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CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE PEOPLE OF GOD

A Study Based on Acts 15 and Other Relevant Passages in Acts

by

MARGARET RUTH DIFFENDERFER

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CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE PEOPLE OF GOD

A Study Based on Acts 15 and Other Relevant Passages in Acts

by Margaret Ruth Diffenderfer

This thesis is an exegetical and redactional study of the requirements for membership in the people of God stated in Acts 15:1-29 primarily and other passages in Acts by way of reference. It argues that membership, i.e. salvation, for both Jews and Gentiles depends without distinction on a personal commitment to Jesus and a faithfulness to God expressed in terms of the Old Testament covenants. It posits as well, given the pericope's structural and theological centrality in Acts, that for Luke the people of God manifest, on the one hand, a continuity with the Israel established by the Old Testament covenants which is interpreted in terms of the disjunctive effect of God's salvation in Jesus and, on the other, a diversity of belief and practice which is governed by a unity expressed uncompromisingly in terms of faith in Jesus and faithfulness to God's covenants.

The study is divided into six chapters, following the order of the events and speeches in Acts 15. In the Introduction the debate is related to the event initiating the council (Acts 15:1-5), i.e. the Judaizers' demand that circumcision and keeping the law were necessary for salvation, and to the earliest apostolic proclamation (Acts 2-5). Peter's response (Acts 15:7-11)--that faith in Jesus had determined the Gentiles' salvation just as faith, not the law, had brought the Jewish Christians the experience of salvation--is discussed, in Chapter I, in light of Cornelius's conversion (Acts 10:1-11:18). Chapter II deals with Barnabas's and Paul's relation to the Hellenists and Paul's exhortation that justification is by faith (13:38-39). It examines the purpose of the conciseness of Barnabas's and Paul's contribution to the debate (15:12) and proposes that the comment serves not only to depict the missionaries' presence at the council but more importantly to highlight the Jerusalem apostles' approval of uncircumcised believers. James's speech (15:13-21), Chapter III, argues from Amos 9:11-12 that the inclusion of the Gentiles is related to God's act of re-establishing Israel but in no way signifies Israel's possession of the Gentiles; thereby is developed the somewhat paradoxical thesis of freedom from the law and responsibility to Judaism. Chapter IV concerns the consensus reached (15:23-29)--the Gentiles' freedom from the law and the need for the four prohibitions--and it suggests, on the basis of the textual variant in 15:20; 15:29; and 21:25, the legal background of the four injunctions, and Luke's description of the decree elsewhere (15:31; 16:4; 21:25), that the four prohibitions are ecclesiastical *halakhoth* based on the Jewish law and are to be obeyed as law is to be obeyed. The study concludes with an examination of how, as the Pauline mission carried the gospel further away from Jerusalem, the church welcomed Jewish and Gentiles converts. Particular attention is given to Paul's message of salvation and the stories in Acts 15:36-41; 16:1-3; 18:24-19:7; and 21:17-26. There are also discussions of James's position in the Jerusalem church (Chapter III), of the relation between Acts 15 and Acts 11:1-18 (Chapter IV), and of the significance of Luke's use of οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν and οἱ σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν for the class of people termed "God-fearers" (Appendix).

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I certify that the material of this thesis is the product of my own research. It includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration, nor has any part of it been submitted for a degree in this or in any other university.

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PREFACE

The written work is completed. All that remains is the happy task of acknowledging publicly my considerable indebtedness to those whose labours assisted me in accomplishing this research.

I would like to thank, first of all, my supervisor, Professor C. K. Barrett, who has been a source of valuable information and patient advice. He gave to a novice unstintingly of his time, above and beyond what duty required; set an admirable and desirable example of academic integrity; taught me the value of knowing the primary sources; and through probing questioning fostered renewed vigour for the task. To experience such expertise and generosity has been an inestimable and enviable privilege. My gratitude to Professor Barrett would be sadly deficient without a corresponding word of thanks to Mrs. Barrett. Her genuine interest and warm hospitality sustained and enhanced the many day-long supervisions. The brownies were but a small repayment.

I would also like to express my appreciation to those who made this course of study financially possible: Wilson College and Tyndale House, for entrusting me with scholarships; St. John's College, University of Durham, for appointing me to the tutorial staff; and my parents, for providing unfailing encouragement.

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Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to the memory of my father, James W. Diffenderfer. He taught me, by word and example, faith in Jesus Christ and faithfulness to God.

ABBREVIATIONS

For textual abbreviations see LSJ and Journal of Biblical Literature "Instructions to Contributors" (1980).

Citations in the Septuagint which differ from the Masoretic and English texts are listed first, the Hebrew or English being given in brackets (for example, Jer 38[31]:19).

Standard commentators on Acts are cited by surname as follows:

Alexander
Alford
Bauernfeind
Bengel
Bruce (Greek)
Bruce (NIC)
Calvin
Chrysostom (*Hom.*)
Conzelmann
Foakes-Jackson
Haenchen
Hanson
Holtzmann
Jacquier
Knowling
Lake and Cadbury (*Beginnings* vol. 4)
Lampe
Loisy
Longenecker
Lumby
Marshall
Munck
Neil
Overbeck
Page
Preuschen
Rackham
Roloff
Ropes (*Beginnings* vol. 3)
Schille
Schlatter
Schneider
Stählin
Weiser
Wendt
Wikenhauser
Williams

In the interests of space, bibliographic entries in the footnotes are cited by author, title, date of publication, and page number. For full details, see Bibliography.

Articles in *TDNT*, *TWAT*, etc. are cited intially by author and first word; those in *NIDNTT*, by author, English heading, and appropriate Greek subheading. Subsequent references are given only by the author and the relevant volume.

Actes-Kremer	*Les Actes des Apôtres. Tradition, rédaction, théologie*, edited by J. Kremer (Glembloux: J. Duculot, 1979).
Aegyptus	*Aegyptus. Rivista italiana di egittologia e di papirologia.*
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung*, Part II: *Principat*, edited by H. Temporini and W. Haase (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1972-).
APOT	*The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 2 vols., edited by R. H. Charles (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913).
AusBR	*Australian Biblical Review.*
AUSS	*Andrews University Seminary Studies.*
BAGD	*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, by W. Bauer, translated and revised by W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker, 2nd English ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).
BDB	*A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, based on the lexicon of W. Gesenius as translated by E. Robinson, by F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953).

BDF	*A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, by F. Blass and A. Debrunner, translated and revised by R. W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961).
Beginnings	*The Beginnings of Christianity*, Part I: *The Acts of the Apostles*, 5 vols., edited by F. J. Foakes-Jackson and K. Lake (London: Macmillan & Co., 1920-33).
Bib	*Biblica.*
BJRL	*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library.*
BSNTS	*Bulletin, Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas.*
Burton	*Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek*, by E. D. Burton, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1898).
BZ	*Biblische Zeitschrift.*
CBQ	*The Catholic Biblical Quarterly.*
CIJ	*Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaicarum*, 2 vols., edited by J.-B. Frey (Rome: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 1936, 1952).
ClassR	*Classical Review.*
Cremer	*Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek* (and Supplement), 2 vols., by H. Cremer, translated by W. Urwick, 3rd English ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1883-86).
CRINT	*Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum*, Sec. 1: *The Jewish People in the First Century*, 2 vols., edited by S. Safrai, M. Stern, et al. (Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp., 1974, 1976).
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls.
EncJud	*Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 16 vols., edited by C. Roth and G. Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1972).
esp.	especially.
ET	English translation.
ETL	*Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses.*
EvQ	*The Evangelical Quarterly.*
EvT	*Evangelische Theologie.*
Exp	*The Expositor.*
ExpTim	*The Expository Times.*
FS	Festschrift.
FV	*Foi et Vie.*
Grimm-Thayer	*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, based on Grimm's Wilke's *Clavis Novi Testament*, translated by J. H. Thayer, 4th ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901).
GT	German translation.
HDB	*A Dictionary of the Bible*, 5 vols., edited by J. Hastings (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1900-4).
HistJud	*Historia Judaica.*
HTR	*The Harvard Theological Review.*
IBS	*Irish Biblical Studies.*
IDB	*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, 5 vols., edited by G. A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962).
IM	*Istanbuler Mitteilungen.*
ISBE	*The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 5 vols., edited by J. Orr (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1939).
ISBE-rev	*The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 3 vols. (A-P), edited by G. W. Bromiley, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979-).
JAC	*Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum.*
JB	Jerusalem Bible.
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature.*
JES	*Journal of Ecumenical Studies.*
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society.*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies.*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review.*

JRS	*The Journal of Roman Studies.*
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period.*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament.*
JSocS	*Jewish Social Studies.*
JTS	*The Journal of Theological Studies.*
KJV	King James Version.
LPGL	*A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, edited by G. W. H. Lampe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961).
LSJ	*A Greek-English Lexicon*, by H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, revised by H. S. Jones, 9th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940).
LuTJ	*Lutheran Theological Journal.*
LV	*Lumière et Vie.*
LXX	*Septuagint*, edited by A. Rahlfs (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesell - schaft, 1935).
MAMA	*Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua*, 8 vols., edited by W. M. Calder et al., (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1928-62).
Metzger	*A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, by B. M. Metzger (New York: United Bible Societies, 1971).
MM	*The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament. Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-literary Sources*, by J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1930).
Moffatt	*A New Translation of the Bible Containing the Old and New Testa - ments*, by J. Moffatt, rev. ed. (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1935).
Moule	*An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek*, by C. F. D. Moule, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959).
Moulton	*A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 4 vols., by J. H. Moulton (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908-76). Vol. 1: *Prolegomena*, by J. H. Moulton. Vol. 2: *Accidence and Word-Formation*, by J. H. Moulton and W. F. Howard. Vol. 3: *Syntax*, by N. Turner. Vol. 4: *Style*, by N. Turner.
MS(S)	Manuscript(s).
MT	Masoretic text, *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, edited by K. Elliger and W. Rudolf (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967/77).
NEB	New English Bible.
Nestle-Aland^{24}	*Novum Testamentum Graece*, edited by E. Nestle and K. Aland, 24th ed. (Stuttgart: Privilegierte Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1960).
Nestle-Aland^{26}	*Novum Testamentum Graece*, edited by K. Aland et al., 26th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1979).
NIDNTT	*The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, 3 vols., edited by C. Brown (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1975-78).
NIV	New International Version.
NovT	*Novum Testamentum.*
NT	New Testament.
NTS	*New Testament Studies.*
Numen	*Numen: International Review for the History of Religions.*
OLD	*Oxford Latin Dictionary*, edited by P. G. W. Glare et al. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968-82).
OT	Old Testament.
PerspRS	*Perspectives in Religious Studies.*
Phillips	*The New Testament in Modern English*, by J. B. Phillips (London: Collins, 1972).
PWSup	*Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Supplement, 15 vols., edited by A. Pauly and G. Wissowa (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung/Alfred Druckenmüller, 1903-).
RestQ	*Restoration Quarterly.*
RevExp	*Review and Expositor.*

RHPR	*Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie religieuses.*
Robertson	*A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, by A. T. Robertson, 3rd ed. (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1919).
RSV	Revised Standard Version.
SBL SemP	*Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers.*
SIG	*Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, 4 vols., edited by W. Dittenberger, 3rd ed. (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1915-24).
ST	*Studia Theologica.*
Str-B	*Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash*, 6 vols., edited by (H. L. Strack and) P. Billerbeck (Munich: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung Osker Beck, 1922-61).
s.v.	*sub voce*, under the word.
TAPA	*Transactions (and Proceedings) of the American Philological Association.*
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, translated by G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964-76).
TEV	Good News Bible. Today's English Version.
THAT	*Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, 2 vols., edited by E. Jenni and C. Westermann (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1971-76).
TLZ	*Theologische Literaturzeitung.*
TQ	*Theologische Quartelschrift.*
TS	*Theological Studies.*
TSK	*Theologische Studien und Kritiken.*
Turner	*Grammatical Insights into the New Testament*, by N. Turner (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1965).
TWAT	*Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, 4 vols. (א-מל), edited by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1970-).
TZ	*Theologische Zeitschrift.*
UBS^3	*The Greek New Testament*, edited by K. Aland et al., 3rd ed. (London: United Bible Societies, 1975).
USQR	*Union Seminary Quarterly Review.*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum.*
Vulgate	*Biblia Sacra. Iuta Vulgatum Versionem*, edited by R. Weber (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1969).
Zerwick	*Biblical Greek*, by M. Zerwick, translated by J. Smith (Rome: Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici, 1963).
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche.*
ZRGG	*Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte.*
ZTK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche.*

INTRODUCTION

1. The People of God

Central to the New Testament is the issue of the relation between Israel and the church. In essence the primitive Christian community confronted the question "What and who were the people of God?". This question, so clearly answered in the Old Testament by God's election of the hereditary descendants of Abraham and by the establishment of the Sinaitic covenant, during the formation of the church instigated theological debate, created sociological divisions, and engendered persecution, for its previously well-defined answer had been blurred, on the one hand, by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and, on the other, by the inclusion of uncircumcised Gentiles in the Christian community.

