiburg: Herder, 1961⁴, 298–299) offers no persuasive arguments. On this cf. W. Bujard, *Stilanalytische Untersuchungen zum Kolosserbrief als Beitrag zur Methodik von Sprachvergleichen* (StUNT 11. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973).

defends it in 2 Corinthians against wandering Christian missionaries of Hellenistic-Jewish origin.

3. *Galatians*. The so-called "Judaizing" hypothesis is relatively correct in its approach to interpreting Galatians. In none of Paul's other letters is the threat to the Pauline churches by Jewish Christian teachers of the law expressed more clearly. Here for the first time the message of justification in the Pauline sense is articulated. It affirms that the apostle proclaims the free grace of God that justifies human beings, i.e. makes them right before God, without any condition or accomplishment on their part. Freedom from the law and justification (*Gerechtmachung*, "rightwising") by faith are its indispensable structural elements. The justifying, saving act of Christ (indicative) is followed by the imperative never again to yield to slavery under the yoke of the law (Gal 5:1) but to serve one another in love (5:13).

4. *Romans*. Paul's letter to the Romans was written after the Corinthian and Galatian controversies and uniquely reflects the systematic structure of Paul's thought. The writing deals with concrete problems of the Roman church and presupposes the situation of a real letter, since it is intended to prepare for the apostle's visit to Rome and his trip to Spain (Rom 15:22ff). Even though it is not a comprehensive compendium of systematic theology, the theoretical intention is still dominant: the fundamental theme is "righteousness by faith" (1:17). The following section then elaborates human solidarity in unrighteousness in which not only the necessity (1:18–3:20) but also the possibility (3:21–4:25) and reality (chaps. 5–8) of the righteousness of God is presented (= righteousness from God), as it has been revealed in the Christ event. The problem of "Israel" in salvation history (chaps. 9–11), as also the parenetic section (12:1–15:13) draw consequences from, on the one side, Paul's connection with his own people, and, on the other side, from the series indicative–imperative (cf. 12:1). While the unity of the letter can be presupposed except for a few post-Pauline glosses, this does not apply to chapter 16, which differs from the rest of Romans and is essentially derived from a letter of recommendation for "sister Phoebe."

5. *Philippians*. The letter of Paul to the church at Philippi is numbered among the prison letters. It is thus—since the hypothesis of an imprisonment of the apostle in Ephesus remains undemonstrated—probably written near the end of Paul's ministry. While the literary unity of the letter also continues to be debated—exegetes frequently proceed on the supposition that Philippians is a combination of two or three letters—the thesis of the unity of the letter can also still be maintained. This thesis is supported by the overarching purpose of the whole letter in its present form: against the background of his situation of imprisonment, his suffering as an apostle, Paul presents the essence of Christian joy and attempts to

confirm the church in the joy he also sees to be in them. The content of this eschatological joy is determined by looking back to the Christ event of the past and by orienting oneself to the future day of Jesus Christ. The apostle exhorts the church to realize that its ethical conduct on its journey through time must correspond to this eschatological joy.

6. *Philemon*. This is the shortest and most personal of Paul's letters. It is concerned with the relation between the slave Onesimus and his master Philemon. Onesimus had run away from his master, had sought out Paul in his place of imprisonment, had been converted by him and is now being sent back to his owner. We thus have here the first Christian document that takes a position on the issue of slavery. Paul does not challenge the existing social order but places its problematic on a different level in that he provides a new foundation for interpersonal human relations. That Onesimus is to be taken back not as a slave but as a brother (v. 16) indicates the ethical purpose of this writing: Christian love within the family of God is to overcome social distinctions.

c) Later Influences

The apostle's letters did not get written solely on the basis of individual initiative but owe their existence to the reality of a close-knit Pauline circle in which Paul's life was embedded. They reflect the teacher-disciple relation, the "Pauline school," in which the apostle played the dominant role in relation to his coworkers. In the broader sense, the Pauline school includes not only the authentic Pauline letters but also the later writings composed in his name. They document the later influences that go back partly to oral tradition, partly to written tradition. Thus the writings already mentioned (the Pastorals, Colossians, Ephesians, 2 Thessalonians, Acts) reflect in a variety of ways the influence of Paul's person and preaching, but other later New Testament writings also show the effects of the Pauline school. This is seen, for example, in the letter formulae (prescript, prooemium, letter conclusion) and from the specifically Pauline structure of their thought. First Peter is only one example in which these marks are clearly recognizable. It is possible that Hebrews, which is characterized by an independent, Hellenistic-Jewish theology, was later considered to be a Pauline letter, as suggested by the apparently secondary conclusion (Heb 13:18, 22–25). An essential element of the theme of the Letter of James dealing with "faith and works" cannot be understood apart from the influence of Pauline tradition. Not only the deutero-Pauline letters but also the Johannine literature originated in Asia Minor, i.e. in the original Pauline missionary territory. This explains the presence of influences of the Pauline way of thinking. That such influences could also take place in an opposing sense is indicated by the author of 2 Peter, who explains with reference to the letters of "our beloved brother Paul" that they contain things difficult

to understand, things which the "ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction" (2 Pet 3:15–16).

It is no accident, then, that the Pauline influences effective at the beginning and middle of the second century are relatively small. To be sure, the Roman bishop Clement documents that Paul was acknowledged in the Roman church and cites 1 Corinthians in his writing addressed to the Corinthian church (cf. 1 Clem 47:1–3). Similarly, Ignatius of Antioch acknowledges the authority of Paul, just as he does that of Peter (Ignatius, *Romans* 4.3); alongside 1 Corinthians, he also obviously knows other Pauline letters (Romans, Thessalonians). Especially Polycarp acknowledges the authority of the apostle; he appeals to Paul's letter to the Philippians in his (second) letter to the church at Philippi (Polycarp 11.3). So also the Letter of Diognetus manifests some points of contact with Paul, just as do the apologist Justin and the *Shepherd of Hermas*. On the other hand, several second century authors do not refer to Paul at all (2 Clement, Barnabas, Papias, Hegesippus, Aristides). And even if the Christian Gnosticism of this time, such as the Valentinian school, seek to document their basic concepts by reference to Pauline theology, or when in the third century Mani, the founder of Manichaeism, appeals to Paul, it is still the case that the apostle's thought does not play the role that is sometimes ascribed to it because of the alleged proximity of his theological system to Gnosticism.⁶ In contrast, Jewish Christian writings inspired by Gnosticism such as the source document "Kerygmata Petrou" of the Pseudo-Clementines, like the sect of the Elkesaites, are oriented in an antipauline direction on the basis of the Jewish legal observance they advocate. Even Marcion, still described by Adolf von Harnack as an "ultra-Paulinist,"⁷ whose canon included alongside the Gospel of Luke only the most important Pauline letters, with regard to his theological views is hardly touched by Pauline thought. For him the decisive thing is a specific understanding of revelation, the distinction between the two gods: on the one side the Old Testament creator and on the other side the good God, the Father of Jesus Christ. Here we see something that is characteristic of the period of the formation of the early catholic church in general: the authority of Paul is, to be sure, acknowledged in a formal way but Paul's fundamental view of justification is hardly to be found. As clarified by the ancient church's preference for 1 Corinthians, it was especially the ethical instructions of the apostle that gained a hearing. This circumstance thus corresponds to a church situation that had to be open to the Hellenistic world, had to

⁶ Cf. A. Lindemann, *Paulus im ältesten Christentum. Das Bild des Apostels und die Rezeption der paulinischen Theologie in der frühchristlichen Literatur bis Marcion* (BHTh 58) (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1979).

⁷ A. v. Harnack, *Marcion: the Gospel of the Alien God* (Durham, N. C.: Labyrinth Press, 1990) 142–145.

adapt to a widespread consciousness of itself and the world flavored by the ethics of Stoicism, and to debate about how this was to be realized in practice.

If one surveys the course of church history, it is only in exceptional cases in which the apostle actually attains the rank that appears to be assigned to him on the basis of the central position of his writings in the New Testament canon. At one of the few propitious moments, Augustine came by his study of the Pauline letters to a doctrine of grace that speaks of the radical fallenness of humanity under sin for which the grace of God is the only remedy.⁸ The reformer Martin Luther owes his pioneering insight that the righteousness of God does not annihilate guilty human beings but makes them righteous, not only to the reading of Augustine's writings but above all to the theology of Paul (Rom 1:17).⁹ The founder of Methodism, John Wesley, came to the decisive turning point in his life by reading the Preface to Luther's *Commentary on Romans*. And the foundation of "dialectical theology" was laid by Karl Barth's dispute with liberal thought represented by his commentary on Romans, which set forth Paul's message of the righteousness of God which is alone able to save.¹⁰

I. History-of-Religion Presuppositions— Prepauline Elements in Pauline Theology

Hübner, H. Die "Paulusforschung seit 1945," ein kritischer Literaturbericht, *ANRW* II 25.4. (1987) 2649–2840.

Merk, O. "Paulus-Forschung 1936–1985," *ThR* 53 (1988) 1–81.

Schoeps, H. J. *Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961.

Schweitzer, A. *Paul and His Interpreters: A Critical History*. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1912.

The history of scholarship is characterized by a great variety of interpretations of Paul and thus a large number of different pictures of the apostle himself. Sometimes Paul is a rabbi, at other times a Hellenist or a Hellenistic Jewish Christian. The terms "chiliast," "Gnostic," "mystic," or "initiate" in the mystery cults have all been applied to him. Such evaluations not only illustrate the disparity of contemporary scholarship but also all

⁸ Augustinus, *Ad Simplicianum de diversis quæstionibus* I 1.2, CCSLXLIV (Brepols 1970).

⁹ Cf. M. Luther, *Vorrede zu Band 1 der Opera Latina* (1545) WA 54, 185.12–186.20.

¹⁰ K. Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*. (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1953).

have points of contact in the theology of Paul himself.¹ From the point of view of the study of the history of religions, the theology of Paul is a syncretistic phenomenon, like that of earliest Christianity in general. In him religious streams of differing origins collide with each other. Moreover, the lack of unity and evenness is augmented by the fact that Paul's letters are all conditioned by the local situation to which each is addressed (= "occasional letters"). All this makes it more difficult to respond to the question of what might constitute the unity of Pauline thought amidst all this variety, the issue of what is to be understood as the "center" of Pauline theology.² Such a question is also posed for a purely historical investigation. If, as W. Wrede said, "Explanation [means] ... to set in the context of a historical development,"³ then it appears that historical interpretation—as this was recognized in the history of religions school that stood within the kind of historicism considered to be outlawed—does coincide with the demonstration of existential truth. This calls attention to the historically-conditioned aspect of every statement of the truth but still reflects an unfounded optimism in academic research, and presupposes that the awareness of truth can be objectively motivated and perceived by historical study.

Nevertheless, the history of religions school has done us an undeniable service by, for example, having made the historical context of early Christianity accessible. Herman Gunkel was a pioneer in this area for the study of the Old Testament and laid the essential foundation for the understanding of Pauline pneumatology. Albert Eichhorn, Johannes Weiss, Wilhelm Heitmüller, William Wrede and Wilhelm Bousset, among others, investigated the history-of-religions presuppositions of the New Testament from different perspectives and decisively contributed to the illumination of the methodology of interpreting the New Testament from the point of view of the history of religions. They originally had twin goals in view. In the first place, they sought to find analogies in the history of religion, i.e. they looked for ideas in the religious environment of early Christianity that were parallel to those in the New Testament. In the second place, they inquired as to the *genetic connection*, i.e. the direct influences, that were

¹ Inadmissible is the alternative position characteristic of the position of liberal theology, in which the religious genius of Paul is played off against the theologians, the naive against the reflective, piety against scholasticism (cf. A. Deissmann, *Paul: A Study in Social and Religious History* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957) 5–7. Such contrasts live from romantic prejudices, for the theological thought of Paul does not stand in contrast to lived faith as though they were alternatives.

² Cf. e. g. W. Thüsing, *Per Christum in Deum. Studien zum Verhältnis von Christozentrik und Theozentrik in den paulinischen Hauptbriefen* (NTA 1) (Münster: Aschendorff, 1965²) 264–270; on this problem cf. also G. Eichholz, *Die Theologie des Paulus im Umriss* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1972) 8–9.

³ Cf. W. Wrede, *Aufgabe und Methode* 6 note 4.

determinative for the New Testament world of ideas. To the extent that this is possible, in the following we will reflect on such genetic connections. The genuine Pauline elements stand in contrast to the demonstrable religious ideas that were already present in Paul's world. Comparison with pre-Pauline statements facilitates the recognition not only of the agreements but also the distinctions that are important for understanding Pauline theology. So also the results of such a comparison remains within the horizon of the history-of-religions perspective. This is part of the distancing process that is inherent in the historical-critical method as such. This focuses attention on the mythological elements in Pauline thought, elements that the apostle has reworked into his independent conception and in the process significantly modified.

While in such analyses of history-of-religions presuppositions the problem of genetic connections stands in the foreground, at the same time a goal with regard to the history of traditions is delineated, since an investigation of Pauline theology requires that one ask about pre-Pauline traditions. The distinctively Pauline elements stand out as "redaction" in contrast to the material adopted from pre-Pauline tradition. In Paul's letters he not only adopted traditional elements of non-Christian origin but also took over and reworked Christian tradition. Accordingly, the question of the history-of-religions presuppositions of Pauline theology may be divided into the three categories of Judaism, the pagan Hellenistic environment, and pre-Pauline Christian tradition.

a) Judaism

Hengel, M. and U. Heckel, eds., *Paulus und das antike Judentum*. WUNT 58. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1991.

Niebuhr, K.-W. *Heidenapostel aus Israel: Die jüdische Identität des Paulus nach ihrer Darstellung in seinen Briefen*. WUNT 62. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1992.

Oepke, A. "Probleme der vorchristlichen Zeit des Paulus, wiederabgedruckt," K.H. Rengstorf, ed., *Das Paulusbild in der neueren deutschen Forschung*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1964, 410–446.

Sanders, E. P. *Paul and Palestinian Judaism. A Comparison of Patterns of Religion*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977.

