Paul and God's temple
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CHAPTER 5

PAUL AND THE CONTEMPORARY JEWISH CULTURE OF SCRIPTURAL INTERPRETATION

1. The literary context of temple imagery in Paul’s Letters and contemporary Judaism

This chapter will survey the literary context of Jewish scriptural culture contemporary to Paul which may help to understand Paul’s relation to Judaism. My historical approach to Paul’s cultic imagery takes the possibility of connections with contemporary Jewish ideas about the Temple and cultic worship into account. Jewish ideas about the Temple and its cult were related to the literary context of Scripture. Paul’s metaphor of the Temple presents a theological idea. Although the image of a physical Temple of God goes back to to the historical reality of the Temple cult, the metaphor of God’s Temple may be linked with the broader Israelite tradition of the worship of the one God. Both in Paul’s Letters and in contemporary Jewish literature, Scripture as authority is implicitly or explicitly quoted as prooftext in passages with temple imagery. Cultic and theological dimensions of centralised worship are reflected in Scripture and in later exegetical traditions. The comparison between Paul’s temple imagery and contemporary Jewish temple theology therefore needs to take the presence and function of Scripture into account.

The literature of Qumran provides the most explicit analogy to Paul’s temple imagery with regard to the interaction between temple theology and the use of Scripture. Explicit quotations from Scripture figure in 2 Cor 6:16c-18; a passage which follows the metaphor of the Temple in 2 Cor 6:16b. Echoes of Scripture may also be discerned in some passages in the First Letter to the Corinthians which comprise cultic imagery. With regard to the literature of Qumran, one of the most important texts concerning the image of an eschatological Temple, the *Eschatological Midrash* (4Q174), contains a whole string of quotations from Scripture. In other important texts concerning temple theology in Qumran, like 4QMMT, the *Rule of the Community*, the *Damascus Document* and the *Temple Scroll*, Scripture is cited in the direct context of passages about the Temple and purity regulations.

The contemporary culture of scriptural interpretation plays an important role, not only in a comparison of ideas conveyed by Pauline and early Jewish temple imagery respectively, but also in a reconstruction of the mediation of common Palestinian Jewish values and ideas. The search for the influence of Jewish traditions underlying Paul’s temple imagery can best be performed against the background of the contemporary Jewish culture of scriptural interpretation.

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1 In apocrypha, such as the Wisdom of Solomon 9:8, and the Hellenistic Jewish works of Flavius Josephus and Philo, the presence of temple imagery rather applies to the relation between the earthly, physical Temple and the heavenly Temple, the universe or creation, than to a specific religious congregation or sect.


3 Cf. H.H. Drake Williams, III, *The Wisdom of the Wise. The Presence and Function of Scripture within 1 Cor. 1:18-3:23* (Brill: Leiden etc., 2001) 257-300 at 258-268 discussing the presence of Scripture in 1 Cor 3:10-17. As for 1 Cor 6:19, which comprises the metaphor of the body as Temple, the quotation from Gen 2:24 in 1 Cor 6:16 may be noted, and the formal parallel between 1 Cor 6:16 and 1 Cor 6:19 which serves as contrast. To 1 Cor 9:13 compare Num 18:8.31, and to 1 Cor 10:18 compare Lev 7:6.15.
My study of the contemporary Jewish scriptural culture will deal with the first-century CE synagogue, and the Palestinian Jewish synagogue in particular. I will discuss the importance of the synagogue as a place of reading and interpretation of Scripture, and a site of didactic interaction between the Pharisees and the Jewish people for the Jewish scriptural culture contemporary to Paul. On the basis of this socio-religious setting, I will focus on the diversity of languages of Scripture (Hebrew, Aramaic Targum and Greek translation). My survey aims to demonstrate that the diversity of languages of Scripture was part and parcel of the scriptural culture which lies at the basis of Paul’s use of Scripture. Finally, attention will be focused on methods of biblical interpretation shared by Paul and contemporary Jewish exegetes. This literary context and socio-religious setting to contemporary Jewish scriptural interpretation will underpin the comparative analysis of Paul’s cultic imagery.

2. Synagogal culture and scriptural reading

2.1 The diversity of first-century CE synagogues and synagogal culture

My survey of the diversity of first-century CE synagogues will not present a complete or exhaustive overview, but rather focuses on certain differences between synagogues in the Hellenistic diaspora and Palestinian Jewish synagogues. These differences may be deduced from literary and historical sources. This survey will mainly concern the regions which can be related to the activities of Paul, as a former Pharisee and as an apostle of the Christian faith.

Through a reconstruction of the diversity of first-century CE synagogues we can get a sense of the differentiation within synagogal culture and an idea about the kind of culture to which Paul, in his previous way of life as a Pharisee, was affiliated.

2.1.1 The context of the Hellenistic environment in the diaspora

In his *Jewish Antiquities*, Flavius Josephus refers to places of Jewish religious assembly in the context of his quotation of decrees written from the Hellenistic and early Roman legal perspectives. For instance, a decree from the time of Julius Caesar’s rule addresses the magistrates, council and people of Parium to give Roman support to the appeal by the Jews in Delos and neighbouring Jews. This decree mentions the protected status of the ‘religious societies’, θύσαι, of the Jews (Ant. 14.213-216). Such ‘religious societies’ provided the social setting for customary Jewish gatherings and special occasions of religious festivals, κατὰ τὰ πάτρια ἔθη καὶ νόμιμα συνάγεσθαι τι καὶ ἐστίσσει (Ant. 14.216). The language of this decree expresses the pagan context of the Hellenistic environment. For the very terms θύσαις and ἐστίσσει could easily be associated with a company devoted to a mystery cult and to the banqueting near a shrine of household gods respectively. Thus, a pagan Hellenistic culture invests the very language which describes the protected status of Jewish customs in a Hellenistic city.

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5 My survey of synagogal culture only provides a partial picture; cf. Binder, *Into the Temple Courts*, 227-341 for a survey of ‘Diaspora Synagogues’ including also Egypt, Cyrenaica, Cyprus, and the Bosporus Kingdom.
The expression “according to the ancestral customs and statutes”, κατὰ τὰ πάτρια ἔθη καὶ νόμιμα, identifies the protected activities as Jewish. This element of legitimisation by Jewish laws and statutes recurs in other decrees cited by Josephus. The decree concerning Parium provides an interesting comparison with the Jews in Rome with regard to the protected status of Jewish customs and the contributions of money for common meals, συνδειπνον, and sacred rites, ἱερὰ, in the cases of both Parium and Rome (Ant. 14.214).

2.1.2 Greece and Asia Minor

Josephus also informs us about places of congregation, so-called ‘prayer-houses’, προσευχαῖ, in the context of a decree concerning the Jews in Halicarnassus, a city in Asia-Minor. These prayer-houses are mentioned along with the protected status of the observance of the Sabbaths and the performance of the sacred rites in accordance with the Jewish laws. As other decrees also mention the observance of Sabbaths (e.g. Ant. 14.245-246, 264), it may be assumed that prayer-houses or synagogues were the places of congregation for the Sabbath.

The presence of Jewish synagogues in Greece and Asia-Minor is explicitly mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles concerning the cities Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:15f.), Iconium (Acts 14:1), Thessalonica (Acts 17:1), Beroea (Acts 17:10), Athens (Acts 17:17), Corinth (Acts 18:4) and Ephesus (Acts 18:19). It could be that the presence of a synagogue is presupposed in decrees which stipulate the protected status of Jewish customs in other cities, but there is no certainty about this. At least, sacred rites would probably need to be performed in a less profane setting than for example a market-place or a political forum.

2.1.3 Syria

In the case of major cities in Syria, relationships with Israel, the neighbouring heartland of the Jewish religion of the Second Temple period, could perhaps imply a more cohesive influence of Palestinian Jewish traditions as opposed to Hellenising tendencies. This is at least suggested by the evidence of Acts concerning the relationships between Christian Jews from Jerusalem and Christian missionaries in Antioch (Acts 15), and concerning Damascus (Acts 9:1-2). Even though Luke’s picture of the central place of the Jerusalem ‘Urgemeinde’ in the book of Acts may contain legendary elements, influential ties between the leaders of the Jerusalem church and Christian Jews in Antioch are also presupposed by Paul in his account of events in Gal 2:1-14. In the case of Damascus, Acts 9:2 mention the presence of synagogues, συναγωγαί. Josephus informs us about a synagogue, συναγωγή, in Antioch of Syria (J.W. 7.44).

In his Jewish War Josephus also writes that the Jewish community of Antioch displayed a strong commitment to the Jerusalem Temple through various gifts and offerings. Another remarkable feature is that Antiochian Jews interested many Greeks, that is, Gentiles,

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6 E.g. Ant. 14.225-227 (Ephesus), 235 (Sardis), 241-243 (Laodicea), 244-246 (Miletus), 256-258 (Halicarnassus), 259-261 (Sardis), 262-264 (Ephesus).

7 Ant. 14.256-258, there 258 δεδόχθαι καὶ ἤμεν Ἰουδαίων τοὺς βουλομένους ἄνδρας τε καὶ γυναικας τα τε σάββατα ἔχουν καὶ τὰ ἱερὰ συντελεῖν κατὰ τούς Ἰουδαίων νόμους, καὶ τὰς προσευχὰς πουκεθάνει πρὸς τὴ θεαλάττη κατὰ τὸ πάτριον ἔθος.

8 Concerning προσευχή and συνεργή, see BDAG, 878-888 under the lemma ‘προσευχή’: “Esp. used among Jews, this word is nearly always equivalent to συνεργή in her sense of a cultic place”.