If Christianity had appeared merely as a distinct religious philosophy like the mystery religions or the imperial cult, innocuously merging into the political and social milieu, there might have been fewer problems and little cause for Jewish concern or complaint; but the Christian community, at least in the initial decades of its development, claimed a filial tie with Judaism. This claim was to be expected. The first Christians were after all Jews, disciples of a man who had lived and taught in Palestine. What was disconcerting from the official Jewish point of view was that the claim was linked to a reinterpretation of Judaism. Jesus' followers believed and proclaimed that Jesus was God's appointed messiah, the fulfilment of Judaism; indeed, some maintained that Jesus had superseded the Torah and the temple, that those who believed in Jesus were the true Israel, and that Christianity was the true Judaism. In laying claim to the promises and privileges of Abraham and at the same time questioning the foundation of normative Judaism and altering the category of "Israel" within Judaism, the Christian community gave itself a choice. If Christianity were viewed simply as a reform movement within Judaism, analogous to the Old Testament prophets' calls for repentance, the church

would be part of the traditional people of God and membership therein could be defined in terms of God's covenants with Israel. If, however, Christianity separated itself from the primary tenets of Judaism, the church could not, according to some Jews and Jewish Christians, be considered part of Judaism. The definition of the people of God would have to be altered accordingly, whether the church be considered the true expression of Israel or the replacement of Israel.

The decision was complicated by the entrance of Gentiles into the primitive community. The Christians realized that in some way the salvation of the Gentiles was bound up with the salvation of Israel, but whether it was through the preaching of salvation to Israel and Israel's subsequent repentance and acceptance of the message that the Gentiles were to share in Israel's blessings or whether the Christian community had an obligation to the Gentiles exclusive of Judaism had to be determined. Moreover, how this theological question and that of the Jewish Christians' own relation to Israel were resolved directly influenced the answers to a whole set of concomitant questions: what was to be expected of Gentile converts? how were they to relate to converts of Jewish background and to other Jews? were they to become Jews? was a Jewish attitude to the law to be combined with a belief that the crucified Jesus was the messiah? and, later, as Jews continued to reject the Christian message, what was to be the link between an increasingly Gentile church and its Jewish heritage?

These are old and familiar issues. But Luke's[1] view of the relation between Israel and the church recorded in his Gospel and the Book of Acts has begun in recent

---

[1]By "Luke" I mean the author of the Gospel that bears that name and of the Book of Acts, generally considered by scholars these days, rightly I think, to be the same person. The use of this name is not intended as a pronouncement on the authorship of Luke-Acts, though I personally believe that both books were written by the companion of Paul mentioned in Col 4:14.

years to receive extensive attention.[2] Much of this interest has been generated by the fresh perspective of J. Jervell,[3] who, in drawing attention to the conservative tone of Acts and arguing that through the repentance and restoration of Israel salvation came to the Gentiles, has swung the pendulum of Lukan studies from a Gentile to a possible Jewish emphasis.[4]

The renewed interest is certainly justified and necessary. With Luke being, as tradition and internal evidence would suggest, the sole Gentile author in the New Testament corpus and addressing evangelistically and pastorally in all probability a predominantly Gentile audience (whatever its connection with the synagogue), he gives an exceptional point of view on the place of the church in the people of God. He alone of the New Testament writers has produced a two volume history of the origin and development of Christianity, tracing in the first part the establishment of salvation in the ministry and accomplishment of Jesus and explaining in the second part how the procla - mation of this salvation spread from Jerusalem to Rome, from the Jewish religious capital to the Gentile political capital, and founded a community which was both Jewish and Gentile. He is the only New Testament writer whose work aims to overlap that of Paul, providing a stable frame of reference for the Pauline epistles and the development

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[2]A cursory survey of the last five years of *New Testament Abstracts* yields the following on the subject of the Jews, Israel, and the church in Luke's writings: K. Haacker, "Das Bekenntnis des Paulus zur Hoffnung Israels nach der Apostelgeschichte des Lukas", *NTS* 31 (1985) 437-51; M. A. Plunkett, "Ethnocentricity and Salvation History in the Cornelius Episode (Acts 10:1-11:18)", *SBL SemP* (1985) 465-79; J. L. Houlden, "The Purpose of Luke", *JSNT* 21 (1984) 53-65; J. R. Wilch, "Jewish Guilt for the Death of Jesus - Anti-Judaism in the Acts of the Apostles?", *LuTJ* 18 (1984) 49-58; J. B. Tyson, "The Jewish Public in Luke-Acts", *NTS* 30 (1984) 574-83; V. E. Vine, "The Purpose and Date of Acts", *ExpTim* 96 (1984-85) 45-48; J. G. Kelly, "Lucan Christology and the Jewish-Christian Dialogue", *JES* 21 (1984) 688-708; J. Jervell, "The Acts of the Apostles and the History of Early Christianity", *ST* 37 (1983) 17-32; F. Bovon, "Israel, die Kirche und die Völker im lukanischen Doppelwerk", *TLZ* 108 (1983) 403-14; G. Lohfink, "Hat Jesus eine Kirche gestiftet?", *TQ* 161 (1981) 81-97; M. Dumais, "la rencontre de la foi et des cultures", *LV* 30 (1981) 72-86; J. T. Sanders, "The Parable of the Pounds and Lucan Anti-Semitism", *TS* 42 (1981) 660-68.

[3]Jervell's various studies on this subject have been collected into *Luke and the People of God. A New Look at Luke-Acts* (1972) and *The Unknown Paul. Essays on Luke-Acts and Early Christian History* (1984).

[4]The argument opposing the notion that Luke's "extreme sharpness of polemic" (the phrase belongs to H. Conzelmann [*The Theology of St. Luke* {ET 1960} 146]) against the Jews represented anti-Semitism has been espoused, for example, by E. Franklin (*Christ the Lord. A Study in the Purpose and Theology of Luke-Acts* [1975]) and D. L. Tiede (*Prophecy and History in Luke-Acts* [1980]). Franklin believes that in Luke-Acts salvation is offered continually to the Jews right up to the end; Tiede thinks that Luke, who has written from within the Jew-Gentile dialogue and may even be a Jew himself, presents the portrait of a prophet calling his people to repentance. R. Maddox (*The Purpose of Luke-Acts* [1983] esp. 31-65), for one, is not convinced. He believes that Judaism is fulfilled but also superseded in the new Christian community.

of Paul's career[5] and in the process making Paul his chief hero as the mission to the diaspora communities was accomplished. Furthermore, Luke only among the canonical authors refers, both frequently and in relation to Paul's ministry, to God-fearers[6] (οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν or οἱ σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν), an expression thought by most scholars to designate a group of uncircumcised Gentiles (in distinction from proselytes [גרים], who were circumcised Gentile converts to Judaism) who had a loose affiliation with the synagogue, formed the bridge between the Christian mission to the Jews and the Christian mission to the heathen, and constituted the pervading influence within many of the churches founded by Paul. Given such an unparalleled approach to the complex and many-faceted issue of the relation between Israel and the church, Luke's theological and sociological definition of the people of God is critical.

2. The Aim of the Present Study

It is with Luke's conception of the relation between Israel and the church, thus with his conception of the people of God, that the present discussion is concerned. This is not a readily defined task. Although one of Luke's interests appears to be theology, unfortunately he does not engage explicitly in serious theological exposition; and more often than not, as far as the present-day reader is concerned, his narrative raises more questions than it answers.[7] Nor does his terminology yield an explicit or even implicit definition of the people of God, for with two possible exceptions, 15:14 and 18:10, he reserves ὁ λαός for the Jewish population and speaks of the church sometimes as μαθηταί or ἐκκλησία or simply πλῆθος.[8] One plausible way of determining Luke's thought on the people of God, and the way we will proceed, is to examine what Luke

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[5]Indeed, it is arguable that in order to construct the portrait of the historical Paul properly, we cannot do without the data in Acts. J. Jervell (in particular, "Paul in the Acts of the Apostles: Tradition, History, Theology" [1979], in *The Unknown Paul. Essays on Luke-Acts and Early Christian History* [1984] 68-76, although the argument appears throughout *The Unknown Paul*) has recently hammered home this point, claiming that "Luke's picture completes partly what lies in seclusion or restrained in Paul's own letters, thanks to their specific purpose, and partly what can be found in the 'outskirts' or in the margin of his former and first letters, and partly what we detect, when we realize what became of Paul in the end theologically" (p. 70).

[6]See Appendix.

[7]The speculation about the purpose of quoting Isa 6:9-10 in the final pericope of the two volumes is a celebrated example.

[8]The seemingly technical use of ὁ λαός in itself may suggest a discontinuity between Israel and the church, but other factors indicate that Luke's vocabulary is not the entire picture.

says about what was required for a person, Jew or Gentile, to belong to the people of God. Since to belong to the people of God is for Luke the same as to be saved, the focus for such an investigation falls naturally on Luke's account of the Jerusalem council, Acts 15:1-29, when the Jewish Christians, confronted with the increasing number of Gentile converts to Christianity, debated the question "What was necessary for salvation?".

This approach introduces another familiar theme based on a well-trodden path. Yet recently the subject has received fresh impetus in an epochal way from E. P. Sanders,[9] whose insistence that the Palestinian Judaism of the first century A.D. was not a religion of legalistic merit has called into question the assumptions of much New Testament (especially Pauline) scholarship. Sanders posits a concept named "covenant-al nomism", that is, the view that obedience to the law in Judaism was never thought of as a means of *entering* the covenant, of *attaining* that special relation with God; rather, obedience was intended to *maintain* one's covenantal relationship. The proper treatment and reply which this thesis invites and requires must be left to those whose primary concern is Jewish soteriology or Paul's attitude to the law.[10] Nevertheless, since Luke records the growth of the church from a group of Galilean disciples to communities composed of Jews and Gentiles scattered throughout the empire and since Paul is the hero in Luke's story of this transition, the statements in Acts describing the Jewish

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[9]E. P. Sanders's book *Paul and Palestinian Judaism. A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (1977) has been characterized by at least one scholar as "'breaking the mould' of Pauline studies" (J. D. G. Dunn, "The New Perspective on Paul" *BJRL* 65 [1983] 97). This book has been followed by *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (1983) and *Jesus and Judaism* (1985). A synopsis of Sanders's thesis appears in "Jesus, Paul and Judaism" (*ANRW* II.25.1:390-450). See also E. P. Sanders, "The Covenant as a Soteriological Category and the Nature of Salvation in Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism", in FS W. D. Davies (1976) 11-44.

[10]Sanders's revolutionary ideas, bringing to the fore key issues in Paul's *Hauptbriefe*, are beginning to produce a flood of studies on Paul's attitude to the law and Judaism with reference to the saving work of Jesus. To mention only a few, H. Räisänen, *Paul and the Law* (1983); Dunn, "New Perspective"; and M. D. Hooker, "Paul and 'Covenantal Nomism'", in FS C. K. Barrett (1982) 47-56.

Christian mission, Paul's gospel, and his mission to the Gentiles should be considered as well in light of this new perspective.[11]

Specifically our concern with the Jerusalem council is the viewpoints ascribed to the major contributors to the debate--Peter, Barnabas and Paul, and James--set in the context of the events in the earlier chapters of Acts which inform the speeches (chapters I-III), the verdict of the assembly (chapter IV), and the relevant comments about conditions of membership in the people of God subsequent to the council in the light of the council's decision (chapter V). Our investigation, being primarily redactional, is not involved with the equally important (and frankly difficult) historical question of how Acts 15 relates to the events mentioned in Gal 2:1-14[12] and so will not contribute to that

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[11]In part the need has already been recognized and met by S. G. Wilson (*Luke and the Law* [1983]). His study, though, does not refer at all to Sanders's work, responding instead primarily to an essay by J. Jervell ("The Law in Luke-Acts" [1971], in *Luke and the People of God. A New Look at Luke-Acts* [1972] 133-51). Whereas Jervell claims that Luke presents a consistent and conservative view of the law, the whole church, Jews and Gentiles, being shown committed in some way to the law, Wilson says that Luke understood the law/customs of Moses "as the proper and peculiar possession of Jews, appropriate to the expression of Jewish and Jewish-Christian piety but out of place if imposed on the Gentile believers" (Wilson, *Law* 104). In reply to both of these interpretations, C. L. Blomberg ("The Law in Luke-Acts", *JSNT* 22 [1984] 53-80) argues that while Luke-Acts does show the sequential development of "freedom from the law" as a regulatory code of behaviour for Jewish and Gentile Christians alike, Luke's more important understanding lies with the law as "prophecy and specifically prophecy about the coming Christ"; thus, "The Law was not abolished but it was no longer directly relevant for the church *apart from* its fulfilment in and interpretation by the Lord Jesus" (Blomberg, "Law" 71, 72).

