LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

TO THE JEW FIRST: A SOCIO-HISTORICAL AND BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PAULINE TEACHING OF ‘ELECTION’ IN LIGHT OF SECOND TEMPLE JEWISH PATTERNS OF THOUGHT

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
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LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA
JUNE 2013
APPROVAL SHEET

TO THE JEW FIRST: A SOCIO-HISTORICAL AND BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PAULINE TEACHING OF ‘ELECTION’ IN LIGHT OF SECOND TEMPLE JEWISH PATTERNS OF THOUGHT

Anthony Chadwick Thornhill

Read and approved by:

Chairperson: ____________________________

Reader: ________________________________

Reader: ________________________________

Date: ____________________________

7/31/2013
To my wife, Caroline, my children, and my family:

Without your support, encouragement, and patience, this goal would not have been achieved. I am humbled and amazed by your constant love and friendship.
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<td>1 En.</td>
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<td>A.J.</td>
<td>Antiquitates judaicae</td>
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<td>Ant.</td>
<td>Jewish Antiquities</td>
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<td>Bar</td>
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<td>Bib. Ant.</td>
<td>Biblical Antiquities of Pseudo-Philo</td>
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<td>CD</td>
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<td>J. W.</td>
<td>Jewish War</td>
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<td>L.A.B.</td>
<td>Liber antiquitatum biblicarum (Pseudo-Philo)</td>
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<td>m. Sanh.</td>
<td>Mishnah Sanhedrin</td>
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<td>Odes Sol.</td>
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<td>Psalms of Solomon</td>
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<td>Sib. Or.</td>
<td>Sibylline Oracles</td>
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the entirety of the faculty of the Seminary who has invested so much in me as a person and an academic. I am proud to have been a part of the inaugural class of the PhD in Theology and Apologetics, and am grateful for the way this program has shaped me.

Dr. Leo Percer was so instrumental in my coming to this topic in the first place. I would like to thank him for spurring on my interest in Second Temple Judaism, which proved to be so integral to this project, and for the many discussions which we have had on this and many related topics. I am grateful that he agreed to mentor me through this project and would not have completed it without his influence. I would also like to thank Dr. Gary Yates for his assistance in this project and for his influence on my understanding of the Old Testament. I also would like to thank Dr. Michael Heiser for agreeing to be a reader on this project. His comments and questions were extremely valuable in helping to shape my thinking and articulation of this thesis.

I would like to thank Dr. Jim Freerksen for the enduring influence he has had on my understanding of the New Testament through his excellent instruction in New Testament Greek. I would also like to thank Dr. Gary Habermas, Dr. John Morrison, Dr. Kevin King, Dr. David Pettus, and Dr. Ed Smither, each of whom played a key role in my development in the areas of apologetics, theology, history, and Old Testament studies.

I would like to thank my parents, who have offered so much support throughout my educational career.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my wife, Caroline Thornhill. She has helped me more than she realizes. Truly without her this project would not have been completed. I am incredibly grateful for her love and friendship.
ABSTRACT

Paul’s “doctrine” of election has remained a controversial and enigmatic topic for centuries. Few studies, however, have approached Paul’s doctrine through the context of Second Temple Judaism. This study examines Paul’s view of election through the lens of Second Temple Jewish texts written prior to 70 CE. In doing so, it is argued that the best framework through which to view Paul’s discussion of election is through a primarily corporate model of election. While such a model is rooted in Judaism, Paul departs from his Jewish contemporaries in arguing that the locus of election is in God’s Messiah, Jesus.
INTRODUCTION

Few doctrines have been as contentious in the history of the Church as the doctrine of election. This is due, in part, to a seeming diversity of perspectives within the canon of Scripture itself, especially when one considers the interrelated issues of predestination, free will, the extent of sin’s effects upon humanity, and divine providence. While two perspectives (what have been known since the Reformation as Calvinism and Arminianism) have dominated much of the discussion within Protestant circles, there are numerous views of, and approaches to, the subject. Discussions of the doctrine frequently involve issues dating back to the Reformers or even the conflict between Augustine and Pelagius in the early fifth century. Many studies have examined the doctrine of “election” through exegetical, historical, or systematic theology.

1 The recent “Five Views” text (Chad Owen Brand, ed., Perspectives on Election, Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006) offers a defense of several of the more prominent positions. These are, again, but examples of the common ways in which scholars approach the topic. Some interpret the doctrine in a particular sense (e.g., Bruce A. Ware, Jack W. Cottrell and Robert L. Reymond), while others in a universal one (e.g., Thomas B. Talbott). Some view it as an expression of God’s individual choice to save some and damn others (Bruce A. Ware and Robert L. Reymond), while others have described it in more open terms (Jack W. Cottrell, Thomas B. Talbott, and Clark H. Pinnock). Some focus upon the individual aspect of the doctrines, sometimes to the exclusion of the corporate (e.g, Bruce A. Ware, Jack W. Cottrell, and Robert L. Reymond), while others have focused upon the corporate aspect to the exclusion of the individual (e.g., Thomas B. Talbott and Clark H. Pinnock). Karl Barth has offered what may be the most original emphasis during the twentieth century in defining election and reprobation as Christological concepts. Barth assigns to Jesus the election of God and God’s rejection of man’s sin (see especially Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol. II and IV, Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1958), though his interpretation has been criticized as being open to universalism in terms of the scope of salvation (for an analysis, see, for example, William John Hausmann, Karl Barth’s Doctrine of Election, New York: Philosophical Library, 1969).

2 Here the text of the New Testament takes focus and the debate centers upon what was meant by certain words or phrases in the texts examined. The recent edited volume Between Gospel and Election: Explorations in the Interpretation of Romans 9-11 (Florian Wilk, J. Ross Wagner, and Franck Schleritt, ed., Between Gospel and Election: Explorations in the Interpretation of Romans 9-11, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010) stands as a good example of the complex and controversial aspects involved in the discussion.

3 Works of this sort generally trace the viewpoint of a single theologian or contrast the views of multiple theologians in order to develop a case from the history of Christian thought. Pannenberg, for example, discusses the doctrine in Augustine, Aquinas, and Calvin as well as it related to the political aspect of national views of “chosenness.” Pannenberg’s discussion attempts to demonstrate that there is an urgent need to accept a more inclusivistic, corporate, and missional understanding of election rather than an exclusivistic, individual, and salvific one (see especially Wolfhart Pannenberg, Human Nature, Election, and History (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1977), 45-105). Pannenberg asserts that his disagreement with the traditional formulation is that election is therein detached from its historical and social functions (Wolfhart Pannenberg, Systematic Theology, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 442).
approaches. Comparatively few dedicated studies, however, interact in much detail with the historical and sociological setting in which the New Testament was written—namely, that of Second Temple Judaism. A study that is rooted in this setting will reveal certain nuances to the discussion that are often neglected in the debate.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The basic purpose of this study will be to inquire, “What did Paul’s Jewish contemporaries believe about “election,” and how does that relate to one’s understanding of Paul and the rest of the New Testament?” There is an ever-growing emphasis in biblical studies upon the value of reading the New Testament in its historical and social context. Few studies, however, have adequately addressed how the Jewish ideas about election during the Second Temple period relate to New Testament studies. Those studies which have been undertaken have

\footnote{Often here the considerations involved are primarily theological and philosophical rather than exegetical or historical. Here Berkouwer stands as a modern example with his volume \textit{Divine Election} from his “Studies in Dogmatics” series, though Berkouwer also incorporates historical theology in his volume. Berkouwer is generally affirming of the Calvinistic doctrines as it relates to election though he seeks to avoid speaking in deterministic terms concerning election so as to not indict God as the author of sin (G. C. Berkouwer, \textit{Divine Election} (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1960)).}

\footnote{This is not to ignore the fact that the Old Testament has its own complex texts that contribute to the discussion of a “biblical” notion of election, for certainly it does. The Old Testament provides the framework upon which both the Second Temple materials and the New Testament build their “election theologies.” The necessarily limited nature of this study will focus, however, only upon these later materials and interact with the Old Testament only as it intersects with them.}

\footnote{Mark Adam Elliott’s text serves as a recent example, though he does not give much attention to the implications of his study for understanding the New Testament (Mark Adam Elliott, \textit{The Survivors of Israel: A Reconsideration of the Theology of Pre-Christian Judaism}, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000). The recent volume by VanLandingham (Chris VanLandingham, \textit{Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul}, Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006) addresses the relationship between Jewish and Christian texts as they relate to election in part, though his focus is upon justification. VanLandingham’s conclusions, as he notes, part “with the tide of scholarship, regardless of confession” (VanLandingham, \textit{Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul}, 335), and will be discussed in later chapters. Klein discusses the Jewish background, but only in a summary manner and does not emphasize its importance for understanding the New Testament (William W. Klein, \textit{The New Chosen People of God: A Corporate View of Election}, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990).}
either ignored a significant portion of the literature (e.g., the Dead Sea Scrolls or Pseudepigrapha) or a significant theme (such as the remnant motif). In addition, they often address the modality of election but not its scope, or give unwarranted and uncritical preference to the rabbinic materials, which, though to some extent relevant, represent a later expression of Judaism. There is a significant need to fill this void with a study that examines all of the relevant “post-biblical” Jewish literature as it relates to the period surrounding the composition of the New Testament in order to compare the Jewish and New Testament concepts on their own terms.

The purpose of this study is thus to examine the New Testament theology of election through a historical, sociological, literary, and theological framework. By engaging in historical and sociological examination, the study will seek to set the selected New Testament texts in their first century context, examining the relevance of both the immediate (i.e., author, audience, provenance, etc.) and the extended (social and cultural influences, historical setting, religious beliefs, etc.) setting surrounding these texts. In engaging in literary analysis, the study will seek to trace the author’s flow of thought in attempting to determine what precisely the intended meaning of their words were as they communicated to their earliest hearers or readers.7 The integration of a theological study of this material will seek to synthesize and communicate this information in a coherent and intelligible summary. The emphasis of the study will be upon reading the New Testament texts that most directly develop election concepts in light of the spectrum of Jewish beliefs.

In doing so, the study will suggest three important aspects found in the Jewish literature examined. First, the Jewish understanding of the notion of their “election” during the Second

7 It is now widely recognized now that concepts cannot be limited to select vocabulary or word domains. Though “word studies” may offer a starting point or develop a limited perspective on a topic or issue, concepts cannot be limited to words. Words, phrases, and ideas must all be examined and incorporated into a development of a given topic or theme.
Temple period was couched in primarily corporate terms rather than individual terms. That is, the Jews during this period, as evidenced in the extant materials, would have understood God’s “choice” of Israel and the Jewish people as a group comprised of individuals rather than individuals who comprise a group. In other words, while election is typically discussed in modern theological treatises as first relating to an individuals’ soteriological standing before God, and then secondarily as a member of a group of those similarly identified with the same soteriological standing, Jewish writings of the Second Temple period indicate the reverse. They viewed themselves as individuals primarily through the lens of the group. They could speak of themselves as “elect ones” because they belonged to the people of God rather than that they belonged to the people of God because they were “elect ones.” This is more than an issue of mere semantics, but is a fundamentally different way of thinking of election than is typically offered in most Christian theologies. Second, at times the descriptor “elect,” or descriptions of God’s “choosings,” lay their emphasis not upon soteriological status but rather upon the character or role of the elect ones. Finally, the study will seek to understand how the so-called “remnant” or “true Israel” motif, prominent in much of the Second Temple literature, should be treated over and against a purely national or ethnic conception of Israel’s election, and how this affects one’s understanding of the arguments the apostle Paul was actually making against the Jewish conception(s) of election. Thus, in moving beyond the Jewish literature, several Pauline texts will be examined to see how these ideas found in the Jewish literature are related in a broader sense to the New Testament’s teachings concerning “election.”

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8 The study will not focus upon the related issue of “predestination,” which this author views as connected with, but not identical to, the issue of election. Predestination is herein understood as a pre-appointment or pre-determination by God in relation to some event. Though the idea is frequently connected with God’s choice of Israel, the two concepts should not be seen as synonymous. When the issue arises in the literature and contributes to the theme (i.e., God’s choice of Israel prior to creation), it will be addressed, as well as when the issue ties in to Paul’s development of the them (e.g., in Rom. 8-9 or Eph. 1).
STATE OF CURRENT RESEARCH

Within the realm of biblical studies, an endless stream of works, both popular and scholarly, exist which treat the doctrine of election in some manner. Due to the reinvigoration in Jewish studies as a result of the discovery and study of the Dead Sea Scrolls, an increasing number of volumes focus on Second Temple Jewish beliefs about election, and these works are beginning to make headway into New Testament studies. The development has been surprisingly slow and many other elements involved in Jewish theology have been more rigorously examined (such as, for example, justification\(^9\) or eschatology). In modern biblical studies prior to the “shift” created by the so-called “New Perspective,” treatments of Jewish beliefs about election were generally of a common opinion. The view outlined by several key studies came to be representative of many approaches up until the mid- to late-twentieth century. The differences espoused were primarily differences in the mode of election, while there have been some common assumptions about the nature of election.\(^10\) The studies may be grouped by whether election is viewed as national in nature or through the remnant/true Israel motif, as well as if it is viewed as unconditional, cooperative, or conditional. Though these categories are somewhat artificial, they serve to provide a means by which to recognize how these various studies have understood the nature of election.

\(^9\) Often an inherent assumption exists that salvation, election, and justification refer to the same idea. In the New Testament, however, and specifically in Paul’s letters, these ideas cannot be simply equated since separate and unique nuances and emphases are present within each concept. For an introduction, see Brenda B. Colijn, *Images of Salvation in the New Testament* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2010).

\(^10\) This is a point made extensively by Elliott who asserts, “with respect to these writings the conventional view of Judaism, with its nationalistic election theology as a basic working assumption, has remained basically unchallenged” (Elliott, *Survivors of Israel*, 36). There were significant disagreements about modality as there still are today, with various approaches to understanding how “faith” or “grace” and “works” were related to the notion of election. The concept itself, however, has been largely ignored in regards to the nature of election. It is the scope of election, and not the mode, which will be the primary focus of this study.
G. F. Moore’s summary in *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* (1927) has become frequently referenced in addressing the nationalistic view of Israel’s election. He stated, “[S]alvation, or eternal life, is ultimately assured to every Israelite on the ground of the original election of the people by the free grace of God, prompted not by its merits, collective or individual, but solely on God’s love.” Moore’s position arose from his understanding of rabbinic Judaism (primarily), though he also referenced Second Temple literature. Moore viewed the Jewish framing of Israel’s election as national, unmerited, and irrevocable, having been decided by God before the foundation of the world. In terms of method, Moore, like Sanders who followed him, sought to develop a description of “normative” Judaism. His method sought to subsume all of Judaism under what later became known as the authoritative expression of Judaism. Thus, any literature which was not affirmed by the tannaitic literature or the Talmud was ignored or viewed as anomalous, and thus was not assigned any major significance. As he summarized, “[I]nasmuch as these writings have never been recognized by Judaism, it is a fallacy of method for the historian to make them a primary source for the eschatology of Judaism, much more to contaminate its theology with them.” In terms, of course, of historical method, it is actually quite preferable to implement the earliest sources as primary sources rather than to subsume them under a later expression of the religion regardless of the eventual authority that it received. For those interested in understanding Judaism as it relates to New Testament studies, the central question is “[W]hat expression(s) of Judaism was most prevalent in Palestine?


12 Ibid., 126-27.

13 Ibid., 127.
and the surrounding areas during the period leading up to the writing of the New Testament?”

The rabbinic corpus, of course, is much later than, for example, the Dead Sea Scrolls, or many of
the works of the Apocrypha and OT Pseudepigrapha, and thus should not be given a priori
primacy and must be used critically and carefully.14

In his Paul and Rabbinic Judaism (1948), W. D. Davies took a slightly different
approach to the literature of the period. For Davies, there is at least some value to incorporating
other Second Temple literature in understanding first century Judaism in addition to the rabbinic
writings.15 Davies noted elements of particularism in the Jewish literature of the period and
suspected that it is illegitimate to suppose that there was not a sense of universalism16 in the
Jewish attitude during this time.17 However, Davies, like Moore, saw Israel’s election primarily
in nationalistic terms, noting that accepting the Torah meant not just “initiation into a religion…
but incorporation into a nation.”18

E. P. Sanders has been frequently credited with single-handedly re-invigorating studies
on the relationship between Paul and his Jewish contemporaries. His two seminal works, Paul
and Palestinian Judaism (1978) and Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People (1983), have become

14 This is all recognized by Moore but does not limit his desire to give primary weight to the rabbinic
corpus. Moore questions the access and influence that the Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphal writings would have had
upon the New Testament authors and assumes that later Judaism better speaks for the period than the extant writings
from the period itself. Of course, even surveying a few examples of how these texts are relevant for New Testament
studies in terms of parallels, allusions, and possible quotations illustrates their importance for understanding the
theology of the New Testament (see, for example, Craig A. Evans, Ancient Texts for New Testament Studies

15 E.g., W. D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology (New

16 Frequently in OT and Jewish studies this term is used in reference to the scope of salvation in relation to
whether only Israel was viewed as the people of God (particularism), or if Gentiles or other nations were also
included (universalism). This is, of course, different from the sense in which it is employed in systematic theologies.

17 Ibid., 67.

18 Ibid.
the objects of frequent dialogue, praise, and criticism. His approach was to examine the rabbinic (tannaitic) materials along with the Dead Sea Scrolls, and a select number of works from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. Sanders, like Davies and Moore, gave more weight to the rabbinic materials in spite of the fact that he admits they are much later because they offer “a better opportunity of describing a pattern of religion.” On historical grounds, this is, again, an unnecessary precedent to follow and seems to assume 1) that other texts have too little in common to discuss them “systematically” and 2) that the rabbinic corpus provides a sufficiently systematic picture of early Judaism. As he introduced his approach, the central point Sanders sought to make was that the view of Judaism proposed by Ferdinand Weber, Emil Schürer, and Wilhelm Bousset, among others, who understood Judaism as a merit-based religion, was misguided. Sanders’ (now quite famous) explanation of the relationship between election and covenant was that “one is put in the covenant by the gracious election of God; one stays in it by observing the law and atoning for transgression.”

Sanders criticized the approach of looking at thematic comparisons between religions (i.e. Paul and Judaism) on the grounds that “it is usually the motifs of one of the religions which are compared with elements in the second religion in order to identify their origin.” In doing so, one religion is usually decontextualized and treated with lesser significance. While this may be a tendency in these studies, even a predominant one, it does not necessarily prevent this type of an approach from reaching valuable conclusions. It is methodologically a possibility that one

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20 Ibid., 25.
21 E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1985), 45. He argues against the notion that works brought one into the covenant of the elect rather than election (of grace) bringing one into the covenant (Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, 50).
examines both belief systems on their own grounds and then compares the results. In addition, if anything, one may argue that Sanders has simply tilted the slant in the opposite direction, favoring Judaism as his starting point of comparison while not dealing adequately with Paul on his own terms.

Sanders seemed to assume from the outset that Paul’s version of faith was of a completely different sort from that of Judaism as an entirely different “pattern” of religion. Sanders’ stated that his purpose was to examine how an adherent to these religions would have understood how to “get in and stay in” their religion. This, of course, is a framework placed upon these materials rather than one that arises out of them, since these texts do not speak in the same terms as the filter that Sanders seeks to apply to them. As it relates to election, Sanders argued that often election and covenant were presupposed, and that the emphasis upon “works” was to answer the question of how to fulfill Israel’s covenant obligations.

While Sanders sought to develop a comparison of “patterns” of religion, he noted on several occasions that there is not uniformity in the Jewish literature of the period concerning these areas of theology. The tasks of systemization and comparison are daunting ones, and Sanders has made some progress towards those goals, but in doing so, some of the emphases of the period have been ignored. Sanders is fundamentally correct in his assertion that what

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23 Ibid., 12.

24 Ibid., 17.

25 Ibid., 421. Thus, as it relates to Paul, Sanders asserts that “Paul seems to ignore (and by implication deny) the grace of God toward Israel as evidenced by the election and the covenant… Paul in fact explicitly denies that the Jewish covenant can be effective for salvation, thus consciously denying the basis of Judaism… In short, this is what Paul finds wrong in Judaism: it is not Christianity” (Idem, 551-52).

26 IV Ezra and 1 Enoch are offered as two examples of what Sanders considers “defectors” from the normal pattern. He admittedly omits much of the literature in his study and of those sources examined, finds discrepancies between them. Perhaps, then, it is better to take each text on its own merits and speak of patterns that may occur across texts rather than attempt to subsume the entirety of the literature under a single umbrella such as “covenantal nomism.” While this may be an accurate description of some perspectives in some texts, it seems to attempt to prove more than it is able.
separated the various sects of the period were their different definitions of what it meant to be in the people of God, which primarily consisted of distinctions between understandings of election and covenant/Law-keeping.\textsuperscript{27} In seeking to compare “patterns of religion,” Sanders did not adequately address those materials which did not fit within his paradigm, and thus did not produce an adequate picture of first century Jewish beliefs as they relate to early Christian beliefs.

The idea of unconditional, national election has been reaffirmed in Gürkan’s more recent work.\textsuperscript{28} Gürkan envisions election as signifying “that ‘all Israel’, i.e. the descendants of Jacob, are chosen through ‘an everlasting covenant’,”\textsuperscript{29} and that “unlike the writings of the Qumran community, the notion of ‘true Israel’ as associated with a particular group within the people of Israel does not appear in the apocryphal and pseudepigraphal books.”\textsuperscript{30} This statement is, however, in tension with her recognition of the presence of the remnant motif in that body of literature which, of course, asserts primarily that there is a particular group within Israel that is the ‘true Israel’. She concludes that “the general view stemming from the apocryphal and pseudepigraphical, as well as the Qumran, writings is that… Israel (or the remnant of Israel), as the chosen and covenanted people of God, is eternal.”\textsuperscript{31} This conclusion raises the question as to

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\textsuperscript{27} Sanders, \textit{Paul and Palestinian Judaism}, 424.
\textsuperscript{28} Joel Lohr’s text also works within a similar framework though he does not address the Second Temple background. Lohr surveys Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy and examines cases which serve as examples of “election” and “nonelection.” His focus is upon the relationship between those who God chooses and those who he does not. Lohr’s view is that “God’s love for his people is sure, irrevocable, and not determined by Israel’s action” (Joel N. Lohr, \textit{Chosen and Unchosen: Conceptions of Election in the Pentateuch and Jewish-Christian Interpretation} (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 195), and that the “nonelect” are still an important part of God’s plan for the world (Ibid., xii).
\textsuperscript{29} S. Leyla Gürkan, \textit{The Jews as a Chosen People: Tradition and Transformation} (New York: Routledge, 2009), 22.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 24.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 25.
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how exactly the remnant theme was integrated with an understanding of election during the late Second Temple period, and how that might relate to the New Testament.32

Election as National and Co-Operative

In his 1964 work *Palestinian Judaism in the Time of Jesus Christ*, Joseph Bonsirven primarily employed the rabbinic sources and used only a handful of texts from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. Thus, he differed from Moore who viewed them in a much more limited scope, though he still tended to favor the rabbinic materials over the other sources employed as it related to the issue of Israel’s election. He also incorporated Philo and Josephus, but did not include any discussion of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which had been partially published by this time. Bonsirven suggested that the rabbis understood Abraham’s election as a reward for his righteousness and noted that the same theme is present in the Apocrypha, Philo, and Josephus.33 It was the merits of the patriarchs, and of later Israel, as well as the gratuity of God (what Bonsirven refers to as a “reciprocal choice”34), which was understood to have brought about Israel’s election, which was of a national/particular nature.35 Bonsirven understands this as a national/ethnic concept, and notes a tension within the Jewish writings between understanding this election as conditional (i.e. dependent upon keeping Torah) and unconditional.

32 This is a question raised by Elliott as to why there has been a general tendency to view election as national while also recognizing the presence of the remnant theme (Elliott, *The Survivors of Israel*, 47-48). The two are in obvious tension with one another.


34 Ibid., 46.

35 Ibid., 44-45. Köhler sees a deep connection between the election and mission of Israel and, similar to Bonsirven, notes that this election is rooted in the merits of the Patriarchs as well as in God’s love (Kaufmann Köhler, *Jewish Theology: Systematically and Historically Considered* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), 406). Köhler affirmed the centrality of election to the Jewish religion and recognized it as the key to understanding the nature of Judaism (Ibid., 323).
Joel S. Kaminsky, in his recent text *Yet I Loved Jacob: Reclaiming the Biblical Concept of Election*, also addresses the issue of election. While Kaminsky’s text focuses upon the Old Testament conception of election, he turns his attention to the New Testament and rabbinic materials in his last chapter of the text. Kaminsky notes that Christianity, like early Judaism, was also exclusivistic in its claim of being the people of God, though it redefined what that entailed. He seeks in his discussion to identify those elements to which both Christianity and rabbinic Judaism gave the most weight as it concerned their notion of election. Kaminsky seeks to make a distinction between the Jewish view of the elect, the anti-elect (damned), and the non-elect with the Christian conception of the elect versus the anti-elect. In the Old Testament, Kaminsky sees the non-elect as the nations which do not oppose Yahweh and are eventually seen as submitting to him and his people Israel.\(^{36}\) Kaminsky recognizes a tension in both rabbinic and Christian streams between works and grace being the foundation of salvation; between the conditional and unconditional elements described. This is a tension derived from the Hebrew Bible, which also spoke of election and covenant as at times conditional and unconditional.\(^{37}\) Kaminsky’s work has produced some novel findings, especially concerning his description of the elect, anti-elect, and non-elect, and his recognition of the diversity present in the literature at hand. It does not examine, however, the New Testament in light of the Second Temple ethos in that it incorporates only the rabbinic materials, and is thus limited and primarily concerned with defending Jewish election theology against scholarly and popular misconceptions.


\(^{37}\) Ibid., 91.
Simon Gathercole has also recently addressed the topic, though again with a focus primarily on the justification issue as it relates to works and boasting. Gathercole’s aim is to counter both the view that the Jewish “boasting” was primarily because of either their “works-righteousness” or their “national righteousness” received through their election. Gathercole argues that both election and obedience were a part of the Jewish confidence. Gathercole sees election and obedience as compatible when obedience is seen as the “basis for vindication at the eschaton,” a theme which he sees as also being present in Paul. Gathercole seems to envision Jewish election in a primarily national sense, with the presence of conditional elements.

Election as Remnant-Oriented and Conditional

William Klein has argued, in his *The New Chosen People*, that election in both testaments should be understood in corporate terms when related to salvation, and that individual election is primarily to be understood in terms of election to service and not salvation. His discussion of the Second Temple backdrop for these conclusions is, however, quite limited. Klein surveys the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and rabbinic writings. He argues that election at Qumran was related to the remnant rather than to the nation as a whole, and was understood as corporate and conditioned upon the “voluntary exercise of an individual’s will” specifically related to repentance and fidelity. Concerning the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, Klein argues that “salvation comes only to those who meet the entrance requirements. These

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39 Ibid., 263.

40 Ibid., 263-264.

include: loyalty to God, obedience to his commands, and faithfulness to his will.” Here he states again that election was viewed primarily as corporate when related to salvation and individual when related to service or the performance of specific tasks.\textsuperscript{42} Klein’s treatment of the rabbinic materials recognizes the necessarily tentative approach one must take given the late date of the corpus, and as such he interacts primarily with secondary sources. Klein suggests that the rabbinic view had returned from the “remnant” motif to a nationalistic view of election, though still corporate in nature and still applying only to the faithful of Israel.\textsuperscript{43}

A recent and original treatment of the topic has been offered by the late Mark Adam Elliott in his 2000 publication \textit{The Survivors of Israel: A Reconsideration of the Theology of Pre-Christian Judaism}. Elliot’s goal was to offer, through literary, historical, and sociological analysis, a “systematic theology” of late Second Temple Judaism, with a focus upon the concepts of election, covenant, the role of messiah, judgment, and salvation. For Elliot, this entailed, in part, a critique of E. P. Sanders’ vision, which Elliot considered as lacking sufficient historical chronology and of defining Judaism too broadly, and thus not appreciating seriously the diversity present within its various sects and segments. According to Elliot, the purpose of his book “is to call a third ‘pillar’ belief to the bench. This is the doctrine, widely assumed to belong \textit{universally} to Judaism, of the \textit{irrevocable national election of Israel}.”\textsuperscript{44}

Elliott contended that, due to poor historic methodology, the standard interpretation of Second Temple Judaism’s beliefs concerning election has been seen primarily as nationalistic and unconditioned due to an anachronistic projection of the beliefs of rabbinic Judaism upon the Second Temple materials. In his study, Elliott examined select texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 55-56.

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 59-60.

\textsuperscript{44} Elliott, \textit{The Survivors of Israel}, 28.
and the Pseudepigrapha, examining the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, *1 Enoch*, *Jubilees*, *Psalms of Solomon*, *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, and the *Assumption of Moses*. In examining these texts, Elliott argued that an unconditional, nationalistic view of Israel’s election cannot sufficiently account for the preponderance of evidence considered. He instead contends that “all indications pointed to a highly individualistic and conditional view of covenant,”\(^{45}\) rooted in a soteriological dualism in which the unrighteous are composed of both the nations and apostate Israel while the righteous/elect are members of the preserved “remnant” who are faithful to the covenant. As he summarizes, “the conventional nationalistic view of election theology is not accurately reflective of at least some important pre-Christian Jewish groups; in contradistinction to past treatments, moreover, one must conclude from such evidence that a *Jewish theology of special election existed well in advance of the New Testament period.*”\(^{46}\)

Elliott’s work has offered a new paradigm through which to view Israel’s understanding of its election during the Second Temple period. The remnant motif is a significant one in the materials outside of the rabbinic corpus and, though recognized by many prior to Elliott, one that has not been incorporated into an understanding of Israel’s election beliefs. Elliott’s work dealt with a broader range of sources than many of the studies that preceded it and showed how the diversity of the beliefs at the time must be recognized when examining Second Temple Judaism. While serving as a backdrop for New Testament studies, Elliott’s work does not incorporate a discussion of the rabbinic materials (to whatever degree they may be deemed relevant) and he does not extend his findings to the New Testament in much detail.

\(^{45}\) Ibid., 639.

\(^{46}\) Ibid., 640.
Sigurd Grindheim has recently addressed the topic as it relates to Paul’s “critique of Jewish confidence in the election of Israel,” which he defines as “the conviction that by virtue of divine election the Jews (or some of them) belong to the people of God and therefore enjoy God’s favor.” As it relates to Second Temple materials, he concludes that election is associated closely with law observance, and is frequently pictured as relevant only to a faithful remnant and not to the whole nation of Israel. Grindheim interacts primarily with the idea of confidence or boasting, and how it relates to Paul’s distinction between Jews and Gentiles. His work, however, will overlap with this study in his treatment of Romans and his recognition that at the core of that discussion is Paul’s concern to demonstrate the reversal of values present in the concept of election. Here Grindheim concludes that Paul, at least in part, is critiquing the idea that visible status claims among the Jewish people acted as evidence of membership in the elect.

In his 2006 volume, *Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul*, Chris VanLandingham also addresses the issue of election within the socio-historical context of Second Temple Judaism. VanLandingham’s text focuses upon “the relationship between divine grace and human reward as these concepts relate to an individual’s eternal destiny within the writings of Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul.” He deals, however, with the subject of

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48 Grindheim’s study surveys the Second Temple wisdom literature (Sirach, Baruch, and Wisdom of Solomon), 1 Enoch, Jubilees, the Psalms of Solomon, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, select texts from the DSS, and the writings of Philo.

49 Ibid., 75-76.

50 Ibid., 4, 195-197.

51 Ibid., 196.

election as the focus of his first chapter, which, of course, is related to the issue of the grace/works dichotomy he addresses. Contra Sanders, VanLandingham argues that, within late Second Temple Judaism, “election (like salvation) is not a gift of God’s grace, but a reward for proper behavior.”53 Instead, he suggests that Israel’s election is inherited by the people as a whole, and not individually bestowed. Abraham’s election was purposeful, but was done because of his righteousness and then bestowed on Israel as Abraham’s descendants.54 VanLandingham sees the foundation of the argument as resting with Abraham. If Abraham received the covenant by God’s gratuity then Israel likewise receives it as such, but if he received the covenant because of his righteous merits, then Israel has likewise received it. As he summarizes his discussion of election, the author emphasizes that the covenants were bestowed upon Israel because of God’s response to Abraham’s righteousness and that “the mercy God grants to Israel is not given to each individual, but only to the entity of Israel.”55

In these works surveyed, several variations of the view of election in Second Temple Judaism arise. Each of these variations may be summarized by posing the following questions. 1) Was Israel’s election described in terms of being merited or as graciously given by God of his own gratuity? 2) Was all of Israel, in an ethnic or national sense, a recipient of this election, or were only the faithful remnant a part of the chosen people? 3) Did election apply primarily to individuals, or rather to the collective whole or the corporate entity? and, 4) Was individual election primarily soteriological in nature? Several of these questions, which have not been addressed at length in the majority of the works surveyed will be the central focus of this study.

53 Ibid., 18.
54 Ibid., 18-19.
55 Ibid., 65.
METHOD AND APPROACH

The basic thrust of this study will be to answer two key questions: 1) How did Jews during the Second Temple period understand the nature of their “election?” and 2) How does an understanding of a Jewish idea(s) of election influence how one might understand the key New Testament texts that address “election?” The first question, as seen above, contains several sub-questions that will be addressed to various degrees. The study will primarily focus upon Jewish concepts of the nature of election as they relate to the questions of “extent” (ethnic/national or remnant?), the relationship to the individual (corporate or individual in focus?), and the relationship to salvation (unto salvation, service, neither, or both?). The study will deal with the issue of whether this election was viewed as merited or given graciously only as it connects to the primary questions noted above. Since this last area concerning the modality of election has been the primary focus of the recent Jewish election discussions among scholars of Second Temple Judaism, there is seemingly little new ground to break.56

The Relationship between “Jewish” and “Christian” Texts

The study must also consider in what way an understanding of Second Temple Jewish beliefs should influence one’s reading of the New Testament (or here, primarily, Paul). There are primarily three options to consider. First, one may consider Paul’s thoughts as analogous with that of his contemporaries and thus largely adopting their view as his own. Second, one may view Paul as being in dialogue with his contemporaries, though having a different or developed

56 In addition to E. P. Sanders’ *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, Simon Gathercole’s *Where is Boasting*, Chris VanLandingham’s *Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul*, and Sigurd Grindheim’s *The Crux of Election* all deal more or less with this aspect of election.
view of election not identical to theirs. Third, one might ignore the Second Temple materials and conclude that they have no influence upon how one should understand Paul. In order to determine which approach is most appropriate, the concept of election should be examined in both sets of texts to compare how it is described and developed, and then, and only then, determine how one might view how Paul’s statements relate to those in the Second Temple Jewish materials. At the outset, the third option (that there is no interplay between them) seems the least likely since Paul (in Romans, Ephesians,\textsuperscript{57} and elsewhere) is addressing the question of what it means for Jews and Gentiles to both be a part of the people of God. Those who “converted” to Christianity did not do so in isolation from their socio-cultural setting, but rather were often either of a Jewish monotheistic or Gentile God-fearer background (though there were no doubt pagan converts as well). To assume that Paul had no desire to address in some way (whether adopting, reforming, or opposing) the presuppositions of his Jewish brethren is unwarranted.

The “Variegated” Nature of Second Temple Judaism

The literature in question is of a broad and complex background.\textsuperscript{58} As such, a careful approach is needed when attempting to survey such a broad swath of material and represent its descriptions of a single (though multi-layered) theme. This study, rather than seeking to find the position expressed in “common Judaism” or to give preference to what would become the “official” form of Judaism in later centuries, will recognize the variations present in the literature when they are truly present. While an aspect of the study will be to look for areas of agreement

\textsuperscript{57} The issue of the authorship of Ephesians will be addressed in the section below.

\textsuperscript{58} The nature of these texts will be discussed in the section below.
across all the literature surveyed, it will also recognize the presence of diversity without attempting to fit every text into a pre-conceived framework or ignoring its relevance when it does not conform to the overall pattern. The goal will thus be to let each text “speak for itself” rather than trying to force it to answer each question posed above. The questions under consideration must thus serve as a guide for the study since they arise to some degree naturally from the texts themselves, thus attempting not to impose foreign categories or thoughts upon the text.

Concerning letting the texts “speak for themselves,” it is meant that the study will attempt to engage with the interests of these texts as they relate to the questions rather than attempting to hoist these questions unfairly upon them. Gathercole suggested such an approach in arguing, “If one is exploring the dispute between Paul and Judaism, we need to understand not only the Jewish texts on their own terms, but also Judaism on Paul’s terms.”59 This is certainly sound advice. It is not enough to consider the Jewish beliefs concerning some element of theology. That is merely the first part of the process. From there, one must also consider in what ways Paul interacts with those beliefs. Only then can a fair comparison, rooted in critical engagement with both traditions, be accomplished. The proper approach is thus to understand these texts as separate entities before asking how they relate to Paul rather than adopting some pre-conceived framework about Paul’s beliefs and then seek to justify it by finding supporting literature from Jewish sources.

As it concerns the examination of these specific texts, the approach taken will be one sensitive to social, historical, and literary factors in the text. In that these texts are all assigned to different centuries within the late Second Temple period and affected by different events which motivated their composition, it is necessary to consider the historical background of each text in both an immediate and extended sense, in order to contextualize properly its contents. In addition to historical concerns, the literary and social setting of each text must be considered. Here genre and form certainly come to bear on the meaning of the text as well as a consideration of why the text was written and what it was originally intended to accomplish. Elliott’s approach offers a helpful example. Elliott speaks of a “socioliterary” function, which he defines as meaning “that texts not only say something, they also do something. Not only do religious authors intend to express theological teachings or propositions by writing, in other words, but consistently (if unconsciously) there would appear to be some purpose for their writing in the first place, and this purpose forms an essential part of the communication.”\(^60\) The study will aim to examine the materials selected with a sensitivity to these issues.

\(^{60}\) Elliott, *Survivors of Israel*, 9. This is, in general, a recognition of the basic principles of “speech-act” theory in which it is argued that texts are written not only to inform, but to bring about some action on the part of the intended reader. This is the distinction made between the illocution (the intended message) and perlocution (the intended result of the message). Thus, it is argued that words don’t just have intended meaning, but also intended actions or results.
Selection of Sources

Systematic treatments of a theological topic have been somewhat out of vogue in recent scholarship.\(^{61}\) Many studies are content to deal with a single book and do not attempt to integrate insights from other materials of a similar nature. The variety found in the literature should not, however, stop one from recognizing common elements present within Judaism at this time, or at least discuss those elements of the greatest prominence even when homogeneity is not present. One should also not assume that studying these materials with an eye toward the New Testament might prevent any measure of objectivity.\(^{62}\) In terms of tracing the election “theme” through the literature, the identification of the theme throughout these groups of texts must be a conceptual one rather than a linguistic or semantic one. Though semantic studies can be helpful in identifying the core of a certain expression, concepts cannot be limited or isolated to word groups, and thus a conceptual approach is to be highly preferred.\(^{63}\) As such, where the theme is present, either semantically or conceptually, in some significant form, it will be addressed within

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61 This, at least in part, may still be a result of Barr’s oft-cited criticism of the “biblical theology” approach of the last century. As Patrick, for example, asserts, “Barr’s criticism of the creation of concepts from vocabulary items is valid. It is imperative that the study of election not import a complete concept into every passage in which a term or even several associated terms occur” (Dale Patrick, “Election,” in Anchor Bible Dictionary, Vol. 2, ed. David Noel Freedman, 434-441 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 435). Similarly, Elliott writes, “the wide diversity of solutions produced by semantic analysis itself suggests that there do not exist enough “controls” to make this a fruitful procedure. This is so because terms like “righteous,” “elect,” “saints,” “pious,” “wicked,” “sinners,” and the like are such “semantically weak” terms (their social context has the potential for determining their referent entirely, overthrowing any “root sense”) that to start by analyzing these words is clearly to start from the wrong direction. The meanings of these terms and the theology of election they imply, in other words, can only be determined by the context in which they are found—that is, by other clues as to the theology and the significance of terms of reference used by each author and community” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 65). While the willingness to recognize diversity in the literature has grown, and sensitivity to contextual concerns has increased, this has at times discouraged those studies that are broader in focus. Topical studies, however, can still be of value as long as the appropriate controls and parameters are placed upon them.

62 As Elliott remarks, “there is no need to assume, simply because students of the New Testament have certain specific concerns in mind, that they cannot also read Judaism accurately” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 12).

63 Here Gathercole is again helpful. In his study, Gathercole offers a similar approach as it relates to Jewish and Pauline understandings of “salvation,” noting that it is not the word-group that can serve as the basis of the comparison, but rather the concept of “final vindication” which must be addressed in his study (Gathercole, Where is Boasting?:, 21-23).
this study as it relates to the Jewish literature. For the Pauline and New Testament literature, it
will be those texts which devote the most significant attention to the theme, or which are most
commonly used to address it within scholarship, that will be herein studied.

SOURCES

The sources examined in this study are both chronologically and theologically diverse. In
that the goal of the study is to examine Jewish beliefs during the Second Temple period (and
specifically the late Second Temple period) concerning “election,” it is necessary to examine the
literature of this period which gives a glimpse into the thought-world of first century Jews. The
sources considered in this essay are those which are primarily pre-70 CE in their composition, of
Palestinian origin, and Jewish in nature. Several sources which may date pre-70 CE, but could be
dated to the end of the first century CE, will also be included, though tentatively. Some sources
of Egyptian provenance will also be included in the study as well due to their apparent wide
range of circulation during the first century. As these sources are examined, chronological
considerations will also be given in order to trace possible developments throughout the period
as they lead up to the first century CE. Thus, older sources will be examined first and compared
with those written within the first century CE to see if there is either consistency or development
through the period. The ultimate goal is, again, to gain an understanding of Jewish perspectives64
of election leading up to the time in which the New Testament, and specifically Pauline,

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64 It is common to speak now of “Judaisms” rather than of Judaism, recognizing the variety that existed
within Jewish monotheistic beliefs during this time. As Charlesworth has stated, “the Jews formed non-doctrinal
dynamic responses to God and formatively important traditions. Early Judaism was not a philosophy, a theology, or
a doctrinal system; it rather reflected myriad faithful (and unfaithful) response to a Creator; to a dynamically active
God, who was confessed in one universally binding prayerful affirmation, the Shema, which was recited by religious
Jews at least twice daily on the week days” (James H. Charlesworth, The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the
materials were written. The bodies of literature which will be studied are the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and DSS. Some critical comments are necessary concerning each of these groups of writings in regards to how their constituent parts relate to the period and theme discussed herein.

Dead Sea Scrolls

The writings found at Qumran in the mid-twentieth century have provided new and important insights into the world of Second Temple Judaism as well as shed new light upon certain areas of New Testament studies (e.g., the Jewish concepts of Messiah, apocalypse, Torah, soteriology, etc.). These writings can be placed with fair certainty within the period under consideration in this study as most scholars date the bulk of the materials to the first century BCE, with some texts being dated at various points between the third century BCE and the first century CE.65 These texts are also generally considered to be of Palestinian origin, and thus fit well within the parameters of this study. Several questions about the nature of the community, however, must be considered as these texts are examined as a part of the ethos of late Second Temple Judaism. The primary question at hand is “how do the beliefs of the scrolls community relate to the larger picture of Second Temple Palestinian Judaism?” Several questions must be addressed in conjunction with this larger question, namely, “Who were the members of this community?” and “What connection did they have with Jews outside of their community?”

Concerning the first question of the identity of the DSS community, several suggestions have been proposed. Schiffman has argued that the community was associated with the

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Sadducees, though it seems more likely that there were some similarities in halakhic interpretations, though not necessarily to the extent to warrant an overt connection given other contradictions between their beliefs. Golb has argued that the scrolls at Qumran were stored there by many different Jews, not belonging necessarily to the same sect, in order to preserve the writings in the face of a threat of violence from Rome leading up to 70 CE. The dominant view among scholars today, however, is still that the DSS community is best understood as some sort of Essenic sect given the numerous similarities between what is known of this community through their own texts and what is known of the Essenes in, for example, Josephus.

In regards to their connection with “outsiders,” the documents of the sect seem to indicate that there was some definitive sense of separation from the Temple establishment. There was general disdain among the community for the priesthood in Jerusalem, which they viewed as corrupt. The location of the community also isolated them from the “sons of darkness” who were destined for God’s wrath. As Flusser has demonstrated, there was certainly interaction with and possible persecution from the Pharisees and Sadducees and the Essenes prior to their (partial?)

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68 As Vermes asserts, “if its intricacies are handled with sophistication, it is still the best hypothesis today…” Indeed, it accounts best for such striking peculiarities as common ownership of property and the lack of reference to women in the Community Rule; the probable co-existence of celibate and married sectaries… and the remarkable coincidence between the geographical setting of Qumran and Pliny the Elder’s description of an Essene establishment near the Dead Sea between Jericho and Engendi” (Vermes, *An Introduction to the Complete Dead Sea Scrolls*, 12). For their relevance to this study, Elliott helpfully puts the debate into perspective in summarizing, “Even if the scrolls were penned or edited by more than one specific group, they nonetheless preserve a more or less common point of view” (Elliott, *The Survivors of Israel*, 21).


withdrawal to the desert, as is evidenced in several of the Pesher scrolls found at Qumran. Some of the “rules” of the community, however, indicate that there was, albeit possibly limited, contact with outsiders, which one may imagine must be necessary for a remote desert community. According to Martinez, certain rules concerning money and property were in place “to eliminate the negative affects (sic) of wealth, both in the community’s contact with outsiders, as well as with fellow members.” Tso offers a similar suggesting in noting, “[T]he Qumran community saw Gentiles as well as Jewish outsiders not only as morally defiling, but also ritually defiling, which prompted severe restrictions on contacts with all outsiders.” Though the contact was limited and restrained, there was likely contact with outsiders nonetheless. According to Josephus, the Essenes still interacted at the Jerusalem Temple, though they refused to sacrifice there (Ant. 18.1.5). Josephus also demonstrated some knowledge, though limited, of the beliefs of the sect, such as their proneness to determinism (Ant. 13.5.9), their reclusive lifestyle, and their strict rules concerning money and property (Ant. 18.1.5). As Schofield summarizes, “Josephus never states directly either that Essenes interacted closely with or avoided Jewish society at large. However, he does suggest that the members of the sect routinely came into contact with outsiders.”

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71 Ibid., 224-235.
73 Marcus K. M. Tso, Ethics in the Qumran Community (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 117. Harrington likewise affirm, “Labelling outsiders ritually as well as morally impure helped to preserve the group’s identity as a community set apart to maintain holiness in Israel” (Hannah K. Harrington, The Purity Texts (New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 112). Baumgarten also sees it likely that there was some inevitable contact with outsiders among members of the community (Joseph M. Baumgarten, Studies in Qumran Law (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 73) 
74 Alison Schofield, From Qumran to the Yahad: A New Paradigm of Textual Development for The Community Rule (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 204. Flusser suggests that the Qumran community likely, at least at points in their history, intended to eventually reform Jewish life and persuade the people to stop following the errant teachings of the Pharisees. As he states, “For it was ever thus in separatist movements: one tendency seeks to break with the majority, eventually transforming the religious movement into a sectarian group, alongside a second
Concerning the DSS texts which will contribute to the theme of this study, several documents of note have received the most attention in the exploration of this theme. The *Rule of the Community* (1 QS; 4Q255-264; 4Q502; 4 QS<sup>d/e</sup>; 5Q11, 13) is likely a first or second century BCE text which outlines the purpose and guidelines of the sect and acts as a sort of legal code for the community. The *Damascus Document* (CD) is another early text, likely dating to the first century BCE, which provides some details (though somewhat obscure) of the origin of the community as well as additional laws and guidelines for community membership. The *Thanksgiving Hymn* (1 QH, 1Q35, 4Q427-432) is another important Qumran document which contributes to an understanding of the DSS community’s conception of election. Its date is likely slightly later than the previous documents discussed (c. 50 BCE – 70 CE), though still within the period under consideration.

Other documents provide less explicit, though nonetheless important, insights into the beliefs of the scroll’s community concerning this theme. The *Messianic Rule* (1QSa/1Q28a, c. first century BCE), or what is sometimes known as the *Rule of the Congregation*, is another document outlining the structure and “rules” of the community. The fragmentary document of *Liturgical Prayers* (1QLitPr, 1Q34, 4Q508, 509, c. first century CE), *Commentary on Nahum* (4QPNah, 4Q169, c. first century BCE), *Commentary on Habakkuk* (1QPHab, c. first century BCE), *Commentary on Genesis* (4Q252, c. late first century BCE or early first century CE), and *War Scroll* (1 QM, 4Q491-496, c. first or second century BCE) also will contribute to the study at hand.

tendency to convince the majority that this new movement represents the only true interpretation of the religion as a whole” (Flusser, *Judaism of the Second Temple Period*, 244).
The writings of the Apocrypha can generally be dated with fair confidence to the late Second Temple period, prior to the composition of the New Testament, and primarily of Palestinian provenance. Those whose contents bear on the questions addressed in this study are Tobit (c. 200 BCE), the Wisdom of Ben-Sira (c. 175 BCE), Baruch (c. 150 BCE), 1 and 2 Maccabees (both c. 125 BCE), and Wisdom of Solomon (near the end of the first century BCE or the beginning of the first century CE). In general terms, Ben-Sira and Wisdom of Solomon have received the most attention in terms of scholarly discussions of their perspectives in relation to the theme of election. Though some books were more influential in Second Temple Judaism than others (Ben-Sira, for example, is frequently afforded fairly prominent status), this study will examine these texts in chronological sequence again seeking to identify areas of commonality and disagreement across time within the realm of Jewish literature during this period.

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75 This text is sometimes referred to by the titles Sirach, Ecclesiasticus, the Wisdom of Sirach, or the Wisdom of Ben-Sira.

76 The Wisdom of Solomon is a text of Egyptian provenance which was heavily influenced by Greek literature and philosophy. This text has been included in this study because it appears to have been widely circulated across the Roman Empire by the end of the first century and it may have also had some influence upon some New Testament passages (see Lester Grabbe, *Wisdom of Solomon* (New York: T & T Clark, 1997), 28-29).

77 Davies, for example, gave much attention in his text to 1 and 2 Maccabees, Ben-Sira, Wisdom of Solomon, Baruch, and 4 Ezra. Elliott intentionally excluded the Apocryphal writings, with the exception of 4 Ezra. Sanders is concerned primarily with Ben-Sira and 4 Ezra. VanLandingham discussed 2 Maccabees and 4 Ezra. Bonsirven included 1 and 2 Maccabees, Ben-Sira, Wisdom of Solomon, and 4 Ezra. Though Moore interacted with 1 and 2 Maccabees, Ben-Sira, Wisdom of Solomon, 4 Ezra, and Baruch, he did not give them significant weight in their ability to describe first century Judaism. Gathercole included Ben-Sira, Tobit, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, and 4 Ezra in his study.
“Pseudepigraphical” Texts

Like the Apocryphal writings, the Pseudepigraphical materials do not belong to a single period or provenance. Their contents must thus be treated with care as it concerns the significance of an individual writing in relation to the “whole” of Judaism at the time. Within the Pseudepigraphical “Old Testament” writings, a number of texts can be identified as being written within the late Second Temple period. The texts which contribute to this study and fall within this period are Jubilees (c. 150 BCE), Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (c. 150 BCE), the additional Psalms of David (151A, 152, 153, and 155 (5ApocSyPs 3), c. first century BCE or earlier), the Psalms of Solomon (c. 100 BCE), the Sibylline Oracles (near the end of the first century BCE or the beginning of the first century CE), Biblical Antiquities (Pseudo-Philo) (early first century CE), the Testament of Moses (early first century CE), and 1 Enoch.

78 The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs is a text of Jewish origin likely dating to the Maccabean period. The textual history of this testament is complex, with at least two recensions of the text available, having been translated into Armenian, Slavonic, late Hebrew, and Aramaic, though the text itself is likely of Greek origin (See H. C. Kee, “Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,” in The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Vol. 1, ed. James H. Charlesworth, 775-828 (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1983), 775-77). The text contains later Christian interpolations though it is clearly of an original Jewish origin which pre-dates the composition of the New Testament. As Elliott has summarized, “the continuity in subject matter and uniformity of structure within and throughout the present Testaments suggests a basic unity of composition… [with a preferred] Hasmonean date” (Elliott, The Survivors of Israel, 25).

79 The collection known as the Sibylline Oracles has a wide range of compositional dates assigned to its various books, ranging somewhere from the second century BCE to the seventh century CE (John J. Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” in The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Vol. 1, ed. James H. Charlesworth, 317- 472 (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1983), 317. The later books in the collection are primarily Christian in nature and post-date the period under examination in this study). Of the fourteen books and fragments included in the collection, four can be dated to the period under examination (i.e., Books 3 (c. 163-45 BCE), 4 (c. 80 CE), and 5 (c. 80 CE)) (Book 11 was likely composed near the turn of the era (see Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 430-32), but its contents are not relevant to the focus of this study). Books 1 and 2, though likely of early origin, contain later Christian interpolations. The Jewish phases of Books 1 and 2 can be placed near the end of the 1st century BCE or the beginning of the 1st century CE (Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 331).


New Testament Texts

The texts which have been selected for this study in the New Testament corpus are those which contain the most explicit “election language.” By this, it is meant that those texts which most directly present the New Testament teachings on election in terms of imagery or language will be explored. The focus will be upon several key Pauline passages which usually are at the center of the discussion of the theme in the NT. These are, namely, 2 Thessalonians 2, Romans 8-11, and Ephesians 1-2. 83

Exegetical Approach

The approach to the texts in question will consider social, historical, and literary elements in an attempt to bring together an appropriate theological description. By social analysis, it is meant that the study will attempt to attend to the social factors which may have influenced the

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82 The book known as *1 Enoch*, like many of this period, has a complex compositional history. The majority of the text is consensus dated to before 160 BCE (John J. Collins, “Enoch, Ethiopic Apocalypse of (1 Enoch),” in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow, 585 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010), 585). The book is frequently seen as being composed of five originally separate or independent works that were edited together (These are the Book of the Watchers (ch. 1-36, third century BCE), the Book of Similitudes (ch. 37-71, likely near the turn of the century, though perhaps as late as c. 100 CE), the Book of Luminaries (ch. 72-82, third century BCE), the Book of Dreams (ch. 83-90, second century BCE), and the Epistle of Enoch (ch. 91-108, primarily dating to the second century BCE, though portions may come from the late first century CE). With exception of the Book of Similitudes (ch. 37-71), the book can be dated with certainty to being composed prior to the beginning of the first century CE. The Book of Similitudes likely dates to around the turn of the century (See George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 255), though some have suggested a post-70 CE/pre-100 CE date (E.g., Michael A. Knibb, “Enoch, Similitudes of (1 Enoch 37-71),” in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow, 585-587 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010), 587. Knibb suggests that “a good case” can be made for a date around the turn of the century, though he has argued that the Book of Similitudes actually dates after the fall of Jerusalem near the end of the first century CE). Even at this possible later dating, this portion of the book of Enoch is still valuable for this study though its value would obviously need to be considered carefully if it postdates the New Testament writings under consideration by several decades.

83 I accept the general chronology usually posited concerning these texts in which 2 Thessalonians is seen as the earliest of the three, followed by Romans, and lastly by Ephesians.
development of a particular theological expression. The study will not seek, as do many which focus on social factors, to uphold or apply a particular “model” of sociological theory in relation to the texts and movements studied herein, but rather to operate with an awareness of the underlying social factors that are at work in the various texts under examination. This social awareness is, and necessarily so, dependent upon the historically oriented approach of the study. Though there is some uncertainty concerning the exact dating and provenance of several of the texts used in this study, as well as uncertainty concerning what “sect” or “movement” of Judaism the texts may have arisen from, the historical situated-ness of these texts must influence how they are read and interpreted. The setting from which the text arose, as best as it can be determined from the text itself, must be considered in its interpretation.

In addition to these socio-historical concerns, the nature of these texts as texts must be taken into consideration. This involves, obviously, not only attention to genre, style, and literary devices, but also rhetorical intent. In considering these elements, Elliott’s suggestions are again helpful. As already noted above, the presence of a socioliterary function, or the intended perlocutionary force, of the text must be considered. Here, the concerns of both author and reader must come into play. The basic question is, “What did the author seek to accomplish in composing this text in this way?” To some extent, then, this study will seek to understand the

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84 As Elliott has stated, “it is nevertheless important to acknowledge that the influences of social factors in the Second Temple period have been more or less proven to possess real (only some would say predominating) significance for the formation and explication of Jewish theology” (Elliott, The Survivors of Israel, 7). Elliott employs sociological insights in order to define what he recognizes as a particular “movement” within Second Temple Judaism which he undertakes to describe in his text.


86 As Horrell has recognized, “Those who advocate a model-based approach insist that their use of models is heuristic and not prescriptive, and that only if the data fit the model will its use be justified (Esler 1994, 12-13; 1995a, 4). But any particular model shapes the way in which evidence is selected and interpreted” (David G. Horrell, “Social-Scientific Interpretation of the New Testament: Retrospect and Prospect,” in Social-Scientific Approaches to New Testament Interpretation, ed. David G. Horrell, 3-28 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), 19-20).
“thought world” of late Second Temple Judaism concerning the issue of election by examining those texts which are historically and conceptually relevant to the topic. Though this, obviously, does not create a complete picture of this thought world, it does seek to deal with all of the available evidence that comes to bear on the issue. This develops, then, the parameters for understanding the “implied reader” of the text, or the “ideal reader” who would have had at least potential access to the texts and ideas available in the literature of the period. It is thus necessary to construct this thought world in order to consider what a text could have meant within that thought world and exclude what it could not have meant to those who may have read it in the late Second Temple setting.

The Authenticity of Ephesians

The authenticity of the letter to the Ephesians as being attributable to the hand (or at least “mind”) of Paul the apostle has been questioned for quite some time in scholarly circles. Several aspects of the letter have caused its authenticity to be questioned. The disputed reading of Eph. 1:1 (and thus disputed recipients), along with questions about theological consistency/development, linguistic dissimilarity, and the relationship of the letter with

87 As Powell describes, “To read in this way, it is necessary to know everything that the text assumes the reader knows and to “forget” everything that the text does not assume the reader knows. The critic should ask the questions that the text assumes its reader will ask but should not be distracted by questions that the implied reader would not ask. The implied reader, furthermore, is not necessarily to be thought of as a first-time reader. In some instances the narrative texts apparently assumes the reader will come to understand only after multiple readings” (Mark Allan Powell, What is Narrative Criticism? (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1990), 20).


89 As Best writes, “any decision in relation to Eph. 1.1 interrelates with decisions which have to be made about the authorship of the letter and about its purpose, nature and content” (Ernest Best, Essays on Ephesians (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 1).
Colossians (which is also disputed), generally constitute the discussion about the authorship of the text. As Best argues, since the letter seems to assume that Paul (if the author) had not visited the church which received this letter, it seems that, if the letter be authentically Pauline, another church may have been the recipient. For this reason, some have suggested that the letter now known as Ephesians is actually the letter to the Laodiceans mentioned in Col. 4:16. More commonly, however, it is suggested that the letter was written as a circular letter with a region as the intended recipients rather than a specific community. While the objections to Pauline authorship are numerous, there are plausible explanations for the theological and linguistic issues present in the letter, as well as for the similarity with Colossians.

The authenticity of Ephesians as Pauline need not be, however, necessary for its conclusion in this study. As MacDonald has illustrated, many who dispute the authenticity of the letter attribute its authorship to a Pauline student or “school,” who expanded upon the

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90 Snodgrass argues that the issue basically can be reduced to “its relationship to Colossians and the description of Paul and the apostles and prophets in 2:20 and 3:1-13 (especially 3:4-5), which seem to exalt Paul’s own role and that of the apostles excessively” (Klyne Snodgrass, Ephesians, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 25).

91 Best, Essays on Ephesians, 2-5.


94 As Arnold states, “Since each of these objections to the authenticity of Ephesians can be met with a reasonable explanation, the scales are tipped in favor of the letter being precisely what it claims to be—a letter of Paul,” especially when considering its reception in the early church and its inclusion of autobiographical details which would have been strange for a pseudonymous author (Arnold, “Ephesians, Letter to the,” 241-42). Hoehner adds, “The Pauline authorship of Ephesians not only has the earliest attestation of any book of the NT but this attestation continued until the last two centuries. The early attestation is highly significant. The early church was not only closer to the situation but also they were very astute in their judgment of genuine and fraudulent compositions. This overwhelming support for the Pauline authorship of Ephesians should not be easily dismissed” (Harold W. Hoehner, Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 60).

95 Neither is it necessary to determine the original recipients of the letter since it is commonly agreed that the original recipient(s) were of an almost exclusively Gentile background. This assumption will be an important aspect of this study without needing to accept a particular view of the original recipients of the text.
apostles earlier writings in creating this treatise. If the text can be judged as a part of the Pauline tradition and, at least to some extent, reflective of Paul’s own thought, its value for this study can be upheld. As such, in examining the relevant passages from Ephesians as it relates to “election,” the approach of this essay will be to understand how the theme is treated in Ephesians in order to examine if its treatment therein is consistent with other Pauline materials (e.g., Romans and 2 Thessalonians). Thus, though this study will assume the authenticity of the letter, the assumption need not prohibit its inclusion for those who may disagree with that position if its contents are shown to be in keeping with Pauline thought.

OUTLINE OF STUDY

This first chapter has outlined the purpose of the study, current state of scholarly literature, method and approach, and critical comments concerning sources. Chapter 2 will undertake an investigation of the pre-100 BCE Second Temple sources described above through the implementation of the proposed method and chapters 3 and 4 will discuss those sources which fall between 100 BCE and 70 CE. Chapter 5 will then discuss the Pauline texts under consideration based upon the conclusions reached in Chapters 2-4 concerning Second Temple Jewish beliefs. Chapter 6 will address objections which have previously been raised to the approach developed in Chapter 5, will offer a summary of the study along with conclusions derived from it, and will suggest further avenues for additional research which this study may prompt.

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ELECTION IN SECOND TEMPLE JEWISH TEXTS: 
PRE-100 BCE WRITINGS

In adopting a chronological approach to this study, this chapter begins with the earliest post-biblical Jewish literature which addresses this theme and traces its development through the end of the first century BCE. The literature to be studied from this period is diverse, and includes variously defined genres, such as folk stories, wisdom texts, re-written biblical stories, expansions upon biblical stories, poetry, and historical/theological narratives. As much as possible the central questions of this study will seek to interact with these materials on their own terms, noting the differences and unique elements and emphases in each book while also recognizing areas of commonality when possible. Since each text presents unique opportunities and challenges, the texts will be addressed individually. In spite of these divergent elements, however, common themes concerning election are the character of the individual, the corporate focus of election, and the conditional nature of election, though the conditions specified vary.

Tobit (c. 200 BCE)

The book of Tobit tells the multi-faceted and colorful tale of a suffering righteous man whose plight is resolved through the exploits of his son Tobias, and some angelic intervention.

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1 It is worth noting here again that there are genuine disagreements concerning the dating of some of these texts and this study has attempted to adopt the dating schemes employed by a majority of scholars as an analysis of these issues is outside of the scope of this study except when absolutely necessary.

2 Embry has illustrated the importance of understanding a text as a thematic and conceptual whole without seeking to only lift proof-texts or project or retroject a theological conclusion upon it (see Brad Embry, “The Psalms of Solomon and the New Testament: Intertextuality and the Need for a Re-Evaluation,” Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha 13:2 (2002): 99-136).
from Raphael. The purpose of the book seems to have been, in part, to encourage faithfulness and piety to Diaspora Jews, especially with the emphasis on almsgiving and pursuing righteousness in difficult circumstances. The book is replete with biblical imagery, though its explicit attention to the theme of election is relatively minor.

The only explicit mention of “election language” is in Tob 8:15, where Raguel, Tobias’ father-in-law, exhorts the saints, angels, and “chosen ones” to praise God forever. The title here is connected only functionally to praising God and is seemingly focused on the whole of the people of God. In chapters 13-14, the prayers and proclamations of Tobit are recorded in which he addresses the current plight of the people of “Israel.” Tobit foresees the restoration of those Jews who will return to God in faithful obedience, as well as the conversion of many nations (Tob 13:6-11). He also foresees the coming fulfillment of the words of the prophets in which the Jewish people will be restored in their land, the temple will be rebuilt, and Jerusalem will be restored (Tob 14:5). The nations too will fear God and put away their idols (Tob 13:11-13; 14:6-7) with all who love God “in truth and justice” (14:7). This restoration, however, is not universal,

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3 Moore suggests that the characters in Tobit are representatives of the people of Israel. As Moore describes, “There is also a heilsgeschichtlich (“salvation history”) colorization to the book. For as God has looked out for these individuals, so, the author argues, God will respond to the present suffering of his dispersed people (Tobit 13-14)” (Carey A. Moore, Tobit: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 32).

4 As Macatangay writes, “all that Tobit can do is maintain a sense of what defines him as a member of God’s elect and foster cohesion and a sense of belonging among his fellow dispersed” (Francis M. Macatangay, The Wisdom Instructions in the Book of Tobit (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co., 2011), 283).

5 Or, as Griffin stated, “The Book of Tobit is written for those under Hellenistic domination in Palestine and the Diaspora, the same principles advocated by the deuteronomistic historian may be applied to the situation of the author’s own time: remain faithful to the Lord and to the Law” (Patrick J. Griffin, The Theology and Function of Prayer in the Book of Tobit (Ph.D. diss., Catholic University of America, 1984), 358-59).

6 Moore comments, “Tobit like some other texts in the Old Testament believes that Israel’s election is intimately connected with its role as being a blessing and witness to all nations” (Moore, Tobit, 288).

but is inclusive only of the Israelites “who are spared and are truly loyal to God,” while the ungodly “will vanish from the whole earth.” Moore is correct when he states that, for Tobit, “God is not some heavenly chess master who skillfully (and willfully) moves the “pieces” (i.e., the characters in the story) apart from their own will. In God’s providence, a man’s cooperation with God… can bring the entire matter to a successful resolution.” There is an interplay throughout the book between God’s plan and man’s responsibility for righteous behavior, and the restoration and salvation of the remnant comes only after their act of repentance.

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8 Moore, *Tobit*, 288.

9 VanLandingham states, “The text is clear that Tobit’s and Sarah’s salvation depends on their righteousness” (Chris VanLandingham, *Judgment & Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006., 134). Tobit’s righteousness is quite prominent in the book, especially in the early chapters. It is difficult to speak, however, of salvation in an eschatological sense in the book. While the text states that almsgiving rescues one from sin (Tob 4:11), this is not connected with eschatological salvation. The climactic final chapters also do not support this view, but rather envision the perpetual peace to come to the Jews and the nations who “truly love God” while the unjust will “vanish from the earth.” “Salvation” in Tobit is primarily viewed as a rescue from mortal danger rather than rescue from eschatological judgment as VanLandingham argues. He is right, however, to point out the correlation between repentance and deliverance from exile. As he summarizes, “God’s mercy depends on the promise God made both to Abraham and to Israel that if Israel would repent God would forgive and have mercy… Despite threats to the contrary, God’s covenant with Abraham assures a remnant for Israel. It explains why God responds to the people’s repentance and forgives their corporate guilt, and ultimately why God restores the promised land to the people. The covenant, however, does not protect individuals from punishment in God’s judgment” (Ibid., 55).

10 Moore, *Tobit*, 32.

11 Davies notes, “More significant [than the personal or individual themes in the book], however, is the corporate aspect. It is as an Israelite, as a Jew that the heroes behave righteously and it is the survival and restoration of the Jewish people that ultimately matters. The problem of the individual righteous sufferer masks, as it does in Daniel, the fate of the chosen people. Ultimately their survival, that of their home and their cult, are the goals of individual piety, just as they are ultimately the parameters by which individuals are related to God and through which they become blessed” (Philip R. Davies, “Didactic Stories,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, Vol. 1, ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O’Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid, 99-134 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 113).
Wisdom of Ben-Sira (c. 175 BCE)

The book of Ben-Sira (also known as Sirach or Ecclesiasticus) is perhaps the most well-known of the post-biblical Jewish wisdom texts. The bulk of the contents of the book present the application of wisdom in social scenarios, primarily in the family, community, and marketplace. The unique contributions of the book to the wisdom genre are its personification of Wisdom, which it connects deeply to Torah,12 and its insertion of a “hymn” directed to the ancestors of Israel; the great men in Israel’s history.

As it relates to election, the book as a whole does not give prominent attention to the aspects of this theme being considered in this study, though they are present in the text, and especially so in the hymn which closes the book. Like other texts in the Wisdom tradition, Ben Sira’s focus is not “other worldly,” and there is scant evidence that he envisions any sort of afterlife in this text.13 Thus, his treatment of election must be set in such a context. The issue of election in Ben Sira is further complicated by his frequent oscillation between the general and the particular; at times speaking directly of Israel and at times of humanity in general. As is typical of the genre, Ben Sira emphasizes the correlation between behavior and consequences as

12 There is some disagreement, as Goering traces, as to which element controls the other: whether Torah is dominant over Wisdom, or Wisdom over Torah. Goering’s suggestion is that the two are correlated, that wisdom is a “general revelation” given by Yahweh to all humanity, while Torah is special revelation, given to the chosen people of Israel (Greg S. Goering, Wisdom’s Root Revealed: Ben Sira and the Election of Israel, JSJSup, 139 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 5-9). Goering thus asserts that “Ben Sira maintains a focus upon the universal concern of the wisdom tradition for the well-being of all humanity and also upon the particular traditions of Israel’s own national heritage contained within its ancient literature” (Ibid., 14).

a means by which to encourage ethical and obedient behavior. In the same vein, the author also assures that those who depart from the way of obedience to pursue wickedness due so of their own volition (Sir 15:11-20). He admonishes that those who turn away (ἀπέστην) cannot place the blame upon the Lord or accuse him of leading them astray (ἐπλάνησεν). Rather, when he created humankind, he “left him in the hand of his counsel” (ἀφῆκεν αὐτὸν ἐν χειρὶ διαβουλίου αὐτοῦ). It is the choice of the individual as to whether or not they will faithfully keep the Torah or reject it, and the consequence of the decision is framed in the classic Deuteronomistic equation of choosing life or death (Sir 15:15-17; cf. Deut 30:19). The implications here appear to be universal, since the Lord watches both “the ones who fear him” and “every human work” (Sir 15:19). Though Ben Sira’s idea of individual freedom and responsibility/retribution seems clear, it must be asked how this relates to the nation or the elect.

That Israel was chosen by the Lord is clear for Ben Sira. In chapter 17, a chapter which richly describes the various capacities with which man has been endowed (i.e., authority over

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14 Sir 2:7-11, for example, admonishes that those who are faithful to YHWH will be rewarded, can hope for joy and mercy, and will not be neglected in times of distress (see also Sir 11:26). Witherington thus recognizes “Ben Sira is very firm in asserting that the wicked and the righteous both get their just due (cf. Sir. 2:7-11; 7:1; 27:26-27). Sometimes he even affirms that retribution does not delay (Sir. 7:16). However, Ben Sira is well aware that just recompense is not always immediate and sometimes not apparent at all.” Witherington continues that for Ben Sira, the way in which one dies—whether peacefully or tortuously—constitutes the ultimate judgment concerning a person’s life (Ben Witherington III, Jesus the Sage: The Pilgrimage of Wisdom (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 87). Collins affirms that Ben Sira “is at least clear that individuals can make atonement, whether by sacrifices or by good works, and can appeal to the mercy of God (Cf. also 2:7-11; 5:5-7; 18:1-15; 21:1-3.)” (J. J. Collins, Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 91).

15 Of this section, Maston remarks, Ben Sira “argues strongly for the individual’s freedom to determine his or her own destiny through obedience to the Torah. Against the view that God dictates what humans will do (vv. 11-12), Ben Sira claims that after creating the human agent God “has given him into the hand of his inclination” (Jason Maston, Divine & Human Agency in Second Temple Judaism and Paul (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 28).

16 VanLandingham notes that “Sirach 15:14-20 is the best example of an exception to [the] interpretive trend” of understanding the charge in Deuteronomy to choose the way of life or death “as referring to eternal life and eternal death,” (VanLandingham, Judgment & Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul, 148) to which Ben Sira clearly does not refer.

17 There is some question as to whether the Hebrew text read “The eyes of God behold his works” or “His eyes are upon the ones who fear him.” The LXX supports the latter reading, though it may not be original. For a discussion, see Goering, Wisdom’s Root Revealed, 135ff.

39
creation, the image of God, the ability to know and reason, etc.), Ben Sira assures that the Lord appointed a leader over every nation,\(^\text{18}\) “but Israel is the Lord’s own portion” (Sir 17:17). As the passage continues, the focus is upon the knowledge of the Lord of all of “their” sins, though the referent is not specified. This could be humanity in general or Israel specifically. Given the references to “almsgiving” (Sir 17:22), and “repentance” and “return” (17:23), it may be Israel in view here, which would give credence to the possibility that Ben Sira portrayed only a portion of Israel (the remnant) would be faithful to YHWH. This chapter is, however, ultimately inconclusive in that regard.\(^\text{19}\)

One of Ben Sira’s most unique contributions to the theme of election in Jewish literature is the explicit connection made with Wisdom.\(^\text{20}\) In the beginning of this “hymn” to Wisdom, Ben Sira describes Wisdom’s primordial journey from the presence of the Most High through the heavens and the abyss and through every nation, looking for a place to abide. It is then in v. 8 that Wisdom is commanded by YHWH to dwell “in Jacob and in Israel receive your inheritance” (Sir 24:8). Wisdom rooted herself in “an honored people, in the portion of the Lord, his heritage” (Sir 24:12). This giving of Wisdom is later equated by Ben Sira as the giving of the Torah as an inheritance for Israel (Sir 24:23).\(^\text{21}\) Central, then, to Ben Sira’s understanding of Israel’s election

\(^{18}\) There is some question here as to whether or not Ben Sira is speaking of a heavenly leader (cf. Deut 4:18; 32:8; Dan 10:13-21; see, for example, Goering, *Wisdom’s Root Revealed*, 99) or an earthly king (see, for example, Michael E. Fuller, *The Restoration of Israel: Israel’s Re-Gathering and the Fate of the Nations in Early Jewish Literature and Luke-Acts* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), 41 n.104). What is clear is the emphasis upon YHWH’s special relationship with Israel.

\(^{19}\) Skehan and Di Lella seem to view the rest of the text as universal in scope, noting, “[b]ecause of human freedom, there is hope even for the sinner: he can repent” (Patrick W. Skehan and Alexander A. Di Lella, O.F.M., *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: A New Translation with Notes* (New York: DoubleDay, 1987), 83).

\(^{20}\) This is the focus of Goering’s work which addresses the different ways in which election and Wisdom interact in Ben Sira’s thought.

\(^{21}\) This Grindheim affirms in stating, “the giving of wisdom is to be identified with the giving of the Torah and the temple service. To be elect is thereby defined as to be given the Torah” (Sigurd Grindheim, *The Crux of Election: Paul’s Critique of the Jewish Confidence in the Election of Israel* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 35).
is their receipt of, and living in accordance with, Torah. As Goering explains, “The association of Wisdom with Israel results from YHWH’s election of Israel as the place where Wisdom dwells most fully on earth. And, as I have shown, within Israel, Wisdom resides specifically in the Jerusalem temple (24.10-11).” Israel’s chosenness is, for Ben Sira, fundamentally rooted in YHWH’s giving of Wisdom through Torah to them.

Though Ben Sira earlier, and quite radically, affirmed the free will of humanity to obey or disobey the Lord, in ch. 33 he creates a tension with that view. Here he affirms that the Lord has chosen to bless some and curse others “like clay in the hand of the potter to be molded as he pleases… to be given whatever he decides” (Sir 33:13). Thus Grindheim can suggest, “There is an unresolved tension between this emphasis on divine predestination and the clear teaching of the freedom of the human will in Sirach (15:11-20).” Goering and Di Lella, however, acknowledge that, though there is a seeming tension here, Ben Sira stops short of a deterministic view. Di Lella writes,

This text seems to say that God has decreed for each person either a blessed or a cursed destiny, independent of the person’s free choice. But Ben Sira stops far short of attributing human sin to God and of saying that divine predestination destroys human freedom to choose between good and evil. In fact, the most likely meaning of 33:12cd, “Others he curses and brings low, and expels them from their place,” is that God curses some people because they have chosen the path of wickedness; it is not that they are wicked because God has cursed them.

Di Lella thus sees a resolution here between the tension in that God’s blessing and cursing still, for Ben Sira, correspond to the choice of the individual of life (i.e., following Torah) or death.

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23 Collins affirms this connection in stating, Yhwh “exercise[s] the election of Israel through Wisdom” (Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 51).


(i.e., disobedience) (cf. Sir 15:15-20). Thus the text seems to indicate more about God’s judgment than about a pre-determined path that he has outlined for each individual and from which they have no opportunity to stray.

An important, yet controversial, passage which is related to Ben Sira’s framing of election is 36:1-22. Here Ben Sira discusses the relationship of YHWH to the nations. There is a tension in the text between what appears to be Ben Sira’s desire for the nations to come to know YHWH (Sir 36:1-7) and for him to judge and destroy them (36:8-12). Sanders sees here an affirmation of the nationalistic view of election in which “God will, on that day, save all the tribes of Jacob.” This appears to be in tension, however, with Sanders statement that Ben Sira’s view of the individual’s fate does not depend on whether or not the individual is elect… but on whether or not he is counted among the wicked or the righteous… The author’s view of the strict justice of reward and punishment in this life… prevents the question of the election from being

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26 Similarly, and contra von Rad, Goering does not understand election here to be representing “primordial determinism,” but rather suggests “Ben Sira derives the doctrine of election [not from history but] from observation of natural phenomena, specifically, from the relative function of the sun and moon in determining profane and sacred times. This does not, however, necessarily mean that YHWH made the decision to elect Israel from the beginning or from primordial times” (Goering, *Wisdom’s Root Revealed*, 64). It may, however, be connected with creation in Ben Sira, per the Wisdom poem of ch. 24 (Ibid., 65ff).

27 This can be seen even in the expression that humans are “to be given whatever he decides,” or, as the LXX reads, “to give to them according to his judgment” (ἀποδοῦναι αὐτοῖς κατὰ τὴν κρίσιν αὐτοῦ), which supports that this giving corresponds to the deeds of individuals. This interpretation is further supported by Sir 39:22-35 which describes the Lord’s use of nature to punish sinners and bless the godly.

28 The judgmental nature of the text has led some to suggest that it was not original to Ben Sira and was added later. Collins, for example, notes, “this prayer in chapter 36 is remote in spirit from the rest of the teaching of Sirach, and was most probably inserted into the book at the time of the Maccabean crisis. Sirach’s own view of history has no eschatological urgency” (Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 111). Though possibly not original, its presence in the text at the time of the late Second Temple period justifies its inclusion in this study since it falls within the historical period under consideration herein.

29 E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1977), 333. He continues that, in ch. 36, “he calls upon God to hasten the day when he will destroy the Gentile nations, gather again all the tribes of Jacob, and establish the Israelite theocracy throughout the earth. Thus it is clear that Ben Sirach had a firm view of the election of Israel and of the ultimate fulfillment of God’s covenant to establish the chosen people” (Ibid., 331).
sharply focused as regards the individual… Thus the question of a ‘true Israel’, of those who are really among the elect, does not arise.\(^{30}\)

This, no doubt, prompts the question as to how the fate of the wicked and righteous relates to the fate of the elect.\(^{31}\) It seems from the outset that the two views cannot stand together. Unless Ben Sira holds that all Israel will in fact be found as righteous (which does not appear possible, especially in light of ch. 44-51), it cannot be that all of Israel is a part of the elect. According to Maston, “When not overlaid [as Sanders does] with supposed rabbinical understandings of how one comes to be in a covenantal relationship with God (by grace), Ben Sira’s own perspective about how one enters into a covenantal relationship with God appears differently. He gives priority to the human act of obedience.”\(^{32}\) Though this appears closer to Ben Sira’s thought, this is an aspect not directly addressed in the text. Ben Sira asserts the election of Israel, and the special connection between Wisdom, Torah, and Israel’s election, but does not speak in explicit soteriological/eschatological terms.\(^{33}\) There is no explicit discussion of how one might enter the covenant, only of the fact that individuals are free to choose whether or not they obey YHWH, and thus whether or not they are to be counted among his people and receive blessings or curses. Does this mean one is to presuppose that all Israelites are in the “elect” until they choose to obey or disobey? This cannot be definitively answered from Ben Sira since the “soteriological sequence” is not precisely defined. What must be realized, as will be further shown below, is

\(^{30}\) Ibid., 333.

\(^{31}\) Sanders notes the inherently corporate or collective nature of Ben Sira’s view and states that the question of how the individual relates to election and soteriology cannot be answered from Ben Sira’s work (Ibid.).


\(^{33}\) It should be noted, however, as Di Lella states, that the “possibility of rewards or punishments in some sort of afterlife receives no mention at all in the original Hebrew text of Ben Sira. But the Greek translation does make definite allusions to retribution in the hereafter” (Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 86). For example, the Greek text of Sir 7:17 adds “fire” to the judgment received by the ungodly whereas the Hebrew text states only that their punishment will be “worms” (i.e., death).
Ben Sira’s apparent recognition of there being only a faithful remnant in Israel as well as his hope that the nations will know YHWH as Israel has known him.