9 About common meals, συνδειπνον, cf. the negative precaution in LXX Proverbs 23:6 μὴ συνδειπνεῖτε ἄνδρι βασιλέων μηδὲ ἐπιθυμεῖτε τῶν βρωμάτων αὐτοῦ. Concerning the gathering place for Jewish affairs as a separate ‘place of their own’ (τόπον ἵδιον), see e.g. Josephus, Ant. 14.235, 261 (both about Sardis).
for their religion and included them into their community according to Josephus (J.W. 7.45). This information about the open attitude of the Antiochian Jewish community provides an important context for the Christian Jewish mission at Antioch. We also know from Josephus’ works that Jewish communities in Syria were numerous, but that Antioch, of all cities in Syria, had the most sizeable Jewish community.10

2.1.4 Differences between the Syro-Palestinian situation and the Hellenistic Diaspora

Palestinian-Jewish traditions were influential among Jews in Syria, and Aramaic was a spoken language there in the first century CE.11 Because of this, the synagogue culture of the Jews in these regions may have been quite different from the synagogue culture in a less bilingual, more exclusively Hellenistic environment. Thus, in spite of the gradational difference concerning the influence of Hellenistic culture, there must have been a marked difference with regard to the influence of Palestinian Jewish traditions and Semitic languages between Jewish communities in the Hellenistic diaspora and the Syro-Palestinian regions.

Consequently, the synagogue culture may have also been influenced by the language and culture of the Jewish communities and their direct environment. In an exclusively Hellenistic environment, the Greek language may have been predominant, and in a more bilingual environment, Hebrew and Aramaic may have been important for social life and synagogue liturgy to a lesser or greater extent.

The shifting role of Greek and Semitic languages in synagogue liturgy, depending on the language and culture of the congregation, is confirmed in early rabbinic literature12 and in scholarly literature.13 Studies of Jewish inscriptions, synagogue inscriptions in particular, also exhibit this differentiation within synagogue culture between Hellenistic Jewish synagogues and certain synagogues in the Syro-Palestinian regions which were more oriented toward Semitic language and culture.14

Margaret Williams has pointed to certain differences between inscriptions relating to diaspora Judaism and Palestinian Judaism respectively, in her article on “the contribution of inscriptions to the study of Judaism”. According to her analysis, the inscriptions connected to Diaspora Judaism give, among other things, expression to compromises to Graeco-Roman

10 J.W. 7.43 Τὸ γὰρ Ἰουδαῖον γένος πολὺ μὲν κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην παρέσπαρται τοῖς ἑπχορίοις, πλέοντον δὲ τῇ Συρίᾳ κατὰ τὴν γενέσθαι ἐναμεμειγμένον ἑξαμερῶς [δε AVRC] ἐπὶ τῆς Ἀντιοχείας ἦν πολὺ διὰ τὸ τῆς πόλεως μέγεθος.


12 E.g. m. Meg. 2:1 (translation H. Danby, *The Mishnah*, 203): “If he read it [the Scroll] by heart, or if he read it in Aramaic or in any other language, he has not fulfilled his obligation. But it may be read in a foreign tongue to them that speak a foreign tongue”.

13 Cf. S.C. Reif, ‘The early liturgy of the synagogue’, in *CHJ III The early Roman period*, 326-357 at 344: “It was inevitable that the Diaspora synagogue would have a large number of members that preferred Greek to Hebrew and that, even in Judea, Aramaic would be regarded as the more popular tongue in certain areas”.

14 M. Williams, ‘The contribution of Jewish inscriptions to the study of Judaism’, in *CHJ III The early Roman period* (1999), 75-93 at 76-77: “Most of the inscriptions, whatever their provenance, are written in Greek. Hebrew and Aramaic texts, though found in fair numbers in Judaea/Palestine and especially Jerusalem, occur but rarely in the Diaspora”; about synagogue inscriptions, cf. Bloedhorn and Hüttenmeister, ‘The synagogue’, in *Ibidem*, 267-297 at 281: “Normally they are in Greek and Aramaic, and occasionally in Hebrew, while a few are bilingual”.

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culture, whereas many inscriptions relating to Palestinian Judaism voice a Palestinian-Jewish commitment to the Temple service and priesthood, the Law and statutes. Thus, the differentiation does not only concern language, but probably also the degree of cultural commitment to the Jerusalem Temple cult and purity regulations. The issue of Palestinian-Jewish commitment to the Temple service and priesthood is important in relation to Paul in view of his previous Pharisaic education in Jerusalem.

2.1.5 Synagogues in Israel

a. Synagogues of the people

The synagogues in Israel were located in various cities and villages across Galilee and Judaea. Literary references to Palestinian synagogues occur in Philo, Josephus, Rabbinic Literature and the New Testament. A survey of various synagogues in Galilee and in Judaea, which includes identifications from recent archaeological finds, has been given by Lee I. Levine.

In the Palestinian synagogal culture, Jerusalem was the place where members of synagogues from various regions could meet each other and interact. Jerusalem was frequented by foreign visitors especially during the religious festivals, of which the celebration was centered around the Jerusalem Temple. Acts 6:9 mention a great number of Jerusalemite synagogues for congregations of Jews from the Hellenistic Diaspora. The author of Acts named the synagogues according to the region from which the congregation members came. These regions are Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia and Asia, of which Cilicia is of special interest to us. The synagogue of Cilicia, ἡ συναγωγὴ τῶν ἀπὸ Κιλικίας, probably received pilgrims also from Tarsus. According to Acts 22:3, Tarsus is the birthplace of Paul. Acts 6:9, however, also refer to a congregation determined by social class rather than by place of origin, namely the synagogue of the freedmen, ἡ συναγωγὴ τῶν Ἀιβερτίνων.

b. Essene synagogues

The issue of the names given to various synagogues brings us to our last point in this survey of the diversity of first-century CE synagogues: sectarian synagogues. Philo of Alexandria mentions the existence of separate synagogues of the Essenes (Good Person 81-82). Philo also writes in two places of his works about the dwelling places of the Essenes, from which we may conclude that their settlements were most of all concentrated in Judaea. Philo’s mentioning of Essene synagogues is the most evident literary reference, but it is not the only clue we have about sectarian synagogues. In recent scholarly discussion concerning the literature of Qumran, the ‘house of prostration’, בתי השןחתא, in the Damascus Document

15 Williams, ‘The contribution of Jewish inscriptions to the study of Judaism’, 82-83 and 88-89.
18 Jeremias, Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus, 65-66 discusses related passages in rabbinic literature and archaeological finds which could pertain to the so-called synagogue of the Tarsians, i.e. Cilicians.
19 In Good Person 75 Philo mentions Πολιτεία ςύνη in general, but this is in geographical contrast to the foregoing survey, §§ 72-74, where he writes about Greece, Persia and India. In Hypothetica 11.1, Philo refers to Essene settlements in many cities of Judaea as well as in many villages, grouped in societies of many members.
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(20) has been interpreted as a title for a sectarian synagogue. The existence of sectarian synagogues in the late Second Temple period is a Palestinian Jewish phenomenon, mainly concentrated in Judaea. The concentration of various kinds of synagogues in Jerusalem and Judaea, among which were those of the Essenes, constitutes a marked difference with synagogal culture in the Hellenistic Diaspora.

Josephus’ account of his personal experience with the movements of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes through schooling in Jerusalem (Life 7-12) shows that the influence of a composite religious culture on an individual Jew was not uncommon. Josephus even writes that the chief priests (οἱ ἄρχωνες) and the leading men of the city (οἱ τῆς πόλεως πρώτοι) came to receive the more accurate information from him about some particular in the statutes, ὑπὲρ τοῦ παρ’ ἐμοῦ περὶ τῶν νομίμων ἐκπρέπετερον πι γνῶναι (Life 9). In this, Josephus was probably among the relatively few of outstanding learning and knowledge of the statues. Josephus’ information, however, reinforces the idea of versatility in contemporary debates between Jewish schools about legal issues and other traditions in Scripture. Theological views, which were developed in Jewish schools through study and debate about scriptural interpretation, may also have found their way into the scriptural culture of Palestinian synagogues.

According to Philo, the Essenes regarded their places of worship, which they called synagogues, oὶ καλοῦνται συναγωγαῖ, as holy places, ἱεροὶ τόποι (Good Person 81). This holiness ascribed to Essene synagogues is telling in view of Essene exclusion from the regular Temple cult (cf. Josephus, Ant. 18.19). By contrast, in Acts 6:13 the Jerusalem Temple is referred to with the words ὁ τότος ὁ ἐγών [οὗτος], that is, holy place in the singular. Josephus further notes that the Essenes had their own priests to prepare food for them (Ant. 18.22). It could be inferred from the combined evidence of Philo (Good Person 81) and Josephus (J.W. 1.129; Ant. 18.19, 22) that, for the Essenes, the holiness of the Temple was in a way conferred on their religious community. The Essenes were barred from participation in the regular Temple cult due to their divergent views on purification rites.

2.2 The liturgy of first-century CE synagogues

2.2.1 Commonalities according to the literary sources

Within the contemporary Jewish culture of scriptural interpretation, the first-century CE synagogue was an important place for the reading and interpretation of Scripture. Flavius Josephus mentions the Jewish custom of assembling every Sabbath to listen to the Law (Ag.Ap. 2.175). The oral element of listening to the Law, ἡ ἐκρήγησις τοῦ νόμου, presupposes that the Law was read aloud by certain persons in front of a Jewish congregation. The impression of liturgical readings from Scripture in the synagogues is corroborated by evidence from the New Testament, not only concerning the Hellenistic Diaspora but also with regard to Israel itself. According to Acts 13:15, the synagogal reading of Scripture comprised the Law and the Prophets, ἡ ἐκρήγησις τοῦ νόμου καὶ τῶν προφητῶν. The reading of Scripture mentioned in Acts 13:15, reportedly took place in the synagogue of Antioch of Pisidia, in the Hellenistic Diaspora. The consecutive readings from the Law and

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21 Αγ.Αρ. 2.175 ἐκάστης ἐβοήθιος τῶν ἄλλων ἔργον ἀφεμένος ἐπί τὴν ἁρώσασιν ἐκέλευσε τοῦ νόμου συλλέγεσθαι καὶ τοῦτον ἁρώσασιν ἐκμανθάνειν.
from the Prophets constituted a liturgical practice which is also found in early rabbinic literature.\(^22\) Thus, we can get a general sense of the liturgy of scriptural readings in the first-century CE synagogue on the basis of evidence from Josephus’ works, the Acts of the Apostles and early rabbinic literature.