[12]There are three principal solutions for relating Gal 2:1-10 to the events in Acts: (1) Gal 2:1-10 is Paul's equivalent of Acts 15 (e.g. J. B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* [1890] 123-28); (2) Gal 2:1-10 occurred during Paul's visit to Jerusalem recorded in Acts 11:29-30 and 12:25 (e.g. J. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians* [ET 1854] 46-48; W. M. Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen* [1896] 54-60, 154-55; F. F. Bruce, "Galatian Problems. I. Autobiographical Data", *BJRL* 51 [1968-69] 302-7); (3) Gal 2:1-10 is reproduced by both the visit of Acts 11:29-30 and that of Acts 15, the historical event occuring at either point (e.g. K. Lake, "The Apostolic Council of Jerusalem", in *Beginnings* 5:195-212, esp. 199-204; D. R. Catchpole, "Paul, James and the Apostolic Decree", *NTS* 23 [1977] 428-44, esp. 432-38). Other combinations of the data have been suggested. J. Knox (*Chapters in a Life of Paul* [1950/1954] 61-73), R. Jewett (*Dating Paul's Life* [1979] esp. 95-104), and G. Lüdemann (*Paulus, der Heidenapostel* [1980, 1983] 1:165-73) argue that Gal 2:1-10 and Acts 15 refer to the same meeting but that the council actually took place during the visit to Jerusalem hinted at in Acts 18:22; C. H. Buck, Jr. ("The Collection for the Saints", *HTR* 43 [1950] 1-29, esp. 19-21), that Acts 12:25 (accepting the reading εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ) is the summary of the council visit which Acts 15 describes in detail; T. W. Manson ("St. Paul in Ephesus: [2] The Problem of the Epistle to the Galatians", *BJRL* 24 [1940] 64-69), that Gal 2:1-10 refers to a visit unrecorded in Acts, which took place after the missionary call of Acts 13:2.

There is also the correlative question whether Acts 15:22-29 belongs with the events of the council, in other words, whether the council of Acts 15 resolved the problems posed by Gal 2:11-14 (thus, e.g. Ramsay, *St. Paul* 155-66; Bruce, "Galatian" 307-9; A. S. Geyser, "Paul, the Apostolic Decree and the Liberals in Corinth", in FS J. de Zwaan [1953] 124-38; cf. Manson, "St. Paul" 72-80), whether Paul was involved in formulating the decree and if not, whether the decree was first presented to him in the story of Gal 2:11-14 (e.g. Catchpole, "Decree" 438-44) or in the story of Acts 21:17-26 (cf. F. Hahn, *Mission in the New Testament* [ET 1965] 84-85) or at an unrecorded time.

For a further summary of current opinion and more bibliographic data, see Jewett, *Dating* esp. 63-93.

discussion. It is certainly influenced by other historical questions--Paul's argument for the Gentiles' freedom from the law, the sociological dimension of the primitive church, the Jewish paradigms for the Christian mission--and touches in passing on points concerning Paul's attitude towards the law and his application of the council's decision, the similarities and differences of Palestinian and Hellenistic Jewish Christianity, and the Jews' own interest in the Gentiles; but the study will address these matters only where necessary and is not intended as an exhaustive treatment of them. In analysing the council's debate, the investigation will certainly draw from material in the Gospel of Luke and elsewhere in Acts and will seek to contribute to the current discussion of Lukan theology. But the main intent, and in many ways the mandatory prior act, is to deal rather exclusively with Luke's own views about belonging to the people of God as recorded in Acts 15.

Before commencing our study of the conditions of membership in the people of God, a few preliminary comments will be valuable, first, to justify the parameters of the thesis in light of the importance of Acts 15 and then to set the question addressed by the speeches of Acts 15 in its context, with reference both to the events initiating the council (Acts 15:1-5) and to the early apostolic proclamation (Acts 2-5).

3. The Importance of Acts 15

Despite certain obvious limitations, especially the admittedly incomplete picture which will result, for Luke is concerned to present history and he has sprinkled his theological perspective throughout his two volume work, the narrowness of our investigation is warranted. Embedded within the record of Paul's first and second missionary journeys, Acts 15 seemingly interrupts the flow of the narrative;[13] and for

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[13]This feature, which has drawn the attention of many scholars, particularly as interest in source criticism developed, has fostered the possibility that 15:1-33 was abruptly inserted into an account of a missionary journey (or 12:25-15:2 into an account of the council) so that 15:36 is the resumption of 14:28 and the council is the parallel of 11:29-30. See P. Benoit, "La deuxième visite de Saint Paul à Jérusalem", *Bib* 40 (1959) 778-92; S. Dockx, "Chronologie de la vie de Saint Paul, depuis sa conversion jusqu' à son séjour à Rome", *NovT* 13 (1971) 261-304 and *Chronologies Néotestament - aires et Vie de l'Église primitive. Recherches exégétiques* (1976) 45-59.

that reason alone the chapter becomes quite conspicuous. It also forms the centre of the Book of Acts both structurally[14] and theologically.

The chapter is balanced on either side by two distinctive periods in the spread of Christianity from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. Up to this point in the story, the author has outlined the development of the Christian community in terms of four missions: Peter's message of repentance to the Jews and proselytes in Jerusalem (Acts 2-5); the Hellenists' evangelization of diaspora Jews, of the outcasts in Jewish society, and eventually of Greeks (Acts 6-8; 11:19-26); Peter's exceptional and unexpected witness to the pious Roman centurion Cornelius (Acts 10:1-11:18); and Paul's and Barnabas's itinerant ministry, based in and supported by the Antioch church, among not only the Jews and Gentiles affiliated with Judaism but also the wider Gentile population in the diaspora communities of Asia Minor (Acts 13-14). After the meeting in Jerusalem Luke concentrates on Paul's ministry to Jews and Gentiles in the eastern sphere of the Roman empire, mentioning the Jerusalem-based Christian community only briefly (but significantly) in Acts 21:17-26 and Peter, the principal figure of chapters 2-12, not at all. As the structural fulcrum of Luke's story, Acts 15 brings together the disparate elements of the missions in Acts 2-14, introduces the subsequent direction of the Christian mission, and thus is often said, rightly or wrongly, to present Luke's definitive answer on the position of the Gentiles in the Christian community.

Surprisingly, though, despite the significance of Acts 15 for Luke's scheme and despite the wealth of secondary literature on the Jerusalem council and the apostles' decision, little detailed work has been done on the speeches of the council in light of the issue set forth in verse 1, "What must one do to be saved?". The historical question whether or not Acts 15 corresponds to Gal 2:1-10 and the various ramifications thereof, the textual problems associated with the decree, the determination of editorial practices and the sources used seem to have dominated the debate.

Such concentration is in part understandable. The structure of the chapter, the location in Acts, the apparent paralleling of Gal 2:1-10--all invite such avenues of

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[14]Literally, as Haenchen (444) noted: it is preceded by 44 of the 89 pages allotted to Acts in Nestle-Aland[26].

investigation. F. C. Baur, too, left New Testament studies a very significant legacy. While the literary hypothesis of Baur's dialectic--that in the course of the first two centuries A.D. the New Testament corpus was composed, that the literature reflects a progressive weakening of the originally contrasting standpoints of the primitive church in Jerusalem (the thesis) and of Paul (the antithesis) until they finally merged in the catholic church, and that Acts is indicative of the synthesis[15]--was abandoned, the contrast between Gentile and Jewish Christianity, between Paul, the Hellenists, the Judaizers, Peter, and James, is still valid,[16] despite the tendency to view the development of Christianity progressively in terms of a movement from (Palestinian) Jewish Christianity to Hellenistic Jewish Christianity and Gentile Hellenistic Christianity to Gentile Christianity. Early Jewish Christianity was a multifarious phenomenon which was not destroyed with the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70; indeed, it may have been strengthened.[17] Acts 15 contains the necessary ingredients to manifest the variety.

M. Dibelius[18] broke the stranglehold of concentration on source analysis, sensing the methodological necessity of appreciating the real character of Luke's account. Although he may too readily, I think, have divorced Luke's work from its historical context, his approach is to be commended for allowing Acts first to speak for itself and not to act merely as a foil for Paul's epistles. A similar intent is our own.

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[15]F. C. Baur, *Paul the Apostle of Jesus, His Life and Work, His Epistles and His Doctrine. A Contribution to a Critical History of Primitive Christianity* (ET 1875-76), on the decision of the Jerusalem council, see 1:138-45.

[16]J. Munck (*Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* [ET 1959] esp. 69-86) has pointed out effectively the fallacies of Baur's dialectic, but his own position--that the Jerusalem church was devoid of any Judaizing element--is just as defective (see pp. 259-60, 271).

[17]J. Jervell ("The Mighty Minority" [1980], in *The Unknown Paul. Essays on Luke-Acts and Early Christian History* [1984] 26-51) contends that Jewish Christianity did not develop into a theologically active, articulate, and conscious entity until the apostolic council and that it really established itself after A.D. 70, before it died out gradually in the second century.

[18]M. Dibelius, "The Apostolic Council" (1947), in *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (ET 1956) 93-101.

4. The Setting of the Apostolic Council (Acts 15:1-5)

According to Acts 15:1-5 the meeting in Jerusalem resulted from "sharp dispute and controversy"[19] in the Antioch church which, in turn, had arisen because of an attitude in the Jerusalem church.[20] Verse 1 states that some men from Judea travelled to Antioch and began teaching that unless the uncircumcised Gentile believers were circumcised according to the custom of Moses, they could not be saved (οὐ δύνασθε σωθῆναι), salvation in this case meaning not only rescue from the eschatological judgment but also the present experience of membership in the people of God. This demand is reiterated when, in verse 5, the scene shifts to Jerusalem and Christian Pharisees state that Gentile converts[21] must be circumcised and required to observe the Mosaic law (δεῖ περιτέμνειν...τε τηρεῖν τὸν νόμον Μωϋσέως), for the necessity there referred to should be understood also as describing what is necessary for salvation. The theme of the passage therefore is quite clear: it is not just a question whether Gentile converts must conform to the Jewish law in order to enjoy the privileges of Christian fellowship but more critically a question of the terms in which the Christian message of salvation was to be stated and presented to the world.[22] Three other aspects of these introductory verses, though, demand more comment.

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[19]NIV. This was no minor difficulty. The litotes οὐκ ὀλίγη can only emphasize the force of Luke's description. Στάσις refers usually to faction, sedition, discord, even civic riot and rebellion (LSJ, s.v. στάσις; BAGD, s.v. στάσις 2, 3), that is, in essence, to anything that divides or separates, often with great hostility. See Luke 23:25; Acts 19:40; 23:7, 10; and 24:5. Ζήτησις, on the other hand, does not require such a strongly pejorative meaning. The term can signify an investigation (Acts 25:20; possibly 1 Tim 6:4; 2 Tim 2:23; Tit 3:9 [see BAGD, s.v. ζήτησις 1]) or the speech and counterspeech associated with an investigation into a matter on which there is a difference of opinion. This is probably the sense of the noun in v. 7 (cf. H. Greeven, "ζητέω", *TDNT* 2:893-94). But the juxtaposition with στάσις suggests that Luke intends ζήτησις in v. 2 to mean more than mere debate (BAGD [s.v. ζήτησις 3], though, thinks otherwise). Sharp and divisive words, which could breed quarrels, evil suspicions, and constant friction (cf. 1 Tim 6:4), were exchanged.

[20]The location (Antioch) and the participants (Paul, Barnabas, and men from Judea) of this confrontation show great similarity with the incident recorded in Gal 2:11-14, also occurring in Antioch and involving Paul, Barnabas, Peter, and men either with a commission from or appealing without authority to James.

[21]E. Lekebusch (*Composition und Entstehung der Apostelgeschichte* [1854] 114) maintains that the αὐτούς qualifying περιτέμνειν in v. 5 refers specifically to the "some others" (v. 2) travelling to Jerusalem, among whom may have been Titus (cf. Gal 2:3-5).

[22]C. K. Barrett, "Apostles in Council and in Conflict", *AusBR* 31 (1983) 16-17.

4.1. *The structure of the proceedings*

For the proceedings in Jerusalem Luke records the following scenario: the party arrives in Jerusalem; they are welcomed by the whole Jerusalem church, including the apostles, the elders, and the church rank and file; Paul and Barnabas report what God has accomplished through their ministry (v. 4); the Pharisaic Christians lodge their objection regarding the Gentile converts (v. 5); the apostles and elders decide to "deal with" the matter[23] (v. 6); much debate occurs before Peter, Barnabas and Paul, and James, in turn, express their opinions (vv. 7-21); the apostles and elders together with the church rank and file reach a decision (vv. 22-29). It is possible to understand from this ordering of the events that verses 4-5 constitute an initial summary of the council proceedings commenced in verse 6, which is intended to clarify for the reader the issues involved in the debate.[24] It is also possible that the reference to only the apostles and the elders in verse 6 and in verse 23 as the signatories of the council's letter could impose on verses 6-21 the idea of a separate session of the governing body at which the debate occurred, πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος in verse 12 designating no larger company than the apostles and elders,[25] and could imply that the church rank and file served merely to ratify the leaders' decision (v. 22). The interpretation which will be followed in the present study, based on the consensus regarding the reference to the apostles and elders in verse 6, is (a) that verses 4-5 represent an initial, perhaps informal, meeting with the Antiochian representatives, distinct from that in verses 6-21, at which time the church may have decided to meet further and (b) that in both instances the whole church was present in open meeting[26] and the church rank and file by no means a silent witness,

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[23]J. L. North, "Is ΙΔΕΙΝ ΠΕΡΙ (Acts 15.6, cf. 18.15) a Latinism?", *NTS* 29 (1983) 264-66.

[24]Conzelmann 83.

[25]The words can simply denote the company gathered together on the occasion, for πλῆθος in Acts refers not only to the Christian community in particular (4:32; 6:2, 5; 15:30) but also to other assemblies (2:6; 5:16; 19:9; 21:36; 23:7; 25:24) or to a large number (5:14; 14:1; 17:4; 28:3).