As far as it relates to the nations, Israel, and YHWH, Goering has suggested that there is no real hope here for the conversion of non-Jews. As he states, “In light of Sir 17.17, then, it seems that Ben Sira’s eschatology does not involve the conversion of non-Jews to a Jewish piety. The evidence suggests that, in the sage’s view, the nations are not intended to worship YHWH the way Jews do. Rather, the goal of the dramatic rescue is that the nations recognize his supreme power, a fact that should be clear as to the nations after YHWH has defeated their rulers.”34 The text speaks, however, of the nations coming to know YHWH in the way that Israel has known him (καθάπερ καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐπέγνωμεν) as the only God (Sir 36:5). There also seems to be a more universal call present, and the hope of the destruction of those who oppress the people and do not recognize YHWH (Sir 36:12).35 It might be said then that while Ben Sira does not explicitly envision the entrance of non-Jews into a relationship with YHWH that results in their observance of Israel’s cultic rituals, he hopes for the destruction only of those who oppose YHWH, and the recognition among the nations of YHWH as the only God, whatever religious connotations that may entail.

The fullest discussion of election in Ben Sira (outside of, perhaps, ch. 24) is found in the hymn of Sir 44:1-50:29. The “genre” of this hymn has been debated. As Collins summarizes, some have offered parallels to this section of Ben Sira in Jewish and Hellenistic literature, such as a remembrance of heroes, exemplum, De Viris Illustribus, succession, and epic poem. Collins

34 Goering, Wisdom’s Root Revealed, 234.

35 It may be helpful here to think in terms of Kaminsky’s categories of the elect, anti-elect, and non-elect. Clearly the anti-elect will face YHWH’s judgment, but this does not mean that the non-elect are likewise without hope (See Joel S. Kaminsky, Yet I Loved Jacob: Reclaiming the Biblical Concept of Election (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007).
suggests that encomium “remains the most satisfactory genre label for the Praise of the Fathers,” which is a fair representation of the content of this hymn. The hymn opens with a summary of the legacy left by these “famous men” (Sir 44:1-15), and goes on to describe, to varying extents, the lives of Enoch (mentioned twice), Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Phinehas, Joshua, Caleb, the judges, Samuel, Nathan, David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha, Hezekiah, Isaiah, Josiah, Ezekiel, Job, the Twelve Prophets, Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Joseph, Shem, Seth, Enosh, Adam, and Simon son of Onias.

According to Mack, the hymn follows a certain pattern of description, as there are several repeating components. Mack recognizes that the individual’s office, election, relationship to covenant, character, work, historical situation, and rewards are recurring themes in the hymn.

For Mack, the office of these men determines the pattern to the extent that the “greatness of these heroes is directly related to the great significance of these offices.” While that may be true to an extent, what is consistently mentioned of each individual, even of those who held no formal office, with few exceptions, is their work or character. As he recounts Israel’s men of fame, Ben Sira consistently identifies their righteous behavior before recognizing God’s gracious response to or blessing of them. God’s choosing is mentioned explicitly only in the cases of

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38 Ibid., 19.

39 Only Isaac and Jacob are not mentioned in connection with any praise of their works or character for whom it is said only that God upheld his covenant and blessings to them and their children (Sir 44:22-23).

40 Enoch pleased the Lord, and then was taken up (44:16); Noah was righteous and then received a covenant (44:17-18); Abraham kept the law and then received the covenant (44:19-21); Isaac received the covenant for Abraham’s sake (44:22); Moses was merciful and highly favored and was then made God’s spokesman (45:1-5); Aaron was a holy man and received an everlasting covenant (45:6-22); Phineas had zeal and courage and was then given a covenant of peace (45:23-26). This pattern repeats throughout the hymn of the ancestors. The only exception when the character or work of the man is mentioned along with God’s benevolence toward him (whether through
Moses (Sir 45:4), Aaron (45:16), and David (47:2). Moses’ “election” is mentioned in connection with his faithfulness and meekness, while God’s choice is simply affirmed of Aaron and David with no emphasis on sequence or causation. The emphasis in this chapter on the deeds and piety of these characters thus makes it plausible to understand, as Grindheim has suggested, “divine election as based on the ethical and religious quality of the elect.”

Ben Sira also recognizes that, within Israel’s past history, the Lord preserved a remnant of Jacob and the family line of David even when the kingdom itself became depraved. This is first addressed when recounting the division of the kingdom under Solomon. In this context, it is asserted that the Lord will “never blot out the descendants of his chosen one, or destroy the family line of him who loved him. So he gave a remnant to Jacob, and to David a root from his own family (Sir 47:22), though the nation itself was exiled from the land for their ever-increasing sin (47:24-25). The remnant motif is again mentioned in connection with the exile in 48:15-16, where he asserts that because the people did not repent, “they were carried off as plunder” and “the people were left very few in number, but with a ruler from the house of David.” The section of the hymn recounting biblical history ends, however, with little attention spent to the return from exile other than a brief mention of Jeshua and Nehemiah (Sir 49:12-13).

The climax of the hymn is in Ben Sira’s praise of Simon, son of Onias, the high priest (Sir 50:1-29). Though David’s descendants are lauded in several places in the hymn, it seems

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41 The LXX reads, “ἐν πίστει καὶ πραΰτητι αὐτὸν ἡγίασεν, ἐξελέξατο αὐτὸν ἐκ πάσης σαρκός.” The question here is how to read the preposition ἐν and the participle ἐξελέξατο.”

42 Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 37.

43 The LXX uses a series of four emphatic negatives to assure that Israel, and specifically David’s line, will never be totally wiped out of existence: “ὁ δὲ κύριος οὐ μὴ καταλίπῃ τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ,” “καὶ οὐ μὴ διαφθείρῃ ἀπὸ τῶν λόγων αὐτοῦ,” “οὔδὲ μὴ ἔξαλείψῃ ἑκλεκτοῦ αὐτοῦ ἔκγονα,” and “καὶ σπέρμα τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντος αὐτόν οὐ μὴ ἔξάρῃ.”
that Ben Sira, as Goering states, “indicates that the high priest had assumed some of the functions previously performed by the king.”44 Garlington affirms this interpretation in suggestion that “[f]or Ben Sira Simon is the Messiah… the priest is depicted as possessing messianic traits; his priesthood is the guarantee of the continued existence and peace of Israel… he stands in the line of David and Hezekiah… [and] salvation is present” in him, though in a “this-worldly’ way.”45 Wisdom and election thus have culminated in Israel’s history, for Ben Sira, in the current peace enjoyed under Simon which he prays is sustained in the future of Israel (Sir 50:23).

It is important here to summarize how Ben Sira’s unique and varied contributions to the theme of election relate to this study. In doing so, one must also consider how this text would have been received and understood by late Second Temple Jews rather than just understanding Ben Sira’s probable intent. The Greek translation of the text shows that there may have been a tendency to interpret Ben Sira’s this-worldly attitude with an eschatological bend, such as in the addition of “fire” to the judgment of “worms” found in the Hebrew text of Sir 7:17. The text itself seems to view Simon as the apex of God’s movements in Israel, and hopes for sustained peace among the people. It also, however, foresees both the recognition of YHWH among the nations while also hoping for the destruction of those who oppress his people (Sir 36:1-22).46 This tension between the general and the particular is not, however, explicitly resolved. The

44 Goering, *Wisdom’s Root Revealed*, 123.


46 Concerning Ben Sira’s more negative appraisals of the nations, Goering notes, “many of the passages in which he expresses such a negative attitude allude to specific peoples in Israel’s history—the Canaanites, the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Edomites, the Philistines, and the Samaritans—for whom, according to the biblical tradition, Israel maintained an animosity. Moreover, some of these groups belong to Joel Kaminsky’s category of the anti-elect (see chapter 2), and thus these passages are not indicative of a generally negative attitude toward non-Israelites on Ben Sira’s part” (Goering, *Wisdom’s Root Revealed*, 193-94).
remnant motif is explicit in Sir 44-50, though Ben Sira is dealing primarily with Israel’s past rather than its future. One may, however, in reading these texts in light of Ben Sira’s emphasis upon the correspondence between deeds and judgment, as necessitating a conditional view of Israel’s election in which only the faithful remain among the people of God and do not receive a dishonorable death/punishment.\(^{47}\) This is also in keeping with Ben Sira’s explicit mention of man’s free will to choose life or death (i.e., obedience or disobedience) in Sir 15:15-17, as well as his acknowledgement of God’s judgment being consistent with man’s choice in 33:11-15. The general emphasis, however, on the nature of election is its close connection with the behavior of the elect rather than their soteriological status. Thus Garlington asserts, “More often than not, election throughout the ‘praise’ has to do with consecration for special service (cf. 45.16; 47.2).”\(^{48}\) What is clear, then, from Ben Sira is the correlation of Wisdom and election in the giving of the Torah, God’s special relationship with Israel, and an emphasis upon the ability of humanity to choose obedience or disobedience (life or death), for which God will reward or punish them accordingly, whether now or at death/in the afterlife.\(^{49}\) It thus is likely, or at least

\(^{47}\) Or, as Maston summarizes, “In Ben Sira’s view, each individual must reconfirm the covenant, and God’s goodness to previous generations is the result of their obedience and does not carry over to later generations” (Maston, Divine & Human Agency in Second Temple Judaism and Paul, 42-43). Grindheim seems to disagree, stating, “[f]or Ben Sira election encompasses all Israel (17:17) and there is no explicit mention of a possible limitation of the scope of this election… Even though the election of all Israel is presupposed, the question of whether or not this election guarantees the salvation of all or virtually all Israelites is not an issue of reflection” (Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 39). He acknowledges, however, the preservation of a remnant as indicating both judgment and salvation (cf. Sir 44:17, Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 150), and he, in turn, suggests, “[t]o speak of a remnant implies judgment on the majority of Israel, while the minority will be saved” (Ibid., 150). Thus though the theme may not be explicit, it seems logical to view Ben Sira’s perspective in this light given the tension that would result from viewing election both as conditional and national.

\(^{48}\) Garlington, The Obedience of Faith, 40. Goering similarly concludes concerning the relationship of election and piety that Israel’s election is rooted in the primordial existence of Wisdom, and as the elect, they are charged to enact the “ethical and ritual commandments of the Torah,” and thus “benefit the whole of humankind, indeed the whole world” by renewing and sustaining “the primeval order upon which the world is built.” In this way, “Israel’s chooseness is intended to achieve goals greater than the covenant community” (Goering, Wisdom’s Root Revealed, 185-86).

\(^{49}\) Again as may have been understood by late Second Temple Jews given the additions to the translation by Ben Sira’s grandson.
quite possible, that Ben Sira’s recognition of the remnant motif and emphasis upon human choice and faithfulness would favor being interpreted in light of a conditional view of election. This election is thus maintained by a faithful remnant, of which the primary description of the elect is concerning their faithfulness to keeping the Torah (piety) and living under the guidance of Wisdom rather than upon their soteriological or eschatological destiny.

Baruch (c. 150 BCE)

The book of Baruch is an example of Second Temple “rewritten Bible,” in which the author compiled and expanded upon existing biblical traditions. Though the setting of the book is near the time of the exile in the sixth century BCE, the book was likely written after Ben Sira, given the presence of allusions to Sir 24 and dependence upon Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. The book’s emphasis upon the importance of faithfulness to the Torah, repentance, and the future restoration of Israel in the land makes it a fitting contribution to the theology of Diaspora Judaism, all themes which would have resonated well with frustrated or oppressed Jews. The first section of the book (Bar 1:1-3:8) contains a narrative introduction and then a confession of Israel’s sins against God.

The special relationship between YHWH and Israel is affirmed in Bar 2:34-35, where the restoration of the land is promised. Here the author invokes Jer 32:38-40 and Ezek 36:28, stating, “I will make an everlasting covenant with them to be their God and they shall be my people; and


51 See also David A. deSilva, Introducing the Apocrypha: Message, Context, and Significance (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 205.
I will never again remove my people Israel from the land that I have given them.” Like Ben Sira before him, Baruch (likely influenced by him) also connects Wisdom and Torah with Israel’s election. Wisdom is “the book of the commandments of God,” and “all who hold her fast will live, and those who forsake her will die” (Bar 4:1-2). Here Israel’s elect status is portrayed as contingent upon her faithfulness to the terms of the covenant outlined in the Torah. Bar 4:12-35 envisions Israel’s restoration as coming through the destruction of those who have oppressed her, though the exile is also viewed as God’s punishment for their unfaithfulness and idolatry (4:5-16). The appeal for restoration is grounded in Bar 2:19 in God’s mercy alone, and not in any meritorious deeds of Israel’s ancestors. The book makes brief mention of the remnant motif in 2:13, where it is stated that the people are now “few in number, among the nations where you have scattered us.” Moore notes that this is curious given the widespread dispersion of the Jews, who were large in number, during the Diaspora. This text may, then, harken back to the notion of the number of faithful Jews being few rather than there being few Jews from an ethnic perspective.

The relationship between the nations and Israel finds an important expression in Baruch. According to the book, it was by YHWH’s hand that “Babylon” was brought against Israel to depose them (Bar 4:15-16), and Baruch even appeals for Israel to serve the king of Babylon

52 This Grindheim also affirms in noting, “The striking connection between election and wisdom comes to expression also in Baruch… Jacob being given wisdom from God is indicative of his election” (Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 40).

53 Hogan notes that the allusion in 4:1 to Israelites forsaking the law is consistent with the sections that follow which emphasize Israel’s failures, though in sharp contrast with the triumphant tone which ends the poem (Hogan, Theologies in Conflict in 4 Ezra, 85). This is also seen, for example, in 1:18-22, where Israel’s punishment is seen as being consistent with what YHWH proclaimed in Deut 28 in that the people would be blessed for faithfulness and cut off and cursed for disobedience and idolatry.

obediently that they may be restored and retain the land (2:20-26). Baruch also instructs his hearers to “pray for the life of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and for the life of his son Belshazzar, so that their days on earth may be like the days of heaven” (Bar 1:11). Though the book hopes for the destruction of the nations which have oppressed Israel, it also instructs its readers to live in civility under foreign domination and pray for the king.

As reflected throughout the letter (and especially in 2:19), though Israel’s faithfulness to the covenant was dependent upon their obedience, their disobedience was willful, and there were no meritorious grounds by which they could appeal for restoration. It was only by the mercy of YHWH that they may hope for salvation and restoration. Though their repentance and adherence to the Torah is required, they must appeal to God’s gracious response because they have broken

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55 Thus, Harrington summarizes, “No doubt is expressed about the sovereignty and justice of the God of Israel. Rather, it is assumed that God used the Babylonians as his instruments to punish Israel for its sinfulness.” However, “Israel for its part must repent of its sins and walk according to the Torah. Its repentance will issue in a return from exile to the temple city of Jerusalem” (Daniel J. Harrington, Invitation to the Apocrypha (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), 99-100).

56 This is widely noted as a historical inaccuracy since Belshazzar was the son of Nabonidus and not Nebuchadnezzar. It is at least a possibility that “son” here is used only to mean descendant. For a discussion of the issue as represented in the book of Daniel, see Thomas Gaston, Historical Issues in the Book of Daniel (Oxford: TaanathShiloh, 2009), 67-85.

57 As Moore notes, Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon did also “get good press from Jeremiah (cf. Jer 27:6-8; 29[36]:4-7… and Ezekiel (Ezek 29:17-20). Thus, in I Bar 1:11-12 the exiles urge the Jews in Jerusalem to practice what Jeremiah had originally urged the exiles to do” (Carey A. Moore, Daniel, Esther, and Jeremiah, 273).

58 Some have argued that the apparent tension between these themes is evidence that the book was composed in various stages and edited together by a final redactor. While this is certainly a possibility, the two need not be seen necessarily in tension as the Jewish people could have hope for future deliverance and restoration, along with the punishment of their enemies, as an act of God while living in the present in peaceful submission to the foreign occupants.

59 There is also an appeal to the preservation of God’s reputation as seen in his relationship with Israel. As deSilva describes, “God’s reputation in the world and Israel’s fortunes in the world are intimately connected, such that the birth of Israel as an independent people at the exodus was also the birth of God’s international reputation (2:11). This means, however, that the disgrace and loss of status that have befallen Israel pose a threat to God’s “name,” or reputation, in the world as well (2:14-15). Thus, God must not abandon Israel to perdition, if for no other reason than to preserve God’s own honor in the world” (David A. deSilva, Introducing the Apocrypha: Message, Context, and Significance (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 211).
the covenant through their un faithfulness. Baruch also seems to share Ben Sira’s this-worldly outlook on Israel’s salvation. This is seen especially in 2:17, where he states, “The dead who are in Hades, whose spirit has been taken from their bodies, will not ascribe glory or justice to the Lord.” Though this does not eliminate, for example, a hope for future eschatological resurrection, this hope is not expressed in the book, and Israel’s salvation is couched primarily in terms of a physical return to the land and the destruction of the nations who oppose them. Thus, their receipt of the covenant blessings may be seen as conditioned upon their response to the Torah of YHWH, and it is possible that Baruch envisions only a portion of Israel truly repenting, though this theme is implicit rather than explicit.

**Jubilees (c. 150 BCE)**

The book of Jubilees is a re-telling of the books of Genesis and portions of Exodus, told through an encounter between God and Moses. The book contains rearranged biblical materials as well as significant expansions in order to fulfill the purposes of the author. Though sharing some features with apocalyptic materials, the book is not preoccupied with the typical imagery and eschatological emphases usually found in the genre. The author’s purpose of writing may

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60 deSilva summarizes quite aptly, “The confession of the Judean remnant and the exiles allows the participant to remove from himself or herself the cause of displacement and thus remove the obstacle to the hoped-for future. By naming the cause of the disruptive circumstances “sin,” the circumstances are tamed, in effect, since individual Jews (and their community) have the resources to deal with “sin,” even if they do not have the resources to fight for political liberation for all their coreligionists” (Ibid., 206).

61 This is a point seemingly affirmed by Gathercole who suggests, for example, that “those who hold fast to Torah will have their life increased, presumably with longevity and prosperity” (Simon J. Gathercole, *Where is Boasting? Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul’s Response in Romans 1-5* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002), 41).

be similar to that of 1 Maccabees, calling upon pious Jews to avoid the adoption of Gentile customs which offend the traditions outlined within the Torah. The book is widely discussed as it relates to the issues of covenant and election, and thus a careful and thorough treatment is necessary in this study.

The overarching theme of the book can be seen in the introductory chapter in which God informs Moses that Israel will disobey his commandments, adopt the ways of the Gentiles, including the worship of their gods, reject the message of the prophets, be judged, and then repent and return to the Lord (Jub. 1:7-18). This restoration will be completed in that, after they repent, the Lord will circumcise their hearts and place a holy spirit within them so that they will forever remain faithful to him (Jub. 1:22-25). Some (e.g., Sanders) see this future hope for the restoration of the people as indicating that the author or final redactor of Jubilees believed that all of Israel would eventually be saved because of a national return and repentance. Thus, for example, Sanders states that in 1:29, where it is said that the elect of Israel will be renewed, “The phrase ‘elect of Israel’ (1.29) probably does not refer to a sect within Israel, the members of which are the only elect; it perhaps should be understood as ‘the elect, Israel’, for it is clear that all Israel is elect.” Sanders also notes of Jub. 1:28, “Jacob is the key figure in the covenant, and

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63 As VanderKam summarizes, “The author’s penchant for antedating Mosaic legislation so that the patriarchs become practitioners of the law can be seen as counteracting the Hellenizers’ assumption that there had been a golden age when the laws of Moses were not yet in effect and Jew and non-Jew lived in the same way and in unity… Jubilees is an all-out defense of what makes the people of Israel distinctive from the nations and a forceful assertion that they were never one with them” (James VanderKam, The Book of Jubilees (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 140).

64 Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 362. Elsewhere he notes, further “Salvation here appears to be both eternal (with God and his angels) and temporal (in possession of the land), but in any case, we see that whatever salvation is, it is Israel’s. Even though Israel transgresses, God does not forsake them (1.5; 1.18); he ultimately will cleanse them of all sin, and evil will be eradicated, so that Israel may dwell ‘with confidence in all the land’ (50.5)” (Ibid., 367).
descent from him puts one among the elect,” again emphasizing the national nature of election. Sanders tends to point back to this text as an overarching statement of the author’s belief of the nature of election, though, as will be seen below, he also recognizes that apostasy is a real threat for every Israelite.

In contrast, others emphasize the conditional nature of what is laid out in chapter one as being more consistent with the overall tone of the book apart from the statements of restoration found in Jub. 1:15-18 and 1:22-29. VanLandingham notes of this chapter, “In reality, then, God does forsake the people when they sin, but remembers them when they repent, even though they had previously sinned.” For VanLandingham then, God’s action is conditioned upon Israel’s response and not separate from it. Elliott also sees a more negative outlook as being present in this chapter and recognizes the presence of sectarianism in the book. Though the first chapter includes two detailed references to the future restoration of Israel, the rest of the book seems to

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65 Ibid., 363. Sanders further adds, “That God of his own will chose Israel is the predominant theme in Jubilees, but that author can also say that Abraham chose God and his dominion (12.19). As always in Judaism, the divine choice does not eliminate freedom of action” (Ibid.). Sanders’ emphasis in Jubilees on the grace of God over the action of man has been heavily criticized.

66 Klein has similarly couched the view of Jubilees in stating, “[T]he Book of Jubilees (1:29 and 2:20) gives the impression that though all Israel is elect, a Jew could forfeit a place in Israel by failing to keep God’s Law” (William W. Klein, The New Chosen People of God (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 55).

67 VanLandingham, Judgment and Justification, 75.

68 Elliott notes, “[T]he prayer as reported by the author of Jubilees appears to deliberately and conspicuously outline and emphasize the sin of Israel, much more than any sincere intercession would do. The constant and repeated reminder of Israel’s sin in the passage, in other words, hardly adds up to a good case for Israel’s forgiveness… The irony of this passage is also similar to what is seen in other discourses that tactfully argue the preeminence of Israel from one side of the mouth, all the while implying its unworthiness from the other side” (Mark Adam Elliott, Survivors of Israel: A Reconsideration of the Theology of Pre-Christian Judaism (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000), 180-82). Wisdom also supports this interpretation in noting that the language of the chapter was intended to serve as a polemic against the Jews the author had deemed to have violated the covenant (Jeffrey R. Wisdom, Blessing for the Nations and the Curse of the Law: Paul’s Citation of Genesis and Deuteronomy in Gal 3.8-10 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 98).

69 Thus he notes, “It would appear that the basic condition for the salvation of the nation is accepting the foundational beliefs of the righteous community” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 537).
call this hope into question in that the author is clear that some or many Israelites have failed to
be faithful to the covenant.

One very interesting feature of the book of Jubilees is that it grounds a number of the
commands in the Torah in the actions of the patriarchs, extending even back before Adam. In
2:17-33, the Sabbath is presented as a part of the created order and something observed by the
angels in heaven as well as by those on earth. Before humanity’s creation, YHWH had purposed
to set apart a people for himself that they might keep the Sabbath (Jub. 2:19). According to
Goering, Jub. 2.17ff reflects that YHWH set Israel apart “in the time of creation for the purpose of
keeping the Sabbath.”70 Segal suggests the significance of this passage is in the way it expands
upon the biblical account. As he notes:

In the Torah, the election of Israel as a special nation is understood as recompense for
their acceptance of God’s commandments: “Now then, if you will obey me faithfully and
keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all the peoples, for the
earth is all mine. And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation…” (Exod
19:5-6). But in the view of Jubilees, Israel was already awarded this special status from
the time of creation.71

The purpose that this seems to serve for the readers of the book is to present the Sabbath not only
as an ordinance in the Mosaic Law to which Israel is expected to adhere, but also as a
fundamental part of the created order and as a reflection of the order of heaven. Thus to
transgress the Sabbath ordinance is not only to break the Law and betray the covenant, but to fall
out of step with the workings of the heavenly hosts themselves.

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70 Goering, Wisdom’s Root Revealed, 242. As he continues, “According to this passage, the deity elected
(“sanctified”) Israel in the time of creation for the purpose of keeping the Sabbath. As James Kugel observes, the
celestial nature of the Sabbath explains “why there is no universal commandment to observe the Sabbath” (James
Only Israel is required to practice this particular form of Jewish piety” (Goering, Wisdom’s Root Revealed, 242).

71 Michael Segal, The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology, and Theology (Leiden: Brill,
This notion of the pre-Mosaic nature of the Torah occurs throughout the book. In 3:8-14, Adam and Even are portrayed as observing the purity laws related to childbirth, in 4:31-32, the law of retaliation is invoked in connection with Cain’s murder of Abel, Noah’s sacrifice after the flood is described in keeping with the Mosaic ordinances (Jub. 6:1-3; cf. Gen 8:20; Lev 18:26-28; Num 35:33ff; Exod 29:40; Lev 2:2-5) and the feast of Shebuot (weeks/firstfruits) was instituted after his sacrifice (Jub. 6:17-31), and the law of the tithe is delivered to Abram (13:26-27). Thus, as Elliott notes, “Moses’ covenant is understood in Jubilees as little more than a renewal of the ancient laws and covenants (everywhere Mosaic legislation is introduced by reference to former patriarchs).”

The Abraham narratives in Jubilees contribute significantly to the book’s purpose and theme. As Abraham is introduced in the book, it is said that at a young age he began to understand the evils of idolatry and that he separated from his father so that he would not be caught up in this transgression. Thus, Abraham “began to pray to the Creator of all so that he might save him from the straying of the sons of men, and so that his portion might not fall into straying after the pollution and scorn” (Jub. 12:17). The expansions in Jubilees clearly put the impetus of faithfulness upon Abraham rather than YHWH, showing that, even in his ignorance, he faithfully sought after God. Abraham even goes so far to burn the house of idols, an action which prompts Terah to then take his family and head toward Canaan (cf. Jub. 12:1-15). It is only after Abraham’s prayer of commitment, in which he confesses his allegiance to the Most

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72 Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 251. This was not, however, entirely imaginative on the part of the author. As Segal points out, mentioning specifically the giving of circumcision (Gen 17), prohibition of eating blood (Gen 9), and Noah’s following proper sacrificial guidelines (Gen 7-8), “The existence of laws in the pre-Sinaitic period is thus not the creation of Jubilees, but was present already in some of the sources of the Pentateuch” (Segal, The Book of Jubilees, 276). Jubilees expands upon the concept already found in the OT in order to reinforce the interests important to the author/redactor.
High God and prays for deliverance from evil spirits, that he is called by God and given the promises of blessing (Jub. 12:19-31).

Following the recounting of the giving of the covenant to Abraham, the affirmation of a soon to come descendant (Isaac), and the importance of the sign of the covenant (circumcision) (Jub. 15:1-24), Jubilees offers expanded details concerning the law of circumcision (15:25-34). Here it is affirmed that anyone who is not circumcised on the eighth day “is not from the sons of the covenant which the LORD made for Abraham since (he is) from the children of destruction… (he is) destined to be destroyed and annihilated from the earth and to be uprooted from the earth because he has broken the covenant” (Jub. 15:26). This absolute language concerning a pre-requisite for covenant membership is apparently intended as a polemic against “Ishmael and his sons and his brothers and Esau” (Jub. 15:30) who likely stand for both the Gentiles and the compromising Jews.73

Much conversation has taken place concerning this particular section of Jubilees as it relates to the exact relationship between election and covenant obedience. It is generally agreed that disobedience of certain commands in Jubilees, such as circumcision here, at times results in the expulsion of the guilty party from the covenant community and benefits.74 Disagreement persists, however, concerning the basis of the nature of election. Sanders contends that Jubilees evidences that election is availed to those of Abraham’s seed on the basis of God’s grace and not

73 Elliott supports this interpretation in noting, “Given the author’s highly pessimistic view of contemporary trends in Israel, it would appear that he was resigned to the severe judgment that had come, and was apparently still to come, for a significant portion of his compatriots. As in the Enochian literature, therefore, the idea of Israel’s judgment is not treated as a minor concern in Jubilees. Israel has broken the covenant (cf. also 15:33-34), and the entire nation is in danger of judgment for this.” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 93)

74 Thus, as VanderKam notes, “Naturally, when members of the chosen line sinned, punishment awaited them, but that did not mean the end of their membership in the covenantal community where forgiveness was possible. However, if a member of the elect violated certain laws, then that person was to be removed from the relationship. Examples are omitting circumcision and marrying a gentile (15.34; 30.7-10, 15-16, 21-22)” (VanderKam, The Book of Jubilees, 122).
works. Thus, for Sanders, disobedience to the covenant means a forfeiting of one’s status in the
covenant community though God’s gracious election is the means by which they entered.\textsuperscript{75} VanLandingham disagrees and suggests that both entrance into and expulsion from the covenant are dependent on obedience/disobedience. Thus, he states, “I admit that because of the election of Abraham, some of his descendants are favored. Jews have the advantage over Gentiles since they are circumcised, have been taught the commandments, and are not led astray by malignant spirits (15:25-32). Nevertheless, all the blessings that God promises to bestow depend on obedience to the covenant.”\textsuperscript{76} VanLandingham here seems to represent better what the author of Jubilees had in mind. First, election in Jubilees is centered upon Jacob/Israel rather than Abraham, since the author castigates both Ishmael and Esau, who seem to represent for him Gentiles and uncircumcised (and thus unfaithful) Jews (cf. Jub. 15:28-30). The basis for Ishmael and Esau’s rejection is that God “knew them” (Jub. 15:30), which seems in the context to indicate that God knew of their unfaithfulness (i.e., lack of proper circumcision observance, marriage of foreign wives, etc.) and thus did not choose them as covenant members (cf. 16:26; 19:13-31; 20:14-20; 35:9-17).\textsuperscript{77} Second, it seems clear from this passage that entry into the covenant requires obedience (at least on the part of one’s parents) to the covenant stipulations.

\textsuperscript{75} Thus, as he states, “Rejection of any one of these commandments, like transgression of the commandment to circumcise, was regarded by the author as forsaking the covenant and thus forfeiting one’s status as a member of Israel and one destined for eternal salvation” (Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 368).


\textsuperscript{77} Thus, VanLandingham argues, “the phrase “for he knew them” suggests that God knew that Ishmael and Esau would be disobedient and so did not choose them” (VanLandingham, Judgment and Justification, 37). See also Jub. 24:1-13; 26:34-35; 27:8-9; 33:10-14, 18-20; 36:9-11; and 37:6-38:3. Here again Esau’s reckless and unrighteous character is portrayed as the basis for his rejection from the covenant community. Thus Elliott asserts, commenting on Jub. 25:28, “The implication here is accordingly clear: all who follow the spirit of Mastema—the opponents of the order prescribed in Jubilees—are disqualified from the “seed” of Abraham. Their “seed” will not be saved anymore (sic) than that of Esau, who forsook God—“both he and his sons”—apparently by seeking Gentile wives (35:14)” (Elliott, The Survivors of Israel, 321).
Covenant obedience begins at birth and disobedience to this first ordinance assigns one “to be destroyed and annihilated from the earth and to be uprooted from the earth because he has broken the covenant of the LORD our God” (Jub. 15:26). Thus, in Jubilees, covenant faithfulness and righteousness are emphasized over and above God’s free and gracious choice to save Israel. Salvation is not granted apart from God’s power or mercy, but also not apart from obedience to the covenant requirements.

This is further explicated in Jub. 16:15-19 in which the angels reveal to Abraham that all of his sons would be fathers of nations, but

from the sons of Isaac one would become a holy seed and he would not be counted among the nations because he would become the portion of the Most High and all his seed would fall (by lot) into that which God will rule so that he might become a people (belonging) to the LORD, a (special) possession from all people, and so that he might become a kingdom of priests and a holy people.

This clearly shows that Jubilees sees Jacob, not Abraham alone, as the chosen heir of the promises, and those outside of his line, those who failed to fulfill the covenant obligations, are doomed as outsiders. This is again displayed in Jub. 19:13-31, where Esau is depicted as an unruly and unrighteous man from his earliest days, a trait which Abraham perceives and communicates to Sarah in order to ensure that Jacob would inherit the promise and blessings. Here, again, it seems that membership in the covenant community is more connected to obedience to the commandments and righteous character than to unconditional election or progeny alone. This is echoed by Abasciano, who notes, “The texts we have surveyed from Jubilees so far make it clear that Jacob was chosen as the covenant heir because of his goodness and that Esau was rejected because of his wickedness… It is apparently the Lord’s knowledge of

78 Or, as Segal describes, “Verse 26 describes the dualism in earthly terms: every person belongs to one of the two groups, either those who are part of the covenant with the Lord and who therefore benefit from his protection, or those who are destined for destruction because they do not” (Segal, The Book of Jubilees, 237).
Esau’s character as wicked that served as the basis of his covenantal rejection of him.” 79 While clearly true of Esau, Segal notes also of Ishmael, “[T]he story in Jub. 15 seeks to remove the possibility that Ishmael was circumcised immediately, and as a result he is not considered a member of the covenant.” 80

This is in contrast to Sanders’ position, which largely depends upon his reading the whole book through the lens of Jub. 1:17ff, a section Sanders reads as ensuring the future salvation of national Israel. In spite of this, Sanders recognizes that Jubilees indicates that some Israelites will “be damned.” As such, he asserts, “Physical descent is the basis of the election, and the election is the basis of salvation, but physical descent from Jacob is not the sole condition of salvation.” 81

Sanders does not here include that Jacob’s selection over Esau was based on Esau’s reckless and unrighteous reputation or that the author recognizes circumcision as necessary for covenant entrance as is explicit in Jub. 15. Sanders is correct to note that the position of Jubilees does not constitute “works righteousness,” 82 as the author does not depict salvation as something Jews earn. However, defining it as “salvation depends on the grace of God” 83 fails to recognize the author’s emphasis on the necessity of covenant faithfulness (e.g., circumcision or refusing to marry Gentiles, etc.), by both to initially accepting the covenant and continuing in it. This does not mean that there is not forgiveness for those who repent, or that salvation is somehow achieved independent of God, but it is not the same as to say that salvation is solely through God’s gracious election except when the covenant is forfeited.

80 Segal, The Book of Jubilees, 243.
81 Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 368.
82 Ibid., 383.
83 Ibid.
The election of Jacob is unique in that his election is not described in terms of his own personal standing before God, but rather because he stands as a representative of the people and his chosen seed “will be one which fills all of the earth” (Jub. 19:21). Thus, Abasciano writes, “Jacob’s is a corporate election, for he is chosen ‘as a people’ (19.18).” This “corporate” nature of Jacob’s election does not, however, guarantee that all who are of Jacob’s seed are guaranteed final vindication, something which the book clearly holds out only for those who are faithful. Those who are Jacob, however, are those who are alone positioned to fulfill the covenant since its promise and blessings are for him and his faithful descendants.

This point is further emphasized in Jub. 21:21-26 where, as Abraham gives his “final” advice to Isaac, he instructs him to be faithful to God so that he will experience his blessings and so “he will raise up from you a righteous plant in all the earth throughout all the generations of the earth; and my name and your name shall not cease from beneath heaven forever.” Here Abraham suggests again that covenant faithfulness is required to receive the covenant blessings, while forsaking the covenant by committing “a mortal sin” (Jub. 21:22) will result in his the wiping out of his “name and seed… from all the earth” (21:22). That not all of Isaac’s descendants will be faithful is expressed apparently by Abraham asking that God would “bless all of your seed and the remnant of your seed for eternal generations” (Jub. 22:25).

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84 Abasciano, Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.10-18, 23.

85 Thus, Grindheim states, “[I]t is unwarranted to see in the election of Jacob’s seed an election of the nation Israel as a whole. One of the main points of the entire narrative of the patriarchs is that election is not tied to physical descent but is instead contingent upon religious purity” (Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 48).

86 These mortal sins in Jubilees have been referenced above as including omitting circumcision, marrying foreign wives, worshipping idols, etc. Elliott notes that the appeal here to Abraham, Enoch and the heavenly tablets in Jub. 21:10-11 is likely to give greater weight or authority to certain laws which he deemed paramount for Jewish faithfulness. (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 255)

87 Sanders here curiously asserts, “Thus we see that all Israel will be saved. Excluded from Israel are those who transgress a commandment which is, in the author’s view, tantamount to denying the covenant (not circumcising, not keeping the Sabbath, intermarrying or permitting intermarriage with Gentiles, not keeping the
As Abraham’s farewell blessings continue, he calls Jacob to his side and prays:

(10) May the God of all bless you and strengthen you to do righteousness and his will before him. And may he elect you and your seed so that you become a people for him who always belong to his inheritance according to his will… (11) May the LORD give you righteous seed, and may he sanctify some of your sons in the midst of all the earth… (15) And may he renew his covenant with you, so that you might be a people for him, belonging to his inheritance forever, and he will be God for you and for your seed in truth and righteousness throughout all the days of the earth… (16) Separate yourself from the gentiles, and do not eat with them, and do not before deed like theirs… (20) do not take a wife from any of the seed of the daughters of Canaan” (Jub. 22:10-20).

Here again the conditional nature of the covenant is emphasized. In order for Jacob (i.e. faithful Israel) to enjoy the covenant blessings, he must avoid certain sins which would cause him to be cut off from the community. Jacob’s “election” here is again presented as corporate and conditioned in that the purpose of his election is connected with the seed which will come from him (Jub. 22:10), though not all of this seed will remain faithful since only some will be sanctified (22:11).88

In Jub. 23:8-32, the author again emphasizes the coming failures of many of Jacob’s descendants, which is likely a projection of what he sees as the unfaithfulness among the people of his own day.89 After the death of Abraham, the author notes that all generations which will

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88 This is contra Sanders who suggests, “We should not take the phrase ‘some of thy sons’ to indicate that only a portion of Jacob’s descendants is elect. This is negated by the prayer that ‘thy sons’ should become ‘a holy nation’ in the same passage and by the reference to ‘all his seed’ in 16.18” (Ibid., 363).

89 Elliott, for example, notes, “That this law was not for ancient times but bears directly on the writer’s contemporaries is evident when the author becomes more specific about the sin in mind, namely, when he reveals that the Israelites have “forgotten the ten commandments and covenant and festivals and months and Sabbaths and jubilees and all of the judgments” (v. 19), expressions that once again point to disputes over the calendar… The important point here is again that the predictions of apostasy concern Israel” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 89). Furthermore, Wardle adds, “As the high priest is the only one allowed to enter the holy of holies, Jubilees 23:21 focuses attention on one specific member of this evil generation – the high priest. Here the high priest is condemned not only for unrighteousness but also for immoral sexual behavior. The use of the plural in this passage, however,
follow Abraham’s will not have prolonged life (Jub. 23:8-13), and the “evil generation” to come will contaminate the land with their sins and forsake the covenant, leading to war and oppression (23:14-21). This disobedience will lead to “judgment and to captivity and pillage and destruction” (Jub. 23:22). Furthermore, there will be no reprieve from this oppression, for Israel will pray for salvation, “but there will be none who will be saved” (23:24).90 This state of affairs will continue until the people return to the ways of the covenant and righteously adhere to the law and commandments (Jub. 23:26),91 ushering in an era of restoration, peace, and blessing for Israel and judgment and annihilation for their enemies (23:27-31).

One final, and likewise heavily debated, aspect of Jubilees relevant to this study is the role of the heavenly tablets and books in the work.92 Some have seen the tablets as evidencing the presence of a deterministic outlook in Jubilees93 while others have viewed them as a heavenly record-keeping system or a ledger of good and evil works.94 Many references to the

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90 Sanders here simply notes, “Thus Israel when attacked by ‘the sinners of the Gentiles’ will pray to be saved from ‘the sinners, the Gentiles’ (23.23f.)” (Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 374). Sanders does not appear to recognize, however, that this prayer is not answered until Israel repents and returns to the Torah. It is not simply an appeal to God’s grace as his extension of mercy to Israel is conditioned upon their return to covenant-faithfulness.

91 See especially VanLandingham, Judgment and Justification, 79-80. As he summarizes, “Here, as elsewhere, obedience, not election, is the basis of salvation. Salvation and damnation do not simply divide Jew from Gentile, but righteous Jew from sinful Gentile” (Ibid., 80). See also Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 539.

92 The tablets are referenced in Jub. 3:10, 31; 4:32; 5:13; 6:17ff.; 15:25; 16:3ff.; 18:19; 19:9; 23:32; 24:33; 28:6; 30:9ff.; 31:32; 32:10ff.; 33:10; 49:8; 50:13. As Christiansen summarizes, “The heavenly tablets in Jubilees contain all the liturgical and ethical commands to Israel given from creation, including the plan or creation revealed to Moses (cf. 4:21). Thus, the Old Testament laws that have a special significance for the readers at the time when Jubilees was written, are given a special prominence… Another set of tablets contain the human behavior, kept until the day of judgment… In one specific case, they are said to reveal future events to Jacob (32:31). The content of the tablets is not identical to the law” (Christiansen, The Covenant in Judaism and Paul, 71 n.16).

93 E.g., Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 366ff.; Gathercole, Where is Boasting?, 62; Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 45.

94 E.g., VanLandingham, Judgment and Justification in Paul and Early Judaism, 71ff.; Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 121ff.
tablets are rather innocuous, simply noting that certain actions and events have been recorded in the heavenly records.\textsuperscript{95} Other references, however, require more careful attention (namely, \textit{Jub.} 5:13; 16:3, 9; 19:9; 23:32; 24:33; 30:19-26; 31:32; 36:10).

In \textit{Jub.} 5:13ff., it is said that:

the judgment of all of them [apparently of the evil angels and their offspring, though perhaps also including men in general (cf. 5:8ff.)] has been ordained and written in the heavenly tablets without injustice. And (if) any of them transgress from their way with respect to what was ordained for them to walk in, or if they do not walk in it, the judgment for every (sort of) nature and every kind has been written.

Apparently, in light of \textit{Jub.} 5:13b, what is “ordained” here is not what must happen (i.e., a pre-determined future), but rather the consequences that will follow if a certain course of action (i.e., disobedience to the way ordained for each kind) is taken.\textsuperscript{96} This seems to fall in line with the function of the heavenly tablets noted above in which the items recorded therein serve as an eternal law and specify both the stipulations of the laws and the consequences for departing from them.\textsuperscript{97} Likewise, in \textit{Jub.} 16:9, where it is said that Lot’s seed will be uprooted and judged

\textsuperscript{95} In a number of places, it is simply the commandments which are written in the heavenly tablets. Thus the purity laws concerning childbirth (\textit{Jub.} 3:10), necessity to cover one’s “shame” (3:31), law of retribution (4:32), feast of weeks (6:17, 29-30), proper calendar observances (6:35), law of circumcision (15:25), feast of tabernacles (16:28), feast “of the LORD” (18:18-19), the priority of the eldest daughter in marriage (28:6), laws of adultery and intermarriage with Gentiles (30:9), laws of tithing (32:10-15), day of “Addition” to the feast (32:28), law prohibiting relations with one’s father’s wife (33:10), reminder of laws prohibiting adultery (39:6), feast of Passover (49:8), and laws of Sabbath (50:13). While Martínez categorizes the inscriptions pertaining to the feasts separately from the legal material (see Florentino García Martínez, “The Heavenly Tablets in the Book of Jubilees,” in \textit{Studies in the Book of Jubilees}, ed. Matthias Albani, Jörg Frey, and Armin Lange, 243-260 (Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck: 1997), 251), it seems that their function is one in the same, to emphasize the necessity of following the prescribed commandments and feasts since they are ordered in the tablets of heaven.

\textsuperscript{96} Najman notes, “Given Jubilees’ sense that the righteous are a minority, it is perhaps not surprising that punishments seem to constitute a large part of the heavenly record.” (Hindy Najman, \textit{Past Renewals: Interpretive Authority, Renewed Revelation, and the Quest for Perfection in Jewish Antiquity} (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 59)

\textsuperscript{97} Thus, contra Elliott who suggests that this is a list of individuals who break the covenant (Elliott, \textit{Survivors of Israel}, 265), it seems instead that this is a record of the “laws” ordained for each kind and the punishments associated with breaking them. The judgment, however, as Elliott and Davenport (Gene L. Davenport, \textit{The Eschatology of the Book of Jubilees} (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), 73) maintain, is described as an individual one (cf. \textit{Jub.} 5:16), though this too is set within the context of a collective mentality in that repentance and return are seen to be a corporate (or remnant) endeavor (cf. 5:17). A similar description of the tablets as outlining the eternal laws and consequences for disobeying them is seen in 15:25ff. where the law of circumcision on the eighth day is described and the consequences are given immediately after in that anyone who does not keep it “is not from the
because of his sin with his daughters, the action is apparently described as conforming to the standards outlined in the eternal laws of the tablets, though it is apparently Lot’s sin and not that of his descendants which has caused this judgment.98

In other references to the tablets, their function seems to act as a register or list of the faithful/good in contrast to the disobedient/evil.99 Thus, for example, it is noted of Abraham and Levi that they, because of their faithfulness and righteousness, were written down as “a friend of God” (Jub. 19:9)100 and “a friend and a righteous one” (30:20) in the heavenly tablets. Likewise, Esau’s betrayal (cf. Jub. 37:20-23) is warned to result in not being “written (on high) in The Book of Life for (he is written) in the one which will be destroyed and pass on to eternal execration so that their judgment will always be renewed with eternal reproach and execration and wrath and torment and indignation and plagues and sickness” (36:10).

_Jubilees_ does not make clear how the heavenly tablets and the books of life and destruction are related. An indication of their function is given in _Jub_. 30. Here, it is noted that in the heavenly tablets, the faithful are recorded as friends while the unfaithful are recorded as enemies (Jub. 30:21-22). Those who are unfaithful are “blotted out of the book of life and sons of the covenant” but is “from the children of destruction” (15:26). Martínez, in her taxonomical study of the function of the tablets refers to this particular function as “the divine, pre-existing archetype of the Torah” (Martínez, “The Heavenly Tablets in the Book of Jubilees,” 243).


99 This function seems similar to the role of Enoch described in the book. According to _Jub_. 4:23-24, Enoch was placed in Eden to write the “condemnation and judgment of the world, and all of the evils of the children of men… so that he might bear witness against all of the children of men so that he might relate all of the deeds of the generations until the day of judgment.” Enoch’s role thus seems a clerical one in that he is recording evil deeds so there is a record on the day of judgment. Thus, in _Jubilees_, final judgment is apparently based upon one’s deeds, though given the prominence of the Torah in the book, it seems like that this is not best understood simply as “good works” but rather as faithfulness to the laws of God.

100 Here Martínez notes that it seems correct “to view the inscription as a consequence of “he was found faithful” and to consider Abraham’s inscription in the HT as a registering of that fidelity” (Martínez, “The Heavenly Tablets in the Book of Jubilees,” 247). Martínez categorizes this under records of “good and evil,” though it seems in Abraham’s case, as in Levi’s, in _Jubilees_ that author has taken steps to demonstrate this “goodness” occurred in light of his obedience to the “proto-Torah” of the heavenly tablets.
written down in the book of those who will be destroyed.” Thus, there is an apparent correspondence in that what is written in the heavenly tablets will be reflected in the books of life and destruction, through either the blotting out of one’s name from the book of life and/or its entry into the book of destruction.

Finally, the heavenly tablets are said to record in some instances events that are clearly yet future. In Jub. 16:3, it is said that Isaac’s name is revealed to Sarah “just as his name was ordained and written in the heavenly tablets.” This reference to the tablets may be no more than a way to emphasize the surety by which the birth of Isaac will occur. If his name is already written in the records of heaven, then surely his birth must come about. It seems unwarranted to read into this reference some suggestion of exhaustive pre-determinism\(^\text{101}\) rather than what may simply be a display of the foreknowledge of God concerning his birth. Either of these interpretations are certainly possible, and the text itself does not overtly display which is to be preferred.

Following the descriptions of the judgment to come upon the evil generation, which will continue until the people return to Torah obedience, it is noted that Moses was to write about this period of punishment which will precede the restoration. It is said that Moses was to write these words “as a testimony for eternal generations” (Jub. 23:32). This function is specified elsewhere when the blessings for Levi and Judah are affirmed, and were written for them “as an eternal testimony in the heavenly tablets” (Jub. 31:32).\(^\text{102}\) In 23:32, however, the instance is different

\(^{101}\) Thus, contra Von Rad who states, “Thus we learn, even with regard to details, that these have happened exactly as has been described in advance on the heavenly tablets, like, for example, the giving of the name of Isaac (16.3)... the concept of divine determination has taken complete control of all historical traditional material” (Gerhard Von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel* (Harrisburg, Trinity Press: 1993), 271).

\(^{102}\) Martínez suggests that this is more than a blessing on Levi and Judah, but also “that the blessings predestine their future and the future of their descendants” (Martínez, “The Heavenly Tablets in the Book of Jubilees,” 250). The prayers of blessing which are affirmed to be recorded in the heavenly tablets seem, however, to again be an assurance of the future faithfulness of the lines of Levi and Judah. The text does not specify if this
since this records both previous events and events yet to come (the completion of the apostasy and the future restoration). Martínez has suggested that “[t]his revelation contains a simple, but comprehensive, vision of history… the whole of human destiny is written down on in the HT.”\textsuperscript{103} The tablets are elsewhere said to record information concerning events yet future. In \textit{Jub.} 24:27-33, where Isaac curses the Philistines, it is said that his curse, which proclaims their destruction from the earth and eternal state of disfavor, is “written and engraved concerning him in the heavenly tablets to be done to him in the day of judgment so that they might be uprooted from the earth.”\textsuperscript{104}

There are several competing interpretations of the nature and function of the tablets. While their legal and cultic functions seem rather straightforward, questions have arisen concerning the passages which describe the recognition of certain individuals as “friends” or “enemies” as well as the passages which describe future events as being already recorded (e.g., Isaac’s name, Israel’s restoration, or the Philistines’ judgment). Sanders suggested, though the book may seem to imply otherwise, that the tablets “are not actually account ledgers with debits and credits beside each name. They are the ‘book of life’ (30.22; 36.10) and the ‘book of those who will be destroyed’ (30.22).”\textsuperscript{105} He thus collapses the two functions of recording the deeds/status of an individual and their status in the book of life/destruction into a single function. Gathercole, agreeing in principle with Sanders, states, “[t]o be written in the Book of Life should be viewed in light of foreknowledge or of pre-determined activity. Again, the emphasis in the book on the established nature of the laws and their consequences (good or bad) seems to favor the former rather than the latter.

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., 249.

\textsuperscript{104} Here again Martínez concludes, “The curse is effective because it already existed in the HT: the destruction of the Philistine progeny is predestined and will be accomplished on the Day of Judgment” (Ibid.). Martínez sees a similar instance in 32:21-22 where Jacob is handed 7 tablets which foretell the future of his descendants. Though the Ethiopic text does not specify these as “heavenly” tablets, Martínez suggests that is likely the meaning intended.

\textsuperscript{105} Sanders, \textit{Paul and Palestinian Judaism}, 366.
appears to be the default position,” though, contra Sanders, he continues, “However, [t]he
category of “the righteous” whose destiny is spiritual resurrection is not merely a matter of being
elect; it is inseparable from the concrete acts that are commended in the book… Thus, in this
important sense, there is a future dimension of Israel’s relationship with God (amicitia) that is
contingent upon obedience.” 106 In further contrast, VanLandingham contends,

Despite Sander’s arguments, I find almost no support for this view. Membership in the
covenant as the basis for inscription in a heavenly book may be supported in Jub.
30:22b… In this case one would need to assume that these persons were originally
inscribed in the book of life because of their birth into the covenant of Abraham. Jubilees
never says this, and besides, the previous verse indicates that it is good deeds, not the
covenant, that cause one’s name to be written in the book of life. 107

From the study above, it seems best to allow the book as a whole to interpret the function of the
heavenly tablets in Jubilees rather than to allow the few statements concerning the books of life
and destruction to act as a controlling hermeneutic for how the rest of the book, including the
passages concerning the tablets, is to be understood.

The book of Jubilees, as a whole, emphasizes the importance and necessity of obedience
to the covenant stipulations. For those who break the covenant, repentance may be available, 108
but this does not seem to be a principle generally extended to all situations in the book. When
certain sins are committed (e.g., failure to properly circumcise, inappropriate sexual relations,
intermarriage with Gentiles, etc.), it appears that one is removed from the covenant community
and written into the book of destruction. There is no mention of those who are in the book of


106 Gathercole, Where is Boasting?, 62. Gathercole goes on to note, “The covenant, then, opens up the
possibility for Israelites to be either obedient or disobedient… This points to an understanding of the relationship
with God that is promised in the future and that depends upon (of course, covenantal) obedience to the Law”
(Gathercole, Where is Boasting?, 62).

107 VanLandingham, Judgment and Justification, 71. He goes on to state, “Elsewhere Jubilees portrays
Enoch as recording the deeds of each person in order that he might bear witness against them on the day of judgment
(4:22-24). Here, too, it seems that more is recorded than just the names that go into the “book of life” or “the book
of those who will be destroyed” (30:22; 36:10)” (VanLandingham, Judgment and Justification, 73).

108 Such as in Judah’s case, for example (Jub. 41:23-28).
destruction being re-written in the book of life. What the author hopes for is, after this current evil generation has run its course, that a new generation of Israelites, faithful to the covenant, will arise, repent, and be restored as God had always intended (cf. Jub. 23:16-32). The author sees this as a definite action in the future, since it is already written in the heavenly books.

How, then, does all this relate to the question of Israel’s election? Here, too, the disagreements are glaring. As it relates to this study, the two most significant points of disagreement concern the nature of election as conditional or unconditional, and the scope of election. Sanders has described the view of election presented in the book as graciously given (cf. Jub. 1:18) and excluding only those Jews who forsake the covenant through egregious disobedience. This can also be said, however, of Israel as a whole, and thus Sanders suggests the possibility that all repentance and atonement will be applied to all Israel in the future. To reconcile the tension between the seriousness of certain transgressions and the gracious behavior of God, Sanders suggests that the author views repentance and effective for the past and future, but not for the seriousness of the present situation.

Though, like Sanders, emphasizing the national view of election which can be forsaken by disobedience, Das suggests that the books displays that God “intended the law to be obeyed

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109 Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 371. “There is no statement to the effect that those who keep it [the Law] will live: the assumption is that Israel will be saved (1.22-25; 50.5), and only those who transgress in certain ways are excluded from Israel (e.g. 6.12; 30.7)... It would be more accurate to say that obedience preserves salvation” (Ibid.).

110 Thus, “In 15.32-35... he seems to distinguish between a ‘true Israel’, which remains loyal to the covenant, and the rest, who forsake the covenant (and do not observe the commandment to circumcise). Yet in chapter 1 he seems to grant that all Israel has at some time forsaken God... The ‘true Israel’ conception from chapter 15 functions to separate the true Israelites from the apostates in the author’s generation, while the idea that all Israel forsook God and returned serves to explain historically the continuation of Israel despite the most serious transgressions... Put another way, repentance atoned in the past and will atone in the future, but the crisis in the author’s time is so acute that certain transgressions permit no atonement” (Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 378).

“without transgression.” However, echoing Sanders’ view, Das further explains, “All Israelites have a share in the world to come” (m. Sanh. 10:1). God’s election of the people of Israel is a motif that courses through intertestamental and rabbinic literature. According to Jubilees and the rabbis, only the most egregious sinners who had turned their backs on God’s relationship with the people would be excluded. The basic understanding here is similar to Sanders’ “covenant nomism” in that Israelites are elect through God’s grace and take part in the covenant blessings so long as they do not violate the covenant in such a way that would result in their exclusion.

This view, however, overlooks the overall emphasis in the book that obedience precedes election. To be in the elect, for Jubilees, is to be in right standing in the covenant. To be in the un-elect is to transgress it, something that it appears the author believes many Israelites in his own generation have done. This is affirmed by Grindheim who suggests that, “the logical causal relationship is from righteousness to election [which] is seen in the re-writing of the history of Abraham’s departure from Ur of Chaldea. God is no longer the initiator; Abraham is.” Thus, contra Sanders’ vision of the book, Jubilees’ emphasis upon the conditionality of the covenant and upon the causal relationship between covenant obedience and election must be recognized.

VanLandingham likewise asserts,

Affirmations in Jubilees that Israel as an entity will continue to exist in the next age are not statements about the efficacy of the covenant as the basis for individual salvation. God promises that Israel will survive, but the promise does not depend on God’s willingness to bestow free, unmerited grace on those who will compose the future Israel.

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112 Ibid., 17.
113 Ibid., 95.
114 Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 45.
115 Thus Elliott, who states, “…every indication is that restoration was conditional upon repentance. Israel will first conform to the righteousness demanded of God (i.e., demanded by the community) and then they will be restored” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 538), and, “[T]here is little indication that the author thought the faithfulness of God would cover for the disobedient (contra Sanders)” (Idem, 125).
God’s promise relies on that foreknowledge that in the last days a certain number of Jews will be obedient.\(^{116}\)

The emphasis upon covenant obedience in the book thus strongly favors a conditional understanding of election which is applied to a faithful group of Jews which, at the present, seems small in number though a revival of sorts is anticipated when a future generation repents, returns to covenant faithfulness, and is restored.\(^{117}\) While individuals are spoken of in the book within the context of election (e.g., Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc.), this is \textit{always} in light of their relationship to the group which they represent. Jacob and some of his sons represent faithful Israel, while Ishmael, Esau, and other represent those Gentiles and Jews who are outside of the covenant. Thus with Abasciano it can be affirmed, “As for the election of Israel, it is clearly a corporate matter. It is obviously assumed that the corporate election of Israel is in the individual Jacob, but its corporate nature comes out all the more clearly when the text contrasts the rejection of Ishmael and Esau with the election of the people of Israel and omits mention of Jacob.”\(^{118}\) This is also clear in \textit{Jub.} 22:11 when it is said that only some of the sons of Jacob will be sanctified in relationship to the covenant.

How then can this be related to the general perspective of Second Temple Judaism? While much more is necessary to answer that question, as will be explored below, Christiansen suggests that the viewpoint expressed herein need not necessarily be understood as applying only

\(^{116}\) VanLandingham, \textit{Judgment and Justification}, 80.

\(^{117}\) Enns supports this notion in stating, “The point is that the author of \textit{Jubilees}, from first to last, is concerned to emphasize God’s promise never to forsake his people. \textit{Israel as a people} will always remain because God is faithful. Transgression of eternal commands, however, will result in individual punishment and forfeiture of one’s individual covenant status. The fact of Israel’s election, however, remains sure” (Peter Enns, “Expansions of Scripture,” in \textit{Justification and Variegated Nomism}, ed. D. A. Carson, Peter O’Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid, 73-98 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 97).

to a small segment or sect of Jews.\textsuperscript{119} \textit{Jubilees} demonstrates that at least some Jews during the period understood election in a corporate sense, being granted to the fathers of Israel who represented those who would come after them and maintain their faithful commitment. In addition, it makes a case for understanding election as conditioned in that it was faithfulness to the covenant, beginning, at least for males, at birth through proper circumcision, and continuing on through adulthood through observing feasts and Sabbath properly and abstaining from certain sins which may have been outside of the possibility of atonement. This should not be understood simply in terms of “good works” outweighing “bad works,” or even as “perfect obedience,” since some sins can be atoned for, but rather as faithfulness to the covenant obligations and especially to those obligations which transgressing of the book describes as resulting in the exclusion of the offender from the covenant community and blessings.

\textit{Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs} (c. 150 BCE)

The \textit{Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs} offers a more complex example of Second Temple Jewish beliefs. While it has long been recognized that the final form of the \textit{Testaments} was certainly the product of Christian authors/redactors, the extent to which these redactions may prevent one from being able to recognize the Jewish form(s) of the text is highly contested, with the spectrum ranging from viewing the work as essentially Christian to seeing only minimal

\textsuperscript{119} Christiansen states, “Although these issues could point to one particular political and/or social crisis, Jubilees’ attempt to make its message timeless seems to reflect a concern with normative principles, aimed at uniting Israel. The particular calendar is not necessarily a reason for placing Jubilees outside mainstream Judaism of its time. The same goes for the apocalyptic framework” (Christiansen, \textit{The Covenant in Judaism and Paul}, 69-70). Sanders likewise states,
Christian redaction of an originally Jewish work. While fragments of the *Testaments* have been found at Qumran, showing their Jewish origin, they are not extensive enough to allow a comparison of the earliest versions of the work with what has survived in the Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, Armenian, and Slavonic versions. While there is little doubt now that its origins were Jewish, the extent to which the “Jewishness” of the *Testaments* is recoverable is debated. Equally contested is the original author and provenance of the work.

It is frequently recognized that the content of the *Testaments* differs significantly from many other texts of the Second Temple period in that it contains only a few references to specific commands found in the Torah and emphasizes instead general principles of morality. Some have seen this as indicating Hellenistic Jewish influence in that the themes involved often

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121 According to Evans, for instance, “The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs were written between 109 and 106 BCE by a Pharisee who greatly admired John Hyrcanus at the zenith of the Maccabean (or Hasmonean) dynasty. The conviction was that Hyrcanus and his Levite family constituted the messianic line.” (Evans, *Ancient Texts for New Testament Studies*, 40) Thomas and Hultgard have suggested that the Essenes, or a related group, were responsible for their original composition (Johannes Thomas, “Aktuelles im Zeugnis der zwölf Väter,” in *Studien zu den Testamenten der Zwölf Patriarchen*, ed. Walther Eltester (Berlin: Töpellmann), 62-150).The general consensus is at least that the original Testaments were Jewish in origin, with broad disagreement concerning the so-called “Christian interpolations.”

122 Concerning their general structure, Kugler summarizes, “each testament in this collection follows more or less a familiar pattern: it begins with the patriarch’s summons to his children to his bedside, continues with his autobiographical reflections, moral exhortation, and future prediction, and concludes with an account of the man’s death and burial” (Robert A. Kugler, “Testaments,” in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, ed. John J. Collins and Daniel L. Harlow, 1295-1297 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010), 1296).
overlap with those found in Stoicism. To view it, however, as outside of the mainstream of Judaism is unwarranted since references to the Law are found, specifically as it relates to circumcision (T. Levi 6:3-6), sacrifices (T. Reu. 6:8; T. Levi 9:7-14; 16:1; T. Jud. 18:5), and intermarriage with Gentiles (T. Levi 9:10), and since the Law is referenced as something to be read (T. Levi 13:1-3). Other writings from the post-biblical period (e.g., Ben Sira) also reflect a more generic view of the Law as equated with Wisdom and universally applicable to all humanity without disregarding the essential Jewishness of the Torah. Thus, while recovering the “original” text of the Testaments is currently not possible, and neither is recovering its original Sitz im Leben, this does not mean that it cannot contribute to one’s understanding of Second Temple Judaism, though clearly tentatively so.

Several important themes in the Testaments are relevant to this study, namely the Levi and Judah passages (L.J.), the descriptions of Israel’s disobedience, judgment, and repentance (often termed as S-E-R. [Sin-Exile-Return] passages), and the fate of the nations. The L.J.

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123 Thus Kee comments, “The Law is treated in the Testaments as a virtual synonym for wisdom (TLevi 13:1-9), as it is at times in rabbinical tradition. Unlike its function among the rabbis, however, in the Testaments, law (= wisdom) is universal in its application (TLevi 14:4) and is equated with natural law (TNaph 3)... The appeal to a universal law of nature in the Testaments is incompatible with the concept of the Torah as a protective wall of covenantal identity that characterized most of Jewish piety in the period of the second Temple and subsequently.” (Kee, “Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,” 780).

124 Thus Slingerland has argued, “The Testaments is no more a treatise on the food laws than on circumcision, but glimpses of these matters place the writing in the traditional Jewish mainstream insofar as such things are concerned.” And again, “Thus, in spite of the fact that the authors of the T. 12 Patr. intend their work to stress love of neighbor and other such general aspects of the law, there is no basis for scholarship’s consensus that nomos has been limited to this sphere. These authors conceive of the law as a written body of jurisprudence to be read, studied, and taught; they hold the role of Israel’s traditional teachers in high regard; they refer to the “Law and the Prophets”; they call for obedience to all this legal matter; and they reflect much interest in several aspects of Israel’s ritual laws. There is no reason to think otherwise, therefore, than that when these writers speak of nomos they have in mind Israel’s traditional legal corpus understood in its wholeness” (Dixon Slingerland, “The Nature of Nomos (Law) Within the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,” Journal of Biblical Literature 105:1 (1986): 46, 48).

125 These categories are commonly discussed in Testaments literature. Collins, for example, notes, “Three motifs stand out in the future predictions of the patriarchs: first is the pattern of sin, punishment and restoration, or sin-exile-return; second is the special position of Levi and Judah; third is the coming of the Messiah(s) and the
texts\textsuperscript{126} are especially difficult since they are heavily influenced by the Christian elements or redaction of the \textit{Testaments} as they now stand. There is also unevenness present concerning the relationship between Levi and Judah as it relates to the role of the messiah(s). In \textit{T. Reu.} 6:6-12, Levi and Judah are described as holding God-given authority, though Levi is given prominence since he blesses Judah and it is through him that God will reign among the people.\textsuperscript{127} In \textit{T. Sim.} 5:1-6, Levi is injured with a sword but will overcome the descendants of Simeon. Levi and Judah will be few, but will be victorious. According to Kee, the reference to “Levi as warrior-leader may be a reference to the Maccabees or to the eschatological battle of the kind depicted in 1QM.”\textsuperscript{128} The indication here seems to be that Levi and Judah, though small in number, represent the faithful who have remained true to God.\textsuperscript{129} In \textit{T. Levi} 2:10-12, Levi is again informed of his priestly ministry and his connection to the one who will redeem Israel, though it is again through Levi and Judah that this will take place. Though this prediction finds no precedent in the Aramaic Testament of Levi (4Q213-14), it does speak of a righteous seed coming from Levi, and Levi receives an invitation to enter into heaven where the vision in \textit{T. Levi} 2 takes place. Though the rest of the text is lost, it is reasonable to suppose that a similar eschatological scenario” (John J. Collins, “Testaments,” in \textit{Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period}, ed. Michael E. Stone, 325-356 (Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1984), 337).


\textsuperscript{127} This is often seen, and certainly may be, a reference solely to Christ inserted by a Christian redactor. Like many of the messianic texts in the \textit{Testaments}, though certainly not all of them, there is nothing overtly Christian about this particular passage that necessitates that it is not possibly a part of an original Jewish text or tradition. Occurrences of clear Christian redaction in the L.J. portions in the \textit{Testaments} are evident in \textit{T. Levi} 8:11-19.

\textsuperscript{128} Kee, “Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,” 786 n. 5c.

\textsuperscript{129} \textit{T. Sim.} 7:1-3 also mentions the ruling of Levi and Judah, though here apparently a reference to a single individual. The passage is most certainly Christian, either in origin or redaction, and several lengthy and overt references to Jesus make it difficult to determine what may have been original in any Jewish source material for this section.
vision would have been described. In addition, 4Q214 recounts the disobedience of the “tribe” of Levi, their judgment, and their need to follow God and his Torah/Wisdom and predicts that they will be leaders, judges, priests, and kings of an eternal kingdom. Thus the basic framework of the Testament of Levi is upheld in the Aramaic version which is attested at Qumran, suggesting the possibility that the messianic connections to Levi (and possibly Judah as well) may be original and not Christian additions and further suggesting that the original Jewish text may not be as “lost” as some have suggested.

In T. Jud. 21:1-6 another interesting, and here more decisively divided, discussion of the messianic role(s) is present as Levi is given the priesthood to oversee heavenly matters and Judah the kingship to oversee earthly matters. Judah’s kingdom, much like David’s, is described as eternal, though it is interrupted until the salvation of Israel is brought by the God of righteousness (T. Jud. 22:1-3). Again in T. Dan 5:1-13 (as well as T. Gad 8:1-3 and in T. Jos. 19:1-12), salvation arises from Levi and Judah, and victory over Beliar is granted, with those who call upon him receiving eternal life and peace. In T. Naph. 8:1-5, it is Judah from whom salvation will arise, and he will bless Jacob. Though Levi is mentioned in context, here it is Judah who is given prominence rather than Levi. de Jonge has suggested that the dual portrayal of messiahs from Levi and Judah should be taken to refer to a single figure, namely Jesus as intended by the Christian author(s)/redactor(s). Elliott agrees that the passages likely

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130 This is found in the current Testaments in T. Levi 14:1ff.

131 It is also worth noting that in T. Benj. 11:4-5, the messiah from Judah and Levi is called “God’s Chosen One forever.” Of this reference, Hollander and de Jonge note, “like ἄγαπητός κυρίου (cf. v. 2), ἐκλεκτός (τοῦ) θεοῦ/κυρίου is used as an epithet of righteous individuals (besides the more common use of the plural οἱ ἐκλεκτοί (τοῦ) θεοῦ/κυρίου indicating the group of true worshippers” (Harm W. Hollander and Marinus de Jonge, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Commentary (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 444).

132 “We should stress that these views do not necessarily lead to the expectation of two messianic figures, as is found in some Qumran texts… there is no ‘double messianism’ in the Testaments. Whenever a savior figure occurs in the L.J [Levi-Judah] passages, there is only one” (Ibid., 60-61).
have a single referent but suggests that this may have (at least originally) been connected to the community itself rather than Jesus. As he writes, “The exhortations to honor Levi and Judah in the above passages would suit better their role as patrons of the Testaments community, figureheads representing the corporate identity of the group who believed themselves alone to emulate the ideals expressed by these figures.” As he goes on to explain concerning T. Sim. 5:4-6,

Here it is particularly notable how the pair “Jacob and Israel” has been subtly replaced by “Levi and Judah,” thus suggesting that the author of the Testaments took “Levi and Judah” to be a designation for the righteous in Israel with which he replaced the more nationalistic term “Jacob and Israel” as found in Genesis… Taken together, therefore, these passages suggest that while “Levi and Judah” represented the righteous, the other tribes cumulatively represented the unrighteous.

Though hesitant to assert that Levi and Judah became a sort of self-identification for the community, Elliott’s suggestion is intriguing. Of primary issue with his view, it must be noted that other tribes, like Levi and Judah, are said to apostasize and repent just like Levi and Judah. Elliott’s theory gives credence, however, to Levi and Judah’s prominence in the book and recognizes that, for the author(s), to be in the people of God for the Testaments requires submission to them.

The S-E-R passages are frequent in the Testaments as well. The Sin and Exile aspects of the pattern are present in nine of the Testaments, while the Return aspect is present in eight. While all of the Testaments contain warnings against sin and disobedience, those which contain

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133 Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 450. He continues in stating, “The Testaments community was accordingly composed of supporters of a legitimate priesthood and of a legitimate Davidic government in Jerusalem—not because they belonged to the Levi and Judah tribes, but because they recognized these offices to be essential to the religion and welfare of the state. It was also a highly consequential fact that this order of things, a legitimate priesthood and a Davidic government, was presently not experienced in Jerusalem” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 451). See also Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 324, 370, 424, and 555.

134 Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 453-54.

the S-E-R passages make specific predictions about the future (though likely present to the
author’s time)\textsuperscript{136} apostasy of a given tribe. The listed sins of Israel are often generically
described as committing wicked deeds or disobeying the ordinances of God. Specific sins are
also, however, mentioned, including sexual immorality and infidelity (\textit{T. Levi} 14:6; \textit{T. Jud.} 23:2;
\textit{T. Dan} 5:6-7; \textit{T. Benj.} 8:1-9:1), intermarriage with Gentiles (\textit{T. Levi} 14:7; \textit{T. Dan} 5:5), profaning
the temple (\textit{T. Levi} 16:1), witchcraft and idolatry (\textit{T. Jud.} 23:1), and rebellion against Levi and
Judah (\textit{T. Dan} 5:4; \textit{T. Gad} 8:1-3).

In keeping with the S-E-R pattern present throughout the \textit{Testaments}, the restoration of
the people is frequently mentioned. Here it must be noted that repentance is required for the
people \textit{before} they are restored and/or blessed.\textsuperscript{137} In \textit{T. Sim.} 6:1-7, the people must first divest
themselves “of envy and every hardness of heart” before restoration comes. \textit{T. Jud.} 23:5 attests
that the people will be oppressed and in exile “until you return to the Lord in integrity of heart,
penitent and living according to all the Lord’s commands. Then the Lord will be concerned for
you in mercy and will free you from captivity under your enemies.” Likewise, \textit{T. Iss.} 6:3-4
states, “Tell these things to your children, therefore, so that even though they might sin, they may
speedily return to the Lord, because he is merciful: He will set them free and take them back to
their land.” \textit{T. Zeb.} 9:7 declares, “you will remember the Lord and repent, and he will turn you
around because he is merciful and compassionate.” In all of these cases, repentance precedes
restoration and blessing.

Since the origin of the \textit{Testaments} is debated, so is its overall purpose. It is viewed by
some now (e.g., de Jonge) as simply a Christian apologetic for the supremacy of Jesus, adapted
\textsuperscript{136} Of this reality, Elliott notes, “There is little doubt in this regard that the author has primarily in mind his
\textit{contemporary} situation (Elliott, \textit{Survivors of Israel}, 389).

from Jewish traditions or materials. According to Kugler, the Testaments in its original form “likely served a variety of purposes, from addressing concerns over the purity of the priesthood (Levi) to elaborating speculatively on curiosities in the biblical text (Naphtali).” The Jewishness of the document, however, persists in its attention to key figures in Israel’s history, concern with keeping the Torah (though often generically described), and the future of Israel, which is at times intermingled with that of the Gentiles. In light of this, Elliott has commented,

It is accordingly not difficult to discern the function of the testamentary form in these passages in condemning present-day Israel by means of the combination of ethical and future material. But this combination also offers the opportunity for the author to define who he does think belongs to the righteous community… one can discern a double function for the testament form in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: to warn Israel regarding their apostasy, on the one hand, and to establish a standard of righteous behavior, on the other.

The Testaments, when read by their authoring community or by Jews in general during the period thus quite possibly intended to accomplish both an ethical and a theological purpose.

The Testaments’ view of the nature of election is generally consistent with what has already been reviewed in the texts previously discussed. Inclusion in the elect is depicted in the Testaments as being contingent, either upon faithfulness or repentance, as well as available to

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139 Here de Jonge has aptly summarized, in some cases, only the future of Israel is mentioned (T. Levi 16:5; T. Iss. 6:4; T. Ash. 7:7; cf. T. Zeb. 10:2 after 9:9), in other places the Gentiles are mentioned alongside Israel as their enemies and oppressors (T. Lev. 10:4; 15:1-3; 16:5; T. Jud. 23:3; T. Iss. 6:2; T. Zeb. 9:6; T. Dan 5:8; T. Naph. 4:2; T. Ash. 7:2), and in other places as recipients of salvation alongside Israel or as humanity in general (T. Reu. 6:11; T. Sim. 6:5-7; 7:2; T. Lev. 2:11; 4:4; 5:7; 10:2; 14:2; 17:2; T. Jud. 22:2; 24:6; 25:5; T. Zeb. 9:8; T. Dan 5:11; 6:7; T. Naph. 4:5; 8:3; T. Ash. 7:3; T. Jos. 19:4-6; T. Benj. 3:8; 9:2; 10:5) (Marinus de Jonge, “The Future of Israel in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,” Journal for the Study of Judaism 17:2 (1986): 196-97).

140 Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 391.

141 Thus Grindheim states, “The continued elect status of the people is thus understood as contingent upon their righteousness” (Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 54). Elliott likewise, commenting on T. Ash. 1, states, “The idea of “pairs” seems to perpetuate the notion, inherent in the “two ways” as well, that there is choice or decision involved in everything, especially the covenant” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 281).
the whole of Israel, though applicable now only to the obedient, who may be represented by the Levi-Judah motif. The S-E-R texts best evidence the presence of the theme of election in the work. Thus, Hollander and de Jonge write, “It [S-E-R] emphasizes the importance of righteous behavior and of repentance, and it promises return and salvation after renewed obedience. The descendants of the patriarch are regarded as in need of warning or in distress.” While the Testaments are not explicit concerning the ultimate exclusion of unfaithful Jews, neither do they contradict the consistent message outlined in the texts surveyed above that the faithful and penitent are those who are a part of the people of God. They condemn “present” Israel for its apostasy and demonstrate that the means by which they may be accepted by God (in the view of the author/defining community) is through repentance and obedience to the Torah and the leadership of Levi/Judah.

Additional Psalms of David (151A, 152, 153, and 155 (5ApocSyrPs 3), c. first century BCE or earlier)

The additional psalms of David were known primarily through Syriac versions and were frequently referred to as the Syriac non-canonical psalms prior to their discovery at Qumran.

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142 Thus contra Hollander and de Jonge who seem to suggest that all of Israel, regardless of their response, will receive compassion because of their ethnic standing (Hollander and de Jonge, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, 55).

143 Ibid., 51-52.

144 Though discovered at Qumran, these psalms, and specifically Psalms 151 and 155, are thought to predate the Qumran community and thus are not necessarily sectarian or Essenic in origin. Thus Charlesworth and Sanders write, “Some distinguished scholars [Philonenko, Delcor, and Dupont-Sommer] have argued that one or more of these pseudepigraphical psalms were composed by the Essenes, the authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Most scholars, however, conclude correctly that while some passages can be interpreted in line with Essene theology, this possibility does not indicate that these psalms were composed by the Essenes, who shared ideas with other Jews contemporaneous with them” (James H. Charlesworth and James A. Sanders, “More Psalms of David,” in The Old Testament in English, 4, 96).
Of these psalms, Psalms 151A, 151B, and 155 are present within the Qumran Psalms Scroll (11QPs\(^a\)), and are thus clearly pre-Christian in their composition. Psalms 152 and 153 were not contained in the Psalms scroll, though this does not exclude the possibility that they are pre-Christian in origin. Since each psalm contains its own special issues and concerns, they will be addressed individually. While most attention has been devoted to their compositional history, and especially to the relationship between the Hebrew, Greek, and Syriac versions in light of the discovery of the Qumran Psalms Scroll (11QPs\(^a\)), their content nonetheless contributes to an understanding of Second Temple Jewish beliefs.

Psalm 151 recounts God’s choice of David over his brothers. In 11QPs\(^a\) 151:6-7, David declares, “(Although) their stature was tall, (and) their hair handsome, the Lord God did not choose (לוא בחר) them, but he sent and took me (ויקחני) from behind the flock, and he anointed me with holy oil, and he made me leader for his people, and ruler over the sons of his covenant.” Here God’s choice of David is contrasted with the stature of his brothers, who presumably would have been more “natural” choices for a warrior-king than the scrawny and young musician David. As Sanders describes, “Even though David is insignificant in external appearance, he, in his soul or heart to himself, has said the significant thing: he would give glory to the Lord (verse 2); and the Lord who can see into the heart has seen and heard everything David has done and


said (verse 4). Therefore, God heeded David’s piety of soul by sending the prophet Samuel to take him from behind the flock to make him a great ruler.”

David’s election for the role of king is presented as an irony, contrary to common human intuitions. His election is also depicted as office-oriented in that God chose him for the task of ruling, and no explicit soteriological connections are made. Furthermore, as seen elsewhere in Second Temple literature, God’s choice of David is precipitated by his pious disposition indicating that God has chosen a king who was worthy of choosing because of his righteous character rather than his physical capabilities.

Psalm 152 is found in the Syriac collection but has not been discovered at Qumran and is not found in the Qumran Psalms Scroll. The original provenance, authorship, and date of the psalm are thus indeterminable. As Charlesworth and Sanders suggest, “It is impossible to date this psalm. The general tone, Jewish but non-rabbinic character, and association with Psalms 151, 154, and 155 indicate that it was probably composed by a Palestinian Jew during the hellenistic period.” This Syriac psalm is placed in the setting of an encounter by David with a lion and wolf which attacked his flocks. In 152:4, the psalmist declares, “Spare, O Lord, your elect one; and deliver your holy one from destruction.” The main theme of the psalm is rescue from danger and death, and the psalmist here seems to plea to God for salvation on the basis of

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146 Sanders, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scroll*, 95.


148 Charlesworth and Sanders, “More Psalms of David,” 615. Rooy agrees in stating, “It seems possible that a Hebrew Vorlage could be postulated for the original text underlying Psalm 152 in the manuscript 12t4. The other Syriac texts represent a subsequent edited version of the Psalm in the Syriac transmission of the text. In the heading of this Psalm in 12t4 and in the later edited version, clear indications exist that the later editorial work to this Psalm was part of an attempt in the Syriac tradition to strengthen the link between the Psalm and 1 Samuel 17:34-37” (van Rooy, *Studies on the Syriac Apocryphal Psalms*, 122).

149 “your elect one” is omitted outside of the Syriac manuscripts.
his standing before God. As an “elect one” and a “holy one,” David’s plea is here based upon God’s calling of him, presumably for the role of ruler and king. It is noteworthy here that “elect one” and “holy one” are offered as parallel terms and again emphasize character over soteriological status. The underlying expectation seems to be that if David is killed, God’s purposes for him (and his kingdom) will be thwarted. The explicit purpose is that, through continuing in life, the psalmist may continue to praise the name of God (Ps 152:4), thus validating the need for God’s intervention.

Like Ps 152, the date and provenance of Psalm 153 is not determinable. It may, like Ps 152, be originally Hebrew and from the Hellenistic period, but this is determined more by association than internal evidence.\(^\text{150}\) Also like Ps 152, the psalm’s reference to David’s “election” occurs in the context of deliverance from danger, though here it is retrospectively described. God has “delivered the physical life of his elect one from the hands of death; and he redeemed his holy one from destruction” (Ps 153:2). Here again “elect” and “holy” are paralleled, and the result of David’s deliverance is that he will continue to praise and exalt God (Ps 153:6).