According to the picture of synagogal liturgy in Acts 13:15, readings from the Law and the Prophets could be followed by a sermon or inspired words, based on the exposition of Scripture. This sermon, to be held by men learned in the study of the Scriptures, would consist of words of exhortation and encouragement, παράσκευής (Acts 13:15). Παράσκευής is a general term, but it usually has a connotation of appeal and exhortation. There appears to be no direct parallel for this part of synagogal liturgy, as portrayed by the author of Acts, in contemporary Jewish literature. The term παράσκευής as encouragement is, however, a quality attributed to the ‘holy books’, τὰ βιβλία τὰ ἄγια, that is, Scripture, in 1 Macc 12:9. Thus, a dimension of encouragement is implied in the reading and interpretation of Scripture. Interestingly, Paul also alludes to this dimension of encouragement from Scripture when he addresses his readers in his Letter to the Romans. In Rom 15:4 Paul writes the following about the instruction, διδασκαλία, and encouragement, παράσκευής, from Scripture: “For whatever was written before, was written for our instruction, in order that by steadfastness and by encouragement of the scriptures we may have hope”.\(^23\)

At least, some form of exposition of Scripture was probably part of synagogal liturgy. The exposition of Scripture constitutes something more than the act of interpreting or translating (ταραττόν) Hebrew scriptures into Aramaic, which is mentioned in early rabbinic literature (e.g. m. Meg. 4:4.6). The oral translation in Aramaic followed the readings of portions of Scripture in the Hebrew original. Nevertheless, Aramaic versions of biblical books from fragments in the literature of Qumran and from rabbinic literature play an important role in ancient biblical interpretation in Palestinian Jewish culture. I will deal with this question more extensively in the subsequent section on the languages of Scripture. The issue of textual and interpretative aspects to Aramaic translation of Scripture is, of course, most important for the study of the Palestinian Jewish culture of scriptural interpretation. In synagogues in the Hellenistic Diaspora, the established Greek translation, the Septuagint, probably provided the main model of the biblical text.

One other aspect of synagogal culture in the late Second Temple period needs to be mentioned here. This aspect concerns the cultic and ritual parts of synagogal liturgy, which may have been related to scriptural culture in certain ways. Josephus mentions ‘ancestral prayers and sacrifices to God’, σι πάτρων εὐχαὶ καὶ θυσίαι τῷ θεῷ, when a decree of the people of Sardis is cited (Ant. 14.260). Probably, the term προσευχή for synagoge was also connected to this aspect of synagogal liturgy. The combination of prayers and ritual offerings to God as ancestral customs is typical of the Second Temple period. After the destruction of the Temple, the Rabbis transformed the liturgical setting of Jewish worship.\(^24\)

Ritual offerings and gifts of money for the Jerusalem Temple service were apparently a part of the contemporary synagogal culture. The issue of sacrifices is also mentioned in a letter to Ephesus, cited by Josephus in his Jewish Antiquities 14.227. Such ‘sacrifices’ were probably (votive) offerings destined for the Jerusalem temple cult, because the native rites, which probably concerned sacrifice, are specified as ‘produce’, οἱ χαραποί, in the case of a

\(^{22}\) E.g. m. Roš Haš. 4:6 (transl. H. Danby, The Mishnah, 193): “They begin with [verses from] the Law and end with [verses from] the Prophets”; cf. m. Meg. 4:1-5.

\(^{23}\) δοσιν χάριν προεργάσῃ, εἰς τὴν ἡμετέραν διδασκαλίαν ἐγράψει, ἵνα διὰ τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ διὰ τῆς παρασκύπης τῶν γραφῶν τὴν ἑλπίδα ἔχωμεν.

\(^{24}\) For a recent overview of the history of synagogal worship and its relations to Scripture, see S.C. Reif, Judaism and Hebrew Prayer. New Perspectives on Jewish Liturgical History (Cambridge UP: Cambridge, 1993) 22-87.
letter concerning Miletus (Ant. 14.245). Regulations for ritual offerings figure in the Pentateuch. On the other hand, offerings in a figurative sense are mentioned in the books of Psalms and Proverbs, as well as in the Prophets. The synagogal liturgy in the Diaspora was related to the Temple service through the contributions of money and the offerings. Purity laws probably regulated common meals in Jewish congregations, for one decree addresses the issue of ‘suitable food’, τροφὴ ἐπιτῆδεα, (Ant. 14.261).

The scriptural culture of the late Second Temple period, in Israel as well as in the Diaspora, had its socio-religious setting in the gathering of Jewish congregations in synagogues and in pilgrimage to the Jerusalem Temple at the occasion of religious festivals. The reading and interpretation of Scripture and the involvement in ritual and cultic matters took place on a regular basis within the synagogal culture of Paul’s time.

### 2.2.2 Scriptural reading and interpretation in a sectarian context

#### a. Practices of the Essenes

The Essene synagogues had a developed liturgy. The reading and exposition of Scripture took place in these synagogues on the sabbath, and the exposition of things not understood was entrusted to those of special proficiency, οἱ ἐμπειροστάτῳ (Good Person 82). Philo attributes elements of philosophy and allegory to the Essene study of Scripture; an attribution which may be coloured by his comparative Hellenistic perspective.

Josephus, who, from his personal background and experience, was more familiar with the Palestinian Jewish situation, uses the verb θεολογεῖν (J.W. 2.158) as a term to describe the traditions of the Essenes. Only at the end of his digression on the main Jewish schools does he use the verb φιλοσοφεῖν (J.W. 2.166; cf. Ant. 18.25), probably in order to conceptualise ideas to his readers who had a Hellenised viewpoint. While the soul was a central subject of their ideas, the theological views of the Essenes were undoubtedly also related to Scripture. Josephus describes the study of Scripture as a heavy component to the Essene schooling in his *Jewish War* 2.159.

Another reference to the Essene liturgy of scriptural readings occurs in Hippolytus’ *Refutation of All Heresies* (Haer.), whose account of Jewish sects is often taken to rely on Josephus’ digression in the *Jewish War*. In *Haer.* IX, 22.2, Hippolytus writes that the Essenes are zealous in readings from the Law and the Prophets, σπουδάζουσι δὲ περὶ τὰς τοῦ νόμου ἀναγνώσεις καὶ προφητῶν. Since Hippolytus’ text runs partly parallel to Josephus’ account, it is interesting that Josephus notes in his digression that the Essenes show an extraordinary interest in the writings of the ancients, σπουδάζουσι δ’ ἐκτόπως περὶ τὰ τῶν παλαιῶν συντάξεως, followed by a specifying clause (J.W. 2.136). In their extraordinary interest in sacred writings, the Essenes are said to single out matters related to the benefit of soul and body. Hippolytus’ text appears to be a more general rendering of the writings comprised in the Essene scriptural readings, and does not go into specific issues.

#### b. Interrelations between the Essenes and the Qumran community

Synagogal liturgy had a significant place in the Palestinian-Jewish schools. The diversity of languages of Scripture played a lively role even in the secluded context of the Qumran

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community. The synagogal liturgy of scriptural reading and interpretation also provided the link with didactic interactions between the Jewish schools and the Jewish people and a context in which Jewish traditions could become widely shared.

Passages about the Essenes in Philo and Josephus and certain texts in the literature of Qumran, suggest that there were interrelations between Essene groups and the Qumran community as well as intersections between the theological views of the Essenes and the Qumranites. First, Josephus differentiates Essene groups by distinguishing two orders of Essenes (J.W. 2.120-159, 160-161). Secondly, the divergent accounts by Josephus and Philo of the settlement of the Essenes in large numbers in every town (J.W. 2.124) or in villages (Good Person 76) respectively implies a differentiation within the Essene movement.

The complicated situation of divergent orders and communities among the Essenes may well be reflected in a description of different groups in the Damascus Document. This description distinguishes between those living in camps ‘according to the rule of the land’, פֶּסֶר הָאָרֶץ (CD-A VII, 6) from the ‘assembly’, קַחַל (CD-A VII, 17) and the ‘whole congregation’, כֶּל הָעֵד (CD-A VII, 20). The Qumran community rather lived according to the ‘rule for the men of the community’, שְׂדָךְ לְאַלְפֵי הָעִיר (IQS V, 1), whose precepts were to be guarded by the Community council, חוֹלֶת הָעִיר (IQS VI, 13-16f.). The different rules mentioned in the Damascus Document and the Rule of the Community respectively provide evidence that the Qumran community’s sense of self was opposed to the stratified Jewish culture of Israel.

In the comparison between the Essenes and the Qumran community, it is important to note that the synagogue was also a place of worship for the sectarian Qumran community. Annette Steudel has interpreted the ‘house of prostration’, בֵּית הַשִּׁחֵרָה, in CD-A XI, 22 as a sectarian synagogue in connection with column XII, 1. This idea of the synagogue as a ‘holy house’ corresponds well to Philo’s reference to the synagogues of the Essenes as holy places (Good Person 81). Liturgical texts among the literature of Qumran, such as prayer texts (e.g. IQFestival Prayers and 4QDaily Prayers) further attest to developed forms of worship, which probably existed in a sectarian synagogueal context.

Notwithstanding the closed sectarian character of the Qumran community, with its hierarchical grades of membership, theological views concerning the presence of God in the religious community may have been developed not so much in seclusion but rather in exchange with and counterposition to the Essenes who lived in settlements throughout the land of Israel. In their picture of Palestinian religious culture, Philo and Josephus both write about the enormous impact of Essene thought and practice across sectarian boundary lines.