The view is widespread that the continuity between Judaism and Pauline thought was of decisive significance for Pauline theology. Accordingly, Paul continued to be a Jew after he became a Christian. In contrast to this view, Paul is seen as the one who understood himself to be the apostle to the Gentiles, whose apostolic call was included as a part of his conversion, whose self-understanding included a fundamental break with Judaism (Gal 1:13ff; Phil 3:7). Of course, even after his conversion the apostle continued to live within the world of Jewish ideas and to make extensive

use of it in both his preaching and in the development of his theological thought. The fundamental Jewish ideas found in the Pauline letters reach back into the time prior to Paul's conversion, since before his call to be apostle to the Gentiles Paul was indeed a Jew in his own self-understanding and in the way he lived his life, rooted in the national, religious, and intellectual existence of his people. Although the Pauline letters hardly report biographical details from the life of Paul, the brief notices about the apostle's conversion and call (Gal 1:13–16) show that in comparison with his contemporaries the pre-Christian Paul excelled in the "Jewish way of life" (Ἰουδαϊσμός), and that he championed the ancestral traditions to an extreme degree, including persecution of the Christian congregations.

According to Adolf Schlatter,⁴ this statement is to be interpreted on the basis of Acts 26:10–11. Paul's persecuting activity authorized by the high priest would accordingly have included a judicial function. The function of a judge, however —so it is further inferred—could only have been exercised by an ordained rabbi. Thus Paul must have been an ordained rabbi. (J. Jeremias also comes to this conclusion, in "War Paulus Witwer?" ZNW 25 [1926] 310–312, and in "Nochmals: Was Paulus Witwer?" ZNW 28 [1929] 321–323). It is questionable, however, whether rabbinic ordination was practiced at the time of the apostle (cf. R. Riesner, *Jesus als Lehrer* [WUNT II 7. Tübingen J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck)] 1988³ 266–276). Acts 26:10–11 thus reflects a later legendary tradition from which historical inferences about the pre-Christian Paul cannot be derived. We know nothing about the details of the persecution carried on by the pre-Christian Paul's persecution of Christian congregations. In Galatians 1 Paul only confirms the fact itself; he interprets it in the sense that as a persecutor he was attempting to defend the ancestral traditions. This corresponds to his Pharisaic background, which he documents himself.

More precise information about the pre-Christian period of Paul's life is provided by the passage Philippians 3:5–6 ("circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless"). The context reflects a debate with Jewish Christian or (more probably) Jewish opponents. These boast of their achievements in Judaism, especially their possession of the Law, which confer a higher status on Jews in contrast to Gentiles. To this the apostle responds: as a Christian he considers all such privileges to be garbage (V.8: σκαβάλα), although in his pre-Christian period he was subject to the Jewish law. Since his birth ("circumcised on the eighth day") his life had been determined by this Jewish legal system, which means not only demand but privilege: "Israel" is a distinguished title for the Jewish

⁴ A. Schlatter, *Die Geschichte der ersten Christenheit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983⁶ [reprint ed. by R. Riesner]) 112–129. Cf. A. Oepke, *Probleme* 412–413.

people that indicates their honored status as God's chosen people.⁵ Belonging to the tribe of Benjamin points to a privileged segment of this people, since Benjamin as the youngest of Jacob's sons was born in the Jewish fatherland. So also "Hebrew" was a title of honor within the Jewish context,⁶ in distinction from the term "Jew," the term mostly used by outsiders.⁷ Paul's family lived intentionally within the Jewish tradition; they were in the situation of being able to trace their genealogy back to the tribe of Benjamin. This corresponds to Paul's designation of himself as a "Pharisee;" he belonged to an influential religious group that placed a high value on living a strict Jewish manner of life,⁸ in distinction from the "Sadducees," who were satisfied to make compromises with the Roman occupation authorities and were open to pagan cultural influences.

From this data provided by Paul himself, the inference is made that Paul is to be regarded primarily as a Palestinian Jew whose religious presuppositions are to be sought in the Jewish fatherland, in Palestine. Primarily two arguments are presented for this view: (1) Paul describes himself as a Pharisee (Phil 3:5). Pharisaism is authentically Palestinian and limited to the Palestinian area. (2) Paul was a disciple of the Jewish Torah scholar Gamaliel I, who taught in Jerusalem ca. 25–50 C. E. (cf.

⁵ Cf. 2 Corinthians 3:7; 11:22; Romans 9:6, 31; 10:19; 11:1–2, 25–26, and elsewhere—Paul has transferred this title of honor to the Christian community (Gal 6:16).

⁶ Cf. 2 Corinthians 11:22. The term Ἑβραῖος occasionally refers to the Hebrew language, as apparently in Acts 6:1 (in contrast to the "Hellenists"). However, neither a Palestinian origin nor a knowledge of the Hebrew language is to be inferred from this word either for Paul or for his opponents. It is rather the case that "Hebrews" was in Hellenistic Judaism a designation of the Jewish people in ancient times, just as it was for the pagan Greek world, so that the expression has a certain archaizing coloring (W. Gutbrod, TDNT 3.372–375; J. Wanke, EWNT 1.892–894: Corresponding to Jewish-Hellenistic propaganda "it is probable that Paul here presents himself first and foremost as a "full-blooded Jew" [H. Lietzmann, *1/2 Korintherbriefe* HNT. 150], a Jew who has remained loyal to the customs and practices of the ancestors..."). So also the secondary superscription of the New Testament "Letter to the Hebrews" does not purport to be addressed to Palestinian or Hebrew-speaking Jews but to Christians, upon whom the ancient Jewish title of honor is conferred.

⁷ Ἰουδαῖοι is also used by Paul in a distancing sense. Thus in parallel to the "Gentiles" (ἔθνη): 1 Corinthians 1:23–24; 10:32; 2 Corinthians 11:24; Romans 1:16; 2:9–10; 3:9, and elsewhere.

⁸ In Josephus' portrayal (*Ant* 8, 15, 17, 18; *Wars* 1 and 2; *Life* 38) the Pharisees, in their life and teaching, represent the Jewish people in their best light. Characteristic of them is the combination of piety and political engagement. This would mean that the persecution activity of the pre-Christian Paul is not necessarily motivated primarily by dogmatic and theoretical concerns (such as their understanding of the Law), and also makes it difficult to reconstruct a continuing connection between the Pharisaism prior to 70 C. E. and the rabbinism after 70. Cf. P. Schäfer, "Der vorrabbinische Pharisaismus," in M. Hengel and U. Heckel, eds. *Paulus und das antike Judentum* 170.

Acts 5:34; 22:3). Neither argument, however, is sound. With regard to the first argument: It is true, of course, that documented evidence for the Pharisees is limited almost exclusively to Palestine but they were active far beyond the Palestinian boundaries in the Jewish Diaspora. The first Evangelist, who is not writing within a Palestinian context, presupposes this when he charges the Pharisees and scribes with going over land and sea to make one proselyte (Matt 23:15). It is thus quite conceivable that Paul united with Pharisaism within the context of the Jewish Diaspora. With regard to the second argument: The origin of the notice about Paul's connection to Gamaliel is unknown. It was possibly an element of the legendary Pauline tradition that Luke found in the process of gathering Pauline materials, if it did not originate with Luke himself. It does correspond to the tendency of the Lucan delineation in Acts of the course of the apostle "from Jerusalem to Rome," "from the Jews to the Gentiles," and "from Jewish Christianity to Gentile Christianity."⁹ Moreover, it is quite doubtful whether Paul was ever in Jerusalem prior to his conversion. The authentic letters of Paul point in a different direction: the first visit to Jerusalem reported by Paul was three years after his conversion, in order to seek out Cephas (Gal 1:18). This first, precisely documented visit of Paul to Jerusalem is presumably also the first visit to Jerusalem in the life of Paul, since according to Galatians 1:22 Paul had been unknown to the Christian congregations in Judea. This first visit was so short that it did not lead to a closer familiarity with Christians within Jerusalem and its near environs. This also makes it probable that Paul had never lived in Jerusalem prior to this visit.¹⁰

Paul did not grow up in Jerusalem but in the Jewish Diaspora. Acts reports that he came from Tarsus in Cilicia (Acts 9:11; 21:39; 22:3) and was a Roman citizen (e. g. Acts 16:37–38; 22:25–26). This is the basis of the double name attributed to him in the tradition. While in his letters to his Gentile Christian churches he refers to himself as Παύλος, in Acts he is called Σαῦλος (Hebr. שׂאֵל) prior to his own Gentile mission (e. g. Acts 7:58; 8:1, 3; 9:1, 8; cf. 13:9). Obviously "Saul" was his original Jewish name, while "Paul" was the cognomen appropriate to the Roman and Greek context, and indicated that its bearer was a Jew of the Diaspora.

⁹ This agrees with other reports about Paul that probably derive from Luke: Acts 7:58; 8:1; 11:30.

¹⁰ Galatians 1:22–23 does not provide evidence for the view that Paul persecuted the Jewish congregations but merely reports what these had heard, namely that the erstwhile persecutor (of the Christians in the Jewish Diaspora; cf. Gal 1:13, 17) had now become a preacher of the faith he once opposed. The attempt of M. Hengel, in opposition to the negative results from the Pauline letters, to affirm that the pre-Christian Paul persecuted the Christians in Jerusalem, is inspired by the Lucan picture of Paul (M. Hengel, *The Pre-Christian Paul* [Philadelphia: Trinity Press International; London: SCM Press, 1991]).

The roots of the thinking of the pre-Christian Paul are accordingly to be sought in Diaspora Judaism, i.e. in the realm of Hellenistic Judaism. Tarsus, with its mixed population of Greeks, Jews, and Orientals was famous in antiquity because of its philosophical and other academic educational institutions. It is obvious that in this intellectual environment Paul did not become an outstanding exponent of Greek scholarship but it is still the case that the intellectual and theological formation of the pre-Christian Paul is to be distinguished from that of Palestinian Judaism. That which is often claimed to be Paul's rabbinic manner of thought is rather to be attributed to the influences of Diaspora Judaism, as Paul became acquainted with it in his home town through Jewish teachers. The knowledge of the Torah possessed by the pre-Christian Paul derives from the tradition of Hellenistic Judaism. This can be seen in Paul's use of Scripture.

1. *The Use of the Old Testament*

- Dodd, C. H. *According to the Scriptures. The Sub-Structure of New Testament Theology*. London: Nisbet, 1952.
- Ellis, E. E. *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1957.
- Ellis, E. E. *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity*. WUNT 18. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1978.
- Hanson, A. T. *Studies in Paul's Technique and Theology*. London: SPCK, 1974.
- Harris, J. R. *Testimonies I,II*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1916.
- Hays, R. B. *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*. New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 1989.
- Hellholm, D. "Paulus von Tarsos—Zum Problem der hellenistischen Ausbildung," *Manuskript* 1992; Norwegian Version, "Paulus Fra Tarsos. Til spørsmålet om Paulus' hellenistiske utdannelse," T. Eide and T. Hägg, eds., *Dionysos og Apollon. Religion og samfunn i antikkens Hellas* (Skrifter utgitt av det norske institutt i Athen 1). Bergen, 1989, 259–282.
- Hirsch, E. *Das Alte Testament und die Predigt des Evangeliums* Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1936.
- Koch, D.-A. *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums*. BHTh 69. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1986.
- Michel, O. *Paulus und seine Bibel*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972².
- Vielhauer, Ph. "Paulus und das Alte Testament," *Oikodome, Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament*. TB 65, G. Klein, ed., Munich: Kaiser, 1979, 196–228.

The extent to which the theology of Paul is shaped by Hellenistic-Jewish presuppositions is demonstrated by the Old Testament texts used in the Pauline letters. The first thing to be established about Paul's use of the Scripture is that the apostle presupposes a collection of writings that would later be described as the Old Testament canon. The extent of authoritative Jewish writings had not yet been finally decided but the process was almost complete. The matter is seen differently by H. Gese ("Erwägungen zur Einheit der biblischen Theologie, *ZThK* 67 [1970] 417–436; also *Vom*

Sinai zum Zion [BEvTh 64] [Munich: Kaiser, 1974] 11–30), who argues that the New Testament tradition intervenes in the process while a still flexible tradition was being formed: ... "It is in fact the case that we have to do with the formation of a tradition of what constitutes the Bible; ... The Old Testament originated through the New Testament. The New Testament forms the conclusion of a process of tradition that is essentially a unity, a continuum" (*Ibid.*, p. 14). However, the postulation of a temporal (and material) priority of the New Testament to the Old Testament neglects the fact that Josephus documents the existence of an Old Testament "canon" already for the time in which the New Testament writings were still being written (Josephus, *Antiquities*, Prooemium 12–13; 1.27ff). In addition, the Jewish delimitation of the canon is to be understood less as a delimitation over against Christianity than as the result of a general (including inner-Jewish) situation in the first century C. E.

There is not the slightest doubt that Paul (and/or his coworkers, to the extent that these, as members of the "Pauline school" participated in the preparatory work and composition of the Pauline letters) used the Greek translation of the Old Testament. He even cites the Septuagint text where it manifests errors in contrast to the Massoretic text.¹¹ He also follows the Septuagint where the Massoretic text would already have provided an appropriate wording for his purposes.¹²

To the extent that deviations from the Septuagint text are present in the Pauline citations, they may be explained in different ways. In the first place is to be considered that Paul himself, even when he had a written text before him, may not have cited it word for word. It is rather the case that changes in the text could have been made, consciously or unconsciously, in order to bring out the intended meaning being read into the text.¹³ Moreover, we must reckon with the possibility that Paul used early recensions of the Septuagint that are not always identical with the text handed on to us.

An instructive example is presented by 1 Corinthians 15:54. The quotation κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νίκος deviates from the Massoretic text (Isa

¹¹ E. g. Galatians 3:17.

¹² E. g. 1 Corinthians 2:16: cited is Isaiah 40:13 LXX (νοῦς κυρίου); the Massoretic יְהוָה יִרְאֶה = πνεῦμα κυρίου would actually have fitted the context better.

¹³ Cf. below on Romans 1:17 (Hab 2:4) and other passages. Cf. additional such abbreviations of the cited text in 2 Corinthians 3:16 (Exod 34:34); Galatians 3:13 (Deut 21:23c); Romans 10:15 (Isa 52:7). The omission in Galatians 3:12 (Lev 18:5; this passage is cited in full in Romans 10:5) is an accommodation to the neighboring citation. An addition is found in Romans 10:11 (Isa 28:16c); the same citation is found in its unmodified form in Romans 9:33. This means that the exact wording of the Isaiah quotation is known by Paul, and that the addition is conscious. Cf. also Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6 (Gen 15:6).