Like Ps 151, Ps 155 is most certainly Jewish in its original composition in that it is included in the collection of 11QPs\(^a\). While the Hebrew text lacks a title, the Syriac version (5ApocSyrPs 3) attributes the psalm to Hezekiah’s request for deliverance from the Assyrians. The end of the Hebrew version is lost due to the decay of the manuscript prior to its discovery. The Syriac version, however, which closely parallels the extant portions of the Hebrew version,

\(^{150}\) Charlesworth and Sanders, “More Psalms of David,” 616. Likewise, van Rooy again summarizes, “It is quite clear that with regard to the Hebrew colouring and vocabulary that this Psalm is closely related to Psalm 152… Although the Hebrew retroversion presented above does not read smoothly in all instances, the retroversion can be taken as support for the view that the original of this Psalm was written in Hebrew. The possibility of Syriac revision, as can be deduced from a comparison of the different manuscripts, must be kept in mind… If the Psalm had a Hebrew Vorlage, as is possible, it must be dated in the late Persian, early Hellenistic era, as is probably the case with Psalms 151, 154 and 155” (van Rooy, Studies on the Syriac Apocryphal Psalms, 132).
concludes with a plea to “Save Israel, your elect one; and those of the house of Jacob, your chosen one” (Ps 155:21). Charlesworth and Sanders add that here “chosen one” may be rendered as “tried (or approved) one.” Here again God’s choice, in Ps 155 of Israel and the house of Jacob, serves as the basis for the plea for deliverance. It is possible here, again, that “those of the house of Jacob” may be a reference to faithful Israel, and that “elect one” and “chosen one” descriptors of the faithfulness of the people.

Though brief and more implicit than not, these above non-canonical psalms appear to emphasize the character of the elect rather than their soteriological status. David, in particular, is seen as a pious young man rewarded for his piety, a message that seems to have resonated strongly with many Jewish people of the period. It is not David’s physical abilities, but his piety and pure heart, which establish him as the “right man for the job.” Psalms 152 and 153 likewise emphasize the ethical aspect of “election” in that “elect” and “holy” are used as parallel terms. Though less obvious than the examples above, Psalm 155 may also plea for God’s salvation of Israel based on their faithfulness to him. This again shows that “election” in the

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151 Charlesworth and Sanders, “More Psalms of David,” 624 n. v. Falk states that “The psalmist offers no personal qualifications to elicit God’s help, but appeals only to God’s reputation, his simple trust, and God’s election of Israel/Jacob (Syrac 10, 17, 21; 11QPsa 24:9, 15)” (Daniel Falk, “Psalms and Prayers,” in Justification and Variegated Nomism, Vol. 1, ed., D. A. Carson, Peter T. O’Brien and Mark A. Seifrid, 7-56 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 23). This, of course, assumes that the purpose of God teaching him Torah is not to aid him in covenant obedience and also assumes that the language of “election” here refers to God’s unmerited choice of Israel rather than to the her being a “choice” or “approved” one.

152 Abegg, Flint, and Ulrich translate “elect one” here as “faithful one,” (Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich, The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1999), 580) and, as already mentioned, Charlesworth and Sanders suggest “chosen one” may be translated as “tried (or approved) one” (Charlesworth and Sanders, “More Psalms of David,” 624 n. v).

153 Thus Fernández-Marcos suggests that this particular psalm “can be explained perfectly within a reshaped biblical tradition as a means of providing hope to the Jews involved in different wars with their neighbours. The psalm is a poetical account of the young David which stresses his election/anointing by Yhwh (in spite of his being the smallest of his brothers), his ability as a musician, and his glorious victory of Goliath, the enemy of Israel” (Natalio Fernández-Marcos, “David the Adolescent: On Psalm 151,” in The Old Greek Psalter: Studies in Honor of Albert Pietersma, ed. Robert J. V. Hiebert, Claude E. Cox, and Peter J. Gentry, 205-217 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 216).
Second Temple Jewish thought represented more than simply God’s uninfluenced and predetermined choice of individuals for a particular soteriological standing, but rather his response to their obedience (or repentance) or disobedience to the covenant.

1 Maccabees (c. 125 BCE)

The book of 1 Maccabees is a narrative description of the revolt of Judean Jews under the rule of the Seleucids during the mid-second century BCE. The book focuses on the exploits of the Maccabean brothers, led by Judas Maccabeus. The revolts were prompted by the activities of Antiochus IV, who desecrated the Temple and forbade the exercise of the Jewish religious practices, greatly offending and outraging the Jews (1 Macc 1:20-50). The Maccabees are upheld in the book as the heroes of the conflict, fighting against both their syncretistic brethren and against the tyrannies of Antiochus IV and subsequent rulers. The book is generally described as being written prior to the end of the second century BCE, and thus close to the occurrence of the events. Though historical in nature, the book is also written as a theological commentary on the events of the period, setting the conflict within a theological framework. This does not

154 Concerning the impetus for the persecution, Elliott summarizes, “The cause, and exact significance, of this event are widely debated. Antiochus’ “campaign against Judaism” has been interpreted, on the one hand, as an expression of a mad ruler’s rigorous personal Hellenizing program (Antiochus assuming the weight of the “blame”); but, from a completely opposite point of view, it has also been viewed as only the result of the Jews’ resistance to Hellenism, which in turn enraged the ruler and further hardened him in his intentions (Jews assuming the weight of the “blame”).…”if psychological or ideological motivations fail to explain Antiochus’s actions, some other explanation is required, and one solution has been offered by what might be called Jewish conspiracy theories. Such theories maintain that the events of persecution were catalyzed by a Hellenizing party within Judaism, an understanding that is strongly encouraged by the writer of 1 Maccabees (esp. 1:11-15)” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 192).

155 deSilva helpfully summarizes the author’s intent for the book in noting, “The author is clearly pro-Hasmonean and considers Israel to owe an enormous debt of gratitude not only to Judas and his brothers but also to their house, the “sons of Simon.” The author would have been found among the loyal supporters of their regime. This does not mean, however, that the author wrote this history directly as a reply to open and virulent challenges to the legitimacy of that regime, such as one finds during the reign of Janneus” (deSilva, Introducing the Apocrypha, 250).
necessarily diminish the historical veracity of the events, and Callaway notes that scholars often consider the book as “the most reliable historical resource for the study of the Maccabean revolt.”

Much of the book serves as a polemic (as well as an apologetic for the Hasmonean rulers) against both the regime of Antiochus and the Hellenized Jews who, at least in the view of the Maccabees and their sympathizers, refuse to stand against the pressure posed by the outsiders. This is first seen in 1 Macc 1:11-15 when “certain renegades” came and deceived Israel into making a covenant with the Gentiles, resulting in their removing the marks of circumcision and forsaking their covenant with YHWH. Shortly after, Antiochus raided the city, overtook it by force, and then demanded that all of the conquered peoples give up their customs to be united (1 Macc 1:20-41). The author notes that “many even from Israel gladly adopted his [Antiochus’] religion; they sacrificed to idols and profaned the sabbath” (1 Macc 1:43). Antiochus also forbade the Jews from offering sacrifices, observing festivals, and practicing circumcision (1 Macc 1:45-48). Those Jews who forsook the Law even went so far as to betray their Torah-abiding kinsmen, forcing them into hiding (1 Macc 1:51-53). The temple was desecrated, the books of the law burned, and those faithful to the Law condemned to death (1 Macc 1:54-61). In spite of this intense oppression, many in Israel remained faithful (1 Macc 1:62-64). When Mattathias, a descendent of the priestly line of Yehoyarib/Joarib (cf. 1 Macc 2:1), and his sons


157 Goldstein notes, “The language of vs. 11 is a deliberate imitation of Deut 13:7-8 and 31:17; the author intends to show how close those who propose violation of the separation required by Deut 7:2 are to those who propose idol worship” (Jonathan A. Goldstein, I Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (New York: Doubleday, 1976), 200).

158 Of his priestly lineage, Goldstein notes, “Mattathias was a member of the priestly line of Yehoyarib (2:1). Until Antiochus IV appointed an outsider, Menelaus, to the high priesthood (cf. II4:23-25 with 3:4), the office had long been in the hands of the “Oniad” line, who were descended from Jeshua on the line of Yedayah. Later, when members of the Hasmonaean family were raised to the high priesthood, partisans of the Oniad line and others
were rounded up with the rest of the Jews and asked to sacrifice to the king, Mattathias killed a Jew who stepped forward to sacrifice and killed the king’s soldiers along with him, an act compared to the righteous anger of Phinehas (1 Macc 2:15-26; cf. Num. 25:6-15). Mattathias and his followers agreed to fight against the Gentiles, even on the Sabbath, in order to stand against the enemies of God and the apostates in Israel (1 Macc 2:39-48).

On Mattathias’ deathbed, the author records the last words of the father to his sons. He admonishes his sons to be faithful to and zealous for the covenant and to remember the great ancestors of Israel. Here Abraham, Joseph, Phinehas, Joshua, Caleb, David, Elijah, Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael, and Daniel are pointed out as examples of those who were faithful in times of testing and were rewarded as a result of their faithfulness. Of particular significance is the nature of the examples selected by the author. Abraham is venerated throughout Second Temple literature as a model of faithfulness to the Torah and as being rewarded with righteousness through the Aqedah. Joseph, Joshua, Caleb, Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael, and Daniel are all harassed with various oppressions by foreigners who put their faithfulness to viewed them as usurpers. Hence, our author takes care to have Mattathias identify the next example, Phineas, as “our forefather,” thus asserting for his own priestly line eligibility for the high priesthood equal to that of the Oniads. The examples of Joshua, Caleb, and David follow (I 2:54-57)” (Ibid., 8).

159 It was not simply the Gentiles, but also the apostate Hellenistic Jews who the Maccabees opposed. See Elliott, The Survivors of Israel, 221; Uriel Rappaport, “Maccabees, First Book of,” in The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism, ed. John J. Collins and Daniel L. Harlow, 903-905 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010), 904.

160 As Goldstein notes, “The Hasmonaean position allowing defensive warfare on the Sabbath was unacceptable to many Pietists” (Goldstein, I Maccabees, 237).

161 Abraham is faithful in testing and is reckoned unto him as righteousness (ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην), Joseph is faithful and becomes a ruler in Egypt, Phineas’ zeal is rewarded with the covenant of everlasting priesthood (ἐλαβέν διαθήκην ἱερωσύνης αἰωνίας), Joshua was obedient and became a judge over Israel, Caleb testified in the assembly and received an inheritance in the Promised Land, David’s mercy is rewarded with an everlasting kingdom, Elijah’s zeal is rewarded with being taken up to heaven, the three faithful Jews were saved from fire, and Daniel’s innocence is rewarded with deliverance from the lions.

162 The portrayal is, no doubt, anachronistic in that the Law is not yet given and in that Abraham is said to be “reckoned as righteous” in Genesis prior to the trial with Isaac (cf. Gen 15:6; Gen 22).
YHWH to the test. Phinehas and Elijah both encountered opposition in the form of apostasy within Israel. David faced pressures from within and without of Israel and is praised by the author for his “mercy.” While some of the trials faced by these men of Israel’s history were dealt with through non-violent obedience or protest (Abraham, Joseph, Elijah, Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael, and Daniel), others required retaliation to protect the interests of God’s people (Phinehas, Joshua, Caleb, and David). In selecting these examples, the author has not ostracized the passive dissenters within Israel (i.e., the faithful who have not responded with physical violence but do not oppose the Maccabees), though clearly his favor lies with the military offensives launched by the Maccabees. The memory of the deeds of the ancestors of Israel is intended to inspire the Maccabees (and the reader) with zeal for the Law and unwavering faithfulness to God. The result will be the receipt of “great honor and an everlasting name” (1 Macc 2:51, 64) not an eternal existence, but an eternal influence upon future generations. There is great reward (if only temporal) for those who are faithful to the covenant of YHWH with Israel. The final admonition of Mattathias is for his sons to heed the counsel and leadership of Simeon and Judas that they might “rally around you all who observe the law, and avenge the wrong done to your people” (1 Macc 2:67).

Zeitlin suggests, “The Hebrew probably had חסידתו which may mean “in his piety.” The Greek translator followed the usual LXX rendering of חסד as “merciful” (Solomon Zeitlin, The First Book of Maccabees (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), 86). Goldstein sees here a possible defense of the Hasmonean legitimacy in suggesting, “Still other Jews may have viewed the prophecies of a Davidic messiah as voided by sin; see I Kings 2:4; 1 Chron 28:7, 9; Ps 132:11-12; Sir 49:4-5. This last may have been our author’s view. If so, he needed to give no further explanation of why the kingship of the later Hasmonaeans was no usurpation of the rights of the house of David. The house of David no longer had royal rights. Cf. 1 Macc 14:41, bearing in mind that our author believed John Hyrcanus to have been a prophet” (Goldstein, I Maccabees, 241).

As Gathercole reminds, “The personal motivation for Torah observance in 1 Maccabees is the reward of glory and honor. This, as we have seen, is the basis of the injunction to remember the deeds of the ancestors (2:51)... So what is evident here is a strong reward theology. It does not yet contain eschatological reward, though there is a hint in the case of Elijah, whose zeal for the Torah meant that God took him up into heaven. Moreover, other figures mentioned do not receive everlasting rewards: the initial promise for deeds is an everlasting name, and Phinehas receives an everlasting priesthood; David, an everlasting kingdom. These examples, we shall see, will lend themselves later to an eschatological interpretation” (Gathercole, Where is Boasting?, 52).
Throughout the book, there are numerous examples which illustrate the author’s belief that the faithful are those who 1) keep the Law and 2) support the Maccabean revolt.\textsuperscript{165} Those who fail to meet these “requirements” are outside of the people of God and opposed to God’s purposes. In the encounter with Apollonius, it is the “lawless” and “godless” Gentiles who oppose the Maccabees and thus incur the wrath of God who will “crush them before us” (1 Macc 3:10-22). After battle, Judas’ army shows their piety through fasting, mourning, prayer, and reading the book of the law (1 Macc 3:46-57).\textsuperscript{166} In addition, those who were occupied with other affairs were allowed to go home, all done according to the law (1 Macc 3:54-60; cf. Deut 20:5-9). In the conflict with Gorgias, the plight of Judas’ army is further compared to that of Moses and the Hebrews when Pharaoh pursued them to the Red Sea. Judas’ prayer is that “Heaven... [will] remember his covenant with our ancestors and crush this army before us today” (1 Macc 4:10).\textsuperscript{167} The conflict is also compared to the battle between David/Israel and Goliath/Philistia, and Judas prays that the “Savior of Israel” might “strike them down with the sword of those who love you, and let all who know your name praise you with hymns” (1 Macc 4:30-33). After the temple sanctuary is reclaimed, Judas is sure to select “devoted” priests to cleanse it, and directed the building of a new altar and restoration of the temple vessels according

\textsuperscript{165} This notion is affirmed by Goldstein who states, “Indeed, to our author piety by itself was not enough to bring salvation to the Jews. They must also obey the Hasmonaeans, the stock chosen by God to save them. Pious Jews who did not follow the Hasmonaeans were massacred or, worse, incurred heinous sin as traitors” (Goldstein, \textit{I Maccabees}, 12).

\textsuperscript{166} To further illustrate that God had anointed the Maccabees as Israel’s deliverers, when a group of Jews, inspired by the deeds of the Maccabees, go to battle with the Gentile forces in Jamnia, Gorgias and his army kill 2,000 of the Jewish army because “they did not listen to Judas and his brothers” and “did not belong to the family of those men through whom deliverance was given to Israel” (1 Macc 5:55-62). Goldstein notes, “Just as the author of the book of Samuel proved that God had chosen David and his dynasty to rule by exhibiting the failure of the house of Saul and the superiority of the house of David over all competitors, so our author proves the divine election of the Hasmonaean dynasty” (Goldstein, \textit{I Maccabees}, 304). See also, Harrington, \textit{Invitation to the Apocrypha}, 122.

\textsuperscript{167} Thus, as Gathercole recognizes, “in addition to the zealous activism of Mattathias’s program and the conditionality of God’s help in strengthening those who are faithful (e.g., 2.61), there is considerable appeal to God’s gracious election” (Gathercole, \textit{Where is Boasting?}, 58).
to the specifications of the law (1 Macc 4:41-51; cf. Exod 20:25; 25:27; 30:7-8; Deut 27:5-6). The Hasmoneans clearly have the favor of God as his chosen instrument of deliverance for the Jews, illustrated further by the fact that the author states that their victories are associated with their family lineage.168

In numerous examples throughout the book, Israel’s dissenters (i.e. those who break the covenant and/or oppose the Maccabees) are the lawless and wicked, while the Maccabees and their supporters169 are chosen by God and stand within the ranks of the great men of Israel’s history.170 Thus, lawless renegades from within Israel convince the people to forsake the covenant (1 Macc 1:11), oppose the Maccabees militarily (1 Macc 1:34), flee to the Gentiles in fear (1 Macc 2:44; 3:5-6), are equated with the Gentiles (1 Macc 3:20), bring false accusations against the Hasmoneans (1 Macc 7:5; 9:58; 11:25), and seek out the Maccabean sympathizers after the death of Judas (1 Macc 9:23).171 The Maccabees, on the other hand, are lauded for their...

168 Goldstein notes, “Our author then refers to the Hasmonaeans by the phrase zr’ ’nysm (“seed of men”), which I have rendered “family of men.” In the Hebrew Bible the phrase is used only in connection with Samuel, the divinely elected successor of Eli (I Sam 1:11). The phrase may have had eschatological connotations in Hasmonaean circles” (Goldstein, I Maccabees, 305).

169 Gathercole states, “During the crisis of the second century, Judas Maccabeus’s army consisted of “all who observe the Law” (1 Macc 2:67-68), and Simon later settled in Gazara “those who observe the Law” (13:48)” (Gathercole, Where is Boasting?, 186).

170 Elsewhere, the author compares Judas’ situation to that of Hezekiah and the Assyrians (1 Macc 7:39-42; cf. 1 Kings 19), and Jonathan may be viewed as a successor of Josiah. As Goldstein suggests, “Our author may view Jonathan, the man who wiped out the wicked and purged Israel’s dross, as a worthy successor of Josiah (II Kings 23:24) and as a fulfillment of Isa 1:25-26. Indeed, Isaiah goes on in 1:27-28 to predict the liberation of Jerusalem and the rout of the wicked, exactly as we find them in 1 10:7-14” (Goldstein, I Maccabees, 395). In addition, the campaigns against the “sons of Esau” may be construed as a fulfillment of Obad 15-21 as Goldstein has observed (Goldstein, I Maccabees, 294). deSilva also supports this notion in stating, “The result of the author’s creation of linkages between the history written in 1 Maccabees and the Scriptures is the strong impression that the sacred story of Israel continues to be worked out, and God’s age-long purposes for Israel served, in the Maccabean Revolt and its principal players, the members of the house of Mattathias.” (deSilva, Introducing the Apocrypha, 259)

171 As Bickerman summarizes, “Again and again, their complaints cause the Syrians to march against Israel. These complaints are listed even in cases where the government would not have remained inactive anyway, such as during the siege of the citadel in Jerusalem by the Maccabees (1 Macc 6:21; 7:5, 25; 9:58; 11:21; cf. 6:19; 1:21)... the author wants to equate the Jewish opponents of the native dynasty with the pagan enemies of the people” (Elias Bickerman, The God of the Maccabees: Studies on the Meaning and Origin of the Maccabean Revolt (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 18).
opposition to these lawless renegades (1 Macc 3:5-6; 9:69), and Simon is praised for doing “away with all the renegades and outlaws” (1 Macc 14:14). As the Maccabees’ reputation grows, they become allies with Gentile rulers who laud their accomplishments. Jonathan is established as governor and high priest (1 Macc 10:18-20, 65), and thus the offices which had been separate prior to the revolt are now combined in one ruler and would remain so for over a century. In Simon’s plea to the people after the death of Jonathan, he reminds the people of the greatness of his deceased brothers and father who faithfully kept the Law, protected the sanctuary, and died for the preservation of Israel (1 Macc 13:3-6). Jonathan’s death is mourned by “all Israel,” which is clearly either an exaggeration or a recognition that those Jews who opposed the Hasmoneans or forsook the covenant have no place in the people of God (1 Macc 13:26). While Jonathan is appointed and publicly confirmed as high priest in Jerusalem by King Alexander, and later by King Antiochus (1 Macc 10:20; 11:26, 57), it is said that Simon is recognized as such by the people (1 Macc 13:42; 14:35, 41, 47), perhaps an attempt to legitimize the combination of the two offices for the author’s intended audience and future generations. Even in his untimely death, Simon is portrayed as pious and good (1 Macc 16:17), and the book ends with the rise of John Hyrcanus who is described as having gained power, no doubt, through his righteous avenging of the murder of his brother (1 Macc 16:19-24)

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172 So while Harrington states that “[the author]… comes close to equating the Maccabees with the “true Israel” and their Jewish opponents with “lawless men”’” (Harrington, Invitation to the Apocrypha, 124), it seems likely that this is what he in actuality does.

173 According to Goldstein, “By becoming stratēgos and meridarchês, Jonathan probably became military and civil governor of the province of Judaea. The civil and military governor of the province of Samaria appears to have borne the same title (J. AJ 5.5.261, 7.1.287)” (Goldstein, I Maccabees, 417).

174 deSilva affirms the latter in stating, “‘All Israel’ mourns Mattathias’s passing (2:70), thus limiting “Israel” narrowly to those sympathetic to the Hasmonean attacks on apostates and the Gentile occupying forces.” (deSilva, Introducing the Apocrypha, 262)

91
While 1 Maccabees is widely recognized as the most historically accurate account of the revolt available, its bias is clear. Its overarching purpose is to legitimize the Hasmonean dynasty by portraying its opponents as lawless God-forsakers and by showing the Maccabees to be the continuation of Israel’s history and God’s chosen deliverers of his oppressed people. Here it is not just disobedience to the Law, but opposition to God’s chosen deliverers and rulers, that constitutes apostasy. As Goldstein, however, notes, “For our author, all opponents of the Hasmoneans are sinful and wicked. Other pious observers would not have agreed.” The Hasmonean dynasty was not without its controversy, and no few texts in the period contain criticisms of the Jerusalem priesthood. Josephus records, for example, the enmity between the Hasmoneans and the Pharisees, who, due to a dispute between a member of the group and John Hyrcanus, had their traditions banned, much to the outrage of the Pharisees and their supporters, who Josephus suggests were numerous (Ant. 13.10). The position expressed in the writing of I Maccabees no doubt applied to later Hasmonean rulers in which any who were discontent with the dynasty were depicted as hating their nation or transgressing the Law. It is also a frequent suggestion that the Wicked Priest mentioned at Qumran was a Hasmonean priest-king, such as

175 Bickerman has suggested that there are actually four streams of traditions concerning the revolt found in the various historical records. “As we can see, they [the sources] offer no less than four completely different answers to our question. For the older Jewish conception (Daniel and the letter of the Jerusalem community of 143), which is also characteristic of II Maccabees, the persecution was a chastisement brought about by the sin of the people. I Maccabees, i.e., the chronicle of the Hasmonaean dynasty, sees in the religious oppression another piece of evidence for the arrogance of the Gentiles… The official Seleucid version justifies the measures taken by the king through the rebellion of the Jews. A later generation glorified his policy as a determined struggle against Jewish barbarism” (Bickerman, The God of the Maccabees, 23).

176 Goldstein, I Maccabees, 330.

177 Thus, Josephus noted that the Pharisees “have so great a power over the multitude, that when they say anything against the king, or against the high priest, they are presently believed” (Ant. 10.10.5). It was not until the reign of Alexandra Salome when the Pharisees regained their influence among the ruling class (Ant. 13.16.2; J.W. 1.5.2).

178 See Bickerman, The God of the Maccabees, 18.
Jonathan, Simon, or Alexander Janneus. The Qumran community took issue with the Jerusalem priesthood and considered themselves, not the Hasmoneans and their supporters, as the “true Israel.” In addition, the book itself seems to indicate that the opposition posed by the Hellenizers was itself a sizeable group, though this could be due to their alliances with the Gentiles. The Hasmoneans thus ended up being in the center of the spectrum of Judaism with the Hellenistic Jews representing a progressive form of religion described as syncretistic (i.e., idolatrous) and the pious who opposed the regime criticizing their lax handling of the priesthood.

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180 This will be discussed further in the section on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Goldstein has suggested that there may be anti-Qumranian statements in 1 Maccabees, noting, “The Qumran sect spoke of its own members as the “poor” or “humble” and called one of its own important figures dōrēš hattōrāḥ, “he who sought to fulfill the Torah,” or “the interpreter of the Torah”… Our author here may be attacking the sect for its opposition to the Hasmonaeans: Hasmonean Simon is the true dōrēš hattōrāḥ, and the true “humble” are not his opponents but his beneficiaries” (Goldstein, I Maccabees, 491).

181 Hellerman notes, however, that “Comparable attitudes and behaviors are conspicuously rare among Jews some two centuries later. Persons who abandon Jewish identity in favor of overt Hellenism, after the manner of Menelaus and his followers (Tiberius Julius Alexander, for example), stand out as exceptional among first-century Jews. Jewish writings of Palestinian provenance produced during and after the crisis exhibit, moreover, a rather strident texture where symbols of Jewish identity are concerned. Discussions about circumcision, the sanctity of the temple, and laws relating to food, festivals, and Sabbath abound in the literature. These practices, moreover, are often explicitly associated with Israel’s “otherness,” vis-à-vis the Gentiles, as the chosen people of God” (Joseph Hellerman, “Purity and Nationalism in Second Temple Literature: 1-2 Maccabees and Jubilees,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 46:3 (2003): 402).

182 As Elliott summarizes, “Much of what went on in Jerusalem can accordingly be explained as a result of interaction between two types of Judaism: an establishment Judaism that was very progressive and may even have encouraged a thoroughgoing Hellenistic reform in Jerusalem and a traditional, conservative Judaism that would eventually resist the changes to be brought onto the cult and the people and provoke the events about to unfold in the Maccabeans revolt” (Elliott, *Survivors of Israel*, 196). See also Elliott, *Survivors of Israel*, 222.

183 As will be discussed below, a large measure of the discontent associated with the Hasmoneans was due to their acceptance or advocacy of the combination of the offices of high priest and king/governor and what was viewed as their corruption of those offices. Of this, Elliott notes, “In other ways Jonathan and his successor Simon departed from tradition and created offense, the former by his acceptance of the office of high priest from the hand of Alexander Balas (152 B.C., 1 Macc 10:21), and the latter by accepting this position (Ant. 13.213; Wars 1.53) and
The depiction then of the “elect” in 1 Maccabees is clearly limited to the family of the Maccabees (and the subsequent Hasmonean rulers) and those who follow the Torah and the leadership of these chosen rulers. Here again it is a subset of the Jews, socially and religiously defined rather than ethnically so, who are depicted as the true chosen Israel of God.\textsuperscript{184} While the whole Torah is assumed as binding by the author, and illustrated by the ways in which the Maccabees execute their restoration plan, Rappaport notes, “The Jewish laws should be obeyed unconditionally. Most important are the ones that the persecutors forced the Jews to transgress: those pertaining to circumcision, Sabbath, diet, and the purity of the Temple and its cult.”\textsuperscript{185} This is not to the exclusion of the other laws, but the emphasis is clearly intended to demarcate the perhaps also by donning the purpose robe as a symbol of royal claims” (Elliott, \textit{Survivors of Israel}, 224). Harrington similarly asserts, “While traditional Jewish religious observance was the rallying point for the Maccabees and their supporters, they gradually brought Jews into even closer contact with their neighbors. Their usurpation of the high priesthood from the Zadokite line was a bold and controversial move, one that horrified the traditionalists such as the group that eventually produced the Qumran Scrolls” (Harrington, \textit{Invitation to the Apocrypha}, 135). Schofield and VanderKam have, however, argued that the Hasmoneans may not have actually been non-Zadokites as many have assumed. As they summarize, they suggest that the association with Phinehas, association with the line of J(eh)oiarib, lack of specific connections at Qumran with the Wicked Priest and concerns over illegitimacy of lineage, and Josephus’ story concerning the schism between Hyrcanus and the Pharisees lacking any mention to specific lineage issues (though this may be insinuated). Based on these factors, they suggest there is more evidence to indicate that the Hasmonean’s were of Zadokite descent than there is to the contrary. While this is possible, they also admit that the Hasmoneans could have professed their Zadokite heritage as propaganda which was contrary to reality. Alison Schofeld and James C. VanderKam, “Were the Hasmoneans Zadokites?” \textit{Journal of Biblical Literature} 124:1 (2005): 73-87. It may be, then, that the combination and corruption of these offices is what offended a number of the pious objectors rather than the taking of the priestly line from the Zadokites.

\textsuperscript{184} Elliott argues that the “Maccabean movement, for its part, was nationalistic \textit{from the beginning}, so much so that this commitment to a national program is partly to be blamed for the fact that those who eventually inherited the Maccabean vocation—under the rubric “Hasmoneans”—became as offensive to the pious as the syncretism that the movement originally had attempted to overthrow had been offensive” (Elliott, \textit{Survivors of Israel}, 223). While true in that the Maccabean movement had political, social, and religious foundations, the movement still envisioned a portion of the Jews as “outsiders” based upon their chosen criteria similar to texts such as Baruch, \textit{Jubilees} or the \textit{Testaments}. The difference here is the Maccabees/Hasmoneans held the power in Jerusalem while these other groups apparently did not. Hellerman has, for instance, noted the similarities between 1 and 2 Maccabees and \textit{Jubilees} in that these books “draw implicit and explicit connections between Jewish purity practices, on the one hand, and the election and preservation of national Israel as the people of Yahweh, on the other” (Hellerman, “Purity and Nationalism in Second Temple Literature,” 421). Here again “national” Israel, however, must be defined as those who adhere to the standards of inclusion expressed by the various authors represented.

\textsuperscript{185} Rappaport, “Maccabees, First Book of,” 904.
“outsiders” and lift up the Maccabees as the leaders of the faithful Jews, the “true Israel.”

Those Jews who are marked as “outsiders” are apostates who have forsaken the covenant of God through their disobedience and/or their rejection of God’s appointed rulers. Those who are within the chosen people of God are those who remain faithful to the God of Israel by their obedience to the Law as well as by their recognition of the Maccabees/Hasmoneans as their divinely appointed priest-kings.

2 Maccabees (c. 125 BCE)

The book of 2 Maccabees, like its counterpart discussed above, addresses the events surrounding the Maccabean revolt. Unlike 1 Maccabees, however, the book focuses primarily on Judas Maccabees and ends the story with the restoration of the temple. The epitomist cites Jason of Cyrene as his source for the work and states that his version is a condensed form of the five volumes which Jason composed (2 Macc 2:23). The accounts of the exploits of Judas are preceded by two letters written to the Jews in Egypt admonishing them to observe Hanukkah along with their Judean kinsmen. The author, more so than 1 Maccabees, emphasizes the Deuteronomistic view of cause and effect in which the judgment of the Jews is a result of their disobedience and their blessing a result of their faithfulness to God, much like the S-E-R cycles found in the Old Testament and other post-biblical works.

In previous scholarship the book was often derided as rather unhistorical in comparison to 1 Maccabees, though this is an opinion that has by and large changed in recent decades.

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186 This is, again, as Hellerman notes, to identify “Israel’s “otherness,” vis-à-vis the Gentiles, as the chosen people of God” (Hellerman, “Purity and Nationalism in Second Temple Literature,” 402) as well as to identify those Jews who truly belong to God’s people verses those who do not.
Though the theological interpretations of events are more prolific here than in 1 Maccabees, and there are historical inaccuracies present (such as the attempted conversion of Antiochus IV to Judaism or the letter ascribed to Judas), the book in places offers a more accurate account than its Judean counterpart.\textsuperscript{187} The compositional history of the book is complex in that it incorporates two letters in the introduction and is an abridgement, likely with additions in the form of theological reflections, of the work of Jason. The character of the work is also thoroughly Hellenistic in terms of style and vocabulary,\textsuperscript{188} which presents a bit of an irony considering its message of the dangers which Hellenism poses to the Jewish people.\textsuperscript{189} The books as it stands in this “final form” emphasizes God’s role in the deliverance of the people of Israel from their oppressors.\textsuperscript{190} This emphasis is very much formed through the lens of Deut 32 with an emphasis

\textsuperscript{187} See David S. Williams, “Recent Research in 2 Maccabees,” \textit{Currents in Biblical Research}, 2:1 (2003): 69-83. As Schwartz argues, “if we avoid the psychological fallacy, revise the chronology, and bear in mind that even a religious author may tell the historical truth, even if he or she packages it in religious interpretation and decorates it with religious motifs, there is room to reopen the discussion of our book’s historical worth” (Daniel R. Schwartz, \textit{2 Maccabees} (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 39).

\textsuperscript{188} As Schwartz describes, “The Hellenistic Jewish author thus indicated to his readers that the Jews are a civilized and respectable people organized around a \textit{polis}, the central bearer of Greek culture. Correspondingly, the book terms Jews “citizens” (\textit{politai}; e.g., 4:5, 50; 5:6, 8), complains that a villain changed Jerusalem’s “constitution” (4:11), summarizes persecutions as prohibitions “to live as citizens (\textit{politeueshai}; 6:1) according to the laws of God,” and contrasts the “urbane” Jews with their “barbarian” enemies (2:21; 5:22; 10:4; 13:9; 15:2)” (Daniel R. Schwartz, “Maccabees, Second Book of,” in \textit{The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism}, ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow, 905-7 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010), 905).

\textsuperscript{189} Thus, Himmelfarb, among others, has recognized the irony of 2 Maccabees anti-Hellenism language while message is very much influence by Greek literary style and ethics. (Martha Himmelfarb, “Judaism and Hellenism in 2 Maccabees,” \textit{Poetics Today} 19:1 (Spring 1998): 19-40) Schwartz, however, has also noted that though 1 Maccabees is stylistically more similar to Jewish canonical works and 2 Maccabees to Greek works, the core of 2 Maccabees “is informed by a central biblical chapter, Deut. 32. Add to this the oft-noted fact that God, as in biblical historiography, is very obviously and even sensationaly involved in the story of 2 Maccabees, in contrast to that of 1 Maccabees” (Daniel R. Schwartz, “On Something Biblical about 2 Maccabees,” in \textit{Biblical Perspectives: Early Use and Interpretation of the Bible in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls}, ed. Michael E. Stone and Esther G. Chazon, 223-232 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 232).

on the role of foreigners in the punishment of Israel for their sin and their deliverance arising only after their punishment has been meted out.191

The purpose of the book has likewise been debated. The book clearly attempts to justify and encourage the participation of Egyptian Jews in the observance of Hanukkah, and thus adapted the work for this purpose.192 Doran’s view has also been positively received, which argues that the book ought to be considered temple propaganda, a genre in which a holy city and its temple, specifically, are defended by its patron deity against foreign attackers.193 Goldstein has suggested that the book was formed as an anti-Hasmonean response to the propaganda of I Maccabees,194 though his proposal has been disputed.195 The books clearly thus serves at least cultic and theological purposes which may be seen as primary, and may also serve a political purpose secondarily. Though falling within the period and scope of this study, its impact upon “common” Judaism, or specifically Palestinian Judaism, is uncertain, and thus it theological program must be tentatively incorporated in this study.196

191 Thus, Nickelsburg comments, “The organizing principle for the contents is a historical scheme whose roots are found in the latter chapters of Deuteronomy. It presumes a close correlation between piety and prosperity. Obedience to the commandments issues in the blessings of the covenant; disobedience brings on the curses” (George W. E. Nickelsburg, “1 and 2 Maccabees—Same Story, Different Meaning,” Concordia Theological Monthly 42 (1971): 52).

192 See Schwartz, “Maccabees, Second Book of,” 906-7. Schwartz argues that it may also have encouraged the observance of “Nicanor’s Day” which is mentioned more often in the narrative of the book than Hanukkah (Daniel R. Schwartz, 2 Maccabees (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 8, 168).


195 For a discussion, see Williams, “Recent Research in 2 Maccabees.”

196 Schwartz, for example, notes, “Apart from the ancient author of 4 Maccabees and the tenth-century author of Josipon, who used it extensively, there is little trace of any Jews reading 2 Maccabees prior to the modern period” (Schwartz, “Maccabees, Second Book of,” 905).
Following the introductory letters, the book begins with an idyllic description of the state of Jerusalem. The city was “in unbroken peace and the laws were strictly observed” (2 Macc 3:1). Throughout the book, the immediate fate of the people hangs upon the quality of their leaders. Thus, here, the peace and prosperity being enjoyed is “because of the piety of the high priest Onias and his hatred of wickedness” (2 Macc 3:1). Trouble arises throughout the book, however, because of certain instigators who bring turmoil upon the city and its inhabitants. The trouble begins with a certain Simon, who, in opposition to the pious Onias, reports to the governor of the region that the temple held a great treasury which could come under the king’s possession (2 Macc 3:2-6). Heliodorus is sent by the governor, Apollonius, to inspect the temple (2 Macc 3:7-14). The city is quite grieved over this state of affairs, but Heliodorus’ visit is disrupted by a heavenly manifestation, brought about by “the Sovereign of spirits,” which strikes Heliodorus down on the ground, causing the men to recognize “clearly the sovereign power of God” (2 Macc 3:15-28). Heliodorus is spared through the intercession of Onias, and he recognizes and declares that the power of God is the protector of the city (2 Macc 3:29-40).

The narrative changes, however, in chapter 4. While the Sovereign God came to the aid of the temple in chapter 3, the troubles of chapter 4 bring God’s judgment upon Jerusalem. Since his first scheme failed, Simon turned to slandering Onias and accused him of treason (2 Macc 4:1-6). After Seleucus died, Onias was ousted from the priesthood by Jason who bought it with a significant sum. Jason then began to construct a gymnasium in the city and “at once shifted his

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197 Even in the introduction, however, God’s protection of Israel is affirmed. He delivers them “from every evil,” he “chose the ancestors and consecrated them,” and the prayer of chapter 1 also pleas for him to “gather together our scattered people, set free those who are slaves among the Gentiles, look on those who are rejected and despised, and let the Gentiles know that you are our God” (2 Macc 1:24-29). The sentiment here is also repeated in 2 Macc 2:16-18.

198 Or, as Schwartz states, “Our problems began because some nincompoop started a feud with such a wonderful high priest” (Schwartz, 2 Maccabees, 189).
compatriots over to the Greek way of life” (2 Macc 4:11). Though the author does not specify how, he comments that Jason established customs contrary to the laws of Jerusalem, and “induced the noblest of the young men to wear the Greek hat” of Hermes who was the patron deity of athletic competitions. The extreme Hellenism of Jason led even to the priests being “no longer intent upon their service at the altar” but rather preferring to take part in the Greek games (2 Macc 4:12-17). The trouble which would then come upon Jerusalem is justified in the author’s mind because of the wickedness and irreverence for the divine laws which had overtaken Jerusalem. Jason even sent funds for the sacrifice to Hercules, though his envoy used the money for other purposes as they deemed this as inappropriate (2 Macc 4:18-20). Jason was, however, soon outbid for the priesthood by Menelaus, the brother of Simon, the original instigator, who himself possessed “no qualifications for the high priesthood” (2 Macc 4:25). The treachery continued as Menelaus gave away and sold some of the temple vessels and arranged for the death of Onias (2 Macc 4:30-34).201 Andronicus, who carried out Menelaus’ plan, is led

199 Schwartz states, “The issue was a more general one of introducing “Greek style” (v. 10), which competed with an marginalized Jewish practices” (Schwartz, 2 Maccabees, 222). deSilva agrees that this was likely either outright apostasy or dangerous syncretism (deSilva, Introducing the Apocrypha, 275). Goldstein further comments, “Jason the Oniad here wishes to bring Jews of Jerusalem, under his own leadership, into Antiochus’ scheme for an “Antiochene republic” in imitation of the Roman republic… Jason might hold that the Torah permitted association with Greeks and adoption of Greek institutions, provided no idolatry was involved,” though rigorsists, such as found in the book of Jubilees, “told Jews to shun all gentiles, including Greeks” (Jonathan A. Goldstein, II Maccabees (New York: Doubleday & Company Inc., 1983). The author seems to indicate here, however, that there was possible idolatry involved, whether knowingly practiced or not.

200 Though Jason held the office of priest, he was, as Elliott observes, “backed by a group of Hellenists (1 Macc 4:14; cf. 1:11). Cf. also 2 Macc 4:9, where these are given the name “Antiochenes.” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 215 n.96).

201 This treachery offended even the Gentiles who were given the name “Antiochenes.” (Schwartz, Maccabees, Second Book of, 905). Here the Jewish leaders act in ways unfitting even for the Gentiles. They have made a mockery of the religious institutions of Israel and have encouraged and partaken in syncretistic practices which pose a danger to the distinctness of their Jewish identity and offend the laws of their ancestors.
naked through the city to the spot where the crime was committed and, in an example of “realized justice,” is killed and “repaid with the punishment he deserved” (2 Macc 4:38). Civil turmoil grew within the city, resulting in a clash between the people and the followers of Menelaus, though the result, through an act of bribery, was the acquittal of Menelaus and the execution of those who had rightly opposed him (2 Macc 4:39-50).202

After hearing a false rumor that Antiochus died, Jason led a failed assault on the city, attempting to take back the high priesthood from Menelaus, and was forced into exile where he later died exile, having “no funeral of any sorts and no place in the tomb of his ancestors” (2 Macc 5:10). News of the turmoil reaches Antiochus who believes the region is in revolt, prompting a massacre of the people and the profaning of the temple at the consent of Menelaus (2 Macc 5:11-15). The author here reveals that God has allowed this punishment to come upon the people because they were involved in many sins (2 Macc 5:17-18). The temple was chosen for the sake of the people, and thus it shared in their fate of judgment.203

The complete “Hellenization” of the Jews is attempted shortly after these events, and the Jews are told to abandon “their ancestors and no longer to live by the laws of God; also to pollute the temple in Jerusalem and to call it the temple of Olympian Zeus” (2 Macc 6:1-2). Cultic prostitution infiltrates the temple, the altar is defiled, and the people are thus prevented from observing the Sabbath and festivals (2 Macc 6:3-6). The author illustrates the dire nature of the

202 Schwartz notes, “As in v. 41, it is important for the author to emphasize just where the guilt does and does not lie” (Schwartz, 2 Maccabees, 244).

203 And so Schwartz states, “our book clearly views the Temple as of only secondary importance. This is explicit at 5:19, where the author pedantically explains that God’s choice of the Temple is secondary to his choice of the people” (Ibid., 906).
situation with several stories of martyrdom: first of two mothers and their circumcised babies (2 Macc 6:10), those who left the city to observe the Sabbath (2 Macc 6:11), righteous Eleazar (2 Macc 6:18-31), and the seven brothers and their mother (2 Macc 7:1-42). The author prefaces the most intense of the stories with the disclaimer that these acts of judgment were deserved and show God’s mercy toward Israel since he does not allow their sins to reach full measure as he does with the nations (2 Macc 6:12-17).

Several important issues surface in the martyrdom tales. First, as noted by Goldstein, the martyrs “are classified according to the principles for which they give up their lives: circumcision (vs. 10 and I 1:60-61), the Sabbath (vs. 11 and I 2:29-38), and the dietary laws, including the prohibition on eating the meat of a pagan sacrifice (vss. 18-31 and 7:1-41; I 1:62-63).” It is specifically because of their faithfulness to these laws (all of which would have resonated strongly with Diaspora Jews since they were not dependent upon the temple life) that these martyrs die. In the case of the seven brothers, specific mention of bodily resurrection is made, apparently as a reward for their faithfulness (cf. 2 Macc 7:9, 11, 14, 23, 29). Mention is also made of the martyrs’ deaths bringing about Israel’s restoration to God and his judgment upon Antiochus (cf. 2 Macc 7:14, 17-19, 31-38). It is clear through these chapters that Israel as a nation has deserved its punishment and that, in spite of their faithfulness, the faithful are not exempt from the suffering and their deaths actually serve as a catalyst for the nation’s restoration. Thus, Bartlett summarizes, “The author saw the martyrs’ suffering as more than just an example to their compatriots; it made a difference to the progress of events. It did not lessen

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204 Goldstein notes here that anti-Hasmonaean sentiments may have been responsible for the composition or inclusion of the story of the seven sons and mother who were martyred (Goldstein, II Maccabees, 299-303). Unlike in 1 Maccabees, however, here those who do not fight against the Seleucids are not disparaged because of it.

205 Harrington, Invitation to the Apocrypha, 149; VanLandingham, Judgment and Justification, 137.

206 Goldstein, II Maccabees, 278.
God’s anger with his people; but by the brothers’ acceptance of the discipline God’s mercy could come *speedily* and his *anger* could be ended.\(^{207}\) Furthermore, Harrington adds that the author “interprets their martyrdoms as atoning for the people’s sin and so making it possible for Judas to reclaim the temple and restore it to its rightful place in Israel.”\(^{208}\)

The final brother indicates in his speech that though the Jews fall under God’s punishment now, he will soon restore them and Antiochus will subsequently be punishment (2 Macc 7:30-38). The death of the martyrs is seen as bringing to an end God’s judgment on Israel, and in chapter 8, the restoration of Israel begins through the efforts of Judas and his men.\(^{209}\) The remaining chapters primarily recount the military victories of Judas and his men which occur against the odds because God is now on “their side.” When the Jews face insurmountable odds, they plea to God for deliverance, and he answers them (2 Macc 8:1-4; 9:18-21, 23-24; 10: 1, 16-17, 25-31, 35-38; 11:6, 9-11; 12:5-6, 15-16, 28, 36-38, 41-43; 14:15, 34-36; 15:14-27, 29-30, 34). The pattern here is fairly consistent in that Judas and his men first plea to God for victory in the face of their enemies and then praise him for their victories, all the while being dutifully

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\(^{209}\) So deSilva aptly notes, “Just as the sin of individuals brought collective punishment, so the covenant loyalty of individuals can effect reversal… The martyrs take their place alongside Judas and his warriors as heroes of the Jewish people, whose courage and dedication contributed something essential to the reestablishment of religious and political independence” (deSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha*, 275).
observant of the regulations of the Torah. While Judas enjoyed continued military success, God himself dealt with Antiochus, inflicting him with an incurable disease which brought much suffering upon him (2 Macc 9:5-12, 28).

In some respects, the message of 2 Maccabees concerning the status of God’s chosen is the same. It was because of the pervasive Hellenism that corrupted the leadership, priesthood, and people of Israel, that judgment came upon Israel. For both 1 and 2 Maccabees, the trouble is caused by, or at least begins with, key instigators, though the author acknowledges that these sinful leaders have a following within Israel, however large it may have been. In 2 Maccabees, however, it is primarily the instigators, and not the Gentiles, who are at least initially to blame, and the judgment which came was deserved (cf. 2 Macc 2 Macc 5:17-20; 6:1-17). 1 Maccabees also has little indication of judgment which comes in the afterlife, while 2 Maccabees emphasizes in numerous places the blessings which the faithful will receive, presumably in the

210 See Daniel R. Schwartz, “Maccabees, Second Book of,” in The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism, ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow, 905-7 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010), 906; Schwartz, 2 Maccabees, 282. Faithfulness to the Sabbath, for example, is emphasized over and above its function in 1 Maccabees, where those who fight see no option but to fight on the Sabbath. Thus deSilva writes, “The epitomator has preserved those portions of the history that elevate Sabbath observance, circumcision, dietary regulations, and the like as inviolable tenets of the covenant, to be kept even under pain of death rather than violated” (deSilva, Introducing the Apocrypha, 271).

211 Though not all of the instigators are said to meet a deserving fate, Antiochus, Menelaus (2 Macc 13:3-8), Lysimachus (2 Macc 4:42), and Nicanor (2 Macc 15:28-36) all meet horrific fates which are seen as instances of “realized” justice in the book. See Gathercole, Where is Boasting?, 54.

212 Bartlett, The First and Second Books of the Maccabees, 265. Schwartz suggests that, “whether or not he was aware of it, our author has suppressed evidence both for Jewish traitors and for fighting among Jews—which fits the diasporan tendency… to limit the number of Jewish villains as much as possible” (Schwartz, 2 Maccabees, 325). Zeitlin suggests, for example that the Jews “compelled” to join Nicanor may have actually done so voluntarily in opposition to the Hasmonian agenda (Solomon Zeitlin, The Second Book of Maccabees, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), 239). Schwartz, however, disagrees in noting that such a view “runs counter to the plain wording of the text, and also requires us to assume that loyalist Jews who willingly supported the Seleucid cause nevertheless took the Sabbath so seriously that they would allow it to interfere with military operations” (Schwartz, 2 Maccabees, 497).

213 Throughout 2 Maccabees it is the schemes of sinful Jews which prompt the intervention of the Seleucid leaders and Gentiles. So Simon (2 Macc 3:4-6, 12; 4:1-6), Jason (2 Macc 4:7-19, 23; 5:5-10), Menelaus (2 Macc 4:23-27, 32-34, 39, 43-50; 5:15-20, 23; 13:3-8), Lysimachus (2 Macc 4:39-42), and Alcimus (14:3-14, 26-27) are often the instigators or source of the trouble which comes upon the Jews.
eschaton. Though the entire nation presently shares in the same fate of judgment, regardless of their personal status, the faithful who die have a hope in resurrection that the unfaithful, Jews and Gentiles alike, do not. 214 As Zeitlin suggests, this point is illustrated by “The fourth victim [who] told Antiochus that he himself would be resurrected by God but not Antiochus; only pious people would be resurrected, not sinners.” 215 While in some cases (Heliodorus, Lysimachus, Antiochus, Menelaus, and Nicanor) justice comes swiftly, the book deals only implicitly with the judgment of the wicked, and does not indicate that the unfaithful outnumber the faithful. 216 This contrasts not only the view of 1 Maccabees, where the faithful are limited to the Hasmonean supporters, 217 but also most of the literature of the period. As VanLandingham surmises, 2 Macc 4:10-16 and 5:17-18 present an exception to the normal pattern of Second Temple literature, which is that the

preponderance of these texts surveyed state or strongly imply that most Jews would be damned at the Last Judgment. Many texts are explicit that the Last Judgment is the time when the wicked element is removed from Israel and the world. Those righteous enough to merit survival or resurrection into the next age will be cleansed, purified, and forgiven.

214 Thus, VanLandingham recognizes, “Unlike in Third Isaiah and Malachi, God’s wrath in 2 Maccabees does not discriminate between the righteous and the wicked people of Jerusalem… the moral and cultic defilement creates a corporeal miasma that clings not only to the sinner but spreads and attaches to everyone and everything around the immediate vicinity” (VanLandingham, Judgment and Justification, 136). See also deSilva, Introducing the Apocrypha, 275; Bartlett, The First and Second Books of the Maccabees, 265, 273.


216 So Goldstein notes, “The author of First Maccabees was glad to tell how the Hasmonaeans fought against such wicked persons. Jason or the abridger seems to have preferred to focus on the righteous martyrs at this point, leaving the presence of the wicked to be inferred from 8:6-7, 33, and 10:15 (cf. 2:21)” (Goldstein, II Maccabees, 270).

217 While 2 Maccabees is decidedly not pro-Hasmonean as is 1 Maccabees, whether or not it was intended as an anti-Hasmonean work is unclear. Thus, as deSilva notes, “The book’s emphasis falls on God’s deliverance through any and all agents God chooses, rather than on the contribution of a particular family to the well-being of Israel” (deSilva, Introducing the Apocrypha, 274). Nickelsburg suggests that the author’s “silence about Jonathan and Simon may well indicate that he was opposed to the Hasmonean high priesthood. This need not mean that his version of the story was intended to set straight what he considered to be the distortions of the account related in 1 Maccabees… The Deuteronomic scheme provides the framework within which to see how this piety and God’s reward of it are played out. The anti-Hasmonean tone of the work and its favorable view toward the Romans suggest that it was likely composed during the reign of Alexander Janneus” (George W. E. Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah, 108).
This age, sometimes identified as the messianic age, will be characterized as an age of righteousness.\textsuperscript{218}

For the author of 2 Maccabees, there is no indication as to the number of faithful and unfaithful Jews, and even the Gentiles are often portrayed favorably, with key persons and groups from among the Jews and Gentiles identified as sinners. What is clear, however, is that it is the uncompromising Jew who is safely identified among God’s people, and though this does not exempt them from physical suffering now, they will enjoy resurrection and restoration in the future. So VanLandingham again notes, “The criterion [for salvation] is obedience to God’s laws, with martyrdom especially guaranteeing one’s resurrection. Twice (vv. 23 and 29) the promise of future life is attributed to God’s mercy. As discussed above, this mercy does not mean that the martyrs do not deserve vindication by means of resurrection.”\textsuperscript{219} In 2 Macc 1:25, the author notes that it was God who made the ancestors his chosen people (ὁ ποιήσας τοὺς πατέρας ἐκλεκτοὺς). Those Jews who abandoned the laws of the ancestors (μεταβαίνειν ἀπὸ τῶν πατρίων νόμων), thus likewise must be seen as forfeiting the covenant, the God of the covenant, and the blessings of the covenant. The point is illustrated further in 2 Macc 12:40-45 where Judas makes supplication and sacrifice for the fallen Jews who were found with the idols of Jamnia beneath their tunics. The purpose of his actions were that “he was looking to the splendid reward that is laid up for those who fall asleep in godliness... Therefore he made atonement for the dead, so that they might be delivered from their sin” (2 Macc 12:45).\textsuperscript{220}

\textsuperscript{218} VanLandingham, \textit{Judgment and Justification}, 172.

\textsuperscript{219} VanLandingham, \textit{Judgment and Justification}, 137. Gathercole seems to agree with the sentiment in noting, “First, resurrection comes to those who are faithful to Torah... Second, the reward comes in the form of ‘poetic justice’: that God will give life back to the martyrs because they were willing to give it up for him” (Gathercole, \textit{Where is Boasting?}, 54).

\textsuperscript{220} The author’s depiction of Judas’ sacrifice is particularly interesting considering the Hasmoneans were known for their opposition to such views. So Goldstein writes, “Jason believes that the sin offering was brought to secure expiation for the dead!... Jason was driven to this kind of interpretation because he firmly believed in
Resurrection, reward, and piety here go hand-in-hand. Those who sin and forsake the covenant without making restitution will not enjoy the rewards of the resurrection life. So, again, deSilva summarizes succinctly: “fidelity to the covenant ensures peace, sin against the covenant brings punishment, and repentance and the renewal of obedience leads to restoration.”221 The fathers of Israel, and thus Israel, are God’s chosen people, but the individuals who comprise this corporate body only remain in it through their faithfulness to the covenant, and thus to God.

Summary of Pre-100 BCE Writings

This survey of these Jewish texts has revealed some common threads within the framework of Second Temple thought concerning election. First, two aspects of “individual” election were discovered. Frequently the description of individuals as “elect ones” emphasizes their worth or character more than their soteriological standing (e.g., Ben-Sira, Testaments, Additional Psalms of David). In some cases their “electing” is preceded by their righteous behavior, thus showing the conditional nature of the covenant. In other instances individuals identified as “elect ones” are identified as such because they stand for a corporate group or body and thus it is not their standing, but rather the standing of the group which they represent, that is in focus (e.g., Jubilees, Testaments). Throughout these texts election is consistently pictured as conditional, dependent upon faithfulness to the covenant stipulations. In most texts either an implicit (e.g., Tobit, Ben-Sira, Baruch) or explicit (e.g., Jubilees, Testaments, 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees) recognition of only a portion of ethnic Israel being included among the people of resurrection and had to justify his own approval of Judas, a member of a family notorious for rejecting the doctrine” (Goldstein, II Maccabees, 450).

221 deSilva, Introducing the Apocrypha, 273.
God exists. The variation here is not the fact that some Jews are outside of the covenant because of their sin but rather how many Jews fall outside of the people of God. While some texts explicitly indicate that only a small number of Jews are among the faithful (e.g., *Jubilees*, *Testaments*, 1 Maccabees), other texts are either ambiguous or seem to indicate that the faithful are not necessarily a minority (Tobit, Ben-Sira, Baruch, 2 Maccabees). The other significant variation found is what disqualifies one from their covenant status. Circumcision, piety, Sabbath observance, ritual purity, resistance of intermarriage with Gentiles, abstention from sexual immorality, observing the proper calendar and festivals, resisting Hellenization, and support of the Hasmoneans are all variously applied as requisites for “belongingness.” Thus, it can be summarized that the overwhelming picture of election developed thus far is that it is conditional and corporate (with individuals mentioned as “elect” as a means of character description, as illustration of the conditional nature of election, or as representing a corporate entity), with significant differences existing concerning what the necessary or appropriate conditions for inclusion may have been. The struggle thus seems to have been, in the literature surveyed thus far, in defining how to identify the faithful, due in large part to the tension created by living under the influence of Hellenization.
ELECTION IN SECOND TEMPLE JEWISH TEXTS:
100 BCE – TURN OF THE ERA WRITINGS

The next period under consideration involves those texts written between 100 BCE and the turn of the era. Though less extensively tumultuous than the previous period, which saw the fluctuation of foreign domination, revolt, and much consternation in Palestine, this period had its own unique challenges for the Jewish people. The Hasmonean dynasty ended with much infighting among the people, as the sects mentioned by Josephus had become well-established and formed their own political alliances. The dynasty ended with Pompey’s defeat of Jerusalem, which ushered in the period of Roman rule. The texts in this period thus reflect both the internal and external stressors of this period. Sharp divisions are thus frequently developed between the Jews, identifying the faithful and elect over and against the apostates, who sins are variously described. The texts thus continue to operate within a primarily corporate and conditional framework of election.

Psalms of Solomon (c. 100 BCE)

The Psalms of Solomon have received much attention from Jewish and New Testament scholars because they contain early Jewish ideas about messianism and were thought, prior to the discovery of Qumran, to be a product of the Pharisees. These psalms, unlike many texts of the Pseudepigrapha, can be situated within a somewhat precise historical situation. With the discovery of the DSS, most now question identifying the author(s) with the Pharisees,¹ and many scholars...

¹ Lane, for example, defended the Pharisaical authorship of the Psalms and saw it as valuable for placing Paul within a Jewish context (William L. Lane, “Paul’s Legacy from Pharisaism: Light from the Psalms of Solomon,” Concordia Journal, July (1982): 130-140). The assumed Pharisaical origin, or at least pharisaic tone, of the Psalms of Solomon has led to several comparisons with Paul’s own theology of justification (See for example,
conclude that the identity of the group simply cannot be precisely defined other than that they were a devout Jewish sect who had separated themselves, either physically or in terms of their identity, from the Jerusalem establishment.\(^2\) The \textit{Psalms} can be dated with fair certainty to the first century BCE, based upon both internal and external evidences.\(^3\)

There is more agreement over the purpose of the \textit{Psalms}, though some disagreements are also present.\(^4\) Most agree that the \textit{Psalms} community cannot be precisely identified with any of Josephus’ categories of Judaism. The community apparently existed in close proximity to Jerusalem, or within the city itself, and considered itself as the pious/devout Jews and all or most

\(^2\) Trafton, for example, notes that the Pharisees were responsible for these psalms is questioned by a number of recent scholars (see Joseph L. Trafton, “The Psalms of Solomon: New Light from the Syriac Version?,” \textit{Journal of Biblical Literature} 105/2 (1986): 227-237). Atkinson states emphatically, “There is virtually no evidence, however, that supports maintaining the Pharisaical authorship of these psalms” (Kenneth Atkinson, “Toward a Redating of the Psalms of Solomon: Implications for Understanding the \textit{Sitz im Leben} of an Unknown Jewish Sect,” \textit{Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha} 17 (1998): 112), and surmises that “the group responsible for these psalms should be situated within the confines of the city, since they suffer the effects of corrupt Jewish leadership, know of the activities of the Jerusalem Sanhedrin, and experience first-hand the siege of the city” (Ibid., 107). As Franklyn summarizes, “The theological roots of Essenism and Pharisaism are there, but there are still enough intangibles to require further external evidence that identifies the community which is responsible for the liturgical production of these well-structured expressions of individual or national eschatological hope” (Paul N. Franklyn, “The Cultic and Pious Climax of Eschatology in the Psalms of Solomon” \textit{Journal for the Study of Judaism} 18:1 (1987): 1-17). Wright likewise states, “The eighteen Psalms of Solomon incorporate the response of a group of devout Jews to the capture of Jerusalem by the Romans in the first century B.C.” (Robert B. Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” in \textit{The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha}, Vol. 2, ed. James H. Charlesworth, 639-670 (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1983), 639).


\(^4\) Some debate has also persisted concerning the genre of the psalms. As Trafton summarizes, some have used more traditional labels, such as lament and psalms of praise, others have taken a redactional approach, seeing the psalms as originating as prayers of distress but eventually functioning to instruct and encourage, and others still have recognized the vacillation between corporate and individual foci in the psalms (Joseph L. Trafton, “The \textit{Psalms of Solomon} in Recent Research” \textit{Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha} 12 (1994): 5-7).
outsiders as sinners.\textsuperscript{5} The purpose of the \textit{Psalms} is usually identified as seeking to instill hope or give encouragement to the reader,\textsuperscript{6} while also clearly both affirming the “rightness” of the community and informing the reader of how to remain in a right-standing with God. The \textit{Psalms} provide an important contribution to understanding election in Second Temple Judaism and thus must be carefully considered.

\textit{Psalm of Solomon} \textsuperscript{1} serves as a brief introduction to the collection, though it introduces a theme that is prevalent throughout. Here Jerusalem cries out to God for deliverance from foreign invaders. She is sure that God will hear her, for she believes she “was full of righteousness” because she had flourished (\textit{Ps. Sol.} 1:3). Her abundance, however, had led to her children becoming arrogant and failing to present to God the tribute which he deserved (\textit{Ps. Sol.} 1:6). Jerusalem was unaware of the secret sins of her inhabitants, which were lawless (ἀνομίαι) in nature, and the extent of which were even beyond the Gentiles in that they profaned the holy place of the Lord (\textit{Ps. Sol.} 1:7-8). Here clearly the Jews of Jerusalem are in rebellion against God, and were misguided in their confidence that he would continue to deliver them from their enemies in spite of their sin.

\textsuperscript{5} Atkinson has suggested that “the \textit{Pss. Sol.} does not represent Judaism at large” but rather “depicts a group in isolation from the temple community, which denounced as sinners virtually every individual and institution of the day (\textit{Pss. Sol.} 17.19-20), including the temple establishment (\textit{Pss. Sol.} 2.3; 8.11-13), the Sanhedrin (\textit{Pss. Sol.} 4.1), the king, local judges, and the common people (\textit{Pss. Sol.} 17.20)” (Atkinson, “Toward a Redating of the Psalms of Solomon,” 109-111). Embry, on the other hand, disagrees, noting, “A good case can be made for viewing \textit{Pss. Sol.} as appealing to the mass of loyal Jews over and above the various ‘sects’ or ‘associations’ which happened to exist. The terms ‘sinner’ and ‘righteous’ are used by \textit{Pss. Sol.} to explain the reason for the invasion and punishment of Israel from the standpoint of purity as defined by the Hebrew Bible” (Brad Embry, “The \textit{Psalms of Solomon} and the New Testament: Intertextuality and the Need for a Re-Evaluation,” \textit{Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha} 13:2 (2002): 121). While the collection may have been intended for an isolated or small community, the message of the collection resonates quite well with the other literature surveyed thus far in that it draws a narrow distinction between the faithful and unfaithful based on the community’s understanding of what faithfulness to the Torah means.

\textsuperscript{6} Embry defends that the “the document should be considered a message of hope meant to encourage its readers to religious steadfastness in the expectation of God’s redemption and salvation. In so doing, the author effectively produced a literature of assurance for his audience; God was going to save the just, punish the wicked, and, through his Messiah, establish his kingdom on the earth” (Emby, “The \textit{Psalms of Solomon} and the New Testament,” 132, 135).
The result of the sin of the Jerusalem Jews is the invasion of the city by the Gentile sinners. God declares, “Remove them far from me; I do not take pleasure in them” (Ps. Sol. 2:4), resulting in judgment coming to young and old alike (Ps. Sol. 2:8). Throughout this psalm, the sins of the people justifies God’s handing them over to the Gentiles (Ps. Sol. 2:3-5, 7-9, 16-17, 34), and thus God is righteous in his judgment of them (Ps. Sol. 2:10, 15, 18, 32). Specific sins mentioned here are typical of the collection, and include defiling the sanctuary and the offerings (Ps. Sol. 2:3) and sexual impurity (Ps. Sol. 2:11-13), the extent of which was so offensive that it was mocked by the Gentiles (Ps. Sol. 2:12). Though judgment was deserved, the psalmist prays that God would deliver Jerusalem (Ps. Sol. 2:22-25), a prayer which is answered, at least in part, by the dishonorable death of the “dragon,” likely intended to represent the emperor Pompey (Ps. Sol. 2:25-30). As the psalmist concludes, he affirms that God is merciful to those who fear him, that he judges between the righteous and sinners, has mercy on the righteous, raises them to glory, and treats the devout with mercy (Ps. Sol. 2:31-37). The sinners here clearly include Jews first and Gentiles secondarily. The fate of the sinner is “eternal destruction in dishonor” while the righteous will be raised “up to glory” (Ps. Sol. 2:31).

Again in Ps. Sol. 3:3, the righteous acknowledge the judgments of God as being “just” and accept discipline from him for their own sins. Unlike the sinners, the righteous constantly search out their sins and atone for them through fasting and humility (Ps. Sol. 3:5-8), and thus

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7 The psalmist, in fact, states that they will “justify” God for his right judgments. Winninge notes, “It is remarkable that the verb δικαιοῦν is used with the devout as subject, as it is something new in comparison with the Hebrew Bible. God is never declared righteous by those he created in the Hebrew Bible, the Apocrypha, and the Greek OT Pseudepigrapha. In the PssSol the devout declare God righteous thrice in a direct way (2:15; 3:5; 8:7). It is significant that the psalmist proves God right with reverence to God’s activity as a judge (v 15)” (Mikael Winninge, Sinners and the Righteous, 35).

8 Of this, Wright comments, “Life after death is concentrated entirely in the hope for bodily resurrection (viz. 2:31; 3:12)” (Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” 645).
“the Lord will cleanse every devout person and his house” (Ps. Sol. 3:8). 9 Instead of accepting discipline and atoning for their sins, the sinners, by contrast, curse their life, multiply their sins, and are destroyed forever. The devout, however will “rise up to eternal life” (Ps. Sol. 3:12). 10 Again, here what separates God’s people from those who will receive judgment is their inner disposition and outward behavior.

Ps. Sol. 4 offers another indictment against the unrighteous, with the object here apparently being at least some members of the Sanhedrin. 11 The offenses of the guilty here are their transgression of the Torah (Ps. Sol. 4:1, 12), harshness (4:2), lust (4:4), deceit (4:4, 10-11), and covetousness (4:9). It is the psalmist’s prayer that these hypocrites be exposed (Ps. Sol. 4:7), expelled (4:6, 24), afflicted (4:16-18), and punished with a humiliating death (4:6, 19-20). In contrast, the righteous will prove God right when the eventual expulsion of these men who “deceitfully quote the Law” takes place (Ps. Sol. 4:8). The psalm ends with a prayer that God would show mercy to “all those who love you” (Ps. Sol. 4:25). Not only are the unrighteous here Jews, they are influential religious leaders among the Jews. 12 Winninge further notes, “Clearly

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9 And so Atkinson writes, “The psalmist recognizes that the righteous, including his own community, is not perfect. The devout, as the author of Psalm of Solomon 3 makes clear, are not those who are free from sin, but those who confess their transgressions and justify God (Pss. Sol. 3.3)” (Kenneth Atkinson, “Enduring the Lord’s Discipline: Soteriology in the Psalms of Solomon,” in This World and the World to Come: Soteriology in Early Judaism, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner, 145-166 (New York: T & T Clark, 2011), 152).

10 Like Wright, Winninge sees in the Pss. Sol. the resurrection of the body, stating, “Thus the ultimate perspective is eschatological, and the belief in the resurrection of the dead is at hand” (Winninge, Sinners and the Righteous, 41).

11 As Wright notes, those “sitting in the council of the devout” (Ps. Sol. 4:1) is likely a reference “to the supreme council, the Sanhedrin” (Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” 655).

12 See also Atkinson, “Toward a Redating of the Psalms of Solomon,” 102; Winninge, Sinners and the Righteous, 55. Winninge suggests that the leaders here may include the Hasmoneans as well as the members of the Sanhedrin, whom he identifies as only the Sadducees since he holds to a Pharisean origin of the collection. Wright likewise suggested that “[t]he sinners, the Jewish opponents of the devout, are the Hasmonean Sadducees. They violently usurped the monarchy (17:5-8, 22), they were not scrupulous in ritual purity and in ceremonial observances (1:8, 2:3, 5; 7:2; 8:12; 17:45), and they were too willing to comply with foreign customs (8:22)” (Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” 642).
enough the sinners are the majority here, which is why the main interest has to be focused on them.”

Ps. Sol. 7 contains a plea for God to remember his “holy inheritance” (Ps. Sol. 7:2) and not deliver them to the Gentiles (7:3). The psalmist is confident that God will not destroy his people (Ps. Sol. 7:5), and that he “will have compassion on the people of Israel forever” (7:8). Sanders sees the confidence here as an assurance that God will forever remember the nation of Israel as a whole, with no particular emphasis on the remembrance of the obedient only. 14 As VanLandingham notes, however, statements like this “address only the nation as an entity. Statements such as Pss. Sol. 9:5, which have as their basis Lev 18:5; Deut 28-32 (especially Deut 30:15-20), address the individual.” 15 Thus, a nationalistic view here should not be placed over and above the clear emphasis on the preservation of the devout alone which occurs frequently throughout the collection.

Ps. Sol. 8 records the sieging of Jerusalem and, as in Ps. Sol. 4, the psalmist shows God to be just in his judgments (Ps. Sol. 8:7), since the people of the city had been involved in secret sexual deviances (8:8-10), thefts from the temple (8:11), and the desecration of the temple site (8:12). Their sins here, again, have surpassed even the sins of the Gentiles (Ps. Sol. 8:13). The instrument of God’s judgment was “someone from the end of the earth, one who attacks in strength” (Pompey), who brought violence upon the people of the city (Ps. Sol. 8:14-21). With the judgment complete, the psalmist hopes that God will restore his people to the city (Ps. Sol.

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13 Winninge, Sinners and the Righteous, 47. Of 5:1, Winninge further observes that the “we/Israel-group is called ἐπιστάμενοι τὰ κρίματά σου (v 1), perhaps implying that the community alone has real knowledge and a true theology” (Ibid., 111).


8:27-28), and that Israel will be restored and forever faithful to their God (Ps. Sol. 8:33-34). While the hope for restoration seems to be inclusive of all Israel, the psalmist also suggests that it is the devout alone who will enjoy this blessing (Ps. Sol. 8:23, 34). Thus Elliott notes, “The devout here cannot be Israel as a whole (whatever continued sense of solidarity with Israel the author may have cherished in this and other passages) but only the righteous community, always carefully distinguished from the apostates.” Thus the sin of the city appears to have been widespread, the judgment deserved, and the devout, “like innocent lambs” (Ps. Sol. 8:23), collateral damage, caught up with the judgment of the sinners.

As in the above, Ps. Sol. 9 affirms God’s rightness in judging Israel, here with the exile, which was brought upon them because of their “lawless actions” (Ps. Sol. 9:2). In Deuteronomistic language reminiscent of Deut. 28, the psalmist declares that the choice of right/blessing/life and wrong/curse/death is within the “power of our souls” (Ps. Sol. 9:4-5). Those who “call upon the Lord” are cleansed from their sins and blessed when they repent (Ps. Sol. 9:6-7). Such mercy is not extended to sinners. As the psalmist concludes, he affirms:

we [the devout] are the people whom you have loved; look and be compassionate, O God of Israel… for you chose the descendants of Abraham above all the nations, and you put your name upon us, Lord, and it will not cease forever. You made a covenant with our ancestors concerning us, and we hope in you when we turn our souls toward you. May the mercy of the Lord be upon the house of Israel forevermore (Ps. Sol. 9:9-11).

Here again, though “Israel” is affirmed as God’s people, the author clearly has in mind the devout alone, since only they are forgiven of their sins when they repent (Ps. Sol. 9:7), and only they have hope because their souls are turned to God (9:10). Much disagreement has occurred over how to understand this part of the collection. Grindheim, along the lines of Sanders’


17 Ibid., 94.
covenant-nomism, sees all Israel as elect, but the unrighteous as forfeiting the covenant benefits. Grindheim recognizes, however, that it is the free choice of the individual as to whether or not they are obedient, and thus righteous according to the covenant/Torah. Wright, along similar lines, recognizes that individuals are said to possess a free will, and their destiny “is not unalterably fixed and that God may adjust it on the basis of one’s actions.” Winninge sees here a broader affirmation of the election of Israel, noting that the designations in Ps. Sol. 9:9 and 11 indicate that the psalmist sees that “Israel as a whole is involved.” The psalmist has couched this section, however, by noting that it is those who repent, not Israel as a whole, who are forgiven and blessed (Ps. Sol. 9:7), and that only those who turn to God who have hope (Ps. Sol. 9:10). While the psalmist may hope for a full national restoration, clearly here the devout are those who are enjoying the blessings of the covenant. Atkinson has recognized the tension here in noting that the author believes God is obligated to protect Israel, though only the pious will enjoy the covenant blessings, and thus, “[t]he community of the Psalms of Solomon believes that it constitutes the true Israel because its members live in accordance with the covenant, and are therefore assured salvation. God deals with them differently than ordinary sinners.”

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18 Grindheim, *The Crux of Election: Paul’s Critique of the Jewish Confidence in the Election of Israel* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 49

19 Ibid., 52.

20 Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” 645. As he continues, Wright notes, “Gentiles are lawless by nature and are rejected by God (2:2, 19-25; 7:1-3; 8:23; 17:13-15), even if occasionally he chooses them as instruments of his wrath against sinful Israel (PssSol 8). No hope is offered for their conversion. Indeed, one of the blessings of the messianic age will be the expulsion of the gentiles from Israel (PssSol 17). God chooses Israel “above the nations” forever (9:8-11) as the object of his special love and concern, and the sense of Israel’s mission to the gentiles is extremely limited” (Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” 645).


22 Atkinson, “Enduring the Lord’s Discipline,” 151, 155.

23 Ibid., 151, 155, 158.

24 Ibid., 159.
while the author uses terms that appear to refer to all of Israel, clearly the intent here is that Israel is to be equated with the righteous Jews who faithfully observe the Torah and repent when they violate it, and not with all Jews from an ethnic/national perspective.25

A similar perspective is given in the closing verses of Ps. Sol. 12. After the psalmist requests that “the salvation of the Lord be upon Israel his servant forever,” he next prays that the wicked will perish and that the “Lord’s devout inherit the Lord’s promises” (Ps. Sol. 12:5-6).

Here, again, the nationalistic language is qualified with specific mention of the devout, indicating that the non-devout, i.e., the sinners, will not inherit these promises and, in keeping with the rest of the collection, will be judged and destroyed.26 In Ps. Sol. 15,27 the righteous are further said to be marked with the mark of salvation, which ensures that they will not by harmed by the Lord’s judgment and anger against sinners (Ps. Sol. 15:4-6), while sinners, marked with the mark of destruction, will not escape the judgment of God (15:8-9). As in Ps. Sol. 14, the sinners inherit

25 This limited perspective on the “true Israel” appears to be repeated in Ps. Sol. 10, where again it is the devout who love God who God cleanses from sin (Ps. Sol. 10:1-3). While “Israel shall praise the Lord’s name in joy,” it is the devout who give thanks, the poor who receive mercy, and the synagogues of Israel (not the temple or Jerusalem) who glorify God’s name (Ps. Sol. 10:5-8). Given the rest of the tone of the book, and references to the poor elsewhere as a designation for the true Israel, the terminology here again should be taken as non-nationalistic.

26 This distinction is taken up in the psalm which follows, which affirms that the righteous are disciplined for their sin, but not destroyed, and thus “the discipline of the righteous… is not the same as the destruction of the sinners,” since “the Lord will spare his devout… [and] the life of the righteous (goes on) forever, but sinners shall be taken away to destruction, and no memory of them will ever be found” (Ps. Sol. 13:7, 10-11). Likewise in Ps. Sol. 14, the devout live by the Law and are “firmly rooted forever… but not so are sinners and criminals,” whose “inheritance is Hades, and darkness and destruction; and they will not be found on the day of mercy for the righteous. But the devout of the Lord will inherit life in happiness” (Ps. Sol. 14:4, 6, 9-10). Here the sinners who do not keep the Law are destined for destruction. Grindheim thus notes, “In Psalm 14 the thought is not that Israel as such is rejected but that the sinners of Israel are” (Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 50).

27 Concerning Pss. Sol. 15, Atkinson suggests, “Because this psalm does not refer to Gentile intervention, it is possible that the author was describing an intra-Jewish conflict from which his community escaped. This particular Ps. Sol. may possibly refer to the civil warfare that erupted between Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus II, in part fueled by the ambitions of Antipater” (Atkinson, “Toward a Redating of the Psalms of Solomon,” 103-104). If true, this further illustrates the sectarian nature of the Psalms, drawing divisions between Jewish “saints” and “sinners.”
death, darkness, and destruction (Ps. Sol. 15:10-12), but the righteous will find mercy in God (15:13).  

Of any psalm in the collection, Ps. Sol. 17 has received the most attention, particularly because of its messianic convictions and the framework that this offers for understanding Jewish expectations. The psalmist begins with recognition of God’s choice of David as king over Israel and his promise that his kingdom would not fail (Ps. Sol. 17:4). However, the sinners (of Israel) “despoiled the throne of David with arrogant shouting,”  

and because of their treachery, Jerusalem was overthrown by “a man alien to our race” (Ps. Sol. 17:6-7). After Jerusalem fell, the “children of the covenant… adopted” the practices of the Gentiles, and the devout fled to the wilderness in order to not lose their lives or fall into unfaithfulness (Ps. Sol. 17:15-18). The psalmist indicates that all of Jerusalem, from the king to the people, were guilty of every kind of sin, and not one of them practiced righteousness (Ps. Sol. 17:19-20). The psalmist’ hope for restoration is a Davidic king to take the throne and for the unrighteous to be destroyed and the devout to be gathered to Jerusalem (Ps. Sol. 17:21-26). At that time, God will separate the faithful Jews from the unfaithful (Ps. Sol. 17:27) by purging Jerusalem of all sinners (17:30). As the psalmist closes, he notes, “Blessed are those born in those days to see the good fortune of

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28 Likewise, in Ps. Sol. 16:15, the righteous are assured God’s mercy by their victory over temptations, though this victory is one that is requested from God in prayer as the psalmist asks that he be protected from these evils.

29 Lane, who identifies the author with the Pharisees, writes, “the writer of these hymns… believed that the Hasmonean rulers had abused their office and had brought great hardship to the state (17:15-22). They had assumed unlawful prerogatives, including the royal office (17:5-8), with the consequence that judgment had fallen upon them and the people. The hymn-writer remained in society as one who was quietly awaiting the fulfillment of God’s promises (7:9; 8:37; 12:6-7; 17:3-4). He identified himself with the prophetic ideal of rule based not on military force, but on the power of God (17:37-38)” (Lane, “Paul’s Legacy from Pharisaism: Light from the Psalms of Solomon,” 133). Winninge agrees with the acknowledgment of the anti-Hasmonean thrust of the passage in noting, “These “real” sinners (ἁμαρτωλοί in v 5) were the leaders of the country, i.e. the Hasmoneans” (Winninge, Sinners and the Righteous, 108).

30 According to Winninge, “Apparently, the designations οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς διαθήκης (17:15) and ὁ λαός (17:20) formerly had been theirs, but now they appear to have lost their covenantal status and become ἄνομοι (17:18)” (Ibid., 127).
Israel which God will bring to pass in the assembly of the tribes. May God dispatch his mercy to Israel; may he deliver us from the pollution of profane enemies” (Ps. Sol. 17:44-45). Here again, in light of the rest of the psalm, Israel must be seen as equivalent with the devout, as those Jews who are sinners, apparently the entirety of those in Jerusalem, are to be judged, destroyed, and purged from the city and the devout currently in “exile” restored.31

The final psalm of the collection is Ps. Sol. 18, which offers a benediction of sorts for the collection. Here the psalmist praises God for his mercy and goodness to Israel, “the descendants of Abraham,” whose discipline of them is “as (for) a firstborn son” (Ps. Sol. 18:1-4). The psalmist again prays for the cleansing of Israel for the reign of his Messiah (Ps. Sol. 18:5). Here the cleansing is seen as preceding the Messianic reign, and thus Elliott suggests, “It is only reasonable to expect that the author would demand from apostate Israel the same experience of repentance and concern for piety that he demanded from his own group… 18:5 suggests that restoration is the result rather than the cause of this repentance and cleansing.”32 Again, here, it is the piety and sensitivity to sin that marks the people of God as throughout the collection.

The tension between statements of God’s mercy toward and protection of Israel and assertions about the necessity of obedience and the role of works as it relates to God’s judgment have been seen as polarizing extremes in the collection.33 These need not, however, be seen as

31 Embry agrees in stating, “Pss. Sol. 17 details the advent and origin, impetus and work of the Messiah. The end result of this work is the purification of the nation of Israel, so called precisely because they are now pure before the God of Abraham (Pss. Sol. 9.9; 18.3), not because they are genealogically Israelites. They are no longer Israelites simply because they were born Israelites (note John the Baptist in Mt. 3.9; Lk. 3.8)” (Embry, “The Psalms of Solomon and the New Testament,” 121, 133). See also Winninge, Sinners and the Righteous, 96, 98, 109.