28 According to Ant. 18.19, 22, however, the Essenes depended on agricultural work, γερμογένες, for making a living, while city-dwellers’ occupations could also be in industries, commerce or politics.

29 Cf. the War Scroll (IQM III, 11) for one instance of a ‘congregation of Jerusalem’. לתודר זרקספם.


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Philo calls this sect a ‘congregation of Essenes or holy ones’ to whose moral goodness other people are inferior.\(^{32}\) Philo’s representation of the theology of the Essenes concerning the existence of God and the creation of the universe, in his treatise *That Every Good Person Is Free* 80, is affected by his Hellenised perspective of a tripartite philosophical system of logic, physics and ethics. Nevertheless, at the point of emphasising that the Essenes were concerned only with ethics, Philo writes that these ethics were based on the ‘laws of their fathers’, χρώμενοι τοῖς πατρίοις νόμοις. In other words, the ethics of the Essenes were grounded in Jewish scriptural culture.

Josephus writes in the *Jewish War* 2.158 that the views of the Essenes “bring about an irresistible appeal to those who have once become acquainted through experience with their wisdom”. This appeal may have gone beyond strictly sectarian boundary lines.

### 2.3 Paul and the contemporary synagogal culture

There is hardly any place in his Letters where Paul distinctly describes the synagogue as an institution. However, Paul does implicitly refer to the synagogal reading of Scripture in his Second Letter to the Corinthians 3:15. He alludes to the contemporary synagogal readings from the Torah as follows: “to this day, whenever Moses is read”, ἐὼς σήμερον ἤνακα ὁν ἄναγκησάντα Μουσίς.\(^{33}\) From the context of the passage, we may conclude that in Paul’s view the contemporary synagogal culture is connected to what he calls the ‘old covenant’ (2 Cor 3:14). In this connection, Paul quotes Exod 34:34 as a proof-text in 2 Cor 3:16. It is important to note that Paul does not force a rupture between the old and the new covenant. On the contrary, he aims to reinforce and fulfil the original context of the old covenant, as it emerges from Exod 34. Paul stresses the direct contact of Moses with God, which he extends to the entire community of believers (2 Cor 3:18), and revelation through the Spirit rather than mediation through a written code (2 Cor 3:6). He describes the fulfilment by the new covenant as a transformation “from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Cor 3:18).\(^{34}\)

The ‘reading of Moses’ in 2 Cor 3:15 expresses a focus on the Law in such a way that the Law of Moses appears as the most important part of Scripture in Jewish liturgy. This emphasis on readings from the Law in synagogue liturgy is comparable with the passage in Josephus’ treatise *Against Apion* which mentions the “listening to the Law” (Ag.Ap. 2.175). Paul does not refer to the readings from the Prophets, but it is important to note that the Prophets play a crucial role in Paul’s christological use of Scripture. Paul writes in Rom 1:1-2 that the gospel was promised beforehand by the prophets in the holy Scriptures. Paul’s allusion to the ‘reading of Moses’ in 2 Cor 3:15 does not necessarily constitute a polemic against synagogal scriptural culture *per se*, as is indicated by his advice to the Corinthians to take his example in not giving offense to Jews, Greeks or the church of God (1 Cor 10:32-33). Even if 2 Cor 3:15 were interpreted as Paul’s attempt to distance himself from the Jewish synagogal culture, his reflection on the ‘reading of Moses’ reveals Paul’s acquaintance with this culture through his Jewish background.

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\(^{32}\) Philo, *Good Person* 91, ὁ λεγός τῶν Ἐσσαίων ἡ ὃσίων ὁμόλος, πάντες δὲ ἀσθενέστεροι τῆς τῶν ἄνδρων καλωσάγαθας γενόμενοι.

\(^{33}\) Cf. Philo, *Spec.Laws* 4.132 about Moses as a spokesman of the particular laws of the whole legal corpus, νομοθετία (cf. Rom 9:4), that is the Pentateuch; cf. *m. Yoma* 3:8, 4:2, 6:2 for quotations from the Pentateuch in rabbinic tradition introduced as “the Law of your servant Moses”.

\(^{34}\) Translation from RSV. The phrase ἄπο δόξης εἰς δόξαν in 2 Cor 3:18 may be connected to Paul’s discussion of the glory of the new covenant which surpasses that of the written code in 2 Cor 3:7-11.
According to the Acts of the Apostles, Paul’s mission started consistently in the synagogues of the places which he visited on his missionary journey. Thus, we read in Acts 17:1-2 that Paul went into the synagogue when he came to Thessalonica, “as was his custom”, κατὰ τὸ εἰς ὁδός. Moreover, during Sabbaths he would argue from the Scriptures in conversations with other Jews. Yet, this consistent point in Luke’s description of Paul’s mission could be misleading. It fits in the narrative strategy of the author who suggests a development of Christianity, in the words of John Knox, “as the continuation and fulfillment of authentic Judaism”.

It can reasonably be assumed that, in his previous life as a Pharisee, it was Paul’s custom to frequent synagogues. In the Synoptic Gospels Pharisaic attendance of a synagogal service occurs in a polemical context. According to Josephus, the Pharisees counted as the leading school and were considered with high esteem as the most accurate interpreters of the Law. As a school which provided religious leaders in the land of Israel the Pharisees probably played a prominent role in the synagogal liturgy of scriptural readings and the exposition of Scripture (cf. Ant. 18.15). Paul’s previous schooling in the Pharisaic study of the Law must have included the unwritten laws of the fathers, αἱ πατρικαὶ μου παραδόσεις (Gal 1:14). The teaching of the unwritten laws was part of the Pharisaic exposition of Scripture. As the Pharisees were influential among the townsfolk in Israel, their teachings were probably mediated through the contemporary synagogal culture.

The dissemination of certain religious values and ideas may not have been limited to a one-way didactic interaction between Pharisees and the common people. Expositions of Scripture in Palestinian synagogues could convey ideas and norms which developed out of debates between the pluriform Jewish movements. Paul may have been influenced indirectly by religious ideas and traditions, which were disseminated through the scriptural culture of Palestinian synagogues. This is more likely to have been the case than supposed a segregation of closed movements with a homogeneous system of beliefs and practices.

The idea of debate and social interaction between Jewish schools is confirmed in rabbinic tradition. In the Babylonian Talmud, the disciples of the schools of Hillel and Shammai, the names of two Jerusalemite teachers of the Law around 20 BCE, are said to have lived with one another in mutual esteem and friendship, despite their differences in halakha (b. Yebam. 14a-b). The heterogeneous character of the contemporary Jewish traditions was probably also mirrored by the Palestinian Jewish synagogal culture. In the case of certain analogous ideas related to the metaphor of the Temple in Paul and Qumran, such a comparison may be contextualised in the Palestinian Jewish scriptural culture of Paul’s time.

Since there was an Essene quarter in Jerusalem, participation by the Essenes in debates about the interpretation of Scripture may have taken place in the pluriform Jewish setting of the city of Jerusalem. Josephus further refers to the presence of individual Essenes in Jerusalem and in the Jerusalem Temple complex, and to the influence of their visionary ideas.

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35 Cf. B.J. Koet, ‘As close to the synagogue as can be: Paul in Corinth (Acts 18,1-18)’, in R. Bieringer (ed.), The Corinthian Correspondence (BETL 125; Leuven UP / Peeters: Leuven, 1996) 397-415 at 409 stating about Acts 18:7 that Luke’s emphasis on Paul’s spatial proximity to the synagogue “is more or less a metaphor for his being as closely connected to the synagogue as can be and that thus Luke makes a point about Paul’s desire for a continuing relation to Jews”.
36 Knox, Chapters in a Life of Paul, 35.
38 J.W. 2.162. Note the use of the term οἱ δοξολόγες for people held in high esteem; this term is used by Paul to designate the leaders of the Christian congregation in Jerusalem in Gal 2:6.
39 Cf. Josephus, Ant. 13.297 ἀπερ οὐκ ἀνεγέφασσον ἐν τοῖς Μωσείοις νόμοις; § 408.
thought in Judaea (cf. J.W. 1.78; 2.113). In the context of the historical narrative of the Jewish War, Josephus also mentions the military leadership by an Essene named John (J.W. 2.567; cf. §§ 152-153 about the Essene part in the war against the Romans).

Certain theological views of the Essenes concerning the presence of God may have entered the discourse of other interpreters of Scripture and enriched the scriptural culture of Jerusalemite synagogues in adapted or altered forms. The theology of the Essenes was part of the religious culture of shared traditions, at the receiving end of which Paul probably stood during his previous life as a Pharisee. An important way along which theological views concerning the Temple and the presence of God could have reached Paul in his previous life in Judaism was the scriptural culture of Palestinian synagogues.

Paul the apostle names other churches of God in the context of his missionary journeys (e.g. 1 Cor 11:16; 16:1; 2 Cor 11:28), but no synagogues. Thus, we cannot get a clear picture of Paul’s relation to the contemporary synagogue culture on the basis of his Letters, apart from what he writes in 2 Cor 3:14-15. Nevertheless, Paul writes that his gospel mission addresses those who are called, both Jews and Greeks (1 Cor 1:24). We may gather that some sort of confrontation with Jewish communities may be inferred from the fact that Paul, among other hardships, underwent five times a Jewish punishment (2 Cor 11:24). Even if Paul visited synagogues frequently during his missionary journeys, he directed his gospel to those who were called among both Jews and Gentiles. These groups could not both be gathering together in the synagogues in the Hellenistic Diaspora, except perhaps in those cases of Jews and Gentile converts to Judaism. Perhaps, Christian Jews and Gentile converts rather assembled in the domestic context of households, as may be suggested by certain evidence in Paul’s Letters (Rom 16:5, 10, 14; 1 Cor 16:15).