25:8) but also from the Septuagint tradition (thus in the passive κατεπόθη and in the reading εἰς νίκος for the Hebrew מָצַח). By contrast, there are verbatim agreements with the Jewish translators Theodotian and Aquila, as well as parallels in Symmachus.¹⁴ Whether the agreement with Theodotian is proof of Paul's dependence on an "Ur-Theodotian" is a disputed point,¹⁵ just as is the question of whether we may infer from this phenomenon that Theodotian is older than previously thought.¹⁶ In any case, we must proceed on the assumption that the Septuagint text used by Paul can not always be identified with our Septuagint text. It may thus be the case that in 1 Corinthians 15:54 a pre-Christian Jewish text was used by Paul that corrects the Hebrew text in a manner corresponding to the scroll containing the Twelve Prophets from Muraba'at (ca. 50 C. E.). Such early recensions apparently influenced the later translators Theodotian, Aquila and Symmachus.¹⁷

This can also explain the two texts in which Paul otherwise would have appealed to the Hebrew text:¹⁸ Romans 11:35 (Job 41:3) and 1 Corinthians 3:19 (Job 5:12–13). Since despite indications of linguistic improvement there is no demonstrable Pauline translation style, also here we have basically a Greek translation of the Old Testament that is to be regarded as a reworking of the Septuagint text.¹⁹ Thus when attention is given to the variations named above, the Septuagint as Paul's basic text remains solidly established, and it is excluded that Paul ever used the original Hebrew text. To this extent Paul's use of the Scripture is representative of Hellenistic Judaism.

¹⁴ While the Septuagint text of Isaiah 25:8 reads κατέπεν ὁ θάνατος ἰσχύσας, for Theodotian there existed two different translations that render מָצַח with εἰς νίκος. Aquila καταποντίσει τὸν θάνατον εἰς νίκος and the somewhat later Symmachus καταποθῆναι ποιήσει τὸν θάνατον εἰς τέλος.

¹⁵ Contra e. g. A. Rahlfs, "Über Theodotian-Lesarten bei Justin," ZNW 20(1921) 182–199.

¹⁶ The possibility that Theodotian did not work around 180 C. E., as indicated by the reference in Epiphanius (de mensuris et ponderibus, PG XLIII 264–265) but that the note in Irenaeus (*Heretics* 3.24) is more credible, is assumed by S. P. Brock, "Bibelübersetzungen I.2," TRE 6.163–172. Accordingly Theodotian's translation would be dated in the middle of the first century C. E.—which, however, does not increase the probability that Paul was dependent on Theodotian.

¹⁷ Cf. R. Hanhart, *Das Neue Testament und die griechische Überlieferung des Judentums* (TU 125) (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1981) 293–303; and "Septuaginta," in W.H. Schmidt and W. Thiel-R. Hanhart, *Altes Testament* (GKT 1) (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1988) 176–196. Similarly D.-A. Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge*, who speaks of a Hebraizing reworking of the Septuagint that Paul had in partly written form (57–81).

¹⁸ So E. E. Ellis, *Paul's Use* 144 note 3.

¹⁹ Cf. D.-A. Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge* 78–79.

Excursus: The Testimony Book Hypothesis

According to J. Rendel Harris a collection of quotations ("testimonies") existed in early Christianity that functioned in anti-Jewish polemic. This oldest Christian document was used not only by New Testament authors but by the Church Fathers. One must reckon with the use of this book in the Pauline letters. A testimony book hypothesis actually deserves more attention in the present state of research than it received in its own time. Since a collection of quotations was found in Cave Four at Qumran (4QTest: Deut 5:28–29; 18:18–19; Num 24:15–17; Deut 33:8–11; Josh 6:26), the possibility that early Christianity also made use of such collections in its preaching and teaching can no longer be disputed.²⁰ It can be assumed that the reflection-citations in the Gospel of Matthew derive to a considerable extent from a collection of quotations that lay before the Evangelist Matthew.²¹ So also in the second century Melito of Sardis wrote "six books with excerpts from the Law and the Prophets," i.e. a testimony book.²² Nonetheless, Harris' comprehensive hypothesis cannot be accepted in the form in which he advocated it for two reasons:

1. Such a written collection is not documented in the history of early Christian literature; this makes it difficult to postulate its existence that presumably lasted into the late Patristic period.

2. The problem of the tradition of New Testament quotations of the Old Testament may not be considered only from the point of view of literary connections. Harris' hypothesis leaves the oral tradition out of consideration. The phenomenon of oral tradition is also to be presupposed in regard to the school traditions and how they influenced the formation of New Testament literature.

C. H. Dodd posed a different hypothesis as an alternative to Harris' suggestion, in which the element of oral tradition played a stronger role. According to Dodd's thesis, within the oral tradition there were blocks of material containing selected passages from the Old Testament.²³ These sections, also called "pericope," were used in early Christian instruction as proof texts. They would have contained expositions of the apocalyptic-eschatological world of ideas, the new Israel and the Servant of God. However, the arrangement of the "blocks of material" remained hypothetical. Many agreements within the quoted material are determined by the

²⁰ Cf. on 4QTest: J. M. Allegro, "Further Messianic References in Qumran Literature," *JBL* 75 (1956) 174–187; J. A. Fitzmyer, "'4QTestimonia' and the New Testament," in *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (London: G. Chapman, 1971) 59–89.

²¹ Cf. G. Strecker, *Weg der Gerechtigkeit* 49–85.

²² Cf. Eusebius, HE 4.26.13–26.

²³ C. H. Dodd, *Scriptures* 126–127.

subject matter, occasionally also through textual interdependence within the literary history. Therefore the agreements that can be confirmed within the cited material that occurs in the New Testament and related early Christian literature should not be evaluated too extensively in terms of literary connections. Dodd was right, however, to call attention to the influence of oral tradition: early Christian preaching and instruction used Old Testament texts in order to make the Christ-kerygma understandable or also thereby to legitimate it through the proof from fulfilled prophecy. Paul presupposes this in a layer of oral tradition, which means in Christian traditions that have Hellenistic Jewish characteristics. The Letter to the Hebrews, with numerous parallels to citations in the Pauline letters, can be introduced here as an example, for it is a New Testament document written under Hellenistic Jewish presuppositions. Such a layer of tradition, the extent and coherence of which has of course not yet been proved, is of Christian origin and was adopted by Paul after his call to be an apostle and/or worked out by Paul himself and his school.²⁴

The Jewish presuppositions of Pauline theology are also seen in the manner in which Paul interprets the text of the Old Testament. Here we may name the methods that are partially documented in rabbinic Judaism but also were already known in the Greek-speaking Judaism of the first Christian century.²⁵

1. The *inference a minori ad maius*, "from the smaller to the greater," is found often. This method is recognizable in the Greek formula for comparison πολλῶ μᾶλλον or πόσω μᾶλλον. It is found in the Adam/Christ typology (Rom 5:15, 17), in the portrayal of the meaning of the death of Christ as "for us" (Rom 5:9–10), in discussing the problem of the role of Israel in salvation history (Rom 11:12 / Ps 68:23 LXX in 11:9, also 11:24), further in the juxtaposition of ministry of Moses and ministry of the Spirit (2 Cor 3:7–9, 11/Exod 34:30). In the rabbinic literature this hermeneutical method is called קל וְחָמֵר, "light and heavy." The reverse method is also documented, namely the conclusion "from the greater to the smaller" (*a maiori ad minus*; cf. Rom 8:32; 1 Cor 6:2–3).

2. The *inference by analogy* (in rabbinic tradition, שְׁוֵה שְׁוֵה = "equal decision"). Here two biblical passages that use the same terms are interpreted with reference to each other so that the one explains the other (thus

²⁴ The existence of pre-Pauline Christian collections of Scripture quotations is vigorously disputed by D.-A. Koch. His thesis is "that Paul, in the course of his own reading of Scripture, collected excerpts from Scripture passages which he could then refer to in the composition of his letters" (*Die Schrift als Zeuge* 253). This thesis, not entirely without justification, reckons with the independence of Paul's work but neglects the consideration of the activity of the Pauline school.

²⁵ Cf. O. Michel, *Paulus und seine Bibel* 91ff; D.-A. Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge* 199ff; G. Mayer, "Exegese II," *RAC* 6.1197–1198; on the types and structures of Pauline argumentation, cf. D. Hellholm 15–19.

Rom 4:3–8; Gen 15:6 and Ps 31:1–2 LXX; in each case the verb λογίζομαι appears in a different sense. Paul connects both passages so that λογίζομαι means both "consider faith to be righteousness" and "not count sins against one").

The two hermeneutical methods just mentioned belong to the seven rules ("Middoth") of Rabbi Hillel, which were a "collation of the main types of arguments in use at that time."²⁶ This does not necessarily mean, however, that Paul knew these rules or that he was a Hillelite.²⁷ Hillel used still other methods of proof and those just named were not only typical of Jewish teaching but have parallels in Hellenistic rhetoric, so that we may assume that the rabbinic methods themselves were influenced by their Hellenistic environment.

3. *Argumentum e silentio*. This method draws the consequences of the fact that something is not said in a particular text. For example, in Romans 4:6–8 David is cited according to Psalm 31:1–2 LXX: "Blessed is the person to whom the Lord does not impute sin." Since this text does not say that people must demonstrate their own works if God is to grant them justification, Paul infers from this the conclusion that justification does not come from works but from faith.

4. Also to be mentioned is the *argumentum e contrario*, found in Romans 3:4 and 1 Corinthians 14:22; 15:44 as well as in rabbinic writings (Mekhilta on Exod 12:1).

5. *Etymology of names*. Hellenistic Jewish exegesis had already used the theological interpretation of Old Testament names (cf. Philo *All* 3.244; cf. also Ber 7b; San 19b). A common interpretation understands Galatians 4:25 in this way ("The word Hagar means Mount Sinai in Arabia"). Paul interprets this "figuratively." Hagar, Abraham's slave woman and concubine, receives a special function in the ordering of law and gospel; she symbolizes the Law given on Mount Sinai.

Two other methods are of fundamental significance, whose importance extends beyond those already mentioned:

6. *Allegorical Interpretation*. An allegory is a narrative representation, which in essential parts has figurative significance such that within the traditional narrative there is a deeper sense that is the real meaning of the

²⁶ H. L. Strack-G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991.) 19.

²⁷ Differently J. Jeremias, "Paulus als Hillelit," E. E. Ellis and M. Wilcox, eds., *Neotestamentica et Semitica* (FS M. Black) (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1969) 88–94, which names further parallels to Hillel. It is supposed that three additional Hillelite rules can be discerned in Paul: The fifth rule (general and specific) lets comprehensive and special commands interpret each other. Paul supposedly used this rule in Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:14. The sixth rule (getting a more precise meaning from a passage with the help of a related passage) is supposedly used in Galatians 3:16, and the use of the seventh rule (inference from the context) is documented by Romans 4:10–11a and Galatians 3:17.

text. Old Testament narratives are often read by Paul under the presupposition that they are allegorical portrayals that are thus actually oriented to their real sense that is hidden within them. But even when the verb ἀλληγορέω appears in Galatians 4:24, whether the juxtaposition of Hagar and Sarah (Gal 4:21–31) is really an allegory, and not more correctly understood as an instance of typological exegesis, is still a disputed point.²⁸ In any case, we have an allegory in 1 Corinthians 9:9, when Deuteronomy 25:4 ("You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain") is interpreted in the sense that allows the apostle to claim financial support from the church. So also Galatians 3:16 with its typical identification formula ὅς ἐστιν Χριστός ("this is Christ") must be considered an allegory. The comparison Christ = Passover lamb, with the juxtaposition of old and new leaven (1 Cor 5:6–8) also approaches the allegorical method. The Hellenistic Jewish presuppositions for this method are documented above all in the works of Philo of Alexandria.²⁹ In Christian interpretation of the Old Testament after Paul, the allegorical method was increasingly practiced, as the Letter of Barnabas documents as an important example of this approach in early Christian literature.

7. *Typological interpretation of Scripture.* This approach understands the Old Testament narratives of real persons or events as anticipatory portrayals of other future persons or events. The focus of the argumentation is on the latter. The point of departure of this paralleling of Old Testament and Christian persons and events is the conviction of the Christian community that its past, present, and future can be illuminated by the "types" portrayed in the Old Testament texts, and that Christian

²⁸ D.-A. Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge* 210–211, and H.-J. Klauck, *Allegorie und Allegorese in synoptischen Gleichnistexten* (NTA 13) (Münster: Aschendorff, 1986²) 116–122, decide that this is a juxtaposition of the διαθήκαι represented by both Hagar and Sarah, and thus an "allegorization" of Genesis 21. Differently Ph. Vielhauer, *Paulus und das Alte Testament* 200, according to whom the text is an example of typological exegesis despite the allegorization of the name, since "the figures and events here mentioned are not figurative code words for timeless truths but unique historical phenomena and are thus models, anticipatory forms of present realities."

That the word ἀλληγορέω in this passage was used mistakenly has been widely accepted since John Chrysostom (PG LXI, 662). Cf. A. Oepke, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater* (ThHK 9) (Berlin: Theologische Verlagsanstalt, 1979⁴) 148; O. Michel, *Paulus* 110; E. E. Ellis, *Paul's Use* 52–53; similarly R. Bultmann, "Ursprung und Sinn der Typologie als Hermeneutischer Methode," in *Exegetica* 369–380 (377: "The typology in the interpretation of the story of Sarah and Hagar is mixed with allegory [Gal 4:21–31]).

²⁹ Cf. Philo Jos 28 σχεδὸν γὰρ τὰ πάντα ἢ τὰ πλεῖστα τῆς νομοθεσίας ἀλληγορεῖται ("almost all, or most of the lawgiving [concretely: the given law] is allegorized"); also the Septuagint preceded Paul in the use of the allegorical method. Cf. R. Mayer, "Geschichtserfahrung und Schriftauslegung. Zur Hermeneutik des frühen Judentums," in O. Loretz-W. Stolz, eds., *Die hermeneutische Frage in der Theologie* (Schriften zum Weltgespräch 3), published by the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Weltgespräch (Wien-Freiburg 1968, 328ff.

theological consciousness can be strengthened by this style of interpretation. The temporal factor, i.e. the distinction between "then" and "now" is constitutive for this hermeneutical method. The Old Testament is interpreted from the point of view of the New Testament. The Hagar episode of Galatians 4:21ff can be understood in this sense. So also Abraham's being pronounced righteous on the basis of his faith is perceived as a typological expression for the justification of the godless (Rom 4:1–25). Moreover, we may speak of typological exegesis when a type is juxtaposed to an antitype. Thus 1 Corinthians 15:21–22, where Adam the type as the author of death is set over against the antitype, Christ as the bringer of life. This contrasting arrangement of Adam and Christ is also found in 1 Corinthians 15:45–47 and Romans 5:12–21.³⁰ Moreover, the "new declaration of God's will" that is received in the "ministry of the Spirit in glory" is antitypically set over against the Sinai law, in which the "ministry of death" is expressed (2 Cor 3:6–11). While the vocabulary and concepts discussed here were already present in Paul's given religious environment, and while Paul, possibly in connection with his school, made use of traditional units that had already been formed, this is also true of 1 Corinthians 10:1–13, where various Jewish and Hellenistic elements are used to express the meaning of the Christian sacraments baptism and the Lord's Supper by juxtaposing them to the saving sacramental reality experienced by the wilderness generation of Israel, which also occasions the presentation of positive typological lessons, namely the warning against sin and apostasy.