[26]E.g. Bruce (Greek) 295; Knowling 321. The delayed reference to the whole church (vv. 12, 22) could be attributed to Luke's tendency to mention belatedly further details of a situation (Lake and Cadbury 4:172); 19:7 is a good example. It is interesting that 614 1799 2412 sy^{h} Ephraem noted the difficulty and added after πρεσβύτεροι the words σὺν τῷ πλήθει.

although, as verse 6 seemingly aims to show, the chief responsibility rested with the apostles and elders.[27]

4.2. *The ecclesiastical situation*

It is important to consider further from verses 1-6 the theological climate in the church and in particular the extent of the disagreement. While the men from Judea (v. 1) and the Christian Pharisees (v. 5) have often, by reason of source analysis or differing theological perspectives, been viewed as from distinct groups,[28] there is hardly cause to distinguish between them; and it is unlikely that Luke did.[29] No doubt, in Luke's view, they were Christian Pharisees who went to Antioch. It is noteworthy, though, that by characterizing the troublemakers in Antioch as having come from Judea, Luke avoids a reference to Jerusalem. Does he, as the unity of the church verges on disintegration, mean for some reason to keep the Jerusalem leaders, at least, suspended from the source of the conflict? He does not say at this point, but the suspicion is laid.

Ἔταξαν (v. 2) is informative. In the best textual tradition the verb lacks an explicit subject. The Western text rectifies the omission, making clear that the men from Jerusalem were in control: they ordered Paul and Barnabas and other believers from Antioch to go to Jerusalem to be judged before the apostles and elders (ὅπως κριθῶσιν ἐπ' αὐτοῖς). While this interpretation could follow logically, as far as grammar is concerned, from verse 1 and while the Western redactor, on the whole, probably does amplify and clarify the already present intent of the text rather than introduce new

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[27]F. J. A. Hort, *The Christian Ecclesia. A Course of Lectures on the Early History and Early Conceptions of the Ecclesia and Four Sermons* (1898) 69.

[28]Bauernfeind 188; Haenchen 425 n. 1, 426-27, 458; cf. Bruce (Greek) 291. Each adopts this viewpoint for different reasons. Bauernfeind attributes it to the use of different sources; Haenchen refers to the Jerusalem ecclesiastical organization; and Bruce points to a difference in the purpose of the demands--the necessities for salvation (v. 1) and the necessities for fellowship (v. 5). Bruce ([NIC] 303) also claims that the men in Antioch were the same as those in Gal 2:12 who "came from James", except that they had exceeded the terms of their commission.

[29]Barrett, "Apostles" 17; cf. Ramsay, *St. Paul* 158 and Hort, *Ecclesia* 68. The Western tradition, reading the subject of v. 5 back into v. 1, makes the equation. See also the discussion below on the Judaizers' demand.

themes,[30] the additional words hardly accord with the picture of the relation between the Jerusalem believers and the daughter communities elsewhere in Acts.[31] The Jerusalem leaders examine and investigate, sending delegates to confirm the new missionary enterprises in Samaria (8:14, 21) and in Antioch (11:22); but they do not, apparently in Luke's view, summon for trial the leaders in other communities. To illustrate, there is the comparable situation of Peter visiting Jerusalem after his encounter with the uncircumcised centurion Cornelius (11:1-2). Although Peter faced interrogation and censure from believers in Jerusalem, he does appear to return to the city at his own initiative. This is the case as well in the Western expansion of 11:1-2 and, indeed, is so emphasized.[32] It may be that the ecclesiastical situation has changed in the interim, the need for caution being greater or the attitude of the principal offenders more liberal, or that the men from Judea exceeded their commission.[33] Nonetheless, the idea of a summons is at the most latent and probably non-existent.[34]

A more tenable choice for the subject of ἔταξαν, suggested by the agent in οἱ προπεμφθέντες ὑπὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας (v. 3) and supplied from τοὺς ἀδελφούς (v. 1), is the

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[30]Cf. C. K. Barrett, "Is there a theological tendency in Codex Bezae?", in FS M. Black (1979) 15-27. Barrett is responding to the hypothesis of P. H. Menoud ("The Western Text and the Theology of Acts", *BSNTS* 2 [1951] 19-32) and of E. P. Epp (*The Theological Tendency of Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis in Acts* [1966]) that the Western text displays a specific theological tendency to anti-Judaism (the idea is reiterated in I. M. Ellis, "Codex Bezae at Acts 15", *IBS* 2 [1980] 134-40). Dibelius ("Council" 93) assesses the D reading of vv. 1-5 similarly to Barrett.

[31]Such variances are probably best attributed to a different point of view from that represented in the B text. The Western redactor cannot be said to be anti-Pauline, for he does state that the church welcomes the delegation from Antioch heartily (v. 4) and he in no way betrays the animus displayed against Paul by the writer of *Clementine Homilies* (Metzger 427). Most critics conclude simply that the B text reflects the viewpoint of Paul whereas the D text is more sympathetic to the tradition of the Jerusalem church (e.g. Lake and Cadbury 4:169-70).

[32]Peter is said to have wanted for a considerable time to travel to Jerusalem (11:1D). The motives for the textual expansion may be connected with the tendency in the Western text to assert the honourable reputation of Peter (J. Crehan, "Peter according to the D-Text of Acts", *TS* 18 [1957] 593-603; Epp, *Codex Bezae* 105-7). The addition does circumvent the *possible* (but not the *required*) impression that Peter was compelled to interrupt his missionary work in Caesarea and travel to Jerusalem (cf. Metzger 383).

[33]See n. 28 above and Chapter IV.3.

[34]If D in this instance is to be viewed as amplifying what already exists in the text, it may be that the emphasis falls on the authority and unity of the church (cf. Menoud, "Western Text" 29; Epp, *Codex Bezae* 97-103); but at the same time it is very doubtful that this unity is presented over against the viewpoint of Judaism. Indeed, A. Ehrhardt (*The Apostolic Succession. In the First Two Centuries of the Church* [1953] 29-30) has found a Jewish tendency in the D reading of v. 2. It is worth noting as well that Epp (*Codex Bezae* 102) seeks to strengthen his argument by maintaining that the controversy related in D comes from only one group while in the B text at least two groups are involved. In reply, see above.

Antioch church itself (cf. 11:30).[35] The Antioch community could be *forcing* Paul and Barnabas to consult Jerusalem, some of the Jewish believers in Antioch having been persuaded to the Judaizers' position (cf. Gal 2:13).[36] More likely, because of the conciliatory οἱ προπεμφθέντες, the verb bears the sense not of ordering but of arranging, not of commanding but of appointing.[37] And the daughter community is shown, on the one hand, acknowledging the priority of Jerusalem, possibly authoritatively as well as temporally, willing to consult the mother church and to maintain ecclesiastical unity and, on the other hand, supporting Paul and Barnabas over against the Judaizers.

Verse 3 also influences the readers' perception of the ecclesiastical situation. A reference to the delegation's journey from Antioch to Jerusalem through Phoenicia and Samaria may be characteristic of Luke (cf. 8:25; 15:41; 17:1); but it does seem in this instance disruptive of the increasing intensity of the drama. Perhaps, as some would suppose, the text here reflects the clumsy combining of various sources, either verses 1-2[38] or verse 3 being the written or editorial addition. Yet it is precisely at such places of apparent superfluity that an author's interests and presuppositions can often be ascertained. Verse 3 makes a claim for the existence of Jewish Christian communities in Phoenicia. It also and very significantly asserts that Paul's mission to the Gentiles, devoid of the conditions of circumcision and the law, was gladly welcomed by Jewish Christians everywhere. An insistence on a legalistic piety for Gentile converts appears to be held by only a segment of the Christian community, not by all Jewish Christians.[39]

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[35]E.g. Bruce (Greek) 290 and Haenchen 426. Ramsay (*St. Paul* 153) says that Paul himself may have even proposed the sending of a delegation to Jerusalem. Williams (179) offers as an alternative that ἔταξαν is an impersonal plural best translated by the passive "it was arranged". But if Luke meant the passive voice, he would be more likely to have expressed it by using a passive form.

[36]Cf. Epp, *Codex Bezae* 102.

[37]Grammatically οἱ προπεμφθέντες could include the men from Judea, but contextually this is improbable since those who are seen off are also those who speak positively of the conversion of the uncircumcised Gentiles.

[38]Lake and Cadbury 4:171.

[39]E.g. Haenchen 426, 441; Lampe 791g. Ramsay (*St. Paul* 155) comments on the significant omission of a reference to Judea, a province which the delegation would also have traversed, and notes that the joy in Phoenicia and Samaria was not "merely caused by sympathy with the spread of Christianity". Nor was the presence of circumcised Gentiles in the church newsworthy at this stage of Luke's story.

In short then, we have a Christian community which is seriously and severely divided, the source of the trouble coming from the Jerusalem church, though possibly not from all the members or from the leaders, while Jewish Christians elsewhere are supportive of the idea of salvation without the requirement of circumcision.

4.3. *The argument of the Judaizers*

A third consideration is the Judaizers' demand. Verse 1 states that salvation depended on a person being circumcised according to the custom of Moses; verse 5, that it was necessary for a person to be circumcised and to keep the law of Moses. There are noteworthy differences between these two statements.

It is obvious that the demand in verse 5 is more extensive than the one in verse 1.[40] Does this mean that the two demands are distinct? Probably not.[41] Circumcision and obedience to the law were to the Jew in essence one and the same. Although there appear to have been Gentiles who chose to keep some of the commandments of the law without being circumcised, there is no known account of any who accepted circumcision, the cause of non-Jewish ridicule, without committing themselves to obeying the law; the naturalized Jew, to whom in rabbinic literature the Old Testament term גר was applied, was put on the same footing with the native Israelite and given the same covenantal responsibilities.[42] Obedience to the law was the proper expression of the covenant to which circumcision provided the entry.[43] This close connection between Torah-observance and circumcision is typified by rabbinic *halakhah*:

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[40]D, adding after περιτμηθῆτε in v. 1 the words "and walk according to the custom of Moses", eliminates the discrepancy.

[41]Contra, for example, Epp, *Codex Bezae* 100. This answer strengthens the earlier suppositions (see p. 10) that both demands address the same question, namely, "What is the way to salvation?", and that the Judean believers who travelled to Antioch (v. 1) and the Christian Pharisees in Jerusalem (v. 5) were of the same group.

[42]While parity between native Jew and naturalized Jew was the theory (cf. *b.Yebam.* 47a-b), it was not always practised. The attitude of the Jewish religious leaders towards proselytes differed according to the political climate, and individual teachers had their own sympathies and antipathies (G. F. Moore, *Judaism. In the First Centuries of the Christian Era. The Age of the Tannaim* [1927-30] 1:341-47; E. Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi* [1898] 3:133-35). It is noteworthy, for example, that the proselyte was sixth in the order of seven sociological classes, after a bastard and a temple slave and before a freed slave (*m.Hor.* 3:8); that the proselyte's marital rights were the same as a freed slave's even to ten generations (*m.Qidd.* 4:7); and that a proselyte whose parents were not Jewish could not make the avowal, having to say "O God of the fathers of Israel" instead of "O God of our fathers" (*m.Bik.* 1:4).

[43]Sanders, *Paul* 206.

> As the native born Jew [who was circumcised] takes upon him (to obey) all the words of the law, so the proselyte [who was circumcised] takes upon him all the words of the law. The authorities say, if a proselyte takes upon himself to obey all the words of the law except one commandment, he is not to be received.[44]

Thus, verse 5 is only spelling out what is presumed in verse 1: all those who are circumcised are committed to obeying the law.

The terminology of the two statements is also different. In one instance circumcision is identified as a *custom* of Moses (τῷ ἔθει τῷ Μωϋσέως, v. 1); in the other it is related to the Mosaic *law* (τὸν νόμον Μωϋσέως, v. 5). The common element in the two statements, circumcision, a legal requirement prescribed in the levitical code (Lev 12:3), indicates that here is one of the unique and characteristic occasions in Luke-Acts when ἔθος and νόμος are identical (cf. Luke 2:27; Acts 6:11-14; 21:21). S. G. Wilson[45] has effectively and cautiously demonstrated, from a comparison with Josephus's use of the words (e.g. *J.W.* 2.392-93; *Ant.* 14.194, 195, 263-64) and with Philo's (e.g. *Leg.* 210) to a lesser extent, that while ἔθος and νόμος are for Luke interchangeable terms they can also be distinct. The distinction, Wilson suggests, is not to be drawn along the lines of unwritten versus written laws[46] but perhaps is to be related to an apologetic purpose (cf. Josephus, *Ag.Ap.* 2.155-56, 164-67).[47] Possibly the non-Jew is being invited to view the practices based on Jewish law cogently and sympathetically as customs different in kind, but not in principle, from those of other peoples. Such evidence, if valid, suggests that in 15:1, 5 there may be a concern, on the one hand, to set the Judaizers' demand in a broader cultural context (ἔθος), understandable to Luke's non-Jewish and non-Christian readers and with the purpose of generating respect, and, on the other

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[44]Siphra Qedoshim pereq 8, cited by Moore, *Judaism* 1:331; cf. *b.Bek.* 30b. This principle is often based on Exod 12:48-49: "There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger (גר) who sojourns among you". Similarly, by comparison, Josephus (*Ant.* 13.257-58, 318; 20.145-46) assumes that circumcision and "adopting the customs of the Jews" are correlatives and that both acts signify acceptance of Judaism.