32 Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 560; see also 325.

being in opposition. God’s mercy/blessings are afforded to those who are faithful to the covenant (as defined here by the community). These covenant works should rather be seen as in keeping with the framework of the covenant which God himself established.\textsuperscript{34} When viewed as a collection, however, the emphasis of the \textit{Psalms of Solomon} seems quite clear. The Jews of Jerusalem and their leaders (i.e. the Hasmoneans and Sanhedrin)\textsuperscript{35} have transgressed the Torah, profaned the temple, and failed to repent. Their sins exceed even those of the Gentiles, and they developed a false confidence that God would protect them in spite of their sin. The Gentiles were used to punish the unrighteous. Though the punishment of the righteous is received as discipline, the unrighteous multiply their sins and will be destroyed because of their wickedness.\textsuperscript{36} While the judgment of the Gentiles is discussed in the \textit{Psalms}, the chief polemic is against the Jews of Jerusalem, and the author indicts the entire city as the devout have escaped to the wilderness to avoid defilement. The fate of the individual is determined by their choice of the way of life (righteousness) or the way of death (wickedness), and though the election of Israel through

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34 Sprinkle suggests this in stating, “In sum, the \textit{Psalms of Solomon} do not portray salvation through self-righteous works, and yet Sanders’s category of covenantal nomism is not very helpful either. We should speak, rather, of a tension whereby God’s mercy is held together with the necessity of obedience. The basis for future life is not purely covenant membership, nor is it merited by works. Participation in the righteous community is essential in order to inherit the covenant promises, and this participation is dependant [sic] both upon obedience and upon God’s mercy” (Sprinkle, \textit{Law and Life}, 93). This is contra Atkinson and Lane, who see primarily a theology of merit (Atkinson, “Enduring the Lord’s Discipline,” 160, 162; Lane, “Paul’s Legacy from Pharisaism,” 133), and Sanders who sees only a theology of mercy (Sanders, \textit{Paul and Palestinian Judaism}, 393). Sanders again here asserts that “only those who sin in such a way as to exclude themselves are cut off from Israel” (Sanders, \textit{Paul and Palestinian Judaism}, 405), but fails to recognize that the majority of Jews fall into this supposed minority, and thus underestimates the severity of the psalmist’s assessment of the situation (See also VanLandingham, \textit{Judgment and Justification}, 44). As VanLandingham summarizes, “It does not work to say all Israelites have a share in the world to come based on God’s original electing grace, and then enumerate a list of sectarian exceptions” (VanLandingham, \textit{Judgment and Justification}, 140; see also Falk, “Psalms and Prayers,” 51).
36 And so Grindheim writes, “Whereas the present punishments are a signal of rejection for the nation as a whole, the righteous accept this as discipline and thus demonstrate that they constitute the group for which the election-based promises are still valid.” (Grindheim, \textit{The Crux of Election}, 51). See also Falk, “Psalms and Prayers,” 44; Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” 643.
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Abraham is affirmed, the national language and the title of “Israel” is qualified as applying only to the “true Israel,” the devout community responsible for the collection. The collection thus does not lend itself to a predestinarian interpretation. Herein also the election of an individual (David) is mentioned, but specifically for the role as king over Israel. The devout, though not sinless themselves, are those who will inherit the promises of God because of their repentant spirit and pursuit of righteousness.

Dead Sea Scrolls

Few discoveries have incited as much attention and controversy as the Dead Sea Scrolls (hereafter DSS). Textual, theological, and archaeological studies have attempted to recover and reconstruct the community at Khirbet Qumran, who are the assumed authors of the sectarian literature discovered there. While some debate has persisted, general consensus now is that the community was associated with the Essenes mentioned by Josephus, though some differences between his descriptions and the theology found in the scrolls exist. The identification is also complicated by historical questions concerning the possibility of the doctrine of the community developing overtime, with that development reflected in the sectarian texts. The approach of

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this study will assume, due to the large degree of agreement among them, that the sectarian writings were the product of a single religious community of Essenes who separated themselves from the Jerusalem religious institution. Though interconnectedness is assumed, each text will be dealt with individually.41

_Pesher on Habakkuk (1QpHab, c. first century BCE)_

The _Pesher on Habakkuk_ (hereafter 1QPHab)42 dates to the second half of the first century BCE, and was likely written after 63 BCE, when Jerusalem was overtaken by Pompey.43 The text describes a specific conflict between the righteous of the community and their leader, the Teacher of Righteousness, the wicked of the Jerusalem temple cult, led by the Wicked Priest, and the Kittim, foreign oppressors who bring judgment upon Jerusalem, who are likely to be identified with the Romans.44

1QpHab offers an interpretation of the text of Habakkuk in light of the community’s situation. The interpretation points to issues and identities current to the situation of the author, and offers a revelatory interpretation of the text. In 1QpHab 1.11-17, in interpreting Hab 1:4-5, the author compares those outside the community with those who have rejected the Law of God, and identifies “the evildoer” as “the Wicked Priest and the upright man” as “the Teacher of

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Righteousness.” Brownlee suggests that the Wicked Priest is likely a chief priest, with attention throughout on “his wicked deeds.”45 The traitors are those who do not heed the teachings of the Teacher of Righteousness and the new/true covenant,46 which belongs to the community (1QpHab 2.1-4). These are joined by the traitors of the new covenant, who apparently defected from the community.47 The revelation of the Teacher of Righteousness is ignored by these violators of the covenant, who do not heed his warnings of the judgment to come upon disobedient Israel at the hands of the Kittim (1QpHab 2.5-4.17).48

In the face of this destruction, however, “God is not to destroy his people at the hand of the nations, but in the hand of his chosen ones God will place the judgment over all the nations; and by their reproof all the evildoers of this people will be pronounced guilty, (by the reproof) of those who kept his commandments in their hardship” (1QpHab 5.3-6).49 The “chosen ones” here, Brownlee notes, is ambiguous, and could refer either to the Teacher of Righteousness or the

45 Brownlee, The Midrash Pesher of Habakkuk, 46-47. Brownlee notes that there has been debate as to whether the Teacher of Righteousness was a single individual, or was viewed as an enlightened line of teachers ever present within the community. However, given the way in which 1QpHab describes the Teacher and his opponent in the Wicked Priest, it seems that there would have been a single individual in mind when the pesher was originally penned, though this may have become viewed paradigmatically in the continued conflict between Qumran and Jerusalem (Ibid., 48-49). For a discussion of the identity of the Man of Lies, the Wicked Priest, and the Teacher of Righteousness, see Brownlee, The Midrash Pesher of Habakkuk, 95-98, 204-205; James H. Charlesworth, The Pesharim and Qumran History: Chaos or Consensus? (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002); Horgan, Pesharim, 6-8; Timothy H. Lim, “The Wicked Priests of the Groningen Hypothesis,” Journal of Biblical Literature 112.3 (1993): 415-425; Arthur E. Palumbo, “A New Interpretation of the Nahum Commentary,” Folia Orientalia 29 (1992-1993): 153-162; Rowley, “The Kittim and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 92-109; A. S. van der Woude, “Once Again: The Wicked Priests in the Habakkuk Pesher from Cave 1 of Qumran,” Revue de Qumran 17.1-4 (1996): 375-384.

46 So Brownlee writes that “they never had “believed in the words of the Teacher of Right”; but such unbelief constituted defection from true Israel” (Brownlee, The Midrash Pesher of Habakkuk, 54).

47 See Ibid., 55.

48 As Elliott points out, 1QpHab 2.14 contains the interesting statement that the followers of the Teacher of Righteousness (and his teachings) “will be saved “by their works and by their faith in the moreh sedeq”” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 136).

49 Elliott notes, “[I]t is the elect, not the nations, who will be the final dispensers of judgment in the last days. This passage does not, as might appear on the surface of things, contrast two completely opposite views of judgment… so much as it contrasts to agents of judgment—the nations and the elect from Israel” (Ibid., 71).
future Messiah, or to the community as a collective, which is the more likely option given the interchange in the passage between the nations and the community.\(^{50}\) The wrath of the Kittim, who worship their weaponry, will bring death to many (1QpHab 6.1-12), but the “men of truth” will remain faithful through the calamity,\(^{51}\) and “God will come at the right time”\(^{52}\) and “will free” those who are faithful to the Teacher of Righteousness (1QpHab 7.7-8.3).\(^{53}\) So, “all observing the Law in the House of Judah” are freed “on account of their toil and of their loyalty to the Teacher of Righteousness” (1QpHab 8.1-3). Here the “House of Judah” clearly seems intended to make a contrast between the faithful of the community and the Jewish outsiders, who are by default likened to the wicked Northern Kingdom of Israel.\(^{54}\)

Israel has been led astray because of the disobedience of the Wicked Priest, who became proud, betrayed the Law for wealth, and dishonestly took money from the people (1QpHab 8.8-13). As a result, he will be punished with “terrifying maladies” and “vengeful acts on his fleshly


\(^{51}\) Brownlee notes correctly that “good works” as such do not enter the picture at all, but only a steadfast faith which makes possible the endurance of suffering… Such faith in any case would involve faithfulness to the law as the Teacher expounded it; for it is precisely the “doers of the Law” who are the righteous” (Brownlee, *The Midrash Pesher of Habakkuk*, 130).

\(^{52}\) Brownlee comments on 7.13, “All God’s times” of intervention into human affairs were foreordained and there has never been any deviation from the divine time schedule. So also will it be in connection with the “last time”” (Ibid., 121).

\(^{53}\) The exclusivity of the attitude of the author concerning the community’s status before God is noted by Horgan who writes, “Considering themselves to be the people of the New Covenant, the true remnant of Israel living in the end-time, the members of the Qumran community believed that they were the guardians of the purity and authenticity of the true priesthood and of the correct interpretation of Scripture, an interpretation revealed to the Teacher of Righteousness” (Horgan, *Pesharim*, 2).

\(^{54}\) See Brownlee, *The Midrash Pesher of Habakkuk*, 126. Horgan notes likewise that Judah is a self-designation for the community in 4QNah, where “Ephraim = the Pharisees, Manasseh = the Sadducees, and Judah = the Essenes” (Horgan, *Pesharim*, 210). John S. Bergsma has argued that the community never used Judah as a designation for the community itself. While this may describe the Essenes, he suggests that the community itself did not use the designation, though they may have still identified themselves with the larger Essenic movement (John S. Bergsma, “Qumran Self-Identity: “Israel” or “Judah”?,” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 15 (2008): 172-189).
body,” and the priesthood will be plundered by the Kittim (1QpHab 8.14-9.7) for its sins against God’s elect (1QpHab 9.8-12), who here again is possibly the Teacher of Righteousness and/or the community itself. The efforts of the “Spreader of the Lie” will be futile, and will result in the judgment of him and all who have “derided and insulted God’s chosen will” (1QpHab 10.6-11.17). His sins were committed against the poor and the “Council of the Community” and the “simple folk of Judah,” and resulted in the defilement of the Jerusalem Temple (1QpHab 12.1-10). The Wicked Priest, and all idolaters and the wicked will be destroyed in the day of judgment, thus vindicating the Teacher of Righteousness and all who followed the Law rather than the Wicked Priest (1QpHab 12.11-13.3).

Unlike many other texts of the period, 1QpHab, and most of the writings of Qumran, appear to be intended primarily for the community, with little concern for outsiders. Thus Brownlee suggests that the purpose of 1QpHab is to vindicate the Teacher of Righteousness and the community against opponents, strengthen the faith of the community, warn against apostasy, and prepare the way for the coming judgment against sinners. 1QpHab clearly evidences certain features present already in the thought milieu of Second Temple Judaism. The election of the community is primarily viewed in collective terms, though the Teacher of Righteousness is representative of the community as well. They represent the true Israel, and those outside of the community, both Jews who have been led astray by the Wicked Priest and the Man of Lies, and Gentile sinners, will face God’s judgment for their rejection of his covenant. Sanders suggests

55 As Brownlee notes, the same ambiguity is present here as in 1QpHab 5.4 in which “the elect” may refer to the Teacher of Righteousness or more broadly as a collective term for the community. Given that the context mentions both the Teacher and “his council,” it seems here again that the latter would be preferred. See also, Horgan, Pesharim, 32, cf. 48.

56 Horgan notes that “those described as the “simple ones” seem to be those who, though they observed the Law, were intellectually vulnerable and could be led astray (Ibid., 53).

that this text, along with 1QM and 1QSa promotes that those judged in the final judgment are only Gentiles, “while the elect are the Israelites—apparently all of Israel which survives, not just the present sectarians.” This, clearly, runs against the emphasis of the text itself and against the tide of scholarship which viewed the community as decidedly exclusivistic. In referring to itself as the congregation of Israel or the house of Judah, the community clearly views itself as the only genuine expression of the covenant community. All outsiders in 1QpHab, and especially the Wicked Priest and his followers (i.e., Jews), will be judged, and the faithful of the community will be delivered. So, commenting on 1QpHab 5.3-5, Elliott summarizes rightly that “the scrolls never teach that the righteous in this way atone for the wicked in Israel; atonement is only efficacious for the individual if he joins the community. Whatever the salvific purpose of the existence of the community, in other words, it was certainly not a question of saving all Israel, especially apart from prior repentance and conformity to the community’s teaching.”

Community Rule (1QS; 4Q255-264; 4Q502; 4 QS$^d/e$; 5Q11, 13)

The Community Rule (hereafter 1QS) is a document found at Qumran which served as the basis of the community’s religious beliefs and observances. As Metso summarizes, “The community that produced it is widely identified as belonging to the ancient Jewish movement of

58 Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 247.

59 Harvey notes, “‘Judah’ is a self-designation indicating the group’s origins within a region and a wider community. “Judah” is not a “pure community” but one which has faced, and will face, judgment” (Graham Harvey, The True Israel: Uses of the Names Jew, Hebrew, and Israel in Ancient Jewish and Early Christian Literature (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 33). As he summarizes, “‘Judah” is applied to both “good” and “bad” in Qumran Literature. Reflecting the contemporary situation of a plurality of Judaisms, it is applied to both the producers of Qumran Literature and their opponents in other groups” (Harvey, The True Israel, 41).

60 Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 69-71. Flusser, likewise, citing 1QpHab 7, notes “Only the righteous—these being, of course, the members of the Qumran community—will be spared the total annihilation” that comes with the final judgment (David Flusser, Judaism of the Second Temple Period, Vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), 10, also 17).
the Essenes, some members of which inhabited the site from about 150 BCE (or, as recently argued, ca. 100 BCE) to 68 CE. Copies of the text were discovered in Caves 1, 4, 5, and 11, including a nearly perfectly preserved copy in Cave 1 (1QS).

1QS is addressed to the “instructor,” and its purpose is stated in the introduction as to equip the community to do what is good, just, commanded, selected, and true, and “to welcome all those who freely volunteer to carry out God’s decrees into the covenant of kindness” (1QS 1.1-8). Even at the beginning of the text, the tension which will play out through 1QS must be noted. Here, those who join the community “freely volunteer” to “carry out God’s decrees” (1QS 1.7). Thus Tukasi can comment that in 1QS that “the universal order is set beforehand is indisputable,” while Leaney acknowledges that the “men of the sect, though God’s chosen, must each make his own decision to practise (sic) the Law of Moses as interpreted in their community.”

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62 Ibid.

63 For a discussion of the meaning and referent of יָחָד (yaḥad), see Arie van der Kooij, “The Yahad—What is in a Name?” Dead Sea Discoveries 18 (2011): 109-128.

64 Tukasi comments, “hatred in both human beings and God is directed towards whatever falls outside of the divine choices as revealed in the scripture. Thus, human beings love and hate in accordance with what God chooses and what he rejects. It is this idea of divine choice (בחר) and reject (ומש) that forms the essence of תוב and רע respectively in the Rule of the Community (Emmanuel O. Tukasi, “Dualism and Penitential Prayer in the Rule of the Community (1QS),” in Dualism in Qumran, ed. Géza G. Xeravits, 166-187 (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 179).


66 Tukasi, Determinism and Petitionary Prayer in John and the Dead Sea Scrolls, 30

Carrying out the decrees includes obeying all that was revealed to Moses and the Prophets, including “the regulated times” (1QS 1.3, 9), and also includes detesting the “sons of darkness” (1.10). The author of 1QS states that the sons of light are loved according to their “lot,” while the sons of darkness are hated according to their “guilt.” The verbiage here, as elsewhere in this text, can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Tukasi’s suggestion is lucid. He writes, “the Rule takes the view that the divine gestures of favour and judgement (sic) are established permanently on the spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit and their deeds respectively. For the penitent to attract the merciful countenance of God, ‘the efficacy of the confession is tied to the yielding of the individual to the spirit of truth upon which the favourable (sic) countenance of God is established forever’.” Thus, in his view, what is predetermined are the divine standards and responses to human behavior. The individual destinies of humans are not necessarily predetermined according to what has been stated thus far in 1QS.

The community of the sons of light allows its members to “refine their knowledge in the truth of God’s decrees” and obey all of his precepts as he has intended (1QS 1.14-18). The Levites of the community are responsible for reciting “the iniquities of the children of Israel… during the dominion of Belial,” and the people respond by confessing the sins of Israel (1QS 1.21-26). As a result, the priests may intercede for the congregation to be blessed, protected, and illumined and the “lot of Belial” to be cursed, terrorized, destroyed, and ignored by God when they petition him (1QS 2.1-10).

68 Metso notes that they community adhered to a solar calendar, in contrast to the lunar calendar used among those associated with the Jerusalem Temple (Metso, “Rule of the Community (1QS + fragments),” 1170).

69 Tukasi, “Dualism and Penitential Prayer in the Rule of the Community (1QS),” 180.”

70 Timmer notes that even in its reformation of the priestly blessing of the OT in 1QS 2, that the Qumran community identified itself as the recipients of the blessings and outsiders as under the covenant curses (Daniel C. Timmer, “Sectarianism and Soteriology. The Priestly Blessing (Numbers 6,24-26) in the Qumranite Community Rule (1QS),” Biblica 89 (2008): 389-96).
Those who enter into the covenant of the community yet revert to idolatry in their hearts are condemned to everlasting destruction and the curses of the covenant (1QS 2.11-18). There exists the possibility of those who have become enlightened through membership in the community to commit apostasy and abandon the covenant.\(^71\) Those who refuse to enter into the covenant of the community\(^72\) are wicked and forbidden from fellowship with the community, regarding “darkness as paths of light” (1QS 2.26-3.3).\(^73\) The bifurcation here is clear and, as Leaney states, “[O]nly members of the sect will in the final judgment of God be reckoned as Israelites.”\(^74\) Participating in rituals of atonement or cleansing do not affect forgiveness for those outside of the community since they spurn the decrees of God (1QS 3.4-7). Atonement is only found through the truth of the community, and those outside must humbly submit themselves to perfect obedience to the stipulations of the community’s covenant (1QS 3.7-12).\(^75\)

Perhaps the most heavily discussed and most debated portion of 1QS is found in 3.17-4.26, where the so-called “Treatise on the Two Spirits” is found. The author states that the

\(^71\) So Shemesh comments, “Such a person is admonished and cursed: if he persists, he will ultimately be cut off from the Sons of Light and will share his lot with that of the “cursed ones for ever.” Theologically speaking, this means that the person’s sins (or sinful intentions) show his presence in the community of Sons of Light to be false, as his thoughts and deeds imply that he is actually one of the Sons of Darkness” (Aharon Shemesh, “Expulsion and Exclusion in the Community Rule and the Damascus Document,” Dead Sea Discoveries 9.1 (2002): 48).

\(^72\) Leaney states, “It seems natural to interpret this passage (2.25b-3.12) as a commination against those who, after their probation, refuse to enter the covenant, balancing the part of the scroll so far considered (1.1-2.24) which deals with those who enter” (Leaney, The Rule of Qumran and Its Meaning, 137).

\(^73\) Timmer suggests “the non-covenantal form of the Priestly Blessing of Numbers 6… meant that this modified blessing was perfectly suited for application to the community’s members on the basis of their election rather than their covenantal fidelity” (Daniel C. Timmer, “Variegated Nomism Indeed: Multiphase Eschatology and Soteriology in the Qumranite Community Rule (1QS) and the New Perspective on Paul,” Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 52.2 (June 2009): 346). This appears, however, to create a false dichotomy. Clearly adherence to the Torah as interpreted by the Teacher of Righteousness and belief in their election (however defined) were central tenants of the community. Neither must be hoisted above the other.

\(^74\) Leaney, The Rule of Qumran and Its Meaning, 138.

\(^75\) Ringgren writes, “This certainly implies that the hope is based on the work of God’s spirit; but at the same time it becomes apparent that salvation presupposes a conversion and a new willingness to fulfill God’s law” (Helmer Ringgren, The Faith of Qumran: Theology of the Dead Sea Scrolls (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1995), 105).
instructor is obligated to teach the sons of light about the designs of God. According to 1QS 3, this includes that when the sons of light “have come into being, at their appointed, they will execute all their works according to his glorious design, without altering anything. In his hand are the laws of all things and he supports them in all their affairs” (1QS 3.13-17). Furthermore, within man God has placed two spirits—truth and deceit—which walk with him “until the moment of his visitation” (1QS 3.17-19). The spirit of deceit and the Angel of Darkness rule over the sons of deceit, while the spirit of truth and the Prince of Lights rule over the sons of justice. All sin, grief, and affliction comes from the Angel of Darkness, even for the sons of light, but the Prince of Lights and the God of Israel aid the sons of light/justice in resisting these evil powers (1QS 3.19-26). That God himself has placed these spirits in humanity is taken by some to indicate that he has predetermined, in a form of double-predestination, the ultimate fate of each person. Some have suggested, in light of the statement that the truth itself can be defiled by injustice and “the spirits of truth and injustice feud in the heart of man” (1QS 4.23), that the spirits are simply the good and evil force inside of each man, and may or may not represent a form of double-predestination, while others see them as more or less absolute categories.

Before returning to these options, a discussion of the remainder of the passage is necessary.

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76 Vermes, for example, takes this section to mean that the sect “insisted, moreover, on the individual election of each sectary” (Geza Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective (Cleveland: William Collins & World Publishing Co. Inc., 1978), 171). See also Alexander, “Predestination and Free Will in the Theology of the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 31; Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 57. Preben Wernberg-Møller compares the doctrine to Augustine’s formulation of double predestination (Preben Wernberg-Møller, “A Reconsideration of the Two Spirits in the Rule of the Community (1 Q Serek III,13 – IV,26),” Revue de Qumran 3.3 (1961): 424). Tukasi seems to agree in stating, “The universe as it now exists could not have been other than what it is. This is a cosmological type of determinism” (Tukasi, Determinism and Petitionary Prayer in John and the Dead Sea Scrolls, 36), and, “human activity is not actually theirs per se but is produced by the spirit which has the dominion over them” (Ibid., 37), though he also notes elsewhere that “the walk of each person determines his or her category. Thus to walk in truth, light and righteousness is to fall in the lot of God, and to walk in darkness and deceit is to belong under the dominion of Belial” (Ibid., 48).

77 So Leaney writes, “The main doctrine at Qumran appears to have been that every individual man is a mixture of the two spirits, but the thought certainly oscillates between two sets of terms, truth/perversity, light/darkness; and from the metaphorical and inexact way of writing when the latter set is used, as from the fact that
According to the author, those who follow the paths of true justice through the enlightenment of the spirit of truth—typified by meekness, patience, compassion, goodness, knowledge, wisdom, dependence on God, and detesting of idols—will enjoy eternal life and blessings (1QS 4.2-7). Those, however, who are led by the spirit of deceit—typified by greed, lack of compassion, deceit, pride, cruelty, impatience, foolishness, lustful acts, blasphemy, and stubbornness—will suffer eternal damnation and humiliation, with no remnant or survivor remaining (1QS 4.9-14).

The dualism described here appears absolute in the sense that these two trajectories may encapsulate all of humanity, and “every deed they do (falls) into their divisions” (1QS 4.15-16). In God’s visitation, the injustice perpetrated by the wicked will cease, and the upright will be purified, the spirit of injustice removed from them, and they will be anointed with the spirit of truth (1QS 4.18-22). It is clear here also that the sons of light themselves are not yet perfected,

light/darkness seems to provide a fundamental antithesis” (Leaney, The Rule of Qumran and Its Meaning, 37-38, see also 149, 155). See also Marco Treves, “Two Spirits of the Rule of the Community,” Revue de Qumran 3.3 (1961): 450.

Alexander writes, “God has appointed for man ‘two spirits in which to walk, the Spirits of Truth (‘emet) and Falsehood (‘awel)’. There are only these two spirits in which a man can walk: no third, intermediate way is possible. Every human action is founded upon them, and falls into one or other of these categories (3.25-26; cf. 4.15-16)” (Alexander, “Predestination and Free Will in the Theology of the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 29). See also Eugene H. Merrill, Qumran and Predestination: A Theological Study of the Thanksgiving Hymns (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 44; Preben Wernberg-Møller, The Manual of Discipline: Translated and Annotated with an Introduction (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957), 84.

Tukasi states that the spirit “is identified as co-helper with God in relation to the children of light… the Angel of Truth is the one who causes the ‘light’ or ‘enlightenment’ in the heart of human beings. It is also peculiar to the Angel to ‘make straight’ the path of true righteousness, and to quicken the heart of human beings to have reverent regard for the judgment of God” (Tukasi, Determinism and Petitionary Prayer in John and the Dead Sea Scrolls, 42). While the figure is interpreted here as an angelic being, the spirits may also be seen as impersonal forces. Since the language in the passage is inconsistent, it seems either is possible as a viable interpretive option.

Gathercole writes, “The abundance of “eternal” language here points toward an unending glorious state for the righteous, and the corresponding opposite for the wicked. From them there will be no remnant or survivor” (Gathercole, Where is Boasting?, 99).
and both spirits are at war within the heart of the individual (1QS 4.23). The upright ones have been chosen by God for an everlasting covenant (1QS 4.22), and acceptance into the community is apparently determined by “one’s inheritance in the truth” (1QS 4.24). The righteous and the wicked have been sorted by God “into equal parts until the appointed end and the new creation” (1QS 4.25). Heger, contra Martínez, notes here that this “is Martínez’ translation, but since, from the context, it unequivocally refers to the two spirits, Vermes translates it as “For God has established the two spirits in equal measure until the determined end.” The sons of man (i.e., humanity) know both good and evil, and God has “cast the lot of every living being according to his spirit in […] until the time of] the visitation” (1QS 4.26).

To return to the question posed at the beginning of the examination of this passage, a decision concerning the function of these spirits in their relation to a notion of determinism is required. In that the sons of light are influenced by the spirit of darkness as well as the spirit of light, it seems most likely that the notion of the intermingling of the spirits is most correct. In keeping with the first column of 1QS, it is reasonable, if not preferable, to understand this section as stating that God has declared those things that are good and those that are evil, and that both impulses reside within each individual. God has also chosen a people (i.e., the community, the “true Israel”), and the members of this people are typified by the behaviors brought about by the influence of the spirit of light. This does not prevent them from being influenced by the spirit of darkness, but rather it seems that whatever spirit is given predominant influence in the individual determines their lot. Thus Tukasi states correctly, “This struggle is inconsistent with the notion that a person’s lot is determined. If a person’s lot in truth or deceit

81 So Alexander writes, “There is a note of realism here: the elect are capable of sinning… [and] the righteous only become perfect at the eschaton” (Alexander, “Predestination and Free Will in the Theology of the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 32).

82 Heger, Challenges to Conventional Opinions on Qumran and Enoch Issues, 327.
were already fixed and unalterable, the struggle between the two spirits would be irrelevant." 83

What appears, however, to be central in all of this development of the concept of different lots, spirits, and God’s declaration of what is good and evil is the definition of the boundaries of the true people of God. Thus Heger and Elliott both suggest that the Treatise on the Two Spirits “functioned within the context of intra-Jewish debate to legitimize and explain the division felt to exist within Israel, not to outline a doctrine of predestination.” 84 The fundamental question that this text answers is why all of Israel is not currently a part of the elect community. They have sinned, and the existence of the two spirits explains why they sinned. 85 The clear presence of conditional elements for membership in the elect community, and the lack of any necessity to see absolute determinism as present in this section, along with the contextual factors mentioned above, all mediate against understanding 1QS to be promoting a kind of double-predestination.

Interestingly, though Col. 4 is so heavy with deterministic language, Col. 5 begins with the assertion that “this is the rule for the men of the Community who freely volunteer to convert from all evil and to keep themselves steadfast in all he commanded in compliance with his will” (1QS 5.1). This notion again nullifies the possibility of understanding what has preceded as

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83 Tukasi, *Determinism and Petitionary Prayer in John and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 59. Heger likewise writes, “If some humans are condemned to be wicked, lacking faculty ever to repent and change, what would be the divine rationale for implanting in them some righteous spirit or inclination? Further, it is only reasonable to assume that Dual Predestination applies equally to the righteous: If they are chosen to be perpetually righteous, there would be no reason to implant in them bad inclinations… Finally, it seems to me inconceivable that the highly intellectual Qumran scholars would have created a theology that contradicts the cardinal biblical doctrine of repentance and forgiveness” (Heger, *Challenges to Conventional Opinions on Qumran and Enoch Issues*, 328).


85 Elliott notes that the tension exists between what is portrayed as extensive cosmological dualism and predestinarianism here in this passage, and the rest of Qumran soteriology, which does not fit within such a framework (Elliott, *Survivors of Israel*, 402). He concludes, “Whether one views the passage as dominated by a psychological or a cosmic perspective, by the idea of a mixture of spirits or by cosmic determinism, it is evident that such distinctions are not essential to understanding the message and purpose of the original author/compiler… its real significance once again lies in the fact that it functioned (perhaps quite unconsciously) as a statement of opposition to the enemies of the sect… the most outstanding feature is not the strict dualism between two spirits, but the dualism *between two groups of people*” (Ibid., 404).
referencing some kind of absolute determinism.\textsuperscript{86} Those who enter this covenant community do so in submission to the sons of Zadok, the priests, and the community itself, which entails submitting to their “decision by lot… in every affair involving the law, property and judgment” (1QS 5.2-3). 1QS 5.4-13 emphasizes the importance of obedience to the covenant of the community and the authority of its leaders and to forsaking fellowship with the wicked outsiders (“the congregation of the men of injustice” (1QS 5.1-2)\textsuperscript{87}), who have disregarded the decrees of God and will experience “everlasting annihilation without there being any remnant” (1QS 5.13). The shunning of those outside of the covenant is emphasized in 1QS 5.13-19; community members are to not associate with such a person. Those who submit themselves to the decrees of the community’s covenant are to be examined by the community as a means to test their willingness to submit, and their deeds “must be tested, year after year” (1QS 5.21-24).

1QS 6.1-23 contains additional requirements which regulate the social interactions of community members as well as the “session of the Many” (6.8). 1QS 6.13 offers regulations for examining “anyone from Israel who freely volunteers to enrol (sic) in the council of the Community,” which includes subjecting himself to the scrutiny of “the Many” and a 2 year period of partial inclusion prior to the opportunity for “full membership” (6.14-23). Further regulations for handling improper behavior are found in 1QS 6.24-7.16, which specifies the

\textsuperscript{86} Timmer writes, “Since these voluntary elements are not consistently conditioned by an anthropology in which all human works are in need of purification, they suggest the possibility of a cooperative soteriology, something that comes more clearly into view in the Community Rule’s theology of atonement” (Timmer, “Variegated Nomism Indeed,” 347). This is contrasted with Schwartz, who suggests that new members must be thought of as “‘sons of light’ all along,” something that clearly the text itself does not require (Daniel R. Schwartz, “‘To Join Oneself to the House of Judah’ (Damascus Document IV, 11),” Revue de Qumran 10.39 (1981): 445-446).

\textsuperscript{87} These men are, in all likelihood, Jews who have rejected the covenant of the community. Elliott thus writes, “There is good reason to suspect, however, that the expression “men of iniquity who… are not reckoned in God’s Covenant” conceals a kind of religious irony, and that its reference is to those who in fact believe themselves to be participants in the covenant. It becomes even clearer in the words that follow that the exclusion of Israelites, not Gentiles, is the point being made by this passage, as the language used to speak of those who are excluded is drawn from biblical passages addressed to Israel” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 58).
punishments for those who knowingly lie, utter “the Name,” speak angrily against the priests, insult a fellow-member, are negligent with shared property, are angry, use improper speech, sleep during meetings, display unnecessary nudity, spit, and giggle. Questioning or speaking against “the Many,” questioning “the foundation of the Community,” allowing one’s spirit to turn from the community, or fraternizing with those who had been expelled, all could result in expulsion from the community (1QS 7.16-25).  

The council of the community is charged with ensuring the faithfulness of the community “in order to atone for sin by doing justice and undergoing trials, and to walk with everyone in the measure of the truth and the regulation of the time” (1QS 8.1-4). This atoning function, Elliott notes, seems to reflect the view that the sectarian cult was intended, by means of a spiritual kind of worship, to take the place of the apostate priesthood and cult in Jerusalem.”  

The author then states “When these things exist in Israel the Community council shall be founded on truth, to be an everlasting plantation, a holy house for Israel and the foundation of the holy of holies for Aaron, true witnesses for the judgment and chosen by the will (of God) to atone for the land and to render the wicked their retribution” (1QS 8.5-7; also 9.3-6). Here, again, the community clearly envisages itself as the true Israel, the faithful remnant, who God has preserved in this period when Belial is having his way among the majority of the Jews. The perfect obedience of the community will “prepare the way of [Yhwh]” and “open there His path” (1QS 8.13-14).  

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88 Of these regulations, Tukasi notes, “Another way by which the text articulates human responsibility is in its emphasis on the standard of living within the community. As a way of enforcing the standard, the text enumerates the punishment for every misdemeanour (sic)” (Tukasi, Determinism and Petitionary Prayer in John and the Dead Sea Scrolls, 59).

89 Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 333.

90 Tukasi again notes, “The text makes it clear that continuation of membership in the Community is guaranteed on the condition that one’s actions befit the purpose which identified the group as a predestined Community” (Tukasi, Determinism and Petitionary Prayer in John and the Dead Sea Scrolls, 58).
All of the ordinances of the community are to be followed “until the prophet comes, and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel” (1QS 9.11).91

As the Rule closes, 1QS 9.12-11.22 records the regulations for the “Instructor” as well as a prayer of dedication and praise to God. In 1QS 11.7-8, the author writes, “To those who God has selected he has given them (wisdom, knowledge, and justice) as everlasting possession; and he has given them an inheritance in the lot of the holy ones. He unites their assembly to the sons of the heavens in order (to form) the council of the Community and a foundation of the building of holiness to be an everlasting plantation throughout all future ages.”92 As the prayer closes, the author confesses his weakness and places his trust in the mercies of God for salvation and marvels at the glory and goodness of God (1QS 11.10-22).

The examination above has shown, outside of Col. 3-4, that 1QS is primarily concerned with outlining the commandments and rules of order for the community. The deterministic language is bookended with conditional clarifications, which appear incompatible.93 It has been suggested herein, however, that the language primarily deals with the recognition that God has declared certain ways to be true and good, and others to be deceitful and evil,94 and the spirits influence individuals in these ways. The individual, however, must walk, in one way or the other,

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92 Here, Vermes states, “their attitude in regard to the Covenant was that only the initiates of their own ‘new Covenant’ were to be reckoned among God’s elect and, as such, united already on earth with the angels of heaven” (Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 170).

93 Treves states succinctly that “it seems to me that our author’s predestinarianism has been somewhat exaggerated” (Treves, “Two Spirits of the Rule of the Community,” 451).

94 So Tukasi states, “The predestination we encounter in the Rule concerns the two spirits and their ways, and not the allotment of people into good or evil” (Tukasi, *Determinism and Petitionary Prayer in John and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 62).
and their ultimate fate is determined by their choice. The way of truth clearly corresponds to the life of the community. They alone are the remnant of Israel, and they have been preserved by God in fulfillment of his promises. They receive the covenant blessings. It is this community, that is chosen, or elect and here, as elsewhere, membership in the community is determined by an individual’s choices and behaviors.

**Rule of the Congregation (1QSa; 1Q28a, c. first century BCE)**

Like the *Rule of the Blessings*, the *Rule of the Congregation* (also known as the *Messianic Rule*, and hereafter 1QSa) is appended to 1QS where it is best preserved, though a number of fragments have been identified from Cave 4. The text dates to c. 100 BCE, though it may be dated earlier than that, depending on its relationship to the aforementioned fragments of Cave 4.

1QSa is a guiding document for the community “in accordance with the regulation of the sons of Zadok, the priests, and the men of their covenant who have turn[ed away from the] path

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95 Again, Tukasi writes, “What is of particular interest to the Rule in the cosmic order is the two spirits and all the deeds established upon them. Every human being becomes either a child of light or a child of darkness not by any pre-arranged order, but by one’s choice of actions” (Tukasi, *Determinism and Petitionary Prayer in John and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 61). See also Grindheim, *The Crux of Election*, 65. Contra Dimant, who writes, “While the biblical covenant implies a real choice and acceptance, and the curses and blessings function as threats and rewards, the covenant of the sectaries asserts and reinforces a situation predetermined by God from the beginning” (Devorah Dimant, “Qumran Sectarian Literature,” in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period*, Vol. 2, ed. Michael E. Stone, 483-550 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 500).


98 Ibid, 1172.
of the nation” (1QSa 1.1-2). The obedience of the community to the covenant is performed “to aton[e for the ear]th” (1QSa 1.3). Here, as Schiffman describes, “We are told that through its adherence to its covenant with God, the sect had atoned for the land… The sect’s observance of the law prevented the destruction of the Jewish people who were otherwise deserving of so grievous a penalty.” So the community, as the remnant of Israel, prevents the complete destruction of Israel, while the nation on the whole stands under condemnation. The book outlines the process by which young men are trained in the ways of the community, from youth to adulthood, when they are eligible for full membership and leadership functions within the community (1QSa 1.4-2.10). 1QSa closes with a description of the “Messiah of Israel’s” entrance into the community to break bread and drink wine with and bless the community (1QSa 2.11-22). The community is referred to in this text as “native Israelites” (1QSa 1.6), “Israel” (1QSa 1.14; 2.2, 14, 15, 20), and “the congregation of Israel” (1QSa 1.20; 2.12), indicating clearly that they viewed themselves as the true Israel. They no doubt saw their commitment to purity and obedience in the present as a reflection of what the community would look like in the eschaton, when the Messiahs were present in their midst.

The majority of Israel in the “now” stood outside of the covenant, and many Israelites would no doubt be excluded in the future as well, though it appears the community expected that their numbers would increase through the events of the last days, since the “th[ousands of Israel]” would be gathered at the Messianic banquet (1QSa 2.15). Though there may be a future

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99 For a discussion of the function of the leaders of the community, see Schiffman, _The Eschatological Community of the Dead Sea Scrolls_, 28-36.


101 For a summary, see Schiffman, _The Eschatological Community of the Dead Sea Scrolls_, 13-27.

102 Ibid., 68-71.
ingathering of Israelites into the community, nothing in the text indicates that “all of Israel” would be saved in the last days (which would no doubt conflict with other sectarian writings at Qumran). Likewise, the emphasis upon following the precise prescriptions of the new covenant indicates that inclusion in the community is conditioned upon adherence to the precepts given to them by God, the sons of Zadok, and his Messiahs.  

Rule of the Blessings (1QSa; 1Q28b, c. first century BCE)

The Rule of Blessings (hereafter 1QSa), written around 100 BCE, is a partially preserved appendix to 1QS and 1QSa which “apparently pertains to life in the messianic age following the eschatological restoration.” 1QSb offers a prayer of blessing for the community, which is comprised of those who “keep his commandments, remaining constant in his holy co[ven]ant and walk with perfection [on all the paths of] his [tru]th, those he has chosen for an eternal covenant wh[ich] endures for ever” (1QSa 1.1-3). Though fragmentary, 1QSa in places draws a clear distinction between the community, upon which the blessings of God are prayed, and those outside who apparently are to be destroyed with no remnant and warred against because they are a corrupt generation (1QSa 1.7; 3.7). The community is able to receive these blessings because the sons of Zadok “have established [his covenant] in truth and have examined all his precepts in justice, and they have walked in accordance with wha[t] he chooses” (1QSa 3.24).

103 Elliott summarizes, “Even if, however, these columns from 1QSa allow an interpretation that relates them to a future gathering of others from Israel, it is crucial to note that this belief still does not entirely conflict with notions of judgment and exclusivity, inasmuch as throughout the work the converts from Israel are said to join the community and to obey the ordinances taught by its members. There is no such thing as a general restoration that does not have at its center the teaching and community organization already known by the sect” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 550).

The War Scroll (hereafter 1QM) dates to the first or second century BCE, and is preserved in manuscripts and fragments discovered in Caves 1, 4, and 11. 1QM describes the battle to take place between the sons of light (also called “the sons of Levi, the sons of Judah and the sons of Benjamin” (1QM 1.2)) and the sons of darkness (Gentiles and Jewish traitors to the true covenant alike), led by Belial (1QM 1.1-3). According to Sanders, “in 1QM the enemies are always the Gentiles. The only reference to enemies within Israel is the phrase ‘offenders against the covenant’ in 1.2. These are said to assist the Gentile armies against whom the Sons of Light wage their first engagement.” Clearly, however, the “violators of the covenant” can refer only to Jews who have abandoned the covenant as defined by the community. These apostates fight alongside of the Gentiles, and thus are numbered among the enemies of the sons of light. The sons of light are on the offensive in the conflict, bringing the

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106 Flusser identifies the Kittim of the War Scroll as the Romans, and that “the scroll was composed some time after Pompey’s entrance into Egypt, or perhaps Julius Caesar’s” (Flusser, Judaism of the Second Temple Period, Vol. 1, 141); See also Alexander Boalotnikov, “The Theme of Apocalyptic War in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” Andrews University Seminary Studies 43.2 (2005): 261-266). Treves, however, sees the mention of Assyria and Egypt as reference to the Macedonians of Syria and Egypt, and thus “in the period 167-69 B.C., when there were hostilities between the Jews and the Seleucids, and thus did not originate with the Qumranites (Marco Treves, “The Date of the War of the Sons of Light,” Vetus Testamentum 8 (1958): 420).

107 Yadin notes that the language here “doubtlessly referred to those amongst the Jews whom the sect considered to be traitors and persecutors of the righteous” (Yigael Yadin, The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), 26).


battle to Jerusalem, and the event will be a “period of rule for all the men of [God’s] lot, and of everlasting destruction for all the lot of Belial” (1QM 1.3-5). The victory of the sons of justice will result in their perpetual peace, blessing, and joy (1QM 1.8-9). The battle itself will be a fierce contest, with advances made by both camps, but ultimately God will assist the sons of light and he will be victorious over Belial, his angels, and his armies (1QM 1.10-17).110

Much of the text (1QM 2.1-9.18) contains detailed descriptions of the organization of the priests and battle units and their war paraphernalia.111 The people will be confident in battle because of their assurance that God is with them (1QM 10.1-7). The author inquires, “Who (is) like you, God of Israel, in the heavens or on the earth, to do great deeds like your deeds, marvels like your feats? And who (is) like your nation, Israel, whom you chose for yourself from among all the nations of the earth, a nation of holy ones of the covenant, learned in the law, wise in knowledge, […] hearers of the glorious voice, seers of the holy angels, with opened ears, hearing profound things?” (1QM 10.8-11). This praise of Israel is no doubt limited to the sect, since the “violators of the covenant” and those outside were not members of the covenant in the minds of the sectarians.

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110 Elliott summarizes, “According to the War Scroll, the Sons of Light were even expected to suffer some measure of defeat in the war, something that was all in God’s plan to perfect the righteous while simultaneously judging the others. Unlike those upon whom the community would bring this judgment, however, they themselves would eventually experience salvation through the same battle” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 614).

111 The detailed descriptions of the battle gear and tactics may be taken as mere embellishment to inspire the eschatological imagination of the sect (see Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 620). Treves, however, has stated, “On the contrary, the many precise details, some of which have parallels in contemporary Hellenistic and Roman tactics and military organisation (sic)... give it the appearance of a plan for a real war to be waged in the author’s days. It does not look like a liturgical poem for some annual festival, as some commentators seem to suggest, nor like an apocalyptic dream conceived in peacetime for the consolation of mystics, as others suppose” (Treves, “The Date of the War of the Sons of Light,” 419). Yadin supports this suggestion in stating, “The main purpose of the scroll seems to consist in supplying the members of the sect with a detailed set of regulations and plans in accordance with which they were to act on the day of destiny appointed ‘from of old for a battle of annihilation of the Sons of Darkness’ (i, 10)” (Yadin, The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness, 4). Thus, the sectarians may have expected and planned for a real conflict which they believed would bring about the final intervention of God.
1QM 11.1-18 then recounts the past victories of God over the Philistines and Egyptians, which serves to assure that he will again defeat the enemies of his people, followed by the appropriate praise of his splendor (12.1-18). The author then pronounces, “blessed be all who serve him in justice, who know him in faith,” and “Accursed be Belial for his inimical plan… Accursed be all the spirits of his lot for their wicked plan, may they be damned for their deeds of filthy uncleanness” (1QM 13.3-5). God has “[re]deemed us to be for you an eternal nation, and you have made us fall into the lot of light in accordance with your truth” (1QM 13.9-10), while he “made Belial for the pit” (13.11).

After their return from battle, the congregation will cleanse themselves and then say, “Blessed be the God of Israel, the one who keeps mercy for his covenant and pledges of deliverance for the people he has redeemed. He has called those who are tottering to wondrous [exploits], and has gathered the assembly of peoples for destruction with no remnant” (1QM 14.4-5). God will use the weak and poor, “the perfect ones of the path” (1QM 14.7), who are “the rem[nant of your people]” (14.8) to bring about the destruction of the wicked (14.6-8). Furthermore, God has “wondrously bestowed [his] mercies to the rem[nant of your inheritance] during the empire of Belial” (1 QM 14.9), who has “not separated us from your covenant” (14.9-10).

Though the period of war against the sons of darkness will “be a time of suffering for Isra[el],” for those of “God’s lot there will be everlasting redemption” (1QM 15.1). The High Priest will give the orders to the armies of light to enact the destruction of the “wicked congregation” (1QM 15.9) and thus “with the holy ones of his people he will perform a mighty deed” (1QM 16.2). The priests will thus lead the people against Belial and his armies (1QM 16.3-17), in the “appointed time to humiliate and abase the prince of the dominion of evil” (17.
5-6). Belial and his armies will be destroyed, and the priests and Levites and chiefs will bless God for his salvation and his faithfulness to his covenant with them (1QM 17.10-19.14).

The War Scroll serves as both a military plan and a theological encouragement. The community is assured of their success. All who will side with them will likewise enjoy victory, while those who oppose them in reality oppose God, and will be destroyed for their failure to accept the true revelation which the community has been given. Again, the community sees themselves as inheriting the promises given to Israel for they alone stand in the line of the covenant. Here, as elsewhere, it is their collective identity that is consistently emphasized, and God’s predetermined plans are collectively described. He has chosen the nation (i.e., the community) as his people. Duhaime recognizes the rhetorical force of this emphasis in stating, “This powerful and encompassing vision certainly helped legitimize the decision of the sectarian to cut themselves off from a corrupted environment; it also provided them with a strong sense of identity as the true remnant of Israel and helped them consolidate their commitment to the Mosaic Law as interpreted and enforced in the community by its religious authorities.”

Liturgical Prayers (1QLitPr; 1Q34; 4Q508, 509, c. first century CE)

The Liturgical Prayers contain prayers for the various festivals observed in the community. Though fragmentary, the prayers offer a glimpse into the liturgical content of the community. 1Q34, Frag. 3, 2.1-8 in particular is relevant to this study. The prayer notes that humanity, in spite of God’s revelation, does not obey God and are utterly wicked (2.3-4). The

112 Duhaime, “War Scroll (1QM),” 1329.
author notes, “This is why you reject them, because you do not like s[i]n, and the wicked person will not endure before you” (2.5). In spite of the existence of the wicked, God has chosen a people in the period of your favour [sic], because you have remembered your covenant. You established them, isolating them for yourself in order to make them holy among all the nations. And you have renewed your covenant with them in the vision of glory, and in the words of your holy [spirit], by the works of your hand. Your right hand has written to let them know the regulations of glory and the everlasting deeds. (2.5-7)

The community here, as elsewhere in the writings of the sect, is viewed as those who have inherited the covenant, and thus its promises, and are the chosen remnant of Israel.

**Thanksgiving Hymns (1QH; 1 QHa; 1Q35; 4Q427-432)**

The Thanksgiving Hymns (hereafter 1QH) is a large collection of hymns clearly authored by the Qumran community. Much debate has occurred over the relationship of 1QH and 1QS, specifically in the “treatise” of the two spirits and the dualistic and deterministic language found there, and the at times conflicting verbiage in the Hymns. 1QH, like 1QS, contains a number of statements which seem to indicate absolute determinism alongside other statements emphasizing human response and obedience. As such, some have come to interpret the collection as evidencing absolute determinism, while others have suggested that instead there is a

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114 Grindheim, for example, states, “It is therefore correct to speak of a broad concept of predestination in 1QH. Everything is predestined by God. Not only the salvation or damnation of the individual, but everything that takes place is predestined (1QHa 4:21; 5:13-14, 16-19; 6:11-12; 9:14-20, 23-31; 12:13)” (Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 58). See also Menahem Mansoor, “Studies in the New Hodayot (Thanksgiving Hymns)—V: Some Theological Doctrines,” Biblical Research 5 (1960): 1-21); Merrill, Qumran and Predestination, 19-28.
coexistence (however resolved) between the sovereignty of God and human response. As in previous texts, the context and intent of these statements must be carefully considered.

In 1QH 4.17-25, the author gives thanks “for the spirits which you placed in me” (4.17). God had pardoned his sins, in which “I defiled myself with impurity, I [separated myself] from the foundation [of truth]” (1QH 4.19). He also acknowledges that God “[smoothen[s]] the path of the one whom you choose and by the insight [of your knowledge you pre]vent him from sinning against you” (1QH 4.22). He then prays, however, that God would “[prevent] your servant from sinning against you, from tripping over all the things of your will” (1QH 4.23). Here the combination of an affirmation of the workings of God to keep the psalmist from sin with a petition to keep him from sinning should first alert one to some of the issues present within the genre. In that hymns focus on praise to God for his grace and goodness, it is not surprising that one might find here a denigrating view of humanity and an all-encompassing attribution of sovereignty to God. One would not, however, expect the theology of the hymns to contradict with what has already been seen in the didactic and theological works previously examined. This is not to say that the hymns are false depictions of the beliefs of the sect, but rather that they are unbalanced by nature of the genre. Even still, it shall be noted that the impetus for humans to be obedient to God and obey the covenant is not removed.

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116 Grindheim, for example, notes, “Hymns will typically stress the reasons for giving praise to God, whereas rules will typically stress that elect status is demonstrated by obedience.” (Grindheim, *The Crux of Election*, 64)

117 VanLandingham suggests, “In comparing 1QS and 1QH, VanLandingham notes, “the differences or contradictions… between them are real, including the internal contradictions of 1QH”. The differences, at least on the issues of a pessimistic anthropology and *sola gratia* soteriology, can be attributed to the same internal differences in the texts noted above. The reason derives from the genre, not Qumran theology… There are not different or opposing views on how one joins the Community, (i.e., by human obedience or God’s grace) or how one
In 1QH 7.11-7.28, the author acknowledges again the complete sovereignty of God. He affirms:

I know, thanks to your intellect, that [...] is not by the hand of flesh, and that a man [can not choose] his way, nor can a human being establish his steps. I know that the impulse of every spirit is in your hand, [and all] its [task] you have established even before creating him... You, you alone, have [created] the just man, and from the womb you determined him for the period of approval, to keep your covenant, and to walk on all (your paths), and to... on him with the abundance of your compassion, to open all the narrowness of his soul to eternal salvation and endless peace, without want (1QH 7.15-19).  

Likewise,

the wicked you have created for [the time] of your wrath, from the womb you have predestined them for the day of slaughter. For they walk on a path that is not good, they reject your covenant, their soul loathes your [...], and they take no pleasure in what you command, but choose what you hate. You have established all those [who...] your [...] to carry out great judgments against them before the eyes of all your creatures, so they will be a sign and a por[tent for] eternal [generations] so that all will know your glory and your great might (1QH 7.20-23).

The psalmist herein has attributed all of the ways of the just man, including his keeping of the covenant, to the workings of God. There appears to be here in 1QH 7.15-23 no room for human response or initiative for either the righteous or the wicked. In the lines that preceded (1QH 7.11-14), however, it is said that the psalmist has loved God, purified his soul, committed himself to the commandments, and joined the Many, all apparently of his own volition.

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118 In this passage in particular, Grindheim notes, “To be elect means to be given the discernment so as not to sin against God (4:22; cf. 6:17). Law observance is therefore the sign that one is elect” (Ibid., 59).

119 A similar line of thought is expressed in 1QH 18.1-13, where the author inquires, “I am dust and ashes, what can I plan if you do not wish it? What can I devise without your will? How can I be strong if you do not make me stand? How can I be learned if you do not mould me? What can I say if you do not open my mouth?... Apart from you nothing happens, and nothing is known without your will.” See also 1QH 15.34-36 and 20.4-36.

120 This is how Hopkins, Mansoor, and Merrill interpret the hymn (Hopkins, “The Qumran Community and 1 Q Hodayot,” 350; Mansoor, “Studies in the New Hodayot (Thanksgiving Hymns)—V,” 4; Merrill, *Qumran and Predestination*, 29).
Furthermore, as quoted above, the wicked are said to choose what God hates and “walk on a path that is not good” (1QH 7.21-22). Here, in the same psalm and context, both the initiative and conduct of humanity and the complete sovereignty and apparent determinism of God are affirmed.

Again in 1QH 11.19-36, the hymnist offers assurance of God’s sovereignty. He states, “The depraved spirit you have purified from great offence so that he can take a lace with the host of the holy ones, and can enter in communion with the congregation of the sons of heaven. You cast eternal destiny for man with the spirits of knowledge, so that he praises your name in the community of jubilation, and tells of your wonders before all your creation” (1QH 11.21-23). The psalmist then states that he shares in “the lot of the scoundrels” because the “soul of a poor person lives amongst great turmoil” (1QH 11.25) and awaits for the “torrents of Belial” to break loose (11.29), yet God will be “a massive rampart for me” (11.37) and will set his “feet upon a rock… and /on/ the tracks which you have chosen” (12.3-4). It seems here that his lot in life has changed, and God indeed has rescued him from the trouble he faced and will also rescue him from the advances of Belial.

1QH 12, in contrast, however, asserts that the wicked (12.1-18), who are full of deceit, oppress the righteous, alter the Law, are hypocrites, stubborn, and idolaters, “have not chosen the path of your [heart] nor have they listened to your word” (12.17). Because of their decision, they

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121 So Heger suggests, “These verses demonstrate explicitly that the wicked will be punished because they chose, by their own will, to act against the divine rules, not because they were damned to behave wickedly. God predestined that all who act likewise, who choose the bad way, will be severely punished, in order to serve as a sign and a premonition of his boundless might to castigate those who disobey him” (Heger, Challenges to Conventional Opinions on Qumran and Enoch Issues, 337). See also Ringgren, The Faith of Qumran, 107.

122 1QH 11.19 is sometimes understood as a reference to eschatological salvation. In the context, however, and with the use of the past combined with the OT notion of Sheol as the underworld/grave, it seems likely here that the psalmist is simply noting when he was rescued by God from physical death. See, for example, George W. E. Nickelsburg, Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 190. For a discussion on immortality in 1QH, see Robert B. Laurin, “The Question of Immorality in the Qumran ‘Hodayot’,” Journal of Semitic Studies 3.4 (1958): 344-355.
will be annihilated in the day of judgment (1QH 12.18-21). The righteous will, in contrast, stand in the presence of God and he will sustain them in every difficulty and forgive their sins (1QH 12.21-40). The righteous “walk on the path of [God’s] heart” (1QH 12.21) and have listened to the psalmist (12.24), who himself had been barred from the covenant (12.35) and was readmitted only because he humbled himself and recommitted himself to the covenant (12.36-40). While the previous hymns have focused on the sovereignty of God, to the near (though not total) exclusion of any recognition of the responsibility of humans, this hymn focuses almost exclusively on the responsibility of humanity and the consequences for disobedience, to the near (though not total) exclusion of God’s sovereignty.123

1QH 14 begins with a praise of God’s goodness in opening the ears of the hymnist “[to the instruction of those who rebuke with justice” (14.4). The hymnist takes comfort in knowing that God will soon “raise a survivor among your people, a remnant in your inheritance. You will purify them to cleanse them of guilt. For all their deeds are in your truth and in your kindness you judge them with an abundance of compassion and a multitude of forgiveness” (1QH 14.8-9). This community is where the truth of God resides, as God himself is their teacher (1QH 14.9-14). Because of this, “[Their root] will sprout like a flower of the field forever, to make a shoot grow in branches of the everlasting plantation so that it covers all the world with its shade, and its crown (reaches) up to the skies, and its roots down to the abyss” (1QH 14.14-16). Clearly here, again, the community is viewed as Israel, and the agricultural metaphors which have been mentioned before as applying to the remnant are applied here to the community. Those who have strayed from the path of truth and justice are under the counsel of Belial, and

123 In spite of this emphasis, Flusser sees here that man’s election is due to preordained divine grace, and that the community is the sum total of the individual elect (Flusser, Judaism of the Second Temple Period, Vol. 1, 23). The passage seems, however, to say little of election and even less of the community, save mention of the covenant. It seems, instead, that this hymn focuses upon the consequences of the behavior of individuals, which ultimately determines whether they walk the path of God’s heart or choose their own path instead.
include the uncircumcised, unclean, and vicious (1QH 14.19-22), and these wicked will be completely destroyed (1QH 14.29-38).

Finally, in 1QH 19.3-14, the focus on the community as the eschatological people of God continues. Here the hymnist notes that God has shown “compassion for all the sons of your approval, for you have taught them the basis of your truth, and have instructed them in your wonderful mysteries” (1QH 19.9-10). It is because of this divine instruction that men may “become united with the sons of your truth and in the lot with your holy ones, to raise the worms of the dead from the dust, to an everlasting community and from a depraved spirit, to [your] knowledge, so that he can take his place in your presence with the perpetual host and the spirits” (1QH 19.11-13). Here again the submission of individuals to the covenant seems to be viewed as an action performed on their own volition, while God has gifted the community with truth, and all who commit themselves to its membership are enabled to receive this gift.124

1QH thus, like 1QS, contains affirmations both of human and divine activity as it relates to entrance in and obedience to the community. While 1QS in general emphasized the human aspect with several strong statements of divine activity, in 1QH the reverse is seen. The focus is upon the activity of God, for which the psalmist is giving thanks, and the activity of the psalmist and his community is minimized, though not absent altogether. As was stated at the outset, this is due, in large part, to the genre of the hymns, which focus upon the greatness of God and the unworthiness of man, while legal, eschatological, or historical texts have a different focus. It is God’s enabling spirit125 and his gifting of truth to the community that is most at work in 1QH. In

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124 And so Grindheim has stated, “There is thus a clear line from election via knowledge to the oath that makes one a member of the Qumran community. This clear link between election and entrance into the community shows that in the Thanksgiving Hymn election is made manifest by membership in the sect.” (Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 60)

125 Elliott has summarized the pneumatology of the sect in 1QH as consisting of four main categories: 1) the righteous possess God’s Spirit while the unrighteous possess Belial’s; 2) the Spirit of truth is found only in the
that 1QH is focused on the working of God in the life of the individual, the communal or corporate emphasis upon election is less evident, though still present, especially in 1QH 12, 14, and 19. While some have postulated ways in which to reconcile free will under the umbrella of absolute determinism, this is both unnecessary and inconsistent with the rest of the writings from Qumran. Several elements within 1QH create problems with this approach. As noted above, the petitionary and volitional elements in the Hymns are not reconcilable with a deterministic interpretation. As elsewhere in the scrolls, the community is the true Israel, the remnant root which God has preserved and will bless. Salvation is only found within the community since in it the truth of God is delivered through the Teacher of Righteousness. Those outside the community, as Merrill has noted in examining the titles ascribed to the righteous and the wicked, are called “transgressors” (1QH 2.9), “faithless” (2.10), “those who seek smooth community; 3) the community is in good standing with the Spirit and the angels; 4) the unrighteous are inspired by Belial or demonic forces (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 408-419).

126 Hopkins suggests that the dilemma between free will and election is resolved by positing that there is an “area of intersection [between] those outside of the community who are potentially saved but who have not yet heard the word as well as those inside the community who do not really belong there or who are not sure that they belong there” (Hopkins, “The Qumran Community and 1 Q Hodayot,” 363). The text itself, of course, does not support this category. Merrill has suggested that the presence of “voluntarism” and “determinism” in 1QH are both under the umbrella of determinism, and the presence of free will is one that is simply mysterious or that free will only operates within the parameters of the sphere to which an individual is assigned (Merrill, Qumran and Predestination, 39-45).

127 Schuller has noted that the petitionary elements in the Hodayot further evidence the notion that the scrolls affirmed the existence of human freedom and personal responsibility (Schuller, “Petitionary Prayer and the Religion of Qumran,” 29-45).

128 So Heger inquires if the author believes “in individual determinism at birth, or is he using a common manner of expressing divine omnipotence and generosity in contrast to human degradation and ineptitude? On the basis of the intertextual approach, as I will argue, I believe that the latter is correct” (Heger, Challenges to Conventional Opinions on Qumran and Enoch Issues, 335).

129 Holm-Nielsen writes, “Taken as a whole, it is obvious that the salvation is to be seen in the closest possible association with the community into which he has been received; to it he has pledged himself with an oath (14:17)... It is worth noting the considerable degree of agreement between the expressions which refer to the community as a whole and those which refer to the psalmist as an individual; because of it, there is no reason for differentiating between them here” (Svend Holm-Nielsen, Hodayot: Psalms from Qumran (Aarhus: Universitetsforlaget I Aarhus 1960), 299-300).

130 Merrill, Qumran and Predestination, 52.
things” (2. 15, 32), “men of deceit” (2. 16, 34; 4.20) “interpreters of deceit” (4.7), “seers of error” (4.20), and “unclean” (4.20), indicating that the sinners include, at least in large part, ethnic Israelites.

**Damascus Document (CD; 4Q266-273)**

The Damascus Document (hereafter CD) dates to the first century BCE, and contains a more complex compositional history than many of the other scrolls. The text was originally discovered in Cairo in 1896 in two medieval copies, which were later, with the discovery of the scrolls at Qumran, realized to have originated at Qumran.131 Much of the debate over the contents of the document has centered on the origins of the community, which are alluded to within CD, though precise conclusions are difficult to reach.132 The document contains theological material intermingled with detailed precepts for the community and moral exhortations.133

CD opens with the declaration that God will judge those who “spurn him. For when they were unfaithful in forsaking him, he hid his face from Israel and from his sanctuary and delivered them up to the sword. But when he remembered the covenant with the forefathers, he saved a remnant for Israel and did not deliver them up to destruction” (CD 1.2-5). This remnant


132 Ibid., 511.

133 The document shares a number of similarities, though differences are also present, with 1QS. Werberg-Møller, for instance, states, “That 1QS (and 1QpHab) are closely connected with CD, is realized by all scholars and, indeed, the points of contact are so striking that it can hardly be doubted that all these manuscripts originate from the same religious circles. The evidence is overwhelming and need not be given here” (Werberg-Møller, The Manual of Discipline, 15). For a comparison and discussion, see Hilary Evans Kapfer, “The Relationship between the Damascus Document and the Community Rule: Attitudes toward the Temple as a Test Case,” Dead Sea Discoveries 14.2 (2007): 152-177.
consisted of men who “realized (sic) their iniquity and knew that they were guilty,” but “because they sought him with an undivided heart” God raised up a Teacher of Righteousness to lead them in truth and faithfulness (CD 1.8-11). The author sees this as the time foretold by Hosea, when Israel would stray from God and invoke the covenant curses by following “easy interpretations” promoting injustice, and persecuted those who properly observed the Law (CD 1.13-21).

The author acknowledges that atonement is available to those who repent, but those who turn aside from the path are destroyed completely (CD 2.3-6), “For God did not choose them at the beginning of the world, and before they were established he knew their deeds, and abominated the generations on account of blood and hid his face from the land, from <Israel>, until their extinction” (CD 2.7-9). This foreknowledge and foreordination has been interpreted by some as an absolute arrangement. Alexander, for example, states, “There is, it seems, a fixed, predetermined list of the righteous, and through ‘those anointed in His holy spirit and who view His truth’ God has made known to the elect the names of those who are to be saved.”

Here, as in 1QS, the text does not postulate a complete determinism; rather it indicates that God has rejected evil, and all those associated with it. His foreknowledge may mean that he knows who will be in the lot of the wicked, but this is not the same as determining their identities. Indeed, following this statement (as in 1QS!), the author then admonishes his “sons” to “choose what he is pleased with and repudiate what he hates, so that you can walk perfectly on all his paths and

134 It is of no doubt, as Elliott writes, that the “community believed itself to represent the continuation of the former remnant, indeed, but they were not only the descendants of this remnant but were, in some sense, a new remnant who found themselves in need of surviving the present times of trouble, and who hoped to survive the future judgment as well” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 627).

135 Wacholder notes that the “Just Teacher’s opponent could conceivably be understood as a reference to the leader of the Pharisees, a group whom the author labels as the "(Ben Zion Wacholder, The New Damascus Document: The Midrash on the Eschatological Torah of the Dead Sea Scrolls (Reconstruction, Translation and Commentary) (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 151).

not allow yourselves to be attracted by the thoughts of a guilty inclination and lascivious eyes” (CD 2.15-16). Again, God has determined what is good and true, and those who align themselves with the way of truth are those who will receive the blessings he has predetermined, just as those who align themselves with evil will receive the curses.

Following this, CD then recounts the rebellion of the Watchers and the subsequent corruption of humanity (CD 2.17-3.1). Abraham, however, “was counted as a friend for keeping God’s precepts and not following the desire of his spirit” (CD 3.2). Isaac and Jacob followed Abraham’s example, but “Jacob’s sons strayed because of them and were punished in accordance with their mistakes” (CD 3.3-5). Again, it is noteworthy that their punishment is a result of their disobedience to the commands. The author then summarizes the disobedience of Israel (which the sons of Jacob are likely intended to have foreshadowed), which caused many to be forsaken from the covenant, while those “who remained steadfast” received the covenant (CD 3.5-17). These too, however, sinned, and God graciously pardoned them and built them a safe city (CD 3.17-20).\footnote{Nickelsburg writes, “This remnant has been built as "a sure house in Israel" (cf. 1 Sam 2:35). Others may still join them, but the end of the age is near, and soon the wall of that house will be complete and outsiders will be excluded” (Nickelsburg, \textit{Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah}, 124). Likewise, Knibb states, 3.19 “The author of the Damascus Document is claiming that when God established his covenant (line 13), he brought into being in Israel a new movement or group which possessed a privileged status as was promised in 1 Sam. 2:35” (Michael A. Knibb, \textit{The Qumran Community} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 35, see also 38).}

Now, those who faithfully keep the covenant “will acquire eternal life” (CD 3.20).

It is the “sons of Zadok” who are “the chosen of Israel, the men of renown, who stand (to serve) at the end of days” (CD 4.3).\footnote{So Vermes states, “The Essenes not only considered themselves to be the ‘remnant’ of their time, but the ‘remnant’ of all time, the final ‘remnant’” (Vermes, \textit{The Dead Sea Scrolls}, 165).} Belial is set loose against the rest of Israel, who are outside of the covenant, and are caught in the “three nets” of Belial: fornication, wealth, and...
defilement of the temple (CD 4.13-21).\textsuperscript{139} Disrespect for the Law and sins of a sexual nature are again levied against the Jerusalem priests in CD 5.1-21. In spite of these abominations, God remembered the covenant and “raised from Aaron men of knowledge and from Israel wise men” (CD 6.2-3) who established the Law in Damascus to guide the faithful through the present age of wickedness (CD 6.3-11). Those who are within God’s covenant are forbidden from entering the temple, which is clearly corrupt, must keep separate from the wicked and wealthy, and must observe the Law exactly, including keeping the feasts and the day of fasting of the new covenant, loving one another, helping the poor and deprived, refraining from fornication, and avoiding defilement (CD 6.12-7.4).\textsuperscript{140} The covenant provides “a guarantee for them that they shall live a thousand generations” (CD 7.5-6).

God’s judgment, however, will come against those who despise his covenant, and will be administered by the scepter from Israel who is “the prince of the whole congregation” (CD 7.9-8.1). This judgment will come upon “all those entering his covenant but who do not remain steadfast in them; they shall be visited for destruction at the hand of Belial” (CD 8.2). The “target,” here again, of these warnings of judgment are the Jews who have rejected the covenant of the community.\textsuperscript{141} The wicked are those who have “chosen the stubbornness of his heart. They did not keep apart from the people and have rebelled with insolence, walking on the path of the wicked ones” (CD 8.8-9). Among those to be judged are “the builders of the wall” who “have not understood all these things, nor those who daub with whitewash, for one who weighs wind

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{139} Stokes rightly notes, “The Damascus Document’s teaching deals with the sins of Jews outside the sect, those who do not interpret the law according to sectarian standards” (Ryan E. Stokes, “The Origin of Sin in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” \textit{Southwestern Journal of Theology} 53.1 (Fall 2010): 63).
\item \textsuperscript{140} On the community’s separation from the temple cult, see Wacholder, \textit{The New Damascus Document}, 224.
\item \textsuperscript{141} See Elliott, \textit{Survivors of Israel}, 61; Shemesh, “Expulsion and Exclusion in the Community Rule and the Damascus Document,” 57.
\end{itemize}
and preaches lies, has preached to them, so that God’s wrath has been kindled against his entire congregation” (CD 8.12-13). God loves those who follow in obedience as the fathers of Israel did, but has “hatred for the builders of the wall” (CD 8.17-18). Thus, all who reject God’s commands will be judged (CD 8.18-19).

The covenant community is forbidden from speaking “the name” or from charging the covenant curses to another, and are expected to pass the ways of the covenant down to their sons in order for them to be enrolled in the covenant community, and all members must strive to follow the precepts of the Law perfectly, with specific instructions being provided as relating to public sins, oaths, purity issues, and the sabbath (CD 8.21-13.23). There exists the possibility for banishment from the community if disobedience occurs, though most offenses are dealt with through a period of temporary punishment. The author then declares, “(to) all those who walk in them, the covenant of God is faithful to save them from all the nets of the pit, but “the ignorant walk on” (Prov 27.12) and are punished” (CD 14.1-2). CD thus contains “the exact interpretation of the regulations by which [they shall be ruled] [until there arises the messiah]h of Aaron and Israel. And their iniquity will be atoned [through meal and sin-offerings]” (CD 14.18-19).

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142 Some scholars identify the wall-builders as all Jews outside of the community (Philip R. Davies, The Damascus Covenant: An Interpretation of the Damascus Document (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1982), 113; Knibb, The Qumran Community, 42). Others, such as Wacholder, identify them as the malevolent leaders of sinful Israel (Wacholder, The New Damascus Document, 188).

143 Wacholder thus observes correctly that the “followers of the Just Teacher are regarded as part of the ancestral promise to the patriarchs, the inheritors of the pagan lands” (Ibid., 243).

144 The instructions are given “to keep the unclean apart from the clean, and distinguish between holy and profane. And these are the ordinance for the Instructor, so that he walks in them with every living thing, according to the regulation for every time. And in accordance with this regulation shall the seed of Israel walk and it will not be cursed” (CD 12.19-22).

145 Shemesh has linked this practice to the community’s identification with the exile. “Exclusion, like exile, was temporary removal; after a process of repentance, the offender was allowed to return to his original status” (Shemesh, “Expulsion and Exclusion in the Community Rule and the Damascus Document,” 58). Furthermore, the “idea that the temporary exclusion of an unfitting offender from the Community is a substitute for ritual expiation through sacrifice is based on the paradigm of Israel’s exile; and according to the sectarian conception of history that was the punishment for unintentional offenses” (Ibid., 62).
As was seen in its sister document, 1QS, though containing deterministic language, CD does not nullify the importance of human freedom and response. The God who controls history has also chosen Israel, or specifically “true Israel,” the remnant of Israel, as his people. He has also determined “right and wrong,” so to speak, and the rewards and consequences for behavior which falls into those categories. Membership in the community is conditioned upon one’s acceptance of and obedience to the terms of the covenant, which are to be understood through the authoritative interpretation of the Teacher of Righteousness. Grindheim suggests that the remnant idea has been individualized at Qumran, but it is clear that the community is Israel. They have received the covenant, and only they have been faithful to it. The concept of election here, as seen elsewhere, has been de-nationalized and spiritualized, removed from any purely ethnic notion and framed in a covenantal one. The depiction is no less corporate, however,

146 See Schwartz, “‘To Join Oneself to the House of Judah’ (Damascus Document IV, 11),” 445.

147 Thus Grindheim writes, “The understanding of election in the Damascus Document is reflected in its development of the remnant-theme” (Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 65).

148 Schwartz's suggestion is helpful in stating, “in Dam. Doc. [predestination] controls only the framework of human history, the succession of epochs... Any penitent outsider can join them, but they must hurry, for a time will come when people who are essentially no worse than the sectarian will be denied the opportunity to take shelter in their "sure house"” (Schwartz, “‘To Join Oneself to the House of Judah’ (Damascus Document IV, 11),” 446).

149 So Dimant writes, “Thus the sect’s point of departure appears to have been a double awareness: on the one hand the recognition of their own sinfulness and the need to repent; on the other, the conviction that they possessed the true teaching and revelation through the Teacher of Righteousness. This explains why the sectaries call themselves both ‘the Repenters of Israel’ and ‘the comers into the New Covenant’” (Dimant, “Qumran Sectarian Literature,” 492).

150 “The individualization of the remnant idea is anticipated in the prophetic literature (cf. ch. 1) and continued in the literature of Second Temple Judaism, particularly the Enochic literature (cf. above). While this perspective has been amplified in the Dead Sea Scrolls, its novelty should not be overstated.” (Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 69)

151 Demant, again, is helpful in stating, “All these teachings were divulged to the community in a divine revelation and thus render the community elect and just by its very nature” (Dimant, “Qumran Sectarian Literature,” 492).
than elsewhere in the Second Temple period. Thus, the size of the remnant should not cause one
to determine that their religious beliefs have been individualized.

**Pesher on Nahum (4QpNah; 4Q169, c. first century BCE)**

The *Pesher on Nahum* (hereafter 4QpNah) again predicts a coming judgment at the hands
of the Kittim (4QpNah Frags. 1 + 2, 1-9). Here the antagonist is “the Angry Lion,” a clear
allusion to Alexander Jannaeus, who struck “the simple folk of Ephraim” and took revenge
against “those looking for easy interpretations” by hanging “living men [from the tree,
committing an atrocity which had not been committed] in Israel since ancient times, for it is
[hor]rible for the one hanged alive from the tree” (4QpNah Frags. 3 + 4, 1.5-8). As he explain
Those who are “looking for easy interpretations,” quite likely a term describing the Pharisees,
are accused of walking “in treachery and lie[s]” and thereby bring judgment upon the people
through their “fraudulent teaching and lying tongue” (Frags. 3 + 4, 2.1-8). Their evil deeds,
however, “will be exposed to all Israel in the final time; many will fathom their sin, they will
hate them and loathes them for their reprehensible arrogance,” abandoning their teachings and

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152 Horgan states, “there is virtually unanimous agreement among modern scholars that these lines refer to
Alexander Jannaeus’s crucifixion of the Pharisees who had turned their allegiance to Demetrius III” (Horgan,
*Pesharim*, 175).

153 Yadin has suggested that 4QpNah approved of the crucifixion of the Pharisees, and thus Jannaeus was
enacting God’s judgment on the Pharisees, which was deserved because of their treachery (Yigael Yadin, “Pesher
argued against this hypothesis, noting that the strong language of the pesher and the quotation of Deut 21 seems to
clearly condemn the action (Florentino Garcia Martinez, “1QpNah y la Crucifixión: Nueva hipótesis de
reconstrucción de 4Q 169 3-4 I, 4-8,” *Estudios bíblicos* 38 (1979): 221-235).


155 Tantlevskij suggests that the author of 4QpNah thought Alexander to be the last wicked king which
would rule over Israel, and the last days would soon be ushered in, which would include his judgment (Igor R.
Tantlevskij, “The Reflection of the Political Situation in Judaea in 88 B.C.E. in the Qumran Community on Nahum
joining instead “the [majori]ty [of I]srael” (Frags. 3 + 4, 3.1-8). Though its ending is fragmentary, Frags. 3 + 4, 4.1-8 also appears to predict the end of the influence of Manasseh (the Sadducees) and Ephraim (the Pharisees) over the people of Israel. The wicked Pharisees, Sadducees, and Temple cult, along with the Hasmonean king, clearly stand outside of the covenant community, have dishonored and transgressed the Law in their misinterpretations or disobedience, and thus will face judgment, along with those who they have led astray and thus prevented from following the true interpretation of the Law found in the community alone.

4Q Commentary on Genesis A (4Q252, c. late first century BCE or early first century CE)

4Q Commentary on Genesis A (hereafter 4Q252) offers a brief summary and commentary on various texts within Gen. 7:10-49:10, focusing on Noah and the flood judgment (4Q252 1.1-2.7), the life of Abraham (2.8-3.14, all quite fragmentary), and the descendants of Jacob and Esau (4.1-7). In 4Q252 5.1-6, the author states that the descendants of Judah will be given the perpetual throne of David, “the covenant of royalty,” which will be renewed by the “messiah of righteousness” who is linked with the community and their obedience to the covenant. Though fragmentary, the notion here seems that the community represents a “true Israel” and is the sole inheritor of the covenant promises seems likely. Brooke supports this interpretation in stating, “4Q252 seems to suggest that its compiler considered himself and his audience as those who stand under the divine blessing; they have the right credentials to take up the promise land.”156

Summary of the Dead Sea Scrolls

Though containing some distinguishing features, the DSS reflect a similar notion of election found in the Jewish milieu of this period. The community clearly viewed itself as the remnant of Israel, and the only true representation of a faithful covenant community, having received from God, through the sons of Zadok and the Teacher of Righteousness, the renewed or new covenant. Throughout the scrolls, though particularly in 1QS, 1QH, and CD, elements of determinism and volunteerism are intermingled. While numerous solutions have been suggested, it may be argued that what God has predetermined is a declaration of what is good and true, in contrast with what is wicked and deceitful. He has also chosen a people for himself, Israel, who now survive only in the form of the remnant community. These predeterminations, however, do not override the individual choices of humanity (as evidenced in the conditional nature of the commands, the explicit statements of the choice of individuals to obey or disobey, the possibility of apostasy, and the inclusion of petitionary prayers) who are admonished to repent of their wickedness and voluntarily submit themselves to the community. The wicked, however, have chosen to deny God’s revelation and walk in their wickedness. Though Gentiles (primarily the Romans) are identified as enemies of the community, it is primarily the apostates Jews, identified as the Temple leadership, Pharisees, Sadducees, and possibly even non-Qumranite Essenes, along with all those whom they have led astray, who are outside of the covenant, and thus under

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157 Dimant states, “The total dependence of man on God, inherent in the fundamental laws of creation, implies that man’s salvation, if possible, depends on God too. So it is expressed in the Hodayot and elsewhere. Yet such salvation demands a corresponding attitude of man. In fact, by truly repenting and by following God’s true ways, i.e. the Law of Moses (1QH 10:30), man distinguishes himself as one who merits and is capable of receiving the divine grace” (Dimant, “Qumran Sectarian Literature,” 537). See also Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 261, 265.

158 Even Sanders recognizes, “A study of the extant literature reveals that three different groups are considered outside the covenant: Gentiles, non-Essene Jews and apostate Essenes” (Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 243). He maintains, however, that the sect did not view itself as the “true Israel,” but rather as a “specially chosen part of Israel” (Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 247).
the judgment of God. While there exists now an opportunity for repentance, God’s wrath will come against all who forsake the covenant, including members of the community who commit apostasy. It is Israel who stands as God’s chosen people, found now in the remnant community, and all who voluntarily commit themselves to the community and its teachings, enjoy the blessings of the covenant and become a member of the elect.

Wisdom of Solomon (c. 30 BCE – 40 CE)

The Wisdom of Solomon is a unique entry in the collection known as the Apocrypha. Written either shortly before or shortly after the beginning of the Common Era, probably in Alexandria, the work is typically classified as Jewish wisdom literature. It—perhaps more than any other work of the period, outside of Philo—demonstrates an intentional integration with Greek philosophical thought to defend the superiority of the Jewish wisdom and legal traditions, though it includes only a few vague references to the Torah itself. Thus, as Harrington has stated, “It is more a book about wisdom—its benefits, nature, and role in history—than a wisdom book giving practical advice (like Proverbs and Sirach).” The work is not purely descriptive, however, in that it no doubt expects certain behavioral responses of its

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159 Elliott summarizes, “The scroll writers were also well aware of the view that others in Israel were not believed to share in this corporeity, and so they could express their view of the community in a negative way also, that the rest of Israel would be judged according to their relationship to that community—namely, according to their treatment of it and their acceptance or nonacceptance of its revelation. It is almost as if the center of salvation had become the yahad itself, leading to the conclusion that soteriology was to a point defined in terms of corporate identity” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 347).


161 As Nickelsburg describes, “In order to accomplish his purpose the author combines the wisdom and apocalyptic traditions of Israel, synthesizing them with an eclectic use of Greek philosophy and religious thought, and creatively and artistically shaping his material through the use of typical Hellenistic rhetorical devices and modes of expression” (Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah, 205).

readers who have accepted its teachings.\textsuperscript{163} The stated audience of the book is the Gentile “kings and rulers” (Wis 1:1; 6:1), though clearly this work is intended for a broader readership.\textsuperscript{164} deSilva summarizes, “Wisdom is thus surely written to encourage continued adherence to the Jewish way of life in a setting where the enticements of Hellenization and the ability of apostates to reject their heritage as of little value weigh heavily upon the Jewish consciousness.”\textsuperscript{165} The book was likely intended for a Jewish audience, though Gentile God-fearers would also be welcomed readers. The work was likely directed toward faithful Jews and proselytes as a means to shore up their commitment to the Jewish way of life, though apostates may have been a secondary target audience.\textsuperscript{166} As Nickelsburg has noted, though likely a diaspora work, the Wisdom of Solomon has several themes that overlap with the New Testament. While this may not necessarily be due to direct dependence on the work, it at least shows a common thought milieu and thus certainly makes the work relevant for an understanding of Second Temple Judaism and its relationship to the New Testament.\textsuperscript{167} The work is typically divided into three sections: chs. 1-6 contrasts the righteous and the wicked; chs. 7-10 offers praise of Lady Wisdom, and ch. 11-19 gives a series of contrasts based upon the Exodus narratives.