According to R. Bultmann,³¹ typological interpretation of Scripture presupposes a cyclical understanding of history. The historical process requires the idea of the recurrence of events (cf. the concept of the transmigration of souls). Such an interpretation is to be constrained, however, by the fact that in Paul's typology there is a constant linear futuristic-eschatological factor. So also the cyclical schema, according to which the endtime corresponds to the time of primeval beginnings ("*Urzeit wird Endzeit*"),³² can imply a teleological orientation, thus expressing a view of

³⁰ Cf. below in section A. I. b. 3., "Gnosticism."

³¹ R. Bultmann, *Exegetica* 369–380.

³² Cf. G. v. Rad, "Typologische Auslegung des Alten Testaments," *EvTh* 12 (1952/53) 17–33; accordingly the basic idea of typology is "to be seen less in the idea of 'repetition' than in that of 'correspondence.'" The correspondence is here temporally determined: the ancient event is a type of the eschatological event" (*Ibid* 19). A different type of correspondence is found for example in Zechariah 1:11 (between the earthly and the heavenly); cf. also Exod 25:9 (the booths for the feast of Tabernacles correspond to the heavenly model), Isaiah 11:1–2 (David as type of the Messiah), Isaiah 43:14–21 (Exodus narrative as pattern of divine action). A Moses-Messiah-typology is known by the rabbinic literature: "As the first redeemer (Moses) so also the last redeemer (the Messiah);" cf. PesK 49b, PesR 15 (72b), NuR 11 (162b), anon. MidrHld 2,9 (100a) (cf. Bill I 69).

the course of history directed to a final goal. Intentionality is also presented in the schema "prophecy and fulfillment." In distinction from this, typology does not deal with those Old Testament prophecies consciously intended as predictions (2 Cor 6:2; Isa 49:8). It is rather the case that the mysterious meaning of the Old Testament was first perceived in the texts in retrospect. Differently than is the case with allegory, typological thinking is oriented to history. However, it is still not simply to be equated with a concept of salvation history, since the latter view is interested in demonstrating God's act in history as a temporal action open to reasonable observation.³³

Old Testament citations are found primarily in the longer letters, especially in Romans and 1 Corinthians, and in Galatians,³⁴ but not very often in the smaller letters (1 Thess, Phil, Phlm). The idea that Paul cites the Old Testament when he is debating with his opponents is probably not the reason for this difference but rather that it is theoretical reflections that call for biblical confirmation. This corresponds to the fact that it is not the position of the opponents but issues of faith and congregational discipline that are illuminated by citations from the Old Testament, as well as the fact that the Old Testament is called upon not so much as proof texts for the ethical imperative,³⁵ but above all for Christology and for the Pauline soteriology with which it is integrally connected.

To be sure, Paul does not undertake to establish Jesus' messiahship by scriptural proof but there is no doubt that he regards the *person and work of Christ* as demonstrated in the holy Scripture. Although he does not produce direct quotations, he indicates the lines of connection that testify to the biblical character of the *Christ event*: the proclamation of the gospel of the Son of God / Son of David through the Old Testament prophets (Rom 1:2–3), the death and resurrection of Jesus "according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor 15:3–4), and the lordship of the shoot of Jesse over the nations (Rom 15:12). The direct quotations that confirm Jesus Christ as the "seed" of Abraham and thereby as the representative of the promise made to Abraham (Gal 3:16) receive a special importance, as do those that ground Jesus' passion³⁶ or eschatological lordship³⁷ in the Scriptures.

A christological orientation is also found in Paul's *soteriology*, as this is expressed in the juxtaposition of the first, natural Adam and the second,

³³ Cf. the Markan δει (see below).

³⁴ Romans contains 51 citations from the Old Testament; 1 Corinthians contains 18; there are an additional 11 in 2 Corinthians and 10 in Galatians.

³⁵ Cf., however, Romans 12:19–20 (Deut 32:35a; Prov 25:21–22); 13:8–10 (Lev 19:18b); 1 Corinthians 5:13 (Deut 17:7c) and Galatians 5:14 (Lev 19:18b).

³⁶ Romans 15:3; Ps 68:10 LXX; the crucifixion of Jesus as liberation from the curse of the law, "becoming a curse for us" (Gal 3:13), based on Deuteronomy 21:23 "anyone hung on a tree is under God's curse").

³⁷ 1 Cor 15:25, 27, a combination of Psalm 110:1 and Psalm 8:7 LXX.

spiritual Adam (1 Cor 15:45 / Gen 2:7), or in the understanding of the blessing of Abraham as the object of the promise to all the nations (Gal 3:8 / Gen 12:3). In the context of the Abraham / Christ typology, the promise of the righteousness that comes by faith is clarified on the basis of Genesis 15:6 in Romans 4:3 and Galatians 3:6. The locus classicus of the doctrine of justification, the revelation of the righteousness of God from faith to faith (Rom 1:17), which is at the same time the theme of Romans, is demonstrated by the quotation from Habakkuk 2:4 LXX ("the righteous live by my faithfulness"). Paul has adapted this text to his purpose by omitting *the* *μ**ov*, by separating the text from its original theological orientation, thus making it into an anthropological statement, thereby giving it the connotation of opposing the idea of justification by works. The Hagar / Sarah typology draws inferences from Isaiah 54:1 and Genesis 21:10, 12 regarding the life of those who have been born according to the Spirit, their life free from the law as those who are justified by faith (Gal 4:21ff). Similarly, the "Moses midrash" of 2 Corinthians 3 is contrasted with Exodus 34 to show the freedom and glory of the new Israel. That the whole of humanity before and apart from Christ is guilty before God is shown by the list of quotations in Romans 3:10–18, and the election of the Gentiles is demonstrated by a series of Old Testament texts (Rom 15:9–12). So also the reflections in Romans 9–11 on the problem of Israel within the history of salvation are documented by a variety of scriptural references that reveal the intensive exegetical work of Paul and his school.

Just as the Old Testament in the Pauline perspective is essentially determined by God's promise, and does not contain the gospel but promise and law,³⁸ there can be no dispute about the fact that such an interpretation of the Bible cannot be correct in terms of either the original meaning of the Old Testament texts or the contemporary Jewish understanding. From the perspective of historical criticism as practiced in the biblical interpretation of the present day it is therefore not to be imitated. The contrast between the original meaning of the Old Testament texts, and the meaning given to them in Paul's exegesis, is all too clear, especially since it is not seldom the case that he changes the reading of the text in order to adapt it to his meaning. This makes it all the more important to be aware of the hermeneutical key that determines Paul's citation of the Old Testament. Here we are not concerned with Paul's use of the Old Testament in his ethical instruction but with his theological interpretation. When one asks about the "theological center" of the Old Testament, one may state with E. Hirsch *cum grano salis* that at the center of the theology of the Pentateuch as well as the preaching of the Old Testament prophets

³⁸ Rightly L. Goppelt, *Theology of the New Testament* 2:56–57. That the history of ancient Israel is located under the rubric "promise" (ἐπαγγελία) is seen especially in Romans 4:13ff, 9:4ff; Gal 3:14ff, 4:23, 28.

stands the conviction that the Israelite people have been chosen by Yahweh and that this consciousness of their election determines the whole range of forms in which the people of Israel structured itself. Then for Paul's interpretation, by contrast, the definitive idea is that it is not the Old Testament law concerning the people but the gracious act of God revealed through Jesus Christ, not the powerful work in history of the divine covenant of the Old Testament but the direct relation of human beings to God revealed through Christ that opens up the way to understanding the Old Testament tradition. Therefore the specific interpretation of the Law by Paul, including its relation to the holy Scriptures of the Jewish people, receives a fundamental significance, as documented by 2 Corinthians 3 and the doctrine of justification in the major Pauline letters. It was for this reason that Paul never undertook to outline a history of the divine election in which the Christian church would appear as the continuation or supplement to the history of the Jewish people. So also the theologoumenon of "the immutability of God" revealed through Christ does not remove the relation of discontinuity that characterizes Paul's interpretation of the Old Testament, although for Paul the Father of Jesus Christ is indeed at the same time the God of Israel who spoke with the ancestors and acted on their behalf. But the Old Testament concept of Yahweh, the God of the covenant, who had obligated his people to keep the whole, indivisible Torah and who had also executed his will with military force, is considerably different from Paul's picture of the God who has redeemed humanity in Christ and has justified the ungodly. While the concept of the *one* God was no point of controversy at all between the Old and New Testaments, their pictures of this God were quite different and did contribute to the discontinuity between the two Testaments. Nor is the idea of one continuous stream of history documented by the doctrine of creation and the one Creator God who rules all, however much it is presupposed in the Pauline writings (cf. Rom 1:18ff; 1 Cor 8:6.)³⁹ This doctrine of creation does not have an independent theological function but is rather illuminated by its various relations to the Christ kerygma.⁴⁰

The Christ event is accordingly the decisive point of departure and orientation that shapes all Paul's interpretation of the Old Testament. It is connected just as little to an idea of universal history as to some mathematical point abstracted from this line. Nor is its temporal character characterized completely by referring to the one saving event of the cross and resurrection. Although Paul does not reflect on the *vita Jesu*, he does

³⁹ Cf. below A. I. a. 3.

⁴⁰ Cf. Romans 1:18ff: the necessity of the revelation of Christ follows from the guilty involvement of the natural, this-worldly human being, who should be able to recognize God by his works in creation. Romans 8:39: the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ conquers all worldly powers.

presuppose the earthly life of Jesus (cf. Gal 4:4; 1 Cor 11:23). The past history of Jesus Christ does not begin with the incarnation, however but is the past history of the preexistent one who was with God before the creation of the world (Phil 2:6). It is the reality of Christ that transcends and comprehends time that lets the Old Testament be understood as a Christian document, for it is not the Scripture in relation to the Christ event but the Christ event in relation to the Scripture which is the ultimate norm that determines Paul's interpretation of the Bible.⁴¹

The concept of the preexistence of Christ is more presupposed by Paul than explicitly developed. Alongside Philippians 2:6, especially to be named is the title "Son of God," which implies the pre-temporal existence of the Son in connection with the concept of his being sent into the world (cf. Gal 4:4 "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,..."). So also the designation of Christ as the "image of God" (εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ: 2 Cor 4:4), which suggests the idea of preexistence not only by its connection to Genesis 1:26 but

⁴¹ This approach was carried out consistently by Wilhelm Vischer when he finds Christ already manifest in the Old Testament and is willing to apply the designation "Christian" to the testimony of the church when it acknowledges this unity of the two Testaments; such unity then means the identification of Jesus Christ with the Messiah of Israel (W. Vischer, *The Witness of the Old Testament to Christ* [London: Lutterworth, 1949]). Nonetheless, from the historical perspective the Old Testament is a document of the Jewish faith, so that the differences between Old Testament-Jewish messianology and New Testament Christology cannot be smoothed out.

The matter is seen differently by Rudolf Bultmann, who, to be sure, would like to acknowledge the Old Testament explication of the law as an abiding moral demand, and states that the unconditionedness of its moral demand presupposes that the world is not at human disposal and that human existence is a temporal / historical being in relation to God and the neighbor, and that this is the point of agreement between Old Testament and New Testament faith in God. But he acknowledges no direct revelation of the Word of God in the Old Testament, so that the Old Testament's declarations of grace are bound irrevocably to the people of Israel. Since human existence in the Old Testament perspective is shattered by the collision between its relation to God by virtue of creation and its being bound to history, the Old Testament as a document of the failure of the history of Israel is as a whole no history of revelation. It is rather the case that in it the promise is concretized, the promise that is realized in the New Testament ("The significance of the Old Testament for the Christian Faith," *The Old Testament and Christian Faith*, B. W. Anderson, ed. [New York: Harper & Row, 1963] and "Prophecy and Fulfillment," Claus Westermann, ed., and James Luther Mays, Eng. trans. ed., *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics* [Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1963]).

In addition to the hermeneutical approaches named above, the interpretation of the Old Testament can open up possibilities of human self-understanding in connection with the encounter with God it presupposes, especially by analysis of the anthropological structures as they are presented in the Psalms, for example. In interpreting and applying the Old Testament to its own situation, Christian preaching may not disregard the Christ event which is its foundation.

especially through the corresponding ideas in the Philonic doctrine of the Logos (*Spec Leg* 1.81; *Conf* 97; *Her* 231). A significant parallel from the point of view of the history of religions is also found in the Jewish teaching about wisdom. In a manner similar to Christ (1 Cor 8:6), preexistence and the mediation of creation is also affirmed of Sophia.⁴² To be sure, Paul is not concerned with the construction of an objective system of history within which the concept of preexistence could be incorporated but the "now" of proclamation and the acceptance of the grace of God fulfills the preexistent reality of the Son of God and actualizes "today" the eschatological reality of the preexistent one.⁴³

2. *The Sophia Tradition*

- Conzelmann, H. "Die Mutter der Weisheit," *Zeit und Geschichte* (FS, R. Bultmann) Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1964, 225–234.
- Dahl, N. A. "Formgeschichtliche Beobachtungen zur Christusverkündigung in der Gemeindepredigt," *Neutestamentliche Studien für R. Bultmann, E. Dinkler*, ed. BZNW 21. Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1957², 3–9.
- Gese, H. *Lehre und Wirklichkeit in der alten Weisheit: Studien zu den Sprüchen Salomos und zu dem Buche Hiob*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1958.
- Küchler, M. *Frühjüdische Weisheitstraditionen*. OBO 26. Freiburg-Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979.
- Lietzmann, H. *The Beginnings of the Christian Church*. London: Lutterworth, 1949².
- Macrae, G. W. "The Jewish Background of the Gnostic Sophia Myth," *NT* 12 (1970) 86–101.
- Rudolph, K. "Sophia und Gnosis," *Altes Testament-Frühjudentum-Gnosis*. K. W. Tröger, ed. Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1980, 221–237.
- Schweizer, E. "Zur Herkunft der Präexistenzvorstellung bei Paulus." *Neotestamentica: deutsche und englische Aufsätze 1951–1963*. Zürich: Zwingli, 1963, 105–109.
- Sellin, G. *Der Streit um die Auferstehung der Toten*. FRLANT 138. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986.
- Stadelmann, H. *Ben Sira als Schriftgelehrter*. WUNT II/6. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1980.
- von Lips, H. *Weisheitliche Traditionen im Neuen Testament*. WMANT 64. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1990.
- von Rad, G. *Theology of the Old Testament*, I. New York: Harper & Row, 1962.
- Wilckens, U. "σοφία," *TDNT* VII (1966) 465–476, 496–528.
- Windisch, H. "Die göttliche Weisheit der Juden und die paulinische Christologie," *Neutestamentliche Studien*. (FS G. Heinrici) UNT 6. Leipzig: J. C. Heinrichs, 1914, 220–234.