[45]Wilson, *Law* 4-11.

[46]This is the case in the rabbinic literature where custom (מנהגא; cf. *b.Nid.* 66a; *b.Yebam.* 13b), though it be sacred and binding, is clearly distinct from law/*halakhah* which could only be superseded by proof from the Torah or a decision of the elders.

[47]That non-Jews quite naturally described Jewish practices as "customs" (e.g. Dio, *Hist.* 57.18.5a; Diodorus 40.3.1-8 [esp. §5]; 2 Macc 11:24-25; Josephus, *Ant.* 14.213-16, 245-46) gives credibility to this suggestion.

hand, to underline that the demand, upheld and defined by written law, was legitmate (νόμος) and fundamental.

4.3.1. Was circumcision necessary?

There is a more critical issue with respect to the Judaizers' demand which should be raised briefly at this point: was circumcision required of the male belonging to the people of God in the Judaism of the first century A.D.? Luke's inclusion of δεῖ (v. 5), a word which connotes that the act so designated was not only expedient but also fundamentally required by the revealed will of God,[48] would claim so. Can the claim be supported?

It is universally acknowledged in Jewish and pagan sources,[49] as we implied above, that circumcision was a, if not *the*, sign of identification with the Jewish nation.[50] The rite was ordained by God for Abraham (Gen 17:9-14; 21:4), his descendants, and his slaves, as well as any strangers joining themselves to the clan, to signify their participation in the benefits of God's covenant and their acceptance of its obligations. Circumcision was not only the sign of the covenant; it was itself called the covenant (Gen 17:13) and the person circumcised became a son of the covenant (בן ברית). Failure to comply had the direst consequence: excommunication from the people of God[51] (cf. *m.Ker.* 1:1). Participation in the passover feast commemorating God's redemption of his people too was contingent upon the act of circumcision (Exod 12:48-49). The non-Jew living in Israel who was circumcised and made one with the native Jew could celebrate the feast; the uncircumcised non-Jew could not. Reason and precedent exist therefore for circumcision to be a fundamental act which marked a Gentile part of the people of God.

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[48]Conzelmann, *Theology* 153.

[49]E.g. 1 Macc 1:41-49, 60-61; 2 Macc 6:7-11; Juvenal, *Sat.* 14.96-106; Horace, *Sat.* 1.9.68-70; Suetonius, *Dom.* 12.2.

[50]The observance of the sabbath was also considered a fundamental commandment (Isa 56:2, 4, 6; cf. 1 Macc 2:29-41); but while it was the more visible sign of a person's fidelity to his religion (Moore, *Judaism* 2:24), it apparently did not have the "watershed" effect that circumcision had (Juvenal, *Sat.* 14.96-106; compare Exod 12:48-49 with Exod 20:10).

[51]For the meaning of this expression see p. 188.

During certain periods in Israelite history, as in the wilderness (Josh 5:2-7) or under hellenistic influence (1 Macc 1:41-53), the rite was either discontinued or spurned by some sectors of Jewish society. These lapses appear to be a consequence of disobedience (cf. *Jub*. 15:33-34) or of extenuating circumstances rather than an indication that the rite had diminished in importance. The same assessment--an attitude of obligation--should be made about first century Judaism, and attempts to argue otherwise can be answered.[52]

In this regard the lack of inscriptional evidence from the first-century for the presence of God-fearers in the synagogue is significant. Obviously the void could be interpreted to mean that no such sociological class existed in Jewish society and that the expressions οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν and οἱ σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν are no more than a Lukan literary motif correlative to the theme of missionary preaching in the synagogues of the diaspora communities.[53] But an equally plausible way of explaining the silence of the inscriptions is that Gentiles who did not accept the final commitment to Judaism in circumcision, preferring instead to maintain a looser affiliation by observing only certain laws, were in fact considered by Jews not part of their community.[54]

To illustrate further the attitude of first century Judaism towards circumcision, there is the oft-cited case of the conversion of Izates, the king of Adiabene, recorded in Josephus, *Ant*. 20:17-96 (esp. §§34-35, 38-49). Izates, who had been taught to worship God according to the Jewish tradition (§34), desired to become genuinely a Jew (§38). His first spiritual mentor, a Jewish merchant named Ananias, told him that

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[52]The case presented by N. J. McEleney ("Conversion, Circumcision and the Law", *NTS* 20 [1974] 319-41) that the proselyte did not have to be circumcised, based on comments in Josephus, *Ant.* 20.38-48; Philo, *Quaes.Ex.* 2.2; *m.Pesaḥ*. 8:8; *b.Pesaḥ*. 96a; *b.Ḥul*. 4b; *m.Ned*. 3:11; *b.Yebam*. 46a-b; and Epictetus 2.9.20-21, has been well answered at each point by J. L. Nolland ("Uncircumcised Proselytes?" *JSJ* 12 [1981] 173-94). McEleney's argument regarding circumcision could be said to be an application of his thesis that universal Jewish orthodoxy at the minimum consisted of the worship of the one God, the status of Israel as the chosen people of God, and the acceptance *in some way* (italics mine) of Moses's law and, secondarily, that both Pharisaic Judaism and Christianity are parallel developments of a wider Jewish orthodoxy of the first century (N. J. McEleney, "Orthodoxy in Judaism of the First Christian Century", *JSJ* 4 [1973] 19-42). This thesis has been rightly criticized by D. E. Aune ("Orthodoxy in First Century Judaism? A Response to N. J. McEleney", *JSJ* 7 [1976] 1-10), citing especially the fact that the religious structure of first century A.D. Judaism involved as well ritual practice and ethical behaviour.

[53]Thus, A. T. Kraabel, "The Disappearance of the 'God-fearers'", *Numen* 28 (1981) 113-26. The motif is intended "to help Luke show how Christianity had become a Gentile religion legitimately and without losing its OT roots" (Kraabel, "'God-fearers'" 121).

[54]See Appendix.

he could worship God and still be a devoted adherent to Judaism without undergoing the rite of circumcision (§41). According to Eleazar, a Galilean Jew with whom Izates later came into contact, circumcision was a cardinal commandment in the law and to persist in the state of uncircumcision was an act of impiety (§§44-45).

It must be conceded that the differing interpretations of the law--the liberal viewpoint of Ananias versus the stricter opinion of Eleazar--can suggest that "while circumcision was normally the approved way of a man's becoming a Jew, there were those who did not believe it was necessary in every case".[55] Nevertheless, there are indications in Josephus's narrative which challenge the further inference that a significant strand of first century Jewish thought accepted and practised that conversion to Judaism was possible without circumcision.[56]

(1) According to Josephus, Izates is typical of many Gentiles who were attracted to the Jewish customs and who knew that he would not be genuinely a Jew unless he was circumcised (§38).

(2) Ananias's advice to the king must be read in the light of a legitimate concern, expressed as well by Izates's recently-converted mother, about the popular reaction in an extremely sensitive political situation (§§21-22, 26-32, 36-37) which might follow the king's devotion to "strange and foreign" rites (§39) and "unseemly practices" (§41; compare §§75-76). Against this political background Ananias proposes the compromise. Prior to this he was ready to circumcise the king (§38).

(3) It is evident that if the king were not circumcised but were only to worship God according to the Jewish tradition, he would be viewed by his subjects not as a Jew (§39). We may infer that sociologically then Izates would be left on the Gentile side of the Jew-Gentile divide.

(4) Theologically Izates's failure to be circumcised is presented as understandable and pardonable by God rather than as a right (§42).

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[55]McEleney, "Conversion" 332.

[56]The following discussion incorporates some of Nolland's arguments (Nolland, "Uncircum - cised" 192-94). For another opinion, see K. G. Kuhn, "προσήλυτος", *TDNT* 6:731, 735.

(5) Josephus ascribes to Ananias a personal motive for proposing the compromise: afraid that if his previous support for Izates's circumcision became widely known he would be held responsible and would be subjected to punishment, Ananias is a man out to save his own neck (§41).

In short, Izates represents a special case, namely, a monarch whose abstention from circumcision is due to the threat of insurrection and not a personal repugnance towards the act and who in his uncircumcised though pious state is still considered less than a fully naturalized Jew. To claim further that the dispensation accorded this high-ranking political official represented a general openness in first century Judaism towards the practice of circumcision is conjectural.[57] To be sure, some Jewish groups may have neglected to impose the condition upon Gentile converts or even to fulfil the rite for themselves, but circumcision was generally regarded by Palestinian and diaspora Jews alike as the distinctive and mandatory sign indicating entry into the privileges and obligations of Israelite status.[58]

5. The Earliest Apostolic Proclamation (Acts 2-5)

It is helpful also to set the council against the backdrop of Acts 2-5, which records the foundation of the Jerusalem church and presents the Christian community's initial conception of its divinely-constituted mission. Particularly relevant are the recipients of the apostles' message, the conditions imposed on possible converts, and the rationale for the apostles' exhortation.

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[57]Indeed, it may be going too far to attribute the concession to Izates's monarchical status. In this respect it is significant that there was difficulty in finding Drusilla a husband who was willing to be circumcised (Josephus, *Ant.* 20.139); compare the situation of her sister Berenice (Josephus, *Ant.* 20.145-46). Nor should the difference between Ananias's advice and Eleazer's be attributed immediately to lax legal practices in the diaspora communities, as often is done. M. Hengel (*Judaism and Hellenism. Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* [ET 1974] passim) has effectively demonstrated that hellenism pervaded Palestine as well as the diaspora. Moreover, contact between the diaspora communities and the homeland was extensive.

[58]A brief comment about *b.Yebam.* 46a-b is valuable. B. J. Bamberger (*Proselytism in the Talmudic Period* [1939, 1968] 49-51) ingeniously explains the controversy over the priority of circumcision or of baptism for initiation into Judaism by saying that the debate concerns the determinant of conversion, not the omission of circumcision. This really does not resolve the matter as far as we are concerned. A better suggestion, based on the summary statement "they differ only on circumcision without ablution", is that R. Joshua and R. Eliezer are discussing not the necessity of circumcision but whether the state of circumcision is adequate or whether the demand for proper ablution should be pressed in addition (Nolland, "Uncircumcised" 188-92).

5.1. *The recipients*

In Acts 2-5 the apostles' sphere of ministry focuses primarily on ὁ λαός. This term may simply signify people in the popular sense of "crowd" or population. It occurs often as a description of the crowd in Solomon's colonnade, a section of the temple which was open to Jews and Gentiles[59] (3:19-12; 5:12-13; cf. 4:1-2). But accompanying qualifiers like Ἰσραήλ (4:10, 27) and Luke's almost technical use of the term elsewhere[60] suggest a uniqueness about the crowds, namely, that the people to whom the apostles witnessed were Jews. This idea is backed up by the salutations of Peter's speeches--ἄνδρες Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οἱ κατοικοῦντες Ἰερουσαλὴμ πάντες (2:14), ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλῖται (2:22; 3:12; cf. 5:35), and ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί (2:29; cf. 3:17; 2:37)[61]--and the concluding exhortation "Let the whole house of Israel know" (2:36; cf. 4:10). The apostles' mission at this time in Luke's story was centred not only on Jerusalem but specifically on the Jewish population of the city and was without the thought of a Christian mission to the Gentiles.

Seemingly then, as Acts 1:8 and Luke 24:47-48 imply, Luke plots a scheme for the unfolding of the Jewish Christians' discovery of God's interest in the Gentiles which progresses not only geographically but also sociologically and theologically. The reader knows that the gospel will eventually reach the uncircumcised Gentiles as well as the political capital Rome, but neither of these goals, according to Luke, were part of the early church's experience until God revealed them. Three statements in Acts 2-5,

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[59]W. S. Caldecott and J. Orr, "Temple", *ISBE* 5:2937. Even without the reference to Solomon's colonnade the crowds in the temple precincts could include Gentiles, for despite the rigid religious barrier between Jews and Gentiles and the periodic conservatism (Acts 21:26-28; Josephus, *J.W.* 5.193-94), Gentiles appear to have participated in the temple worship and sacrifices (see E. Schürer, G. Vermes, et al., *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ [175 B.C.-A.D. 135]* [1977-] 2:309-13).

[60]See Chapter III.1.1.

[61]Some of these vocatives require clarification. That the coordinate in ἄνδρες Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οἱ κατοικοῦντες Ἰερουσαλὴμ πάντες (2:14) is probably epexegetic, thereby making the vocative denote Jews who are either permanent or temporary residents in Jerusalem, is supported by the language of 2:5 (see below) and by the successive salutations in the speech (2:22, 29). *'Abot R. Nat.* 2(2[a]) has a similar construction: לאנשי יהודה וליושבי ירושלם (cited by Str-B 2:614; I have been unable to verify this reference). Ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί and the related ἀδελφοί initially seem quite general. But they are, at least for Luke (Acts 7:2; 22:1; 23:1, 6; 28:17; cf. 4 Macc 8:19), a type of address found in the first century synagogues and among Jewish congregations generally and are comparable to ἄνδρες Ἰουδαῖοι.

however, have been thought to call the idea of a limited mission into question. We will look briefly at them.[62]

5.1.1. The witnesses of Pentecost (2:5, 9-11)

Acts 2:5 characterizes the people at Pentecost who were attracted by the apostles' phenomenal ability to speak in other dialects and from whom the first converts to Christianity came. The most indicative word of the description, Ἰουδαῖοι, identifies the people specifically as Jews. Unfortunately, though, the inclusion of Ἰουδαῖοι in this verse is textually dubious. The word is significantly absent from ℵ and is variously placed in C (ἄνδρες Ἰουδαῖοι) and E (Ἰουδαῖοι κατοικοῦντες). Does this mean, as K. Lake maintained,[63] that Ἰουδαῖοι is an addition to the text, derived perhaps from the opening words of Peter's speech (ἄνδρες Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οἱ κατοικοῦντες Ἰερουσαλὴμ πάντες, 2:14), and that from the beginning the gospel was preached to the Gentiles? The obvious needlessness of mentioning that Jews were living in Jerusalem and the possible contradiction in saying that Jews, who were already a nation, were persons from every nation would support Lake's argument. Yet two factors suggest otherwise, that is, that even if the word Ἰουδαῖοι were secondary, Luke probably means Jews.