\textsuperscript{163} Collins, \textit{Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age}, 182.

\textsuperscript{164} Of this identification, Gowan notes that the address to kings and rulers (1:1; 6:1) “was a common literary device and stands in keeping with the supposed authorship by Solomon” (Donald E. Gowan, “Wisdom,” in \textit{Justification and Variegated Nomism}, Vol. 1, ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O’Brien, and Mark A. Siefrid, 215-239 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 224-225).


\textsuperscript{167} Nickelsburg, \textit{Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah}, 212.
As the book opens, it asserts that those who seek God will find him, while those who love folly and perversion will be exposed (Wis 1:1-3). Even here, it is Wisdom who is described as the force which separates the righteous who possess her and the wicked who do not (Wis 1:4-5). The lawless deeds (ἀνομημάτων αὐτοῦ) of the ungodly bring their conviction, and their folly opens an invitation to death (Wis 1:10-12). Death, for the author of Wisdom, is an intrusion into God’s creation, not something God intended to exist, for “he does not delight in the death of the living” (Wis 1:13). In language reminiscent of Isaiah 28, the ungodly, by their words and deeds, made a covenant with death while the fate of the righteous is immortality (Wis 1:14-16).

The wicked deny the existence of any life after the present, and thus pledge to enjoy this life, even if this means the oppression of the righteous and poor, for in their minds, “what is weak proves itself to be useless” (Wis 2:1-11). The wicked mock the righteous for their belief in God in spite of their derision among humanity, failing to realize that God created humans for eternity and not for annihilation (Wis 2:12-24). Given that the offenses of the unrighteous are “lawlessness” and “against the law” (ἀμαρτήματα νόμου), it is reasonable to assume that apostate Jews who have forsaken their heritage and adopted Gentile beliefs and behaviors are included in the number of the ungodly. The righteous, however, have assurance that they will ultimately be vindicated and rewarded with immortality, and the difficulties of this life are seen

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168 Harrington affirms, “There can be no coexistence between God’s wisdom and sin. On the one hand, wisdom refuses to “enter a deceitful soul” or to “dwell in a body enslaved to sin” (1:4). On the other hand, “a holy and disciplined spirit” will have nothing to do with unrighteousness (1:5)” (Harrington, Invitation to the Apocrypha, 58). See also Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah, 205. Pseudo-Solomon here goes on to note that while wisdom is a kind spirit, it does not free the guilty from their offenses (Wis 1:6).

169 Collins, Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age, 194; deSilva, “Wisdom of Solomon,” 1271; Gowan, “Wisdom,” 226; Harrington, Invitation to the Apocrypha, 59-60. Grabbe is particularly insightful in stating, “The righteous are never directly identified with the Jews, nor the wicked with the Gentiles. Since righteousness is closely associated with obedience to the law and knowledge of God (2.12), one would expect the righteous to be confined mostly to the Jewish people, but whether the author might have conceived of a ‘righteous Gentile’ is difficult to know. Similarly, to what extent the company of the wicked was thought to include Jews is unclear, though no doubt apostates (however defined) would have been included” (Lester L. Grabbe, Wisdom of Solomon (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 51).
as refining their character (Wis 3:1-6). Here again, faithfulness is the condition for enjoying the presence of God, “because his grace and mercy are upon his holy ones, and he watches over his elect” (Wis 3:9; 4:15). While Crenshaw apparently sees here, and in Wis 15:1-2, an affirmation of the national and unconditional election of Israel, this ignores the real, and even likely possibility, that apostate Jews are a part of, or even are primarily in view, as the wicked who will be judged because of their lawlessness. These unrighteous scoffers will be condemned by the righteous (Wis 4:16), and then will shamefully take their place among the dead, coming to a fearful realization of their error (5:1-14). Again in Wis 5:15 and 6:10, it is those who are faithful who are rewarded with eternal fellowship and life with God and made holy.

As the author concludes the first section, he affirms that Wisdom, the mediator of God’s salvation, “is easily discerned by those who love her, and is found by those who seek her. She hastens to make herself known to those who desire her… love of her is the keeping of her laws, and giving heed to her laws is assurance of immortality, and immortality brings one near to God; so the desire for wisdom leads to a kingdom” (Wis 6:12-20). Here Wisdom comes to those who seek her, and those who keep her laws (i.e., are faithful to the stipulations of the covenant) will inherit eternal life and rewards. As Clarke observes, one must avoid the temptation of seeing here “works-righteousness” in which eternal life is earned. Eternal life can only come from God,

170 Here, Wright notes, “Lack of faith characterizes those whose membership in Israel is called into question, whereas the true Israel have faith” (N. T. Wright, Jesus and the Victory of God (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 260).


172 See Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah, 206.

173 deSilva notes, “while she is not here identified with the Torah as in Ben Sira, she does teach what pleases God, and this involves keeping the commandments (Wis 6:18; 9:9)” (deSilva, “Wisdom of Solomon,” 1272). While less overt than in Ben Sira, the book does still connect Wisdom and Torah, and thus salvation with the covenant.
and if eternal life (as mediated through Wisdom and the Torah) is rejected through unfaithfulness or ignorant self-absorption, then humans will enter into a covenant with God, but with death.  

The next section of the book (Wis 7-10), in which Wisdom is described and her benefits are extolled, offers fewer connections to the concept of election, though several noteworthy assertions are presented. Wisdom, as an emanation of the glory of God, is powerful, holy, and good, and “in every generation she passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God” (Wis 7:24-28). Here again, Wisdom is the mediator of humanity’s relatedness with God, and those who are without her are assumed to be God’s enemies. Those who know her will experience immortality (Wis 8:13, 17). She is bestowed, however, only as a gift from God, and apparently only to those who seek her through prayer (Wis 8:21-9:4). The result of Wisdom’s bestowal upon “Solomon,” and humanity in general, is that “people were taught what pleases you, and were saved by wisdom” (Wis 9:18). In chapter 10, the author illustrates his claims of Wisdom’s necessity for human righteousness in recounting those who were faithful by her aid, and contrasting them with those who failed by departing from her.

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175 This Harrington affirms in stating, “In this context wisdom plays pivotal roles as both mediator and savior in offering rescue from evil and ungodliness, and making possible a life guided by wisdom and leading to eternal life with God” (Harrington, “‘Saved by Wisdom’ (Wis 9.18),” 186).

176 It is worth noting that in Wis 9:7, Pseudo-Solomon declares that God has chosen him as king over the people, though clearly here, again, this is a reference to vocational election, and not a soteriological claim.

177 See Clarke, The Wisdom of Solomon, 63.

178 Nickelsburg and Winston both recognize the role that Wisdom plays as a mediator of salvation in this chapter (Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah, 209; David Winston, The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 58). Harrington further notes the necessity of Wisdom in stating, “The reflection (9.13-18) explains why wisdom’s role as a mediator is necessary – on account of the weakness of the human condition” (Harrington, “‘Saved by Wisdom’ (Wis 9.18),” 187).

179 Interestingly, it is said of Adam that he was delivered from his transgression and ruled all things (Wis 10:1-2). Hogan notes this omission in stating, “There is no suggestion in this verse that mortality—or indeed any
The final section of Wisdom (11-19, with a much discussed excursus on ungodliness and idolatry in 11:15-15:19) offers a series of seven contrasts which Harrington summarizes in stating, “The basic principle operative in all seven contrasts is stated in 11.5: ‘For through the very things by which their enemies [the Egyptians] were punished, they [Israel in the exodus] received benefit in their need’.” Here the notion of retributive justice comes to the fore in the author’s discussion. This final section has as its focus God’s blessing of his people and cursing of the ungodly, who, though they mock the plight of his people, come to realize his power through the deliverance of the righteous (e.g., Wis 11:5-14). Though the ungodly worship false gods and creatures, God is still “merciful to all, for you can do all things, and you overlook people’s sins, so that they may repent. For you love all things that exist, and detest none of the things that you have made, for you would not have made anything if you had hated it” (Wis 11:23-24; also 12:1-2). Though God is patience in waiting for their repentance, the author also notes “you were not unaware that their origin was evil and their wickedness inborn, and that their way of thinking would never change. For they were an accursed race from the beginning” (Wis 12:10-11). In spite of the strength of the rhetoric here, Grabbe notes correctly that though “[t]here are statements suggesting a strong view about determinism [3:10-12; 12:3-11]… the bad consequence—came about as a result of Adam’s transgression” (Karina Martin Hogan, “The Exegetical Background of the “Ambiguity of Death” in the Wisdom of Solomon,” The Journal for the Study of Judaism 30 (1999): 18). Thus, little is made of “the Fall.” Furthermore, Cain’s murder of Abel is interpreted as the cause for the Flood (Wis 10:4). Other examples given are Abraham, Lot, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses (Wis 10:5-21).

Harrington, “‘Saved by Wisdom’ (Wis 9.18),” 188.

Thus deSilva disputes, “It is not simply that “sinning Jews are freed from punishment, but God hates the sinning Canaanites and exterminates them for their sins” (Reider 1957: 41). Rather, the author argues that God in fact loves all that God has created and detests none of God’s works, infused with God’s “immortal spirit” as they are (Wis 11:23-12:1)” (deSilva, Introducing the Apocrypha, 147). The author may primarily have Gentiles in mind, but sinning Jews are not exempt from God’s judgment, nor are Gentiles excluded from the possibility of salvation if they were to repent, though this is not likely in the author’s view. See also, Collins, Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age, 220.

See also Wis 12:12-22.
universal predestination of Gentiles to damnation is probably not envisaged by the book.”

Rather these stand together with commands to obey the Law and polemics against idolatry. Following the excursus on idolatry (Wis 13:1-15:19), the author resumes the contrasts (16:2-19:22), again illustrating the evil intent of the wicked returning on them as punishment, but delivering the righteous (e.g., 19:4-5). The judgment of the wicked thus came only after persistent wicked acts and warnings through “prior signs” (Wis 19:13-16). Throughout all of the recounted history of Israel, the faithfulness of God to his people has been demonstrated “at all times and in all places” (Wis 19:22).

Of frequent concern in discussion of this text is the previously noted tension present between determinism and human responsibility, one that has been noted in other Jewish texts discussed earlier in this study. As Winston summarizes the issue, “What baffles the reader of ancient literature, however, is the easy coexistence in it of two apparently contradictory strands of thought, namely, an emphasis on God’s ultimate determination of all human action coupled with an equally emphatic conviction that the human will is the arbiter of its own moral destiny.” On some level though, it seems that most Jewish texts, the Wisdom of Solomon included, do not go so far as to explicitly argue that God determines “all human action” as much as they seem to indicate that the fate of the wicked and righteous, and at times the identity, is predetermined. Logically, this may lead to determinism, but in most cases, as in the case of Wisdom, the author makes no such claim explicitly. Winston’s solution for Wisdom is that “man’s freedom is only relative, and that from the higher perspective, it is God who in reality

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184 Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 48. deSilva would seem to agree in stating, cf. 19:4, “The Egyptians appear to have been destined for destruction and led on to that end by a force beyond their own choosing. The limitations that the author places on the Gentiles’ ability to respond positively to God’s corrective discipline thus severely undermines the author’s overtures to universalism” (deSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha*, 148).
makes certain individuals worthy of Wisdom, and destines others for ‘Death’.”185 The author, however, allows, for example, that death is an intrusion into God’s creation, one that would certainly undermine the notion of determinism.186 So while the author upholds the traditional belief in God’s choosing of Israel, and does not extend much, if any, hope to Israel’s enemies,187 the overall picture of the book is that God desires all people to repent and seek Wisdom, and that the gift of Wisdom will be afforded to all who ask for her.188 The few instances of language which seems deterministic must, again, be read in light of the whole and major thrust of the book.

As it relates to Israel, several important issues again surface in the Wisdom of Solomon. The book, in its affirmation of the afterlife, dispels with the older notion that the righteous will always be blessed in the present life and the wicked will always be punished.189 As in many other texts of the period, true justice will come in the eschaton or the afterlife,190 when the just are rewarded for their faithfulness and the wicked punished or doomed to non-existence. The righteous are synonymous with those who live uprightly as defined by the Law (Wis 12:21; 16:6,


186 So Collins notes, “The primary point that Wis Sol. makes about the origin of death is that it was not from God. The same presumably holds true of sin. The author expends little effort in clarifying whence these evils arose” (Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 190).

187 See John J. Collins, *Encounters with Biblical Theology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005), 126. There is a tension even with the rejection of the Egyptians and Canaanites, for their judgment in part comes from God’s foreknowledge of their lack of repentance, though the text also seems to indicate that their very nature prevents them from performing such an action. See Harrington, *Invitation to the Apocrypha*, 75; Harrington, “‘Saved by Wisdom’ (Wis 9.18),” 190.

188 See Harrington, “‘Saved by Wisdom’ (Wis 9.18),” 184.


190 For Wisdom, it seems likely that a disembodied eternal existence of the soul is expected by the author. So Collins states, “There can be little doubt, however, that the immortality envisaged is immortality of the soul, as in Philo. There is never any suggestion of resurrection of the body, nor indeed of resurrection of the spirit… The author does not, however, speak of immortality as a natural property of the soul. Rather it is the fruit of righteousness and wisdom” (Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, 186).
26; 18:4, 22) and Wisdom, which is imparted to those who seek it through prayer.\textsuperscript{191} The wicked are those who mock the righteous and, more specifically, are adulterous, violent, dishonest, thieves, and sexually immoral.\textsuperscript{192} The wicked undoubtedly include certain Jews who reject the Law and are unrepentant.\textsuperscript{193} As Hogan describes, they “forfeit immortality through their sinful lives, so for them, physical death does amount to annihilation.”\textsuperscript{194} Thus again it seems, though more implicitly described, that God’s choice of Israel is best thought of in corporate terms in that only those faithful to the covenant will receive its blessings.

Summary of 100 BCE – Turn of the Era Writings

Though the period surveyed here is unique, and special themes and nuances have been noted, some consistency with previously studied texts has been found. There exists within these texts an inherent tension between God’s mercy shown to the righteous and their responsibility to be obedient (\textit{Psalms of Solomon}, DSS, and Wisdom of Solomon). In general, it may be said that God is described as merciful because his response to repentance in the midst of Israel’s general disobedience \textit{is not required}. This does not, however, diminish the expectation that the righteous

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{191} Gowan, “Wisdom,” 229.
\item \textsuperscript{192} Collins, \textit{Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age}, 191-192.
\item \textsuperscript{193} See Elliott, \textit{Survivors of Israel}, 73.
\item \textsuperscript{194} Hogan, “The Exegetical Background of the “Ambiguity of Death” in the Wisdom of Solomon,” 2. Or, as Harrington summarizes, “Looking at the book of Wisdom as a whole, it seems that the author was concerned that his Jewish readers be saved from ungodliness or unrighteousness, ignorance, and idolatry… He urged his readers to live righteously and wisely, in fidelity to the God of Israel. He also wanted them to enjoy immortality in the form of eternal life with God… For help along the way they could rely on the God of Israel as ‘the Saviour of all’ (16.7) as well as his surrogates or mediators – wisdom and the word of God” (Harrington, “‘Saved by Wisdom’ (Wis 9.18),” 190).
\end{itemize}
be obedient to his commands. A tension was also observed (Psalms of Solomon, DSS) between insinuations of or statements favoring determinism, and the necessity of a volitional exercise on the part of the individual. Again here it was suggested that absolute determinism is not an appropriate category for these texts. Deterministic descriptions typically serve to identify that God has pre-ordained what is good and evil in the universe (i.e., at Qumran) or that he has chosen Israel as a part of his plan for human history. This does not override, however, the need for individuals to make a decision to walk on the correct path, the path of truth and righteousness. The real possibility exists both for the wicked to repentant and join the number of the righteous, or for the righteous to apostatize and be omitted from the covenant blessings.

Gentiles are certainly included in those who are outside of the covenant (Psalms of Solomon, DSS, and Wisdom of Solomon). Often, however, the chief polemic is levied against Jews (Psalms of Solomon, DSS, and Wisdom of Solomon), in particular the Jerusalem leadership and those who have decided to follow them in spite of their corruption (Psalms of Solomon, DSS). They are guilty of various sins (including sexual immorality, deceit, oppression, and idolatry), and are thus facing God’s judgment either in this life, the next, or both. It can thus be affirmed by these authors that Israel has been chosen by God, though clearly at least a portion of Jews (Wisdom of Solomon) or the majority (Psalms of Solomon, DSS) are outside of the covenant because of their sin and lack of repentance. The election, then, is best understood as corporate, and inclusion within the number of the elect is conditioned upon the appropriate response and enduring faithfulness of the individual. Election language applied to individuals

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195 VanLandingham has summarize this quite effectively in stating, “one cannot properly separate God’s obligations from the people’s obligations. The covenant is the sum of its stipulations—no covenant exists apart from the obligations it imposes. One may not separate the “if” and the “then” or the blessings from the stipulations” (VanLandingham, Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul, 103).
(e.g., *Psalms of Solomon*, here in the case of David), is clearly vocationally oriented or subsumed under corporate primacy.

Perhaps the biggest distinction again is to be drawn in how the righteous are defined. Within these particular texts, the definition consists either of a general piety and attitude of repentance, accompanied by the avoidance of certain cardinal sins (*Psalms of Solomon*, *Wisdom of Solomon*) or by membership in the elect community through submission to the God-given authority of the Teacher of Righteousness/sons of Zadok (DSS). It may again be asserted, then, that the primary picture given in these texts is of election as corporate and conditional.
ELECTION IN SECOND TEMPLE JEWISH TEXTS:
TURN OF THE ERA – 70 CE WRITINGS

This final period under consideration marked the end of Second Temple Judaism. Though there was relative peace in the land, tensions remained among the Jewish sects, as well as between the Jewish people and their Roman rulers. Caligula’s desecration of the temple stands as a more extreme example of the intrusion upon the Jewish religious practices, and the tensions came to a boiling point during Nero’s reign and into Vespasian’s, when revolt broke out among the Jews, leading to the leveling of their temple and the effective dismantling of their religious identity. It is not surprising, then, that apocalyptic literature, and condemnations both of the Romans and of Jewish opponents, flourish in the literature of this period. Though a tension between God’s mercy and the necessity of human obedience is found throughout, the texts continue to support an essentially corporate and conditional framework of election.

_Sibylline Oracles_ (near the end of the first century BCE or the beginning of the first century CE)

The _Sibylline Oracles_ are a collection of Jewish and Christian writings, primarily apocalyptic in nature, which are derived from the “Sibyl,” a figure always depicted as an elderly lady who prophecies concerning future disasters. In summarizing their content, Collins states, “The content shows at least the same basic pattern of disaster followed by a transformation of the

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1 Concerning their relevance, Collins notes, “They are an important source for early Judaism and for the thought of the early Church. Yet they have only rarely been studied in modern times” (John J. Collins, _The Sibylline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism_ (Missoula: University of Montana, 1972), xiii). Lightfoot agrees with this sentiment (J. L. Lightfoot, _The Sibylline Oracles: With Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on the First and Second Books_ (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), vii). As these texts are examined, Christian interpolations, as much as is possible, will be excluded from this study.
world, often accompanied by the establishment of a new kingdom.”² The books which make up the collection date from the second century BCE to the seventh century CE, and are considered primarily Egyptian in provenance.³ Books 1, 2, and 3 are all primarily Jewish in origin, all likely date to before the destruction of the temple in their original composition, and all contribute to the theme of this study.⁴ The Egyptian works in the collection bear witness to a unique expression of Judaism which draws upon various Egyptian, Hellenistic, and Jewish traditions and synthesizes them into a unity.⁵ The oracles typically promote moral purity and the rejection of idolatry, though they may have also served a political function.⁶ The textual layers of these works are rather complex, with glaring interpolations easy to identify, but no easy and clear distinctions able to be drawn in many cases.⁷ Though certainty of the origin of the various sections is not

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² Ibid., 19
⁴ Collins summarizes, “It is generally agreed that the oracles in books 3-5 are of Jewish origin. Books 1-2 and 8 contain Jewish oracles that have been incorporated into Christian compositions. Books 6 and 7 are Christian. The provenance of books 11-14 is unclear, but at least book 11 appears to be Jewish, and there is no sign of Christian authorship” (John J. Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” in Dictionary of New Testament Background, ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, 1107-1112 (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 1108). Collins adds elsewhere that the provenance and date of books 1 and 2 “are obscured by its extensive Christian redaction and the excision of the eighth and ninth periods (and their historical data), although its lack of reference to the destruction of the Temple… might denote a pre-70-CE date” (Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” in The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism, 1227).
⁵ Of this, Collins again states, “The branch of Judaism which they represent is significantly different from what we know of Egyptian Judaism from other sources” (Collins, The Sibylline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism, xiii).
⁷ Thus, Lightfoot warns that the Oracles “should not be read on the presumption that, a few superficial Christian accretions having been stripped out, an intact Jewish substructure will stand revealed underneath,” though this does not completely undermine the possibility of recognizing certain sections “being made to serve different purposes according as its function was conceived in the culture that produced it” (Lightfoot, The Sibylline Oracles, viii).
achievable with the available manuscripts, the Jewish origins of the books examined below are generally accepted.

Books 1 and 2 are typically viewed as a unit and understood to originally be a Jewish work which was later edited and expanded by a Christian redactor. Book 1 begins with a summary of creation and the Fall (*Sib. Or.* 1.5-64), followed by a summary of Jewish history (*Sib. Or.* 1.65-323; 2.1-38, 2.154-176), organized into ten generations, with a large Christian redaction interrupting the sequence (*Sib. Or.* 1:324-400), and a summary of the eighth and ninth generations missing entirely. In the second book, it is more difficult to determine the extent of the Christian redaction. Collins suggests that several sections (*Sib. Or.* 2.45-55, 177-183, 190-192, 238-251, 311-347) are most likely Christian in origin, while the remainder (*Sib. Or.* 2.39-44, 149-153, 184-189, 193-237, 252-310) could be Jewish or Christian in origin.⁸

The first relevant text for this study occurs in the summary of Noah and the Flood (*Sib. Or.* 1.125-306). The human race had fallen into a deplorable state, and judgment was imminent. As Collins summarizes, “The impending destruction of the world provides an occasion for preaching the crucial ethical values on which the judgment is based… The sins in question are commonplace: violence (*Sib. Or.* 155-57, 176), deceit (177), adultery and slander (178) and lack of reverence for God (179). The remedy prescribed is simply repentance and supplication (167-169).”⁹ Following the fifth generation of insolent men, God tells Noah to “proclaim repentance to all the peoples, so that all may be saved. But if they do not heed, since they have a shameless spirit, I will destroy the entire race with great floods of waters,” though Noah “and as many as

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live with [him] will be saved” (Sib. Or. 1.128-136). Here the offer of salvation from the Flood is extended to the entire race, conditioned upon the repentance of the people and their avoidance of the aforementioned sins.

Following the interpolation of Sib. Or. 1.324-400, the text resumes in the tenth generation of humanity in Sib. Or. 2.6. The Sibyl here proclaims the disasters about to come upon the earth, resulting in the death of the majority of humanity (Sib. Or. 2.20-26). God, however, “will be a savior of pious men in all respects” (Sib. Or. 2.27-28). Following the Christian interpolation (Sib. Or. 2.39-55 and likely 2.149-153 as well) and the moral exhortations from Pseudo-Phocylides (Sib. Or. 2.56-148), the text resumes with its eschatological predictions (2.154-176). Here, devastation comes upon the earth, along with false prophets and the demonic figure Beliar (Sib. Or. 2.165-167). The text, a difficult one at that, then reads:

Then indeed there will be confusion of holy chosen and faithful men, and there will be a plundering of these and of the Hebrews. A terrible wrath will come upon them when a people of ten tribes will come from the east to seek the people, which the shoot of Assyria destroyed, of their fellow Hebrews. Nations will perish after these things. Later the faithful chosen Hebrews will rule over exceedingly mighty men, having subjected them as of old, since power will never fail (Sib. Or. 2.168-176).

Among these holy, faithful, and elect men (ὁσίων... ἄνδρῶν ἐκλεκτῶν πιστῶν) is said to be a “disturbance” (ἀκαταστασί’) and a “driving away” (λεηλασίη) following the coming of Beliar.

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10 Though, as noted above, Collins believes this section (154-176) is definitely Jewish in nature, Lightfoot notes that there is “considerable disagreement about how much is Jewish and how much Christian” (Lightfoot, The Sibylline Oracles, 471). He further comments on 2.34-347, “opinion has polarised (sic) between those who regard the eschatology as fundamentally Christian with Jewish accretions (Harnack), and those who hold the precise opposite (Kurfess), with the majority of scholars (Geffcken, Collins) falling somewhere in the middle” (Ibid., 553).
This is said to come upon “these and the Hebrews” (τούτων Ἑβραίων), apparently distinguishing between the holy, elect, and faithful men and the Hebrews. Of this, Lightfoot notes, “In 175 and 3.69, the faithful elect are the same as the Hebrews, and in 3.69 are distinguished from the faithless; whereas here the Hebrews and the faithful elect are separate. Norelli 1994, 196 n. 428, supposes that the distinction was drawn by a light Christian intervention to a Jewish underlay (such as he thinks is found in 3.69), but if so the Christian redactor failed to make the same distinction five lines later.”11 The text does not make clear who the “fearful wrath” brought by invaders from the east comes upon, but the lack of distinction seems to indicate that it comes upon both the holy, elect, and faithful men as well as the Hebrews. It is then said that “Nations will be destroyed after these things” (ἔθνη ὑπὸ τοὺσ ὀλοῦνταί), and then later the “faithful elect Hebrews will rule over them” (ἐκλεκτοὶ πιστοὶ Ἑβραῖοι καταδουλώσαντες αὐτοὺς). Here again, Lightfoot comments,

The translated text in 175 reads ἐκλεκτῶν πιστῶν Ἑβραίων, so that the ἔθνη must be the subject of ἄρξουσιν ... That implies some sort of sudden reversal after 173, in which the pagan nations rule over the Jews once more and enslave them, as in former times... Maranus (cf. AlexandreCP; Buresch 1892, 108) Geffcken emended the nominatives in 175 ἐκλεκτοὶ πιστοὶ Ἑβραῖοι, so that Jews, once more reunited, become the rulers rather than the ruled.12

This text is difficult for a number of reasons, but especially for the purpose of this study in that it does not specify the extent to which the faithful are deceived and driven away, nor if their restoration involves their repentance. In that they are called faithful again in Sib. Or. 2.174 may be taken to indicate this, but this is speculative. There is here then, at least, the possibility that the faithful may be deceived, fall away, and be restored through repentance, and that ultimately only the faithful and pious will be blessed by God. In the remaining portions of book 2, the distinction

11 Ibid., 476.
12 Ibid., 478.
between the righteous and wicked is maintained, and the blessing of the former and destruction of the latter is promised. No clear indication is given, however, as to how many Jews may be included in the wicked, and how many, if any, Gentiles may be included in the righteous.

Book 3 of the *Oracles*\(^\text{13}\) has received the most attention of the collection, and is more explicit in addressing the theme of election, though it also raises several difficulties. It, like books 1 and 2, is also early in its original composition, and Buitenwerf, for example, concludes that the earliest portions of the third book were “written by a Jew sometime between 80 and 40 BCE.”\(^\text{14}\) The book is recognized as a composite work, and Collins suggests that the main, original portion of the corpus includes 97-161; 162-95; 196-294; 545-656; 657-808.\(^\text{15}\) *Sib. Or.* 3:213-293 and 3.573-808 are particularly instructive for this study.

The main corpus of book 3 begins with prophecies concerning the tower of Babel and the Titans, and a list of prophecies against several nations, though primarily against the Romans. At the conclusion of the prophecies of woes, the Sibyl declares, “Evil will come upon the pious men who live around the great Temple of Solomon, and who are the offspring of righteous men. Nevertheless I will also proclaim the race of these” (*Sib. Or.* 3.213-214). *Sib. Or.* 3.218-293 follows after this statement, which contains a lofty praise of the Jews.\(^\text{16}\)

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\(^{13}\) Collins states of this part of the collection, “It is generally agreed that the third book of sibylline oracles is the oldest part of the Jewish and Christian corpus (Collins, *The Sibylline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism*, 21).

\(^{14}\) Buitenwerf, *Book III of the Sibylline Oracles and Its Social Setting*, 130

\(^{15}\) Collins, “The Sibylline Oracles,” in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period*, 366. Collins views the collection as coming from Egypt, with the Ptolemaic dynasty being viewed as the catalyst for the eschatological restoration of the Jewish people (Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, 1227). As previously noted, Buitenwerf argues for an Asian provenance of the third book and disagrees with identifying the “King from the son” (*Sib. Or.* 3.652) with the Ptolemaic dynasty (Buitenwerf, *Book III of the Sibylline Oracles and Its Social Setting*, 130-133).

\(^{16}\) Buitenwerf notes the implicit tension here in stating, “On the one hand the Sibyl announces that she will describe the evil that will come upon the people living around the Jerusalem temple, on the other hand she states that she will praise them and their ancestors” (Ibid., 197).
Within this praise of the Jews, the Sibyl states that they are “a race of most righteous men” (Sib. Or. 3.219), “always concerned with good counsel and noble works” (3.220), “care for righteousness and virtue and not love of money” (3.234-235). They furthermore are not involved in astronomy or sorcery, do not steal from their neighbors, and are generous in their treatment of the poor (Sib. Or. 3.225-247). The setting of these praises given by the oracle is apparently of the people (“in the land of Ur of the Chaldeans” (Sib. Or. 3.218) prior to the exodus, as the exit from Egypt and appointment of Moses is yet “future” (3.248-254). They will not escape, however, the aforementioned evil, which will come upon them in the form of the Assyrian captivity, an event the Sibyl recognizes as stemming from idolatry and general disobedience of the Law of God (Sib. Or. 3.265-281).17 Awaiting them on the other side of this period of judgment is “a good end and very great glory” in the form of a messianic king who will restore the people, punish their enemies, and effect the building of a new temple of God (Sib. Or. 3.282-294). Throughout this section, there is no recognition on the part of the Sibyl of a “true Israel” or faithful remnant who receive the promised blessings as a result of their perseverance. While the perseverance of the people is expected (“But, you, remain, trusting in the holy laws of the great God, whenever he may lift your wearied knee upright to the light” (Sib. Or. 3.283-285)), there is no explicit indication that an eschatological judgment awaits a portion of the Jewish people who are unfaithful as has been seen throughout the literature surveyed thus far.

The next section (Sib. Or. 3.573-808) follows after the pronouncement of oracles against Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, Greece, Rome, and an exhortation to the Greeks to heed the true God, something the Sibyl seems to envision happening after the appointed judgments occur in that

17 So Buitenwerf states, “God himself has ordered the Israelites to accomplish all his just ordinances, and has ensured that anyone who does not obey will be punished, either in a lawcourt (‘by law’), or by human revenge (‘by mortal hands’). If trespasses remain hidden from humans, any possible form of punishment may be exacted, presumably by God himself” (Ibid., 203-206). There is a recognition here that the Jews will also disobey and suffer God’s judgment.
they “will certainly not sacrifice to God until everything happens. What God alone has planned will not go unfulfilled” (Sib. Or. 3.570-571). Following these oracles and warnings, the Sibyl turns her attention again to the Jewish people. Here the Jews are called the “pious men” who keep the commands of God and honor the temple (Sib. Or. 3.573-583). They alone are recipients of wisdom, faith, and knowledge (εὖφρονα βουλήν καὶ πίστιν καὶ ἀριστον... νόημα (Sib. Or. 3.584-585)), and they alone do not engage in sexually immoral behavior (3.594-600). After another declaration of judgment against idolators in Sib. Or. 3.601-618, the Sibyl calls for mortal men not to “tarry in hesitation but turn back, converted, and propitiate God.” The call here for repentance and sacrifice is not directed specifically at Israel, but given as a general plea, though from the perspective of the Sibyl in book 3, Israel alone honors God with sacrifices at the temple. This creates the possibility that those in need of repentance and sacrifice are apostate Jews, or those among the Jews who have neglected to uphold the Law and are thus in need of God’s mercy (Sib. Or. 3.628).

Following this plea are further predictions of disaster (Sib. Or. 3.635-651), a prediction of a “King from the sun who will stop the entire earth from evil war” (3.652-653), the gathering of the kings of the earth to siege the temple (3.657-668), and the judgment of God over “all the impious” (3.669-701). Following the description of God’s judgment, the Sibyl declares that “the

18 And so Buitenwerf states, “Although the author is not entirely consistent in treating this theme, the result is always the same: only the Jews serve the true God properly” (Ibid., 261). Elsewhere, however, he notes, “According to the third Sibyl line book, God will destroy the sinners and exalt the pious and righteous. The Jews are the only people who will all be saved because they are the only ones to live piously and virtuously (III 702-709). They will become the prophets of God, and the kings and judges of the new kingdom (III 582, 781-782), which will be centred (sic) around Jerusalem (III 785-787). This is not to say, however, that no pagan will be saved. By nature, every human being has knowledge of the divine principles of piety and righteousness. According to III 710-731, some pagans will acknowledge their mistakes in time and share in the glorious future” (Ibid., 346).

19 Buitenwerf notes that “the central role the author assigns to the temple of Jerusalem and to worship there” in 3.657-775, along with obvious references to the Jews and the Law in 3.211-294 and 573-600 “make a Jewish origin in this case more likely than a Christian” (Ibid., 126). Collins agrees that the focus on the temple presents evidence of Jewish origin, though he associates this with a follower of Onias writing from Egypt (Collins, “The Sibylline Oracles,” in Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period, 367).
sons of the great God will all live peacefully around the Temple” (*Sib. Or.* 3.702-703)\(^{20}\) for God “will shield them” (3.705) and “will be fighting for them” (3.709). This will prompt “all islands and cities” to recognize the greatness of the Most High God, renounce their idolatry, and to ponder the Law (*Sib. Or.* 3.710-723). Following this oracle, the Sibyl again implores the Greeks to serve God and leave the holy city undisturbed (*Sib. Or.* 3.733-740), followed again by warnings of the coming judgment of God (3.741-761). A final, generic, moral exhortation is given in *Sib. Or.* 3.762-766, where the Sibyl urges the people to worship only the Living God, avoid adultery and sexual sins, and to not sacrifice their children, “for the Immortal is angry at whoever commits these sins” (*Sib. Or.* 7.766). The book ends with a summary of the peace and prosperity of the eschatological kingdom, to which “every land will bring incense and gifts” (*Sib. Or.* 3.772), and which is given “to faithful men” (3.775).

It is noted here again that Israel is thought of in collective terms throughout the *Oracles*. They are God’s chosen people, the pious ones, and the righteous ones throughout the books examined above. Unlike, however, the previous literature examined, the descriptions in the book seem to look toward a national restoration of Israel, with no explicit indications that a “true Israel,” a group of faithful Jews amidst a largely unfaithful populace exists. There are several themes, however, in the *Oracles*, which indicate the implicit presence of such a theme, though certainly not one as pronounced as in *Jubilees* or even the *Psalms of Solomon*. First, the book clearly emphasizes the importance of obedience, with eschatological deliverance belonging *solely* to the pious/righteous (*Sib. Or.* 1.128-136; 2.27-28; 3.283-285, 573-583).\(^{21}\) The *Oracles*

\(^{20}\) Buitenwerf again states, “In line 702 the phrase ‘sons of (the great) God’ is used. In Jewish literature of the period, it is sometimes used to distinguish between righteous and wicked people. Although this usage may have occasioned the author to use the phrase, its primary function here is to distinguish between Jews and non-Jews” (Buitenwerf, *Book III of the Sibylline Oracles and Its Social Setting*, 280).

also recognizes, particularly in *Sib. Or.* 1.155-179; 3.265-281, 594-600, 601-618, 741-761, and possibly in 2.168-179, that Israel has committed certain sins, or is susceptible to them in that they are warned to avoid them (namely, idolatry, violence, deceit, adultery and sexual sins).\(^{22}\)

Obedience and sacrifice are emphasized in book 3, though elsewhere (particularly in *Sib. Or.* 1.167-169) it is repentance that is expected. Buitenwerf affirms that the author of *Oracle* 3 (and presumably also books 1 and 2) was writing to this Jewish audience both to praise their pious lifestyle and “to admonish them to persevere in this way of living.”\(^{23}\) There is at least the possibility, for the Sibyl’s audience, that apostasy or immoral sin may occur, and thus they must guard themselves against it. And so, “Throughout the book, the author has the Sibyl confront a possibly disobedient audience with the threat of divine punishment. Only those who live according to the divine principles may expect to share in a happy future and to enjoy God’s protection during his future intervention in world history.”\(^{24}\) Thus the possibility exists, if not already the present reality, that there are apostates or sinners within the audience, and thus warnings of judgment along with promises of salvation to the righteous, are present within the author’s message. Thus, though not nearly as explicit as in other writings of the period, the Sibyl maintains the real possibility or reality of disobedience among the Jews, and the inevitability of God’s judgment to follow.

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22 So Donaldson notes, “But in describing this law, the author does not mention at all those aspects of the Torah that separate Israel from the nations (circumcision, dietary regulations, etc.). The law is presented instead as a basic moral code, accessible, and hence applicable, to all… The essence of the Torah for the Sibyl, therefore, is to be found in the avoidance of idolatry, the worship of the one true God in the Jerusalem temple, and adherence to a basic code of morality” (Terence L. Donaldson, “Proselytes or ‘Righteous Gentiles’? The Status of Gentiles in Eschatological Pilgrimage Patterns of Thought,” *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 7 (1990): 18-19).


24 Ibid., 335. He further notes elsewhere, “The main function of the prediction of divine intervention in world history, and a judgement (sic) in which evil people will be punished and the pious rewarded, is to emphasize the importance of the author’s warning to live piously and righteously” (Ibid., 364).
The book of *1 Enoch*, like many of the period, is a composite text, with five widely recognized divisions to the book. While the majority of the work was composed prior to the first century CE, the lengthy *Similitudes of Enoch* (ch. 37-71) are generally thought to have been composed at some point in the first century,\(^{25}\) so a discussion of the work has been saved until now. The work has survived fully only in Ethiopic, though some portions of the text also exist in Greek, and Aramaic fragments of all sections of the book except the *Similitudes* have been found at Qumran.\(^{26}\) The book is replete with the theme and language of “election,” and thus makes several important contributions to this study. The text will be treated in the generally agreed upon chronological order in which it was likely written.

*Book of Watchers (1 En. 1-36) – third century BCE*

Book I\(^{27}\) opens with the introduction of Enoch, who is receiving a “vision from the heavens” and records it to bless the “elect and the righteous” who will be present, and judged with the ungodly, at the day of judgment (*1 En.* 1:1-7). The elect will be preserved and blessed while the wicked will be destroyed “on account of everything that they have done” (*1 En.* 1:8-9). The term “the elect” is used frequently in several places in the *Book of Watchers*, numerously in

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the *Similitudes*, and twice in the *Epistle of Enoch* (ch. 91-108), and is frequently paired with the term “the righteous” or “the holy.” As shall be seen below, the term emphasizes the relationship of the community (the “true Israel”) to God, and not a predetermined soteriological status. Enoch’s vision begins with an examination of the order of creation, from the heavens to the earth (*1 En*. 2:1-5:3). In contrast, the people have not done what God has intended for them because they have transgressed the commandments, and thus they will be judged and receive no mercy from God (*1 En*. 5:4-6). The elect, however, will be blessed and will “all live and not return again to sin, either by being wicked or through pride; but those who have wisdom shall be humble and not return again to sin,” enjoying peace through the remainder of their days (*1 En*. 5:7-10). The wisdom here given to the elect is, as Grindheim suggests, “a reward that will be revealed in the end times (5:8).”

The vision then turns to an examination of the Antediluvian period and intermingling of 200 heavenly beings with the children of men, led by Semyaz (*1 En*. 7:1). These beings took wives from humanity and “taught them magical medicine, incantations, the cutting of roots, and

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28 So VanLandingham writes, “The term emphasizes the community’s faithful obedience to God, especially considering that the righteous are often compared with sinners, oppressors, evil, or ungodly ones, terms equally descriptive of human conduct” (Chris VanLandingham, *Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006), 87).

29 Nickelsburg agrees in noting, “In 1 Enoch 1:8 the ancient priestly blessing of the nation is interpreted as the eschatological blessing to a part of that nation, the true Israel, here called “righteous and chosen… The biblical technical term “chosen” (בָּנָא and cognates) originally denoted God’s election of the nation, but it came to designate the remnant or portion of Israel that lived out its covenantal responsibilities” (George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, Vol. 1 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 147).

30 Again VanLandingham notes, “The “elect” are not predestined by God, and “righteous” is not a status granted to them apart from their behavior. They survive God’s judgment solely because the judgment is just, not because it is not” (VanLandingham, *Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul*, 89).

31 Nickelsburg notes here that this may have been intended as an appeal for “sinners to repent and become a part of the chosen” (Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, Vol. 1, 133).

taught them (about) plants. And the women became pregnant and gave birth to great giants” (1 En. 7:1-2), who then began to oppress the human race (7:3-6). The human race became corrupt (1 En. 8:1-3), and “(the people) cried and their voice reached unto heaven” (8:4). This prompts Michael, Surafel, and Gabriel to intervene with the Most High, asking for him to reveal to them how to react to the calamity and a warning of the flood is given to Noah (1 En. 9:1-10:3). The wicked angels are bound and decreed to be punished, along with all of the children of wickedness who are upon the earth (1 En. 10:4-12).

Following a period of seventy generations, the “eternal judgment” will occur, and the wicked angels, and “those who collaborated with them will be bound together” forever (1 En. 10:13-15). Then “every iniquitous deed will end, and the plant of righteousness and truth will appear forever and he will plant joy. And then all the righteous ones will escape; and become the living ones until they multiply and become tens of hundreds; and all the days of their youth and the years of their rest they will complete in peace” (1 En. 10:16-17). It is generally agreed that this “plant of righteousness and truth” represents the community of the righteous described in the Watchers, and is a “corporate metaphor” for the “true Israel.”

Likewise, the figure of Noah serves as a type of the righteous ones who will escape the final judgment just as righteous Noah and his sons escaped the Flood. With all iniquity gone from the earth, “all the children of the people will become righteous, and all the nations shall worship and bless me” and the earth will be blessed forever (1 En. 10:21-11:2).

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33 Mark Adam Elliott, Survivors of Israel: A Reconsideration of the Theology of Pre-Christian Judaism (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000), 330. The terminology (both seed and plant imagery) occurs elsewhere in 1 Enoch and will be addressed in those instances separately.

34 Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch, Vol. 1, 226; Stokes, “Watchers, Book of the (1 Enoch 1-36),” 1333. Elliott notes that, in light of the Flood being a paradigmatic judgment, “The present-day Israel is thereby itself implicated and warned of the coming judgment when only the “righteous ones will escape” (v. 17)” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 430-431). See also Idem, 623. Even Sanders here recognizes that “the righteous must be those who obey the will of God, just as the unrighteous disobey” (E. P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1977), 350).
Enoch declares this judgment to the Watchers and Azaz’el,\textsuperscript{35} prompting them to ask that he intercede for them that they might be forgiven (\textit{1 En.} 12:1-13:7). Enoch then has a series of visions, which reaffirm the judgment of the Watchers and their wicked descendants, and declares that their petitions for forgiveness will not be heard (\textit{1 En.} 13:8-15:1).\textsuperscript{36} The giants who descended from the Watchers are to exist as evil spirits on the earth, and they will oppress one another and the children of the people (\textit{1 En.} 15:2-12),\textsuperscript{37} and the Watchers too are rejected from returning to heaven (16:1-3). Enoch is shown the heavens and the “deep pit” where the wicked angels who deceived humanity into idolatry will be imprisoned “until the time of the completion of their sin” (\textit{1 En.} 17:1-19:3). Enoch is then transported again to a chaotic place of terrible fire which served as “the prison house of the angels; they are detained here forever” because of the innumerable sins which they have committed (\textit{1 En.} 21:1-10).

The place where Enoch is next escorted is described as the place where the souls of the dead are kept until the day of judgment (\textit{1 En.} 22:1-4). Enoch observes separate “hollows” where the souls are kept. The souls of the righteous are placed by a “spring of water with light upon it,” while the souls of the sinners “are buried in the earth” (\textit{1 En.} 22:5-12). The function of the

\textsuperscript{35} Collins, among others, notes the tension present as to whether sin was introduced through the disobedience of Azaz’el or Semyaz, which is interpreted as a polemic against Hellenism, the moral failures of the Jerusalem leadership, or both, as the stories were “reapplied to other situations after the wars of the Diadochi” (Collins, \textit{The Apocalyptic Imagination}, 50-51).

\textsuperscript{36} Collins suggests that “[t]he allegorical implication would seem to be that the official cult is not operating properly, but mystical ascent offers an alternative access to the divine throne, at least for a chosen individual such as Enoch” (Ibid., 54).

\textsuperscript{37} Nickelsburg summarizes their sins as including the defilement of themselves and their wives through inappropriate intercourse, the violation of the created order by joining together the spiritual and the physical, as well as by the joining together of the heavenly and the earthly (Nickelsburg, \textit{1 Enoch}, Vol. 1, 271).

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separate “hollows” appears to be as an initial judgment or reward before the final judgment, in accordance with the earthly life of the dead.  

Enoch is then shown a great mountain which will be the throne “on which the Holy and Great Lord of Glory, the Eternal King, will sit when he descends to visit the earth with goodness” (1 En. 25:3). Around the mountain was a fragrant tree which was “for the righteous and the pious. And the elect will be presented with its fruit for life” (1 En. 25:4). Sanders recognizes here that in 1 En. 25:5, “the righteous and pious are equated with the elect.” The tree which gives life (likely eternal life) is clearly intended as a gift or reward for the righteous/holy/elect alone. As the book closes, Enoch is shown the “accursed valley” where the ungodly will be gathered together to be judged in the sight of the righteous (1 En. 27:1-5), along with the “tree of judgment” (29:1-2), and the extremities of the earth and heavens (1 En. 30:1-36:3). The book concludes by blessing God for “his great deeds to his angels, the winds, and to the people so that they might praise the effect of his power and praise him in respect to the great work of his hands and bless him forever” (1 En. 36:4).

Clearly in the Book of Watchers, the “elect” are those who are righteous before God. They consist of those who receive the special wisdom from the Enochic revelation and follow

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38 See Matthew Black, The Book of Enoch or I Enoch: A New English Edition with Commentary and Textual Notes (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 167-168; George W. E. Nickelsburg, Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 171; Nickelsburg, I Enoch, Vol. 1, 302. Gathercole suggests, “These souls, then, are divided into four categories, the righteous (22:9b), the wicked who were not punished on earth (22:10-11), the martyred righteous (22:12), and the wicked who were punished in this life (22:13)” (Gathercole, Where is Boasting?, 43).

39 While it is generally assumed that this is the tree of life from the Garden (See Nickelsburg, I Enoch, Vol. 1, 315), Bachmann suggests the tree may represent the gift/availability of Wisdom (Veronika Bachmann, “Rooted in Paradise? The Meaning of the ‘Tree of Life’ in 1 Enoch 24-25 Reconsidered,” Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha 19:2 (2009): 83-107).

40 Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 350. In spite of this, however, Sanders still suggests that their state as being righteous and elect is purely a gift from the mercy of God though the text suggests otherwise (Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 351; compare with Idem, 348).
the commandments, and who do not sin as the ungodly do through sexual perversions, violence, oppression, and occult practices. They represent a special group within ethnic Israel, a “true Israel” who will receive eschatological blessings. Even in death, as they await final judgment, their plight is better than that of the wicked. In outlining the fate of the elect and righteous, the author warns the sinners in Israel that they will face judgment just like the wicked Gentiles, unless they, like the righteous/elect, are faithful to the Lord of Glory.  

**Book of Luminaries (1 En. 72-82) – second century BCE**

The *Book of Luminaries* primarily recounts a summary of the workings of the heavenly bodies, describing the movements of the sun (*1 En.* 72:1-37), the moon (73:1-74:17), the stars and seasons (75:1-9), the winds (76:1-14), the “directions,” mountains, and rivers (77:1-9), followed by the names of the sun and moon and the stages of the moon (78:1-17), and a summary of all of the rules regarding the heavenly bodies (79:1-6). Rather than seeing them as instruments of order controlled by God, the sinners view the heavenly luminaries themselves as gods, and thus bring destruction upon themselves (*1 En.* 80:1-8).

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41 As Elliott summarizes, in chs. 14-24 “the primary concern of these revelations of the cosmos is to reveal the respective ultimate destinies of the elect and the damned and thus to define the elect and the apostate by outlining their respective fates, the lengthy and detailed descriptions of the places of reward and torment adding revelational authority to the message that Israel is divided according to eternal destinies. The sinners need to be warned lest they share the fate of the Gentiles; the righteous need to remain faithful” (Elliott, *Survivors of Israel*, 301).

42 The *Book of Luminaries* is generally given a second century BCE date (James C. VanderKam, “Enoch, Astronomical Book of (1 Enoch 72-82),” in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow, 581-583 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010), 582). Nickelsburg notes, “Since 1 Enoch 1-36 (e.g., chaps. 2-4 and 33-36) employs material from these chapters, it is evident that the Book of the Luminaries is one of the oldest sections of the collection, dating back at least well into the third century B.C.E.” (George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 44). The *Luminaries* are thought to have been a shortened form of a non-extant Enochic astronomical book (Idem, 44; VanderKam, “Enoch, Astronomical Book of (1 Enoch 72-82),” 583).
Following these revelations of the workings of the heavenly bodies, Enoch is shown the heavenly tablets and “all the deeds of humanity and all the children of the flesh upon the earth for all the generations of the world” (1 En. 81:2). Nickelsburg has observed here the presence of what he believes must be a deterministic view of history on the part of the author, since, in his view, “Divine foreknowledge implies a deterministic view of human history. Events and actions must happen because the omniscient God knows that they will happen and has revealed them to Enoch already in primordial times.”

He also recognizes, however, that the function of the tablets is to comfort “the reader with the assurance that the sovereign God controls history and will execute righteous judgment in spite of present inequities.” As in Jubilees, though the tablets function differently, there is no need here to see determinism in the thought of the author. The tablets function to assure the righteous of their rewards. Upon reading these accounts, Enoch declares, “Blessed is the man who dies righteous and upright, against whom no record of oppression has been written, and who received no judgment on that day” (1 En. 81:4). There is no indication that God has determined the actions of humanity, but rather that they are to be assured of their future blessings if they live righteously, and subsequently assured of their punishment if they do not. In his critique of Von Rad’s view of the relationship between prophecy and apocalypticism, Bauckham helpfully states,

So the determinism of apocalyptic must be judged not as an abstract philosophy, but by its function within its context, which is precisely to counter fatalistic despair, to lay open to men the eschatological future, and call men to appropriate action. In terms of that

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43 Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch, Vol. 1, 339. He reaffirms this notion in Vol. 2, stating that “the notion of heavenly tablets inscribed with the deeds and fates of people gives expression to a belief regarding foreknowledge…. while they do record the actions of people, those actions are predetermined” (George W. E. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Vol. 2 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 537).

44 Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch, Vol. 1, 339. Stückenbruck likewise notes, “Presumably the tablets record the rewards due to the righteous, and thus reassure the intended readers that such rewards are not in doubt” (Loren T. Stückenbruck, 1 Enoch 91-108 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 85).
function the gulf between the prophetic and apocalyptic concepts of history is by no means so unbridgeable as von Rad assumes. Since the text does not require such a view, it should not be assumed when the function of the tablets is to encourage right action. If a fatalistic view were intended, then there would be no reason for the sinner to change their course, since their course had already been set.

Following this revelation, Enoch is instructed to share all of his knowledge with his son, Methuselah, and is consoled with the fact that “the righteous ones shall rejoice with the righteous ones and congratulate each other. But the sinners shall die together with the sinners; and the apostate shall sink together with the apostate. But those who do right shall not die on account of the (evil) deeds of the people” (1 En. 81:7-9). Enoch follows the orders given to him and again affirms to his son, “Blessed are all the righteous ones; blessed are those who walk in the street of righteousness and have no sin like the sinners in the computation of the days in which the sun goes its course in the sky” (1 En. 82:4). In part, at least, the sin of which the sinners are guilty in the Book of Luminaries is the failure to observe the proper calendrical cycles. As Elliott asserts, the gravity of this sin lies in the connection between the calendar and the covenant, and those who fail to observe the correct calendar are out of synch with creation and in disobedience to the cycles established by God himself. Enoch then again recounts the workings and orderedness of the heavenly bodies, affirming that the message which he has received is true and that these events will come to pass (1 En. 82:7-20).

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46 So he summarizes, “it is nevertheless implied that sinners have disobeyed the calendar. It would appear in fact that the chief sin according to this book is disregard for the calendar.” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 147). And further, “For our purposes it is important only to emphasize that when 1 Enoch... probably reveals an early and fundamental association between the covenant formulary and concern for maintenance of the proper calendar. All this helps explain why calendar and covenant are often closely associated in these writings and, more importantly here, why sin against the calendar could be considered as nothing less than a breach of the covenant” (Idem, 158). See also Collins, The Apocalyptic Imagination, 62.
The *Book of Luminaries* thus evidences again an emphasis on the importance of righteous behavior in faithfulness to the covenant with the King of Glory. In the *Luminaries*, faithfulness comes, at least in part, in the form of proper calendrical observances, and failure to observe the correct calendar results in failure to keep covenant. As Elliott notes, this is a distinctly Jewish issue,\(^4^7\) and thus those sinners targeted for their “computation of days” by the sun are Jews, those outside of Israel. Though explicit language is not used, the idea of a “true Israel” concept is again identified by the author, who assures the righteous that their rewards will await them, and warns the sinners, primarily Jewish sinners, that, if they do not change their ways, their judgment is coming.

*Book of Dreams (1 En. 83-90) – second century BCE*

Book IV, also known as the *Book of Dreams*,\(^4^8\) recounts two visions which Enoch received at two different periods of his life. The first vision is of the Flood (*1 En.* 83-84) and the second, and longer, vision recounts the history of Israel, from Adam to the Maccabees (85-90). Enoch’s vision of the Flood is interpreted by his grandfather, Mahalalel, as a vision of “all the sins of the whole world as it was sinking into the abyss and being destroyed with great destruction” (*1 En.* 83:7). He instructs Enoch to pray that “a remnant shall remain upon the earth and that the whole earth shall not be blotted out” (*1 En.* 83:8). Enoch asks that God would “save

\(^{4^7}\) “It is especially noteworthy, therefore, that it is not *the Gentile world but Israelites* who are centered out for judgment in this passage, indeed in the entire book; only Israelites would be accused of abandoning the calendar, and only Israelites were subject to covenantal curses” (Elliott, *Survivors of Israel*, 82).

for me (a generation) that will succeed me in the earth; and do not destroy all the flesh of the people and empty the earth (so that) there shall be eternal destruction. Do now destroy, O my Lord, the flesh that has angered you from upon the earth, but sustain the flesh of righteousness and uprightness as a plant of eternal seed” (I En. 84:5-6). Again, as in the Book of Watchers, the author likely views the Flood as a paradigmatic judgment event, and sees his own community as the “remnant” which will survive in the last days.49

The second vision in the Book of Dreams is an extended metaphor, frequently referred to as the Animal Apocalypse, in which the characters and groups depicted by Enoch are animals. The account begins with a cow and a female calf (Adam and Eve) bringing two calves into the earth, one of which (Cain) kills the other (Abel) (I En. 85:1-7). Following this murder, the cow and the calf bring many other “snow-white”50 cows (children) into the world (I En. 85:8-10). Enoch then sees a star (Azaz’el) falling from heaven, followed by many other stars (other angels) pasturing among the cows (humanity), and bringing forth “elephants, camels, and donkeys” (giants, Nephilim, and Elioud)51 by having intercourse with the heifers (women), bringing fear and turmoil to the whole earth (I En. 86:1-87:1). Four beings from heaven take Enoch to a tower above the earth and reveal to him the fate of the fallen stars (I En. 87:2-4). The fallen stars are bound and cast into “the pits of the earth” (I En. 88:1-3). Enoch then sees the great Flood destroy the earth, from which only a “snow-white cow which became a man” (Noah) and three cows, one

49 Nickelsburg perhaps hints at this at noting, “Enoch prays in v 6 that, as a true judge, God distinguish between sinful humanity, which has rightly aroused the divine wrath (v 4), and the righteous and true humanity, which should remain as a remnant that will bear seed for a new planting” (Nickelsburg, I Enoch, Vol. 1, 353).

50 Tiller notes that in the Animal Apocalypse, “White is used as a positive symbol… [and] the color indicates participation in the chosen line… In general, white does not indicate goodness. All of the sheep are white, even the blinded ones” (Tiller, A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of I Enoch, 225-226).

51 See Ibid., 240.
red, one white, and one black, (his sons) survive (1 En. 89:1-9). The descendants of the snow-white cow then multiply into numerous species (those outside of Israel), while the line of the snow-white cows culminates in the birth of a white sheep (Jacob) and his twelve sheep (his sons; cf. 1 En. 89:10-12).

Enoch then recounts how the sheep grew great in number and so were terrorized by the wolves (Egyptians) before “the Lord of the sheep” led them through “a certain pool of water” and drowned the wolves (1 En. 89:13-27). While in the desert, the sheep “went astray from the path” which the Lord showed them, causing some to be killed while others returned to their folds (1 En. 89:28-35). The notion of blindness or dimness is essentially equated in the Animal Apocalypse with apostasy and disobedience. After the death of the sheep which led them (Moses), “their eyes become dim-sighted until another sheep arose and led them” (Joshua; cf. 1 En. 89:36-41). Enoch then sees a ram rise up to lead the people (Saul), but when he begins to attack them, another ram (David) is raised up in his place, bringing peace to the sheep (Israel; cf. 1 En. 89:42-50).

52 Tiller notes that “it may be that the colors here do not represent any specific characteristics of the three brothers but that taken together they serve to characterize the postdiluvian age as essentially the same as the antediluvian age—inhabited by both righteous and wicked, both perpetrators and victims of evil” (Ibid., 267). Black suggests, “The three colours (sic) here seem to have a different connotation from the ‘red’ and ‘black’ of Abel and Cain at v. 3. In this verse they symbolize three races, Semites (white), Japhethites (red) and Hamites (black)” (Black, The Book of Enoch or I Enoch, 264).

53 Esau is described in the vision as a black boar, both marked as outside of the line of the righteous and represented by an unclean animal. Tiller notes, “The contrast between Jacob/Israel and Esau/Edom could hardly be greater” (Tiller, A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of I Enoch, 275).

54 So Tiller writes, “The implication of seeing, then seems to be possession of God’s law and obedience to it. From this point on the ability of the sheep to see will represent Israel’s obedience or disobedience to God. The metaphor of blindness is also frequently coupled with the metaphor of straying, both together representing apostasy (cf. 89.32, 54)” (Ibid., 293). See also Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah, 84; Nickelsburg, I Enoch, Vol. 1, 378

55 Throughout the Animal Apocalypse, the ram indicates a leader, usually a military leader, over the Israelites (i.e., Jacob, Saul, David, Solomon, and Judas Maccabeus; cf. Tiller, A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of I Enoch, 306).
Following this peace and prosperity, the sheep again go astray, causing the Lord of the sheep to send sheep from among them (prophets) to “testify to them and to lament over them,” but the sheep nonetheless go astray and are blinded once more (I En. 89:51-54). As a result, they are handed over to the wild animals (Gentiles) to be devoured, and then placed under the authority of seventy shepherds (angels) who mishandle their duties given by the Lord of the sheep (I En. 89:55-71). Eventually the sheep are brought back to the tower which the wild animals had destroyed and begin to rebuild it (i.e., return from exile; cf. I En. 89:72). The eyes of the sheep, however, were still dim (I En. 89:74), and they are again devoured by wild animals until “the sheep became few” (90:4). The lambs (i.e., the author’s righteous community and/or the younger generation) born to the sheep cry aloud to them, but the sheep “became exceedingly deafened, and their eyes became exceedingly dim-sighted” (I En. 90:6-7). The call from the lambs is most likely to return to obedience to the Law or pious living (cf. I En. 90:7), but the sheep apparently ignore their appeal. One sheep then sprouts a horn, and this ram (Judas Maccabeus) battles the wild animals while crying aloud “so that (God’s) help should come” (I En. 90:8-14). The sheep, however, turned against the ram and came upon him with

56 Tiller notes again that “Apostasy and faithfulness to God are not represented by the color and kind of animal” (Ibid., 318).

57 Compare Tiller, who notes, “These lambs no doubt represent one of the circles to which the author of the An. Apoc. Belonged. If there is any social group that can be said to have produced the An. Apoc., it is this group” (Ibid., 350), and Nickelsburg, who suggests, “Here the younger generation has begun to see the error of the nation’s ways and calls its elders to repentance” (Nickelsburg, I Enoch, Vol. 1, 398).

58 As Tiller summarizes, the righteous community “is characterized by (1) a revival of correct obedience to the law (90.6, they could see); (2) an appeal to others to join them (90.6, they cried to the sheep); (3) lack of success and forcible opposition from other within Israel (90.7-8, the sheep failed to hear, afflicted them, and prevailed); (4) unsuccessful armed revolt (90.9, they grew horns which the ravens crushed); (5) later adherence to the Maccabees, both militarily and doctrinally (90.9-10, one sheep grew a great horn and mustered all the rams, and they could see). The Maccabees are viewed as being at least acceptably obedient to the law” (Tiller, A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of I Enoch, 350).

59 Tiller suggests that these are likely “Jews who were not only disobedient (“blind”) but who had also become Hellenized or collaborators and thus joined the nations in the battles against Judas” (Ibid., 363). Elliott likewise notes, “In line with the symbolism of the work generally, therefore “sheep” remains a designation for the
the wild animals (Gentiles), but the Lord of the sheep struck the earth, giving victory to the ram and the sheep over the beasts (1 En. 90:15-19). Here, clearly, Israel is divided as to their allegiances, with some supporting the Gentiles and others the Maccabees, a phenomenon likewise found in 1 and 2 Maccabees as previously discussed.60

Following the deliverance of the sheep (Israel) from the animals (Gentiles) through the ram (Judas Maccabeus), a throne is erected in the land, and the Lord comes to judge (1 En. 90:20-21). The disobedient stars and shepherds (angels) are judged first and cast into the fiery abyss, followed by the blinded sheep (apostate Jews), who meet a similar fate (1 En. 90:22-27). Thus here, the disobedient Jews, along with the fallen angels, all face eschatological judgment for their sin.61 The Lord of the sheep then brings forth a new house, and the snow-white sheep who had survived are given authority over the animals of the earth (1 En. 90:28-36). Then a snow-white bull with large horns (Messiah) is born, and all of the animals of the earth make petition to him, and all become snow-white cows, indicating a return to the original state of the earth, with all the animals (Jews and Gentiles!)62 transformed into the original glory of the first snow-white cow (Adam) (1 En. 90:37-39). With this, Enoch’s visions are completed (1 En. 90:40-42).

whole population of Israelites, not simply a specific group of opponents or the leaders of Israel. Thus v. 16 certainly intends this Israel when it says that “all the sheep of the field” conspire together with the Gentiles in one final mass confrontation with the horn” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 79).

60 Elliott emphasizes, “What is especially important is how these groups are portrayed as being in fundamental religious conflict” (Ibid., 77).

61 So Elliott suggests, “It is difficult to avoid the conclusion, given this colorful description of Israel’s judgment, that the author was so completely at odds with the present situation in his homeland that he was unhindered by nationalistic doctrines from pronouncing on an apostate nation its judgment in the most extreme terms” (Ibid., 80).

62 Tiller notes, “The theological implications of this situation are quite surprising. The existence of the separate nations, one of which is Israel, is apparently seen as one of the negative effects of human history that the ideal future will undo” (Tiller, A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of I Enoch, 20).
Sanders notes concerning this conclusion to the *Book of Dreams* that the “remnant of the sheep that remain are all good (90.30, 33),” and suggests that the “section is remarkable because it concentrates on the wicked within Israel rather than Israel’s enemies.” As we have noted throughout this study, however, there are frequently divisions within the literature examined between the faithful and unfaithful *within Israel*, often with the result that the majority of Jews stand outside of the “true Israel.” What is unique in this passage is the apparently large scale inclusion of Gentiles, likely those who had not oppressed Israel, in the eschatological people of God with the result that there is one, unified, righteous humanity, now united in their worship of the One True God. The people of God within the *Dreams* are thus those who are faithfully obedient to God, and those who supported the Maccabean revolt, over and against those Jews who were apostate and/or sided with the Gentile oppressors of the faithful of Israel.

*Epistle of Enoch* (*1 En. 91-108*) – second century BCE

The *Epistle of Enoch* begins in the manner of the testamentary literature of the period in that Enoch calls all of his sons together to impart his knowledge to them (*1 En. 91:1-2*). Enoch

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64 Ibid, 351. Contra Sanders, see Elliott, *Survivors of Israel*, 75.

65 See Black, *The Book of Enoch or I Enoch*, 279.


67 Tiller suggests as much in stating, “The author of the *An. Apoc.* represents a militant, pro-independence, religious reform group. This group is politically quite close to what can be known about the Hasidim and its critique of the Second Temple is paralleled in the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, the *Testament of Moses*, and certain sectarian compositions from Qumran” (Tiller, *A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of I Enoch*, 126).

instructs his children to love uprightness and walk in righteousness, for great evil is going to come upon the earth and God’s judgment will follow it (1 En. 91:3-9). The Righteous/Wise One will then arise to destroy the sinners, and the sinners will be handed over for judgment, and their deeds will depart from the earth (1 En. 91:10-14). These judgments will be followed by a period of “goodness and righteousness, and sin shall no more be heard of forever” (1 En. 91:15; this is summarized again in 92:1-5). In that the Righteous One is given “eternal uprightness” and “authority,” Sanders suggests from this verse that “the author characteristically thinks that the reward of the righteous in the resurrection will not be earned by works, but be given by the mercy of God; even the righteous man’s continuing uprightness in the new life will be by grace.”69 Clearly, however, the purpose of this verse is not to offer a general soteriological principle, but rather to show that the authority to judge humanity which is given to the Righteous One comes from God. Contra Sanders, Gathercole notes that “the author of the epistle affirms both realities [i.e., election and obedience] by defining the righteous both in terms of their election and in terms of their works (91:3-4; 91:13).”70 Clearly, and as shall be seen below, the elect are those who are obedient to God.

In ch. 93, Enoch recounts the seven weeks which precede the eighth, ninth, and tenth weeks of judgment outlined in 1 En. 91.71 Enoch lived during the first week, which was followed by a second week in which evil grew on the earth. In the third week, a man “shall be elected as the plant of the righteous judgment, and after him one (other) shall emerge as the eternal plant of righteousness” (1 En. 93:5). This is likely a reference first to Abraham, and second to Jacob (or possibly Isaac), who stand as representatives of the nation which would be born from them.

69 Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 356.

70 Gathercole, Where is Boasting?, 48-49.

71 For a summary of the narrative in the weeks, Stückenbruck, “Enoch, Epistle of (1 Enoch 91-108),” 584.
Here, both the eternality of this election, and the characteristic of the “plant” as a righteous one, are affirmed. In the fourth week, the Law is given “for all the generations,” which Stückenbruck notes is the only explicit reference to the Law in all of the work, and in the fifth week the temple and kingdom are established (1 En. 93:6-7). In the sixth week, the people “forget wisdom,” the kingdom is burned, and “the chosen root shall be dispersed” (1 En. 93:8). Then, in the seventh week, “an apostate generation shall arise; its deeds shall be many, and all of them criminal” (1 En. 93:9). The author apparently suggests here that the entirety, or at least majority, of the nation was characterized by disobedience at this time. At its completion, there shall be “elected the elect ones of righteousness from the eternal plant of righteousness, to whom shall be given sevenfold instruction concerning all his flock” (1 En. 93:10), who clearly stand in the line of Abraham. The fact that Enoch here identifies the elect as a sub-group of the plant of indicates that they are a remnant of Israel, a “true Israel,” who received a special wisdom that separates them from the apostates of Israel, which apparently includes all who are outside of the

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72 Stückenbruck, *1 Enoch 91-108*, 107). Stückenbruck further notes that the Law here “is closely bound up with both the former (“holy and righteous ones”, i.e. angels) and the latter (“the enclosure”, i.e. the tabernacle)” (Ibid.).

73 “The double emphasis on “all” indicates how completely the sixth period is marked by an abandonment from the unfolding plan of God through Israel’s election (week 3), the giving of the Torah and the ark of the covenant (week 4), and the Temple cult (week 5). Withdrawal from these tantamount to blindness that corresponds to a lack of insight into the divine purpose” (Ibid., 113).

74 Stückenbruck states that “[t]he author thus leaves the impression that, as far as he and his community are concerned, the Second Temple is of no consequence in relation to God’s plan for Israel” (Ibid., 122).

75 Nickelsburg suggests, “This viewpoint constitutes a wholesale condemnation of the return, the restoration, the rebuilding of the temple, and the events of the Persian and Hellenistic periods” (Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, Vol. 1, 447).

76 Stückenbruck notes that “one would therefore be hard pressed to suppose that this is simply a reference to ethnic Israel in its entirety, which if anywhere has just been mentioned in relation to the figure of Abraham. It is, rather, none other than a designation for a select, collective offspring of Abraham concerning which the *Apocalypse* has been authored… “plant of righteousness/truth” denotes a group, a “true Israel” selected from amongst Abraham’s offspring, that provides a continuous link between biblical and eschatological time” (Stückenbruck, *1 Enoch 91-108*, 101-102).

77 Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, Vol. 1, 448
Chapter 93 then closes with a reflection on the incomprehensibility of the heavenly realm and the Holy One.

Enoch then begins dispensing advice to his children, admonishing them to love righteousness and resist wickedness, for the judgment of the wicked will soon commence (1 En. 94:1-3). They must, instead, “choose righteousness and the elect life!” (1 En. 94:4). Clearly the author of the Epistle views election here as conditional, and by choosing the elect life, he no doubt intends that this choice entails a righteous and upright lifestyle. Following these instructions begin seven sections of woes/judgment pronouncements against the wicked (1 En. 94:6-95:2; 95:4-7; 96:4-8, 97:3-10, 98:4-8; 98:9-99:2, 6-9; 99:11-16, 100:1-4; 100:7-102:3), with messages of encouragement to the righteous interspersed among them (1 En. 95:3; 96:1-3; 97:1-2; 99:3-5; 99:10; 100:5-6). The sins commonly charged against the wicked throughout these woes are their performing of oppression and injustice (1 En. 94:6, 9; 95:6-7; 96:5; 96:7-8; 97:6, 8; 98:13-14; 99:13, 15; 100:7), deceit (94:6; 95:6; 96:7; 97:10; 98:15-99:1; 99:12), trust in and flaunting of their riches (94:8; 96:4-5; 97:8), dependence on self rather than God (94:8; 96:6; 97:8), hatred (95:2), pronouncing curses (95:4), rewarding of evildoers (95:5; 99:11), lack of repentance (96:4), blasphemy (96:7), foolishness (98:9-10), stubbornness (90:11; 100:8), distortion and rejection of the Law (99:2; 99:14), and idolatry (99:6-9, 14). The sins of the wicked have all been recorded against them, and they will be unable to flee in the day of judgment (1 En. 97:3-7; 98:4-8; 100:1-6, 10-13; 104:7). The sinners, no doubt, include, perhaps

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79 Grindheim notes, “That which is “elect” is now a quality that may or may not be the object of someone’s choice. The connotations of the term are that which is ethically and religiously good, and that which is worthy of being elected, that which is choice (cf. also 93:10).” (Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 42). See also Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 355-356; VanLandingham, Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul, 93.
predominantly, Jewish apostates, especially as it relates to their lack of dependence and distortion of the Law.\(^8^0\) They are also, at least in part if not predominantly, the ruling class who hold social power and thus oppress the impoverished righteous community.\(^8^1\) The righteous, in contrast, should not fear, for they will eventually judge the wicked (1 En. 95:3; 96:1; 99:3-5) and will flourish in the absence of their oppressors (96:2-3; 97:1-2; 99:10; 100:5-6). The sinners, unlike the sailors tossed about on the sea, have not feared God in spite of his sovereignty over creation (1 En. 101:1-9). Though the sinners will be judged, destroyed, “accursed forever” (1 En. 102:1-3) and experience “evil and great tribulation” in Sheol (103:7), the righteous, though they died in sorrow and because of oppression (102:4-11), will “live and rejoice; their spirits shall not perish” (103:4) and will “shine like the lights of heaven” (104:2).\(^8^2\)

As The Epistle closes, it, as seen elsewhere in 1 Enoch, recalls the story of Noah, which is viewed by the author as paradigmatic of the salvation and judgment of the righteous and wicked. The birth of Noah, whose form was radiant at his birth (1 En. 106:10-11), is recounted in 106:1-12, which sets the stage for Enoch’s vision of the coming judgment. Enoch has foreseen the coming cataclysm, in which God “will surely make new things upon the earth” (1 En. 106:13). Humanity has been found disobedient, sinning by bearing children with the Watchers (1

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\(^8^1\) See Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity*, 143, 156.

\(^8^2\) As Nickelsburg summarizes, “In 1 Enoch, the function of the resurrection of the righteous has broadened in two respects. First, God raises the righteous not because they have suffered unjustly for his sake, but simply because they have suffered unjustly. Secondly, resurrection to life is not an answer to an unjust and violent death… In 1 Enoch, God vindicates the behavior of the righteous vis-à-vis those who have claimed that such conduct goes unrewarded” (Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity*, 156).
En. 106:14). Enoch declares that Noah “shall be the remnant for you; and he and his sons shall be saved from the corruption which shall come upon the earth on account of all the sin and oppression that existed” (1 En. 106:18). Enoch himself indicates that this judgment will be a paradigmatic foreshadowing of a future judgment when an even more wicked generation will rise up on the earth (1 En. 106:19-107:1). It is not until a “generation of righteous ones” comes that wickedness and sin will be removed from the earth (1 En. 107:1). In this final judgment, the names of the sinners “shall be blotted out from the Book of Life and the books of the Holy One; their seeds shall be destroyed forever and their spirits shall perish and die” (1 En. 108:3). The ungodly, whose sins include blasphemy, altering the words of the Lord, defiling their bodies, revenging themselves by God, working with evil people, and accruing wealth, will be taken into a dark cloud of burning fire while the righteous will be summoned to God and seated upon a throne and honored forever (1 En. 108:4-15). The description of the fates of the righteous and wicked here no doubt, as elsewhere, serves to spur on the righteous to continued faithfulness and the wicked to repentance.

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83 The language here is more generic than elsewhere in the book in that the Watchers are not specifically identified. It may be that the author views the sin of intermarriage in his day as a catalyst for judgment just as the sin of the Watchers brought about the Flood of Noah.

84 So Elliott comments, “The significance of the flood typology for the writer’s own community is accordingly caught up with the idea of a remnant: as there was a remnant in Noah’s day, so there will be a remnant after the coming judgment” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 625).

85 The fact that these heavenly books can be altered again speaks against the notion that whenever heavenly books or tablets are present, they indicate an assumption or promotion of determinism or fatalism. As Elliott comments, “The idea of the full number of the righteous is directly associated in this passage with the “books of the living” and may suggest a suitable provenance for what has conventionally—but quite wrongly—been taken as a deterministic teaching. In this passage the “number” of the righteous follows naturally from the idea of a set number of names listed in the book of the living and may actually have little to do with abstract determinism per se” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 290). This is contra Nickelsburg, who writes, “In any case, the notion [of names being blotted out] is odd, because the idea of heavenly books suggests a determinism that seems to preclude later exclusion from them” (Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch, Vol. 1, 555).

86 As Elliott summarizes, “This outlining of the fates of righteous and sinners in the future portion reveals that the concern of these predictions is closely associated with the pattern of the historical rehearsal. The purpose of both sections, therefore, is not primarily to focus on determinism, or on the future outcome itself, but on the division
**Similitudes of Enoch (1 En. 37-71) – first century CE**

Book II, also known as the *Similitudes of Enoch*, is replete with election language, as the term “elect” is used 25 times within this section of the book. The *Similitudes* are introduced as a revelation of wisdom to Enoch which he received “in according with the will of the Lord of the Spirits” (*1 En.* 37:4). Though some have argued for a second or third century date of the work and view it as Christian in origin, general consensus today among Enochic scholars is that the book, as Black states, “was a pre-Christian Jewish apocalypse,” for which a pre-70 CE dating “for at least some of the oldest traditions in the Book” cannot be ruled out.

As Collins has noted, “The Similitudes of Enoch consist of three “parables” (chaps. 38-44, 45-57, and 58-69) and a double epilogue in chaps. 70 and 71.” At the beginning of the first parable, Enoch declares, “When the congregation of the righteous shall appear, sinners shall be judged for their sins, they shall be driven from the face of the earth, and when the Righteous One shall appear before the face of the righteous, those elect ones, their deeds are hung upon the Lord of the Spirits, he shall reveal light to the righteous and the elect who dwell upon the earth” (*1 En.* 37:4).

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87 This is compared with only eight times in Book I and twice in Book V, with no occurrences in Books III and IV.

88 Black, *The Book of Enoch or I Enoch*, 182.

89 Ibid. 187. As he summarizes, “Halévy and Charles were right in proposing a Hebrew *Urschrift* for the Book of the Parables, which I would date to the early Roman period, probably pre-70 AD” (Ibid., 188). See also Nickelsburg, *I Enoch*, Vol. 2, 58-66; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah*, 255. Nickelsburg dates the work to the first half of the first century CE.


91 Here, as elsewhere in *I Enoch*, Enoch is the bearer of the special revelation necessary for inclusion in the community of the elect. See Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 182.
38:1-2). The terms “righteous ones,” “holy ones,” and “elect ones,” occur throughout the *Similitudes* in various combinations, with a clear emphasis upon the quality of the community. Here, as throughout the book, a close relationship is maintained between the community of the righteous/elect and the Righteous/Elect One who serves as their vindicator and the judge of the sinners (*1 En. 38:3-6*). This Righteous/Elect One ensures the salvation and blessing of the righteous/elect ones (*1 En. 39:6*). The righteous ones will dwell among the holy angels in the days of the Elect One “underneath the wings of the Lord of the Spirits” (*1 En. 39:7*). The rest of the first parable describes a heavenly journey of Enoch among the angels and through the storerooms of heaven (*1 En. 40:1-44:1*).

Enoch introduces the second parable by stating that it concerns “those who deny the name of the Lord of the Spirits and the congregation of the holy ones” (*1 En. 45:1*). Enoch sees here a transformed heaven and earth, ruled over by the Elect One, and free from sinners who have been destroyed “from before the face of the earth” (*1 En. 45:2-6*). This “One” is described in *1 En. 47* as the “Son of Man,” in whom righteousness dwells and whom the Lord of Spirits

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92 Nickelsburg suggests, “Their righteousness refers to their lifestyle as the obedient people of God, as opposed to “the sinners” (see esp. 38:1-3). Their status as “the chosen” involves their relationship to God. As “they holy” they are destined to live with the holy ones in heaven. They are oppressed by the kings and the mighty, although there is no evidence that this is a function of their status and lifestyles as the chosen and the righteous” (Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, Vol. 2, 46-47). In an extensive discussion, Nickelsburg also notes that there is no mention of the Torah in the *Similitudes*, which is odd with the heavy emphasis on righteousness, suggesting that the author takes for granted that the elect/righteous/holy ones understand what this entails (Ibid., 54).

93 As Nickelsburg summarizes, “Moreover, of the seven occurrences of “the chosen” in the Parables, six of them are found in contexts that refer to God’s agent, “the Chosen One” (40:5; 45:3, 5; 62:7, 8, 11). Additionally, the combined form “the righteous and chosen” occurs six times in such context (39:6, 7; 51:5; 62:12, 13, 15). Thus, in part, the term “the chosen” emphasizes the status of the author’s people as clients of “the Chosen One.” The Chosen One is related to the chosen as the Righteous One is related to the righteous” (Ibid., 100). See also Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 184.

94 Thus a failure to recognize the elect community as the people of God is subsequently a denial of God himself.
has chosen to unseat kings and rulers, shame the strong, and end oppression. These unjust rulers, though they practice injustice and worship idols, “like to congregate in his houses and (with) the faithful ones who cling to the Lord of the Spirits” (1 En. 46:8). It seems, then, that these represent the powerful leaders in Israel, perhaps along with the Gentiles with whom they conspire. The righteous are described in ch. 47 as a persecuted group, whose prayers, along with the hosts of the heavens, fervently petition the Lord of the Spirits to bring judgment upon their tormentors. The Son of Man—the Before-Time—will act as a staff for the righteous to lean on, and he also is “the light of the gentiles and he will become the hope of those who are sick in their hearts” (1 En. 48:4). It is he, as the Chosen One before creation, who will save the righteous and holy ones and bring about the destruction of those who oppress the righteous (1 En. 48:6-10; 50:1-2). The judgment of the sinners will bring repentance for those who see it, effecting their salvation by the Lord of the Spirits through the Elect One, but the unrepentant shall perish (1 En. 50:2-5). The Elect One is also present when the righteous/elect ones are raised back to life and inherit the earth (1 En. 51:1-5). As the scene of judgment is prepared (1 En. 52), it is again the wicked sinners who will be destroyed by the Lord of the Spirits, included among them the kings and rulers of earth (53:1-5), and after this, “this Righteous and Elect One will reveal the house of

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95 On the identity of the sinners, Knibb writes, “It appears that the Parables stem from a dissident group that were being oppressed by the ruling powers and their supporters, and one of the main aims of the work is to assure the righteous that they will ultimately enjoy salvation” (Michael A. Knibb, “Enoch, Similitudes of (1 Enoch 37-71),” in The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism, ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow, 585-587 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010), 586).