The kind of poetic wisdom tradition that goes back to ancient Israelite and general Near Eastern roots also played a significant role in Hellenistic Judaism. Differently than was the case in the literary genre of apocalyp-

⁴² See below A. I. a. 2. on the Sophia tradition.

⁴³ Cf. 2 Corinthians 5:16–17; 6:2; Romans 3:26; 5:9, 11; 8:1; 11:30–32; 13:11; Galatians 2:20; 4:9, 29.

tic,⁴⁴ the wisdom writings were not the expression of a dualistic orientation in which the inequities of history would be reconciled at the eschaton but dealt with sayings and speeches that sought to understand the world of human beings in terms of its orderliness and to mediate reasonable instructions by which people could come to terms with the problems of everyday life. Wisdom attempted to bridge the gap between the ideal and the real and to give insight into the relation between one's deeds and the way one gets along in the world. In this regard the wisdom literature of the Old Testament and later times became a constituent element of Jewish ethics that has influenced New Testament writings in a variety of ways.

A distinction can be made between an "experiential wisdom" devoted to the basic structures of human social life, and a more didactically oriented wisdom teaching intended to bring people to a higher educational level.⁴⁵ Both types presuppose a variety of given structures within the Jewish social world.⁴⁶

The theological significance of the wisdom tradition is found in the fact that it places the ethical awareness of human beings under the claim of God and measures human ethical conduct by the divine command. After all is said and done, the beginning of wisdom is still the "fear of the Lord," (Prov 1:7; Ps 111:10; Job 28:28). Just as the person led by wisdom acknowledges God's command and turns away from sin (Sir 18:27; cf. Prov 16:17), so also ignorance of the way of the Lord leads to wrong and guilt (Wis 5:7). The goal is to practice what is reasonable in relations with one's fellow human beings, corresponding to the conviction that the good is always the reasonable and practical (Prov 3:1-2; 10:9; 15:10).

The world order, the knowledge of which constitutes the foundation of wisdom, is ultimately not at human disposal. Thus the rule of wisdom states that the industrious become rich and the lazy become poor; the rich receive their deserved happiness in contrast to the poor (Prov 10:4-5, 15; 11:16b; 12:11, 24, 27; 13:18; 14:20; 19:4). Nevertheless, the admonition is given to be merciful to the poor (Prov 14:21, 31; 17:5; 19:17; 21:13).

⁴⁴ E. g. Job, Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, Sirach, Wisdom of Solomon.

⁴⁵ Experiential wisdom is directed to the task of uncovering the hidden order of the world in order thereby to manage one's own life better. It is important to note in this connection that such experiential wisdom does not make a claim to ultimate and absolute truth and validity. This distinguishes wisdom from philosophy, since a system based on wisdom is constantly open to new experiences of wisdom and thus in theory can never be thought of as a closed system.

In the case of didactic wisdom one should think of that kind of instruction that has as its goal to teach people how to overcome their emotions, to practice patience, so that in self control and the fear of God one can shape one's life in such a way that it remains constant in good times and in bad. The Joseph story of Genesis 37, 39-50, a story constructed as didactic wisdom, is an instructive example of this intention. Cf. von Rad, *Theology* 1:431, 440, 454.

⁴⁶ Cf. H. v. Lips, *Weisheitliche Traditionen*.

This would be pointless, if the connection between wealth and human achievement, or between poverty and guilt, were a matter of direct observation that could be calculated. If that were so, then human beings should not interfere with this order of the world that has been established once and for all. On the one hand, the order of the world established by God is not at human disposal; on the other hand, this is not perceived in a fatalistic manner but the examples of wisdom's instruction reflect human responsibility and independent capacity to act.

The theological importance of the wisdom tradition increased for the Jewish people during the postexilic period. This is seen in the caesura between the older preexilic tradition of the "Proverbs of Solomon" (Prov 10–29)⁴⁷ in which wisdom sayings are strung together in a series, and the postexilic stratum (Prov 1–9) characterized by the call of *personified wisdom* and her instruction for those who lack understanding (Prov 1:20ff; 8:1ff). Sophia is distinguished from God, since it/she was created by the Spirit of God;⁴⁸ it/she goes forth "from the mouth of the Most High" (Sir 24:3) but is presented as an independent figure who wanders through heaven and earth (Sir 24:5–6), looking for a dwelling place among human beings, without being able to find a place to dwell (Sir 24:7; 1 Enoch 42:2). Only in Jacob and in Israel her "inheritance" does she find a home (Sir 24:8b, 10–11). Like the Holy Spirit, she is herself a gift of God (Wis 8:21; 9:1ff; cf. 1 Kings 3:9ff; Job 28:23). She invites to her banquet (Prov 9:1–6). Her goal is the salvation of human beings (Wis 9:18) and the gift of everlasting life, an immortality that brings one near to God (Wis 6:19–20; 8:17).

It is characteristic of Jewish wisdom literature which has been influenced by Hellenism that—in contrast to the priestly writing of the Old Testament—it is not bound to the salvation history of the Jewish people by the creation story but conversely the law given by God to his people is understood in terms of creation.⁴⁹ The statements about *wisdom's preexistence* both materially limit and go beyond wisdom's being as one of God's creatures: that wisdom was created before the foundation of the

⁴⁷ Although Solomon is explicitly mentioned as the author only in Proverbs 10:1–22:16 and 25:1–29:27, the whole of chapters 10–29 is probably preexilic.

⁴⁸ It is certainly the case that the concept of the hypostatization of wisdom is met for the first time in Proverbs 8:22ff; the supposed example in Job 28 is uncertain. On this cf. also H. Lietzmann, *History* 1:99–100; differently M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* 275–318.

⁴⁹ Cf. G. von Rad, *Theology* 1:450–451. As Genesis 1 shows, the author of the "Priestly Document" (P) opens up the dimensions of history and thereby of salvation history on the basis of the creation story. According to P, one cannot speak of Israel apart from the theological data concerning creation. Therefore salvation history begins with the act of God in creation. Wisdom theology sees this in a different light: it regards the created world as an object to be critically observed, and with the created world as its point of departure attempts to make a connection to salvation history.

world guarantees that it/she has an existence that transcends the world and that will remain eternally.⁵⁰ Although wisdom too is a creature of God, it is still the case that it/she was called into being prior to all the other creatures (Sir 1:4–9). Its/her essence is divine, for "she is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God" (Wis 7:26). Consequently she is designated as "God's beloved."⁵¹ Moreover, she can be regarded as a *participant in the creation of the world* (cf. Prov 3:19: "The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens."), for "wisdom [is] the fashioner of all things" (Wis 7:22; cf. 9:9), and however mysterious her essential being may be, she is clearly associated with the divine creative power (Job 28:25–27). The function of preservation the cosmos is thus attributed to her (Wis 7:27 τὰ πάντα καινίζει). All this makes clear that the Jewish wisdom literature is more interested in the cosmological interpretation of the wisdom concept than in the historical. It is also noticeable that in this connection the Jewish cultus recedes in importance.

In those passages where wisdom is identified with the Torah, it is not the observance of the ceremonial law that is the point at issue but right ethical conduct. Thus the terms "law" and "wisdom" can be interchangeable (Sir 24:23–27; 2 Baruch 38:2; cf. 44:14), or wisdom can be placed over against the nonobservance of the way of the Torah, just as wisdom as the fear of the Lord can be equated with the insight of avoiding evil (Job 28:28), for the words of wisdom teach righteousness (Wis 8:7). This fundamentally means that wisdom teaches what pleases God (Wis 9:9).

The wisdom tradition was more widespread and more varied within Hellenistic Judaism than is apparent in the extant texts. In Aristobulus⁵² Jewish thought is fused with the concepts of Greek Stoic cosmology and epistemology. In yet another manner Philo of Alexandria exegetes the wisdom concepts under the influence of syncretistic streams of Hellenistic culture. On the one hand, wisdom is the mediator of revelation, in accord with the Old Testament and Jewish tradition. On the other hand, wisdom is interpreted as a mythological figure, so that lines of connection between Philo and later Gnostic views can be drawn.⁵³

⁵⁰ Sirach 24:9; Aristobulos in Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* 13.12.10–11.

⁵¹ Proverbs 8:30 חָכְמָה, which really means "a pampered child;" translated by Luther as "master worker," which presupposes the participation of wisdom in the creation of the world.

⁵² The extant fragments come from the middle of the second century B. C. E.; cf. N. Walter, "Aristobulos," in *Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit* III. 2 (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn 1975) 262.

⁵³ Cf. Philo *Fug* 105–112: the Old Testament high priest is identified with the λόγος, who has God for his father and Wisdom for his mother. Whether the influence of the mystery religions is relevant here is disputed; cf. U. Wilckens, *TDNT* 7:501 n. 233.

Although a systematic scheme of the Philonic concept of the hypotheses cannot be reconstructed⁵⁴ and Philo once connects the Logos with a system of five Powers, while another time he describes the Logos as a unity of only two primeval Powers, it is still clear that Philo's speculation proceeds from a concept of God in which God as the absolute Being is completely beyond human knowledge. There is no way that there could be a direct connection between this God and matter, which is thought of as very far down the ontological scale. It is rather the case that God makes use of bodiless forces, thought of as ideas. These are united in a comprehensive world-of-ideas, that can also be thought of as an ideal unity and identified with the concept of the "Logos." The Logos is accordingly the creative instrument of God, who/which stands between God and the world and mediates between the two. It is characteristic of him to have an intercessory function as the advocate of human beings before God; he/she/it is also described with the term "Sophia."

It is in this context within the history of religions that Paul finds himself when he speaks of divine wisdom or adopts wisdom traditions. The hymnic doxology of Romans 11:33–36 is reminiscent of wisdom language and content, when it affirms, in antithesis to current wisdom concepts, the inability of human thought in view of the unsearchable decisions of God. This is related to the immediately preceding v. 32, which affirms that God has had mercy on all even though no one deserves it, since all human beings live in disobedience to God. This fact is not understandable to human thinking and must seem inconceivable to human beings (v. 33). That God saves his creatures without any human achievement evokes the Pauline response and the hymnic doxology. The subject is the riches of divine wisdom. What was said in the Hellenistic Jewish wisdom tradition is also true for Paul: the divine wisdom is the depth of knowledge originally belonging only to itself; it participated in the creation of the world as God's advisor and had a share in the rich treasures of God. Such a wealth of ability to perceive God's ways Paul cannot affirm for human beings, who must rather confess themselves to be sinners before God, and who must take refuge in the "deus absconditus," the One who is now revealed in Jesus Christ.

The doxology that concludes the first main section of the Letter to the Romans thus does not only refer to the mystery of Israel's salvation history (Rom 9–11) but—as made clear by the direct connection with 11:32—to the disobedience of all human beings to the God who shows mercy without any basis in human achievement. Thus the outcome of the first part of Romans is maintained, at the beginning of which stands the proof that no one, neither Gentile nor Jew, can be justified before God by works of

⁵⁴ Cf. Lietzmann, *History* 1:95–97

law (1:18–3:20) but that rather human beings can stand before God only by means of a righteousness "through faith for faith" (1:17).

The myth of the preexistent Sophia who reveals herself in this earthly world, though not directly cited by Paul, is apparently presupposed by him in 1 Corinthians 2:6–16. For the wisdom of God, the subject of the apostolic preaching, may not be understood merely as a doctrine about Christ,⁵⁵ but appears as the teacher of people who are led by God. She is identified with the Spirit that searches the deep things of God (vv. 10–13). This is in harmony with the Jewish wisdom tradition according to which hypostatized Wisdom is identified with the Spirit of God (Wis 1:4–7) and as such pervades all things, rules and renews the universe, while at the same time instructing those who understand and making them friends of God (Wis 7:21–8:1).

The closeness of the Pauline interpretation of Christology to the Jewish wisdom tradition is not to be overlooked. Just as the ancient wisdom teaching was aware of the concept that wisdom participated in the creation of the world, so Paul seems to take up this idea in 1 Corinthians 8:6, when he says that alongside God Christ is "through all things and we through him." A similar idea probably also motivated 1 Corinthians 10:4. There Exodus 17:6 is referred to in order to show that the people of Israel in the time of its wandering through the wilderness was accompanied by a visible manifestation of Christ. Just as Deuteronomy 30:12ff explains that the commandment given by God is not in heaven or beyond the sea but is near to human beings, so Paul also refers to this passage in his exposition in Romans 10:6–13. The word that stands near to human beings is identified with Christ, in direct verbal dependence on the Deuteronomy passage.

The personal figure of Wisdom, hidden from human beings and identified with the Spirit of God, is a suitable figure to represent preexistence. This interpretation of wisdom bears soteriological traits (1 Cor 2:7, 9). This is seen especially in the way in which it is presupposed that the divine plan of salvation was hidden from the aeons. This means at the same time that, similarly to the Jewish myth of Sophia, the Pauline understanding of wisdom has a cosmic background. To be sure, it is striking that the advent of wisdom in this world is not recognized by all. Thus the "rulers of this world" who "crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor 2:8) have no access to it. Their inability to recognize wisdom or even to be blessed with it, is demonstrated in the paradoxical event that they resist the saving wisdom of God. By so doing, and without being aware of it, they carry out the divine act of salvation and contribute to the fact that God's saving will comes to fulfillment in the crucifixion. The "archons" are subjected to the act of the

⁵⁵ Cf. H. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* (Hermeneia. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975) 88 n. 69.

divine wisdom, while in the same moment they think that they have disposed of it. The worldly powers hostile to the divine wisdom are obviously identical with the demonic cosmic powers that exercise their authority through this-worldly authorities. To their essential being there belongs not only their ignorance of the revelation of divine wisdom in the Christ event but associated with it is an anti-God activity that found its high point in the crucifixion of Jesus. Their actions presuppose an underestimation/misjudgment of the saving plan of God expressible in terms of wisdom and manifest in the Crucified One, and is an indication of an ontically-determined manner of thinking that finds expression in the dualistic juxtaposition of the heavenly and earthly world, of divine wisdom and the demonic world, a kind of thought found not only in apocalypticism but also in wisdom. Therefore the concept of *descensus*, the descent of divine wisdom into the earthly, anti-God world is also necessarily implied, although the consequences that would be drawn from this by the later dualistic system of Christian Gnosticism, have not yet been made (cf. John 1:5, 11).