First, ἄνδρες εὐλαβεῖς points away from a reference to the Gentiles. Εὐλαβῆς characterizes for Luke (Luke 2:25; Acts 2:5; 8:2; 22:12) a religious attitude which is typically Jewish and which appears to be applied strictly to Jews.[64] Simeon (Luke 2:25) was not only pious, he was also based in the temple and was waiting for the consolation of Israel. Ananias (Acts 22:12) was εὐλαβῆς κατὰ τὸν νόμον and respected by all the Jews living in Damascus.

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[62]The following discussion responds to the interpretations of K. Lake ("The Gift of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost", in *Beginnings* 5:113-14) and J. Jervell ("The Divided People of God. The Restoration of Israel and Salvation for the Gentiles" [1965], in *Luke and the People of God. A New Look at Luke-Acts* [ET 1972] 41-74).

[63]Lake, *Beginnings* 5:113-14; cf. Ropes 3:12.

[64]Presumably the pious men who buried Stephen were Jews. The text does not say. But nowhere does the adjective actually take the place of ὁ φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν or ὁ σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν (contra Williams 64) and denote the uncircumcised Gentiles who were in some way affiliated with the synagogue, if this is even the meaning of the participial phrases (see Appendix). The only cause for doubt is if εὐλαβῆς bears the same meaning as εὐσεβής which is applied in 10:2 to Cornelius.

Second, ἀπὸ παντὸς ἔθνους τῶν ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανόν not only recalls ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς in 1:8 (cf. εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, Luke 24:47), making a geographical as well as a socio-logical note; it also indicates that Luke means the reader to understand the description in verse 5 in terms of the list of nations in verses 9-11. The countries included in the list are primarily those in the diaspora with large Jewish populations.[65] Among the pairs of nations, though, is the certainly unexpected and extremely puzzling Ἰουδαῖοί τε καὶ προσήλυτοι (v. 11).[66] This pair requires some explanation.

Lake posits that "Jews and proselytes" represents a distinct category and is intended to show that the other components of the list designate Gentiles. While his suggestion would eliminate the tautology created by Ἰουδαῖοί τε καὶ προσήλυτοι qualifying Ἰουδαία (v. 9)[67]--in general inhabitants of Judea would be assumed to be Jews--it is untenable. It fails to consider the primary distinction between the pairs and, consequently, draws attention incorrectly to the different religious backgrounds rather than, as ἀπὸ παντὸς ἔθνους indicates, to the great variety of nationalities represented. Moreover, it is possible--admittedly awkward, but possible--to make the pair adjectival in sense and to view it as a qualification intended not to exclude but to emphasize. In

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[65]See Bruce (NIC) 62-64.

[66]Most striking is the placement of these words in the middle of a list classifying people apparently according to the country of birth. Some of the awkwardness would be eliminated if Ἰουδαῖοί τε καὶ προσήλυτοι were the last item in the list. This would allow the neat succession of political and religious categories. But the textual evidence is lacking to permit a legitimate omission of "Cretans and Arabians"; and attempts to give this pair a figurative meaning (e.g. O. Eissfeldt, "Kreter und Araber", *TLZ* 72 [1947] 207-12; J. Thomas, "Formgesetze des Begriffs-Katalogs im N.T.", *TZ* 24 [1968] 15-28; E. Güting, "Der geographische Horizont der sogenannten Völkerliste des Lukas [Acta 2 9-11]", *ZNW* 66 [1975] 149-69), though interesting, are not convincing.

The list itself--its seemingly deliberate selection and arrangement of the components--has been the subject of speculation. On the possible connection between Acts 2:9-11 and astrological geography, in particular the list of Paul Alexandrinus, see S. Weinstock, "The Geographical Catalogue in Acts II,9-11", *JRS* 38 (1948) 43-46; H. Fuchs, "Zum Pfingstwunder, Act. 2,9-11", *TZ* 5 (1949) 233-34; J. A. Brinkman, "The Literary Background of the 'Catalogue of the Nations' (Acts 2,9-11)", *CBQ* 25 (1963) 418-27; and B. M. Metzger, "Ancient Astrological Geography and Acts 2:9-11", in FS F. F. Bruce (1970) 123-33. Page (85-86), followed by Knowling (75), suggests that the countries may be grouped historically according to the development of the diaspora communities. G. D. Kilpatrick ("A Jewish Background to Acts 2:9-11", *JJS* 26 [1975] 48-49) believes the list was drawn up from the perspective of Rome; B. Reicke (*Glaube und Leben der Urgemeinde. Bemerkungen zu Apg. 1-7* [1957] 32-37), that Luke followed a list, compiled by the leaders of the church of Antioch, of lands to which Christian missionaries had been sent prior to A.D. 50. M. D. Goulder (*Type and History in Acts* [1964] 152-58) makes a case for linking the world of Acts 2 with the list of Noah's grandsons in Genesis 10. Harnack (67) thinks that the number twelve (obtained by striking out Judea, Cretans, and Arabs) was chosen purposely, perhaps to indicate that each apostle spoke a different language.

[67]The tautology and the curious anomaly that the inhabitants of Judea were amazed to hear the apostles speak in their own language (v. 6) have caused scholars to question the originality of Ἰουδαῖοι (for a conspectus of opinion, see Haenchen 173 n. 2). The preponderance of external evidence, though, favours the inclusion of the word (Lake and Cadbury 4:19; Metzger 294).

spite of the problems caused by their position, the words may modify all the components in the list;[68] or they may refer specifically to οἱ ἐπιδημοῦντες Ῥωμαῖοι,[69] thereby foreshadowing the goal of Acts and possibly hinting at the means by which the gospel reached the political capital--through the Jews and proselytes converted at Pentecost.

5.1.2. The recipients of the promise (2:39)

The conclusion of Peter's speech at Pentecost states that the message of salvation, the proclamation of the work and achievement of Jesus the Messiah, was a promise directed to Peter's audience, to their children, and to all those who are far off. The third element of the compound designation is crucial. It may be interpreted in several ways: (a) all Jews in future generations,[70] thereby expanding τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν; (b) all Jews living in the diaspora communities;[71] (c) the Gentiles who are presently outside the covenant.[72] The first interpretation is unlikely.[73] As for the other two options, the D-text's use of ἡμῖν and (τοῖς) ἡμῶν instead of the second person pronouns, thereby (τέκνοις) resuming the universalistic tone of 2:17-21D,[74] and the εἰς ἔθνη μακράν in 22:21 detailing the parameters of Paul's apostolic commission, would support interpretation (c).[75] The author (and the reader) with one eye on the goal of Acts would certainly have in mind the thought of a church composed of Jews and Gentiles.[76] Nevertheless, there

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[68]Alexander 1:53-54 and Page 87; cf. Haenchen (174) and others who hold this position by omitting or reinterpreting "Cretans and Arabians".

[69]Harnack 69-70 and Bruce (NIC) 63. Against this interpretation is Lake's valid observation that the other two pairs connected by τε καί do not modify the immediately preceding component (Lake, *Beginnings* 5:114).

[70]Cf. BAGD, s.v. μακράν 1b and Stählin 54.

[71]E.g. Haenchen 186; Munck, *Paul* 213 n. 1; and S. G. Wilson, *The Gentiles and the Gentile Mission in Luke-Acts* (1973) 219.

[72]E.g. Jervell, "Divided People" 57-58; H. Preisker, "μακράν", *TDNT* 4:374 and J. Dupont, "The Salvation of the Gentiles and the Theological Significance of Acts" (1959-60), in *The Salvation of the Gentiles. Essays on the Acts of the Apostles* (ET 1979) 22-23.

[73]Μακράν is not used temporally elsewhere in the Greek Bible. Moreover, "your children" often denotes more than the immediately succeeding generation.

[74]Epp, *Codex Bezae* 70-72.

[75]Another frequently cited argument is the influence of Isa 57:19, where τοῖς μακράν opposes τοῖς ἐγγύς. This OT text is applied in Eph 2:13, 17 to the reconciliation of Gentiles (τοῖς μακράν) and Jews (τοῖς ἐγγύς), with God and with each other, through the shed blood of Jesus. It is arguable, though, whether the use in Ephesians determines that in Acts.

[76]Most scholars understand a proleptic reference to some extent, whether or not they believe that Peter himself or his listeners thought in terms of a mission to the Gentiles.

is sufficient evidence to suggest that although the mission to uncircumcised Gentiles looms imminently, at this stage in the story the apostolic proclamation should be considered strictly in terms of a mission to the Jews or circumcised Gentiles. Verse 39 sums up the significance of the list of nations in verses 9-11. It also completes the thought of Joel 3:1-5(ET 2:28-32) cited at the beginning of Peter's speech and presumably conveys the context of the Old Testament passage.[77] The virtually parallel wording of the adjectival ὅσους ἂν προσκαλέσηται κύριος ὁ θεός ἡμῶν (cf. Joel 3:5) would suggest so.[78] If this is the case--and I think it is--verse 39 speaks of those in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, from both near and distant places,[79] who have survived God's judgment of Israel; the judgment of the nations (Joel 4:2[ET 3:2]) occurs after the restoration of Judah and Jerusalem. There need not be therefore for Peter or his audience the thought of Israel's responsibility to a wider sociological group.[80]

5.1.3. The blessing through Abraham (3:25-26)

In this passage concluding Peter's second address, that to the people in the temple precincts attracted by the healing of the lame man, Gen 22:18 is cited ("through your offspring will all the families of the earth be blessed", v. 25) and the inference is drawn that God sent Jesus to bless the Jews first[81] by turning them from their sins.

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[77]C. H. Dodd (*According to the Scriptures. The Sub-structure of New Testament Theology* [1952] 126) says that "particular verses or sentences were quoted... as pointers to the whole context [rather] than as constituting testimonies in and for themselves.... But in the fundamental passages it is the *total context* that is in view, and is the basis of the argument". Dodd's argument has been frequently challenged. The framing of Peter's speech by the citation of and allusion to Joel 3:1-5 suggests, however, that in this instance it is valid.

[78]R. F. Zehnle (*Peter's Pentecost Discourse. Tradition and Lukan Reinterpretation in Peter's Speeches of Acts 2 and 3* [1971] 124) questions the influence of Joel 3:5 on the meaning of Acts 2:39, citing the perfect tense of προσκέκληται in the OT passage and the future nuance of προσκαλέσηται in the NT passage which underlines "the possibility of salvation for all, because the call of the Lord has not yet been made definitively". This distinction need not follow, for the subjunctive mood in Acts 2:39 is determined by the indefinite ὅσους ἄν. Moreover, Zehnle seems to have confused the subjunctive προσκαλέσηται with a future tense.

[79]It may be questioned that those whom God has called are, according to Joel 3:5, people living in the diaspora. H. W. Wolff (*Joel and Amos* [ET 1977] 68-69) thinks not. But the expression ἀπὸ παντὸς ἔθνους τῶν ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανόν in Acts 2:5, reinforced by the list of nations, suggests that Luke at least has a broader geographical sphere in mind.

[80]Jervell's contention that the "audience represents all people", that the verse claims that "Through Judaism, through Israel, Gentiles are to be reached" (Jervell, "Divided People" 57-58) not only exceeds the plain reading of 2:39, it is also faultily based on interpreting 2:39 in light of Luke 24:47 and Acts 1:8. Luke 24:47 and Acts 1:8 may, as I think, set the programme for the story line of Acts; but though always in view, the programme need not apply in its entirety at each point of the story.

[81]Most commentators, influenced by 13:46, take πρῶτον with ὑμῖν rather than with ἀναστήσας (cf. 26:23).

According to J. Jervell,[82] the quotation and its application imply that through Israel, or at least through the repentant part of Israel, blessing will come to the Gentiles. Thus, the prospect of a mission to the Gentiles was for Jesus' apostles in Luke's story already a reality. Jervell's argument depends on ἐν τῷ σπέρματί σου bearing a reference to Israel [83] and not to Jesus as the consensus would understand, on αἱ πατριαὶ τῆς γῆς meaning Gentiles, and on πρῶτον hinting at an objective beyond the Jews.

Verses 25 and 26 are without a doubt difficult, and it is hard to ascertain what exactly is said. Nonetheless, there is sufficient cause to question Jervell's presupposition[84] and to suggest an alternative interpretation.