The liturgy of the Corinthian congregation, which is evoked in 1 Cor 14:26, comprised elements which could have been parallel to traditions in the contemporary synagogue culture. The mentioned hymn (ψαλμός), teaching (διδαχή), and interpretation (ἐρμηνεία) in 1 Cor 14:26 may have included traditions with which Christian Jews were already familiar. Christian Jews may have introduced into their Christian congregations influences from the contemporary synagogue culture, which consisted of certain teachings and the exposition of Scripture. Paul was among those Christian Jews, who brought in the influence of Jewish traditions without imposing a Jewish way of life on the converts from the Gentiles, as his opponents did (cf. Gal 1:6-9, 5:2-12; 2 Cor 11:12-15.22-23). Other Christian Jews, whom Paul considered to be his fellow workers, are for example Aquila and Prisca (cf. 1 Cor 16:19, Rom 16:3). Thus the influence of contemporary synagogue culture affected both Paul’s previous life in Judaism and the congregations addressed by him in his Letters.

3. Paul and the languages of Scripture in Second Temple Judaism

3.1 Language and scriptural culture in Paul’s Letters

Although Paul calls himself a ‘Hebrew born of Hebrews’ (Phil 3:5; cf. 2 Cor 11:22), addressing congregations in the Hellenistic diaspora, he naturally had to write in Greek and also quote Scripture in Greek in order to make himself understandable to his readers.

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Paul and the contemporary Jewish culture of scriptural interpretation

However, Paul does use words in his Letters which remind us of Hebrew scriptural culture. In the following survey of elements in Paul’s language derived from Semitic language and culture, I do not intend to give only a list of words and expressions, but evidence of the fact that the Semitic scriptural culture is an important background to Paul’s use of Scripture.

It may be useful to start with a prominent example of a Pauline term with a background in the contemporary Semitic Palestinian-Jewish culture, that is, the expression ‘works of the Law’ in Galatians 2:16 and 3:10. Paul’s Greek expression ἔργα νόμου has recently been compared with the Hebrew term פְּרָע הַתֶּשֶׁב in the Qumran text 4QMMT published in 1994. Thus at a previously unexpected point, Paul’s language resounds theological concepts which were common to the Palestinian Jewish culture of his time.

In connection with the issue of Paul and the observance of the Law, Paul’s expression νόμον φυλάσσειν in Gal 6:13 may also be mentioned here. It should be noted that the accusative νόμον has no definite article, even though Paul clearly has the Jewish Law, not just any law in mind. Contrary to this, we find פְּרָע הַתֶּשֶׁב in Acts 21:24, determining νόμος by the definite article. Paul’s usage in Gal 6:13 may be influenced by a Semitic background, since the Hebrew equivalent to פְּרָע הַתֶּשֶׁב, does not always have a determined noun as object either. Thus, for example, MT Proverbs 29:18 has the expression חֲשֹׁם הָרֶם, whereas the Septuagint renders this as ὁ δὲ περιτυγχάνειν τὸν νόμον, that is, with the definite article. Even if the absence of the article in Paul’s expression may be due to the fact that it conveys an abstract idea, the contrast with the Septuagint remains striking and suggests Paul’s familiarity with Semitic scriptural culture, independently from the Septuagint.

The language of the Hebrew Scriptures underlies Paul’s use of Scripture indirectly in cases of semitisms imported into the biblical Greek of the Septuagint. For example, the quotation from Isaiah 1:9 in Romans 9:29 includes the Greek words for ‘Lord of hosts’, Κυρίος σέβεται, which remind us of the Hebrew צָאַב בְּשָׁם יְהוָה. σέβεται is not an original Greek word, but transliterates the Hebrew צָאַב בְּשָׁם. A Semitic etymology is also at the basis of proverbial names and expressions in Paul’s quotations from Scripture (Rom 9:29, 33; 11:4, 15:12); names and terms which are related to Israelite history and prophecy, such as Zion, the root of Jesse, Sodom and Gomorra, and Baal. Names for the Devil, σατανᾶς and Βέλιτρ in Paul’s Letters (1 Cor 5:5, 7:5; 2 Cor 2:11, 6:15, 11:14, 12:7) also stem from Semitic words.


43 See chap. 2, section 1.1 about 4QMMT and p. 67 n. 10 for bibliography on 4QMMT and New Testament Studies, in particular Galatians.

44 The Septuagint does not incorporate any variant to the Greek expression φυλάσσειν τὸν νόμον which omits the definite article; the definite article generally accompanies the object to φυλάσσειν, also in other cases.

Certain expressions used by Paul could be termed ‘Hebraisms’. Thus, the expression ἔνωσιν τοῦ θεοῦ, found among others in 1 Corinthians 1:29, corresponds quite closely to the Hebrew יסח חי התו. In 2 Cor 1:20, the expression τὸ ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ θεοῦ πρὸς δοξάζειν corresponds word for word to Hebrew doxology, for in Isaiah 65:16 a blessing is prescribed as יבכרא יהוה ימא נמא פנוי ידכ ו, while Jeremiah 10:5 has והיה יגית. The term קאומם εὐπρόσδεξτος, which figures in 2 Cor 6:2 in connection to the ‘day of salvation’, could be Paul’s rendering of a Hebrew expression, as יכד, which is found in Psalms 69:14. It can be inferred from the context in Psalms that the Hebrew term is also related to salvation coming from God.

A few transliterations of Aramaic words also occur in Paul’s Letters. Thus, in Romans 8:15 the words אבָּבָּא בָּאָרָּר are mentioned in a liturgical context. The same words are found in Galatians 4:6, also in a liturgical context of exclamation. The transliteration of the Aramaic איה and the Greek או פָּרָּר stand side by side in Paul’s Letters. These liturgical references in Rom 8:15 and Gal 4:6 could be related to the gospel tradition of the Passion of Jesus situated in Getsemane (cf. Mark 14:36), and could thereby constitute a liturgical remembrance of Jesus’ suffering and death connected with the institution of the Lord’s Supper.

Furthermore, Paul consistently calls Peter by his Aramaic name כַּפָּרָּץ in his Letters (1 Cor 1:12, 3:22, 9:5, 15:5; Gal 1:18, 2:9.11.14), taking for granted that his readers understood about whom he wrote. This Pauline usage seems to suggest Paul’s proximity to the Aramaic-speaking culture of the early Jesus-movement in the Syro-Palestinian area.

In 1 Cor 16:22 Paul uses the expression מְעַרְון תָּא, a transliteration of Aramaic words, without adding any Greek equivalent at all. The expression can be translated as ‘Our Lord, come’, from the Aramaic איה אֲלֹהִים. It is important to note that this Aramaic phrase figures in the closing part of 1 Corinthians where Paul addresses the Corinthians with a greeting by his own hand (1 Cor 16:21-24; 1 Cor 16:21: "וּבָּאָרָּר פַּאַל פָּוָל"). This part appears to focus more directly on Paul’s own wording rather than on the writing dictated to a scribe by Paul. Romans 16:22 attests for instance to the activity of the scribe Tertius. The presence of an Aramaic expression in this part may further point to Paul’s connection with Aramaic-speaking Christianity.

In his article about ‘Qumran Aramaic and the New Testament’, Joseph A. Fitzmyer has pointed out the importance of the Aramaic description of God as Lord, אֱלֹהִים, in the literature of Qumran, as the contemporary Jewish background to the designation of κυρίος applied to Jesus in the New Testament. Thus the Qumran targum of Job (11Q10 XXIV, 7) comprises the term אֱלֹהִים, but, even more interesting for comparison, the Qumran Aramaic fragments of 1 Enoch 4Q202 III, 14 has אֱלֹהִים. This evidence is not only pertinent to the Greek concept of κυρίος in the New Testament, but even more so to Paul’s Aramaic phrase.

The Hebraisms and Aramaic words in Paul’s Letters figure in the context of Paul’s theology and in liturgical settings. Their presence, therefore, not only reflects a bilingual orientation but also Paul’s relation to the Semitic scriptural culture. This impression is also

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46 The Septuagint rather translates the Hebrew expression mostly as ἔνωσιν κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου.
47 Paul does not make any clarifying comment, such as τοῦτ’ ἐστιν, δ’ ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον, as they are used to explain an Aramaic expression of Jesus in Matt 27:46, the Semitic term ‘Messiah’ in John 1:41 and the Aramaic name of Peter in John 1:42 respectively.
48 אֱלֹהִים comes from אָלֶה, meaning ‘Lord’, with the common plural pronominal suffix קְ to attached to it. The root of קְ is קש, a verb which means ‘to come’. קש can also be found spelled קָשׁ in Jewish Aramaic and Christian-Palestinian according to the dictionaries of KB and of Jastrow respectively.
50 Cf. Van Unnik, ‘Aramaism in Paul’, 143 who refers to “some Aramaic mental processes in the thoughts of Paul even when he does express himself in Greek”.

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confirmed when we compare certain ideas and concepts in Paul with Palestinian-Jewish texts. However, the most important in examining to what extent Paul drew on Hebrew scriptural culture are, of course, Paul’s quotations from Scripture, with which we will subsequently deal.

3.2 The text of Paul’s quotations from Scripture and the textual types of Scripture

In his study about Paul’s use and understanding of Scripture, Dietrich-Alex Koch has maintained that Paul’s social and cultural background is generally related to Hellenistic diaspora Judaism. This thesis creates the impression that Paul depended on the influential Greek translation of the Septuagint for his quotations from Scripture. My view that this dependence on the Septuagint is only a relative form of dependence will be substantiated here on the basis of examples of formulas, which introduce quotations, and on the basis of some quotations from Scripture in Paul’s Letters.