It is disputed whether in 1 Corinthians 2:6ff Paul presupposes the scheme of revelation that can be reconstructed for the Pauline school, which was possibly an element of their oral instruction. This schema is presented by N. A. Dahl in two variants:⁵⁶ Variation 1: The mystery once hidden from the world has now been revealed (Col 1:26–27; Eph 3:4–7, 8–11; Rom 16:25–26); Variation 2: That which was present before the foundation of the world has now been revealed at the end of the times (2 Tim 1:9–11; Titus 1:2–3; 1 Pet 1:18–21 and elsewhere). Presupposed here as the background is the pre-Pauline (and thus not genuinely Pauline) antithesis of the hiddenness and the revelation of the mystery of God. It is still possible that the specific stamp given to this tradition in the deuteropauline letters was encouraged by Paul himself. To be sure, Paul, in distinction from the deuteropauline authors, binds the revelation of divine wisdom to the cross event (1 Cor 2:2, 8) but he also does distinguish between elementary knowledge and deeper wisdom (2:6, 14–15), and he does not (yet) bring the pregnant juxtaposition "once / now" into a context having to do with knowledge, but the relationship to the later revelatory schema is not to be disputed. It becomes visible in the emphatic temporal connection of the juxtaposition of the hiddenness and revelation of divine wisdom (cf. 2:7).

Traces of Hellenistic Jewish wisdom tradition are visible already at the beginning of Paul's debate with the Corinthian opponents, when 1 Corinthians 1:17–31 places the foolishness of the cross of Jesus Christ over against the wisdom speech of the Corinthian pneumatics who are characterized by their rhetorical skill (1:17; 2:4). The saving "power of God" (1:18) that has been manifested in the cross event is in Paul's view explicitly not expressed in the kind of wisdom speech cultivated in Corinth. The Pauline reading of the matter becomes understandable when it is perceived what the wisdom speech in the "original" sense was concerned to do.

⁵⁶ N. A. Dahl, "Formgeschichtliche Beobachtungen."

While the Corinthian wisdom speech was oriented to immanent reality subject to examination by human reason, what Paul was concerned with was not a matter of human understanding of given empirical reality but a matter of the mystery of the revelation of God that takes place in history. If this is something that can only be grasped by faith, then it is something that cannot be apprehended by the instrument of a human doctrine of wisdom (1 Cor 2:4–5). To be sure, Paul himself emphasizes over against the Corinthians that he speaks with wisdom but he fills this term with different content than do the Greeks. While their wisdom is “of this world”, the apostle speaks in contrast of the wisdom of God (1 Cor 2:6–7). Ancient philosophy had the goal of pressing forward in thought until it attained the knowledge of God but in Paul’s understanding its attempt to explicate the transcendent in terms of immanence has been completely shattered. The inability to perceive the wisdom of God that preceded, surrounds, and preserves the world (1 Cor 1:21) is seen in the fact that the powers of this world nailed the Lord of glory to the cross (1 Cor 2:8). After human wisdom had thus itself demonstrated its own poverty, the salvation of humanity by God is introduced not through the medium of human rational possibilities but through the proclamation of the crucified Christ that appears as foolishness (1 Cor 1:21, 23). This wisdom that had previously been hidden (1 Cor 2:7) is now revealed to those who have been predestined to accept it. The divine wisdom thus makes possible what is denied to human wisdom: the knowledge of God that brings salvation (1 Cor 2:10–11). In this is reflected the adoption of Old Testament understandings of wisdom, since the role of mediator is attributed to wisdom who makes known God’s saving power to human beings.

It is thus here presupposed that on the one hand the world finds itself “in the wisdom of God,”⁵⁷ while on the other hand the realm of the divine wisdom stands over against the sphere of the cosmos as two exclusive territories. For it is characteristic of the cosmos understood in this way that it places its trust not in God but in itself and becomes guilty of evaluating itself too highly. For the revelation of the saving act of Christ, in contrast, it is characteristic that it does not occur in accordance with the categories of wisdom already present but paradoxically in the destruction of Jesus on the cross. Thus the Crucified One becomes to the earthly world a scandal and foolishness to Jews and Gentiles without distinction, but to those who believe he is the power and wisdom of God (1:23–24). While the predominate aspect here may be a purely conceptual identification of Christ and the wisdom of God, and not the equating of Christ with

⁵⁷ 1 Corinthians 1:21: ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ has a local meaning; this is not to be completely excluded when the ἐν is taken adverbially as expressing the accompanying circumstance of the failure of the cosmos to recognize God’s wisdom (so A. M. Wedderburn, “ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ—1 Kor 1,21” *ZNW* 64 (1973) 132–134.

hypostatized wisdom,⁵⁸ it is still the case that here Paul stands on the ground of a preexistence Christology. This is also indicated by other parallels to the personal figure of Wisdom found in Hellenistic Judaism, so that the Sophia tradition of Judaism is to be evaluated as a significant element of Pauline or prepauline Christology. Moreover, the parenesis of the Pauline letters is characterized by ethical features similar to those typical of Jewish wisdom tradition. These are indirectly related to the concept of personal wisdom, and in addition stand within the framework of the complex of the Hellenistic Jewish stream of tradition that had provided the basic building blocks of Paul's thought, as mentioned frequently in the preceding discussion.

3. *The Jewish Ethic*

- Dodd, C. H. "The Ethics of the Pauline Epistles," E.H. Sneath, ed., *The Evolution of Ethics*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927, 293–326.
- Lohse, E. *Theological Ethics of the New Testament*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991.
- Merk, O. *Handeln aus Glauben: Die Motivierungen der paulinischen Ethik*. MThSt 5. Marburg: N. G. Elbert, 1968.
- Niebuhr, K.-W. *Gesetz und Paränese*. WUNT II 28. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1987.
- Reinmuth, E. *Geist und Gesetz*. ThA 44. Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1985.
- Schnackenburg, R. *Die sittliche Botschaft des Neuen Testaments*. HThK.S 1+2. Freiburg: Herder, 1986, 1988.
- Schrage, W. *The Ethics of the New Testament*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988.
- Schulz, S. *Neutestamentliche Ethik*. Zürich: Calver, 1987.
- Strecker, G. "Autonome Sittlichkeit und das Proprium der christlichen Ethik bei Paulus," *ThLZ* 104 (1979) 865–872.
- Strecker, G. "Strukturen einer neutestamentlichen Ethik," *ZThK* 75 (1978) 117–146.
- Wendland, H. D. *Ethik des Neuen Testaments*. GNT 4. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970.
- Wibbing, S. *Die Tugend und Lasterkataloge im Neuen Testament*. BZNW 25. Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1959.

Among the history-of-religions presuppositions of Paul's theology there belongs also the forms and contents of the ethic that occupies a considerable proportion of the Pauline letters. Thus the second major part of the Letter to the Romans is exclusively concerned with ethical-parenetical

⁵⁸ Questions of detail remain open. For example, in 1 Corinthians 1:24, 30 does Paul intend an identification of Christ with the personified wisdom of God? (Cf. H. Windisch, "Die göttliche Weisheit" 225). Is E. Schweizer, "Präexistenzvorstellung" 109, correct that Paul is dependent on the concept of preexistence in Jewish wisdom speculation and not on an older myth? It is to be noted that the concept of preexistence belongs to a broad stream of Hellenistic and Jewish thought. The hymn in Philippians as well as the Pauline *ἐν Χριστῷ* Christology also exhibit parallels to the Hellenistic Jewish wisdom tradition and cast further light on the texts discussed above. This applies no less, of course, in regard to the broader horizon of Hellenistic Jewish syncretism as illustrated by Philo and others.

matters [Rom 12:1–15:33]. The same is true of the Letter to the Galatians (Gal 5:1–6:10). Since the other letters also go into concrete relationships in the churches, in them too the hortatory and monitory element is of considerable importance. For example, both 1 Corinthians and Philemon are entirely dedicated to parenetic themes. Likewise, parenesis takes up much of the space of Philippians (Phil 1:27–2:18; 3:2–4:9), and an example of the early form of the Pauline ethic is presented by the parenetic section of 1 Thessalonians (4:1–5:22).

Is the Pauline ethic a *Christian* ethic? In view of the theological and sociological context, this question is clearly to be answered in the affirmative. The ethical norms for the Christian life apply within the sphere of Christ; they are grounded in the Christ event, by the indicative that speaks of the redemptive act of Christ. This event is the basis of the imperative of the new life.⁵⁹ Paul's ethic is characterized by the announcement of salvation from which the imperative of the Christian life is derived. It is still necessary, however, to note that in terms of detailed parenesis there is not a great difference between Paul's teaching and that of his religious environment. To be sure, it is not possible to find an ancient parallel for each item in Paul's ethical instruction. But it is still true in general that there is extensive agreement between Paul and the ethics of the Hellenistic world in both general principles and particular instructions. Many of Paul's ethical statements could also have been made within the non-Christian Jewish or Hellenistic world.

With the Jewish tradition Paul shares the faith in the one God, the creator.⁶⁰ Even though an isolated *doctrine of creation* is not developed and statements of creation theology appear primarily in a Christological-soteriological context (Rom 4:17; 9:19ff; 2 Cor 4:6), it is still clearly the case that the apostle confesses his faith in the one God of the Old Testament as the creator of the world. Thus Jewish norms can be derived from their connection with creation. Since God's invisible being can be recognized from his works in creation, the pagan world must have intentionally avoided accepting this knowledge that can perceive God as the "prima causa" of the cosmos. Instead, the pagan world devoted itself to polytheism and immorality (Rom 1:18–21). Although the influence of Hellenistic Jewish apologetic is not to be overlooked in this regard,⁶¹ such a "natural

⁵⁹ Cf. Galatians 5:25; Romans 6:1ff.

⁶⁰ It is to be noted, however, that the Old Testament-Jewish concept of God the creator overlaps Hellenistic-Stoic teaching; cf. Epictetus, *Dissertations* 1.9.7 (τὸν θεὸν ποιητὴν ἔχειν καὶ πατέρα).

⁶¹ On this cf. E. J. Goodspeed, *A History of Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1942) 129ff. It is to be noticed that Romans 1:21 (γινόντες) affirms not only the possibility but the reality, of the knowledge of God among the Gentiles. This corresponds to an interpretation widespread in ancient Judaism, e. g. Jos. *Apion* 2.190ff; 1 Enoch 2–5; 2 Baruch 54:17–18; cf. E. Reinmuth, *Geist und Gesetz* 43ff.

theology" has no independent function but is subordinated in the context to Paul's line of argument in which the Gentiles have fallen under God's wrath and their guilty conduct means they cannot be justified on the basis of any human accomplishment. Thus Romans 2:12–16 develops the argument: both Gentiles and Jews stand under the wrath of God (Rom 2:5, 9–11), for the demand of the law has been known by them also. This is a reality given in nature itself (2:14: φύσει τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῶσιν), because "the work of the law is written in their hearts." This is the testimony of their consciences, as it is of their thoughts that both accuse and excuse them (2:15). It is thus clear that the universal cosmic rulership of God the creator (cf. also 1 Cor 10:26 / Ps 24:1) corresponds to the general obligation of all humanity to obey the law of God given on Sinai or in nature.

There can be no doubt that this grounding of ethical statements is shaped not only by the Hellenistic Jewish tradition that is presupposed but also by dependence on the Stoic ethic, especially by the folk morality practiced in daily life. This is indicated not only by the fundamental obligation derived from the cosmic foundation of the law which has a "natural theology" as its presupposition as expressed in Romans 1:18ff but also by the individual commands. As an example Paul sets forth the binding norm of the "natural" over against "unnatural" sexual relations (Rom 1:26, φύσις). So also Paul bases his teaching on proper hair length on the "teaching of nature" (1 Cor 11:14–15). In the motivation and derivation of the Pauline ethic, there is an interlocking of elements from the Old Testament-Jewish faith in God the creator of the world and the Stoic doctrine of the orderly working of the cosmos by natural law. This also implies that the line between authentic Christian and non-Christian ethical statements is not to be drawn too clearly.⁶²

The all-encompassing presence of the creator God makes it possible that *individual ethical instructions* can be traced back to the Old Testament or derived from it. They are connected with direct quotations that contain an ethical directive, for example Romans 12:19 ("never avenge yourselves" is supported by citing Deut 32:35 "Vengeance is mine, and recompense"). The collection Paul is taking for the poor in Jerusalem is motivated in 2 Corinthians 8:15 by Exodus 16:18 (the mutual equalizing of the amount of manna collected), and the standard is applied which has

⁶² One example: While it is true enough that the term "lowliness, humility" (ταπεινοφροσύνη) in the secular literature of the first century, including Josephus, was basically used with a negative connotation (W. Schrage, *The Ethics of the New Testament*, [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988] 201), it is also the case that "being subject to one another" can also be a basic principle of Gentile ethics (cf. PsCallisth 1.22.4; Plut *Mor* II 142 E), so that "subordination" as such is not specifically Christian, and despite Philippians 2:8 has not only christological foundations but also bases that were adapted from general sociological contexts.

been provided by the God who himself gives freely (Ps 112:9, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor." In particular, the wisdom tradition of Greek speaking Judaism offers extensive material that has found a place in the ethical admonitions of the apostle. This is elucidated in the parenetic section Romans 12:9–21.⁶³ This is where the so-called *catalogues of vices and virtues* belong,⁶⁴ that for the most part arrange lists of moral offenses or (less often) virtues; they by no means reflect primarily the personal experience of the apostle but presuppose a long background in the history of the tradition.⁶⁵ The substance of the obligations, which are primarily social rather than religious, go back to the tradition of Hellenistic Judaism (possibly via an intermediate Christian level). They are mostly untouched by Paul's own literary interventions. Characteristic for the influence of Jewish-apologetic tradition in such catalogues are "immorality" (πορνεία) and "idolatry" (εἰδωλολατρία), since in the current understanding pagan polytheism was typified by "whoredom" (Deut 31:16; Isa 1:21; Wis 14:12–31), and the worship of idols always coincided with immorality (Sib Or III 29:ff). Thus in the vice catalogues immorality and idolatry are sometimes listed side by side (1 Cor 6:9; cf. 5:11). Also "licentiousness" (ἀσέλγεια) is considered synonymous with pagan worship (2 Cor 12:21; Gal 5:19–20). Doubtless the high value placed on marriage has Jewish roots (cf. Matt 5:31–32par; 1 Cor 7:2ff; with reference to Gen 1:28; 2:24).