(1) While it is technically correct that Luke elsewhere applies σπέρμα to Israel (Luke 1:55; Acts 7:5-6; 13:23), ἀπὸ τοῦ σπέρματος κατ᾽ ἐπαγγελίαν in 13:23 comes very close to identifying Jesus as the specific descendant of Abraham[85] and may indicate that a similar sense of "seed" is intended in 3:25.

(2) It is plausible to hold, on the grounds that verse 26 no doubt interprets verse 25, that since the blessing (εὐλογοῦντα) which the Jews will receive is in verse 26 communicated through Jesus, the blessing (ἐνευλογηθήσονται) mentioned in verse 25 is given to the Jews and will come likewise by means of Jesus.

(3) The Septuagintal text of Gen 22:18 (cf. 18:18; 26:4) with its πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς would aptly suit the notion that in Acts 3:25 the Gentiles are the specific target of the Abrahamic blessing, τὰ ἔθνη being Luke's preferred designation for Gentiles. Yet remarkably and significantly in Acts the wording of the Old Testament text is different.[86] In place of πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς Luke has written, perhaps deliberate-

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[82]Jervell, "Divided People" 58-60.

[83]See also Dupont, "Salvation" 23.

[84]See the excellent critiques by Wilson (*Gentiles* 219-22) and J. L. Nolland ("Luke's Readers - a study of Luke 4.22-8; Acts 13.46; 18.6; 28.28 and Luke 21.5-36" [1977] 100 n. 4), to which the following discussion is indebted.

[85]Nolland, "Luke's Readers" 100 n. 4.

[86]This alternation cannot be attributed to the influence of other instances of the Abrahamic promise. Gen 12:3 and 28:14 have πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαί, the equivalent of כל משפחת, instead of πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (כל גוים).

ly,[87] πᾶσαι αἱ πατριαὶ τῆς γῆς and opened the possibility that the words refer to Jews as well as Gentiles.[88]

(4) Πρῶτον need not imply that a mission to the Gentiles is specified.[89] Still qualifying ὑμῖν, the adverb can relate to the offer of salvation first in Jerusalem, if ἀναστήσας denotes Jesus' resurrection and exaltation,[90] hence reflecting the order of Acts 1:8 and Luke 24:47, or, if ἀναστήσας means Jesus' incarnation,[91] the offer of salvation first in Palestine. In either case, the temporal counterpart of ὑμῖν is provided by a mission to diaspora Judaism, not by a mission to the Gentiles.[92]

As with 2:5, 9-11 and 2:39 there is in 3:25-26 a level, then, at which we can understand Peter's message entirely within a Jewish framework. To be sure, the reader is fully aware that a mission to the Gentiles has happened and will be mentioned in Acts. It is known also that according to 13:46 the order of priority for receiving the apostolic proclamation is the Jews first and then the Gentiles. Nor has been forgotten the possibility that, as in the promise given to Abraham, αἱ πατριαὶ τῆς γῆς includes Gentiles as well. Quite understandably in each instance the reader may feel that he is being offered a proleptic justification of the mission to the Gentiles; but if the offer is present, it is being made by Luke and not by Peter.[93] The apostles' mission was centred on the Jewish population of Jerusalem.

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[87]Cf. Haenchen 208. T. Holtz (*Untersuchungen über die alttestamentlichen Zitate bei Lukas* [1968] 74-76) thinks that Luke, having received the saying from oral tradition, wrote his version without consulting the LXX. This is possible since none of the LXX parallels use Luke's vocabulary or word order. Holtz, though, understands Acts 3:25 to represent Gen 22:18. Haenchen (208) takes πατριαί as the LXX equivalent of משפחת. Wilson (*Gentiles* 221 n. 1) suggests that πατριαί may be due to the αἱ πατριαὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν of Pss 21:28(22:27) and 95(96):7.

[88]At this point Jervell is inconsistent. Having argued that πᾶσαι αἱ πατριαί means Gentiles and that σπέρμα refers to Israel, he then in essence alters his definitions: σπέρμα denotes repentant Israel (cf. 3:22) and πᾶσαι αἱ πατριαί, not only the Gentiles but also unrepentant Israel (cf. 3:23). See Jervell, "Divided People" 59-60.

[89]U. Wilckens (*Die Missionsreden der Apostelgeschichte. Form- und Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* [1963] 43 n. 1) states the alternatives. He himself, though, still thinks a veiled allu - sion to the second period of the Gentile mission, in analogy with 13:46, is the most likely explanation.

[90]Longenecker 300. When used of Jesus, this generally is Luke's meaning of ἀνίστημι. See 2:24, 32; 13:33-34; 17:31 and the intransitive ἀνίστημι bearing the same reference in 10:41; 17:3; Luke 18:33; and 24:7, 46. Also, τὸν παῖδα αὐτοῦ recalls ἐδόξασεν τὸν παῖδα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν in v. 13.

[91]Haenchen 208.

[92]Nolland, "Luke's Readers" 100 n. 4.

[93]Cf. Haenchen 210-11; Nolland, "Luke's Readers" 100 n. 4.

5.2. *The components of initiation-conversion* [94]

Acts 2:38 in conjunction with 3:19 and 5:31 sums up the conditions imposed upon the potential converts during the earliest days of the Christian community. The injunctions may be placed also in the broader context of the whole book of Acts since Luke apparently proposes the address in Acts 2 to set the pattern and norm for the church's message of salvation. We shall therefore in the interests of space and because of the familiarity of the issues involved look briefly at the injunctions on two levels: specifically with reference to Peter's Jewish audience and more generally in terms of the rest of Acts, pinpointing salient grammatical and syntactical features. This means that the discussion will cover not only the concepts of repentance and baptism mentioned in 2:38 but also that of faith.

5.2.1. Repentance

The first injunction of 2:38, "repent",[95] is a call to change one's mind. Expressing volition and emotion, μετανοέω involves more than the alteration of intellectual ideas or behavioural patterns. It denotes the change of mind which is accompanied by remorse or regret because the former action and opinions were false or bad. It connotes an acknowledgement of rebellion before God and a new beginning in moral and religious conduct, a fundamental change of the whole life which determines a new outlook and objectives corresponding to God's will and demands. Thus, negatively, Simon Magus, cursed by Peter for seeking to gain the Holy Spirit through the wrong method and for the wrong reasons, is instructed to turn away from his evil act (8:22-23) and to pray that the Lord may forgive him. Positively, repentance as action oriented

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[94]This expression, as coined by J. D. G. Dunn (*Baptism in the Holy Spirit. A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in relation to Pentecostalism today* [1970] 5-7), describes the event of becoming a Christian: initiation refers to the ritual, external acts; conversion, to the inner transformation.

[95]In spite of the importance of the subject, μετανόεω and μετάνοια are surprisingly uncommon NT words. The author of Revelation (using only the verb) and Luke register the highest number of instances. Luke employs the verb in a religious sense in Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:22; 17:30; 26:20; Luke 10:13; 11:32; 13:3, 5; 15:7, 10; and 16:30 and the noun in Acts 5:31; 11:18; 13:24; 19:4; 20:21; 26:20; Luke 3:3, 8; 5:32; 15:7; and 24:47. In the Pauline corpus, by comparison, the word group appears only in Rom 2:4; 2 Cor 7:9, 10; 12:21; and 2 Tim 2:25. On repentance in general see J. Behm and E. Würthwein, "νοέω", *TDNT* 4:975-1006 and on repentance in Luke-Acts specifically, see J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke* (1981-85) 1:237-39; Conzelmann, *Theology* 99-101, 228-30; and I. H. Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian* (1970) 192-95.

towards God (εἰς τὸν θεόν) is the goal of or the reference point for Paul's message of salvation (20:21); it leads to life (11:18).

This two-fold dimension, reflecting the religious nuance of the common Old Testament term שוב (cf. Jer 18:8, 11; Mal 3:7), is probably more clearly expressed by Luke's use of ἐπιστρέφω,[96] the usual Septuagintal translation of the Hebrew term.[97] A celebrated example is 26:18, where conversion is defined in terms of two groups of parallel prepositional phrases[98] which describe unilateral movement between diametrically opposed spheres--from the dominion of darkness (ἀπὸ σκότους), corresponding to the authority of Satan, to the dominion of light (εἰς φῶς), representing God. Similarly, 14:15 speaks of turning from (ἀπό) worthless things like idolatrous worship to (ἐπί) the living God.

In three places Luke links the two verbs[99]: Acts 3:17 and 26:20 with reference to salvation and Luke 17:4 with reference to human intercourse and conduct. The concomitance reveals not only the close connection of the two acts in Lukan thought but also an important distinction: although μετανοεῖν and ἐπιστρέφειν are essentially interchangeable, they are not precisely synonymous.[100] Ἐπιστρέφειν, qualified almost always by ἐπι τὸν κύριον (9:35; 11:21) or ἐπὶ (τὸν) θεόν (14:15; 15:19; 26:18, 20; Luke 1:16), represents the positive direction of the act[101] which is denoted negatively by

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[96]Acts 3:19; 9:35; 11:21; 14:15; 15:19; 26:18, 20; Luke 1:16; cf. Acts 28:17 (= Isa 6:9-10); Luke 1:17; 17:4; 22:32; ἀποστρέφω in Acts 3:26.

[97]There appears to be a conscious decision by NT writers to apply to μετανοέω the thought of turning around preached especially by the prophets. In the LXX μετανοέω translates the relatively infrequent נחם Niph. (though see Isa 46:8) and refers to human regret (Prov 20:25; Jer 8:6; 18:10) or a change in divine intent (Amos 7:3, 6; Joel 2:13-14). See H. J. Stoebe, "נחם", *THAT* 2:64-66. Although the basic meanings of נחם and שוב differ, נחם like שוב denotes movement away from a previously adopted position and therefore the verbs are essentially equivalent (Jer 8:6; 38[31]:19). This implicit synonymity and the portrayal of John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles as continuous with the OT prophets presumably paved the way for μετανοέω to assume the imagery of שוב. Proleptic hints of this transference occur in Wis 11:23; 12:10, 19; Sir 17:24; and 48:15.

[98]The unexpected use of the non-coordinate εἰς with ἐπιστρέφω (cf. ἐπί in Luke 1:16, 17; Acts 9:35; 11:21; 14:15; 15:19; and πρός in Luke 17:4; Acts 9:40) and the switch in preposition from εἰς (φῶς) to ἐπί (θεόν) are curious, especially since ἀπό governs each of the other sides of the contrast. But the anomaly is probably of little import. Both εἰς with the accusative and ἐπί with the accusative can express the goal or purpose that is aimed at (BAGD, s.v. εἰς 4cβ; s.v. ἐπί III1bδ).

[99]Compare Joel 2:14, the only other occurrence of the compound verb in the Greek Bible (cf. Isa 46:8 LXX [μετανοήσατε...ἐπιστρέψατε = השיבו]; Luke 17:4). There ἐπιστρέψει καὶ μετανοήσει (= ישוב ונחם) refers to God's compassion towards disobedient Israel.

[100]Haenchen 105, 207; Fitzmyer, *Luke* 1:238; G. Bertram, "στρέφω", *TDNT* 7:727-28.

[101]Ἐν τῷ ἀποστρέφειν...ἀπὸ τῶν πονηριῶν ὑμῶν in 3:26 is exceptional.

repentance. Consequently, it is more suitable for use as a comprehensive term to describe the process of repenting and turning to God (compare the substantival cognate ἐπιστροφή in Acts 15:3).

Leaving aside for the present the related expressions ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν and βάπτισμα μετανοίας, we should draw attention to one other syntactical feature of repentance. The imperative active form of the verb in Acts 2:38 (cf. 3:19; 8:22), μετανοήσατε, shows repentance to be an act which the inquirers must do themselves. It is their responsibility to take the initiative to respond. This idea is substantiated by ἕκαστον, the subject of ἀποστρέφειν in 3:26. But it is also important to note that repentance is something beyond a person's control, for it is God's gift (cf. 5:31; 11:18), God giving the impulse to repent (cf. Jer 31:18; Lam 5:21).

5.2.2. Baptism

Several observations can be made about the second injunction mentioned in 2:38. It is clear, first of all, from the predominant use of βαπτίζω in the aorist tense[102] and passive voice[103] that baptism is a singular act done to the repentant inquirer.[104] Rarely is the agent of the action expressed. The reference to Philip performing the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch (8:38), to Saul being baptized in the presence of Ananias alone (9:18; cf. 22:16),[105] and to Peter ordering the baptism of Cornelius and his household (10:48)[106] suggest, however, that presumably the apostles or other members of the church officiated. Thus, baptism could be said to be the means by

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[102]The occasional use of the durative tenses can be plausibly excused: the βαπτίζω in Luke 3:16a denotes the content of John's mission; ἐβαπτίζοντο, following ἐπίστευσαν and ἐπίστευον in Acts 8:12 and 18:8b, respectively, reproduces the logical tense of narration, referring, like Luke 3:16a, to multiple conversions over a period of time.

[103]Out of 29 instances of the verb, the active voice occurs five times (Acts 1:5; 8:38; 11:16; 19:4; Luke 3:16) and the middle voice, once (Acts 22:16).