96 Nickelsburg notes that “[t]he Chosen One combines the titles, attributes, and functions of the one like a son of man in Daniel 7, the Servant of YHWH in Second Isaiah, and the Davidic Messiah” (Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah, 249). The notion of a heavenly eschatological Messiah figure is present in other literature of the period, such as in 4 Ezra and at Qumran. See Knibb, “Enoch, Similitudes of (1 Enoch 37-71),” 587.

his congregation,” and give the righteous ones “rest from the oppression of sinners” (1 En. 53:6-7). The judgment (again) takes the form of the flooding of the world, which will obliterate those who “did not recognize their oppressive deeds which they carried out on the earth” (1 En. 54:10). The wicked angels, and Azaz’el chief among them, are likewise bound and throne into the abyss along with “their elect and beloved ones”  and their influence upon the earth will come to an end (1 En. 56:3-4). Enoch then sees the kings of the earth trampling the land of the elect ones, but God will confuse their armies so that they slaughter one another and are swallowed up into Sheol and perish (1 En. 56:5-8).

The third and final parable of The Similitudes begins with the blessing of the righteous and elect ones, whose days will be innumerable and full of righteousness and peace (1 En. 58:1-6). Enoch then witnesses a disturbing violence in the heavens in which the cosmic forces are greatly agitated. Michael explains to him that the day of judgment is soon to come (1 En. 59:1-60:5), which the Lord of Spirits prepared for those who do not worship “the righteous judgment” and who “take his name in vain;” it will be a “day of covenant for the elect and inquisition for the sinners” (60:6). After Enoch is shown the mysteries of nature and the two monsters prepared for the day of judgment (1 En. 60:7-25), he sees angels preparing long ropes which will be used to bind the righteous to the Lord of the Spirits for eternity and to measure the allotments for the righteous (61:1-5). The measurements determine the future blessings of the elect ones who have perished will be restored “in the day of the Elect One” (1 En. 61:5). The judgment of the Elect One will be just, and all the creatures of heaven and the elect ones will glorify God because of

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98 Of the identity of these “elect ones” of Azaz’el, Black notes, “Dillmann interprets, in the light of 90.26,27, of the ‘blinded sheep’, the apostate Israel, and Schodde thinks of the ‘kings and the mighty’” (Black, The Book of Enoch or I Enoch, 221). The use of the title here is no doubt intended to be ironic and to contrast Azaz’el’s “elect ones” with those of the Son of Man.

99 See Ibid., 231. The imagery is no doubt intended to serve as an assurance of the rewards which await the righteous.
his mercy and justice (1 En. 61:7-13). The judgment of the Elect One comes against “the kings, the governors, the high officials, and the landowners,” who will “be eliminated from before his face” (1 En. 62:1-3). The Son of Man/Elect One who comes to judge the oppressors has been revealed only to the holy and elect ones, and they alone will be saved on the day of judgment, never again to see “the faces of the sinners and the oppressors” (1 En. 62:7-16). Here again, the titles of the community are used interchangeably. The titles essentially serve as technical terms to describe the identity of the community, and emphasize their pious qualities.

The oppressors will plead for mercy and seek to worship God, but because “our Lord is faithful in all his works, his judgments, and his righteousness; and his judgments have no respect of persons,” their judgment day confessions will do them no good (1 En. 63:1-12). The fallen angels will likewise perish in the coming judgment of the Flood (1 En. 64:1-2), but Noah and his righteous seed will be preserved and from his seed “will emerge a fountain of the righteous and holy ones without number forever” (65:12). Again, here, Noah, and the “remnant” which will follow from him, is undoubtedly connected with the righteous community. As the angels prepare the ark for Noah, it is revealed that the angels and oppressors alike will suffer in the judgment of the Flood (1 En. 66:1-67:10), and the waters of judgment will poison the angels and “become a fire that burns forever” (67:13). As shown elsewhere, the fallen angels are guilty of deceit and introducing sexual sins, violence, and secret knowledge into the world (1 En. 69:1-12). Again the Son of Man is the instrument by which the corruption of the world will cease, as

100 See Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 41


102 Nickelsburg states that “this section emphasizes that the righteous and holy of his time are the descendants of Noah, the righteous and blameless one” (Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch, Vol. 2, 285). Elliott states, “If Noah’s experiences as related in the Similitudes and elsewhere are to be taken as paradigmatic for the author’s own generation—and what other reason would there be for such embellishments?—that would make the flood a type of a future judgment and the seed of Noah a type of the surviving righteous who continue to represent the faithful people of God (in all likelihood, the writer’s community)” (Elliott, Survivors of Israel, 318).

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the fallen angels and their followers are bound and the Son of Man rules from his glorious throne (1 En. 69:26-29). Following this, Enoch is carried away and shown the secrets of heaven and righteousness (1 En. 70:1-71:13), and is assured by an angel that all who will follow Enoch’s path will find peace and length of days (1 En. 71:14-17).

Here, as throughout 1 Enoch, the elect are seen as a righteous and chosen community, a sub-group/the remnant of Israel who represent the true people of God. What separates the faithful from the sinners in the Similitudes is their relation to the Chosen One/Son of Man and their avoidance of sins, such as blasphemy and what may be termed as “practical atheism.” The guilty also include the powerful, who lord their power of the righteous and oppress them.

Summary of 1 Enoch

Throughout 1 Enoch, the emphasis upon the identity of the elect has been as a sub-group (remnant, seed, plant, etc.) of Israel, a “true Israel” who are variously identified throughout the work. At times they are closely connected to an eschatological “Elect One/Son of Man” who assures their future salvation and blessing. The metaphors used are corporate, and the elect are always depicted as a righteous, holy, and faithful people in contrast to the sinners. Their inclusion in the “elect body” is clearly conditional throughout the work, as apostates are on the

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103 See Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 43. Collins recognizes that the group, in its conviction that it is the only true expression of God’s people, shares some characteristics of the community at Qumran (Collins, The Apocalyptic Imagination, 192).


105 Knibb suggests that “‘the kings and the might’ represent the Roman authorities, and a good case has been made for the view that the Parables date from around the turn of the era” (Knibb, “Enoch, Similitudes of (1 Enoch 37-71),” 587).

106 Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch, Vol. 1, 54; Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 361.

107 Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch, Vol. 1, 53; Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 361.
outside, and the elect are those who live uprightly by choosing “an elect life.” The group is limited to the Enochic community who are the recipients of the special revelation given to him. The authors anticipate the day when God will set things right by saving and blessing the elect and punishing the sinners, an event frequently depicted through paradigmatic events, though especially through the Flood. The sinners—who are identified as being guilty of sexual perversion, violence, oppression, occult practices, calendrical errors, dishonestly gaining wealth, hatred, blasphemy, foolishness, idolatry, distortion and rejection of the Law, denial of the righteous community and/or Messiah, and lack of repentance—are predominately Jewish apostates or the powerful, Jew and Gentile alike, who oppress the elect. Not all Gentiles, however, will be ultimately punished as at times they are included among the eschatological people of God, while many Jews clearly stand on the outside and are destroyed for their wickedness.

**Testament of Moses** (early first century CE)

The *Testament of Moses* is another text of the period that frequently escapes attention. This may be due, perhaps in large part, to its uncertain textual history. As Atkinson summarizes, “The *Testament of Moses* is a prophecy attributed to Moses that survives in a single, incomplete, incomplete...


partly illegible sixth-century CE Latin palimpsest in the Bibliotheca Ambrosiana in Milan, Italy.”\textsuperscript{111} The text is acknowledged, along with the Assumption of Moses in several ancient apocryphal book lists,\textsuperscript{112} but, due to the fact that its ending is missing, it is impossible to identify the surviving manuscript with either title, though the title of Testament is more frequently used since the surviving text does not hint at Moses’ ascension after his death. Though the work survives in only a single manuscript, it is commonly agreed that the Latin text is translated from a Greek translation of a Hebrew original.\textsuperscript{113} There is also general consensus that the text predates 70 CE since the temple is still standing throughout the work. The unity of the text is also debated, with some suggesting a Hasmonean or pre-Hasmonean composition of part of the work, with a redaction taking place in the first century CE.\textsuperscript{114} Regardless of its compositional history, Collins suggests correctly that “[i]n its present form the Testament of Moses must be dated around the turn of the era, since there is a clear allusion to the partial destruction of the temple in the campaign of Varus in 4 BCE (see 6:8-9).”\textsuperscript{115}

The Testament begins with an introduction of Moses and Joshua, setting the words which follow in the form of a dialogue between Israel’s leaders, as Moses commissions Joshua to lead

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\textsuperscript{114} According to Atkinson, scholarly consensus maintains “that the original composition was written during the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes and was redacted shortly after 4 BCE,” though Atkinson argues that the text in its entirety was written as a unity around 4 BCE – 6 CE (Atkinson, “Taxo’s Martyrdom and the Role of the Nuntius in the Testament of Moses: 458-467).

the people after Moses’ death (T. Mos. 1:1-9). Moses states here that God has decreed that “He created the world on behalf of his people, but he did not make this purpose of creation openly known from the beginning of the world so that the nations might be found guilty, indeed that they might abjectly declare themselves guilty by their own (mistaken) discussions (of creation’s purpose)” (T. Mos. 1:12-13). Thus, unlike a number of texts previously examined, there is no suggestion of hope for the Gentiles in this text. Moses then tells Joshua to preserve and protect the prophetic message that he is about to receive (T. Mos. 1: 16-18).

The message begins with a recounting of the basic Deuteronomic formula: God has given the land to Israel, and they are to live in it under their appointed rulers and follow the Law in order to be blessed (T. Mos. 2:1-2). The people, however, will be divided between the two tribes and the ten tribes because of the sin of the ten, though the two tribes will also be dragged into apostasy because of them (T. Mos. 2:3-3:7). The specific sins mentioned are the violation of the covenant, sacrificing their children to other gods, and making and worshipping idols in the temple (T. Mos. 2:7-9). The people will be exiled because of their disobedience, causing them to cry out and plead with God to remember the covenant (T. Mos. 3:1-9). Moses then predicts that, because of the intercession of the “one who is over them” (T. Mos. 4:1) and the invoking of the covenant, that the people will be sent back to the land. Of this return, Moses states, “some parts of the tribes will arise and come to their appointed place, and they will strongly build its walls” and “the two tribes will remain steadfast in their former faith” while the “ten tribes will grow and spread out among the nations” (T. Mos. 4:5-10), apparently alluding to the partial restoration of

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116 Tromp suggests that “this concept should not be taken as some kind of metaphysical conviction about the reasons and motifs for creation, but rather as a strong expression of the idea of Israel’s election” (Johannes Tromp, The Assumption of Moses: A Critical Edition with Commentary (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 141).
the people and the presence of a faithful remnant. Israel’s election is affirmed throughout chapter 4 as the intercessor recognizes the sin of the people and pleas for their deliverance.117

The emphasis on the partial faithfulness of Israel is again affirmed in chapter 5, when Moses states that kings will rise up to punish the people, causing them to “be divided as to the truth” (T. Mos. 5:1). The litany of the sins of the people include their lack of justice, pollution of the temple, and idolatry (T. Mos. 5:3-4).118 The priests, leader, and teachers (of the Law) are all indicted as corrupt, accepting bribes and dishonoring the Law (T. Mos. 5:5). These corrupt and malicious religious leaders are often identified with the Hasmoneans, whose abuse of their power is documented by Josephus. 119 The corruption of the city will bring judgment in the form of two powerful kings (Herod and Varus) who will persecute the people by killing the Jewish leaders (Herod; see Ant. 17.8.1) and by destroying a portion of the temple and crucifying some of the Jews (Varus) (T. Mos. 6:1-9). Moses notes that these events will be like the period when the Hebrews were slaves in Egypt, likening their current plight to their situation prior to God’s deliverance of them through Moses.120 Moses foresees that after this time, the end of the age will soon come (T. Mos. 7:1). Tromp observes, “To him, the eschatological times are near. But the eschatological times will not start with the advent of God’s kingdom (10:1-2). Unparalleled

117 And so Tromp notes, “It must be stressed that the people’s restoration, which results from God’s remembering them, is not presented as some kind of reward for their repentance; it is based solely on the covenant with the fathers… the reason is to be found in God’s autonomous promise to restore the covenant when the people repent” (Johannes Tromp, The Assumption of Moses, 178).

118 Tromp agrees, stating, “The priesthood is rejected because of its members’ moral misconduct, which renders their cultic actions impure, defiling the Lord’s sanctuary” (Ibid., 193).

119 E.g., Ibid., 205.

sinfulness and great woe will first come over the world,”¹²¹ events which are described in *T. Mos.* 7:1-8:5 and are characterized by the forced denouncement of Judaism.¹²²

The apocalyptic tide turns, however, when the figure of Taxo and his seven sons, from the tribe of Levi, are introduced. Taxo laments the punishment that has befallen Israel but reminds his sons that “never did (our) fathers nor their ancestors tempt God by transgressing the commandments” (*T. Mos.* 9:4). Taxo here surely speaks of his ancestors in the sense of his family line, and not of Israel in general as the book has indicted the nation on numerous occasions for its sins. Taxo thus is able to stand as a mediator for the nation as he and his sons stand within the faithful remnant of Israel. Tromp and Atkinson note the contrast here between the Levitical line of Taxo and the priests serving in the temple who have profaned it along with the leaders of Israel.¹²³ Taxo vows, along with his sons, to flee to a cave rather than be forced to sin against God, expecting that God will avenge their deaths should they indeed perish (*T. Mos.* 10:6-7).

The text then turns to the future when the kingdom of God “will appear throughout his whole creation” (*T. Mos.* 10:1). A heavenly messenger, apparently functioning as priest,¹²⁴ will

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¹²² Priest notes, “this has been variously interpreted as an allusion to the fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C., the Antiochan persecution, the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey in 63 B.C., or to some otherwise unknown historical event. It seems better to assume that the author has put together many past events that he believes are about to be replicated in the end-time” (John Priest, “Testament of Moses,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 1, ed. James H. Charlesworth, 919-934 (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1983), 931).


execute vengeance on Israel’s enemies, and God will depart from his throne to bring wrath upon the earth (T. Mos. 10:2-3). This results in the entire cosmos being disrupted, as God brings judgment to the idolatrous nations of the earth (T. Mos. 10:3-7). Israel will be rescued and exalted, and give thanks to God for their deliverance (T. Mos. 10:8-10).

The dialogue between Moses and Joshua is resumed in T. Mos. 10:11, and continues through the remainder of the book. Moses tells Joshua to keep this book of prophecy that he has been given and to be ready to succeed Moses as Israel’s mediator (T. Mos. 10:11-15). Joshua, distraught over what has been revealed, doubts his ability to fulfill this role and fears that Israel’s enemies will overtake them after Moses is gone (T. Mos. 11:1-19). Moses replies by stating that God has foreseen all that will happen in human history and remains in control of the course of history (T. Mos. 12:4-7). Moses then states that,

those who truly fulfill the commandments of God will flourish and will finish the good way, but those who sin by disregarding the commandments will deprive themselves of the good things which were declared before. They, indeed, will be punished by the nations with many tortures. But it is not possible for the nations to drive them out or extinguish them completely. (T. Mos. 12:10-12).

Moses is sure that Israel will continue on account of the covenant that God established with Israel (T. Mos. 12:13). Though some of Israel will not be faithful, a faithful remnant will continue, and thus God’s people will continue.

Of this preservation of Israel, Kugler states that it is “all of Israel” which will be preserved because of God’s promises and covenants, and that God’s control of history, and not

125 Tromp states, “It is made explicit that the wrath of God, which is the reason he will rise from his throne, will be poured out over the gentiles, the enemies of his servants (compare 10:3 with 10:7)” (Tromp, The Assumption of Moses, 235).

126 Moses states that Israel will be raised up to the heavens and will see their enemies on the earth. The language may be metaphorical or may actually speak of a celestial dwelling for the redeemed of Israel. See Priest, “Testament of Moses,” 933.

individual mediation or righteous deeds, which will assure Israel of this fate. The text, however, in making distinction between the righteous and sinners within Israel throughout, both in the recounting of Israel’s history, and in its predictions for the future, seems to expect that certain Jews will be excluded and punished because of their disobedience to the Law, and thus their breaking of the covenant. The text no doubt affirms that God is sovereign over history, but nonetheless describes the future of the Jews as conditioned upon their obedience or disobedience to the Law. There is here, as is throughout much the literature of the period, an affirmation both of God’s sovereignty and foreknowledge, and of the responsibility of the Jews to be faithful to the covenant. The covenant assures that Israel will continue, but this text, as do many others, only expects a remnant to enjoy this preservation.

The question here, as elsewhere, is should the occasional statements which seem to promote determinism or national hope be allowed to override the persistent and consistent theme through the book of the need for the people’s obedience and the conditionality of the covenant blessings? Kugler thus states that “the testament argues that God acts unilaterally on behalf of Israel, offering unconditional mercy for a sinful, punished, and only nominally repentant Israel (D. Harrington in Nickelsburg 1976). The concluding assurances Moses offers Joshua, as well as the “covenant and oath” language that echoes the unilateralism of Genesis 15, favors the latter

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128 Ibid.

129 So Collins states, “The strong emphasis on the solidarity of all the people in the first cycle of history gives way to a distinction between those who observe the law and those who do not in chap. 12” (Collins, “Testaments,” 347).

130 Tromp notes, “Having elaborated on the predetermined plan underlying creation, which ensures the safety of the people, the author of As. Mos. makes plain that the Lord’s protection is no licence (sic) to neglect his commandments. Only some of the people will fulfil (sic) his commandments (facientes... et consummantes mandata) they will grow and prosper,” and “The concluding verses exhort faithfulness to the commandments, promising good to those who fulfill them and evil to those who disregard them (12:10-11), and affirm that, in spite of all hazards, a nucleus of God’s people will survive in accord with the covenant promises made long ago (12:12-13)” (Tromp, The Assumption of Moses, 268).
Priest similarly sees the deterministic theme of the book as a dominant one. As seen previously, the deterministic outlook need not nullify the frequently repeated condemnations of disobedience and exhortations to obedience, the specifically conditional language found throughout the book, and the explicit indications in chs. 4, 5, 9, and 12 that only a remnant of Israel will remain faithful and receive the covenant blessings. Nowhere is it stated that God will act unilaterally to restore and rescue all of Israel, and the mention of covenant or election terminology should not be seen as sustaining this view, especially when the covenant language is frequently couched in conditional terms. Thus, Elliott surmises, “The writer is not delineating “exceptions” to the salvation of all Israel. There would be little purpose for such an abstract and detached theological concern in the midst of an emotive work like the Assumption… We are probably witness here to one common method of combining two irreconcilable aspects of the covenant—promise (gift) and demand—in terms of the salvation of a representative segment of God’s people.”

Furthermore, an affirmation of a national and unconditional restoration and salvation of the Jews would defeat the intended purpose of the work, which Atkinson, Harrington, and Tromp agree is to affect the restoration of Israel by encouraging strict obedience to the Torah, something

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133 Gathercole recognizes this tension in stating “the Assumption of Moses is predicated on a very strong theology of election. So we can again see concepts of election and works leading to glory or resurrection running parallel with one another in the same texts” (Gathercole, Where is Boasting?, 58).

134 VanLandingham suggests that T. Mos. 2:4-9; 3:5; 5:2-6; 6:2; 7:3-10; 8:3, 5 all express a “pessimistic anthropology in which the majority of Jews “will be damned” (VanLandingham, Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul, 173).


136 Elliott, The Survivors of Israel, 270.
that is sorely lacking within the current leadership in Jerusalem. The author believes that the end of the ages is near, and thus faithfulness is of the utmost importance for the Jewish people as their faithfulness or unfaithfulness to the Torah will determine their fate when the judgment of God comes upon the earth. The work thus affirms a conditional and remnant-oriented view of Israel’s election, as so many other works of the period do. In contrast to other literature, however, no specific legal requirements are given heightened importance in the work, though circumcision is mentioned specifically in T. Mos. 8. In addition, as Gathercole observes, the political emphases found in 1 Maccabees stands in sharp contrast to the “radical nonviolence” endorsed in T. Mos. 9. In spite of these nuances, the overall view of Israel’s election as conditional and non-nationalistic is well-attested in the Testament of Moses.

Biblical Antiquities (Pseudo-Philo) (early first century CE)

The Biblical Antiquities of Pseudo-Philo (also known as Pseudo-Philo or by its Latin title, Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum) is a first century CE work, generally thought to have been written before 70 CE, though the date is disputed. The author was most certainly not Philo, but

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138 Gathercole, Where is Boasting?, 57.

was likely a well-educated Palestinian Jew, with the work later being attributed to the Alexandrian Jew. The book is a retelling of the Old Testament narratives, spanning from Adam to the death of Saul, and interweaving quoted and summarized biblical material with additional material unique to the work.\textsuperscript{140} The work survives only in Medieval Latin manuscripts but is most likely a translation of a Greek translation of a Hebrew original.\textsuperscript{141} The focus in this study will be upon the additions Pseudo-Philo makes to the Old Testament narratives as guided by Harrington’s translation.\textsuperscript{142}

The \textit{Bib. Ant.} begins with a summary of the genealogies from Adam to Lamech (\textit{Bib. Ant.} 1:1-2:10). Here the author reveals that “in that time, when those inhabiting the earth began to do evil deeds (each one with his neighbor’s wife) and they defiled them, God was angry… and those inhabiting the earth began to make statues and to adore them” (\textit{Bib. Ant.} 2:8-9). The author here reveals two of the prominent sins of the book, which are improper sexual relations, often in the form of intermarriage with Gentiles, and idolatry.\textsuperscript{143} The whole earth is here implicated in these sins, thus explaining the author’s affirmation of God’s anger against humanity.\textsuperscript{144} \textit{Bib. Ant.} 3 by and large reproduces the biblical account of the Flood wholesale, though the materials is rearranged in places. In \textit{Bib. Ant.} 3:9-10, the author adds, after God’s affirmation that he would never again flood the earth,

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{140} For a study of Pseudo-Philo’s compositional strategy, see Bruce Norman Fisk, \textit{Do You Not Remember? Scripture, Story and Exegesis in the Rewritten Bible of Pseudo-Philo} (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001).

\textsuperscript{141} Murphy, “Biblical Antiquities (Pseudo-Philo),” 440.

\textsuperscript{142} This is not to say that the way in which Pseudo-Philo arranges the material is not important, as his theology is certainly seen in how the material is organized and shaped, as well as by what is omitted. The goal in isolating the material unique to the \textit{Bib. Ant.} is to examine the material which most clearly represents the “voice” of the author.

\textsuperscript{143} This Murphy affirms in stating, “Concern about idolatry is evident in Pseudo-Philo. It is the sin that receives the most attention in the book” (Murphy, “Biblical Antiquities (Pseudo-Philo),” 441).

\textsuperscript{144} Again, Murphy notes, “All humanity is characterized as idolatrous” (Frederick J. Murphy, “Retelling the Bible: Idolatry in Pseudo-Philo,” \textit{Journal of Biblical Literature} 107:2 (1988): 276).
\end{footnotesize}
but when those inhabiting the earth sin, I will judge them by famine or by sword or by fire or by death; and there will be earthquakes, and they will be scattered to uninhabited places… But when the years appointed for the world have been fulfilled, then the light will cease and the darkness will fade away. And I will bring the dead to life and raise up those who are sleeping from the earth. And hell will pay back its debt, and the place of perdition will return its deposit so that I may render to each according to his works and according to the fruits of his own devices, until I judge between soul and flesh. And the world will cease, and death will be abolished, and hell will shut its mouth. And the earth will not be without progeny or sterile for those inhabiting it; and no one who has been pardoned by me will be tainted. And there will be another earth and another heaven, an everlasting dwelling place.

Here several issues of note need recognizing. First, the author clearly expects a general resurrection followed by a judgment of all humanity according to the works of each individual. The fate of the wicked is not specified here as to whether it is extinction or eternal punishment, but the new earth and heaven will be an eternal dwelling place for those who have “been pardoned” by God (Bib. Ant. 3:10). Pseudo-Philo also affirms here that the final judgment of individuals will be according to their works (Bib. Ant. 3:10).

The narrative continues with the Noahic covenant, and the genealogies of the sons of Noah (Bib. Ant. 3:11-4:15). In the midst of the genealogies, Pseudo-Philo asserts of Serug, “From him there will be born in the fourth generation one who will set his dwelling on high and will be called perfect and blameless; and he will be the father of nations, and his covenant will not be broken, and his seed will be multiplied forever” (Bib. Ant. 4:11), followed shortly after with a recognition of the idolatry of humanity and the assertion that “Serug and his sons did not act as these did” (Bib. Ant. 4:16). The text in 4:11 does not make explicit how Abraham will be found blameless, but the note in 4:16 suggests that it is the resistance to idolatry that has

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145 Murphy comments on this passage, “the principle for the rest of the book is clearly delineated: Sin will inevitably result in punishment in this life, the life hereafter, or both” (Frederick J. Murphy, Pseudo-Philo: Rewriting the Bible (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 34).
established him as such. This also establishes the intended pattern for Israel, as Murphy describes, and so, “Israel begins with Abraham’s rejection of idolatry and choice to serve God. Such service separates Israel from the rest of humanity. This alerts us to the converse, viz., mixing with the nations leads to disloyalty to God.”

Following the census of ch. 5, Pseudo-Philo introduces Abraham by name (“Abram”) in ch. 6, as he, with a handful of others, resists participation in the Babel project, citing their worship of YHWH as reason for their resistance (Bib. Ant. 6:3-5). Joktan, the leader of the idolaters, gives the men one week to “repent of their evil plans” before they are executed, but Joktan secretly sent the group away since “he was of their tribe and served God” (Bib. Ant. 6:6). Joktan reveals that the people will soon be punished for their wickedness, and the men can return once their plan has been ruined (Bib. Ant. 6:9-10). Abraham, however, refuses to go along with Joktan’s plan, and resolves to stay put, for he was confident that he was not deserving of death and that God would protect him (Bib. Ant. 6:11). The following day, Abraham is thrown into the furnace to be burned, “but God caused a great earthquake,” killing the 83,500 bystanders who had come to witness the spectacle (Bib. Ant. 6:12-18).148 The author has thus placed on Abraham an unwavering confidence in God along with a blameless character, as his family alone resists the evil and idolatry present among humanity. Following these events, the tower is destroyed and the people scattered (Bib. Ant. 7:1-3), and God selects Abraham as his “child” to make a covenant with in order to “bless his seed and be lord for him as God forever” (Bib. Ant. 7:4), a covenant that is established in Bib. Ant. 8:3, much in keeping with its presentation in Gen. 13 and

\[\text{146 So Murphy writes, “Abraham comes from a family which alone, of all the inhabitants of the earth, distinguishes itself by its rejection of idolatry” (Murphy, “Retelling the Bible,” 276).}\]

\[\text{147 Ibid.}\]

\[\text{148 There are clear allusions here to Daniel 3 which likely informed Pseudo-Philo’s development of this episode.}\]
The text then summarizes the descendants of Abraham, from Ishmael and Isaac down to Jacob (*Bib. Ant.* 8:4-14).

Following the 210 years in Egypt, the text resumes with Israel’s enslavement in Egypt. The Egyptians had decided to kill all the male Hebrews and keep the females as slaves. In response, the elders of Israel decided to forbid the people from procreating “lest the fruit of their wombs be defiled and our offspring serve idols” (*Bib. Ant.* 9:2). Amram, however, answered,

> It will sooner happen that this age will be ended forever or the world will sink into the immeasurable deep or the heart of the abyss will touch the stars than that the race of the sons of Israel will be ended... For God will not abide in his anger, nor will he forget his people forever, nor will he cast forth the race of Israel in vain upon the earth; nor did he establish a covenant with our fathers in vain (*Bib. Ant.* 9:3).

Pseudo-Philo here expresses his absolute confidence that God will preserve Israel in spite of the apparently insurmountable circumstances with which they were faced. Amram thus resolves to procreate with his wife, an action that pleases God because “he has not put aside the covenant... so behold now he who will be born from him will serve me forever, and I will do marvelous things in the house of Jacob through him and I will work through him signs and wonders for my people that I have not done for anyone else... And I will reveal to him my Law and statutes and judgments” (*Bib. Ant.* 9:7-8). After the birth of Miriam and Aaron, Amram’s wife again conceives, and they hide the child (“who was born in the covenant of God and the covenant of the flesh” (*Bib. Ant.* 9:13); i.e. was born circumcised) in a basket. Pharaoh’s daughter saw the baby and “the covenant” (i.e., his circumcision\(^{149}\), she took him and raised him, and he “became glorious above all other men, and through him God freed the sons of Israel as he had said” (*Bib.*

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The covenant here, and obedience to it/confidence in it, again figures prominently in Pseudo-Philo’s mind. 150

Following ch. 10, the recounting of the exodus event, and the addition of Israel’s infighting concerning how to proceed when trapped at the Red Sea, Bib. Ant. 11 summarizes the giving of the Law to Moses. Here the Law is described as a “light to the world,” given to establish YHWH’s covenant “with the sons of men and glorify my people above all nations” and to “bring out the eternal statutes that are for those in the light but for the ungodly a punishment” (Bib. Ant. 11:1-2). This Law is to be an everlasting one, and by it God “will judge the whole world” (Bib. Ant. 11:2). Whereas the covenant is given to the “sons of men” in Bib. Ant. 11:1, this is specified in 11:5 as being given specifically to the “sons of Israel” (Bib. Ant. 11:5). While there may be the possibility of some Gentiles being faithful to God, Pseudo-Philo does no more than to briefly allude to this possibility, and thus seems to hold out little hope for this notion. 151

Following the giving of the Law in ch. 11, the pattern of idolatry is resumed in ch. 12 as the golden calf episode is described. The sons of Israel, growing impatient while Moses is away, here specifically make the calf-god to be like “the other nations” (Bib. Ant. 12:2). This episode causes God to ask if the promises of the covenant are now “at an end” since the people have forsaken him before they even entered the land (Bib. Ant. 12:4). Because of this, God states that

150 Thus, Murphy remarks, “Because Amram is faithful to the covenant, God works through him to bring forth the most important figure in Israelite history, Moses” (Murphy, Pseudo-Philo, 57).

151 This tension is illustrated in comparing the comments of Westerholm and Nickelsburg on this passage. Westerholm writes, “Pseudo-Philo portrays Israel’s habitual waywardness in terms as bleak as those of the Deuteronomistic history itself… The gift of God’s everlasting law to Israel made it possible for all humanity—Gentiles explicitly included—to learn and do what is right (11.1-2). And righteous people who proved faithful in the midst of crooked and perverse generations are repeatedly mentioned (1.16; 4.11, 16; 6.3; 16.4-5; 38.1-2, etc.). God-pleasing behaviour (sic) is thus clearly within human capacities, even if practised (sic) only by a minority” (Stephen Westerholm, “Paul’s Anthropological ‘Pessimism’ in Its Jewish Context,” in Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment, ed. John M. Barclay and Simon Gathercole, 71-98 (New York: T & T Clark, 2006), 93), while Nickelsburg asserts, “A corollary of Israel’s election is the distinction between this people and the rest of the nations… Israel alone receives the Torah, and thereby they are glorified over the nations (L.A.B. 11:13)” (Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah, 267).
he “will forsake them” and “will turn again and make peace with them so that a house may be
built for me among them, a house that will be destroyed because they will sin against me” (Bib. Ant. 12:4). Thus, though God questions the continuation of the people,\textsuperscript{152} he affirms it, though acknowledging that they will be wayward throughout their history.\textsuperscript{153} Moses declares that only the mercy of God will allow his “vine” to continue to flourish, and if he does not, he “will not have anyone to glorify” him, for even if he plants another vine (i.e., chooses another people), they will not trust him because he destroyed the first people (Bib. Ant. 12:8-9). The issue of the continuation of the people is thus, for Pseudo-Philos Moses, an issue of the continued worship and service of God, and God’s reaction to Moses’ words is that he is “made merciful” (Bib. Ant. 12:10) by his plea and decides not to utterly forsake the people. Following the giving of instructions concerning the festivals in ch. 13, God recalls Adam’s disobedience and the intrusion of death into the world (Bib. Ant. 13:8). He then commands,

\begin{quote}
If they will walk in my ways, I will not abandon them but will have mercy on them always and bless their seed… But I know for sure that they will make their ways corrupt and I will abandon them, and they will forget the covenants that I have established with their fathers; but nevertheless I will not forget them forever. For they will know in the last days that on account of their own sins their seed has been abandoned, because I am faithful in my ways (Bib. Ant. 13:10).\textsuperscript{154}
\end{quote}

Sprinkle sees here an affirmation of the unconditional nature of God’s faithfulness to Israel, noting that “there is evidence in LAB that the emphasis on God’s unconditional covenant

\textsuperscript{152} This questioning occurs in various places throughout the Bib. Ant. (e.g., Bib. Ant. 15:5-7; 20:4; 21:4; 22:2, etc.).

\textsuperscript{153} Here Murphy expresses, “It is noteworthy that God passes from forsaking to peace without an intervening stage where the people repent. Although repentance is present in the Biblical Antiquities and although the author advocates the connection between sin and punishment, the full pattern of sin-punishment-repentance-forgiveness is not always present. At times, repentance is not mentioned. This makes the eternity of the covenant more prominent. God punishes the people for their sins but always turns back to them, even when repentance is not present” (Murphy, Pseudo-Philo, 71).

\textsuperscript{154} In ch. 15, Pseudo-Philo recounts the sending of the spies into Canaan. In addressing Israel’s unbelief and unfaithfulness, God tells Moses that he will abandon them to the wilderness as they have abandoned him. Here again, Moses intercedes for the people, praying that God will sustain them with his mercy (Bib. Ant. 15:7).
supplants any potential conditional elements.”¹⁵⁵ The tension here, as in other writings of the period, is between the conditions established in the covenant, the unfaithfulness of Israel, and the promises of God. Though a premature conclusion at this point, this study will suggest that the book as a whole subscribes to the faithfulness of God to preserve Israel because it believes that a remnant of faithful Jews exists on the earth, and not because God, who is “faithful in [his] ways” (Bib. Ant. 13:10) overrides the covenant stipulations and consequences with little or no consideration of Israel’s, or humanity’s, behavior.¹⁵⁶ Here God commands Israel to obey,¹⁵⁷ recognizing that they will sin, and promising that he will abandon them for it, though not permanently. Though no explicit mention of repentance or renewed obedience occurs here,¹⁵⁸ this theme is demonstrated throughout the book, with its emphasis on moral causality,¹⁵⁹ and this passage should not be superimposed on the rest of the material. Nothing here requires that there not be repentance or renewed obedience prior to or coinciding with God’s remembrance of them.

Following this event, Pseudo-Philo recounts the census of the people, the sending of the twelve spies, Korah’s rebellion and the encounter with Balak and Balaam in ch. 14-18. He then narrates the death of Moses, and Moses’ departing words about Israel’s future. Here again, Moses predicts the people’s rebellion and God’s punishment of them, in which he will send the nations to rule over them, “but not forever, because he will remember the covenant” (Bib. Ant. 17:4).¹⁵⁶


¹⁵⁶ Jacobson agrees, stating, “I think it more likely that the words mean that God is faithful to his principles and therefore punishes when punishment is merited” (Jacobson, A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo’s Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum with Latin text and English Translation, Vol. 1, 525).

¹⁵⁷ So Murphy writes, “The lesson of moral causality is explicit in 13:10. Obedience brings God’s merciful blessing” (Murphy, Pseudo-Philo, 75).

¹⁵⁸ It is mentioned explicitly elsewhere, such as in Bib. Ant. 21:6 where the people, “having repented of their deeds, will hope for the salvation that is to be born from them.”

¹⁵⁹ See Murphy, Pseudo-Philo, 247-248.
Moses predicts that after the period of foreign oppression, Israel will “rise up… and lament the day of my death” and long for a mediator to come (Bib. Ant. 19:3). The present generation, however, is in need of Moses’ warning that if they “transgress and grow corrupt” God will cut them off (Bib. Ant. 19:4). Here again, conditional elements (i.e., obedience/disobedience) are intermingled with both God’s cursings and blessings. The Deuteronomistic formula persists again in this passage, even with the acknowledgement that God will not forsake them forever. This acknowledgement is apparently made because he believes that future generations will desire an intercessor like Moses to judge among them and pray for them. While this is not an unqualified recognition of repentance or renewal, its occurrence after God’s promise not to forsake them and the restatements of the Deuteronomistic formula in Bib. Ant. 19:2, 4, and 6 suggests that the conditionality of the covenant is still a reality in the mind of Pseudo-Philo. Israel’s continued existence is dependent upon God’s mercy because of their current and coming rebellion and disobedience (Bib. Ant. 19:8-9, 11), but this does not exclude the need for their future obedience in order to receive the covenant blessings. Their disobedience brings about God’s punishment of their sins, and his mercy sustains their existence during times of disobedience, but their receipt of blessings and future life is dependent upon their obedience to the covenant stipulations.

The exhortations to obedience and warnings against disobedience continue throughout the life of Joshua, and the covenant is renewed upon his death (Bib. Ant. 20-24). In ch. 25, an expansion on the biblical figure of Kenaz is presented as the tribes prepare to battle with the

160 Sprinkle here again sees an unconditional promise to Israel of their national salvation, noting, “If our author believed that God’s mercy did have certain conditions, then he certainly does not state this clearly. In fact, he seems to alter the biblical text to convince his audience that God’s mercy is unconditional” (Sprinkle, “The Hermeneutic of Grace, 56).

161 Bib. Ant. 20-21 reinforces the notion that their disobedience brings judgment but obedience brings blessings.
Philistines. In order to ensure that the tribes have pure hearts, they cast lots to determine if there be any sinners in their midst, with those who are found as such to be burned in the fire as punishment (*Bib. Ant.* 25:1-6). Kenaz then remarks that, if the guilty persons confess, “who knows that if you tell the truth to us, even if you die now, nevertheless God will have mercy on you when he will resurrect the dead?” (*Bib. Ant.* 25:7). After the tribes confess their sins (*Bib. Ant.* 25:8-13), the guilty men and all their possessions are burned (26:5), along with others who confessed later (27:15-16). The hope for resurrection is not repeated in *Bib. Ant.* 28 when Kenaz renews the covenant. Here he states that “God destroyed them because they transgressed against his covenant,” and tells Israel that their obedience to the Law will preserve their household and prevent the destruction of the nation (*Bib. Ant.* 28:2). 162 Phineas then describes Eleazar’s vision in which Israel forsakes God and is corrupted, prompting Kenaz to question Israel’s future (*Bib. Ant.* 28:3-5). Kenaz then experiences his own ecstatic vision, here of creation and the entirety of human history, which ends when humanity sins against God and the time (7,000 years) is fulfilled (*Bib. Ant.* 28:6-9). As Murphy summarizes, “Kenaz has seen the sweep of creation and the beginning and end of humanity. He shares the fruit of that experience with the people… Since they know such things, their behavior should reflect that. Subsequent chapters show that the essence of Kenaz’s vision is lost on them.”163

After the passing of Zebul, there was no suitable leader among the people. Israel’s persistent disobedience finally arouses God’s judgment and he sends their enemies to “rule over them” (*Bib. Ant.* 30:2), an action which will prompt the people to recognize their sins (30:2-4). In

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162 Murphy notes, “whether or not God’s commitment to Israel is unconditional is a point of tension throughout the *Biblical Antiquities*. In the course of the work, humans both presume on the indestructibility of the covenant and assume that it is destructible. God is often on the brink of annulling the covenant because of Israel’s unfaithfulness, but the narrative shows that God cannot annul it” (Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo*, 131).

163 Ibid., 133.
recognition of their sins, the people fast in hopes of renewing God’s favor toward them, an action which prompts God to send Deborah to them to “take pity” on them “because of his covenant that he established with your fathers and the oath that he has sworn not to abandon you forever” (Bib. Ant. 30:7). Rather than forsake the people, God is faithful to the covenant because of his faithfulness and not the merit of the people.\(^{164}\) It must also be recognized here, as throughout the work, that this response of mercy comes only after the people have recognized their sin.\(^{165}\)

Following the deliverance of Israel from Sisera (Bib. Ant. 31), Deborah recounts God’s calling of Abraham, the *Aqedah*, God’s blessing of Jacob and rejection of Esau “because of his deeds” (32:5), and the exodus (32:1-10). She affirms God’s faithfulness to the covenant, and his praiseworthiness because of this (Bib. Ant. 32:11-17).

In her farewell speech, Deborah tells Israel to

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\text{direct your heart to the LORD your God during the time of your life, because after your death you cannot repent of those things in which you live… For even if you seek to do evil in hell after your death, you cannot, because the desire for sinning will cease and the evil impulse will lose its power, because even hell will not restore what has been received and deposited to it unless it be demanded by him who has made the deposit to it… do not hope in your fathers. For they will not profit you at all unless you be found like them. But then you will be like the stars of the heaven, which now have been revealed among you (Bib. Ant. 33:2-5).}
\]

As Murphy recognizes, death seals the fate of the dead, for “[o]nly decisions made in this life matter. At death, one’s fate is sealed. One is incapable of morally significant actions after death.”\(^{166}\) The people are instructed that, in order to receive eternal blessing and life, they must


\(^{165}\) And so VanLandingham notes, 30:7 “Even God’s salvation, which is due to the covenant with Abraham, depends on the nation’s repentance. Indeed, this theme is one of the patterns in this text as a whole (13:6, 10; 28:5; 30:4-7; 39:7-8; 46:1-47:12; 49:1-8)” (VanLandingham, *Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul*, 31).

\(^{166}\) Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo*, 151. Or, as Jacobson summarizes, “Be faithful to God now, for after you die, you will be unable to repent [even if you want to]. But if [rather than desiring to repent] you will want to continue
“be found like” their ancestors, meaning that they must be faithful to God. Here again Murphy recognizes that the eternality of the covenant does not guarantee that “any individual Israelite or a specific Israelite generation will be in God’s graces… Individual Israelites and even whole generations can be punished, but that will never mean the end of Israel.”\footnote{Murphy, \textit{Pseudo-Philo}, 152.}

In \textit{Bib. Ant.} 34, Israel is again found sinning against God, here by worshipping the gods of the Midianites, prompting God to deliver them over to the Midianites for judgment, and resulting in Israel’s enslavement. In \textit{Bib. Ant.} 35:3, an angel reveals to Gideon, who is questioning God’s faithfulness, that their judgment is the direct result of their own sins and because they, not God, have abandoned the covenant. Again Pseudo-Philo affirms that God’s faithfulness is because of his covenant with the fathers of Israel, and not because of the behavior of the present generation. God promises a future forgiveness for Israel in spite of their wickedness and raises up Gideon to deliver Israel (\textit{Bib. Ant.} 35:4-7).\footnote{Gideon is chosen to deliver Israel, which is clearly “election” in a vocationally-oriented sense (\textit{Bib. Ant.} 35:6).} Here again there is no explicit mention of Israel’s repentance before God’s decision to deliver them. As has been noted previously, the presence of repentance in the cycle is inconsistent in the book, but not absent entirely.\footnote{Thus here Murphy recognizes that “God forgives Israel in advance of any remorse on their part” (Murphy, \textit{Pseudo-Philo}, 157) but this is not absolute in the work.} God delivers Israel through Gideon (\textit{Bib. Ant.} 36:1-3), who, after the battle, makes and worships idols (36:4). God does not punish Gideon because he believes a punishment would strengthen the Israelites’ idolatry, but instead will punish him in the afterlife “once and for all, because he has offended me” (\textit{Bib. Ant.} 36:4). It is not clear here whether Gideon will be
completely condemned because of his sin, but given Deborah’s warnings in ch. 33, the possibility is at least present, and perhaps the lack of clarity acts here as a warning to the reader.

Following Gideon’s death (Bib. Ant. 36:4), Pseudo-Philo discusses Abimelech’s treachery (ch. 37) over the people and then introduces the figure of Jair. Jair constructs a sanctuary to Baal and deceives the people into sacrificing to it, resolving to burn those who refuse (Bib. Ant. 38:1-3). The dissenters, however, escape, and Jair instead is burned with the fire and told by the angel of the LORD that because he corrupted the covenant, he will “have a dwelling place” in the fire, while those who he condemned to death “are made alive with a living fire and are freed” (Bib. Ant. 38:4). Here again, Pseudo-Philo’s commitment to retributive justice is demonstrated.170 Following these failures, God’s judgment again visits Israel in the form of the Ammonites. The people plead with Jephthah to rule over them, and Jephthah responds by telling the people to “set your hearts on the Law of the LORD your God” that God might again deliver them (Bib. Ant. 39:6). Here the people pray, invoking the remembrance of their election and the covenant, and ask God to deliver them, his own inheritance (Bib. Ant. 39:7). Though absent in places, here again the recognition of the need for obedience (Bib. Ant. 39:6; which in turn requires repentance) and a plea for mercy precede God’s deliverance of the people, which comes “because of the prayer that Israel prayed” (39:11).171 While Jephthah affirms God’s mercy is undeserved, this does not mean, as Murphy indicates,172 that Israel receives it unconditionally. Murphy is correct that this prayer is grounded in the covenant and in Israel’s election, but their receipt of the blessings of the covenant is contingent upon their faithfulness to it. God is merciful

170 Murphy, Pseudo-Philo, 162.

171 Thus, according to Pseudo-Philo, had Israel not prayed, they would not have been delivered. Their prayer for deliverance serves as the catalyst for God’s intervention.

172 Murphy, Pseudo-Philo, 164.
in that he does not completely reject Israel, though he well could, and is faithful to the covenant, which, as seen in *Bib. Ant.* 13:10, means, in part, that he upholds the stipulations that he has put in place.

Following the deliverance of Israel (*Bib. Ant.* 40:1), the expanded story of the sacrifice of Jephthah’s daughter (39:10-40:9), and the judgeship of Abdon (41:1-2), Israel is again found in idolatry, and are handed over to the Philistines for their apostasy (41:3). *Bib. Ant.* 42:1-43:1 recounts the miraculous birth of Samson, who God raised up to deliver Israel from the Philistines (42:3). Pseudo-Philo’s account, however, focuses on Samson’s sin with Delilah and his destruction of the Philistines at Ashdod and Gerar, with no indication that Israel was actually delivered during his leadership. *Bib. Ant.* 44:1 opens with the statement that Israel had no leader and “each one did what was pleasing in his own eyes” (cf. Judg 17:6). *Bib. Ant.* 44:1-5 describes the sin of Micah in leading Israel into idolatry, which prompts God to desire to destroy the whole human race because of Israel’s idolatry and eager transgression of the Ten Commandments (44:6-7). Punishment will come upon Micah, his mother, and “the people of Israel,” and “to every man there will be such a punishment that in whatever sin he shall have sinned, in this he will be judged” (*Bib. Ant.* 44:10), and thus “while they recognize the justice of their punishment, they are distressed that they themselves have been directly responsible for their own suffering.” Pseudo-Philo interjects this notion again in the story of the concubine at Gibeah, which is here re-located to Nob, in that the concubine’s plight is seen as a result of her past sexual transgressions (*Bib. Ant.* 45:3).

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173 Murphy here notes, “Every commandment is broken by the making of idols (44:7)” (Murphy, “Retelling the Bible,” 279).

The people of Israel respond with disgust and anger to the murder of the concubine, a reaction which is couched in ironic terms, since God questions their disturbance over this event but their lack of outrage at the prevalence of idolatry in their midst (Bib. Ant. 45:6). As such, their plan will be in vain “and their heart will be so disturbed that the sinners as well as those allowing the evil deeds will be destroyed” (Bib. Ant. 45:6). The result of the spiritual blindness of Israel and Benjamin is a civil war between them, which ends in the people being confused about God’s stance on the matter (Bib. Ant. 46:1-4). This prompts Phinehas to intervene for the people and ask God “why you have brought this wickedness against us” (Bib. Ant. 47:2). The LORD reveals that all of the people had been led into idolatry by Micah and lacked outrage at the sin that was prevalent in their midst, and thus judgment has come upon all of the wicked, and not on the sins of the tribe of Benjamin alone (Bib. Ant. 47:3-8). The chapter ends with the destruction of Micah, and his mother, and the sons of the tribe of Benjamin (Bib. Ant. 47:9-12).176

Following the ascension of Phinehas (Bib. Ant. 48:1-3), it is stated again that “each one did what was pleasing in his own eyes” due to the absence of leadership in Israel (48:4). The people cast lots to try to find a leader to deliver them, but are unable to do so and conclude that God has hated them (Bib. Ant. 49:1-2), though they ironically recognize that there are no worthy men among them (49:2). Nethez responds to this conclusion by declaring,

He does not hate us, but we have made ourselves so hateful that God should abandon us. And so, even if we die, let us not abandon him, but let us flee to him… For I know that God will not reject us forever, nor will he hate his people for all generations. And so

175 Thus, as Murphy notes, “The story of the Levite’s concubine does little more in Pseudo-Philo than throw into greater relief the seriousness of Micah’s sin and the Israelites’ distorted moral judgment” (Murphy, Pseudo-Philo, 177).

176 So Murphy explains, the people “seem to understand that their punishment is accomplished and God will now honor the pledge to the fathers” and “the Benjamites’ sin is about to overtake them” (Ibid., 183).
strengthen yourselves, and let us pray again, and let us cast lots by cities. For even if our sins are many, nevertheless his long-suffering will not fail (Bib. Ant. 49:3).

The appeal here, again, is preceded by the recognition both of their sin and of their need to live in faithfulness to God. The lot falls upon Elkanah, who is unwilling to lead the people because of the responsibility that he would bear for the people’s sins (Bib. Ant. 49:5). The people blame God for the lot turning out to be a failure (Bib. Ant. 49:6). God declares that if Israel was really getting what they deserved, they would be extinguished, and confirms that the Elkanah’s son (Samuel) will rule them, instilling hope in the people that they might be delivered from their enemies (Bib. Ant. 49:7-8).

The promise of Samuel’s birth is fulfilled in Bib. Ant. 51:1-2. Hannah, in her rejoicing, states that Samuel will enlighten the people, show the nations “the statutes,” and be highly exalted (51:3). She then declares that God “kills in judgment and brings to life in mercy, For them who are wicked in this world he kills, and he brings the just to life when he wishes… when the wicked have died, then they will perish. And when the just go to sleep, then they will be freed” (Bib. Ant. 51:5). So Murphy remarks, “God’s killing is due to the victims’ wickedness and God’s bringing to life is due to the merit of those brought to life. Moral causality is again affirmed.” This principle is demonstrated in the sons of Eli who, when warned to repent from their wicked behavior, replied that they would repent when they grew old (Bib. Ant. 52:1-4). Because of their wickedness, they are killed by Goliath when the ark is captured, along with their


178 Murphy, Pseudo-Philo, 192.
father Eli, with whom the Lord was also angry in spite of his claims of innocence (Bib. Ant. 54:1-6; cf. 52:4). 179

In Bib. Ant. 54:2, after the Israelites decide to bring the ark of the covenant to battle against the Philistines, God responds that he will allow it to be captured “in order that I may destroy the enemies of my people on account of the ark and correct my people because they have sinned.” Upon returning from the battle, Saul relays the defeat of Israel and the capturing of the ark, concluding that God has rejected Israel (Bib. Ant. 54:4). In spite of the doubts of the people, the destruction of the Philistines occurs in Bib. Ant. 55, bringing seven years of peace to Israel (55:10). Following this period, the people ask Samuel for a king, a request that grieves Samuel who responds by stating, “I see that it is not yet the time for us to have an everlasting kingdom… for these people are seeking a king before the proper time” (Bib. Ant. 56:2). 180 The LORD likewise responds negatively and declares that he “will send them a king who will destroy them, and he himself will be destroyed afterward” (Bib. Ant. 56:3). As king, Saul disobeys God by allowing the king of Amalek, Agag, to live, leaving Samuel to kill him instead (Bib. Ant. 58:1-4). True to form, for Pseudo-Philo, it is this sin, and king Agag’s son Edabus, who are the cause of Saul’s death in Bib. Ant. 65:2-4. In 60:3, God chooses David to be anointed as the king over Israel. Following David’s victory over Goliath (Bib. Ant. 61), David asserts his righteousness to Jonathan, condemning Saul’s wicked behavior and asking Jonathan to chastise him if he has done anything wicked (62:3-8). Jonathan affirms David’s righteousness and that the kingdom

179 Here Jacobson remarks, “Nothing before this suggests any reason for God’s anger with Eli, nor does LAB follow it up in any way. Either our text is lacunose here, or LAB casually assumes that the reader will recall the biblical assertion that God was angry with Eli because he did not do enough to deter his sons from their evil acts (I Sam 2:29, 3:13)” (Jacobson, A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo’s Liber Antiquitatum Bibliarum with Latin text and English Translation, Vol. 2, 1116).

180 Jacobson suggests that the focus here “is on the dynasty of David. Samuel recognizes that the time has not yet come for the enduring kingship in Israel (petentibus regem ante tempus), i.e. that of David and his heirs. A king they may have, but his dynasty cannot endure, nor can the temple be built, for it is still too early” (Ibid., 1150).
which he rules will be “the beginning of a kingdom which will come in its own time” (Bib. Ant. 62:9).

The sin of the people again rises up in Bib. Ant. 63:1-5 because of the priests of Nob “profaning the holy things of the LORD and desecrating the first fruits of the people.” Furthermore, Saul, at the prompting of his servant Doeg, has Abimelech the priest and all of his household, save one son, killed because of their affinity for David. Because of this sin, David declares that the wicked people will be delivered “into the hands of their enemies, and they will fall wounded with their king” (Bib. Ant. 63:3). After the death of Samuel, the Philistines recognize that there are no prophets or men who fear God in the land, and rise up to attack Israel (Bib. Ant. 64:1-3). In the absence of any priests and prophets in Israel, Saul seeks out the witch of Endor, who contacts Samuel from beyond the grave, and Saul is informed that he has “sinned now a second time in neglecting God… tomorrow you and your sons will be with me when the people have been delivered into the hands of the Philistines,” leaving Saul to hope that his destruction will atone for his wickedness (Bib. Ant. 64:3-9). The book ends with the death of Saul with no further reflection upon his fate or upon the reign of David which follows.

Throughout the work, several clear and consistent themes prevail. The two most common themes in the work are the failures of Israel and her leaders and the faithfulness of God to the covenant in spite of them. 181 Along with recounting Israel’s failures, Pseudo-Philo takes great care to ensure that every sin which gains attention in the work is punished, either swiftly or

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181 So Murphy summarizes, “The most prominent theme is God’s faithfulness to Israel. God continues to maintain a covenant relationship with Israel despite the repeated failures of the people and of some leaders. This theme is accompanied by a pessimistic picture of the people of Israel and indeed of all humans” (Murphy, “Biblical Antiquities (Pseudo-Philo),” 441). See also Harrington, “Pseudo-Philo,” 865; Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah, 267.
eventually, in a retributive fashion. Because of this, God’s judgment, both in the present and in the future, is always based upon the deeds of the individual. The righteous are rewarded with life and resurrection and the wicked with death and destruction. What is less certain among those who have studied the work is the way in which God’s faithfulness, the covenant, and the people’s obedience or disobedience are interrelated. Sprinkle has described the work predominantly in nationalistic and unconditional terms. While, no doubt, the work is less sectarian than many other writings of the period, this does not seem to extend as far as Sprinkle suggests. Though he recognizes that God judges apostate Israelites, he also suggests that the “most frequent tendency in LAB is to affirm that all Israel will be rewarded with resurrection,” and that “[i]ndividual Israelites are encouraged to repent from sin and obey the Torah, but if they do not, God will save them nonetheless.” Murphy likewise, though recognizing conditional elements in Israel’s receipt of covenant blessings, states, “Pseudo-Philo conceives of the covenant as unconditional. This is especially striking in that Pseudo-Philo does not emphasize

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182 And so, again, Murphy summarizes, “Given the prevalence of human sin and failure, it is not surprising to find many instances of punishment in the Biblical Antiquities. This gives the author many opportunities to demonstrate that the punishment, which comes from God, fits the crime. Pseudo-Philo finds a fairly strict retributive scheme in Israel’s history” (Murphy, “Biblical Antiquities (Pseudo-Philo),” 441). Nickelsburg likewise notes that Israel’s affinity for the gods of the nations causes them to be “perennially” at their mercy (Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah, 267).

183 And so Nickelsburg states, “What is clear about Pseudo-Philo’s expectations about the future is the belief in the resurrection of the dead, a final judgment, and punishment for the wicked and eternal life for the righteous” (Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah, 269).


185 Ibid., 53.

186 Ibid., 58. Sprinkle recognizes “two possible exceptions” to the expectation of national resurrection, even of the disobedient, in LAB 3.10 and LAB 64.7 (Ibid., 59-60).

187 Ibid., 66.

188 “God has chosen Israel and remains eternally faithful to the covenant. However, every sin will receive its recompense, and membership in the chosen people does not guarantee salvation, either in this world or the next” (Murphy, Pseudo-Philo, 233).
the notion of repentance found in Judges.”

Jacobson has rightly recognized and critiqued this conclusion in writing,

LAB is generally strict on the matter of the responsibility of an individual (or a people) for his (its) own fate. Although God is merciful (e.g. 19.9), a sinner is obligated to repent his ways and in his lifetime (F.J. Murphy, *JSP* 1988, 43-57 seriously underestimates the role of repentance [=return to God: *Teshuva*] in LAB and fails to appreciate its relationship to God’s mercy. There will be no ultimate salvation without repentance. See e.g. 21.6).

In light of the overwhelming emphasis in the book on the retributive nature of God’s justice, the affirmation, in the most explicitly eschatological section of the book, that judgment is “according to [man’s] works and according to the fruits of his own devices” (*Bib. Ant.* 3:10), the fact that no sinner goes unpunished, and the examples of the sinners of the tribes of Israel in the days of Kenaz and Saul hoping for mercy in the afterlife instead of expecting it, it seems unnecessary to view God’s faithfulness and the conditionality present throughout the work as mutually exclusive concepts. Here, as has been seen in various other places, the covenant can be viewed as eternal even if the people are not eternally obedient. In Pseudo-Philo, God can remain faithful to the covenant by not casting off Israel, even if every member of the current generation is utterly wicked. The covenant will not perish because God swore to the fathers that he would uphold it, because he knows the future and knows that some Israelites will keep it, and because he will raise up godly leaders, like Kenaz, Samuel, and David, to constantly remind the people of their need to keep it and set an example for them. To ignore the conditional elements and the importance of the Law in the work is to reject its purpose for its readers. As Reinmuth remarks, “Die Gesamtintention des Werkes ist vor diesem Hintergrund der Aufruf zur Gesetzesbefolgung; nur sie kann Grundlage für die geschichtliche und eschatologische Hoffnung des Volkes sein,

189 Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo*, 246.

If the purpose of the work is to call Jews at the present to obedience to the Law, and to warn them of the results of disobedience, it would do little good to affirm that their eternal status is in no way affected by their present life. In the present, it seems, that Israel was tempted to follow after the ways of the Gentiles and lose their distinct identity, and thus to ignore their duty to be faithful to the Law. If one sees the conditionality of the covenant as still present, as the work seems to indicate, this can function alongside God’s unwavering commitment to Israel. It need not be that every Israelite, including apostates, sinners, and the wicked, be rewarded with resurrection and eternal life and blessedness, which clearly rubs against the grain of the book. Rather, God is faithful to the covenant by not forsaking Israel, even when he should, and is faithful in his ways to bless and save those who follow his prescripts.

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191 “The whole intention of the work is the call to the law-observance in light of this background; only it can be a basis for historical and eschatological hope of the people, only it guarantees that the election of Israel materializes historically and comes eschatologically to the purpose” (Eckart Reinmuth, “‘Nicht Vergeblich’ Bei Paulus und Pseudo-Philo, Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum,” Novum Testamentum 33.2 (1991): 122). Tilly’s remarks are similar in stating, “Die gegenwärtigen Sünden Israels werden von seinem gerechten Gott bestraft, aber noch besteht für jeden frommen und gottesfürchtigen Gerechten im Gottesvolk die Möglichkeit zur Umkehr”; “The present sins of Israel are to be punished by his righteous God, but it still exists for every devout and God-fearing righteous person in God's people the opportunity to repent” (Michael Tilly, “Die Sünden Israels und der Heiden Beobachtungen Zu L.A.B. 25:9-13,” Journal for the Study of Judaism 37:2 (2006): 211).

192 Murphy remarks, “Pseudo-Philo’s choice of Israel’s premonarchic period as his subject is significant. He chose a period when Israel was living in the land but was dominated by foreigners. Such contact led to impurities in Israel’s religion, as Judges makes clear… Skepticism about the divine status of the law, about the holiness of God’s Temple, about God’s ability to punish evildoers and those who oppress Israel may be things that he observes in his own community” (Murphy, “Retelling the Bible,” 286).

193 Thus, as VanLandingham remarks, “If the pattern shows that God wipes out ninety-eight percent of the population before intervening in mercy, then those who actually do receive God’s mercy (which is always conditional) are very few indeed” (VanLandingham, Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul, 32). VanLandingham may here overestimate how dire the author views the circumstances to be since the author never specifies how many Jews will be eternally damned. The work may thus expect more Jews to be saved at the eschaton than, for example, Jubilees or the DSS would, but the picture in the book as a whole is no less a conditional one.
Summary of Turn of the Era – 70 CE Writings

The above investigation has again uncovered some persistent themes in the literature, along with certain unique emphases. Again it has been argued that the picture of election presented in these texts is one that is primarily thought of as conditional and corporate in nature. Throughout the material, it is the pious who are counted as the true people of God, and those who do not keep God’s ordinances, whether affirmed implicitly (*Sibylline Oracles*, *Pseudo-Philo*) or explicitly (*1 Enoch*, *Testament of Moses*) stand outside of the covenant. This, often primarily, includes Jews who are numbered among the wicked because of their improprieties (*1 Enoch*, *Testament of Moses*, *Pseudo-Philo*; implicit in *Sibylline Oracles*). In some instances, election terminology serves simply to identify the pious, with little or no particular emphasis upon a soteriological status or predestination (*1 Enoch*). In most cases, it is clear that repentance or obedience is required of the righteous (*Sibylline Oracles*, *1 Enoch*, *Testament of Moses*; inconsistent in *Pseudo-Philo*), and at times even some Gentiles are included among the eschatological people of God (implicit in *Sibylline Oracles* and *Pseudo-Philo*; explicit in *1 Enoch*). At times the identity of the elect is closely connected to a righteous figure, and association with that figure is determinative of the fate of the elect (*1 Enoch*).

One significant area of divergence is in the recognition of the sinners who stand outside of and oppose the community. In general they are violent, deceitful, adulterous, slanderous, sexually immoral, idolatrous, lack reverence for God, and rejection or abuse the Law. In some instances, particular unique sins separate them from the righteous, such as calendrical issues (*1 Enoch*) or anti-Maccabean sentiments (*Testament of Moses*). Frequently the leadership of Israel, particularly the Jerusalem leadership, are singled-out as corrupt, and their corrupting influence extends to the people, whether the majority or a minority of them (*1 Enoch*, *Testament of Moses*, *Sibylline Oracles*);
Even if a majority of Jews, or an entire generation, is unfaithful to the covenant, God has chosen, because of his covenant with the patriarchs, not to obliterate the covenant. This does not annul, however the covenant responsibilities of the people, who are expected to be obedient to the Law (variously defined), repent when they are guilty of sin, and remain faithful even in times of persecution or when they are in the minority.

Summary of Jewish Writings: Pre-100 BCE – 70 CE Writings

Before moving to the writings of Paul, it will be helpful here to note again the convergences and divergences on the Jewish concept of election that have been discovered in the selected literature. The intent here is not to decontextualize the discussion, but rather to note some of the main areas of emphasis in the literature along with unique and contradictory elements as well. For the sake of organization, it will be helpful to enumerate these findings.

1. At times, the description of individuals or a group as “elect” emphasizes primarily their character or piety rather than a particular, predetermined, soteriological standing (Ben-Sira, Testaments, Additional Psalms of David, 1 Enoch).

2. When individuals are mentioned as “elect,” the identification either A) recognizes them as such because they represent or mediate for a corporate group (Jubilees, Testaments, DSS, 1 Enoch), or B) describes a vocational calling (e.g., king, priest, etc.; cf. Ben-Sira, Psalms of Solomon).

3. The picture of election is primarily conditional, either implicitly (Tobit, Ben-Sira, Baruch, Wisdom of Solomon, Sibylline Oracles, Pseudo-Philo) or explicitly (Jubilees, Testaments, 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees, Psalms of Solomon, DSS), in that a number of Jews, whether a majority (Jubilees, Testaments, 1 Maccabees, Psalms of...
Solomon, DSS, 1 Enoch, Testament of Moses) or an undefined number (Tobit, Ben-
Sira, Baruch, 2 Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, Sibylline Oracles, Pseudo-Philo),
are apostate and outside of the covenant. The concept is thus not nationalistic or
ethnic, but primarily remnant-oriented.

4. The conditions of the covenant emphasized vary throughout the literature, and include
circumcision, general piety, Sabbath observance, ritual purity, abstinence from sexual
immorality, avoidance of intermarriage with Gentiles, proper calendrical and festival
observances, resistance of Hellenization and idolatry, support for the Hasmoneans,
rejection of the Hasmoneans, honesty, humility, proper interpretation and application
of the Law, rejection of the corrupt leadership in Jerusalem (e.g., the priests,
Pharisees, Sadducees, Sanhedrin, Maccabees, or Hasmoneans), or association
with/allegiance to a particular community and its understanding of the Law or its
specially received revelation.

5. In spite of the conditional nature, God’s election of Israel is still primarily presented
as a corporate, not an individual, concept. This is clear from the many uses of
corporate or national terminology and imagery, such as use of the moniker “Israel” or
“Judah” when referring only to the pious, vine and plant imagery, association with a
righteous person (e.g., Enoch or Noah), or an explicit invocation of the remnant
motif.

6. Some texts make an allowance for the possible inclusion of Gentiles in the
eschatological people of God (Sibylline Oracles, 1 Enoch, Pseudo-Philo), though by
and large Gentiles are considered as wicked and sinful by nature.
7. God’s mercy and human obedience are not to be seen in exclusive terms. The recognition of Israel’s sin is widespread throughout the literature. At times, God’s mercy is identified as his decision to not reject Israel completely, though they are deserving of such a fate. This does not create, however, a carte blanche for Israel to be licentious, as they are still expected to remain faithful to the covenant (as variously defined) in order to receive the covenant blessings.

8. God’s sovereignty and human freedom are not to be seen in exclusive terms. While certain things, such as the declaration of what is good and what is evil, the final judgment and its rewards or punishments, and the election of Israel/the remnant are described as being predetermined, in no text does this negate human freedom and the responsibility to be faithful to the covenant with God. That God has an overarching plan is clear, but that every nuance within that plan, including the individual actions of humans, is preordained, is not.

9. There is a real possibility, except once the final judgment comes, for the apostates to repent and commit themselves to keeping the covenant as well as for those in the “true Israel” to commit apostasy and reject the covenant and its blessings.

It is with this backdrop in mind that a contextualized examination of Paul’s assertions involving election in the New Testament may be examined.
ELECTION IN PAUL

The previous chapters served to establish the theological milieu of Judaism during the Second Temple period as it relates to the subject of election. There is no question that Paul’s theological vocabulary was shaped by his roots in Judaism. In all likelihood, Paul viewed himself as still a part of that tradition even after his encounter with Jesus.¹ It is important here to be reminded that each of these texts themselves may not have had direct influence on Paul’s thought, though he may have been familiar with many or most of them. Rather, it is the framework which they establish that provides the appropriate context in which to place Paul’s writings, for this reveals the “thought world” of Second Temple Judaism.² The following investigation of these Pauline texts must necessarily focus only on those elements most pertinent to this study, in particular those aspects of these passages that most directly speak to issues of election and predestination.

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14

The second letter to the Thessalonians has historically been accepted as an authentic Pauline letter, though some have questioned its authenticity due to the issues involved in


² Davids has argued for the necessity of such an approach in stating that “Second Temple literature becomes the glasses through which the older narratives [of the Old Testament] are viewed and conceivably, at least in some cases, the only version in which they are known” (Peter H. Davids, “What Glasses Are You Wearing? Reading Hebrew Narratives through Second Temple Lenses,” Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 55:4 (2012): 764).
comparing it with 1 Thessalonians. The questions have persisted mainly because of the literary issues that exist when comparing the content of the two letters, which has also raised questions of the original order of composition. Since the strength of the evidence favors Pauline authorship of the letter, that will be the assumption of this study.

Because the text under consideration begins with “but” (δὲ), it is important to examine the previous context before beginning an investigation of Paul’s election rhetoric. 2 Thessalonians 1 begins with a note of thankfulness from Paul for the faith and perseverance of the Thessalonians during persecution, and an affirmation that those who have tormented this body of believers will be judged by God and “undergo the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his strength” (2 Thess 1:9, NET). Paul prays that God will make them “worthy of his calling” (2 Thess 1:11), and then corrects the misconception among them that the day of the Lord had already arrived (2 Thess 2:1-12). This passage has been historically difficult in that Paul is attempting to correct a misconception concerning the parousia, and yet does not reveal to the reader what the issue was since the recipients of the letter would have already been well aware of its substance. Paul states that the

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4 For a summary, see Wanamaker, The Epistles to the Thessalonians, 29-37

5 As Jewett concludes in his review, “The evidence concerning the authenticity of 2 Thessalonians is equivocal, with the likelihood remaining fairly strongly on the side of Pauline authorship” (Robert Jewett, The Thessalonian Correspondence: Pauline Rhetoric and Millenarian Piety (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1986), 16).


7 See Green, The Letters to the Thessalonians; 302-304; Wanamaker, The Epistles to the Thessalonians, 238-240; David J. Williams, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011), 121. Elias suggests, following Jewett, that Paul is simply addressing their misinterpretation of
rebellion (likely spiritual/religious, though possibly political\(^8\)) and the “man of lawlessness” (ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας) must come first,\(^9\) and this lawless one will seat himself in God’s temple\(^10\) and deceive all who do not possess the truth before he is destroyed by the Lord.

Though fraught with difficulties, the basic sense of the passage is clear. Paul was writing to correct a misconception among this church concerning the timing of the day of the Lord and the parousia of Christ. In Paul’s eschatological framework, the rebellion and the revelation of the man of lawlessness, events that had apparently not yet occurred, must happen first. Paul’s intent here is to simply show that the day of the Lord had not yet come, and those who reject the truth, who are deceived by the lawless one, will also share in his punishment.\(^11\) It is here worth noting that this section ends with a description of the deceived as being so because “because they did not receive the love of the truth for themselves so as to be saved,” and so “all of them who did not believe the truth but delighted in evil will be condemned” (2 Thess 2:10, 12).\(^12\)

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\(^8\) See Williams, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, 124. Or both, as Elias suggests (Elias, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, 278).

\(^9\) Another significant issue in the text is the identity of the “restrainer” mentioned by Paul. Morris notes that the restrainer has sometimes been identified with the Roman Empire, an angelic figure, the preaching of the gospel, the Holy Spirit, or Satan, though each suggestion has its own problems (Morris, *The Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians*, 130-131). See also Green, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, 314-315, who summarizes the main views and suggests that what “restrains” here is a demonic or deceiving force. See also Wanamaker, *The Epistles to the Thessalonians*, 249-252. On the suggestion that the figure is Michael, see Colin Nicholl, “Michael, The Restrainer Removed (2 Thess 2:6-7),” *Journal of Theological Studies* 51.1 (2000): 27-53.

\(^10\) Williams notes that Gaius may be in mind here, or a prediction of the destruction of the temple under Titus in 70CE (Williams, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, 125). Elias notes that the impression made by Antiochus IV can still be seen here and elsewhere in the New Testament, along with the more recent invasions by Pompey (63 BCE) and Gaius (c. 40 CE) (Elias, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, 279). If Paul had a single historical individual in mind, he does not make this clear in the letter. Part of the difficulty here as well is whether Paul is speaking in terms of a general eschatological framework, alluding to an event that he thinks imminent in his own time, or invokes some combination of the two.


\(^12\) Wanamaker notes that although the deceit portrayed “might be understood in terms of predestination, the next clause in v. 10 makes it clear that those who are perishing chose the path of destruction for themselves. Therefore the “parousia” of the rebel will inevitably deceive them” (Wanamaker, *The Epistles to the Thessalonians*, 240).
It is with this background in mind that Paul again states his thankfulness for the Thessalonian believers,

But we ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. He called you to this salvation through our gospel, so that you may possess the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold on to the traditions that we taught you, whether by speech of letter” (2 Thess 2:13-15, NET).

The δὲ here, then, likely serves to draw a contrast between those who delight in evil and do not accept the truth (2 Thess 2:10-12), and the Thessalonian believers who have received the gospel by faith. The cause for Paul’s thanks, as the ὅτι clause demonstrates, is God’s choosing of them, which functions “to reassure the readers of their salvation in the face of the eschatological dangers discussed in vv. 3-12.”

Paul begins by stating that God has chosen the Thessalonians “for salvation,” clearing indicating that the selection here is soteriological. For this reason, many have taken this passage to refer to an individual election unto salvation in terms of a double predestinarian framework.


13 Or more likely, as discussed below, “as firstfruits.”

14 See Wanamaker, The Epistles to the Thessalonians, 265. Green notes, “The author signals this contrast between the two groups in v. 13, which begins with the adversative “but” (de). In fact, the apostle contrasts the action of God toward the two… the means used to bring about his purposes… and the ultimate destiny of both” (Green, The Letters to the Thessalonians, 325).

15 Wanamaker, The Epistles to the Thessalonians, 265.

16 Paul here employs εἰλατο, the aorist middle/passive form of the verb αἴρεω, which can mean either “to take, prefer or to choose” (Frederick William Danker, ed. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, Third Edition (Chicago: IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000) 28). The word is also found in the LXX in Dt. 26:18 where it is translated, “The LORD has today chosen you to be his people,” where it is first said in 26:17 that the people have “chosen” (εἰλατο) God to be their God.

17 Beale, for example, sees God’s choice to limit his love to certain individuals and choose who he plans to redeem (G. K. Beale, 1-2 Thessalonians, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 225-226).
This is caused, in part, by some confusion concerning the proper rendering of the text. The textual issue here is whether Paul has described this selection as occurring “from the beginning.” Some manuscript evidence prefers the reading ἀπαρχὴν (“firstfruits”) over and against the oft translated ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς (“from the beginning”). According to Metzger, the former reading is to be preferred because ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς occurs nowhere else in Paul’s writings, Paul typically uses ἀρχή to mean “power” rather than “beginning,” ἀπαρχη does occur elsewhere in Paul’s writings, and there is evidence that the typical reading ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς was an intentional alteration by later copyists. ἀπαρχὴ is also likely the harder reading, while ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς may have been expected by a later copyist. In light of the text critical evidence, it seems that “God has chosen you [as the] firstfruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth” is the better rendering. Favoring this alternate reading, Williams notes that “aparchēn, ‘first-fruits’, is as well if not better attested. On this reading, the most likely meaning would be that Paul saw the

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18 According to NA, the reading is attested in B; F; G; P 075, 33, 81, 256, 365, 1573, 1739, 1881, 1912, 2127, 2464; it; vg; syr; cop; Didymus; Theodore; Ambr; Pelagius.

19 Of the major translations examined, the ASV, CEB, HCSB, KJV, NASB, NET, NIV, and NKJV chose the reading “from the beginning,” while only the ESV, NLT, NRSV, and TNIV chose “firstfruits.”

20 As is in Rom. 8:38; 1 Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:16, 18; 2:10, 15; Titus 3:1. The only exception is Phil. 4:15 in which ἐν ἀρχῇ is used for “at the beginning” with reference to Paul’s preaching of the gospel.

21 Bruce M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, Second Edition (Stuttgart, DE: Deutshe Bibelgesellschaft, 2005), 568. Olson notes, “This is not some pre-temporal election by God, but a historical event recorded in Acts 17. God’s picking them as firstfruits alludes to the fact that the Thessalonian church was one of the early churches planted by Paul and was the recipient of his earliest epistles” (C. Gordon Olson, Getting the Gospel Right: A Balanced View of Calvinism and Arminianism (Cedar Knolls: Global Gospel Publishers, 2001), 285). Contra Wanamaker who suggests that ἀπαρχὴν does not make good sense contextually (Wanamaker, The Epistles to the Thessalonians, 266). Also, contra Best, who prefers ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς here (Ernest Best, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Black’s New Testament Commentaries (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003), 312-314).

22 It is worth noting here that “firstfruits” is in the singular, and thus may be thought of as God choosing “a firstfruit.” This may indicate that the Thessalonians were simply among the earliest recipients of Paul’s gospel preaching, since they were not chronological the earliest, either of Paul’s ministry or within their region. It may also serve to reinforce the collective sense in which Paul presents this notion.
Thessalonians as only the beginning—an intimation—of a harvest which was yet to be gathered.”

Paul also describes this selection by God of the Thessalonians as “firstfruits” as coming “by the sanctification of the Spirit and faith in the truth” (ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος καὶ πίστει ἁληθείας). Some, again, have seen here an ordo salutis, with Paul affirming that spiritual awakening through the gift of the Spirit comes first before the exercise of faith occurs. Beale suggests that faith here is mentioned after the Spirit because “faith arises as a gift from God. Not until our stone heart is taken out and a spiritual heart is put in can we exercise saving faith in Christ.” Exegetically, this forces quite a bit of weight on καὶ, which rather seems here to be taken as simple connection, rather than indicating a precise sequence of soteriological events. In fact, the argument could be made that the use of καὶ here actually affirms both the role of God and the role of the individual in the effecting of salvation. Furthermore, the mention here again

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23 Williams, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 134. See also Green, The Letters to the Thessalonians, 326, and Martin, 1, 2 Thessalonians, 252-253, who essentially agree with Williams.

24 Though nearly all commentators take ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος here as “in sanctification by the Spirit,” it is possible here that Paul is referring to their personal piety, as he does in Rom 6:19 and 1 Thess 4:3-7. Paul does not use ἁγιασμός anywhere else in his writings in connection with πνεῦμα, but his use of ἁγιασμός elsewhere at least opens the possibility of the same emphasis here. Martin suggests that since the use here of πνεῦμα is singular and lacks a possessive pronoun, it is unlikely that this was Paul’s intent (Michael D. Martin, 1, 2 Thessalonians, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 253), though the same could be said of πίστει ἁληθείας which follows and is connected to ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος with καὶ. One could, then, understand the phrase as “God chose you for salvation as firstfruits by spiritual-sanctification and true-faith.”

25 So Williams states, “This verse summarizes the process by which we become Christians. There is the sovereign, gracious choice of God; there is the Spirit’s action which makes effective to us the work of Christ; and there is our response of faith in welcoming that work and clearing the way for God’s Spirit to act upon us” (Williams, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 134-135). Beale interprets this as meaning that “God sends the Spirit to others to set them apart from falsehood so that they have faith in the truth” (Beale, 1-2 Thessalonians, 228). He likewise connects this to God’s irresistible call which he sees described in 2:14 (Idem, 228), though clearly this is a reference to the preaching of the apostles.

26 Beale, 1-2 Thessalonians, 230.

27 Wanamaker affirms this in stating, “Just as salvation has a divine dimension, so also it involves a human response in the form of faith” (Wanamaker, The Epistles to the Thessalonians, 267). Elias also affirms, “[T]he
of their “faith in the truth” is probably intended by Paul as a contrast with those who have chosen to ignore the truth (2 Thess 2:12).

As Paul continues, he states “unto which [also] he called you through our gospel” (εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ὑμᾶς διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἡμῶν). The neuter singular pronoun ὃ here is likely intended by Paul as a summative pronoun, referring to all that has preceded. 28 This would include, at least, their salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth, and possibly also God’s choice of them as firstfruits. 29 This call, again, is seen by some as describing a unilateral action of God given to his elect. 30 The call here, however, is clearly the preaching of the gospel which Paul and his companions delivered among the Thessalonians, which those who believed responded to in faith. 31 This is all the more clear in what follows in 2 Thess 2:15, where Paul gives the summative command (Ἅρα οὖν) to “stand firm and hold on to the traditions that we taught you.” This double imperative clearly puts the impetus on the Thessalonians, in light of

ministry of the Spirit does not unilaterally bring salvation. A response is required from the human side: and belief in the truth… The community of faith manifests belief in the truth when they respond in gratitude, trust, and obedience to God’s love and call as supremely made known in Christ” (Elias, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 300).

28 It should be noted at this point that there is no grammatical break in the thought from what begins in 2 Thess 2:13. The punctuation breaks in English translations are for ease of reading, but are not original to the text.

29 Some will, no doubt, shudder at the notion that such an idea may be present in Paul, but it is worth reminding that such a possibility exists within the Jewish literature of the period. The most striking example is, no doubt, 1 En. 94:4, though the conditionality of election has been noted throughout the literature.

30 So Schreiner states that “God’s call, which is exercised in history through the gospel, is closely conjoined with his choosing people for salvation… Nor should we fail to see that the call guarantees the outcome. Those who are called through the gospel will possess eschatological glory (2 Thess 2:13). The one who called believers will see to it that they obtain the sanctification needed to stand before the Lord” (Thomas R. Schreiner, Paul: Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ (A Pauline Theology), Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001, 242). The “call,” however, is sometimes described as universal and portrayed as rejected (cf. Matt 9:13, 22:3-9; Luke 5:32; Gal 1:6). Most instances, however, of use in Paul are directed at believers who have already responded to it.