First Corinthians is a good example of the formative influence of Jewish ethics on Pauline parenesis. Without interpreting the Old Testament Torah in a static sense, the general command to keep the "commandments of God" (ἐντολαὶ θεοῦ; 1 Cor 7:9) points back to the law of Moses. The Decalogue of the Old Testament is cited as binding on Christians. Alongside the *Decalogue*, the *command to love the neighbor* is cited as "fulfilling the law" and its summary (Rom 13:9–10; cf. Lev 19:18). In other contexts too, the fundamental meaning of the command to love one's fellow human beings appears as a summary of God's demand (1 Cor 13:1–13). Differently than in the Synoptic tradition (Matt 22:37–40par), Paul does not here make the connection to the command to love God (Deut 6:5). But the Christian led by the Spirit lives by the experience of the love

⁶³ Cf. in particular Romans 12:15 / Sirach 7:39 (7:34 LXX); Romans 12:16 / Proverbs 3:7; Romans 12:17 / Proverbs 3:4; 12:19; Deuteronomy 32:35; Romans 12:20 / Proverbs 25:21–22.

⁶⁴ Romans 1:29–31; 13:13; 1 Corinthians 5:10–11, 6:9–10; Galatians 5:19–23; cf. also Colossians 3:5–8, 12–14par; Mark 7:21–22par; Revelation 9:21; 21:8; 22:15.

⁶⁵ The beginnings are found already in the Old Testament (Hos 4:1–2; Jer 7:9; Prov 6:17ff). Cf. Wisdom 8:7; 14:24–25; 4 Maccabees 1:18–30; Testament of Issachar 7:2–6; Testament of Asher 2:5ff; 5:1; so also in Philo (Sacr 22; 27; Op 73; All 1.86) and in the popular philosophy (Epictetus Diss II 16.5; III 2.3.14; III 22.13; Diss Frgm IV.XIV; Plut LibEduc 13 A; Dio Or LXVI 1; LXIX 6).

of God revealed in Christ (Rom 5:5), just as the community as a whole can be described as "beloved" by God (ἀγαπητός; ἠγαπημένοι in 1 Thess 1:4). The agape-event sets people free to love God (Rom 8:28). Here are found the closest points of contact to the first table of the Decalogue, which is not cited by Paul. The center of gravity of the Pauline ethic lies, however, in the "law of Christ" with the charge to bear the "burdens" of Christian brothers and sisters (Gal 6:2) and by such a realization of the command to love the neighbor to fulfill "the whole law" (Gal 5:14).

When according to the Pauline understanding the love commandment not only provides a *modus operandi* for the Christian life but—for example, by the willingness to sacrifice oneself and the renunciation of egoistic self-realization that it includes—a drive toward concrete expressions of this command, the preparation is thereby given for a *programmatic separation between the ceremonial and the moral law*. Not only in the later major Pauline letters in which Paul radicalizes and systematizes his critique of the Law in connection with his message of justification but from the beginning of his apostolate to the Gentiles the apostle no longer advocates the necessity of keeping the Old Testament-Jewish law for salvation, which of course had already implicitly been annulled as the means of salvation by the Christian confession of the earliest Christian community in Jerusalem. His apostolic ethical instruction has as its subject matter without exception the eschatological moral law interpreted as the demand of God. This had already been anticipated in Diaspora Judaism. Philo of Alexandria had already relativized the obligatory nature of the ceremonial law by his thoroughgoing allegorization of the Mosaic tradition (*Conf* 190; *Sobr* 33). So also the author of the Letter of Aristeas places the commands "that have to do with piety and righteousness" above the Old Testament-Jewish purity laws, which he regards as merely having the function of preserving the outstanding importance of Judaism in comparison with other religions.⁶⁶

The nuanced position that Paul adopts to the problem of the Old Testament law (cf. Rom 7:1–25a), especially the fundamental significance of the love command, makes clear that the Old Testament is not the only basis for Paul's ethical orientation. The apostle falls back on the accepted norms of his social environment.⁶⁷ Not least, the confidence motivated by

⁶⁶ *Arist* 128ff, 131. D. J. Moo rightly emphasizes that with the term νόμος Paul mostly indicates the unity of the Torah and does not make any distinction between the moral law and the ceremonial law ("Law," "Works of the Law," and Legalism in Paul," *WThJ* 45 [1983] 73–100). On the other hand, it should not be disputed that Paul *de facto* does not present the ceremonial law of the Old Testament as binding on Christians, though it does seem clear that he does this with regard to the moral law (cf. Rom 13:8–10; Gal 5:13ff).

⁶⁷ Cf. 1 Corinthians 11:16, where "custom" appears as a binding ethical norm; cf. also the role of "conscience," in e. g. Romans 13:5 and 1 Corinthians 10:25ff.

the Spirit relativizes the traditional casuistic legal prescriptions—in this Paul and his Corinthian opponents are in agreement— and is an expression of apostolic authority and freedom. Independence from the Jewish legal tradition is seen, on the one hand, in the juxtaposition of the state of the circumcised and the uncircumcised and, on the other hand, in keeping the divine commands (1 Cor 7:19). The Christian community overcomes the barrier that separates Jews and Greeks (Gal 3:28); the christologically motivated consciousness of freedom is characterized by the conviction "that nothing is unclean in itself; but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean" (Rom 14:14). Thus Paul can agree with the principle advocated by those causing the trouble in Corinth that "All things are lawful," but adds the qualification, "all things are not beneficial." (1 Cor 10:23). Christian freedom limits itself by its awareness of responsibility for the neighbor and for society. By such self-limitation Christian freedom unmistakably renounces every form of early Christian "self realization."

b) Gentile-Hellenistic Influences

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- Berger, K. "Apostelbrief und apostolische Rede. Zum Formular frühchristlicher Briefe," ZNW 65 (1974) 190–231.
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- Bultmann, R. *Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting*. London and New York: Thames and Hudson, 1956.
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- Classen, C. J. "Paulus und die antike Rhetorik," ZNW 82 (1991) 1–33.
- Hellholm, D. Paulus von Tarsos—Zum Problem der hellenistischen Ausbildung, Manuskript 1992; Norwegian Version, "Paulus fra Tarsos. Til spørsmålet om Paulus' hellenistiske utdannelse," T. Eide and T. Hägg, eds., *Dionysos og Apollon. Religion og samfunn i antikkens Hellas* (Skrifter utgitt av det norske institutt i Athen 1). Bergen, 1989, 259–282.
- Prümm, K. *Religionsgeschichtliches Handbuch für den Raum der altchristlichen Umwelt*. Rome: Päpstliches Bibelinstitut, 1954.
- Schmeller, T. *Paulus und die "Diatribe." Eine vergleichende Stilinterpretation*. NTA NF 19. Münster: Aschendorff, 1987.
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- Schoon-Janssen, J. *Umstrittene 'Apologien' in den Paulusbriefen*. GTA 45. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991.

Stowers, St. K. *The Diatribe and Paul's Letter to the Romans*. SBL.DS 57. Chico (Cal.): Scholars Press, 1981.

If the pre-Christian Paul is to be located within the framework of Hellenistic Judaism, this means that a clear separation cannot be made between authentically-Jewish and authentically-Hellenistic elements of his theology. To be sure, in his youth Paul had received an education that included both Jewish-Pharisaic instruction and pagan Greek and Hellenistic literary instruction. The latter is indicated by the (only) text that the apostle cites from sophisticated Greek literature, 1 Corinthians 15:33, a verse from the Greek comedic poet Menander (4th century B. C. E.), from his comedy *Thais*:

Φθείρουσιν ἥθη χρηστὰ ὁμιλίας κακάι: "Bad company ruins good morals."

This is an iambic trimeter, consisting of six iambs (--), in which each two form a meter.⁶⁸ The quotation stands within a context of Pauline parenesis; it illustrates that Christians must not be conformed to the world and warns in particular against associating with those who deny the resurrection. It documents that fact that Paul not only grew up in a Hellenistic, Greek-speaking context but also had some familiarity with Greek literature.

A different problem is presented by the question of the manner in which Paul's literary formation and theological world of ideas was influenced by his Hellenistic environment. So far as his style of argument in the Pauline letters is concerned, Rudolf Bultmann had already analyzed Pauline rhetoric in his licentiate thesis and had attempted to prove that in his letters Paul had adopted the speech forms of the Cynic-Stoic popular philosophy. Even though the details remain disputed, since the concept and content of the "diatribe" have by no means been established with certainty and there was no such thing as "the" diatribe, we may still assume as our point of departure that Paul's linguistic style was influenced by the didactic style of the pagan (wandering) philosophers. Among such stylistic elements are word plays, rhetorical questions, parallelisms, antitheses, metaphors, and the introduction of objections of fictive opponents that are rejected with the cry *μη γένοιτο* ("may that never be").⁶⁹

With regard to the Letter to the Galatians is to be asked whether it can be understood in terms of the eighteenth type of the *τύποι ἐπιστολικοί* of

⁶⁸ An iamb consists of a short and a long syllable; six iambs make 3 meters, or 1 trimeter. Other citations from Greek poets in the New Testament (Acts 17:28 and Titus 1:12) are not to be attributed to Paul.

⁶⁹ A. J. Malherbe, "μη γένοιτο in the Diatribe and Paul," HThR 73 (1980) 231–240; see also his *Moral Exhortation: A Greco-Roman Sourcebook* LEC 4 (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986). See also J. Schoon-Janssen, *Umstritten "Apologien"* 82ff.

Ps.-Demetrius as an "apologetic document,"⁷⁰ or whether it is the case that differing letter forms have had their influence. The attempt by means of rhetorical analysis and epistolographical comparison to classify the Pauline letters clearly within the framework of ancient letter types has not yet succeeded, since we are lacking an accepted theory of ancient letter writing for the time of Paul. So also the frequently-used term "friendship letter" is too general to designate the distinctiveness of the Pauline letters to churches. It is not to be disputed, however, that the letters of the apostle have been influenced by the form of ancient letters in general. And even if Paul follows the oriental-Jewish formula in his letter prescripts, Hellenistic influences are not to be overlooked, just as echoes of the Greek letter form are found in the conclusions of his letters.⁷¹

The influence of Hellenistic thought on the theology of Paul is to be inferred especially from three problem areas of the history of religions, areas that are important not only for the language but also for the thought of Paul, even if direct genetic lines of connection may not always be drawn.

1. *The Mystery Religions*

- Barrett C. K. *The New Testament Background: Selected Documents*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989².
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- Wagner, G. *Das religionsgeschichtliche Problem von Röm 6: 1–11*. AThANT 39. Zürich-Stuttgart: Calwer, 1962.
- Wedderburn, A. J. M. *Baptism and Resurrection. Studies in Pauline Theology against Its Graeco-Roman Background*. WUNT 44. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1987.

⁷⁰ So H. D. Betz, *Apostel Paulus* 40. Ps.-Demetrius (2 cent. BCE—1 cent. CE). There is considerable variation in the dating of the person and work of Ps.-Demetrius. The similarity to other Byzantine letter writers permits the assumption that the anonymous author lived in the late imperial period (cf. F. Wehrli, ed., *Die Schule des Aristoteles. Texte und Kommentar*, Heft IV. *Demetrios von Phaleron* [Basel-Stuttgart: Schwab & Co. Verlag, 1968²] 88).

⁷¹ Cf. G. Strecker, *History of New Testament Literature* 50–56.

Richard Reitzenstein affirmed a direct dependence of Paul on the ancient mystery cults and attempted to prove this especially for Paul's dualistic anthropology. Thereby theses of the history of religions school were taken up and elaborated according to which early Christianity was very dependent on the mystery religions and may itself in the ancient world have represented a variety of mystery cult piety.

In the Greek world were found mystery cults of Eleusis, Samothrace, and others, not least the cult of Dionysus. In the Hellenistic period they were found in all areas of the Roman Empire. From Phrygia came the cult of Cybele and Attis, who had originally been a Syrian deity; from Syria came the cult of Adonis and Atargatis ("the Syrian Goddess"); from Egypt came the cult of Isis and Osiris. In later times the Persian Mithras cult became important, especially as the cult of Roman soldiers.

The gods and goddesses of the mystery cults are essentially vegetation deities, personifications of the growth and decay that takes place in nature. A mystery drama pictures the dying and rising of the deity. The cult makes present the destiny of the god, which is replicated in the experience of the candidate when he or she is initiated into the cult and then ascends through the various levels of initiation to the highest degree, that of the "perfect" (τέλειοι). The goal of the religious experience of one initiated into the mystery cult is divinization (ὁμοίωσις θεῷ). This is facilitated by the mystery sacraments. This is illustrated by the "Taurobolium," the pouring of the blood of an ox over the initiates,⁷² or the initiatory rites of the Attis or Osiris cults, which manifest a series of parallels to Christian baptism. The latter involve an anointing, and the priest calls out to the initiate:

Rejoice, you initiates; the god is saved; so also salvation from trouble is granted to us.⁷³

That the priest of the Osiris cult does not declare that salvation has already occurred for the initiate is reminiscent of Romans 6:1ff: in Paul's view the believer, like the initiate in the mystery cult, participates sacramentally in the death and resurrection of Christ. This by no means involves a magical incorporation into the deity. It is rather the case that the mystery cults also know, in a way that corresponds to the Pauline eschatological reservation, a dialectic that determines the life of the initiate. In this earthly life there is no absolute "perfection;" for the τέλειοι also, an anthropological dualism plays the decisive role.

A further important parallel consists in the fact that sacred meals were also celebrated in the mystery cults. This is what facilitates the deification

⁷² Cf. Prudentius, *Peristephanon* 10.

⁷³ Cf. Firm Mat ErrProfRel 22.1.

of the initiates. After the sacred meal, the worshipper of Attis makes the confession:

I have eaten from the drum, I have drunk from the cymbal, I have become an initiate of Attis.⁷⁴

The parallel is found in 1 Corinthians 11:23ff: in each case it is a matter of food and drink, the initiate approaches the cultic deity by means of the meal, there follows an incorporation into the cultic community and the goal is "being taken out of the worldly sphere," the liberation from sin and mortality.