3.2.1 Introductory formulas to quotations from Scripture

In his argumentation for the Septuagint as the predominant text-type in Paul’s use of Scripture, D.-A. Koch stresses a total disjunction with characteristic introductory formulas of citation found in rabbinic, Jewish-Alexandrian and Qumran exegesis. The weight of the evidence in favour of the Septuagint as the predominant text type for Paul’s use of Scripture does, in my view, not suggest such a total disjunction. Some examples may serve to show the problem with Koch’s argument about a disjunction between Paul’s use of Scripture and Palestinian-Jewish scriptural culture.

The first example concerns the introduction of a quotation from Scripture with God as the speaker, which is found as a literary and theological usage in the literature of Qumran. Koch has argued that this usage of God as a speaker does not occur in any of Paul’s introductory formulas to the citation of (words from) Scripture. However, considering the context of Paul’s quotations from and allusions to Scripture, some examples from Paul’s letters do point to an introduction of words from Scripture which are in fact connected to God as a speaker. In 2 Cor 6:2, the idea of God as a speaker is implied by the preceding verse. In 2 Cor 6:16c, the phrase κατοδέ κατάπεταν δόθε δότι introduces a string of scriptural quotations. Even though 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 is considered to be an ‘interpolated paragraph’ by certain scholars, 2 Cor 6:16c provides a clear-cut case of the introduction of verses from Scripture with God as the speaker. For evidence of this usage we are not exclusively dependent on this one clear-cut instance. In 1 Cor 5:13, Paul uses the words “God judges those outside”, τοίς δὲ ἔξω δόθε κατανεύοντα, before quoting Deuteronomy 17:7. Thus, the phrase about God’s judgment of those outside indirectly introduces the quotation.

53 Koch, Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums, 25-32.
54 Koch, Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums, 31.
In other cases, the introductory formula may not imply God as a speaker, but the idea that it is the Lord who says it. For example, in Rom 12:19 and 1 Cor 14:21, when a scriptural quotation is introduced by the formula γέραστα, Paul adds the words λέγει κύριος after the quoted verse. These words, λέγει κύριος, do not figure in the original verse quoted from Scripture. Apart from scriptural quotation, the idea of God as the speaker is present in Paul’s Letters in the form of a paraphrase of Scripture: for example in 2 Cor 4:6 with the words ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ὁ ἐπιτύχων.

A second example of an introductory formula in Paul’s Letters, which in my view is connected to the Palestinian-Jewish background, is the phrase λέγει ἡ γραφή (e.g. Rom 4:3, 9:17, 10:11, 11:2; Gal 4:30). Koch juxtaposes this introductory phrase, taken together with the ‘impersonal’ φησίν in 1 Corinthians 6:16b, to usages of scriptural quotation in both Hellenistic Jewish literature and the literature of Qumran. This way of introducing Scripture can, however, be compared with the oral aspect of the traditions of the Pharisees; an aspect of Paul’s previous life in Judaism which reverberates in his Letters. Paul’s introductory phrase λέγει ἡ γραφή emphasises the element of speaking, a theme on which Paul produces many variations, such as ‘he says in Hosea’ (Rom 9:25), ‘Isaiah says’ (Rom 10:16), ‘first Moses says’ (Rom 10:19) and ‘David says’ (Rom 11:9). While Koch argues that the rabbinic scriptural citation formula אָמַר in the Mishnah, ‘as it is said’, has no current Greek equivalent in Paul’s Letters, apart from one exception in Rom 9:12b, I would rather compare ἀκοῦσθαι with this citation formula of Paul. Both the Mishnaic and Pauline introductory citation formulas, ἀκοῦσθαι and λέγει ἡ γραφή, stress the element of oral tradition.

It is important to note that the phrase λέγει ἡ γραφή figures less frequently as an introductory citation formula than the phrase (καθὼς) γέραστα in Paul’s Letters. This introductory formula is our last example for comparison with Palestinian-Jewish texts. The Pauline phrase (καθὼς) γέραστα is admittedly compared by Koch to Hebrew introductory formulas in Jewish literature, in particular the literature of Qumran. In Rabbinic literature, the comparable Hebrew phrase כָּאָמַר נַפְח לְךָ יְרַעְשִׁי figures as the introductory citation formula.

In my view, the points of comparison with Hebrew introductory formulas are evidence of Paul’s relation to Hebrew scriptural culture. Paul’s variations in the pluriform use of citation formulas rather attest to his originality as a skilled writer, who could draw on various literary conventions of citation of Scripture. Paul’s variations do not necessarily point to a total disjunction with the Palestinian-Jewish culture of scriptural interpretation. A total disjunction between the literary culture of the Hellenistic Diaspora and the Palestinian-Jewish situation can neither be maintained with regard to the literature of Qumran in view of the finds of Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts. In one Greek fragment from the literature of Qumran, the phrase ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς could convey a reference to the Scriptures (7Q19 (7Qpap Imprint gr) I recto, 5). The idea of a plurality of Scriptures, εἰς γραφαῖς, also figures in Paul’s Letters (Rom 1:2, 15:4; 1 Cor 15:3-4) and in Matthew 21:42.

55 Koch, Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums, 32.
57 E.g. Rom 1:17, 3:10, 4:17, 8:36, 9:33, 11:8.26; 1 Cor 1:19, 2:9, 3:19; 2 Cor 9:9; Gal 3:10, 4:27.
3.2.2 Quotations from Scripture

The influential place of the Septuagint among Greek versions of the Bible is corroborated in cases of longer verses in which Paul’s quotation exactly corresponds to the Septuagint. However, the variations in Paul’s quotations from Scripture cannot be explained by a model which suggests Paul’s exclusive dependence on a fixed Septuagintal text tradition. Paul’s quotations which do not correspond with the Septuagint may vary from a different word order to completely different renderings which cannot be ‘variations’ from the Septuagint.

An example of correspondence with the Septuagint, except for a slightly different word order and verbal equivalents, can be found in Paul’s quotation of Exodus 16:18 in 2 Cor 8:15. Paul’s quotation has ὁ τὸ πολὺ οἷς ἐπλεόνασεν, καὶ ὁ τὸ ὀλίγον οἷς ἠλαττόνησεν, whereas the text of the Septuagint has οἷς ἐπλεόνασεν ὁ τὸ πολὺ, καὶ ὁ τὸ ἠλαττόν οἷς ἠλαττόνησεν. In both texts, the same verbs are used in the same tense, and τὸ ὀλίγον and τὸ ἠλαττόν can be considered verbal equivalents.

A case of more variation from the Septuagint presents itself when Paul’s quotation appears to be a condensed rendering of two biblical verses. Such a case is found in 1 Cor 3:19, where Paul quotes from the book of Job 5:13 to illustrate his point that the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God. Paul’s quotation runs as follows: ὁ δρασσόμενος τοὺς σοφοὺς ἐν τῇ πανούργῳ αὐτῶν. In the Masoretic text of Job 5:13 the ‘wise men’ are also the object of God’s power to catch them in their ‘wisdom’. Paul’s Greek rendering, while containing a different verb which conveys approximately the same meaning as the verb καταλαμβάνειν in the Septuagint, probably draws on the previous verse in the Septuagint translation of Job 5:12 for his translation of πανούργα. For LXX Job 5:12a has: διαλλάσσοντα βούλας πανούργον. In quoting Psalm 93:11 in 1 Cor 3:20, which otherwise corresponds to the Septuagint, Paul substitutes σοφοί for the original ἄνθρωποι, thus revealing his exegetical drive to give prooftexts in order to denounce the ‘wisdom of the world’.

In other cases, Paul’s quotations from Scripture completely differ from the Septuagint and are at times closer to the Hebrew text. Thus the part of Deuteronomy 32:35 quoted in Romans 12:19, ἐσεως ἐκδικήσεις, ἐγὼ ἀνταπεδώσω, comes closer to the Hebrew Masoretic text than to the Greek of the Septuagint, which gives a temporal connotation to it: ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐκδικήσεως ἀνταπεδώσω. There is also a marked difference between Paul’s quotation of Isaiah 28:11 in 1 Cor 14:21 and the Septuagintal version of this biblical verse. Paul’s reading, ἐν ἐπερήμωσι ν καὶ ἐν καθάπανος ἐντέρων λαλήσω τῷ λαῷ τούτῳ, can be translated as follows: “by those of foreign tongues and by lips of strangers will I speak to this people”. The Septuagintal version, however, which has διὰ φωνῆσιν ἐνέπερήμωσεν διὰ γλώσσας ἐντέρως, ὡς λαλήσουσι τῷ λαῷ τούτῳ, can be translated thus: “It is through a profane sort of lips through a foreign tongue that they will speak to this people”. Paul’s rendering appears to be an independent interpretation of the Hebrew דְּרֵי אוֹלְחֵים הָיוּ.

Even though these are scattered examples, they do provide evidence that Paul’s use of Scripture did not depend exclusively on a fixed Septuagintal text tradition, notwithstanding the importance of the Septuagint in Hellenistic Judaism. To deny a place to other textual versions Greek, Hebrew or Aramaic may be tantamount to negating part of the evidence of Paul’s scriptural quotations.

59 E.g. Psalms 5:10 & 139:4 quoted in Rom 3:13; Psalms 31:1-2a quoted in Rom 4:7-8; Psalm 18:5 quoted in Rom 10:18; Psalm 68:24 quoted in Rom 11:10; Isaiah 52:15 quoted in Rom 15:21. Isaiah 54:1 quoted in Gal 4:27. Perhaps verbatim correspondence with the LXX of longer verses mainly from Psalms and Isaiah could be explained as part of readings from Scripture in Hellenistic synagogues, which Paul could have frequented.
3.3 Textual theories about Scripture in light of the Dead Sea discoveries

The field of textual study of the Bible has faced a formidable challenge since the Dead Sea discoveries which provided biblical scholars with unique evidence of biblical manuscripts from the Hellenistic and early Roman period. The first publication of many previously unpublished biblical manuscripts from Qumran since the 1990s has given a new impetus to textual studies and theories concerning the Bible.