31 So Elias states, “God calls people to experience salvation. Paul and his partners refer to their message as our gospel, since they have proclaimed and embodied God’s gracious invitation to the people of Thessalonica” (Elias, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 300). Likewise, Wanamaker recognizes, “The Thessalonians were called by God (cf. 1 Thes. 2:12; 4:7; 5:23) to share in salvation when Paul and his missionary colleagues were visiting their city to preach the gospel. For this reason Paul can specify that his readers were called (“through our gospel”)” (Wanamaker, The Epistles to the Thessalonians, 267).
their response of faith to God’s calling, delivered through the preaching of the missionaries, to persevere in this truth. This, by Paul’s own portrayal, is more than just a “sign” of their election.32 Rather, it is what separates them from those who found no place for the truth in their hearts. Thus, Wanamaker states, “The fact that the command to keep these traditions represents an inference drawn from the discussion of salvation in vv. 13f. implies that nothing less than the salvation of the Thessalonians depended on their holding to these traditions.”33 It does not appear, then, that Paul is affirming a form of double predestination. Rather, he is drawing a contrast between those who have rejected the truth of the missionaries’ “traditions,” and those who have committed themselves to them.34 Those who had responded in faith are the “firstfruits” of the eschatological people of God, who, through their sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth, are assured eschatological salvation,35 if they remain faithful to the truth they have received.36

One final question must be addressed within this text. In what sense might one speak of salvation as corporate in this passage, which has largely been understood as applying to individuals? Shogren, for example, states, “it would be awkward to regard election as

32 Beale, 1-2 Thessalonians, 231.
33 Wanamaker, The Epistles to the Thessalonians, 265. It is also reminiscent of the writings from Qumran where passages frequently interpreted as deterministic are followed by conditions or commands (e.g., 1QS Col. 1-5 and CD Col. 1-3).
34 So Elias comments, “In the final judgment, God delivers what the people have ordered. Members of the Thessalonian Christian community likely recognize their persecutors in this description… those who acknowledge the lordship of Christ can therefore anticipate that, even though they suffer now, they will finally be vindicated by God” (Elias, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 288).
35 Thus Shogren notes, “Salvation is to be understood, as it is in these two letters, as eschatological—the disciples are saved from God’s wrath at Christ’s return” (Gary S. Shogren, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 303).
36 So Martin summarizes, “Paul both affirmed and reassured the church while at the same time reminding them of the vital importance they should attach to fidelity to the apostolic gospel. They must stand firm in the truth of the gospel, for confusion and deception are the tools of Satan, and those who succumb ultimately are destined for perdition” (Martin, 1, 2 Thessalonians, 254).
“corporate.” It would involve Paul in a tautology (a statement that is true by necessity and thus not worth saying): that he was certain that God had chosen the Thessalonian church because that group received the gospel. It makes better sense if Paul is thinking of the faith that he detects in the believers as individuals.”\textsuperscript{37} Is this not, however, exactly what Paul does? In drawing a contrast between those who have accepted the truth and the Thessalonian believers, Paul filters both through the sieve of the gospel. It is their response to the call of the gospel that separates the two.\textsuperscript{38} Furthermore, if Paul believed that God had unilaterally accomplished their salvation, not only in his work through Jesus but also in his eliciting a salvific response from the Thessalonians, what good would it do for him then to command them to hold fast to what they received? If there were no danger of apostasy, if their fate was already determined, Paul’s imperative here seems quite out of place.

By viewing Paul’s language here as both conditional and fitting within a corporate framework, the activity of God (election and salvation) as well as the intended response (faith and endurance) may both be upheld. Witherington’s summary of this is worth repeating:

Election for Paul is corporate. It was in ethnic Israel and is now “in Christ.” Paul carries over concepts of corporate election from early Judaism into his theologizing about the Christian assembly… From Paul’s viewpoint “election” does not guarantee the final salvation of individual Christian converts any more than it guaranteed the final salvation of Israelites in the past. Just as apostasy was and could be committed by individual Israelites, whom God then broke off from the people of God, at least temporarily (see Rom 11.11-24), so there was also the same danger for individual Christians, hence all the warnings about falling away in 1 and 2 Thessalonians.\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{37} Shogren, \textit{1 & 2 Thessalonians}, 310.

\textsuperscript{38} Capes et al. state, “Paul always uses the term “elect” to refer to those who are already members of God’s people. He never uses it to prescribe who is going to be saved. Instead he employs it to remind those who have answered God’s call that they are members of God’s covenant people” (David B. Capes, Rodney Reeves, and E. Randolph Richards, \textit{Rediscovering Paul: An Introduction to His World, Letters, and Theology} (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 130).

In sum, God has chosen the Thessalonians as “firstfruits” because they represent the first ingathering of the gospel harvest. They are distinguished from those who stand condemned because they have believed and committed themselves to the truth of the gospel, meaning they now stand within the corporate people of God. The apostle commands them, however, to continue in this truth, lest they share in the fate of those who have rejected it as those who delight in evil have done.

Romans 8:28-11:36

Few passages in the Pauline corpus have received as much attention or garnered as much debate as the one at hand. The book of Romans is one of the of Pauline letters that is almost universally accepted as authentic. In it is one of the fullest expressions (if not the fullest) of Paul’s soteriological beliefs, but this expression occurs within the parameters of the letter, which is occasional rather than a theological treatise. Many see this section of Romans, and rightly so, as its climax.40 It is the intention of this study to extrapolate specifically Paul’s “doctrine” of election against its Jewish background which has been developed in previous chapters. In doing so, it will become clear that Paul’s argument here is fundamentally concerned with the fate of Israel and Gentile inclusion, rather than double predestination as is sometimes argued. It must first be admitted, as N. T. Wright has so cleverly remarked, that “Romans 9-11 is as full of problems as a hedgehog is of prickles.”41 It will not be possible in this study to fully examine each of these problems, so only those problems which concern the thesis of this study will be


addressed. It must be stated from the outset that Paul, as he specifically displays as early as Rom 9:3, is addressing a particularly Jewish problem from a Jewish context, a context which has been developed in chapters 2 – 4 in this study.42

Though Romans 9-11 is rightly recognized as a literary unit, Paul’s remarks at the end of chapter 8 serve as the transition, and in some ways bookend, his argument. Paul’s comments here come in the context of personal suffering (Rom 8:18-27), as is so often the case when reflections concerning of election are found in Jewish literature.43 Paul then states,

Now we know that, for those who love God, all things work together for good, to those who are called according to [his]44 purpose, because those whom he foreknew, he also decided beforehand to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many siblings; and those who he decided beforehand [to be conformed to the image of his Son], these also he called; and those who he called, these also he declared righteous; and those who he declared righteous, these also he glorified (Rom 8:28-30).

Paul first states that those of whom God had foreknowledge he determined ahead of time that they would be conformed to the image of Christ, with the purpose that Jesus would be the firstborn of many children of God. It is worth noting here that in the order of the passage, which Paul may see as a sequence of events, foreknowledge comes first. God’s determination that the

42 Witherington affirms this in stating, “Rather, Paul’s views on predestination, election, the remnant, apostasy, and salvation fall within the parameters of such discussions in early Judaism, rather than within the framework of later Augustinian, Lutheran, and Calvinist discussions of the matter. Those early Jewish discussions make full allowance for both corporate election and the meaningful choices of individuals who may commit apostasy and opt out of the people of God” (Ben Witherington III, Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2004), 246)

43 In particular, Jubilees, Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, 1 Maccabees, Psalms of Solomon, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Sibylline Oracles, 1 Enoch, and Testament of Moses display such a connection.

44 Witherington here recognizes that “‘His” is not in the text. Some commentators have urged that prothesis could refer to human beings here, in which case the text would mean “those called according to (their own) choice,” or, as we would say, “by choice,” the free act of choice by which those called respond to God’s call” (Witherington III, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 227. Regardless, such an interpretation is still possible (and likely) in the passage even if the “his” is supplied, though reading the text without supplying the pronoun makes this clear.
foreknown be conformed to the image of his Son, called, declared righteous, and glorified, all come after his foreknowledge of them.

Some have argued that this passage teaches that God has specifically chosen which individuals will be a part of his eschatological people, and has guaranteed that they will be so because of his “effectual call.” They have furthermore described this foreknowledge as a “foreloving,” a personal, covenantal knowledge. This forces the verb (προγινώσκω), however, into a meaning which seems outside of its domain. Though compound verbs do not always take a “literal” meaning of their constituent parts, this verb usually does, meaning simply to know (γινώσκω) before (πρό). The verb occurs only twice in all of the Pauline writings, in Rom 8:29 and again in 11:2. If Paul meant by the term that God had a covenant love for each individual in the elect before they came to exist, this causes problems (as will be seen) for his usage in Rom 11:2 where he refers to ethnic Israel. It makes good sense here to say that God had foreknowledge of those who would respond to the call of the gospel in faith. The call here is not an effectual call, but rather is God’s pronouncement of salvation upon those who are among the

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46 So Demarest states “what God “foreknows” is the saints themselves, not any decision or action of theirs. Thus divine election is according to foreknowledge (foreloving), not simply according to foresight (prescience)” (Bruce Demarest, The Cross and Salvation: The Doctrine of Salvation (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1997), 128). Likewise Schreiner argues, “in Rom. 8:29 the point is that God has predestined those upon whom he has set his covenantal affection” (Schreiner, Romans, 452). Curiously, BDAG and Louw-Nida list Rom 9-11 and 1 Pet 1:20 as the only instances of the gloss “forechoosing,” while the customary meaning of the verb is “to know beforehand or in advance, have foreknowledge of.” Likewise, Liddell lists the meaning as “to know, perceive, learn, or understand beforehand.” It is a stretch to see here anything other than foreknowledge, as is typical of the term’s usage elsewhere.

47 It is worth noting that the study had seen nothing of the sort in its examination of Jewish beliefs concerning election. Had Jews of the period held a firm concept of a divine election of the individual which was irresistible in nature, this would be an easier view to defend. But nothing of the sort existed in the Judaism of Paul’s time, and thus it is unlikely that Paul speaks of such a phenomenon here.
elect, which are those who are “in Christ” by faith.\textsuperscript{48} Paul’s discussion, as seen from what has preceded as well as what follows in Rom 9:30-39, is intended to encourage the people of God in light of the current difficulties they are experiencing.\textsuperscript{49} Because Jesus has been raised from the dead and has been vindicated, those who are in him cannot be separated from God’s love.\textsuperscript{50} Furthermore, as shall be seen more explicitly in Rom 9-11, Paul’s language here is the language of Israel’s election in the Old Testament. Keener here states,

Paul’s own audience would think of Israel as the people God has chosen, and recognize that Paul’s argument was designed to show that God was so sovereign that he was not bound to choose (with regard to salvation) based on Jewish ethnicity. Paul might ground predestination in foreknowledge (8:29) to allow that God takes faith into account (in advance) in salvation (a question much debated by theologians)… Perhaps more importantly, Paul will use even the term “foreknow” for Israel (11:2), thus connecting this claim with his larger argument.\textsuperscript{51}

\textsuperscript{48} Klein summarizes Paul’s use of \textit{kalein} as follows: “It would seem from the evidence that kalein refers not so much to God’s choice of individuals to salvation as to his action in naming or designating some to be Christians. It describes God’s active role in assigning, applying, or bestowing salvation to those who are the elect. As such it is a technical term and can be used alone without further specification. And because it carries all this freight, Paul can exhort and challenge Christians to act in a certain way because God has designated them as his own” (William W. Klein, “Paul’s Use of Kalein: A Proposal,” \textit{Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society}, 27.1 (1984): 64).

Likewise, Abasciano states, “God’s call in Paul’s thought is actually an effectual naming/declaration based on faith, a point established particularly clear by Romans 9… the declarative nature of calling makes for significant overlap with justification, for these both involve the divine declaration of the righteous/elect status of believers” (Brian J. Abasciano, \textit{Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.10-18} (New York: T & T Clark, 2011), 54-55).

\textsuperscript{49} So Ridderbos states that “this is not an abstract pronouncement concerning the immutability of the number of those predestined to salvation, but a pastoral encouragement for the persecuted and embattled church (cf. v. 36), based on the fixed and unassailable character of the divine work of redemption… Fixity does not lie in a hidden \textit{decretum}, therefore, but in the corporate unity of the church with Christ, whom it has come to know in the gospel and has learned to embrace in faith” (Herman Ridderbos, \textit{Paul: An Outline of His Theology} (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975), 350-351).

\textsuperscript{50} See Frank J. Matera, \textit{Romans}, Paideia: Commentaries on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 204-205. It is important to note here, as will again be seen later, and especially in chapter 11, that Paul says nothing of the possibility of unbelief separating believers from God’s love. Schreiner’s suggestion that the interpretation of 8:39 that nothing \textit{external} can separate believers from God’s love, but “people can themselves choose to depart from God” should be rejected is untenable (Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 466). Schreiner sees here an eternally decreed and unbreakable process, but Paul’s arguments in chapters 9-11 suggest that this view is a misinterpretation of Paul’s argument. It is more likely, as Witherington states, that unbelief can separate the believer from God, something that is not an external force, but an internal decision (Witherington, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 233-234).

It is unlikely that Paul would here state something that would contradict what follows in 9-11. Keener rightly recognizes the Jewish context of Paul’s descriptions and its place in the flow of thought in the text. There is no need to assume here that what Paul intends is that God’s sovereignty has pre-determined the specific individuals who will be a part of his people.\(^{52}\) Simply put, those who love God, whom God has foreknown, will receive future resurrection through their union with Christ, who is the first of many who will experience this glorification.\(^{53}\) Paul has said nothing here that would contradict a corporate and conditional notion of election, and such a concept is made all the more explicit in Rom 9-11.\(^{54}\)

Paul begins chapter 9 by recounting the personal anguish he has experienced from his fellow Israelites being estranged from Christ. The Jewish people had numerous advantages as descendants of Abraham (adoption as sons, the glory, the covenants,\(^{55}\) the giving of the Law, the

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\(^{52}\) Mounce is incorrect to suggest God’s predestination could not be contingent upon foreknowledge because “God would not be sovereign” (Mounce, *Romans*, 188). This, of course, depends upon one’s definition of sovereignty. God could determine whatever means and mode he sees fit, even if that means a conditional election, and still be properly sovereign. As Keener rightly recognizes, “Most ancient Jewish authors did not pit God’s sovereignty against human choice (cf. e.g., Josephus *J. W.* 2.162-63; idem *Ant.* 18.13; m. *‘Abot* 3:16); a sovereign God could sovereignly allow much choice and still accomplish his purposes (Keener, *Romans*, 109 n.45).

\(^{53}\) So Marshall states, “First, God's purpose for those whom he ‘foreknew’ was that they might share the image of Jesus, that is, share in his glory. Second, God has already started the process: God has called the people for whom he has this purpose. Calling was followed by justification, obviously of those who believed and thereby responded to the call. And justification is followed by a glorification that has already begun (2 Corinthians 3:18). Thus this passage is meant to reassure God's people that his final purpose for them is glorification, a purpose that will be carried out despite their sufferings. The passage is not a statement about the effectual calling of those whom God foreknew. It is a guarantee that those who have responded to God's call with love (and faith) can be fully assured of his purpose of final glorification for them” (I. Howard Marshall, “The Problem of Apostasy in New Testament Theology,” *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 14 (1987): 77). See also, Paul J. Achtemeier, *Romans*, Interpretation (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1986), 144; Witherington, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans*, 229.

\(^{54}\) Of this section, Dunn notes, “Up till the end of Romans 8 Paul’s exposition of the tension and process could have been understood in solely individual terms. Now he makes clear what was only implicit before—implicit in the “in Christ” (etc.) motif, and in the use of Israel terms to describe Christian converts—that Christian identity is unavoidably corporate and bound up with the identity of Israel” (James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006), 508).

Temple service, the patriarchs, and the human lineage of the Messiah; Rom 9:4-5). Yet in spite of these advantages, they were separated from the Christ, apparently prompting questions as to whether or not God’s promises had failed. Paul responds to this query with a series of examples from the Scriptures in order to illustrate that “not all those who are descended from Israel are truly Israel” (Rom 9:6). Here Paul clearly evidences a belief in a “true Israel.” From the previous examination of Jewish literature of the period, it should be readily recognized that this limiting of the “true Israel” was quite common during the Second Temple period. Paul has at this point suggested nothing controversial in light of the Judaism of his time. What Paul will establish throughout is that these advantages of the Jew have amounted to little advantage at all, and has actually become a disadvantage to them and an advantage to the Gentiles. The whole thrust of Paul’s argument in these chapters is that the Gentiles are full covenant members without submitting to the marks of Judaism (i.e., obeying the Torah), while most Jews, by pursuing the Law instead of the Christ, are now outsiders. It is in these assertions that Paul makes a

56 Christiansen notes correctly that Paul is no doubt concerned with more than identity markers or Jewish privilege here in observing that “none of the Jewish distinctive marks is mentioned: circumcision, Sabbath, festivals, purity marks such as food laws, ritual washings, or the temple as centre of holiness, or possession of the land” (Ibid., 218).

57 For a discussion on the various interpretations of this phrase, see Dunn, Romans 9-16, 539-540. As Dunn notes, a shift takes place here in which Paul no longer refers to a contrast between Jews and Gentiles, but is focused on a new term: “Israel” (Dunn, The Theology of Paul the Apostle, 505). A fuller discussion of this terminology must be saved for Rom 11.

58 Thus, contra Eastman who argues that Paul’s use of “Israel” in Romans 9-11 is to be equated with the Jews (Susan Grove Eastman, “Israel and the Mercy of God: A Re-Reading of Galatians 6.16 and Romans 9-11,” New Testament Studies, 56.3 (July 2010): 367-395).

59 Thus, it is not, as Schreiner states, “astonishing… that most of ethnic Israel… are identified with Esau and Ishmael” (Schreiner, Romans, 502).

60 Garlington correctly notes that Paul’s operation from a Jewish covenantal and messianic framework is a part of his argument in the letter. As he states, “In Rom 1.3-4, then, Paul underscores to his readers that the subject of his gospel is a thoroughly Jewish Messiah, the Son of David prophesied, as it is commonly agreed, by Ps. 2.7f. (Ps 110), and, therefore, the fulfillment (sic) of Israel’s eschatological expectations; he has now been installed (ὁρίζειν) on none other than the throne of his father David (cf. Lk 1.32)” (Don B. Garlington, The Obedience of Faith: A Pauline Phrase in Historical Context (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991), 236).
significant departure from the soteriology of the literature of the period. Thus Paul’s concern, as was the concern of many of his peers, is, as Cranford describes, “to identify which group is in fact elected as God’s people, and the criteria by which they are distinguished.”

As Paul makes clear in Rom 9:7, Jewish ethnic privilege did not guarantee that each Israelite would actually be a member of the covenant people, since not all of Abraham’s children are of Abraham’s seed. His first example is that of Isaac and Ishmael, both descendants of Abraham, but it was only “through Isaac” that his descendants would be counted (Rom 9:7). Paul explains that this meant it was only “the children of the promise” and not “the children of the flesh” who would be recognized as Abraham’s descendants (Rom 9:8-9). As seen previously, being of the seed of Isaac was important both for the author of Jubilees (Jub. 1:7; 6:19; and especially 15:19) and for the author of the Epistle of Enoch (1 En. 93:5), and Isaac (along with Abraham and Jacob) also serves such a function in T. Levi 15:4. Ishmael, in Jubilees, on the other hand, while being blessed by God (Jub. 15:20), and even circumcised (15:23), was

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63 Abasciano notes here that “the Old Testament background of Rom. 9.7-9 identifies the divine purpose of Abraham’s election to be the blessing of all the nations of the world in Abraham and/or his seed” (Abasciano, Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.10-18, 50).

64 Tanner here is fundamentally correct in stating, “In other words being Jewish by birth did not guarantee a person a right standing with God. That had to be accompanied by "circumcision of the heart" (Deut. 30:6) and partaking of the Holy Spirit—both being matters related to the New Covenant. Thus in Romans 9:6 Paul was saying that there is a "true Israel" within "ethnic Israel,” and this true Israel is the believing remnant of the nation. For God to fulfill His promises to Israel, He need not do so with every single physical descendant but only with the believing element within ethnic Israel” (J. Paul Tanner, “The New Covenant and Paul’s Quotations from Hosea in Romans 9:25-26,” Bibliotheca Sacra 162 (Jan. – Mar. 2005): 96). See also Cranford, “Election and Ethnicity, 27-41; Dunn, The Theology of Paul the Apostle, 510, 540; Thomas H. Tobin, SJ, Paul’s Rhetoric in Its Contexts: The Argument of Romans (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004), 327. This is contra the view espoused by Cranfield that God was distinguishing a special elect “hidden Church” within elect Israel (Cranfield, Romans 9-16, 473-474).
not a part of the covenant line, at least in part because his circumcision was not as prescribed in the Law (15:26-30). Within these texts, both Isaac and Ishmael serve as corporate figures, or representative heads, of a type of people. Isaac is a child of the promise, born and circumcised in proper observance of the Law, and Ishmael, though blessed by God, stands outside of the covenant promises because he was not circumcised on the eighth day. Paul uses the Isaac/Ishmael contrast at this point only to affirm that ethnicity or national identity is not a sufficient requirement for membership among the covenant people. Paul’s thought here is again clearly corporate, identifying Isaac and Ishmael as representatives.

Paul’s next example is even more forceful. He notes that before Jacob and Esau were even born “or had done anything good or evil (so that God’s purpose in election would stand, not by works but by his calling)” that God had set Jacob apart (loved) but not Esau (hated) (Rom 9:10-13). Jacob, even more prominently than Isaac, serves as a representative figure in numerous texts of the period (Sir 24:8; 36:11; 46:10; 47:22; Bar 3:30; Jub. 1:7; 2:20, 24; 6:19; 19:16, 23; 22:10-23, 28-30; 24:7-11; 25:14-23; 26:23-24; 27:22-27; 31:6-7, 15-20; 32:17-19; 1 Macc. 5:2; T. Sim. 6:2; T. Levi 4:3; Ps. Sol. 7:9). In the book of Jubilees in particular, Jacob is seen to represent the faithful Jews who observe the Law correctly (i.e. as envisioned by the

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65 This may also be a subtle critique of circumcision as decisive in election since Paul mentions nothing of the sort in his argument.

66 As Kaminsky has observed, it is not uncommon in the Old Testament (Jacob, Joseph, and David serving as prime examples) that God’s choosings were against human intuitions (Joel S. Kaminsky, “Reclaiming a Theology of Election: Favoritism and the Joseph Story,” Perspectives in Religious Studies, 31.2 (Summer 2004): 135–152). Paul’s emphasis on Jacob supports his contention that God’s elective purposes are not predictable or according to human (i.e., here, Jewish) intuitions.

67 This should not be surprising since Jacob also serves such a function in the Old Testament (Num 23:7, 10, 21, 23; 24:5, 17, 19; Deut 32:9; 33:10, 28; 1 Chr 16:17; Ps. 14:7; 44:4; 47:4; 53:6; 59:13; 78:5, 21, 71; 79:7; 85:1; 87:2; 99:4; 105:10, 23; 114:1, 7; 147:19; Isa 9:8; 10:20-21; 17:4; 27:6, 9; 29:22-23; 40:27; 41:8, 14, 21; 42:24; 43:1; 43:22, 28; 44:1, 2, 5, 21, 23; 45:4; 48:12; 48:20; 49:5, 6, 26; 59:20; 60:16; Jer 10:16, 25; 30:7, 10, 18; 31:7, 11; 46:27, 28; 51:19; Lam 1:17; 2:2, 3; Ezek 28:25; 37:25; 39:25; Hos 10:11; 12:2; Amos 6:8; 7:2, 5; 8:7; Obad 1:10, 17, 18; Mic 1:5; 2:12; 3:8; 5:7, 8; Nah 2:2; Mal 1:2; 2:12).
author of *Jubilees*) while Esau and Ishmael represent outsiders, particularly Jews who have been unfaithful to the covenant (though possibly Gentiles as well). Those who are “of Jacob” are within the boundaries of the covenant community because of their faithful observance of the Law.\(^{68}\) Esau, however, was not chosen because of his deeds. Esau, for example, is said to have gained wealth by evil means (*T. Gad* 6:7), was guilty of fornication and idolatry (*T. Benj.* 10:10), married foreign wives (*Jub.* 25:1; 27:8; 29:18) and was not chosen because God knew his unrighteous and violent ways (*Jub.* 15:30; 19:15; 35:9, 13; 36:10; 37:24; *Bib. Ant.* 32:5), while Jacob observed the Sabbath (*Jub.* 2:20-24), festival of weeks (6:19), separated himself from the Gentiles, abstained from idolatry, did not marry Gentile wives, and tithed unto the Lord (22:16-23; 25:1-7; 27:10-11; 30:12; 32:9-10). Clearly the deeds envisioned in these Jewish texts are Torah-deeds. This is typically rejected as a possibility in Romans 9 by commentators on the grounds that the Law had not yet been given,\(^{69}\) but this rejection neglects the frequent view in Second Temple literature that the Law was eternal and that the patriarchs observed it,\(^{70}\) a theme quite prominent in *Jubilees*. Thus, when Paul argues that God’s purpose in election\(^{71}\) is based on

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\(^{68}\) So Abasciano rightly states, “The examples of Isaac and Jacob embody the OT concept of corporate solidarity or representation in which the individual represents the community and is identified with it and vice versa” (Brian J. Abasciano, “Corporate Election in Romans 9: A Reply to Thomas Schreiner,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 49.2 (2006): 355).

\(^{69}\) Paul specifies that these “works” are “works of the Law” in 2:15, 3:20, 28, and implicitly in 3:27; 4:2, 6, and thus it seems likely that such a designation would continue in 9-11, especially in that he is focusing on the status of the relationship between Israel and God. Contra Kruse who states “The indications are that the ‘works’ the apostle denies had any effect upon God’s choice are the ‘good’ or the ‘bad’ that people do. Clearly, such works are not the performance of, or the failure to perform, ‘works of the law’, that is ‘those things that are prescribed by the Mosaic law and understood by some as Jewish sociological markers, because Paul is speaking of the patriarchal period prior to the given of the law’” (Kruse, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans*, 379). Grindheim also denies this possibility (Sigurd Grindheim, *The Crux of Election: Paul’s Critique of the Jewish Confidence in the Election of Israel* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 144 n. 31).

\(^{70}\) As stated or alluded to particularly in Ben-Sira, *Jubilees*, and *Bib. Ant.*

\(^{71}\) God’s purpose in election, in its Old Testament context, is the blessing of Israel and the blessing of the nations (cf. Gen. 12). Concerning the grammatical function of the phrase in Rom 9:11, Abasciano notes, “It is much simpler, clearer and straightforward to say that election fulfills God’s purpose” (Abasciano, *Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.10-18*, 48).
his calling and not upon works, it is most likely, given this backdrop, that he has “works of the Law” in mind even though the phrase in its entirety is not present.\(^{72}\) He is not offering a general polemic against “deeds” or “merit,” as Paul is not opposed to such activity.\(^{73}\) His argument here is a matter of salvation-history. One can anticipate, then (as chs. 10-11 will make clear), that Paul is continuing his faith-Christ/works-Law contrast here.\(^{74}\) It can be suggested, then, that Paul employs the Isaac/Ishmael and Jacob/Esau motif, a motif familiar already in Jewish literature of the time, in order to describe them as representative heads of collective groups.\(^{75}\) This affirms his

\(^{72}\) Cranford is basically correct in recognizing, “To claim that Paul is attacking individual merit here is to totally miss the flow of the argument, which deals with bounded communities and not individuals. Rather, Paul argues that the criteria associated with ethnic Israel (i.e., Torah observance as a boundary marker) was not a factor in God’s election, and he does so by demonstrating that God elects irrespective of deeds of any kind, much less nomistic service” (Cranford, “Election and Ethnicity,” 39). Though Abasciano does not see this as a shorthand reference to “works of the Law,” he states that Paul “almost certainly has special (but not exclusive) reference to the works of the Law” and that such a referent “would be the natural focus of concern from the broader category for Paul and his readers” (Abasciano, Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.10-18, 52).

\(^{73}\) Contra Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 144. So Dunn states correctly, “Jews who insist on “works of the law” as the indispensable mark of God’s chosen people are actually denying not simply the gospel but also their own election” (Dunn, Romans 9-16, 549). Das is probably right to assert, contra the “New Perspective,” that “there is nothing to indicate that Paul has only ethnic boundary markers in mind. Paul uses the language of ἔργα νόμου to indicate the deeds or works that the Mosaic law requires in general” (A. Andrew Das, Paul, the Law, and the Covenant (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 237-238), though his suggestion that Paul is more interested here in human achievement in general seems an overcorrection. There is nothing in these chapters that would require a narrower view of “works of the Law” limited only to circumcision, dietary regulations, and the like. Rather, Paul likely has in mind, as will be clear in 9:30-10:13, that Torah-keeping apart from Christ is worthless. Abasciano is correct, then, to assert, “Paul does seem to be countering a prevalent theological conviction among Jews… that took Jacob’s election and Esau’s rejection to have rested on their works. The salvation-historical observation that Paul makes gets to the core of Israel’s election – for Jacob’s election is the election of Israel – and destroys any notion that God is bound to call/name the seed of Abraham based on ethnicity or Law-keeping” (Abasciano, Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.10-18, 58).

\(^{74}\) So, as Kruse notes, “Only the believing Israelites are chosen for salvation; only believing Israelites are Abraham’s true children, not ethnic Israel as a whole” (Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 376). See also Abasciano, Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.10-18, 52, 64; Achtemeier, Romans, 157; Matera, Romans, 224. Schreiner argues from silence that Paul’s “failure to insert human faith as the decisive and ultimate basis for God’s election indicates that God’s call and election are prior to and the ground of human faith” (Schreiner, Romans, 500). Contra Schreiner, Abasciano notes, “To admit that Paul’s doctrine of justification is implicit here demands that one admit that faith is implicit here also, since his doctrine is justification by faith” (Abasciano, Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.10-18, 54).

\(^{75}\) So Watson states, “Paul, however, is not interested in these individual life stories per se, but in the scriptural precedents they establish for a divine electing purpose that takes communal form… His argument is that the divine turn from Jews to Gentiles is consonant with the scriptural account of God’s electing purpose, rather than flatly contradicting it (as his critics claim)” (Francis Watson, Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), 314). Likewise, Abasciano recognizes that Jacob and Esau here serve
claim in Rom 9:6 that “not all those who are descended from Israel are truly Israel,” a claim with which Jews at the time likely would have largely agreed. Paul’s “twist,” however, is revealed in 9:11-12 where, contrary to Jewish beliefs, he asserts that it is not their faithfulness to the Mosaic covenant that stands as the “boundary marker” of the covenant people.76

Having declared that God was not bound to base inclusion among the elect upon ancestry or keeping the Law, Paul then inquires, “What then will we say? Is there unrighteousness with God? May it never be!” (Rom 9:14). Paul’s use here of ἁδίκια, which is frequently translated as “injustice” (NIV, NET, ESV, NASB, HCSB; “unfair” in NLT) rather than “unrighteousness,” should clearly be set in the context of the covenant rather than as an abstract question of God’s character as it is often taken. It seems clear that Paul is asking, probably reflecting the objection of an interlocutor (whether real or imagined), “If God does not base election on ancestry or keeping the Law, has he not violated the covenant?”77 Paul answers this question by looking at the exodus and the example of Pharaoh. He states,

as corporate representatives of their respective people. “The corporate representative’s election is unique, entailing the election of all who are identified with him. Its significance was never that each individual member of the elect people was chosen as an individual to become part of the elect people in the same manner as the corporate head was chosen. Rather, the individual possesses elect status as a consequence of membership in the elect people/identification with the corporate representative” (Abasciano, Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.10-18, 59-60). In support of a collective view, see also Achtemeier, Romans, 160-165; C. K. Barrett, The Epistle to the Romans, Black’s New Testament Commentary (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 255; Cranfield, Romans 9-16, 479-481; Dunn, The Theology of Paul the Apostle, 511, 544-545; Witherington, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 25, 255. Contra Demarest, who suggests that this clearly shows that Paul’s emphasis is upon God’s sovereignty and not man’s response. “God’s election of Isaac and Jacob is individual unto salvation and not merely corporate (Israel and Edom) in respect of earthly privileges” (Demarest, The Cross and Salvation, 129). He is correct that it does not merely concern earthly privileges, but wrong to ignore the representative/corporate function present. Likewise, contra Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 379-380. In recognizing the conflict between double predestination and the emphasis of Paul in his letters on human responsibility, Schreiner appeals to “mystery” as a resolution (Schreiner, Romans, 501). When the text is understood through the lens of Second Temple Judaism and the individuals are seen as corporate representatives, such an appeal is unnecessary.

76 Aageson notes correctly, “There is no suggestion in 9.6-13 that Paul understood the Christian community as having superseded Israel; on the contrary, he argues that the Christian community is the embodiment of Israel, that is Israel understood as the ‘people of promise’” (J. W. Aageson, “Typology, Correspondence, and the Application of Scripture in Romans 9-11,” Journal for the Study of the New Testament, 31 (1987): 55).

77 As Abasciano recognizes, Paul’s question here of God’s ἁδίκια is in the context of his own faithfulness to the covenant with Israel, and this he is dealing “specifically with God’s faithfulness to his promises to Israel” and
For [God] says to Moses: “I will show mercy to whoever I show mercy, and I will have compassion on whoever I have compassion. Therefore, then, it is not the one who is desiring or the one who is running but God who is showing mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very reason I raised you up, in order that I show my power in you and in order that my name be proclaimed in all the earth.” Therefore then, he shows mercy to whoever he desires and he hardens whoever he desires (Rom 9:15-17).

Paul’s response here has been taken many times as a general theological principle, and illustrating the presence of double predestination in Paul’s thought. As has been argued above, and will be seen again explicitly in 9:23-24, Paul’s focus here is upon the status of Israel’s election, not of the election of individuals. His corporate interest here is obvious in the Isaac/Ishmael and Jacob/Esau contrasts, and no doubt continues here. Schreiner suggests that Paul’s statement here is an indication that he is referring to the election and salvation of individuals as well as corporate groups or nations, citing the singular of the pronoun as evidence of a reference to individuals, and thus, “Those who say that Paul is only referring to corporate groups do not have an adequate explanation as to why Paul uses the singular again and again.”

The singular, however, in Greek, is frequently taken as a collective, particularly when in the neuter or masculine, as is seen here. In addition, in the original Old Testament context of the quotation, Moses’ concern is for the restoration of the people, not a particular individual.

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78 See, for example, Schreiner, Romans, 510.

79 Schreiner, “Does Romans 9 Teach Individual Election unto Salvation?,” 34.

80 Rom 10:13 provides an example of how the singular can stand for a collective, though ἄν helps clarify the usage there. Another clear example occurs in 11:2, where it is said that “God has not rejected his people whom (ὀν) he foreknew,” clearly referring there to a collective entity by nature of the noun to which it refers. It is thus quite possible for a collective use, in light of what has precedeed, to be in mind here.

81 Abasciano astutely notes, “But in its original context, the singular language of Exod 33:19 actually refers to corporate Israel and her restoration to covenantal election. In the LXX translation, which Paul quotes, it is a case of referring to a corporate entity with singular terminology insofar as it represents the thought of the original Hebrew, a sort of collective singular. In harmony with the OT corporate view of election, the highly covenantal context, and the specific concerns of its narrative context, the ὃν of Exod 33:19 has to do with whom God will
Schreiner’s objection then, both in the context in Romans and the original Old Testament quotation, does not obtain. Paul is not here declaring, as a solution to the alleged problem of Israel’s election, that God has decided to save some individuals and to condemn, like Pharaoh, others. In fact, his specific connection of this example of hardening to Israel in Rom 11:7 and 25 will make that clear. Rather, Paul is continuing his line of argument that God can determine the basis of election however he chooses, and he has not violated the covenant by not basing it on ancestry or keeping the Law. Thus, he is not constrained to show mercy to Israel by the manner of their choosing, but rather is free to show mercy on whatever basis he determines, and is free to harden on whatever basis he determines. Neither is it that God hardened Pharaoh (and thus those predestined to condemnation) in advance of any action on Pharaoh’s part. Though Paul does not expressly make such a point, the narrative of Exodus clearly suggests that this is the case. Again, as is clear in Rom 11, Israel’s unbelief (in Christ) is the reason they stand outside acknowledge as his covenant people. Indeed, Paul uses ὃν of God’s corporate people in Rom 11:2 (Abasciano, “Corporate Election in Romans 9,” 359). Furthermore, “In the Exodus context, God had revoked Israel’s election because of their idolatrous apostasy with the golden calf… Therefore, Paul’s quotation of Exod. 33.19b in Rom. 9.15 is first and foremost to be understood in reference to God’s election/rejection of Israel as his covenant people” (Abasciano, Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.10-18, 174-175) and thus the quotation provides “the foundation for God’s rejection of unbelieving ethnic Israel as those who had rejected him through their rejection of Christ” (Idem, 179-180). Likewise, as Di Lella has noted, Paul here appears to borrow a phrase (ὁν ἑλεῖ) from Tobit 4:19, which Tobit uses to affirm God’s freedom to choose Israel over other nations. Tobit’s statement is national/corporate in focus, and Paul’s use of the phrase in this context again suggests it is the same (Alexander A. Di Lella, “Tobit 4,19 and Romans 9,18: An Intertextual Study,” Biblica, 90 (2009): 260-263).

82 That Pharaoh is intended to be representative of Israel is widely recognized by commentators. Here, again, we see the notion of a representative head, with Pharaoh (!) representing Israel. In support, see Abasciano, Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.10-18, 204; Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol. II.2 (New York: T & Clark, 2004), 220; Dunn, Romans 9-16, 563; Watson, Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles, 317.

83 Abasciano supports this in nothing, “Paul’s use of ἑλεῖ earlier in the epistle (7.15-21) suggests that the ‘willing’ of 9.16 specifically refers to desiring to keep the Law of God” and likewise τρέχω, in light of Ps. 119:32 [and likely also Prov. 4:12, “probably suggests a vigorous and wholehearted keeping of the Law and the effort involved in it” (Abasciano, Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.10-18, 188-189).

84 So, as Tobin suggests, “Paul is not interested in the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart itself. Rather, he is interested in God’s purpose in doing so” (Tobin, Paul’s Rhetoric in Its Contexts, 331).

85 Contra Schreiner, it is not the case that “it is an imposition on the text to conclude that God’s hardening is a response to the hardening of human beings. One cannot elude the conclusion that Paul teaches double
of the covenant now, and the reason for which they have been hardened.\(^8^6\) Paul’s startling accusation here is that Israel has not only taken the role of covenant outsiders, but now resembles one of their most despised enemies more so than the people of God. The exodus was, no doubt, God’s paradigmatic act of salvation for Israel in the Old Testament, and the deliverance from Pharaoh played a central part in the Jewish hope for deliverance from foreign oppressors among the Second Temple period (e.g., \(\textit{Jub.}\ 48:4\); \(\textit{1 Macc}\ 4:9\)). Paul’s argument here thus reverses Israel’s role, or more specifically the role of those Jews who have rejected God’s Messiah.

That Paul makes such a connection would, no doubt, be alarming to his Jewish brethren. This likely, then, provides the basis for the next part of Paul’s argument in Rom 9:19-29. Paul begins here with a second question asking, “Why does he still find fault? For who has resisted his will?” (Rom 9:19). He then invokes the image of a potter molding clay and asks, “Does the figure say to one who formed it, ‘Why have you made me like this?’ Or does the potter not have authority over the clay to make from the same lump a vessel of honor and another of dishonor?” (Rom 9:20-21). Here again, Paul’s analogy has been taken as indicating strict double predestination and/or determinism.\(^8^7\) As we have seen, however, Paul’s question in this chapter predestination here” (Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 510). Ben-Sira, in fact, uses Pharaoh as an example of one whose evil deeds (“whose works were manifest under the heavens”; Sir. 16:15) were apparently the basis for God’s hardening of his heart.

\(^8^6\) So Morris is correct to note that “neither here nor anywhere else is God said to harden anyone who had not first hardened himself” (Leon Morris, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988), 361). Likewise, Wright comments that “within normal Jewish apocalyptic thought-forms ‘hardening’ is what happens when people refuse the grace and patience of God, and is the prelude to a final judgment which will be seen to be just” (Wright, \textit{The Climax of the Covenant}, 247).

\(^8^7\) Thus, Schreiner seems to generalize the principles here, when clearly Paul has a specific problem in mind (Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 514-515). Likewise, Demarest states that this means that “God has the sovereign right to bestow more grace on one of his creatures than on another (v. 21)” (Demarest, \textit{The Cross and Salvation}, 130). As shall be seen, Paul says nothing of the sort here. Contra this view, Dunn notes, “That Paul intended a specific reference with the imagery (individuals and final judgment) is hardly as clear as Piper (173-86) argues: the imagery of creator and creation was used of Israel as well as of individuals, and it is Israel’s sense of \textit{national} distinctiveness which Paul seeks to counter” (Dunn, \textit{Romans} 9-16, 557).
is, as Achtemeier notes, “the place of Israel in God’s plan of salvation. He is not dealing with the fate of individuals.”

The identity of the vessels here is of the utmost importance for properly interpreting the passage. Paul references here a single lump of clay out of which both vessels for honor/mercy and dishonor/wrath are made. Paul reveals the interpretive key, in part, in Rom 9:24, where he states that these vessels of mercy are those who God has called from out of the Jews and out of the Gentiles. In keeping with the analogies already presented then, the vessels of dishonor/wrath here must be unbelieving Israel. Part of the difficulty in this section lies with the fact that Paul seems to introduce a conditional sentence in Rom 9:22, but does not complete the thought with the consequence of an apodosis. Furthermore, the participle θέλων, though usually translated as causal, could be taken as concessive (“But what if God, although willing to demonstrate his wrath and make known his power endured with much patience vessels of wrath which have been prepared for destruction”) which would explain the tension present between God’s wrath and his patience with the vessels of wrath. Furthermore, the difference in the verbs used to describe the preparation of the vessels (κατηρτισμένα and προητοίμασεν) is noteworthy. As Witherington has suggested,

Paul uses two different verbs when talking about the vessels of mercy and the vessels of wrath… Katērtismena, used of the vessels of wrath, is a perfect passive participle. Proētoimasen, used of the vessels of mercy, is an aorist active indicative. This change

88 Achtemeier, Romans, 165. And so, contra Kruse who states “God shows mercy to some and as a result they accept the gospel, while he hardens others and as a result they reject it. There is no injustice with God. He has the right to have mercy on whomever he wants to have mercy, and to harden whomever he wants to harden in order to achieve his own purpose” (Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 383).

89 As Abasciano notes, “It begs the question to assume that the singular vessel must refer to an individual person. It could just as well refer to a group of people like Israel or the Church” (Abasciano, “Corporate Election in Romans 9,” 360).

90 See Matera, Romans, 228.

91 See Cranfield, Romans 9-16, 493; Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 386-387.
cannot be accidental, and it suggests that Paul means that the vessels of wrath are ripe or fit for destruction. Indeed, one could follow the translation of John Chrysostom here and understand it in the middle voice: “have made themselves fit for” destruction. If so, this verse certainly does not support the notion of double predestination. Rather it refers to the fact that these vessels are worthy of destruction, though God has endured them for a long time.92

While this translation would certainly diminish the possible presence of double predestination here, Paul’s sense without it is clear. God is still right to “find fault” because, as the potter, he molds the lump into whatever he wishes, even if this means that he saves Gentiles in addition to Jews.93 Tobin is thus correct in summarizing, “The logic of the argument is that if God can do whatever God thinks best (the “greater”), God can also, more specifically, show mercy not only to Jews but also to Gentiles (the “lesser”).”94 As Paul makes clear in v. 23-24, his point here is to argue for God’s rightness both to define election as he chooses and to include Gentiles without the need to keep the Law, even if this decision has meant that the majority of Jews, like Pharaoh, are now vessels of wrath, and thus enemies of God.95

92 Witherington, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 258). See also, Cranfield, Romans 9-16, 496-497. In contrast, Kruse comments, “If the verb ‘prepared’ is construed as a perfect middle participle, it would mean that people have prepared themselves for destruction by their own impenitence (cf. 2:5). If it is construed as a perfect passive participle, it could be understood as a divine passive, in which case the agent of their preparation for destruction is God. The latter is more likely in this context where Paul in the previous two verses (9:20-21) has just employed the image of the potter and the class to stress God’s prerogative to do with his creatures as he will” (Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 387).

93 See Keener, Romans, 120. Grindheim states, “The edge of Paul’s argument is to align the majority of Israel with the vessels of dishonor, prepared for destruction (v. 22). While they are still in God’s plan, the role they are playing is that of Pharaoh” (Grindheim, The Crux of Election, 147). It is worth reminding that Ben-Sira used similar imagery to assert that God is just to determine whatever judgment he deems right for a person, which for Ben-Sira was based upon their behavior (cf. Sir. 33:7-15). Ben-Sira could use the potter/clay imagery while still affirming that a person’s destiny was determined by their choice of the way of life or the way of death (cf. 15:11-20).

94 Tobin, Paul’s Rhetoric in Its Contexts, 312.

95 Furthermore, as Shellrude notes, “it is clear from 11:23-24 that this is not necessarily a permanent condition, that they can become ‘vessels of mercy’ by responding to God’s free initiative in Christ” (Glen Shellrude, “The Freedom of God in Mercy and Judgment: A Libertarian Reading of Romans 9:6-29,” Evangelical Quarterly 81.4 (2009): 315).
Paul further elaborates on the inclusion of Gentiles by appealing to Hosea and Isaiah, who he uses to support his argument. The first quotation, which forms a chiastic structure, states that those who were not God’s people and unloved will be become God’s people, his beloved, and “sons of the living God” (Rom 9:25-26). As Grindheim describes, “At the center of the chiasm [v. 25-26], he emphasizes the love terminology. By highlighting the “call” terminology and the “love” terminology, Paul recalls the paragraph 9:10-13, where “call” and “love” also are the key terms. Paul thus forges a link between Jacob as the beloved and the elect and the Gentiles (with believing Jews) as the beloved and the elect.”96 While the quotation from Hosea supports Gentile inclusion, Paul calls upon Isaiah to show that only a portion of Israel, the remnant, will be saved, “Just as Isaiah predicted” (Rom 9:27-29).97 In doing so, however, Paul shows that God has been faithful to the covenant, and thus any claims of unrighteousness are unwarranted.98 Paul’s purpose throughout Rom 9:1-29 has thus been to affirm the inclusion of the Gentiles and to deny that God was unrighteous to define election as he has defined it.99


97 In contrast with most commentators, Heil has argued that these verses are to be taken more positively than usually interpreted, and suggests that Paul sees here that the remnant of Israel will be numerous in the future (John Paul Heil, “From Remnant to Seed of Hope for Israel: Romans 9:27-29,” Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 64.4 (Oct. 2002): 703-720). Schnelle sees here Paul advocating “double predestination, for salvation and destruction” which are decided by the Creator alone (Udo Schnelle, Apostle Paul: His Life and Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 346), but again, in the context of the argument, this is unwarranted.

98 See Matera, Romans, 230, 240.

99 See Achtemeier, Romans, 155. Shellrude summarizes the thrust of the passage as follows: “First, God is free to determine who will be his people. He is not under obligation to all of Abraham’s physical descendants, i.e. to ethnic Israel. The implied application is that he is not obligated to ensure that Israel responds to the Gospel but is free to determine his people on the basis of those who respond to the grace manifest in Jesus. Second, God is free to judge by hardening. The implied application is that he is free to respond to Israel’s unbelief in a judgment of hardening rather than turning up the heat of irresistible grace. Third, God is free to use those he has hardened to further his purposes, meaning that he is free to use Israel’s unbelief as an occasion for the Gospel to be preached to the Gentiles. Fourth, God is free to show mercy to whom he wishes. The implied application is that he is free to show mercy to the Gentiles, those who were not understood as the primary recipients of God’s covenant promises” (Shellrude, “The Freedom of God in Mercy and Judgment,” 309-310).
Paul’s next section again opens with a question. He asks, “What, therefore, will we say? ‘That the Gentiles who did not pursue righteous but obtained it, that is, a righteousness from faith, but Israel who pursued a law of righteousness did not reach the law? For what reason? Because it was not from faith but as from works; they stumbled over the stone of stumbling” (Rom 9:30-32). Paul again calls on Isaiah to affirm that this was predicted by the prophets, since Isaiah warned that a stone in Zion would “make them fall, yet the one who believes in him will not be put to shame” (Rom 9:33). Paul clarifies his point in Rom 10:1-4, noting that his Jewish brethren “have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge; for ignoring the righteousness from God and seeking to maintain their own, they did not become submissive to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the goal of the Law unto righteousness for all who are believing” (Rom 10:2-4).

It should be noted, first and foremost, that Paul’s view of the Law is not negative as is often assumed. As is quite clear throughout Romans, Paul’s problem is not with the Law, or with those who keep the Law, but rather with those who keep the Law apart from Christ and believe it will make them righteous. Paul recognizes here that the Gentiles have obtained righteousness by faith, but Israel, pursuing “a law of righteousness” did not because they

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100 See Cranfield, Romans 9-16, 508.

101 Tobin’s observation is significant when he states that “Paul is not—and this needs to be emphasized—referring to Israel’s situation prior to Christ but to Israel’s situation in the wake of Christ. There is a temporal orientation to the argument” (Tobin, Paul’s Rhetoric in Its Contexts, 341). Garlington here is correct, stating, “We affirm, then, that Paul’s interaction with Judaism was an encounter with covenantal nomism. The question, however, is whether Paul was opposed in principle to such an understanding of God’s dealings with his people. The answer must be no, because this was undoubtedly the teaching of the OT itself, which Paul sees as the anchorage for his gospel (Rom 1.2). Given both that Paul expected his converts to render faith’s obedience and that Christ is the law’s τέλος, our conclusion is that he opposed, to coin a phrase, ‘Christless covenantal nomism’, i.e., the position of his fellow Jews that since the law of Moses was eternally and unalterably fixed, fidelity to it was sufficient in itself to make one acceptable to God” (Garlington, The Obedience of Faith, 264-265).

102 Abasciano suggests, “This implies that membership in the elect people of God being based on faith is what facilitates fulfilment (sic) of the purpose of incorporating Gentiles into the chosen people… That this principle of faith is the primary condition by which God determines the membership of the elect people of God is shown by the fact that Paul goes on to explain that Gentiles who forsake faith will be cut off from God’s people and Jews who
pursued it “by works.” Paul’s connection here of righteousness connected with the Law and with works likely indicates that he has in mind here the now familiar contrast (cf. Rom 2:15; 3:20, 28) of ἔργων νόμου and πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Paul is not concerned with merit-based salvation, as the Jews of his time were not pursuing such a goal. For Paul the object and foundation of πίστις is obviously the Christ (cf. Rom 3:3, 22, 25, 26; 5:1; 10:17). Paul’s contrast here, then, between ἔργον and πίστις is best understood as a contrast between the modifiers of “Law” and “Christ.” Paul is not principally concerned with the absence of faith among the Jews in general. Obviously those keeping the Law believed in God and were committed to faithful obedience to him. This should go without saying. The πίστις they lacked was not because of their legalistic attitude and attempt to merit their own salvation. What they lacked was πίστις in

come to faith will be grafted in (11.20d-24)” (Abasciano, Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.10-18, 207-208).

Garlington notes that Jews of the period often made allowances for Gentiles to become a part of the people of God, but it was always through their submission to the so-called “badges” or “boundary markers” (i.e., purity regulations, circumcision, etc.) of Israel. For Paul, however, Gentiles were now “full members” in the people of God apart from such practices, and are even assigned some of Israel’s most lofty titles, such as “beloved,” “chosen,” and “holy” (Garlington, The Obedience of Faith, 242-249). Thus “it is no longer necessary to become and then remain Jewish; the privileges entailed in Israel’s identity as the people of God can be had by virtue of faith alone in the risen Christ” (Idem., 247).

Schreiner denies this connection and suggests “works of the law should be defined as the deeds or actions demanded by the law, whereas the term works refers to all deeds or actions that are done” (Schreiner, Paul, 112). To do so, however, is to ignore Paul’s own mention of the law in Rom 9:31. Likewise, contra Matera (Romans, 242) who interprets “works” here as “human striving and exertion” and “an ethical notion of personal achievement.” Similarly, Das takes this as a righteousness of their own achievement rather than one based upon trust in God (Das, Paul, the Law, and the Covenant, 245-247). These views assume improperly that Jews of the period did not exercise faith/trust in God. What they lacked, clearly, was faith in Christ.

This is, of course, one of the principle concerns of Sanders in Paul and Palestinian Judaism, and is generally recognized as a proper corrective by scholars today. Contra Kruse who suggests that first century Judaism had “a tendency for the nomistic obligations of the covenant to be emphasized at the expense of God’s saving grace. A nomistic religion often degenerated, in practice, into a legalistic one,” and, “Those who pursued the law for righteousness were in no frame of mind to seek righteousness through faith, especially faith in a crucified (and risen) Messiah” (Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 396). Those who kept the Law were, as Paul argues in Rom 9:1-5, in a better position than any to recognize God’s Messiah.

Schreiner here, in stating that “when Paul says that Israel did not attain the law, the idea is that the Israelites did not keep the law, they did not attain to the standard required, they fell short of the goal… no one becomes right with God through the pathway of the law since human sin intervenes” (Schreiner, Paul, 121) seems to read too much into the text. Paul himself said that he was blameless according to the Law (Phil 3:6). This also
Christ, as Paul makes clear in Rom 9:33. Thus, their zeal is not according to knowledge because they do not know Christ (Rom 10:2). Their works of the Law apart from Christ, as Paul stated in Rom 3:20, only brought them ἐπίγνωσις (knowledge) of sin. Thus their zeal is misdirected in that they ignore the righteousness of God (τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ) and thus they lack true ἐπίγνωσις. Paul has used this phrase (τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ) in Rom 1:17; 3:5, 21-22, 25-26 with reference to Christ and his gospel. The τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ which the Jews have ignored, to which they have not submitted themselves by trying to maintain their own righteousness through the Law, is Jesus Christ. It is in this way that Christ is the τέλος of the Law, for those who had been keeping covenant with God should have been the first to recognize

overlooks the fact that the Law made provisions for dealing with sin for those who would recognize their sin, repent, and offer sacrifices. To keep the Law was not an impossible task. This view is based upon a misunderstanding of Judaism and Old Testament covenants and falsely equates obedience to the Law with moral perfection. Likewise, contra Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 394.

107 Schreiner objects to a corporate view of election in 10:1 by stating “if the reference to Israel in Romans 9-11 is only corporate, then Israel’s failure to pursue the law from faith, and her attempt to be righteous by works (9:30-10:8), must be exclusively a corporate problem and not an individual one” (Schreiner, “Does Romans 9 Teach Individual Election unto Salvation?,” 34-35). Likewise, Kruse objects in stating, “Such a notion of election does not support an explanation of why some Jewish individuals accept the gospel while others do not, which is the reason Paul introduces it in chapter 9” (Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 392). This is wrong on several accounts. First, Paul clearly uses “Israel” in two senses in the passage as evidenced by Rom 9:6. Second, corporate election allows that unbelief or apostasy means that the elect may lose their status. Thus, while most Jews in Paul’s thought may have been in right standing with God before Christ, their rejection of his Messiah has meant that they have forfeited that status. Third, by thinking of “Israel” here in a national/ethnic sense and not in the sense of “true Israel,” Paul can maintain the corporate perspective.

108 So Dunn argues, “The verb (“establish”) likewise denotes not an act of creation, a bringing about of something which previously did not exist, but a setting or establishing or confirming of something which is already in existence” (Dunn, Romans 9-16, 595).

109 Schnelle comes close to this in stating, “Paul explains the failure of the Jews to attain righteousness in the terse statement that Israel wanted to attain righteousness by works, not through faith. Christ thus became a stumbling stone to Israel because it went the way of the law/Torah, not the way of faith” (Schnelle, Apostle Paul, 346). Sanders is correct when he argues, “The simplest interpretation of the meaning of the quotation, and the one generally accepted, is probably correct: the “stumbling-stone” is Christ, and those who believe in him are not put to shame. The explanation of “not by faith but by works,” then, is “they did not believe in Christ,” not “they incorrectly tried for righteousness and by trying achieved only self-righteousness.” Israel’s failure is not that they do not obey the law in the correct way, but that they do not have faith in Christ” (E. P. Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1983), 37). Likewise, Wright is helpful in stating, “They are unaware of the way in which God’s covenant plan is working out, with Jesus the Messiah as its climax” (N. T. Wright, “Romans 9-11 and the “New Perspective”,” in Between Gospel and Election, ed. Florian Wilk and J. Ross Wagner, 37-54 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 40).
him as their Messiah. The Law pointed to Jesus, the revealed righteousness of God, which the majority of Jews, having rejected him as Messiah, have stumbled over as the stumbling stone.

To support his claim, Paul connects Christ and the gospel with the giving of the Law to Moses. Here he contrasts “the righteousness from the Law” and “the from-faith-righteousness” (Rom 10:5). The context of these quotations in the Old Testament illustrates that Paul is showing the progression from Moses to Christ. Just as keeping the Law was not out of Israel’s reach (cf. Deut 30:11-20), so faith in Christ is as near as their heart and mouth (cf. Rom 10:6-8), so that if they confess the faith which the apostles have preached to them and believe that God raised Jesus from the dead, they will be saved and declared righteous (10:9-10). The gospel thus puts all on equal footing before God, eliminating any distinction, as was inherent in the Law, between Jew and Gentile (Rom 10:12). Paul’s contrast thus continues between the Law

110 See Cranfield (Romans 9-16, 505, 512) who sees Paul’s thought here in terms of a destination, though he interprets the passage differently than has been argued above. Dunn recognizes the possibility of this interpretation (Dunn, Romans 9-16, 597). Matera sees the notion here as “goal” as well, though he emphasizes the element of human effort as a part of the contrast (Matera, Romans, 245). See also Robert Jewett, “The Law and the Coexistence of Jews and Gentiles in Romans,” Interpretation, 39.4 (1985): 352; Tobin, Paul’s Rhetoric in Its Contexts, 312. Contra Kruse, who suggests that both end and goal are in mind here (Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 402-405), since Paul never suggests that Jews are expected to stop practicing the Law, nor did he himself do such. For Paul, there is a place for the Law to operate in the life of the Jews within Christ, but not outside of him.

111 As Dunn notes, “Deut. 30.11-14 was widely understood to have a reference which transcended a simple one-to-one correlation with the Torah… Paul here exploits the larger scope of Deut. 30.12-14 to indicate that what comes to expression in the law is not antithetical faith” (Dunn, The Theology of Paul the Apostle, 517).

112 Dunson likewise suggests, “Thus, just as Moses explained to Israel that the pathway to pleasing God was not to be found in an esoteric reality beyond her grasp (instead being located in the clear word of Torah), so also in the present, the word about Christ is equally available for all to hear and respond to. The content of this word of faith consists of a call to individual confession (όμολογησης) of the Lord Jesus with one’s mouth and individual belief” (Ben C. Dunson, “Faith in Romans: The Salvation of the Individual or Life in Community?,” Journal for the Study of the New Testament, 34.1 (2011): 31).

113 And thus, “Here, God’s righteousness” becomes a roundabout, allusive way of referring to “the gospel of Jesus Christ,” on the basis of 3:21-31” (Wright, “Romans 9-11 and the “New Perspective”,” 41). As Wright continues, he insightfully notes, “if Jesus was the Messiah… then Israel’s God had in fact renewed the covenant through him. The present passage is one of the central pieces of evidence, along with Rom 4, Gal 3 and 2 Cor 3, for reading Paul’s theology as essentially covenantal, in the sense that he believed that God had fulfilled the covenant promises to Abraham, and the promise of covenant renewal in Deuteronomy, in and through Jesus Christ” (Idem, 47).
and Christ in that the Law is inoperative outside of faith in Jesus and finds its true purpose in him.  
And so, as Dunn states clearly, “The one essential condition of salvation is faith.”

Paul’s brethren in Israel were not in unbelief for a lack of hearing the message, as he carefully develops in Rom 10:14-15. Rather, they have heard the message and have not obeyed the gospel (Rom 10:16). Here, again, it is clear that Paul does not intend to set faith and works against each other, but rather is contrasting the futility of the Law outside of Christ and the reality that right-standing in the covenant is now found only through obedience to the gospel.

Paul affirms in Rom 10:18 that the Jews have indeed heard the gospel, and the faith demonstrated by the Gentiles is intended to bring about Israel’s jealousy while God continues to hold “out [his] hands to this disobedient and stubborn people” (10:21; cf. Isa 65:2). Paul’s discussion now comes full circle to the questions of chapter 9. Paul identifies himself, “an

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114 It is unlikely here, as Achtemeier suggests, that Paul intended a contrast between “our good works” and “an act of sheer grace” (Achtemeier, Romans, 170).

115 So Matera states, “The contrast, however, is not intended to criticize Moses or the law, nor is it meant to establish an opposition between “doing” and “believing.” Rather, having identified Christ as the goal of the law, Paul shows how the law finds its goal in Christ” (Matera, Romans, 249). Likewise, Dunn states, “It needs to be said yet again that there is no thought of “achieving righteousness” here… And the verb should not be emphasized, as though Paul was objecting to the idea of “doing” the law” (Dunn, Romans 9-16, 601).

116 Dunn, Romans 9-16, 616.

117 Garlington, in examining the concepts of “faith” and “obedience” in Second Temple Judaism, notes, “The obedience of God’s people, consisting in their fidelity to his covenant with them, is the product of a prior belief in his person and trust in his word” (Garlington, The Obedience of Faith, 233), and so “not only the privileges of the covenant but also its responsibilities were part and parcel of ‘the obedience of faith among all the nations for his name’s sake’: Jew and Gentile in Christ have been called to respond to the voice of God with believing obedience” (Idem, 249). Likewise, for Dunn, Paul’s discussion shows “clearly the continuity Paul sees between God’s covenant with Israel, the law, and the faith which he proclaimed; they confirm that for Paul obedience… is a fundamental aspect of covenant righteousness, as much for him as for his fellow Jews” (Dunn, Romans 9-16, 588).

118 Here Garlington notes, “In applying the concept of calling to believers in Jesus Christ - ὁδὸς καὶ ἔκαλλησεν ἡμᾶς οὐ μόνον ἔξ Τουιδαίων ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔξ ἔθνων - he confers upon them a title which, in one sense, legitimately designated Israel, but which, in another sense, did not characterize the ancient people. That is to say, the ‘nations’ have responded to the call of Paul’s gospel with faith’s obedience, while Israel, who has heard the call (10.18), is a ‘disobedient and contrary people’ (10.21). Whatever one understands by the irrevocable call of Israel (11.29), κλητοί for Paul is a name which thrusts the Roman Christians into the position of Israel of old; it is they who comply with the prophetic challenge to turn from idols and embrace Yahweh’s covenant; they are the new and true Israel of God” (Garlington, The Obedience of Faith, 239).
Israelite, a descendent of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin” as an example of the fact that “God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew” (Rom 11:1-2). Just as in Elijah’s day (Rom 11:3-4), “there is in the present time a remnant according to election of grace; now if it is by grace, it is no longer by works, for grace would no longer be grace” (11:5-6). God’s favor is thus upon the remnant, as evidenced by their election, which is “no longer by works.” Thus, Israel failed to obtain “what they sought for” (ἐπιζητεῖ), but the “elect obtained it” while “the rest were hardened.” Dunn denies that the “what” that Israel sought for could be its election, which would be the closest referent and would correspond to the contrast with the “elect” who

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119 It is not here, as Schreiner suggests, that “Israel’s election as a nation functions as a type of the election of the church” (Schreiner, Romans, 578). Because he does not see election as corporate, it seems that Schreiner must postulate two elections by God, a theocratic election of Israel which had only earthly consequences, and a spiritual election of those who will receive God’s gift of salvation. Again, it is worth reminding here that, as Witherington states, “Foreknowledge does not mean foreordination to salvation” (Witherington, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 265). Because of the nature of the dilemma posed, Kruse admits, “In this context, God’s foreknowledge relates to the nation, not to individuals” (Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 423). Schreiner also suggests that the “selection of a remnant out of Israel (Rom 9:6-9; 11:1-6) also involves the selecting out of certain individuals from a larger corporate group” (Schreiner, “Does Romans 9 Teach Individual Election unto Salvation?,” 34). As Absciano retorts, however, “Schreiner acknowledges this point, but does little more than to insist that this does not exclude individuals, pointing to Paul’s use of himself as an example of an individual who is part of the remnant. However, this line of argument again founders on the false assumption that corporate election excludes individuals from its view. To show that individuals were part of the groups to which they belonged or were impacted by what their groups were impacted by contributes nothing to determining where the focus of election lies (Absciano, “Corporate Election in Romans 9,” 360).

120 Schreiner states that works here must be taken as good works in general, not Torah-works, since Paul omits νομός. We need not expect, however, that Paul repeat the phrase in its entirety, especially when he is speaking specifically about Israel, whose identity was defined by the Torah. Does Paul’s language here indicate that election was at one time “by works?” If so, clearly this would be “works of the Law,” that is, faithfulness to the Mosaic covenant. This should not be taken to mean, however, that election was meritoriously earned. Again, if one sees Paul’s contrast between works of the LAW and faith in CHRIST, there is no need to deny any significance to “doing.” Witherington is helpful here, stating, “Paul is not merely opposing a legalistic way of approaching the Mosaic Law or the Mosaic covenant. And in any case, he is all for his converts keeping the Law of Christ and tells them that they must avoid the deeds of the flesh and do the Law of Christ if they want to enter the kingdom (Galatians 5-6).… Paul affirms a sort of covenantal nomism, though it is grace-empowered and Spirit-driven. It is just not the Mosaic covenant that he wants Gentiles to keep. It is a mistake to call any demand or requirement to obey a law “legalism” in a context where salvation is by grace and faith. The obedience that necessarily must follow from and depend on living faith is not legalism. Paul’s problem is not with obedience or good works, or laws per se” (Witherington, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 266).
obtained it.\textsuperscript{121} It may also be a reference here to “righteousness” if Paul is harkening back to his statement in 10:3 that they did not obtain the righteousness they sought (ζητοῦντες), which seems likely. If so, again, the reason they did not obtain it is because they did not have faith in Christ. The “elect” here are either to be equated with the Gentiles or with the remnant mentioned in Rom 11:5, which, due to its proximity, is the more likely choice.\textsuperscript{122} It should first be noted that “elect” here is in the singular in the form of the less commonly used term ἐκλογὴ (used only in Rom 9:11; 11:5, 7, 28; 1 Thess. 1:4), which emphasizes the collective nature of Paul’s understanding of the term.\textsuperscript{123} If those who were hardened have been hardened\textsuperscript{124} because of their lack of faith (ἀπιστία; cf. Rom 9:31, 32-33; 10:2-4; 10:16; 11:23, 30-31),\textsuperscript{125} then it is also clear that those who are elect are those who have shown faith in the Christ (πίστις). Furthermore, that Paul does not have double predestination in mind here is made clear by what follows. Paul affirms that Israel “did not stumble into an irrevocable fall” (Rom 11:11; NET). If their state is reversible, then Paul surely does not have in mind that their hardening represents their being

\textsuperscript{121} Dunn states, “What was sought and (not) obtained is not expressed here. Obviously it is not “election” itself (= initial acceptance by God), but must be something like the benefits of a sustained covenant relationship” (Dunn, Romans 9-16, 640), but this assumes that election itself is not a “sustained covenant relationship.”

\textsuperscript{122} Toews suggests that what they obtained is “inclusion in the end-time people God is creating” (John E. Toews, Romans, Believers Church Bible Commentary (Scottdale: Herald Press, 2004), i.e., membership in the elect.

\textsuperscript{123} Though rare in Paul, the term is used in Ps. Sol. 9:4 and 18:5 where the author states, “Our works (are) in the choosing (ἐκλογῇ) and power of our souls, to do right and wrong in the works of our hands, and in your righteousness you oversee human beings” (9:4) and “May God cleanse Israel for the day of mercy in blessing, for the appointed (ἐκλογής) day when his Messiah will reign” (18:5). Likewise, it is used in Josephus where he describes that the Pharisees believe that “man has the free choice (ἐκλογῇ) of good or evil, and that it rests with each man’s will whether he follows the one or the other” (J. W. 2.165). Thus, more frequently, the term refers to the act of decision itself, but it is clearly used in this chapter to refer to the “elect” or the “choice ones” as a group.

\textsuperscript{124} It is worth recalling here the connection back to Pharaoh in Rom 9:17, where Paul argued that it was not lineage or works of the Law that was the condition of election, and by rejecting God’s condition of faith in the Messiah, Israel now played the role of Pharaoh. That this interpretation is valid is affirmed by Paul’s explicit connection here. See Ridderbos, Paul, 345.

\textsuperscript{125} There is nothing in the text here that requires, as Schreiner proposes, that Israel’s hardening by God produced its unbelief (Schreiner, Romans, 587). The opposite phenomenon (unbelief followed by a hardening of the heart) was observed earlier both in the Exodus narratives and in 2 Thess 2.
consigned to eternal reprobation. Their trespass (unbelief) has brought salvation to the Gentiles, but Paul’s hope is that this will provoke them to jealousy and belief (Rom 11:11-15).

Paul again turns to analogy in the remainder of his discussion concerning the salvation of the Gentiles and the Jews’ rejection of God’s Messiah. He introduces the analogy in 11:16 in stating, “Now if the firstfruits is holy, so is the batch of dough; and if the root is holy, so are the branches.” Both of Paul’s examples come from agricultural images with the same meaning intended, the basic idea being that if the whole is “holy” then so are all of its constituent parts. That Paul has in mind here the validity of Gentile inclusion in the people of God is clear. As Paul continues, he states, “Now if some of the branches were broken off, but you, a wild olive tree, have been grafted in among them and become a sharer in the fatness of the root, do not boast over the branches; but if you boast, [remember that] you do not support the root, but the root supports you” (Rom 11:17-18).

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126 So Matera remarks, “Because Israel has refused to believe in the gospel, salvation has come to the Gentiles, as illustrated in Acts 13:46, when Paul and Barnabas turn to the Gentiles after the Jewish populace of Pisidian Antioch rejects them” (Matera, Romans, 265).

127 Allison’s observation here is noteworthy. As he describes, “Enlarging further on the distinctive presentation in Rom. 11:11-15, we may say that whereas for much Jewish eschatology the repentance of Israel makes possible and leads to the salvation of the Gentiles, in Paul this is turned around: the salvation of the Gentiles comes before that of Israel. And whereas in much Jewish eschatology the acceptance of the Gentiles (whose repentance is not set forth as a pre-condition of the new age) simply follows after the repentance of Israel, all this is reversed in Paul, for whom the acceptance of Israel (whose repentance is at most implicit in 11:14—"to stir emulation in the men of my own race") simply follows upon the salvation of the Gentiles. "A hardening has come upon part of Israel until the full number of the Gentiles comes in, and so all Israel will be saved" (11:25-26). In short—and this is the presupposition of Rom. 11:11-15—the roles of Jew and Gentile have been exchanged. Although—and to this extent the traditional scheme is retained—it is the salvation of Israel that is the proximate cause of the onset of the consummation, the repentance required before the Kingdom's coming is being fulfilled not by the Jews but by the Gentiles” (Dale C. Allison, Jr., “Romans 11:11-15: A Suggestion,” Perspectives in Religious Studies, 12 (1985): 29).

128 Matera suggests that the root represents the patriarchs (Matera, Romans, 268), but this is not clear in the text and it seems better to see it as representing the people of God as a whole, Israel, or perhaps Christ who is the “sphere” in which the salvation of the elect takes place (cf. John 15; Eph 1:4).

129 So Cranfield recognizes, “If the Gentile Christians insist on boasting over those who are the natural branches, that will never alter the fact that it is from his incorporation into the stock of Israel, the people of God’s
been grafted into the root of Israel. As Paul continues, he further argues that the Gentiles must take care not to boast over the Israelites, for just as they were broken off because of their unbelief, so the Gentiles may not be spared, assumedly if they fall into the same error (Rom 11:20-21). Israel’s condition of hardening and their exclusion from the people of God will, however, be reversed “if they do not persist in their unbelief” (ἐὰν μὴ ἐπιμένωσιν τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ; Rom 11:23). Again, clearly, Paul’s polemic is not based on the fact that Israel has been hardened as a sign of their predestination to condemnation, nor that they were blinded by legalism or a merit-based theology, but that they have not believed in the Messiah of God! Paul’s line of argument has thus been consistent throughout. Election is not based upon ancestry or keeping the Law (though those things are good!), but is based upon whether or not one, Jew or

election, to whom the promise was given of the seed in whom all the nations should find blessing, that all his spiritual privileges derive. No amount of boasting on the part of the branches which have been grafted in can reverse their relation to the root” (Cranfield, Romans 9-16, 568).

130 In the Old Testament, plant imagery is often used to refer to Israel (e.g., Ps 44:2; 80:8, 15; 92:13; Isa 5:2; 60:21; 61:3; Jer 1:10; 2:21; 11:17; 12:2; 17:8; 18:9; 24:6; 31:27, 28; 32:41; 42:10; 45:4; Ezek 16:7; 17:4-10; 22, 23; 19:10, 13; Hos 2:23; Amos 9:15. This imagery was present in J Enoch (10:16-17; 84:5-6; 93:5-10), where it was used to refer to the righteous remnant/the elect, and likewise in Bib. Ant. 12:8-9 where it referred to Israel as a nation (i.e., corporately).

131 Here Shellrude argues, “If Israel’s unbelief was indeed predestined by God, then Paul would be guilty of over-simplification in saying that the problem of Israel’s unbelief can be easily resolved by a response of faith. It would also seem odd to suggest that God’s unconditional election of some Gentiles to salvation can be easily undone by an arrogance that leads to being cut off from salvation. It is hard to imagine that a theologian operating within a strongly deterministic framework would express himself in this way” (Shellrude, “The Freedom of God in Mercy and Judgment, 308).

132 See Matera, Romans, 270-217. Schreiner is correct in noting that “Paul does not contemplate the regrafting of Israel apart from faith, because he says specifically that they will be grafted in again “if they do not remain in unbelief”’ (Schreiner, Romans, 612). That these arguments cause problems for those who hold to double predestination is clear from Schreiner’s discussion: “The warnings are grammatically hypothetical but are seriously intended for believers. Those who do not continue in faith will face God’s judgment. Neither would it be correct to conclude that some of those that God elected will fail to continue in the faith. Murray (1965: 88) observes rightly that “God’s saving embrace and endurance are correlative.” When we look at it retrospectively (cf. 2 Tim. 2:11–21; 1 John 2:19) we discover that those who fail to persevere thereby reveal that they were never actually part of the elect community. But we must beware of imposing this retrospective comment upon the warnings so that they lose their function for believers” (Idem, 608-609). Nothing about Paul’s discussion here suggests this is hypothetical or that those who were “in” were never really “in” at all. By speaking of grafting, Paul clearly speaks of inclusion in the people of God and thus it is possible, both for Jew and Gentile, that those who have once been included among the people of God can be excluded for unbelief, specifically for denial of Jesus as Lord and Messiah.

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Gentile, obeys the gospel and, by faith, is made right with God through Jesus Christ. As Abasciano argues, “Paul’s olive tree metaphor in Rom 11.17-24 evidences the view of the corporate election perfectly. Individuals get grafted into the elect people (the olive tree) and participate in election and its blessings by faith or get cut off from God’s chosen people and their blessings because of unbelief, while the focus of election clearly remains the corporate people of God, which spans salvation history.”

Paul’s next statement is, no doubt, one of the most heavily debated statements in all of Paul’s letters. He states that wants his readers to be aware of the following mystery, “that a hardening of a part of Israel has taken place until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in, and thus (οὕτως), all Israel (πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ) will be saved” (Rom 11:25-26). Paul then supports his claim with a quotation from Isa 59134 and 27, passages largely concerned with the sin of Israel and God’s deliverance of Jacob from its enemies. In Isaiah 27, it is when Jacob repents of their idolatry that they are gathered and rescued by God. For Paul, no doubt, it will be when the unbelieving Jews cease their unbelief that they will be re-grafted into the people of God. So what, then, does Paul have in mind in stating that “all Israel” will be saved? As Cranfield has summarized, this may include 1) all the elect (Jews and Gentiles), 2) all the elect from the nation of Israel, 3) all of the nation of Israel, comprised of every individual Israelite, or 4) the nation of Israel as a whole, but not every individual Israelite.135 The overwhelming majority of recent interpreters have opted for the fourth option, that Paul has in mind here Israel as a whole, and not

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134 Paul quotes here the LXX, and the differences between the LXX and the MT are substantial. Compare Isa. 59:20 in the MT: “The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,” with the LXX: “And the deliverer shall come for Sion’s sake, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”

every individual Israelite.\textsuperscript{136} This seems to suggest, then, that Paul speaks of Israel in two senses in Rom 11:25-26 as he did in 9:6, of Israel as a nation and of Israel in the sense of a “true Israel.”\textsuperscript{137} Most commentators also agree that one should not see here a special dispensation for end-time Israel by which they are saved by any means other than repentance and faith in Christ.\textsuperscript{138} Debate persists as well as to whether or not Paul views this as an end-time event at all.\textsuperscript{139} Regardless of what option is correct, Paul clearly here speaks of a “true Israel” as those who will come to faith in Christ at the end. He has not gone so far to explicitly say that Gentile believers too are “Israelites,”\textsuperscript{140} but it is clear here that he envisions that there is one people of God, the boundary of which is defined by faith in Jesus Christ, and that he holds out hope for the conversion of his own people, which will come through faith in the Messiah. And again, his corporate intentions are clear in that he can speak of Israel as a corporate entity without requiring

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\textsuperscript{136} Kruse is representative, stating, “The election of the nation did not mean that every individual Israelite would enjoy God’s blessings irrespective of their response to his word, something dramatically illustrated by the fact that virtually an entire generation was refused entry to the promised land (Numbers 14)” (Kruse, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 446). See also Dunn, \textit{Romans 9-16}, 681; Tobin, \textit{Paul’s Rhetoric in Its Contexts}, 372; Christopher Zoccali, “‘And So All Israel Will Be Saved’: Competing Interpretations of Romans 11.26 in Pauline Scholarship,” \textit{Journal for the Study of the New Testament} 30.3 (2008): 289-318.

\textsuperscript{137} Harvey and Wright both support the possibility (Graham Harvey, \textit{The True Israel: Uses of the Names Jew, Hebrew, and Israel in Ancient Jewish and Early Christian Literature} (New York: Brill, 1996), 232; Wright, \textit{Climax of the Covenant}, 250).

\textsuperscript{138} So Tobin writes, “[G]iven Paul’s insistence throughout Romans on the significance of Christ for both Jews and Gentiles and on the equality of Jews and Gentiles in both sin and salvation, it is almost impossible to imagine that he could think of Israel’s ultimate salvation as somehow apart from Christ” (Tobin, \textit{Paul’s Rhetoric in Its Contexts}, 374).

\textsuperscript{139} For a representative of the view, see Matera, \textit{Romans}, 273. Contra the end-time interpretation, see Kruse, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 451. Likewise, Wright does not take this as a reference to the \textit{parousia}, but rather that “‘Whenever’ God takes away their sins, i.e. whenever Jews come to believe in Christ and so enter the family of God, in that moment the promises God made long ago to the patriarchs are being reaffirmed” (Wright, \textit{The Climax of the Covenant}, 251).

\textsuperscript{140} Kim argues that the referent here is all Jewish and Gentile believers (Dongsu Kim, “Reading Paul’s καὶ οὕτως πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται (Rom. 11:26a) in the Context of Romans,” \textit{Calvin Theological Journal}, 45 (2010): 317-334). Harvey and Keener deny this possibility (Keener, \textit{Romans}, 136; Harvey, \textit{The True Israel}, 231).
that every individual Jew or Israelite is a part of God’s elect, a status that is conferred only upon those who exercise faith in Christ.\footnote{Guthrie’s summary can thus be wholeheartedly affirmed that Paul’s argument, contra to traditional interpretations, is less about individuals than groups, emphasizes the unity and continuity of the people of God, rather than hard distinctions between the Church and Israel, and a focus on the many rather than the few (Shirley C. Guthrie, “Romans 11:25-32,” Interpretation, 38 (1984): 286-291).}

As Paul closes the chapter, he again recognizes the reversal of roles among the Jews and Gentiles and the basis of exclusion from the people of God. He states, “For just as you formerly were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy by their disobedience, in this manner also they are now disobedient resulting in your receipt of mercy, so that they also might be shown mercy. For God has enclosed them all in disobedience, in order that they all may be shown mercy” (Rom 11:30-32). If disobedience (assumedly to the gospel; cf. Rom 10:16) entails exclusion, it follows that obedience to the gospel is what defines those who are included in God’s people.\footnote{And so Staples summarizes, “It is not that the rules have changed or that God has rejected his people. Quite the opposite, God is cutting off only those of Israel who have forfeited their standing through covenantal unfaithfulness—those from Judah who are indeed “inward Jews” (2:27-29) remain. As Paul has already pointed out, this is not the first time the majority of Israel has rejected God, but God has always preserved a remnant through it all (11:2-5)” (Jason A. Staples, “What Do the Gentiles Have to Do with “All Israel”? A Fresh Look at Romans 11:25-27,” Journal of Biblical Literature 130.2 (2011): 384). As such, it may be more appropriate to speak of a “renewed” covenant than a “new” covenant. There is much continuity between the “old” and the “new” in Paul’s thought.}

To summarize briefly, in Rom 8:28-11:36, Paul has not argued that God has predetermined certain individuals to eternal life and others to eternal death with no account of their faith. Rather, he has foreknowledge of those who will come to faith and has determined the goal of their faith, which is conformity to Christ. Furthermore, he has not defined inclusion among the elect people of God in terms of ancestry or keeping the Law, but has defined the “boundary marker” of God’s people as faith in Jesus the Messiah. Those who obey the gospel are incorporated into the one people of God. The majority of Jews in Paul’s day, however, had
rejected Jesus as their Messiah and thus, for Paul, had rejected the covenant and its subsequent blessings. Their unbelief, their rejection of the righteousness of God found through Jesus Christ, meant that they were cut off from the people of God, though if they should cease in their rejection, they will once more receive the blessings found in life in the covenant. Paul thus agrees with his contemporaries that election is primarily corporate (not nationalistic) and that it is bestowed upon those who are faithful to the covenant, though he has shown that faithfulness to the covenant does not mean, for the Jew, faithfulness to the Law apart from Christ, but, rather, as it is for the Gentile, is found through obeying the gospel and exercising faith(fulness) to God through Christ. Paul’s redefinition is thus not the individualization of election, but rather the redefinition of the “boundary marker” based on God’s work in the Messiah and the full inclusion of Gentiles on the basis of faith alone.