To be sure, the parallels of the Christian sacraments to the mystery cults should not be overestimated. Christian baptism was derived primarily from the baptism of John the Baptist; on this basis alone it is to be considered primarily an eschatological sacrament. And the Lord's Supper points back to the life of Jesus in which Jesus' last meal with his disciples is reflected. No analogous historical reference is known in the mystery cults. The mystery drama is an unhistorical myth, even if it portrays the epic narrative of the destiny of the cultic hero. In contrast, for the celebration of the early Christian sacraments the reference to the Christ event that happened in the world of space and time is constitutive. Like the kerygma, so also the Christian sacraments are anchored in history. Such a "historical reservation" keeps early Christian piety prior to and alongside of Paul from being identified with a mystery piety. On the other hand, the mystery cults are very important for understanding Pauline theology. While from the point of view of the history of religions they cannot be considered the origin of Pauline ideas, they are still significant as analogies to Pauline theology. They are thus helpful for understanding particular theological vocabulary,⁷⁵ as well as providing basic elements in the structure of Pauline anthropology, for instance as it is expressed in the relation of the believer to Christ by dying and rising with him as well as in the dialectic of Christian existence. The gift of salvation that comes to the participant in the mystery religions has a strongly sacramental-substantial character. This should be included in reflections on the analogies between the mystery cults and Paul's own views.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Cf. Firm Mat ErrProfRel 18.1 (cf. Clement of Alexandria Prot II 15).

⁷⁵ E. g. for τέλειος: cf. 1 Corinthians 2:6 and Philippians 3:15; for σωτηρία, Romans 1:16; for πνευματικός, cf. e. g. 1 Corinthians 2:13.

⁷⁶ Cf. the ontological reflections that Paul articulates in 1 Corinthians 15:44 regarding the "spiritual body" (σῶμα πνευματικόν). It is disputed whether the contrast between πνεῦμα and ψυχή in 1 Corinthians 15 goes back to "Hellenistic ideas of rebirth in the mystery religions" and has a particular point of contact in the initiatory prayer of the Mithras liturgy, as supposed by R. Reitzenstein, *Mysterienreligion* 70–77. For a critique of this view, cf. F. W. Horn, *Das Angeld des Geistes* 192–194.

2. Stoicism

- Bonhoeffer, A. *Epictet und die Stoa: Untersuchungen zur stoischen Philosophie*. Stuttgart: F. Enke, 1890 (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 1968).
- Bonhoeffer, A. *Epiktet und das Neue Testament*. RVV 10. Giessen: Frommann, 1911.
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- Erskine, A. *The Hellenistic Stoa: Political Thought and Action*. Ithaca: Cornell, 1990.
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- Pohlenz, M. *Grundfragen der stoischen Philosophie*. AGG III 26. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1940.
- Texts:
- Barrett, C. K. and C. J. Thornton, *The New Testament Background: Selected Documents*, San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989, 80–94.
- Leipoldt, J. und Grundmann, W. *Umwelt des Urchristentums II*. Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1965, 315–333.

The Stoic philosophy that was founded by Zenon about 310 B.C.E. in Athens and whose chief advocates in the New Testament period were Epictetus and Seneca is based on a specific interpretation of nature (φύσις), namely of the cosmos enlivened by πνεῦμα. The world-logos is revealed in the physical world as the deity that determines the order of the world, and does this to such a degree that the two can almost be identified: the deity is the cosmos, the cosmos is the deity! It is the task of human beings to adjust to this given order of the world, for the world-logos is providence (πρόνοια); by establishing the law of nature, it subjects everything that happens to inevitable destiny (ἀνάγκη or εἰμαρμένη). The Stoic's goal is to harmonize his or her life with these necessities (κατὰ φύσιν ζῆν).⁷⁷ The Stoic philosophical system is based on cosmology. While it corresponds to some extent to the Gnostic system, it still does not know the decisive dualism of Gnosticism but is construed according to a basic monistic principle, and is thus basically optimistic and characterized by faith in reason. It is consistent with this that Stoicism then reinterpreted the old Greek religions traditions in a rationalistic manner in which the myths of the gods were demythologized and understood as cosmic processes.

The Stoic anthropology corresponds to its cosmology: the world-logos corresponds to human reason (λόγος or νοῦς).⁷⁸ Such a correlation has as its content that human beings have the possibility of willing what is good and divine, and the ability to do it. Whoever knows and understands the divine order of the world will also order his or her life by it. Wrongdoing is thus based on an error of which the person is guilty himself or herself,

⁷⁷ Chrysippus fr 16, in *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta collegit Ioannes ab Arnim*, Vol. III, Leipzig-Berlin 1923).

⁷⁸ Cf. Epictetus *Diss* I 9 (Leipoldt-Grundmann II 322.9–16); II 8.1 (325.3–5).

because thereby the claim of the world-logos is missed, the logos which is the essence of human being and the basis of human life. The freedom that belongs to the Stoic consists in the fact that human beings are in the situation of being able to do that which corresponds to nature ("freedom for"). At the same time, it affirms that human beings have a "freedom from" all that withstands the subjection of human beings to the world-logos (emotions, passions). Therefore the Stoic is basically a dehistoricized human being who can be touched neither by suffering nor joy. So also death holds no terrors for the Stoic, since death realizes a necessity of nature (ἀνάγκη). The knowledge of such a natural necessity makes the wise human being a victor over death.

The Pauline position differentiates itself from the ideal of the Stoic wise man precisely in those places in the Pauline letter corpus where Stoic influences have been supposed:

α) *Romans 1:18–32* stands at the beginning of the Letter to the Romans and marks the beginning of the first major section (1:18–3:20, "The Necessity of the Righteousness of God for Gentiles and Jews"). Paul wants to present the proof that neither Gentiles nor Jews already possess righteousness that all are dependent on grace, on the righteousness of God that comes through faith. The subsection 1:18–32 thematizes the problem in relation to the Gentiles. The point of departure is the affirmation that God has revealed himself to the Gentiles, i.e. that God's invisible being has been known since the creation of the world by his works, i.e. by the creation itself. This statement contains an originally Stoic view, for it is the Stoic in particular who can conclude on the basis of observing the cosmos itself that there is a world-logos that permeates the cosmos. For Paul it is not a matter of introducing a proof for the existence of God, not the theoretical question of the knowability of God that could result in reflections about the being and essence of God, but—and this is the second idea that has a parallel in Stoicism—Paul presupposes that knowledge of God means a knowledge of a law that lies at the basis of everything. His view thus corresponds to the Stoic view that the world-logos includes a binding law and demands unconditional obedience. From this there follows a third Stoic idea: closing oneself off from this natural knowledge of God means a life in unrighteousness (ἀδικία) which is at the same time a betrayal of one's own true being.

Paul uses this idea as a point of contact for his own theological exposition. Pauline theology thus accepts a natural, general knowledge of God, without thereby having a christological presupposition. Paul thus likewise adopts the Stoic conception according to which compelling evidence for the existence of God "*e consensu gentium*" can be presented: all peoples possess a knowledge of God independently of the preaching of the gospel. But such an adoption of Stoic ideas takes place only in the sense of a "point of contact;" for that God is recognizable by his works means for the

Gentiles that "they have no excuse" (1:20). Human beings stand under the wrath of God and find themselves in a situation in which there is no way out, a situation in which they cannot free themselves by their own power. In making use of this point of contact Paul does not therefore adopt the Stoic system in a positive way, nor is it a matter of a cosmically grounded optimism but a revelation of the haughtiness and conceit of human life prior to and apart from faith. The "*consensus gentium*" can thus not serve to assure oneself of a comprehensive harmony with a divine essence that is pervaded by the eternal laws of the cosmos, under whose guidance human beings may feel themselves to be secure, but rather has the task of making the chasm visible that separates God and humanity from one another in order to make human beings aware of the guilt that holds them captive. For Paul this makes the revelation of God in the Christ event necessary, a revelation that brings new possibilities to light through the righteousness of God, a revelation that means the end of the power of sin and the law.

Stoic ways of thinking are thus undoubtedly presupposed by Paul. They were widespread in the Hellenistic period and had also already been adopted by Hellenistic Judaism, as seen for example in Philo *Op* 3–12 or Wisdom of Solomon 12:1.

β) *1 Corinthians* 7:29–31. This text stands in the context of the problems of marriage and is the response to a question from the Corinthian church: what is the Christian position on the issue of the institution of marriage? Should a Christian consider it better to be married or to be single? Paul responds that, in view of the imminent eschatological catastrophe, it is good to remain unmarried; this corresponds to his own personal decision. Nonetheless, he here displays a nuanced attitude: while it is still better to remain unmarried, it is not forbidden to get married. The decisive thing is not a particular marital state but conduct that takes up both possibilities into itself: the attitude of "distance." This attitude is described by Paul with the expression "as if not" (ὥς μή):

I mean, brothers and sisters, the appointed time has grown short; from now on, let even those who have wives be as though they had none, and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no possessions, and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away. (1Cor 7:29–31).

Here the supreme commandment is not to be bound, to regard the things of the world with a certain distance, and to conduct oneself indifferently over against the world.

Such an attitude was also commended by the Stoic philosopher Epictetus, who lived until 138 C. E., in Greece. One should not bind oneself to this passing world; one should conduct oneself with regard to those hu-

man beings one loves as though they were fragile vessels, not allowing oneself to be governed by drives and passions that obscure clear judgment; one should not allow oneself to be shaken by anything but rather live without deep feelings (ἀταραξία). The attitude of "as if not" is expressed in distancing oneself from transitory things. It is grounded by the unity of human beings with the world-logos. This unity with the world order is the Archimedean point from which what happens in nature and human history can be regarded from a distance.

For Paul, the "as if not" is not motivated by a supposed unity with the world-logos but has a double basis: (1) by the orientation of life to the coming eschaton (1 Cor 7:29 "the appointed time has grown short;" 7:31, "the present form of the world is passing away"); the nearness of the parousia provides the basis for an attitude that deprives the things of this world of their claim to absolute power; and (2) the indicative of the Christ event determines the attitude "as if not." Thus 1 Corinthians 6:11 indicates: "But you were washed [through baptism], you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God." By baptism the believer is united with Christ and taken out of the world, so that the world no longer exercises its power over him or her.

With this different point of view, the question of whether in 1 Corinthians 7 Paul is dependent on material from the Stoic thought world is also decided. The common denominator consists in the formally negative fact that the "as if not" presupposes in each case an attitude that is not oriented to the things of the world. However, the basis for this similar attitude is very different in each case. When in Romans 12:15 Paul commands "Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep," this contradicts the ataraxias called for by the Stoics that commands one to keep oneself free from all feelings. For Paul, the demand of love is foundational. The command to turn to the neighbor and to human society in love stands in tension with the Stoic ideal oriented to the individual, the ideal of self control and self-realization which the wise man is able to achieve.

3. *Gnosis (the Adam Myth)*

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That Paul lives in a complex network of religious ideas can be seen from the Adam / Christ typology presented in 1 Corinthians 15:20–22, 45–53 and Romans 5:12–21. The context in 1 Corinthians 15 deals with a written inquiry from the Corinthian church regarding the denial of the resurrection as advocated by some Corinthian Christians (15:12: "how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead?"). Although it is here not a dispute about the resurrection of Jesus but concerning the general resurrection, Paul begins with the kerygma of the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus and documents the latter by a series of witnesses who have seen the risen Lord, among whom he includes himself—albeit as the last.⁷⁹ This modulates into a statement that faith in the resurrection is constitutive of Christian faith itself (15:12–19), then to an "order of the resurrection" that lists the series of events to happen at the resurrection (15:20–28). Paul's defense of the resurrection faith appeals to the Adam / Christ parallel. Adam as the "first man" (ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος) is juxtaposed to Christ as the "second man" (ὁ δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος).⁸⁰ They are related to one another as type and antitype: Adam as the author and representative of death, Christ as the author and representative of life. This contrast has a fundamental anthropological significance. The first Adam has a natural body, the last Adam, in contrast, has a spiritual body. The first comes from the earth, the last from heaven. They stand over against each other as temporary and eternal, as mortal and immortal. Such a juxtaposition determines the possibility and reality of the being of human individuals: with the first Adam they are fallen into death but as believers they have the possibility of life in Christ (15:21–22).

The contrast between the earthly and the heavenly *anthropos* is not only to be traced back to the views of the Corinthian opponents of Paul, for the apostle presupposes that the church in general is familiar with this idea. He does not utilize the concept as though it were limited to his

⁷⁹ 1 Corinthians 15:1–11.

⁸⁰ 1 Corinthians 15:45, 47. Cf. the rabbinic paralleling of the "first redeemer" (Moses) and the "final redeemer" (the Messiah)

opponents in Corinth. On the contrary, in Romans 5:12–21 also he makes use of it independently of the situation in Corinth. The new aspect here is that the first man is not only the author of death but also of sin (Rom 5:12). This is incorporated in the overarching course of the argument, according to which the righteousness of God is not only a human possibility but is a reality, namely a reality manifest in Christ, who is the representative of life and righteousness. Thereby the contrasting idea is presupposed that the real situation for human beings without Christ is constituted by death and sin.

To answer the question of the origin of this view, less reference should be made to Paul's opponents. There are essentially three possibilities presented in the history of tradition for the derivation of this concept: (1) Paul himself is the creator of this view.⁸¹ (2) Paul adopts a prepauline Christian Adam / Christ typology. In favor of this view is the fact that in 1 Corinthians 15:27 a Christian tradition of Old Testament citation can be introduced, a tradition that recurs in Hebrews 2:8 and perhaps stands in the background of 1 Corinthians 15:45. (3) The Adam / Christ typology has pre-Christian, prepauline, Jewish roots. This is suggested by the term "Adam" and the reference to the Old Testament creation story. Philo distinguishes two types of human beings: (a) the heavenly, spiritual man (the image and model), and (b) the earthly man formed from the earth.⁸² Of course, differently than in Paul, for Philo the heavenly man is the first, and the earthly man the second, and Philo draws no comparison between the heavenly man and Adam.

Can this mythological view, according to which the two ἄνθρωποι are representatives of two mutually-exclusive powers (the power of death and the power of life), be directly derived from Genesis 1–3? Are we to assume that with the Adam / Christ typology Paul intends nothing more than an exegesis of Genesis 1:26–27 and 2:7? The decisive consideration is that in the Old Testament creation story, while Adam is, to be sure, partly responsible for the fate of death in which all humanity is now involved, he is still only the first member of a chain that goes back to him. In contrast, the (pre)Pauline Adam / Christ typology understands Adam as the representative of humanity; in him all have sinned, in him the fate of death happens to all. Here there is a physical unity between *the* human being and human *beings*, even if Paul himself does not take over this myth intact (cf. Rom 5:12). Obviously the view stands in the background that human beings as such are "incorporated" in the first *anthropos*, that they are ἐν τῷ Ἀδάμ (1 Cor 15:22; cf. Rom 5:15) and for precisely this reason they share

⁸¹ So for example W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology* (London: SPCK, 1965³) 41–44.

⁸² Cf. Philo *All* 1.31–32; *Op* 134.