

PAUL'S USE OF JEWISH TRADITIONS¹

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Despite the common practice of appealing to Jewish texts to inform a historic reading of passages in the Pauline *Hauptbriefe*, close in-depth tradition-historical studies have been limited. Furthermore, even among these tradition-historical studies, one finds a great diversity of approaches. Differences of opinion exist in terms of: (1) whether post-Pauline Jewish texts should even be considered as instructive; (2) what constitutes an entity that may be compared, e.g. mere traditions or initially only whole documents; and (3) when one can speak of a tradition having influenced a particular text.

The present study seeks to investigate tradition-historically three Pauline texts that are clearly biblical yet are not direct scriptural quotations, viz. 1 Corinthians 10:4, Galatians 6:16, and Romans 5:12-21. It is hence plausible, if not probable, that these three texts contain interpretative statements and would therefore benefit from a comparison with both preceding and successive Jewish exegetical texts, both synchronically and diachronically. In the case of a diachronic comparison, rather than comparing Pauline and Jewish texts based on only one or a few shared features, a more specific and arguably more reliable way of juxtaposing these texts is applied, which consists of placing a respective Pauline text into a Jewish exegetical trajectory, covering a minimum of three texts.

By seeking to locate the three aforementioned Pauline texts within Jewish exegetical trajectories, Paul's use of Jewish traditions in these three texts can be examined. This in and of itself, at times, allows for a comparison and contrast of Paul and these uncovered Jewish exegetical traditions, showing his appraisal as well as reshaping of these traditions.

¹ Stefan Bosman, 'Paul's Use of Jewish Traditions: Utilizing Exegetical Trajectories to Study 1 Cor. 10:4, Gal. 6:16, and Rom. 12:12-21' (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Aberdeen, 2017). Supervisor Dr Jutta Leonhardt-Balzer.

A more detailed discussion of the thesis follows in which the three fields of Old Testament, New Testament, and early Judaism converge. Sandwiched between an introduction and a conclusion are three chapters that deal with the aforementioned texts, i.e. 1 Corinthians 10:4, Galatians 6:16, and Romans 5:12-21. An overview of the introduction and these chapters follows.

Among other topics, the introduction discusses some of the attitudes within scholarship toward comparing the New Testament with Jewish sources. It focuses especially on the controversial custom of comparing rabbinic literature with the New Testament as well as uncritically accepting rabbinic lists of hermeneutical rules as being useful for New Testament studies. In light of such controversies, a methodology is formulated that will allow for Pauline passages to be scrutinised in light of related Jewish texts in a responsible manner. The approach endeavours to avoid both the pitfalls of parallelomania and parallelophobia. This sets the stage for the discussion of three Pauline texts in light of comparable Jewish sources.

The first text chapter, 1 Corinthians 10:4, examines various pre-Pauline sources on which Paul might have drawn to create 1 Corinthians 10:4. It shows that the Wisdom of Solomon and the Damascus Document are unlikely to have been used by Paul. Rather, in line with the creative rereading of Scripture employed by Paul's contemporary kinsmen, it seems that Paul had combined two scriptural passages, which led to a new exegetical result. Apart from the fascinating prospect of peeking into Pauline hermeneutics, the conclusion supports Paul's own claim of being a Pharisee or Judean zealot, and Paul's exegesis places him within the interpretive context of his erudite Judean kinsmen. Furthermore, the study makes the methodological point that dismissing rabbinic texts just because they are later than Paul or because they are difficult to date impairs one's ability to properly map an exegetical trajectory. This in turn adversely affects the possibility of accurately reconstructing the source and thus an aspect of the background of Paul's passages.

The second text chapter, Galatians 6:16b, seeks, among other things, to establish the identity of 'the Israel of God' in Paul's enigmatic statement 'peace [be] upon them and mercy and upon the Israel of God' (εἰρήνη ἐπ' αὐτοὺς καὶ ἔλεος, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ) in Galatians 6:16b. Two recent studies have examined Paul's possible sources for this benediction. Michael Bachmann appeals to 1 Enoch,

whereas Gregory Beale appeals to a Septuagint reading in Isaiah 54. Bachmann hardly notes the Septuagint, whereas Beale neglects 1 Enoch. Isaiah 54 and 1 Enoch 1 are used in this chapter to suggest a plausible exegetical trajectory which shows significant resemblances to Paul's statement. Placing Galatians 6:16 within this trajectory of Jewish traditions enables 'the Israel of God' to be identified. Also, other features of Galatians 6:16 are highlighted, such as its inaugurated and final eschatological character as well as its undertone of judgement. While the findings in this chapter about 'the Israel of God' support an existing minority position, the exegetical trajectory mapped out by *Traditionsgeschichte* does contain new implications not hitherto considered. Furthermore, in terms of 'the Israel of God', the result of this tradition-historical investigation affirms the findings of grammatical, lexical, and contextual investigations. As a result, the conclusions of this study challenge the majority position about 'the Israel of God' in Galatians 6:16.

The last text chapter discusses Romans 5:12-21. In these verses Paul gives a historical account of sin in various phases, i.e. after Adam, after Moses, and after Jesus Christ, and notes its lethal effect. Casting Adam as a type of Christ, Paul portrays the free gift through Christ as the invigorating alternative to the realm ruled by death. While juxtaposing Adam and Christ, sin and righteousness, death and eternal life, nomistic terms play an essential role throughout the argument of this pericope. Further, some transitions in this text may be classified as awkward. This, in turn, may point to the use of sources, particularly Jewish sources. Using *Traditionsgeschichte*, this study aims to uncover Paul's employment of such sources as well as potentially others' use of Paul's statement.

This chapter first selects various Jewish texts that cohere significantly with Paul's text. This allows the aligning of these traditions in an exegetical trajectory in which Paul's text also fits. This trajectory forms a subset of traditions that are more closely related than other traditions and therefore can be more fruitfully compared to Paul's text than texts that happen to share just one correlation, such as a motif. (Viewing Paul's text from this perspective has hitherto not yet occurred in the works of scholars.) The results of this enquiry yield greater insight into the development of these Jewish traditions and Paul's 'Judaism' in the context of wider Judaism(s).

Not only Paul's use of Jewish sources, however, but also the possibility of Paul's statements, or similar pre-Pauline statements, having been picked up and refigured in other Jewish texts – perhaps for polemical reasons – are among the findings of this chapter. In addition, this chapter also contains new observations about some important Jewish texts, most notably a Jewish text preserved in Raymund Martini's *Pugio Fidei* (p. 862). It also draws further attention to the suffering figure in the Self-Glorification Hymn, a text that seems not to have been sufficiently considered yet in New Testament studies.

In summary, it can be said that the focus of this thesis is tradition-historical. As such, it presents a fresh and carefully weighed and more thorough systematic comparison between Jewish sources and the relevant Pauline texts than has hitherto been made. This shows, among other things, that Paul, at the particular instances of 1 Corinthians 10:4, Galatians 6:16, and Romans 5:12-21, probably incorporated existing Jewish interpretations. At times one may even observe that the hermeneutical logic applied in Paul's texts has parallels in contemporary Jewish texts. In the process of focusing on Jewish exegetical traditions, certain noteworthy exegetical, theological, and comparative religious observations are also made in this study.