Ephesians 1:1-2:22

The last text to be examined in this study is that of Ephesians 1:1-2:22. As mentioned in chapter 1, the letter to the Ephesians is frequently questioned, due to various reasons, by scholars as an authentic Pauline text. This study will assume the authenticity of the letter but this need not exclude the relevance of the text for the study for those who do not if the discussion of election is found to be consonant with the other Pauline texts examined above. While many studies

143 As mentioned in chapter 1, some scholars view the work as the product of a Pauline “school” or follower, and thus it is still thought to be reflective of Paul’s own doctrine. The point here is that Pauline authenticity is not a prerequisite for its inclusion in this study. Fowl basically takes a similar approach in his commentary, noting, “I think the historical evidence leads one to conclude that either Paul wrote Ephesians or someone close to him wrote Ephesians within a decade or two after his death. Theologically and interpretively, it does not make much difference whether Paul or this close follower wrote the text” (Stephen A. Fowl, Ephesians, The New Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 28). For further discussion, see chapter 1.
approach the book of Ephesians through its similarities with Colossians, due to the limitations of space and the methodology adopted, such an approach will not be employed in this study.144

As the letter opens, two issues are worth mentioning. First, the location of the text (“in Ephesus”) is missing from the earliest manuscripts, and thus probably not original and added by a later scribe to clarify the audience.145 Second, though typically translated to indicate a single group being mentioned in the introduction (see NIV, NLT, NET, ESV, HCSB; the NASB comes close to indicating this in translating “To the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus”), only the KJV and the ASB notes that two groups may be in mind in translating “to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.” The author seems to differentiate here between the “saints” and the “faithful,” a distinction that is made explicit in Eph 1:13, 15, 18, and 2:19, where the author refers to Jewish Christians as “saints,” and thus distinct from the Gentile believers who are the primary audience in the letter.146 This distinction is maintained through the first chapter of the letter, as shall be seen, in the distinction of


145 So Martin writes, “Most scholars conclude that no name stood in the original text. If the document was composed as a circular letter, intended to be passed around to a group of churches, there is no reason why such geographical place(s) should have been left out… So Ephesians may well have been composed more as a homily than as a pastoral letter addressed to a local congregation (Ralph P. Martin, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, Interpretation (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1991), 3-4).

146 It should be noted that the terms may collapse after the unification of Jews and Gentiles at the end of chapter 2, though it is possible to still maintain a distinction. Weedman maintains that the “saints” is used throughout the letter to refer to Jewish believers (Gary E. Weedman, “Reading Ephesians from the New Perspective on Paul,” Leaven 14.2 (2006): 84). For others who have argued for such an interpretation, see J. C. Kirby, Ephesians: Baptism and Pentecost (London: SPCK Publishing, 1968), 170; Ben Witherington III, The Problem with Evangelical Theology: Testing the Exegetical Foundations of Calvinism, Dispensationalism and Wesleyanism (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005), 199. O’Brien seems open to the possibility (Peter Thomas O’Brien, The Letter to the Ephesians, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), 128). 2 Thessalonians 2:19 makes it clearest that this is likely the distinction that is in mind, which can be supported then throughout the first two chapters. Even if this distinction is not present in the term “saints,” however, it is clear enough that Paul is here addressing Gentile dependence on Israel in the first two chapters.
pronouns used. Beginning in Eph 1:3, the author uses only the first person plural pronoun aside from first person pronouns referring to God and Jesus.\textsuperscript{147} The first person plural pronoun is used a total of 8 times in Eph 1:3-12.\textsuperscript{148} In addition, the verbal forms in Eph 1:3-12 are never in the second person plural, with 4 first person plural verbs occurring. All in all, there are 12 references to a first person plural group in the span of these 10 verses. In Eph 1:13, the author then states, ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας (“in whom also you, having heard the word of truth…”). It seems more than coincidental that the author here has maintained such a distinction between the two groups. Again, in Eph 1:15, the author notes that he has heard of “your love for all the saints,” possibly indicating that the saints are to be distinguished from these Ephesian believers. In Eph 2:11, the author makes explicit the distinction that has been developed, identifying the “you” of chapters 1 and 2 with the Gentiles (tà ἔθνη).\textsuperscript{149}

Thus, Eph 1:3-12 must be set in its proper context. Paul is here describing God’s gifts to Israel, specifically now to Jewish believers, who are the true heirs of God’s promises through Israel’s Messiah. With this backdrop in mind, Paul’s discussion of election can be properly examined. In Eph 1:4, Paul states that God is blessed because (καθὼς) he has “chosen us for

\textsuperscript{147} Hoehner is right to recognize that the plural pronoun alone does not serve as a sufficient ground to see election here as corporate (Harold W. Hoehner, Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 176). Paul does not seem to have in mind, however, that God has chosen specific individuals for salvation and others for reprobation (Idem, 193). His discussion is more concerned with salvation-history than a doctrine of individual predestination.

\textsuperscript{148} This section is notoriously noted for being a long, complex sentence in Greek which most translations break into many smaller sentences. For a detailed discussion of the form and structure, see Hoehner, Ephesians, 153-161.

\textsuperscript{149} Such a distinction is in keeping with Martin’s description of the purpose of the letter. He suggests that letter, penned by a disciple of Paul, was written “to show the nature of the church and the Christian life to those who came to Christ from a pagan heritage and environment and to remind the Gentile Christians that Paul’s theology of salvation history never disowned the Jewish background out of which the (now predominantly) Gentile church came” (Martin, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, 4). See also Jack Haberer, “Ephesians 1:15-23,” Interpretation 62:3 (July 2008): 313.
himself in Christ before the foundation of the world that we might be holy and blameless before him in love, by choosing us beforehand for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ.” First, Paul clearly envisions election as occurring within the sphere of Christ. This is the first indication that Paul is thinking along the lines of corporate election in that election occurs within the sphere of Christ. Second, the purpose of election is that the elect might be set apart for

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150 Newman notes, “As the implied subject of eklogomai, God authors election. He chose us, and he did so without regard to human merit; he in fact chose despite its woeful lack. God chose only in accordance with his own character, specifically his love (v. 4) and grace (v. 6). And he chose us for himself, as the middle voice of the verb indicates. God therefore stands as the sovereign subject, not only of this verb and sentence, but of any good gift given to this world” (Carey C. Newman, “Election and Predestination in Ephesians 1:4-6a: An Exegetical-Theological Study of the Historical, Christological Realization of God’s Purpose,” Review and Expositor 93 (1996): 238).

151 As Lincoln notes, “in many cases, Paul’s “in Christ” phrase involves “the notion of the incorporation of believers into Christ, and this concept of the incorporation of many in one representative head, together with the use of ἐν, can be seen in the LXX in regard to other figures, such as Abraham (Gen 12:3) and Isaac (Gen 21:12), and in Paul in regard to Adam (1 Cor 15:22)” (Andrew T. Lincoln, Ephesians, Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1990), 21). Lincoln suggests that “It is by explicitly linking the notion of election to that of being “in Christ” that Ephesians takes further the discussion of election found in the undisputed Pauline letters” (Idem, 23), but as already shown above, this is quite consistent with what has already be examined in 2 Thess 2 and Romans 9-11. See also Fowl, Ephesians, 39; Newman, “Election and Predestination in Ephesians 1:4-6a,” 238; Peter S. Williamson, Ephesians, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 33.

152 Contra O’Brien who states that it “is inappropriate, however, to suggest that election in Christ is primarily corporate rather than personal and individual” (O’Brien, The Letter to the Ephesians, 99). He seems to misunderstand corporate election in arguing that “God has chosen a people for himself in Christ, and this includes members of that people” (Idem), as if corporate election somehow excludes individuals. Patzia’s view seems to pose a conflict between God’s corporate election of Israel in the Old Testament and his view that God chooses specific individuals for salvation in the New Testament (Arthur G. Patzia, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011), 151). Schreiner objects to a corporate interpretation on several grounds. “First, the text does not specifically say that Christ was elected. The object of the verb "chose" is "us" in Eph 1:4. It is incorrect to see the emphasis on the election of Christ inasmuch as the verse stresses the election of people” (Schreiner, “Does Romans 9 Teach Individual Election unto Salvation?,” 37). “Second, when the text says "he chose us in him" it probably means that God chose that the Church would experience salvation "through Christ." He is the agent and person through whom the electing work of God would come to fruition. When God planned to save some, he intended from the beginning that their salvation would be effected through the work of Christ. Third, thus it seems to me that those who stress that election is "in Christ" end up denying that God chose a corporate group in any significant sense. All God's choice of a corporate group means is that God chose that all who put their faith in Christ would be saved. Those who put their faith in Christ would be designated the Church” (Idem, 38). Contra Schreiner, Abasciano writes, “The idea is rather that Jesus is the Elect One (Schreiner gets this point right) and the Church was chosen as a consequence of its being in Christ. Christ is the sphere of election. All who are in him share in his election just as all who were in Jacob/Israel were also elect” (Abasciano, “Corporate Election in Romans 9,” 366). In support of the corporate view, see also David B. Capes, “Interpreting Ephesians 1-3: “God’s People in the Mystery of His Will,”” Southwestern Journal of Theology, 39 (1996): 20-31.
God and without blame.\textsuperscript{153} Third, the means by which God accomplishes this election is through his previous decision to adopt the elect as children through Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{154} Much weight is frequently hung upon προορίσας by those who argue for double predestination. As seen in Romans, the term simply means to decide beforehand, and does not contain any inherently deterministic value within the term itself.\textsuperscript{155} The passage states that God decided beforehand (possibly before the foundation of the world, though not necessarily) that those to be elect in Christ would become adopted children of God through Christ.\textsuperscript{156} It is not that God has marked out certain individuals for salvation, but rather he has determined the sphere and the means by which his people will become his children.

It should also be noted that these promises of God originated as promises to Israel. McRay makes the point quite well in stating:

It is in the context of the role of Israel as the elect—chosen to provide the Messiah—rather than in the context of individual predestination to salvation, that Paul speaks of election... Paul asserts in this chapter that the Jews, God’s saints or holy ones, were “chosen” to bring the blessing of redemption to all nations in fulfillment of the promise to Abraham. It was the Jews who were foreordained unto adoption for this purpose (Eph. 1:5), chosen in the beloved (i.e., Messiah) for God’s glory (i.e., to declare the sovereignty of monotheism, Eph. 1:6) before the foundation of the world to be “holy and blameless” (i.e., saints, Eph. 1:4) and to be the first to hope in the Messiah (Eph. 1:12).\textsuperscript{157}

\textsuperscript{153} See Fowl, Ephesians, 41; Lincoln, Ephesians, 24; Neufeld, Ephesians, 60; Newman, “Election and Predestination in Ephesians 1:4-6a,” 240.

\textsuperscript{154} Newman writes, “The election of those in Christ is made certain because of God's predestining work through Christ. Thus, Paul sees that God's electing in, through, and by Christ lies within his predestining activity” (Newman, “Election and Predestination in Ephesians 1:4-6a,” 240).

\textsuperscript{155} Newman, for instance, has argued that προορίσας has no inherent pre-temporal force, and thus the timing of God’s predetermination is not specified. Newman suggests that the timing is a result of the incarnational work of Jesus Christ (Newman, “Election and Predestination in Ephesians 1:4-6a,” 237-243).

\textsuperscript{156} So Lincoln writes, “Verse 6 then confirms the thought found earlier, that God’s predestining choice of believers to be his sons and daughters is inextricably tied to Christ’s being his chosen one and that their experience of this grace is through their being included in the one who is the beloved Son par excellence” (Lincoln, Ephesians, 27).

\textsuperscript{157} John McRay, Paul: His Life and Teaching (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 339-340.
God thus determined even of Israel that their election would be rooted in Christ, as would be their adoption as sons.\textsuperscript{158} Israel was the first of God’s people to be called his children,\textsuperscript{159} and Paul states here that God’s choice for a family in Christ began with his adoption of Israel.\textsuperscript{160} Since God’s election occurred “before the foundation of the world,” it may be that Paul has in mind that since Christ is eternal, God’s choice of a people in Christ occurred at some point before the cosmos was created. It may also reflect the belief during the Second Temple period that God’s choice of a people for himself, specifically of Israel, occurred before creation (cf. \textit{Jub}. 2:19; 1QM 13:9-10; \textit{1 En}. 93:5; \textit{Bib. Ant.} 60:2).\textsuperscript{161} Similarly, in \textit{1 Enoch}, it is the Elect One who God chose before creation to save the righteous and holy ones (\textit{1 En.} 48:4-10).

Further echoes of the “Jewishness” of the passage are seen in Eph 1:7. Here it is noted that their redemption has come through the blood of the Son, affecting the forgiveness of their

\textsuperscript{158} So Yee states, “By saying that Christ is ‘involved’ in God’s electing activity, the author of Ephesians is able to lay bare his claim that Christ is indeed the definitive self-expression of God’s original purpose in electing his people” (Tet-Lim N. Yee, \textit{Jews, Gentiles and Ethnic Reconciliation: Paul’s Jewish Identity and Ephesians} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 37). O’Brien does not see the continuity here and suggests that adoption belonged to Israel in the Old Testament but “[n]ow it belongs to Christians” (O’Brien, \textit{The Letter to the Ephesians}, 102-103).

\textsuperscript{159} Of the consistency of the view with the Old Testament, Witherington writes, “The concept of election and destining here is corporate. If one is in Christ, one is elect and destined. Paul is not talking about the pre-temporal electing or choosing of individual humans outside of Christ to be in Christ, but rather the election of Christ and what is destined to happen to those, whoever they may be, who are in Christ. The concept here is not radically different from the concept of the election of Israel. During the OT era, if one was in Israel, one was a part of God’s chosen people, and if one had no such connection, one was not elect. Individual persons within Israel could opt out by means of apostasy, and others could be grafted in (see the story of Ruth)” (Ben Witherington III, \textit{The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles} (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), 234). See also Klyne Snodgrass, \textit{Ephesians}, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 49).

\textsuperscript{160} Bruce suggests that the backdrop of adoption here may be God’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt and calling them as his sons, cf. Ex. 4:22 (F. F. Bruce, \textit{The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians}, New International Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984), 257). Lincoln likewise notes that Paul, in Rom 9:4, lists adoption as one of Israel’s privileges (Lincoln, \textit{Ephesians}, 25). A Jewish background here seems more appropriate than Roman parallels (see, for example, Fowl, \textit{Ephesians}, 42), though it is difficult to say that those practices would have had no bearing on how the text was read.

\textsuperscript{161} So while Lincoln and Newman are correct to note that the OT never speaks of Israel's election as having occurred "before the creation of the world" (Lincoln, \textit{Ephesians}, 23; Newman, “Election and Predestination in Ephesians 1:4-6a,” 239), Jewish texts of the period do defend the view.
trespasses. The background here is certainly the exodus, God’s paradigmatic act of salvation in
the Old Testament by which he delivered Israel from Egypt, and the sign of their deliverance was
seen through the blood over the doorpost. So here, the new exodus occurs through the blood of
the Lamb of God who has redeemed the people of God. In Eph 1:9, Paul affirms that it was to
the Jews that God first revealed the secret of his will which was revealed publicly in the
incarnation of Christ. In Eph 1:11, Paul states, “in whom also we have been chosen by lot,
being determined beforehand according to the purpose of the one who is working all things
according to the intention of his will.” As Fowl notes, “Similar language, which also has
connections to choosing by lot (cf. Num 26:55-56), is often used in Deuteronomy to speak of
God’s choosing Israel as God’s special possession (Deut 4:20; 9:26, 29; 32:9).” The Jewish
believers thus stood in the line of God’s choosing of Israel, and as God’s plan unfolded, they
were “the first to set our hope on Christ” (Eph 1:12, NET). In light of this, Martin aptly notes,

162 Lincoln notes, “The Pauline concept of redemption has its roots in the OT, where in particular the divine
act of deliverance from Egypt was often described in terms of redemption (cf. Deut 7:8; 9:26; 13:5; 15:15; 24:18; 1
Chr 17:21)” (Lincoln, Ephesians, 27).

163 Martin, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, 17.

164 Here Lincoln notes, “Against its Semitic background the terminology of “making known a mystery”
refers to the disclosure of a formerly hidden secret” (Lincoln, Ephesians, 30; See also Thomas R. Yoder Neufeld,
Ephesians, Believers Church bible Commentary (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 2001), 49-50). As he discusses further,
“At Qumran, however, as here in Ephesians, “mystery” can refer to an event which has already been realized in the
community. In 1QS 11.5-8, for example, the community’s participation in the angelic assembly is seen as one of
God’s marvelous mysteries” (Lincoln, Ephesians, 30). In Second Temple literature, μυστήριον is frequently used of
a secret in a human social sense rather than a divine one. However, in T. Levi 2:10, the coming Messiah is the
mystery about to be revealed, and in Wis. 6:22, it is the origin of Wisdom which is to be revealed.

165 Fowl, Ephesians, 49. Fowl does not see here Paul speaking of Israel or Jewish Christians but rather of
believers in general. O’Brien recognizes the Old Testament background of the statement but seems to suggest some
discontinuity in stating, “Now men and women in Christ are God’s chosen people, having been claimed by him as
his inheritance” (O’Brien, The Letter to the Ephesians, 115-116). Though he admits that 1:11-12 focus upon Jewish
believers (Idem, 116-117), he interprets 1:3-10 as applying to all believers though the language there is just as
specific to Jews. See also Hosea 11:1; where Israel is called God’s children.

166 Williamson states, “Paul celebrates the fact that we, meaning Jewish Christians, are God’s people
chosen (klēroō) in Christ, having been destined according to God’s purpose to live for God’s praise” (Williamson,
Ephesians, 40). Though Lincoln applies the passage to believers in general, and does not see significance in the
pronoun changes (Lincoln, Ephesians, 37), he notes, “God’s purpose in choosing Israel had been expressed in
“This short pericope… demonstrates to Gentile believers how they—with Israel’s remnant—are part and parcel of the new people which has inseparable roots in the Israel of the old covenant.”167

The statement here of the temporal priority by which the Jews received the gospel is likely either a reference to the fact that the hope for a Messiah was first, and distinctly, Israel’s hope, or that, in terms of historical sequence, it was the Jews who first heard and believed the gospel. This is consistent with the picture in the book of Acts, where Jews, including at Ephesus, are given sequential priority in the preaching of the apostles.168 In Acts 13, Paul acknowledges, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles” (Acts 13:46, NASB). Rather than an affirmation of individual election, Paul here has placed election within its historical context. God’s election was first given to Israel, and with the incarnation of the Messiah, Israel was given temporal priority in the hearing of the gospel. Those Jews who believed in the Messiah stand in the line of Israel’s promises, which were transformed and were now being fulfilled through the work of Christ.

The turn in Eph 1:13, then, to the “you” is Paul’s recognition of the historic turn to the Gentiles.169 Paul states, “in whom also you, having heard the word of truth, the gospel of our

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169 Hoehner suggests that the first person pronoun refers to Paul and his companions (Hoehner, Ephesians, 231-233), but unlike his other letters, Paul says little here about his entourage, and thus this suggestion, especially in light of chapter 2, is unlikely. This also creates problems for his interpretation of προηλπικότας, which he regards as referring to “all believers reading this epistle” (Idem, 233). If this were the case, there would be no need for Paul to make a distinction between “we” and “you” since the “you” here are obviously reading the letter as well. Patzia suggests oddly that the pronouns move from “all Christians” in 1:3-10, to Jewish Christians in 1:11-12, to Gentile
salvation, in which also having believed, you were sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the down payment of our inheritance, unto the redemption of His possession, unto the praise of his glory” (Eph 1:13-14). While Paul’s audience may have thought he was speaking of the promises made to them in Eph 1:3-12, he makes it clear here that they are inheritors only because the promises made to Israel, through Christ, have been expanded to the Gentiles. It is difficult to say whether the “our inheritance” mentioned in Eph 1:14 refers to collective Jews and Gentiles, as Neufeld suggests, or to Jews (first). The notion of an inheritance is, of course, a particularly Jewish notion, typically describing the blessings of God (primarily in the form of the land) for Israel or Israel as God’s possession, and is frequently present in the OT. The theme is

Christians in 1:13, to “all Christians” again in 1:14 (Patzia, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, 156). Given the heavy Old Testament imagery in what precedes, it is more likely that the single referent in 1:3-12 is Jewish Christians, the “saints.” Lincoln denies any significance to the pronoun changes based, in part, on the fact that “the proposed distinction between “we” as Jewish Christians and “you” as Gentile Christians is one that simply does not hold for the rest of the letter” (Lincoln, Ephesians, 38). It must be noted, however, that Paul builds a significant contrast between the two groups in chapters 1 and 2 and asserts, with the close of chapter 2, that all divisions have been broken down in Christ. It should be expected then, after first building the divisions and then destroying them, that Paul would speak more universally in what follows with the distinctions no longer able to be maintained. In support of the recognition of the distinction made between we/you and Jew/Gentile, see Haberer, “Ephesians 1:15-23,” 312-314; Martin, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, 19; McRay, Paul, 340-342; Neufeld, Ephesians, 54; Weedman, “Reading Ephesians from the New Perspective on Paul,” 82; Williamson, Ephesians, 40.

170 So Fowl states, “In these verses, Paul rehearses how the Ephesians came to be in Christ. They heard the word of truth, the gospel of their salvation. They believed and were sealed by the promised Holy Spirit” (Fowl, Ephesians, 50).

171 So Weedman states, “The audience, mainly Gentile, is caught by surprise and is led to understand that while they live in God’s favor because of Jesus Christ, they do so also by standing on the shoulders of Israel. It was Israel who was blessed, chosen, predestined, favored, redeemed, graced, recipients of the “mystery,” the first to hope—all of these characteristics coming to fullness as they participated “in Christ” (1.3-12)” (Weedman, “Reading Ephesians from the New Perspective on Paul,” 84). See also Martin, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, 4-5. Martin suggests the corrective comes because “Gentile Christians, who were streaming into the church, were adopting an easygoing moral code based on a perverted misunderstanding of Paul’s teaching (cf. Rom. 6:1-12). At this same time, they were boasting of their supposed independence of Israel and were becoming intolerant of their Jewish brethren and forgetful of the Jewish past of salvation history (cf. Rom. 11)” (Idem, 5).

172 Neufeld, Ephesians, 54-55.

also present in Second Temple literature, and Paul’s use of the term in Gal. 3:18 is clearly from a Jewish backdrop. Regardless if it is Israel’s inheritance, or Israel as God’s inheritance, the blessings first promised to them are clearly now extended to Gentile believers as well. Furthermore, as Paul begins his prayer for the Ephesian believers in Eph 1:15, he notes that he is ever thankful for their faith in Jesus and their love “for all the saints.” Based on the distinction noted earlier, it is quite likely here that by “saints,” Paul is referring to Jewish believers. It has been argued, then, that in chapter 1, Paul is not dealing with an abstract form of double predestination in which God has chosen some for redemption and others for condemnation. Rather, he is dealing with the historic promises of Israel, now fulfilled in Christ and offered to the Gentiles who, like their Jewish brethren, may become inheritors if they receive God’s Messiah by faith. As Paul concludes his prayer, he expounds upon the power which God has exercised in Christ, through his resurrection and exaltation, a power which the Church now shares in as the body of Christ. It is this power which Paul relates specifically to the salvation of the believer in chapter 2.

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175 Neufeld suggests it may refer to a close association with the heavenly realm and the heavenly beings, as is found at Qumran and in other Second Temple texts (Neufeld, Ephesians, 72), but this is less likely than that it refers to Jewish believers.

176 It should be noted that the “negative” side of election is entirely missing in this passage.

177 So Haberer rightly summarizes, “The key to understanding this pericope is found in the use of the pronouns of personal address. Who is the “I,” who are the “we,” and who are the “you” (plural) repeatedly referenced in these chapters? Scholars agree that one of the central issues addressed overall in this epistle is that of a burgeoning multiplication of Gentile converts who at best increasingly forget or at worst consciously dismiss the church’s Jewish-Christian roots. What often gets overlooked is that the writer is tackling this matter right from the start. Indeed, these entire two chapters are less about individual soteriology than about communal ecclesiology, and in particular, the new converts’ place in the church of Jesus Christ” (Haberer, “Ephesians 1:15-23,” 312).

178 Here Neufeld notes, “The use of Psalm 8 here and elsewhere in the NT illustrates this interplay between special individual and corporate experience, in this case between Christ and reconstituted humanity. In the NT, however, Psalm 8 (esp. v. 6) is used to celebrate the special status of the risen and exalted Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 15:27, where, as here, it sits alongside Ps. 110:1; Heb. 2:6; cf. use of Ps. 110:1 in Heb. 1:13). However, as stated in the notes, the Christ who is raised and exalted is never understood to be a solitary individual. Christ is humanity
While Paul has made a demarcation in chapter 1 between Jewish and Gentile believers in order to show the Gentiles that they stand upon the historic promises to Israel and are indebted to this heritage, he seeks in chapter 2 to demonstrate that Jewish and Gentile believers stand on equal ground in Christ. Paul reminds the Gentiles, both in Eph 2:1-3 and 2:11-12, of their former life apart from Christ. In that life, they were “dead in transgressions and sins,” walking according to the *aeon* of the world, under the power of “the ruler of the power of the air,” who is “working in the sons of disobedience,” living in the “desires of the flesh,” and being “natural children of wrath” (Eph 2:1-3). In that they were outside of the resurrection life of Christ, these believers were formerly, in fact, dead. This does not mean, as some have suggested, that they had “no capacity at all to respond to the gospel,” but rather that, before they had been incorporated into Christ through faith, they had not been invigorated with his life. Neither does their being “sons of disobedience” or “children of wrath” indicate a predetermined judgment.

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180 So Lincoln states, “If Christ’s resurrection introduced the life of the age to come ahead of time, then one’s state prior to participation in that resurrection life must, comparatively speaking, be viewed as death” (Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 92).

181 Schreiner, *Paul*, 138. Paul nowhere says that they were “powerless to respond to God because they are dead in their sins,” but rather that they were dead before Christ. One does not follow from the other. Likewise, O’Brien steps beyond the text, both here and in his incorporation of Romans 5:12, in stating that if “all humanity was encapsulated in that one man, then this is to say that all are inherently (by nature) subject to condemnation” (O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 163). If by this O’Brien means that all are condemned before their birth and not for their individual rebellion and disobedience (cf. Eph 2:1-2 and Rom 5:12, where death spreads because all sinned), the text does not require such a view. Adam’s disobedience unleashed the cosmic force of sin upon the world, whereby all humans, because of the weakness of their flesh, will eventually sin. This is not the same as saying that Adam’s individual guilt is inherited by every human person from birth.
since their fate was changed once they responded to the gospel. Rather, they were spiritually dead because they were outside of Christ and were deserving of God’s judgment because of their own sins and disobedience.

Paul reminds, both in Eph 2:4-10 and 2:13-22, that this former state no longer defines them. In both places, Paul transitions with a contrastive conjunction (ὁ δὲ θεὸς in 2:4 and νυνὶ δὲ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ in 2:13). God, because of his love and mercy, has made them “alive together with Christ” (Eph 2:5), and raised them up and seated them in the heavens with Christ (2:6). Just as Christ has been raised and exalted (Eph 1:20-22), so those who are in Christ share in his resurrection and exaltation. Again, it is through being “in Christ,” which occurs by faith, that these blessings are experienced. Accordingly, their salvation (spoken of here in the perfect

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182 It is often noted that these phrases are Hebraisms, emphasizing that their behavior made them deserving of God’s wrath. See Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 97-98. Witherington thus states, “It should be clear that Paul does not mean that people were destined for wrath, since he is talking about himself and in this case other Jewish Christians” (Witherington, *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 254). According to Martin, “The idiom is drawn from the Old Testament and means “deserving of God’s judicial condemnation.” In the history of exegesis and Christian doctrine the phrase has played a significant—if wrongly conceived—role. It has been used to support a teaching on original guilt (as distinct from original sin, which says that all are born with a tendency to wrongdoing, not as actual sinners needing baptism to cancel out their inherited birth sin). And it has from time to time given rise to the false characterization of God as “angry”… What the phrase does say is that all are under divine judgment by reason of the moral choices they have made and that these in turn are dictated by their warped nature. Moral accountability is at the heart of the Christian understanding of the human condition and must never be compromised” (Martin, *Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon*, 26-27).

183 So Lincoln notes, “This explanation of sin does not, however, do away with human responsibility, for in the next breath the writer can say that not only the readers, but all believers, were at one time those who chose not to obey, who instead gave their consent to the inclinations of the flesh, and who therefore fully deserved God’s wrath” (Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 117).

184 As Allen describes, “the correlations [between 1:20-23 and 2:1-10] show the author’s conviction that what God, who is the principal actor in both passages, has accomplished in Christ, he has also accomplished for believers. Christ’s exaltation above all the powers of the universe forms the basis of the believers’ resurrection and enthronement; it releases them from death in sins, from the powers of this world and the passions of their flesh” (Thomas G. Allen, “Exaltation and Solidarity with Christ: Ephesians 1:20 and 2:6,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 28 (1986): 104).

185 Again, Allen states, “Christ reveals God’s decision to love man because he is God’s decision to love man as God’s chosen representative for man, Man-elect… Christ, then, through his personhood and personal actions supplies to those who believe the necessary conditions, qualities, and relationships of a new life, a new corporate self-identity… To be included in Christ’s exaltation means also to enter into the corporate person that Christ is by virtue of providing through his own person and work a corporate self-identity to those with whom he is united” (Ibid., 27). Fowl suggests, “[T]he Ephesians have been liberated from their captivity to sin by means of their
tense, which is the only occurrence of σώζω in the perfect in the Pauline corpus\(^{186}\) is described as “by grace” (τῇ χάριτί) and “through faith” (διὰ πίστεως), which is “not of yourselves” (οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν) and is “not from works” (οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων). So the source of their salvation originates in God alone and occurs through faith.\(^{187}\) There is nothing within humanity that can affect their own resurrection from death, this is God’s gift alone to give. In fact, as frequently noted, the τοῦτο of Eph 2:8 indicates grammatically that the entirety of salvation is in view.\(^{188}\) The gift of salvation is merciful and gracious on God’s part because he owes no debt to humanity—or Israel for that matter—when they have rebelled against him as they have.\(^{189}\) God, in his mercy, however, has not responded to this unfaithfulness with rejection, but with grace. He calls into the realm of 

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\(^{186}\) Lincoln notes, “In Paul the verb σώζειν is normally found in the future tense and the noun σωτηρία in the future context (e.g., Rom 5:9, 10; 10:9, 13; 13:11; 1 Cor 3:15; 5:5), but there are also several reference to salvation as a present experience (cf. 1 Cor 1:18; 15:2; 2 Cor 2:15; 6:2; Phil 2:12)… For Paul, salvation does have past, present, and future aspects; and it would not be totally out of place for him to have used the perfect of σώζειν with its normal force of emphasizing the continuing present effect of a past action, as he does the perfect of other aspects of salvation in Rom 5:2; 6:7” (Andrew T. Lincoln, “Ephesians 2:8-10: A Summary of Paul’s Gospel?,” The Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 45 (1983): 620).

\(^{187}\) Neufeld suggests here, in keeping with Rom 3:22, 26 and Gal 2:16, 20, that πίστις may refer here not to the individual faith of believers, but rather to God’s own faithfulness, as in Eph 3:12. As he states, “It is better to interpret pîstis in the present instance as referring not so much to human trust in God, as important as that is, as to God’s faithfulness. This meaning suggests that salvation by grace is God’s way of keeping faith with the human community, including Gentiles, who have been under the oppression of evil. Such fidelity is, of course, more appropriate to covenantal relationships. But God reaches out to those who have either never been part of the covenantal relationship (Gentiles, 2:12) or who have broken it (Jews, 2:3; cf. the hymn fragment in 2 Tim. 2:13)” (Neufeld, Ephesians, 99-100). Cf. 3:12, 17. See also O’Brien, The Letter to the Ephesians, 174-175. The more common interpretation, however, is that individual faith is here in view.

\(^{188}\) See Ernest Best, Ephesians, International Critical Commentary (New York: T & T Clark, 2004), 226; Fowl, Ephesians, 78; Hoehner, Ephesians, 343; Lincoln, Ephesians, 112. Some have suggested this to mean that believers do not actually exercise faith apart from God regenerating them first. It is better, as Witherington suggests, that “[t]he work of salvation, including the gift of faith, is all the work and gift of God to the believer, it is not our own doing or striving, though certainly believers must exercise that gift of faith and appropriate its benefit. God will not and does not have or exercise faith for us” (Witherington, The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians, 256).

\(^{189}\) Fowl, Ephesians, 78; Lincoln, “Ephesians 2:8-10,” 622.
disobedience and offers salvation to those who will hear and respond.\textsuperscript{190} Salvation here is primarily seen as a transfer of realms, from the realm of oppression to freedom in Christ.\textsuperscript{191} Most suggest here that Paul’s statement that faith is not “from works” (οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων) here is not the typical Pauline expression of “works of the law,” but human effort in general.\textsuperscript{192} It is also worth noting here, however, that it is not justification in view, where Paul is concerned about covenantal status and the sufficiency of faith in Christ alone, but rather God’s work of the transference of the sinner to new life in Christ. That Paul is not against “good works” (ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς) is clear in that he affirms that those who are in Christ have been created for good works (Eph 2:9),\textsuperscript{193} echoing again the thought in 1:4 of God’s purpose for his people. In that these works were prepared beforehand is not indicative of a deterministic mindset in that believers must still “walk in them” (περιπατήσωμεν).\textsuperscript{194} Paul has thus established that salvation, for Jew and Gentile, is not “deserved,” but is given graciously by God, through (his) faith(fulness), in order that his people might walk in a way fitting of those in Christ.

Paul's final section makes explicit what has been implicit in Eph 1:3-2:10, that the Jews had temporal priority in salvation-history, but now, in Christ, all the fullness of God’s blessings to Israel are opened completely to Gentiles in the same way they are to the Jews. Paul begins

\textsuperscript{190} Neufeld, Ephesians, 96; Lincoln, Ephesians, 111.

\textsuperscript{191} Neufeld states, “Ephesians does not mention justification and speaks of salvation chiefly in the sense (and tense) of completion. In Ephesians, salvation has taken the place of justification. Being saved is viewed then primarily as liberation from the oppression of the ruler of the authority of the air in the present, however much such liberation is inextricably connected to the future inheritance (1:14, 18; 5:5)” (Neufeld, Ephesians, 98-99). See also Lincoln, “Ephesians 2:8-10,” 620.

\textsuperscript{192} Lincoln, “Ephesians 2:8-10,” 623; O’Brien, The Letter to the Ephesians, 177; Schreiner, Paul, 123.

\textsuperscript{193} So Fowl states, “The grammar here makes it clear that it is the works, rather than the humans, which God prepared beforehand” (Fowl, Ephesians, 80)

\textsuperscript{194} Thus Lincoln notes, “Even the living out of salvation in good works is completely by grace. But this is not a total determinism. God has prepared the good works in advance “in order that we might live in them.” The human activity of “walking” is still necessary; the actual living out of God’s purpose in the world has to take place” (Lincoln, Ephesians, 116).
with an explicit contrast between the Jews and Gentiles. Here Paul reminds them of their past status with 6 descriptors: “uncircumcision”\textsuperscript{195} (as they are called by the “so-called circumcision”), “apart from Christ,”\textsuperscript{196} “alienated from the citizenship of Israel,” “strangers to the covenants of promise,” “without hope,” and “without God.”\textsuperscript{197} As Gentiles, outside of Christ these Ephesian believers were cut off from the true God and his Messiah,\textsuperscript{198} and all the benefits which commitment to them entailed.\textsuperscript{199} The divisions between the two groups were pervasive and extensive,\textsuperscript{200} based primarily upon the hallmarks of Israel’s unique identity: the covenants, the Law, and the Messiah.\textsuperscript{201} Now, however, the Gentiles are in Jesus the Messiah, being brought “near,”\textsuperscript{202} with Christ having made the two groups one (Eph 2:13-14). He accomplished this, at

\textsuperscript{195} Lit. “foreskins.” It is worth noting that Paul never commanded Jews not to be circumcised, but only Gentiles. He did insist, however, that circumcision is useless for Jews as well if they are apart from Christ. As Weedman notes, “circumcision was still "there" and practiced by Jews, at least as a reminder to them, and here to Gentiles, that it was Israel who was the original "elect," the recipients of God's grace. The "circumcision" that Gentiles now enjoyed, one experienced by being "in Christ," was prefigured by the physical circumcision that Israel had observed. The subtle message is that these Gentiles are to recognize and appreciate that history” (Weedman, “Reading Ephesians from the New Perspective on Paul,” 87).

\textsuperscript{196} Neufeld notes, “Here without Christ is part of the inventory of what it means for gentiles not to have been Jewish: they were excluded from the community from whom and for whom the Messiah would come” (Neufeld, Ephesians, 109).

\textsuperscript{197} Lit. “atheist,” though Paul probably means that they did not worship the true God, not that they denied the existence of any god, which was rare in the ancient world (Lincoln, Ephesians, 138; Patzia, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, 191).

\textsuperscript{198} Lincoln suggests, “Christ is thought of as the messiah belonging to Israel and in retrospect as present to Israel through the promise” (Andrew T. Lincoln, “The Church and Israel in Ephesians 2,” Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 49 (1987): 610). See also Fowl, who sees the Messianic emphasis here as primary (Fowl, Ephesians, 87). Martin likewise recognizes the messianic importance here (Martin, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, 33).

\textsuperscript{199} See O’Brien, The Letter to the Ephesians, 187.


\textsuperscript{201} As Lincoln notes, “The laws which forbade eating or intermarrying with Gentiles often led Jews to have a contempt for Gentiles which could regard Gentiles as less than human. In response, Gentiles would often regard Jews with great suspicion, considering them inhospitable and hateful to non-Jews, and indulge in anti-Jewish prejudice” (Lincoln, Ephesians, 142). See also Martin, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, 35-36

\textsuperscript{202} Lincoln and O’Brien recognize that this is the traditional language used in Judaism to speak of proselytization (Lincoln, Ephesians, 139; O’Brien, The Letter to the Ephesians, 191).
least in part, by destroying the hostile wall which divided them by nullifying “the law of commandments in ordinances” (Eph 2:15). What exactly is meant by this phrase is unclear, but it seems unlikely that Paul here means that the Law was completely done away with, as this would contradict his writings in other places. What seems likely, and would be in keeping with his argument in Romans and Galatians, is that Paul understands that the people of God are no longer marked off by the Law, but rather by their incorporation in Christ. While the Torah itself contained no commandments which forbade Gentiles from becoming covenant members, this was only accomplished through their submission to circumcision and keeping of the Torah, something few Gentiles were interested in doing.

Finally, in light of their incorporation into the covenant community by being “in Christ Jesus,” Paul affirms that Jews and Gentiles have been reconciled to God, with the hostility being

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203 Gombis, following Best (Best, Ephesians, 256-57) and Hoehner (Hoehner, Ephesians, 371), takes this as a general reference to the division between Jews and Gentiles (Gombis, “Ephesians 2 as a Narrative of Divine Warfare,” 414). But clearly what created this division was the Torah’s regulations.

204 The dividing wall is sometimes thought to be the outer court of the temple (See Williamson, Ephesians, 71-72. Martin hints at this (Martin, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, 35)). Paul’s syntax here, however, seems to indicate that the “dividing wall,” “hostility,” and “the law of commandments in ordinances” are one in the same. This would fit also with what was above, where the covenants and circumcision were part of what Paul viewed separated Gentiles from the Jews. Others have taken this to be a reference to a certain portion of the Law, such as the ceremonial or cultic aspects (e.g., Patzia, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, 195). However, nothing in the text indicates that this is a reference to the ceremonial laws, and it is unlikely that Jews ever saw such divisions to the Law.

205 Weedman notes that Paul does not think of the Law as being completely done away with, and in using the phrase ἐν δόγμασιν, “he is qualifying law in a quite restrictive sense” (Weedman, “Reading Ephesians from the New Perspective on Paul,” 90).

206 O’Brien suggests this is best viewed in terms of nullifying the old covenant (O’Brien, The Letter to the Ephesians, 199). Weedman interprets this primarily in terms of boundary markers (Weedman, “Reading Ephesians from the New Perspective on Paul,” 91), and Capes seems to take a similar view (Capes, “Interpreting Ephesians 1-3,” 27). Neufeld notes that this Jewish author (be it Paul or another) generally views the Law positively throughout the letter, and it is unlikely that he would speak of the Law’s destruction (Neufeld, Ephesians, 115-116). Lincoln seems to create too much of an antithesis between Israel and the Gentiles as it relates to the “abolishment” of the Law. (Andrew T. Lincoln, “The Church and Israel in Ephesians 2,” Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 49 (1987): 605-624).
destroyed and Gentiles being “no longer strangers or foreigners” but “fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God” (Eph 2:19). Clearly Paul, again, views Jewish and Gentile believers as one corporate body in Christ. Paul, again, does not say explicitly that Gentile believers are now Israelites, and it may be that his declaration that they are fellow citizens has the “heavenly kingdom” in mind (cf. Eph 1:3, 20; 2:6; Phil 3:20; 2 Tim 4:18). Regardless, he is clear that Jews and Gentiles are now united to God in Christ, who alone provides access to God. Christ, through the Spirit, has made access to God equally available to both, and no longer primarily to the Jew. In this way, the election which first came to Israel is made universally accessible to Jew and Gentile alike through the work of God in Christ.

What Paul presents, then in Ephesians 1-2 is far more than an affirmation of individual election unto salvation and double predestination. Rather, as in Romans 9-11, the heart of Paul’s

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207 Neufeld notes that this designation was equally applied at times to Israel, particularly in Egypt and Babylon (cf. Ps 39:12; 1 Pet 1:1; 5:13), and thus “the ground for treating the outsider well is that Israel too was once paroikos, away from home” (Neufeld, Ephesians, 124-125).

208 As Lincoln describes, “But the readers are no longer completely without a homeland; they are no longer even second-class citizens in someone else’s homeland. They now have full citizenship in and belong firmly to a commonwealth, for they are fellow citizens with the holy ones” (Lincoln, Ephesians, 150).

209 As stated elsewhere, it is likely here that “saints” refers to Jewish believers. So Weedman states, “Again, the subtext is the same as before; the Gentile believers have come lately to the table; the “saints,” that is, Israel, were already at the meal” (Weedman, “Reading Ephesians from the New Perspective on Paul,” 85). Lincoln summarizes that five approaches have been taken concerning the “holy ones” in this verse: 1) Israel or the Jews, 2) Jewish Christians, 3) the first Christians, 4) all believers, or 5) the angels (Lincoln, Ephesians, 150). Of these options, however, that this refers to Jewish Christians has the best contextual support.

210 And so, contra Barth who suggests that all Jews, regardless of their acceptance of Christ, are a part of the people of God and that Gentile believers are incorporated into national Israel (Markus Barth, Israel and the Church: Contribution to a Dialogue for Peace (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2005), 95).

211 Fowl states, “One would expect, perhaps, that based on 2:12, Paul would assert that the Ephesians have been incorporated into Israel. Paul certainly seems to think that in Christ, Jews and Gentiles are incorporated into a reconstituted and redeemed Israel (Rom 9-11). That is not his point here, however. Rather than describe the national identity of Ephesians’ fellow citizens, Paul describes their status: they are holy” (Fowl, Ephesians, 97).

212 Neufeld states, “Access then has to do with special status of those who can enter into the innermost dwelling place of the sovereign God. This privilege was much more understandable for first-century readers of this text than for modern heirs to a piety that understands relationship to God in casual or even cozy terms. Both errant Jewish believers and unclean, sinful Gentiles can now, as a result of Christ’s work, walk together as one humanity into the very presence of God” (Neufeld, Ephesians, 123).
concern is the relationship of Jews and Gentiles in Christ. Whereas Paul dealt with Jewish privileges and the relationship of the Law to Jews and Gentiles in Christ in Romans, in Ephesians, Paul’s concern is with Gentile believers who have neglected to appreciate their dependence upon Israel.213 The privileges of election belonged first to Israel, and the first believers in Jesus the Messiah were Jews, who had temporal priority in the hearing of the gospel. This privilege came secondarily, temporally speaking, to the Gentiles through the work of Christ which removed the obstacle of the Law as the condition of election or the boundary marker of the people of God. Gentiles must, however, remember that they have become partakers of the inheritance which first came to Israel and was grated to them through Israel’s Messiah.214 Christ alone now stands as what identifies the true people of God, and those who are “in him,” who have heard the gospel and committed themselves to him, are the elect of God, Jews and Gentiles, and both inheritors of God’s covenant promises.

Summary of Election in Paul

As seen above, Paul’s most explicit discussions of election in Romans 9-11 and Ephesians 1-2 occur within the context of Jew/Gentile relations. Paul’s concern is to demonstrate

213 So, as Haberer states, “When the two chapters, 1:3 through 2:22, are read as a continuous dialogue between these two groups, we hear the writer introducing these Gentile upstarts to their Jewish forebears, teaching them about the central importance of the church’s foundation, which includes not only Christ Jesus but also the prophets and apostles—armed with law and gospel” (Haberer, “Ephesians 1:15-23,” 313). Likewise, Harvey affirms, “The Christian group is seen as a continuity from ancient “Israel”—part of the one people of God. Originally the members of this group came from those who could be called “the circumcision”, or “Jews”, a group very much aware of a tradition of relationship with God. Then Gentiles were welcomed into this group and became citizens with “Israel”” (Harvey, The True Israel, 232).

214 So Fowl states, “It appears that whether or not the Christians in Ephesus or elsewhere are subject to Judaizing pressures, they must understand themselves as Christians in relation to Israel and Israel’s God. They must understand their past as a Gentile past because that is God’s understanding of their past. Moreover, this understanding makes sense only in the light of God’s call of Israel; if there are no Jews, then there are no Gentiles. Christian identity requires the taking on or remembering of Gentile identity because Christian identity is always tied to Israel. This is not to say that Jewish identity is untouched by the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Far from it. Jewish identity is also radically reconceived in the light of Christ” (Fowl, Ephesians, 101).
that God has not abandoned his covenant with Israel, but rather has transformed it in Christ, making full access available to the Gentiles through faith in Christ alone. What now “marks off” the people of God is their relation to God’s Messiah.215 While the most frequent disagreement concerning election within the Jewish literature of the period was what halakhic requirements constituted the boundaries of God’s people, Paul radically affirms that it is not through ancestry or keeping the Law that the people of God are defined, which was a hindrance to the Gentiles’ access to God.216 This does not mean that the Torah is destroyed, for Paul still assumes that the Jews will keep it. But Torah-works are not required of Gentiles and are useless to those Jews who are not “in Christ” or who try to establish them as covenant boundaries. Thus faith is the condition of membership in God’s elect. God had, in fact, determined all along that this would be the case, rooting election in Israel and, through Israel’s Messiah, transforming it.

As in the Old Testament and Second Temple Judaism, election is correctly viewed as a corporate enterprise.217 Paul’s employment of “election language” is not indicative of double

215 Ridderbos states, “In this relation to Christ the church, too, has a place in this purpose of God and is its object. He has, so it is said in Ephesians 1:5, predestined us unto sonship through Jesus Christ in him. Similarly Romans 8:29 says that God predestined us to be conformed to the image of his Son, and Ephesians 1:11, that we have received the heritage in Christ, destined to that end according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will. In all these passages it is evident that the church was the object of God’s predestination and counsel in virtue of its belonging to Christ” (Ridderbos, Paul, 347). Witherington similarly states, “Election for Paul is a corporate thing. It was in ethnic Israel; it is now “in Christ.” From Paul’s viewpoint, which is simply an adaptation of views found in early Judaism, “election” does not guarantee the final salvation of individual Christian converts any more than it guaranteed the final salvation of individual Israelites in the past” (Witherington III, The Problem with Evangelical Theology, 63).

216 As Hellerman notes, however, the removal of these “badges” as identity markers of true God-fearers would have presented a great challenge to Jews of the period. As he states, “If the views revealed in 1-2 Maccabees and Jubilees prove at all representative, we can be assured of the presence of a vibrant cultural script in first-century Palestine, according to which Judeans would have interpreted early Christianity’s challenges to circumcision, Sabbath, temple, and the food laws as profound challenges to the dominant conviction that the national identity of the people of God must be preserved at any and all costs in the face of Gentile oppression and defilement” (Joseph Hellerman, “Purity and Nationalism in Second Temple Literature: 1-2 Maccabees and Jubilees,” Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 46:3 (2003): 421).

217 According to Wilks, ancient Israelites understood their identity more in terms of covenant community and corporate responsibility than in the highly individualized patterns of most of the Western world. It is this identification that John Wilks speaks of when he notes that in the Old Testament, “the primary reference point for the self-awareness of the individual is not of his- or herself as a unique, separate individual, but the community – the
predestination or individual election unto salvation.\textsuperscript{218} God has chosen a people and defined the “boundaries of membership,” which, through his work in the Messiah, is now trust in and commitment to God through Jesus alone. Those who reject God’s Messiah are thus cut off from covenant relationship with God, and can become a part of God’s people only through casting off their unbelief and disobedience and being transformed by God’s Spirit. God has thus, in Christ, broken down those nomistic barriers that caused hostility between Jews and Gentiles and has united them as one chosen people in Christ. The privileges of election came to Israel first, including their temporal priority in receiving the gospel, but Jewish and Gentile believers now both share in equal status in the renewed covenant God established through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. For Paul, then, election came to the Jew first, but this temporal priority should not be seen as a reason for boasting. Neither should the Gentile boast in their inheritance over the Jew, for without Israel and her Messiah, the Gentiles have no inheritance. Both are undeserving of God’s mercy and grace, and both receive his gift of salvation through faith in Christ alone.
SYSTEMATIC ISSUES AND CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The previous chapter has argued that Paul’s view of election, as viewed through the lenses of Second Temple Judaism, is best understood as corporate in nature, with membership within the elect people of God being conditioned upon faith in God’s Messiah. While the previous chapter dealt, at least in part, with exegetical objections to such an interpretation, it is the intent of this chapter to address two additional objections that are more systematic in nature. In doing so, it will demonstrate that a corporate model best explains Paul’s own thought and best fits within his Jewish context in the first century. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the research present and suggestions for further research.

Objection 1: Election of an “Empty Set,” or, the Absence of Individuals in Election

The first, and most common, objection to the concept of corporate election is that it is a meaningless election of an “empty set” or “empty class.” This objection states that if God chooses a group with no members (i.e., some individuals qua individuals are not chosen by God for salvation and others rejected), then God has not actually chosen anything at all.1 In other words, if God has not chosen certain persons to receive the gift of salvation (and thus others to not), than election is not really election.2 In this objection, for election to be “biblical” it must


2 So Demarest states, “The existence of an elect remnant within the chosen nation is the outcome of God’s sovereign and gracious purpose. God formed the remnant by a personal election within the corporate election to yield a spiritual seed within the institutional people” (Ibid., 131).
mean that God has chosen some individuals for salvation, and the collective of individuals then becomes the group of the elect.\(^3\)

First, this objection fails to take into account that a corporate view of election begins with the election of an individual: the corporate head. The narrative of election from the Old Testament to the New shows that the story of election began with God’s calling of Abraham and his decision to make a people for himself from Abraham’s seed (Gen 12-17). Abraham is thus the first corporate head in Israel’s story, and all who are identified with him can be called his children, and thus are among the people of God. This election is then narrowed through Isaac and Jacob, the theological ramifications of which Paul addresses in Romans 9 and were dealt with in chapter 5. From Jacob/Israel, then, comes the nation, and Jacob comes to serve as the central corporate head in the story of Israel’s election. It is then God’s Messiah, Jesus, who is chosen as the final and full corporate head, a choice which further narrows God’s elect but also serves to expand the body of the elect to the Gentiles.\(^4\) One sees, then, that God’s purposes in election do involve individuals, with the aforementioned corporate heads being historical individuals that

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\(^3\) So Grudem writes, “To talk about God choosing a group with no people in it is not biblical election at all. But to talk about God choosing a group of people means that he chose specific individuals who constituted this group” (Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 677).

\(^4\) It should be noted that this description is intended to serve as a narrative of election, not as a timeline of God’s electing activity.
become representatives of a group. Thus their election is not merely for their own sake, but for the sake of the group which they embody.

Second, as seen in the Second Temple literature surveyed and in Paul, to be “in” these corporate heads means to meet the necessary qualifications for membership in the elect body. The primary framework here is that of covenant. For Jewish writers of the period, this meant that those who kept the Law in the manner prescribed (which varied) were a part of the elect body. From the very beginning, election was not a nationalistic or ethnic concept, but a covenantal one. For Paul, as for his Jewish contemporaries, to be among the elect means to be in good standing in the covenant, which for Paul first and foremost means being “in Christ” through faith. It is in this way that individuals other than the corporate heads are identified with the elect body.

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5 So Abasciano writes, “Most simply, corporate election refers to the choice of a group, which entails the choice of its individual members by virtue of their membership in the group. Thus, individuals are not elected as individuals directly, but secondarily as members of the elect group… But the Bible's doctrine of corporate election unto salvation is even more nuanced than simply saying that the group is elected primarily and the individual secondarily. More precisely, it refers to the election of a group as a consequence of the choice of an individual who represents the group, the corporate head and representative” (Brian Abasciano, “Clearing up Misconceptions about Corporate Election,” Ashland Theological Journal 41 (2009): 60-61).

6 Again Abasciano writes, “In biblical thought, the corporate representative would be seen as embodying the people he represents from the beginning of his representative role, which is to say from the beginning of his election” (Abasciano, “Clearing up Misconceptions about Corporate Election,” 65). Shank also states, “The election of individual men cannot be isolated from “the church, which is his body” any more than it can be isolated from Christ Himself” (Robert Shank, Elect in the Son: A Study of the Doctrine of Election (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1989), 46).

7 See chapters 2 through 5.

8 So Abasciano writes, “As we have seen, individuals participate in the elect status of the elect body. They are truly elect, but only secondarily as members of the group. Here is the scandal of corporate election to modern individualistic sensibilities, which find it hard to grasp corporate ways of thinking: the group is primary and the individual secondary. It would seem that because the individual is not primary in the corporate view, Schreiner cannot see that people are involved at all, and therefore, the concept does not make sense to him. This suggests an inability to understand the corporate perspective, which was so prominent among the ancients, due to individualistic assumptions” (Brian J. Abasciano, “Corporate Election in Romans 9: A Reply to Thomas Schreiner.” Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society, Vol. 49, No. 2 (June 2006): 364; See also Abasciano, “Clearing up Misconceptions about Corporate Election,” 63); Shank, Elect in the Son, 48.

9 Thus Jewett is incorrect to suggest that “[i]t is especially in the New Testament that the individual aspect of election becomes prominent, and it is largely in terms of individual election that the doctrine has been discussed by theologians” (Paul K. Jewett, Election and Predestination (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.,
means, then, that there is a place for individuals in the corporate scheme, but this place is always secondary to the corporate body and in identification with the corporate representative.¹⁰

Third, this does not mean that the faith of the individuals in the corporate body must be predetermined as Schreiner suggests.¹¹ This aspect of the objection assumes that the group must be “pre-programmed” with individuals, but such is not the case. The notion of an elect body is never static in Second Temple texts, and clearly neither is it for Paul (cf. Rom 11). It is true that God has elected corporately, and that this election occurs through identification with Christ, the representative head, but this does not require that faith be predetermined. Schreiner here seems to assume that faith, if not given by God apart from any human activity, is a “work,” which, as chapter 5 demonstrated, is clearly not what Paul intended.¹² Paul neither disputes a conditional

¹⁰ Horton likewise misunderstands in stating of the corporate view that it holds that “All who accept Christ are saved (and therefore elect), but God does not elect anyone to salvation” (Michael S. Horton, For Calvinism (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 61). God elects those who are “in Christ,” and so he elects individuals, but this election is secondary to God’s election of the corporate head and his determination of being “in Christ” as the sphere and manner in which individuals become a part of the elect.

¹¹ He writes, “If God corporately elects some people to salvation, and the election of one group rather than another was decided before any group came into existence (9:11), and it was not based on any works that this group did or any act of their will (9:11-12, 16), then it would seem to follow that the faith of the saved group would be God's gift given before time began. But if the faith of any corporate entity depends upon God's predestining work, then individual faith is not decisive for salvation. What is decisive would be God's election of that group. In other words, the group elected would necessarily exercise faith since God elected this corporate entity. But if what I have said above is correct, then one of the great attractions of the corporate view of election vanishes. Many find corporate election appealing because God does not appear as arbitrary in electing some to salvation and bypassing others. But if corporate election is election unto salvation, and if that election determines who will be saved, then God is not any less arbitrary. It hardly satisfies to say that God did not choose some individuals to be saved and passed by others but that it is true that he chose one group to be saved and bypassed another group” (Thomas R. Schreiner, “Does Romans 9 Teach Individual Election unto Salvation? Some Exegetical and Theological Reflections,” Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society, 36.1 (March 1993): 36).

¹² Klein writes, “Only a Calvinist, or one who thinks like one at this point, would feel the force of this objection, for it assumes a determinist view of reality. That is, according to this kind of thinking, if God elects a group—the church—then since the members of that group are elect before the foundation of the world (in God’s foreknowledge), God must predetermine that each member of that group should come to faith” (William W. Klein,
view of the covenant nor disputes that “works” factor into the covenant. What Paul disputes is that the Law is decisive as a boundary marker for the people of God. He calls upon Jewish unbelievers to “obey the gospel” (Rom 10:16), and establishes that faith in God’s Messiah is the only decisive condition which determines who is “in” the people of God. Paul never states, or assumes, as do neither his Jewish contemporaries, that faith must be gifted from God with no volitional exercise on the part of the individual or else it must be considered a work. So, unless one assumes that exercising faith is a work (which Paul clearly does not), this aspect of the objection to the corporate model likewise fails.

Fourth, if election in the New Testament fails because of this objection, than so does the election of Israel in the Old Testament, which is clearly corporate in nature. The notion of

13 Of the Old Testament concept of covenant, which carries over into Paul’s thought, Willis argues correctly, “Christianity has long considered law extraneous to faith. But in Israel's faith, commandment is always in the context of covenant; that is, commands belong to, make possible, and function for a relationship of trust and submissiveness that is generous, but in which the two parties are not equal. Yahweh's commands intend justice for neighbor (as emphasized in Deuteronomy) and holiness in God's presence (as emphasized in P). This obliterates a distinction between conditional and unconditionality because when all is said and done Yahweh's commands are relational. Like every relationship rooted in trust, the covenant relationship between Yahweh and Israel (and individuals and nations) is conditional because Yahweh has large intentions that pertain to Israel and unconditional because Yahweh is utterly committed to Israel, all at the same time. The commanding authority of Yahweh is not coercive but generative, not repressive but emancipatory. Yahweh is the true subject of Israel's desire (Ps 73:25) so that Israel desires nothing but communion with Yahweh. This communion is rooted in obedience that is the first element of communion, so that Torah, or Law, obedience is Israel's true desire. Life is fundamentally relational, and the God who is the source of life's relatedness is the God who commands. Yahweh is sovereign of Israel and simultaneously is passionately committed to Israel as a husband is committed to his wife. Yahweh and Israel are covenant partners. Yahweh commits himself totally to Israel and in response expects Israel to be faithful to him. Hence, Israel is obligated to respond to and meet Yahweh's expectations” (John T. Willis, “Mediating Conditional and Unconditional Promises in the Hebrew Bible,” Restoration Quarterly 54:1 (2012): 45-46).

14 So Maston argues, “Any claim that prioritises (sic) the human must be rejected and any view that eliminates the human must also be dismissed. This latter point is significant for how one construes Pauline soteriology. It cannot be reduced to the claim that salvation is accomplished solely by God apart from the human. Paul’s view of divine action takes up within itself the human agent. The whole of salvation can be attributed to neither at the expense of the other” (Jason Maston, Divine and Human Agency in Second Temple Judaism and Paul: A Comparative Study (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 178).

15 See Klein, “Is Corporate Election Merely Virtual Election? A Case Study in Contextualization.” Furthermore, when election is not viewed corporately, two elections of Israel must be postulated: 1) a corporate, political election of the nation and 2) an individual, salvific election of individuals within Israel, a distinction that
election in the Old Testament is a corporate one, in which the nation of Israel (with Jacob as its corporate head) is chosen and individual Israelites may commit apostasy and lose their status among the elect. And such is also the view of Jews within the Second Temple literature. The corporate-primary view thus finds support in both the Old Testament and in Second Temple Judaism, while the individual-primary view must be seen as a stark departure from the Jewish mindset concerning election, which would be an unlikely one for Paul and would require more evidence than what is typically provided. In other words, if Paul were breaking from the typical Jewish formulation of election as corporate, he would have needed to be far more explicit in order to effectively communicate this to his audience.

Fifth, to make clear again that membership in the elect is conditional in Paul, the apostle never refers to some individuals as “elect” prior to their incorporation in Christ. In the individual model which asserts that the election of specific individuals is a pre-determined matter, one might expect that the apostle would recognize that some individuals can be called “elect” based on God’s choice of them before creation, but such language is only ever applied to believers in the Old Testament and Judaism do not maintain and which cannot easily be extrapolated from Paul’s writings (Moo, for example, speaking of Romans 9-11, writes, “But it is important to distinguish between this general (and nonsalvific) corporate election of Israel and the salvific individual election of 9:6-29 and 11:5-7” (Douglas J. Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996), 559 n.24; 675)). It is better to speak of a “true Israel,” which was a well-established concept in Judaism and fits well within Paul’s thought as well. Those are truly of God’s elect people are those who fulfill the conditions of the covenant (variously defined), and not a special sub-group who God gives these conditions while withholding them from others.

16 Even Piper seems to acknowledge that election in the Old Testament is conceived of in a corporate sense in stating that “the eternal salvation of the individual as Paul teaches it is almost never the subject of discussion in the OT” (John Piper, The Justification of God: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Romans 9:1-23 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1993), 64).

17 Ironically, Horton, in arguing for individual election, states, “God’s sovereign election of people from every nation to form his church in no way supplants Israel. Rather, it is an enlarging of Israel’s tent, which was announced by Israel’s prophets” (Horton, For Calvinism, 55). The tent metaphor provides a good analogy for a corporate model of election!
Christ in Paul’s writings. So the blessings and status of “elect” never comes or is applied to an individual prior to their incorporation into the corporate body, which occurs through their identification with and faith in Christ, the corporate head.

Thus, it seems that this first objection holds only if one assumes *a priori* that election must follow a certain pattern (i.e., an individual one). The notion of a corporate representative as it relates to the concept of election was well known and frequently utilized both in the Old Testament and the New. That Paul uses such a concept to define God’s work of election is clear. Individuals are among the “elect” through their faith in God’s Messiah, and thus their incorporation into the elect body is a conditional one. Such a view is consistent with the basic framework of election in the Old Testament and within Second Temple Jewish writings. The status of “elect” is only ever applied to those who are already members of the elect people, and never to a theoretical group who God chose to bestow faith upon before creation. As such, the first objection that corporate election is meaningless or excludes individuals fails unless one has already assumed *a priori* that election unto salvation must be primarily individual and a part of God’s eternal decree to give faith to some individuals and not to others.

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18 As Abasciano recognizes, “When believers come to be in Christ by faith, they come to share in his history, identity, and destiny” (Abasciano, “Clearing up Misconceptions about Corporate Election,” 67).

19 So, when Schreiner states, “it must follow that when God chooses the group, no one is yet in the group. One cannot be part of the group before it is formed! And corporate election cannot mean that God simply recognizes those who believe, for then the word "election" is completely stripped of its meaning, and the notion of God choosing is erased from the word” (Thomas R. Schreiner, “Corporate and Individual Election in Romans 9: A Response to Brian Abasciano,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 49.2 (2006): 378), it can first be stated that corporate election begins with the representative head. Second, to state that such a concept “strips” election of its meaning can only be true if one already makes some assumptions about election that contradict the position, regardless of the biblical evidence for the view.
Objection 2: Corporate Election Empties God of His Sovereignty, or, Human Activity is Unduly Elevated in Corporate Election

The second objection frequently levied at a corporate view of election is that the view does not do sufficient justice to God’s sovereignty, or that it elevates human activity and contradicts the notion that salvation is “by grace” alone. In this objection it is thought to fail more or less because it does not fit within the framework of divine determinism or within a deterministic concept of God’s sovereignty or foreknowledge. This may include the objection that God is not free or sovereign in such a system, or that God’s will in corporate election is dependent upon human action.

Such an objection, of course, rests upon a particular view of God’s sovereignty and not the doctrine of God’s sovereignty per se. The sovereignty of God can be conceived of in several different ways, many of which are quite conducive toward a corporate view of election. Thus what this objection actually states is that it does not fit within a certain kind of scheme of sovereignty, namely that of divine determinism. There are good reasons to believe, however, that divine determinism is neither a necessary nor an adequate representation of the biblical descriptions of God’s interactions with humanity. For this study, this objection fails if any of the non-deterministic views of God’s sovereignty are plausible or probable.

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20 Baugh then is typical in objecting, “Let us say in passing that “corporate election” substitutes a divine, hypothetical theorizing for the personal, committed knowledge of God in the Scripture passages that we have carefully examined. It is like saying that I foreknow and choose as my heirs my great-great-grandchildren whose very existence I have no way of accurately ascertaining given the vicissitudes of libertarian wills and the chance universe implied by Socinianism” (S. M. Baugh, “The Meaning of Foreknowledge,” in Still Sovereign: Contemporary Perspectives on Election, Foreknowledge, and Grace, ed. Thomas R. Schreiner and Bruce A. Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 199).

21 It is not within the scope of this project to address those reasons. For critiques of a deterministic interpretation of the Bible or causal determinism in general, see Jeremy A. Evans, “Reflections on Determinism and Human Freedom,” in Whosever Will: A Biblical-Theological Critique of Five-Point Calvinism, ed. David L. Allen and Steve W. Lemke, 253-274 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2010); William Lane Craig, Ron Highfield, and Gregory A. Boyd, “Responses,” in Four Views on Divine Providence, ed. Stanley N. Gundry and Dennis W. Jowers,
Further, it is simply not the case that corporate election is “hypothetical,” for God chooses both the corporate heads, and those who are “in” them. That this election is conditional does not mean that God has only hypothetically elected. Additionally, if positing a traditional view of God’s foreknowledge, God knows who will, by faith in Jesus Christ, become a part of the corporate body of his people. If God freely chooses the corporate head and freely chooses to elect those who are in him (i.e., chooses the condition), nothing about this view impinges upon God’s freedom. If God establishes the condition, then he has sovereignly ordained the process and the corporate head. This does not mean that he also must choose specific individuals to “fill” the corporate body


23 There are, of course, several ways to conceive of God’s foreknowledge outside of a deterministic approach, such as a “simple” view of foreknowledge or a middle-knowledge or Molinist view (for examples, see James K. Beilby and Paul R. Eddy, ed., Divine Foreknowledge: Four Views (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001). Generally speaking, the “openness” view denies that God has foreknowledge, or at least exhaustive foreknowledge, in contradiction to traditional depictions.

24 Contra Hoehner who writes, “It does not mean that God chose us through faith in Christ (διὰ τῆς εἰς αὐτὸν πίστεως) as suggested by Chrysostom because this would destroy God’s freedom of choice. If this were the case, believers by their faith would have a legal claim whereby God must choose them” (Harold W. Hoehner, Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 176). See Abasciano, “Clearing up Misconceptions about Corporate Election,” 75.
(such an expectation is non sequitur), and that if he does not (i.e., if he leaves humans free in their decision), he is somehow not free in his decision to do so.\textsuperscript{25}

Neither does this mean that God merely acquiesces to human choices or freedom in such a system.\textsuperscript{26} If God freely chooses that Christ, the Elect One, represents the true sphere of salvation, and that those who have faith in Him are integrated into the elect body, he is constrained by nothing but his free choice to do so. God has not caused these human choices, but he has determined the parameters by which the “condition” of election is met, and he has chosen so of his own free initiative. God is sovereign in his determination of the means and manner of election, and such a view is fitting in a covenant understanding of God’s relationship with humanity. Furthermore, salvation is accomplished through the work of the Messiah, the corporate head, and not through the response of those who appropriate this work through faith.\textsuperscript{27}

This second objection, then, also rests on the \textit{a priori} assumption that divine determinism is the only proper view of God’s sovereignty, and thus any doctrinal position which is contrary to such a view must be incorrect. The objectors, of course, do not describe the objection in this way, but rather state that the view impinges upon God’s sovereignty or freedom. This simply, however, is not the case. More accurately, the view only impinges upon a deterministic or meticulous sovereignty position as it relates to God’s will. The corporate view of election,

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\textsuperscript{25} Again, this objection obtains only if one presupposes a certain view of God’s sovereignty.
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\textsuperscript{26} Contra Keathley who writes of corporate election that “God decrees to elect the church as a corporate body, and those individuals who choose Christ are then viewed as the elect, while those who reject Him are reprobate. In this respect Arminians view God’s decree as the mere ratification of human choices” (Kenneth Keathley, \textit{Salvation and Sovereignty: A Molinist Approach} (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2010), 141-142).
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\textsuperscript{27} Abasciano writes, “I would argue that as far as election is concerned, it is the Savior and corporate elector who is decisive for the act of saving. For he is the one who has sovereignly planned, initiated, and executed the whole plan of salvation. He is the one who has sovereignly laid down the conditions for salvation, provided for salvation, and the one who actually saves. Without him, there absolutely can be no people or salvation. That he gives us a genuine choice in whether we will receive the salvation that he offers in the gospel is entirely in his control and at his discretion” (Abasciano, “Clearing up Misconceptions about Corporate Election,” 76).
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however, is compatible with a range of possible views of God’s sovereignty outside of divine determinism.

Advantages of the Corporate View of Election

It is thus argued that the typical objections to a corporate view of election do not defeat the view. There are also several advantages to the corporate view of election. First, and perhaps foremost in this study, the corporate view of election is consistent with Jewish beliefs concerning the nature of election. The Old Testament evidences a primarily corporate view of election, as does also the Jewish literature examined in this study. It is worth reminding that the New Testament is a primarily Jewish document, written primarily by Jews who came to believe in Jesus as Israel’s Messiah. Indeed Paul, a well-trained Pharisee, steeped in Jewish tradition, would have been quite familiar with such a conception, and evidence that this was his own view has been presented in chapter 5. The evidence is heavy in favor of the corporate view, and so Abasciano rightly states, “The burden of proof should lie on those who would claim that Paul departed from this standard biblical and Jewish conception of election.”

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28 Abasciano states, “The individual dimension of election refers to the elect status of the individual and possession of the blessings of election by the individual as a result of God's choice of the group, just as it clearly did in the Old Testament for Israel, the people of God” (Abasciano, “Clearing up Misconceptions about Corporate Election,” 75).


30 Klawans suggests that Josephus’s description of the Pharisees is a “partial determinism that attributes all things to providence, but only some to fate, in order to allow for a truly two-sided free will” (Jonathan Klawans, Josephus and the Theologies of Ancient Judaism (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 90) in that “fate” describes in terms of the notion that “all events are planned, by God, in advance and proceed according to plan in such a way that human freedom to choose is challenged,” while “providence” describes “a God who justly and caringly rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked” (Idem, 47-48). In the Pharisaical view, then, God determines certain things and leaves other things to human activity. Clearly, this is Paul’s framework as well, and the basic framework of Second Temple Judaism.

31 Abasciano, “Corporate Election in Romans 9,” 356.
Second, a corporate view of election maintains a covenantal framework and is thus consistent with the Old Testament. This means there is no need to posit two or three elections in salvation history. God has chosen to create a people and has narrowed the identity of this people, first to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and finally to Jesus, whose work paradoxically expanded the scope of God’s election to the Gentiles. The “renewed” covenant effected in Christ is no longer Torah-focused as was God’s covenant with Israel. The Torah became a hindrance to fulfilling God’s purpose in election, which was to bless the nations through Abraham, a purpose accomplished in Christ.

Third, a corporate view of election is Christocentric. This view recognizes Christ as the locus of election. As God’s “Elect One,” he is the chosen sphere and means of election for both Jew and Gentile. The work of salvation was accomplished in Christ, and all the blessings it has created through his vindication are fully available to those who are “in him.” God’s choice of Christ as the locus of election was a choice made before creation was formed, and thus God’s plan for his people to be conformed to the image of his Beloved Son and to be adopted as sons and daughters was eternal.\textsuperscript{32}

Finally, a corporate view of election fully recognizes both the sovereignty of God and the freedom of humanity. God has sovereignly determined the sphere in which the election of his people would ultimately and fully take place (Christ), and has determined the “condition” by which individuals are appropriated into the corporate people of God (faith in Christ). In his

\textsuperscript{32} Abasciano writes, “This actually helps clarify how it is that the Church was chosen before the foundation of the world. The election of Christ, the pre-existent corporate head of the Church, before the foundation of the world entails the election of the Church because he is the corporate head and representative of the Church, and what is true of him as their representative is also true of them, his body. This is similar to the fact that Israel was chosen in Abraham/Isaac/Jacob before the nation ever existed (cf. the way Levi paid tithes in Abraham according to Heb 7:9-10). It is not that the people of Israel were somehow literally existent in Abraham, but the choice of the corporate representative necessarily includes the choice of the corporate entity he represents” (Abasciano, “Corporate Election in Romans 9,” 367).
sovereign plan, however, God has allowed individuals the freedom to accept or reject Israel’s Messiah. This is not to say, on Paul’s terms, that salvation is dependent on “works,” for God planned and accomplished everything involved in his work of election: the sphere, the purpose, and the condition. The faith of the individual, however, is decisive, and their decision is real.

Concluding Observations

This study has argued that the most contextually appropriate way to envision Paul’s discussion of election is through a primarily corporate model. Chapter 1 examined the current state of studies examining Second Temple Jewish concepts of election, noting the various emphases regarding the national or remnant focus of election and upon the unconditional or conditional nature of election. The approach of this study was to examine Paul’s framework through the writings of Second Temple Judaism, in particular through those writings written before 70 CE, which most likely would represent the Jewish thought during Paul’s time or have possible influence upon him. The Pauline texts selected were chosen because of their heavy presence among discussions of the New Testament doctrine of election.

In chapter 2 Jewish texts written before 100 BCE were examined. It was determined that several emphases were present in the literature. First, instances of individual election were found either to focus upon the role or character of the individual or upon their function as a corporate representative. The image of election presented was consistently a corporate and conditional one, with one’s status within the elect people of Israel dependent upon their faithfulness to the covenant stipulations. In these texts, either implicitly or explicitly, only a portion of Jews were deemed to be among the elect, with outsiders generally being such because of their violation or forsaking of the covenant without repentance. What constituted a violation of the covenant,
however, varied, and included issues related to proper circumcision, general piety, Sabbath observance, ritual purity, intermarriage with Gentiles, sexual immorality, proper calendar observance, and support of the Hasmoneans. Thus, the primary disagreement was over the proper “boundary” of the covenant people as defined by the various interpretations of the Torah.

Chapter 3 discussed those Jewish texts which were written between 100 BCE and the turn of the era. Within these texts, the tension between the grace and mercy of God and the responsibility of his people was noted. It was suggested that, in general, God is merciful because he responds to Israel’s repentance of their sin even though he is not obligated to do. It was suggested again that a covenantal framework here explains the tension in that God is free, based upon the covenant stipulations, to abandon and reject Israel because of their sin, but his decision not to do so is based solely in his character, not upon any deservingness in Israel. Though “deterministic” statements were present in some literature of this period, it was observed that absolute determinism was not an appropriate category. Typically deterministic descriptions identified that God had pre-ordained his plan, but never the individual responses of humans. The necessity of volitional response was consistently present throughout all texts of the period. It was also noted that the chief polemic against the wicked was frequently against the Jews or Jewish leadership, again evidencing that the best understanding of God’s election of Israel was a corporate and conditional one. Again the main distinction between the various texts was upon what constituted proper standing in the covenant. Here again the notion of general piety was present, while a more particular requirement of membership in the elect community at Qumran was also seen.

In chapter 4 it was again suggested that a corporate and conditional view of election best explained the evidence in the texts of the period, which were more or less dated from the turn of
the era to 70 CE. Throughout the literature, it was the pious and faithful who were counted among the elect, and not Israel from a national or ethnic perspective. The “outsiders” again frequently included Jews, and repentance and obedience were seen as hallmarks of the true people of God. While general sins of violence, deceit, or oppression were often levied against the wicked, specific halakhic issues were also noted, such as idolatry, rejection of the law, calendar observance, and intermarriage or sexual immorality. Even when a majority of Jews were unfaithful to the covenant, God remained faithful. This did not mean, however, that all individual Jews would be saved, but rather that God would not revoke his promises to his elect, no matter how few their numbers.

Chapter 5 examined three key Pauline texts in the discussion of his “doctrine” of election: 2 Thess 2:13-14; Rom 8:28-11:36; Eph 1-2. These texts were examined against the backdrop and framework of Second Temple Judaism, clearly Paul’s own background. The most extensive discussions of election in Paul occurred in the context of Jew/Gentile relations. It was argued that Paul’s primary concern was to show Israel’s place in the people of God after the revelation of God’s Messiah or the dependence of the Gentiles upon Israel for their standing in Christ. Paul argued, contrary to his Jewish contemporaries, that the only thing that marked off the boundary of God’s people was their relationship to his Messiah, and not ethnic heritage or keeping the Law. This did not mean that the Torah was destroyed, but rather that it is not a requirement for Gentiles to enter God’s people and that observing it apart from identification with Jesus is pointless. It was likewise argued that Paul, like his Jewish contemporaries, saw election as a primarily corporate enterprise, and not through the lens of individual double predestination unto salvation. The boundary of God’s people was his Messiah, and those who are “in him,” those who respond to the call of the gospel with faith, are incorporated into the people of God. Those
who reject God’s Messiah, whether Gentiles or Jews, stand outside of the covenant and thus are apart from the blessings of the covenant. Though the privileges of election came first to Israel, through Christ Gentiles became equal inheritors of the covenant promises and blessings, a privilege for which Gentiles should be grateful and not use as a ground for boasting. Thus, election is found “in Christ,” and those who obey the gospel of God’s Messiah are elect “in him,” and recipients of the blessings he obtained through the work which he accomplished.

In chapter 6, two objections to a corporate view of election were addressed. First, in addressing the claim that corporate election is only an election of an “empty group,” several objections were raised. First, corporate election always take place through identification with a corporate head, which for Paul is ultimately Christ. Second, identification with the corporate head means that those who are “in him” also receive the blessings which the corporate head has procured. Thus those “in Christ” are chosen and blessed by God through faith. Third, this faith need not be seen as predetermined, and such an assumption is only valid for those already committed to divine determinism. Fourth, corporate election in the New Testament is tied to the corporate election of the Old Testament. Fifth, the “elect” are only called so after they have exercised faith, and thus Paul knows of no predetermined, but not yet actualized, group of the elect. God may have foreknowledge of those who will by faith be elected, but this is a different matter. The second objection stated that corporate election does not adequately account for God’s sovereignty, but again such an objection was seen to be necessary only for those committed to divine determinism. God’s freedom and sovereignty are present and active in the corporate view, and other conceptions of divine sovereignty and foreknowledge are available outside of deterministic perspectives. It was finally noted that several distinct advantages are found within the corporate view. First, such a view is in keeping with Jewish beliefs about
election found in the Old Testament and in Second Temple Jewish literature. A corporate view of
election also recognizes the covenantal framework of election and is Christocentric in nature.
Finally, it was argued that a corporate view of election does proper justice to the biblical witness
of the sovereignty of God and the freedom of humanity. Thus Paul heartily affirms that God has
chosen to elect his people “in Christ,” an election which is corporate, conditionally realized
through faith in Christ, and historically availed to the Jew first, though Gentiles are now full
covenant members through God’s work in his Messiah.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study has suggested that a corporate model of election best explains Paul’s
arguments in light of the background of Jewish beliefs about election. The study was, however,
focused solely on the Pauline texts and the background of texts prior to 70 CE. If such a model is
a fruitful explanation of Pauline texts, it may also be fruitful as well for other texts in the New
Testaments. The Gospels, in particular, appear to lend themselves to such a view, with the
Gospels of Matthew and John seeming to employing imagery and themes common to Jewish
thought patterns. Further and more fruitful exploration may also be found in expanding the scope
of Jewish literature beyond 70 CE since not all of the New Testament was composed by that
point. Later writings may show additional trends and patterns that provide a helpful backdrop for
understanding the New Testament. It is clear, however, from this study that there is still much to
be learned of the message of the New Testament by viewing it through the framework of Second
Temple Judaism.
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