In a study of 1961 of the text of Hebrew Scriptures, as it is found in various textual traditions, Shemaryahu Talmon has distinguished synonymous readings from real textual variants. In his survey of examples of synomous readings, which concern verbs and nouns, Talmon has compared the Masoretic text to the Dead Sea Scrolls. In certain cases, apparent sectarian terminology may reflect an ancient scribal tradition according to Talmon.

Emanuel Tov has pointed out that the impact of the Dead Sea discoveries on textual studies of the Bible also affects the reconstruction of the Vorlage of the Septuagint, that is, the Hebrew text of the Bible on which the Greek translators who created the Septuagint relied. The reconstruction of a proto-text is aided significantly by the evidence of the Qumran scrolls, for which Tov refers to examples from 1 Samuel, Deuteronomy and Numbers. His second point concerns the close relation between the Septuagint and certain Qumran scrolls. This textual study of the Bible in light of the evidence from Qumran makes clear that the history of the biblical text is rather fluid and composite at the stages of its development and transmission, and that it defies too rigid categorisations in terms of recensions.

On the basis of Post-Qumran textual theories, Timothy H. Lim recently pointed to the diversity of textual types in the period before 100 CE. At the end of this period, the canonisation of the Hebrew Bible was realised. Lim emphasises the impact of this diversity of textual types of Scripture on our understanding of ‘post-biblical exegesis’. These new textual theories should also affect the approach to Paul’s quotations from Scripture. Lim proposes a broad view on Paul’s interpretation of Scripture, assuming Paul’s knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures and his possible reliance on one or more Greek translations, and Aramaic targum. Among his quotations could also be Paul’s own renderings into Greek.

The conceptual openness of this approach gives a better methodological starting-point which also leaves room for analysis of non-Greek elements and ideas in Paul’s scriptural quotations and theology. A contrary methodological approach would lead to the harmonisation between Paul’s use of Scripture and the Septuagint as the absolute model, which was certainly not the case in the first-century CE, even for Hellenistic Jews.

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65 Josephus, Ant. 1.12-13 writes about the Alexandrian Greek version that only the portion of the Law was translated and interpreted, while in § 5 Josephus notes that for writing his Jewish Antiquities he directly draws on his own translation from the Hebrew records (ἐὰν τὸν Ἑβραϊκὸν μεθημηνευμένη γραμμάτων).
3.4 Paul’s Use of Scripture and Aramaic Targum

In the Hellenistic and Roman Periods, the spoken language of many Jews in the land of Israel was Aramaic. It has already been pointed out in the foregoing section 3.1 that Paul’s Letters contain transliterations of Aramaic words into Greek. It could be assumed that Paul’s previous schooling as a Pharisee included the study of the Bible in Hebrew and translations and discussions in Aramaic. As the Pharisees engaged with teaching the Law to the Jewish people, Pharisaic scribes may have played a part in Aramaic translations of (parts of) Scripture. The translation of portions of the Hebrew Bible into Aramaic could be an oral process, but perhaps parts of Aramaic Targums were already committed to writing. The large-scale writing down of targumim in the Palestinian Targum tradition may be attributed to the rabbinic culture of the Amoraic era (ca. 220-500 CE). Rabbinic exegesis is of course elaborated in rabbinic targumim. However, we cannot exclude the possibility that earlier traditions were at the basis of certain (parts of the) rabbinic targumim, for they are related to the beginnings of the rabbinic movement which was rooted in Pharisaic traditions. In referring to earlier traditions, we need to distinguish between Aramaic translation with elements of interpretation through variant readings on the one hand and Aramaic targum structured along lines of typical rabbinic exegesis on the other.

Evidence of the Dead Sea Scrolls attests to the practice of Aramaic translations of Scripture among the sectarian Qumran community. Fragments of a ‘Targum of Leviticus’ (4QtgLev) and a ‘Targum of Job’ (4QtgJob and 11QtgJob) were published in 1977 by J.T. Milik and in 1998 by F. García Martínez, E.J.C. Tigchelaar and A.S. van der Woude. The Targum of Leviticus was dated palaeographically to the second century BCE by J.T. Milik. The fragments from cave 4 and 11 of the Targum of Job have both been dated palaeographically to the middle of the first century CE. This may indicate that targumic translations of the Pentateuch stood in a longer tradition than other parts of Scripture.

The Pentateuch was also the first part of Scripture integrally translated into Greek, as Flavius Josephus writes in the preface to his Jewish Antiquities. This impression is also confirmed by the fact that the Greek biblical texts found in caves 4 and 7 of Qumran are

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67 Cf. Ant. 13.297 about Pharisaic teachings to the people, τὸ δῆμος, and Ant. 18.15 to the masses, τοῖς δήμοις; J.W. 2.162. On the relation between scribes and Pharisees, see e.g. Mark 2:16 and Acts 23:9.

68 U. Gießmer, Einleitung in die Targum zum Pentateuch (Mohr Siebeck: Tübingen, 1995) 101-181, there 103, in a survey of textual witnesses to the Palestinian Targum tradition, mentions the publication of a papyrus fragment dated to the 4th/5th century CE by Y. Yahalom in 1978.

69 Cf. Strack & Stemberger, Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash, 4-5.


72 J.T. Milik, ‘II. Tefillin, Mezuzot et Targums (4Q128-4Q157)’, in DJD VI, 86.

73 Milik, DJD VI, 90, and García Martínez, Tigchelaar & Van der Woude, DJD XXIII, 87.

74 Ant. 1.12 οὐδὲ γὰρ πάσαν ἐκείνος ἠφεθε λαβεῖν τὴν ἐναγραφήν, ἀλλ’ αὐτὰ μόνα τὰ τοῦ νόμου παρεδόσαν οἱ πεμφθέντες ἐπὶ τὴν ἐξήγησιν εἰς τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρειαν.
mainly fragments from the Pentateuch. However, also within the entire Targumim, the Targums of the Pentateuch appear to stand in a longer tradition of accompanying readings of Hebrew Scripture. The Hebrew of the Torah needed to be accompanied by a translation in the more common language of the time, Aramaic. Aramaic even forms an integral part of the later biblical books of Daniel and Ezra, for which there probably was no equally pressing need to translate them into the spoken Aramaic of the people.

In his discussion concerning targumic texts in the literature of Qumran, Klaus Beyer has argued that the Aramaic Targum to the Pentateuch was composed by groups of scribes by way of a regular practice. Beyer dates this scribal practice back to the second century BCE at the latest. R. Le Déaut also includes the Genesis Apocryphon (1QapGen ar) in his survey of Qumran witnesses to targumic texts, that is, as evidence of “early targumic versions of Genesis”. In his edition of 4QTargum of Leviticus, J.T. Milik has given a synoptic table of comparison to the rendering of Leviticus 16:12-15 and 16:18-21 in the Targum Neophyti, the Targum Onqelos, the Samaritan Targum, and the Syriac version. In more recent literature, 4QTargum of Leviticus has been positively compared by Andreas Angerstorfer with the Targum Onqelos in terms of literary style and ‘Sitz im Leben’ in the Palestinian synagogal culture of liturgical readings from the Torah. The evidence of Qumran targumic texts does, in any case, strengthen the case that Aramaic translations of Torah were in use in the Palestinian-Jewish scriptural culture of the first century CE.

The Semitic background of scriptural culture may lie at the foundation of certain quotations from Scripture in Paul’s Letters in cases where the Greek text does not correspond to the Septuagint or other Greek versions. One example can be found in a quotation from Leviticus in Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians 6:16c. This quotation forms part of a special collection of scriptural quotations in 2 Cor 6:16c-18, which I will discuss more extensively in chapter eight when dealing with the metaphor of the Temple in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1. After the Temple of the living God has been mentioned as a metaphor for the religious congregation, the quotation of Lev 26:11 and other biblical verses follow, introduced by the words “as God said”. This quotation runs: ἐνοικήσω ἐν συνόπτω καὶ ἐμπεριστερήσω, “I will dwell in them and move among them”. Although the verb ἐμπεριστερήσω is in the Septuagint version of Lev 26:11, translating the Hebrew צָרַת, the absence of the other verb, ἐνοικήσω, with which the quotation starts has often been explained as an adaptation in the interest of the exegetical purpose of the writer.

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75 4Q119 (4QLXXLev); 4Q120 (4QpapLXXLev); 4Q121 (4QLXXNum); 4Q122 (4QLXXDeut); 4Q127 (pap4QParaExod gr); 7Q1 (7QLXXExod).
78 Le Déaut, Introduction à la Littérature Targumique, 64-72 at 71-72.
79 Milik, DJD VI, 87-89.
81 Cf. Klinzing, Die Umdeutung des Kultus, 178 who rather explains Paul’s use of the verb ἐνοικήσω from a free translation of הירש יסרויהל in Ezek 37:27, part of which is combined with Lev 26:12. Lev 26:11, however, already has צָרַת מְפֹשַׂט חֲדוֹשָׁה, and the phrase seems to correspond more closely to Paul’s use of a scriptural quotation here as prooftext for the Temple as metaphor for the religious community.
I propose a different explanation for the presence of these two verbs in Paul’s ‘quotation’ of Leviticus. In the Massoretic Hebrew text, the verse from Lev 26:12 runs as follows: “and I will walk among you and I will be your God and you will be my people”. The completely preserved Aramaic Pentateuch-Targum, the Targum Onqelos to Leviticus, begins the Aramaic version of Lev 26:12 with, “I will let my Shekhinah dwell among you”. Shekhinah is a typical term in rabbinic theology for God’s indwelling presence which avoids too much personification of God. The Aramaic verse runs as follows: “I will let my Shekhinah dwell among you” Underlying the rabbinic expression could be an earlier tradition which has a variant reading instead of the verb שְׁחִינוֹת. The verb שָׁעֲרֵי with which the ‘quotation’ is started in the Pauline passage is equivalent to this verb שָׁעֲרֵי, and thus the alternation between the two verbs for ‘dwelling’ and ‘moving among’ could be well explained by the divergent readings of this verse of Lev 26:12 in traditions of a transmitted Hebrew text and targumic readings of Scripture.

The supposition of variant readings of scriptural verses, even of the Pentateuch, is also supported by evidence from Qumran. In fact, the only Greek textual witness to Lev 26:12 in the literature of Qumran, 4Q119 (4QLXX Lev a) fr. 1 ll.17-18, has a shorter text than the Septuagint as we know it, missing the verb שְׁעָרֵי and reading מַעְלֵה instead of מַעֲלֵה in the LXX. Thus, even in the case of a Greek manuscript supposedly representing a Septuagintal text type, there are still variations which might be explained by the Semitic background of scriptural culture. The fluidity of scriptural ‘quotations’ in the first century CE may also be shown by an example from another Greek text from the Judaean desert, the Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever (8Hev/XII gr), published in the DJD series in 1990. This scroll, which follows the canonical order of the Minor Prophets in the Hebrew Bible rather than that of the Septuagint, comprises an example of the variation of verbs in the case of Zechariah 3:7. Whereas the Septuagint text of the latter part of Zech 3:7 has the verb άναστρέφουσα, the text of the Minor Prophets Scroll has the verb άναστρέφεται.

The variety of languages in which biblical texts were versed, containing textual variants of the Masoretic Hebrew text, can also be found in Paul’s quotation of a verse from Scripture. Early targumic versions of the Pentateuch in general could be termed proto-targumic texts from the point of view of comparison with Rabbinic Targumim. The availability to Paul of such early targumic versions of the Pentateuch in general, and of Leviticus in particular, in synagogal and study contexts cannot be overlooked.

4. Shared methods of biblical interpretation

4.1 Midrash, Pesher and the New Testament in light of the Dead Sea Discoveries

In the domain of comparative analysis of the use of Scripture, forms of citation and biblical interpretation (testimonia, midrash, pesher) have received much attention in scholarly hypotheses and theories. The discovery of and subsequent scholarship on the Dead Sea

82 Critical text edition by A. Sperber, The Bible in Aramaic. Based on Old Manuscripts and Printed Texts I The Pentateuch according to Targum Onkelos (Brill: Leiden, 1959).
Scrolls has confirmed the pre-existence of midrash as an exegetical technique and a literary genre in pre-70 CE Judaism, before rabbinic midrash.85 Rabbinic midrash has its own classification86 and characteristics in its development from oral traditions and study of Scripture within rabbinic schools, the תורתו של MIDRASH (also Midresh) and 4Q179 – The literature of Qumran, however, comprises the genre of eschatological midrashim (4Q174, 4Q177, 4Q182 – also named 4QMidrEschat–). Midrash, as a term for the exegesis rather than the exegetical genre, also figures in legal texts. For instance, 1QS VIII, 15 and 4QD 7, II, 15 refer to the study and interpretation of the Law. In the literature of Qumran, however, as exegesis of composite texts of biblical verses (testimonies) can be distinguished from expositions, exact interpretation of separate biblical books,87 and commentary.

In his article on ‘Midrash Pesher in the Pauline Letters’, Timothy H. Lim has described the methodological difference between Midrash and Pesher. Midrash has to be understood as an interweaving exegesis of biblical lemma and commentary, whereas Pesher is defined by a formal distinction between biblical lemma and commentary. Thus, midrashic exegesis seems to leave more room for exegetical adaptation or modification.88 In his monograph, by comparing Pauline biblical interpretation with Pesherite exegesis, Lim goes further into the issue of textual divergence as being part of ‘post-biblical exegeses’. Without this notion of the divergence of textual versions of the Bible, variant readings of particular verses from Scripture in quotations would one-sidedly be taken for the exegete’s modification from the viewpoint of a fixed canon.89 The plurality of text types on which Paul could draw, as he was knowledgeable in Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew,90 provokes the question to which extent his use of Scripture can actually be termed exegetical modification.

4.2 Midrash, Pesher and Biblical Interpretation in the Pauline Letters


86 Strack & Stemberger, Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash, 237-240 give a subdivision in Halakhic and Haggadic, Exegetical and Homiletical Midrashim.


89 See Lim, Holy Scripture in the Qumran Commentaries and Pauline Letters, 3-28.

Paul and the contemporary Jewish culture of scriptural interpretation

Testament. Running commentary, pesher interpretation, typological interpretation and allegorical interpretation are treated by them as four subforms in Paul’s Midrash.91

D. Moody Smith has proposed typological exegesis as the most important form of biblical interpretation in Paul’s Letters as well as other New Testament writings. He describes such Christian typology as follows: “Not just the texts, but the events and persons of which the texts speak are prototypes of God’s revelation in Christ”.92 D. Moody Smith allows for the possibility of affinities between Paul’s methods of interpretation and certain elements of contemporary Jewish exegesis, especially Essene exegesis. As for the influence of midrashic-type exegesis on Paul’s use of Scripture, D. Moody Smith comes with an example of a shared Exodus midrashic tradition with Philo in 1 Cor 10:1-13.93

Another hypothesis concerning the interpretative use of Scripture in Paul’s Letters, concerns the early Christian Testimonia collections, which is important for our understanding of chain quotes from Scripture, as, for example, in 2 Cor 6:16c-18 and in Rom 3:10-18. In his ‘review of the Scholarly Literature on the Testimonia hypothesis’, Martin C. Albl has discussed the influential positions of certain scholars in framing and developing the Testimonia hypothesis. In this connection, Edwin Hatch’s hypothesis on the use of ‘scriptural extract collections’, the ‘Testimony Book hypothesis’ of J. Rendel Harris, the idea of testimonies as a substructure to the Christian message by C.H. Dodd, and Barnabas Lindars’ focus on the apologetic life-setting of testimonia need to be mentioned.94 The Dead Sea discoveries, which include the so-called 4QTestimonia (4Q175), have given a further impetus to the Testimonia hypothesis.95 Albl has pointed to a relative distinction between midrash, which has a scriptural text as starting-point, and a testimonium, which has an extra-scriptural event as the starting-point for scriptural exegesis.96

The idea of an extra-scriptural event as a starting-point for a testimonium could be related to Jesus’ death and resurrection. Quotations from Scripture foretelling his Messiahship could be understood as early Christian testimonia, which are in line with typological interpretation. In his discussion of testimonia in Paul’s Letters, Albl also points to connections with a Jewish life-setting. Thus, in the case of Rom 3:10-18, he identifies this scriptural chain quote with a Jewish Psalms Collection. In the case of 2 Cor 6:16-7:1, Albl links this passage with a Temple Testimonia collection.

Albl does, however, not consider the question of the life-setting of the supposedly original non-Pauline composition in 2 Cor 6:16c-18. As I have argued in the previous section 3.4 on Paul’s use of Scripture and Aramaic Targum, the Pauline edition of a non-Pauline composition may reveal a background in Palestinian Jewish scriptural culture. It is possible that the ‘Temple Testimonia collection’, as Albl calls it, was in use in some comparable form within Palestinian-Jewish synagogue culture.

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95 Cf. e.g. Fitzmyer, ‘4QTestimonia’ and the New Testament’, 513-537.
96 Albl, “And Scripture cannot be broken”, 65-66.
5. Summary

In this chapter, we have seen that the literary context of scriptural interpretation determined temple theology in the Jewish culture contemporary to Paul. The temple theology in the literature of Qumran is based on the sectarian understanding of Scripture. A valid comparison between temple imagery in Paul and Qumran takes commonalities in the contemporary Jewish culture of scriptural interpretation into account. The search for a historical background to Paul’s cultic imagery entails a comparative investigation of echoes of Scripture and biblical interpretation which are interwoven in the use of cultic imagery, including temple imagery.

The intersecting scriptural culture of Palestinian synagogues formed an important way through which shared traditions of biblical interpretation and theological views on the Temple could influence Paul during his former life as a Pharisee. The contemporary synagogal liturgy, as it is described in Josephus, the Gospels and Acts, and early rabbinic literature, is also reflected in Paul’s Letters in certain ways. Paul explicitly refers to synagogal readings from ‘Moses’, that is, the Torah in 2 Cor 3:15, and Christian Jews may have brought elements of synagogal liturgy into the worship service as it is evoked in 1 Cor 14:26-28.

Moreover, Paul’s language and his use of Scripture cannot be understood in a monocausal relation to the Septuagint and the Hellenistic Diaspora setting. It is also necessary to make a comparison with contemporary Palestinian-Jewish synagogal culture. The Hebraisms, transliterations of Aramaic words and certain religious concepts do at least endorse Paul’s relation to Hebrew scriptural culture. Paul’s use of Scripture reflects a relative dependence on the Septuagint, but there are also cases in which Paul’s scriptural quotations are independent or do rather relate to the Masoretic text. The supposition of the Septuagint as the predominant Vorlage for Paul’s quotations carries with it the danger of harmonisation and the negation of part of the evidence of Paul’s quotations from Scripture. In the light of the Dead Sea discoveries, the history of the biblical text can be understood in terms of more fluidity and more textual divergence, so that variant readings of Scripture cannot self-evidently be explained as exegetical modifications. On the basis of analogies between Paul’s use of Scripture and Aramaic Targum, certain variant readings in Paul’s Letters may be explained in relation to Semitic scriptural culture. This scriptural culture was represented by Syro-Palestinian synagogues.

In scholarly analyses of biblical interpretation, the midrashic exegesis and pesherite exegesis of Qumran literature have been compared with Pauline exegesis; a comparative approach which has brought to the fore the issue of textual divergence. Affinities between Paul’s exegesis and Essene exegesis have been pointed out by scholars who deal with the background of Paul’s exegesis. The ‘Testimonia hypothesis’, which originally concerned early Christian testimonia collections, may further benefit the study of the Jewish background of Paul’s biblical exegesis.