[104]It is incorrect to understand βαπτισθήτω, as J. H. E. Hull (*The Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles* [1967] 93-94, 99) does, as the readiness to be baptized. The verb hardly allows such a translation, nor does the interpretation square with the importance of baptism (Dunn, *Baptism* 97). Hull offers this translation in an attempt to solve the logistical problem of 3000 people needing to be baptized in one day before the Spirit could come and the more critical theological problem of Luke's otherwise unsystematic sequence of faith, baptism, and the receipt of the Spirit.

[105]Probably ἀναστὰς βάπτισαι in 22:16 should be understood in terms of ἀναστὰς ἐβαπτίσθη in 9:18, namely, "get yourself baptized" (Bruce [Greek] 403; though see Knowling 459). The force of the middle lays stress on the decision of the person being baptized and not on the fact that he effects his own baptism.

[106]On whether 10:48a should be translated "he ordered them to be baptized" or "he ordered that they be baptized", see pp. 79-80.

which the community signalled its acceptance of the convert and may even be thought to be a rite of entry into the Christian community.

Second, it would be perverse to argue that expressions like Κρίσπος...σὺν ὅλῳ τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ (18:8a; cf. 10:2) and σὺ καὶ ὁ οἶκός σου (16:31; cf. 11:14; 16:15, 33, 34), modifying the singular verb, denote that the faith and baptism of the head of the house are representative of or even substitutes for the faith and baptism of each member of the household or, further, that οἶκος in such expressions includes infants.[107] A major objection to this line of argument is the obvious dependence of the act of baptism on hearing the Christian proclamation. This concomitance occurs in each instance of alleged household baptisms. For example, in the episode of the Philippian jailer (16:31-34) it is said that Paul and Silas spoke the word of the Lord to the jailer and to *all* the people in his household and that consequently the jailer and his entire household were baptized. To expect infants to respond so precociously or to claim household solidarity on the basis of these words exceeds the extent of Luke's language, let alone that of commonsense. Moreover, the singular βαπτισθήτω of 2:38 is reinforced by the explicit ἕκαστος ὑμῶν and becomes more marked by the preceding plural μετανοήσατε. A corporate call to repentance is to be met by an individual's response. In other words, the decision to be baptized was the individual's responsibility and not that of the head of house as representative.

The water baptism commanded by Peter and the other apostles is described, third, as baptism in or into the name of Jesus.[108] The meaning of the formulae used by Luke is obscure, perhaps intentionally equivocal. Probably, as the variant reading in 2:38 and the accompanying genitives suggest, ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (2:38) and ἐν

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[107]See the discussion against this position and the bibliography given by G. R. Beasley-Murray (*Baptism in the New Testament* [1972] 312-20). Particular attention should be paid to the debate between J. Jeremias (*Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries* [ET 1960] esp. 19-24 and *The Origins of Infant Baptism. A further study in reply to Kurt Aland* [ET 1963] esp. 12-32), who argues that infant baptism is reflected in the NT occurrences of οἶκος, and K. Aland (*Did the Early Church Baptize Infants?* [ET 1963] esp. 87-94), who maintains that the origin of the practice of infant baptism can only be traced to around A.D. 200. Despite their differences about when infant baptism started, both scholars agree that the practice belongs to church doctrine.

[108]For a summary of the syntactical constructions used with βαπτίζω, see A. Oepke, "βάπτω", *TDNT* 1:539-40 and M. Quesnel, *Baptisés dans l'Esprit. Baptême et Esprit Saint dans les Actes des Apôtres* (1985) 79-119. Quesnel's work came to my attention too late to take its argument into consideration.

τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (10:48; 2:38 B D *pc* Did) are identical in sense and distinct from εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ (8:16; 19:5).[109] If this be so, the formulae with ἐπί and ἐν may refer either to the candidate's confession of faith in Jesus (cf. 2:21 || Joel 3:5[ET 2:28]; 22:16) or to the administrant acting on the authority of Christ or to his invocation of the name of Jesus during the rite. Εἰς τὸ ὄνομα, on the other hand, possibly expresses the nature of baptism, that is, the transference of ownership, the person being baptized passing to the control and possession of Jesus,[110] and thus an act of dedication. In any case, the name in baptism signifies Jesus as the one who becomes the messiah and Lord of the baptized;[111] the ritual washing, "the means by which the Christian shares in the effects of the Christ-event".[112]

The fourth point concerns εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ὑμῶν. When the use of these words in 2:38 is understood in light of the description of John's baptism in Luke 3:3, βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, and in light of the concomitance of repentance and forgiveness of sins in Luke 24:47[113] and Acts 3:19, as it probably should be, the prepositional phrase can be said to qualify μετανοήσατε and βαπτισθήτω.[114] Forgiveness of sins may be the purpose of repenting and of being baptized (telic εἰς; cf. εἰς τὸ ἐξαλειφθῆναι ὑμῶν τὰς ἁμαρτίας, 3:19) or the outcome (ecbatic εἰς);[115] or it may be

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[109]M. J. Harris, "Appendix: Prepositions and Theology in the Greek New Testament", *NIDNTT* 3:1210-11. Alternatively, the three expressions have been considered synonymous (e.g. S. New, "The Name, Baptism, and the Laying on of Hands", in *Beginnings* 5:123 n. 3; J. A. Ziesler, "The Name of Jesus in the Acts of the Apostles", *JSNT* 4 [1979] 29-30) or distinct, εἰς expressing "with reference to"; ἐπί,"devoted to, resting on"; and ἐν, "on the authority of" (R. Abba, "Name", *IDB* 3:507; cf. Dunn, *Baptism* 96).

[110]W. Heitmüller, *"Im Namen Jesu". Eine sprach- u. religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zum Neuen Testament, speziell zur altchristlichen Taufe* (1903) 94-127, esp. 127; BAGD, s.v. ὄνομα I4cβ. Another interpretation, defended by L. Hartman ("'Into the Name of Jesus'. A Suggestion Concerning the Earliest Meaning of the Phrase", *NTS* 20 [1974] 432-40; "Baptism 'Into the Name of Jesus' and Early Christology. Some Tentative Considerations", *ST* 28 [1974] 21-48, esp. 24-28), maintains that a rabbinic phrase "with reference to" is reflected. Jesus Christ in this case represents the goal of baptism or its fundamental reference: Jesus' baptism in distinction from John's baptism.

[111]Χριστός (cf. κύριος in 8:16; 19:5) is probably both confessional, representative of any early baptismal formula, and titular, an allusion back to Peter's argument of 2:22-36.

[112]Fitzmyer, *Luke* 1:240.

[113]There is in Luke 24:47 a niggling textual problem. On Lukan usage alone it is difficult to decide between μετάνοιαν εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν (cf. Luke 3:3) or μετάνοιαν καὶ ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν (cf. Acts 5:31). Εἰς has the slightly superior external attestation (p^{75} ℵ B) and, in view of the εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη following, probably would have been more likely altered to καί (Metzger 188).

[114]Bruce (NIC) 77; Lake and Cadbury 4:26; cf. C. D. Osburn, "The Third Person Imperative in Acts 2:38", *RestQ* 26 (1983) 81-84.

[115]A. Oepke, "εἰς", *TDNT* 2:429; Moulton 3:266; Moule 70.

regarded as conceptually (though not chronologically) related to baptism, or since John's baptism is termed a "baptism marked by repentance" (genitive of definition), forgiveness may be presented in 2:38 as simply connected with baptism (referential εἰς).[116] Whatever, baptism confirms repentance and forgiveness.

Finally, baptism appears in many of the accounts of conversion mentioned in Acts and conspicuously in the significant ones. Understandably this feature leaves the reader asking whether the act of baptism is from Luke's perspective indispensable for the Christian community. A fair number of exceptions,[117] though, does give us cause to hesitate before affirming the point. We will return to this matter.[118]

5.2.3. Faith

As we mentioned above, the peroration of Peter's Pentecost address does not list faith among the requirements; but 2:44 does refer to the new converts as οἱ πιστεύοντες. It is probable that faith was implicit in Peter's appeal. This is backed up by the fact that in Acts faith is specifically faith in the Lord who is demonstrated in Peter's speech to be the Jesus whom the Jews wrongly rejected. It is implied as well by the striking fact that in Acts members of the Christian community are not called "the repentant ones" or "the baptized"; instead the common appellative focuses on faith in Jesus. Christians are "those who have believed in the Lord", "those who have called upon the name of the Lord".

Luke's use of πιστεύω and of the cognate substantive πίστις in a religious sense (indeed, that of all the New Testament writers) gains significance from the qualifiers

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[116]Harris, *NIDNTT* 3:1208-9; cf. J. C. Davis, "Another Look at the Relationship between Baptism and Forgiveness of Sins in Acts 2:38", *RestQ* 24 (1981) 80-88. Davis argues for a "purposive" εἰς. His other assertion--that "forgiveness, salvation, washing away of sins always follow baptism, never precede it" (Davis, "Baptism" 88)--exceeds the sense of Luke's language. A causal sense of the preposition has been vigorously defended by Robertson (389, 592) and J. R. Mantey ("The Causal Use of *Eis* in the New Testament", *JBL* 70 [1951] 45-48; "On Causal *Eis* Again", *JBL* 70 [1951] 309-11), apparently in an attempt to circumvent any hint of sacramental theology; but the evidence from secular hellenistic Greek for εἰς to be retrospective seems to be lacking. LSJ lists no causal uses of εἰς.

[117]The notable ones are 2:47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7; 9:35, 42; 11:21; 13:48; 14:1 (indeed, a complete silence from 11:18-16:10); 17:4, 12, 34; and 19:10.

[118]See Chapter V.4, esp. pp. 253-55.

which pinpoint the focus of the community's belief.[119] More often the qualifier is a prepositional phrase than the dative case.[120] While it is true that in the New Testament period the use of the dative case was waning, this fact alone does not account for the unparalleled placement of the prepositions εἰς and ἐπί with the accusative with πιστεύω. If no new connotation were intended and πιστεύειν εἰς/ἐπί were the equivalent of πιστεύειν ὅτι, relating faith to a particular event or fact, we would expect ἐν to occur rather than εἰς or ἐπί with the accusative. Such statistics allow us to infer, freely acknowledging the danger in refining too much, that ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον (9:42; cf. 11:17; 16:31; 22:19) connotes the metaphorical movement associated with a decision of commitment, a "turning from former objects of devotion that brought disappointment to a new personal object of faith in whom one has confidence".[121] As for εἰς τὸν κύριον, it denotes as a minimum the object or direction of faith; but there is probably something more than mere intellectual acceptance of the gospel. Since "faith in the kerygma is inseparable from faith in the person mediated thereby",[122] acceptance of the message about Jesus, who is proclaimed as messiah and Lord, implies the committal of one's self to the person of Christ. Faith therefore is both confident reliance and personal trust.

One further syntactical feature of the use of πιστεύω in Acts should be mentioned. In most cases the verb connotes an inceptive action, an entrance into a state of commit-ment ("to receive the message and therefore believe"). This is especially true of the past tenses of the indicative mood where the aorist tense is predominant.[123] But it would be incorrect to assert that (οἱ) πιστεύσαντες always specifies the adoption of faith whereas (οἱ) πιστεύοντες always indicates the continuance of the state of believing. There is too much interchange of usage: πιστεύοντες in 5:14 (cf. 10:43 [?]; 13:39 [?]) expresses

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[119]The following is based particularly on the studies by Moulton (1:67-68), R. Bultmann ("πιστεύω", *TDNT* 6:197-228, esp. 203-4, 214), and Harris (*NIDNTT* 3:1211-14).

[120]With the dative case the sense of the verb ranges from "give intellectual credence to" (the testimony) of men or God (8:12) to "entrust oneself to" God (16:34; 13:12D; cf. 27:25) or Christ (5:14[?]; 18:8a). On the use of διά plus the genitive case to qualify πιστεύω and πίστις, see p. 104.

[121]Harris, *NIDNTT* 3:1212; cf. Moule 49.

[122]Bultmann, *TDNT* 6:211-12.

[123]Zerwick (§250) notes the possible difference with verbs which of their nature indicate a state: "πιστεύειν = be a believer; πιστεῦσαι may = embrace the faith". Cf. the aorist tense in 4:4; 8:12, 13; 9:42; 13:12, 48; 17:12, 13D, 34; 18:8a; the imperfect tense in 18:8b; and the pluperfect in 14:23. The same sense is borne by the infinitives in 4:31D; 14:1; and 15:7, by the imperative in 16:31 and Luke 8:50, and by πιστεύσωσιν in 19:4.

entrance into the state of Christianity; οἱ πιστεύσαντες (4:32) and οἱ πεπιστευκότες (15:5; 18:27; 19:18; 21:20, 25) as well as the present participle (2:44; 22:19) describe the Christian condition and are simply other ways of saying "Christians".

5.3. *The rationale*

5.3.1. The Jews' treatment of Jesus

Though repentance and divine forgiveness apply in the first place to the sins of each penitent, the command to repent in Acts 2-5 is also connected with the specific sin of the Jews' rejection and killing of Jesus (2:23; 3:13-15; 4:10; 5:28, 30).[124] In this respect repentance becomes the responsibility of the nation, too, and concerns not only the violation of Moses's law, since Jesus was innocent (3:13), but also the violation of God's will as expressed through Jesus (2:22; 3:13; cf. 10:38).

This particular disobedience, excused to some extent by the Jews' ignorance (κατὰ ἄγνοιαν, 3:17; cf. Luke 23:34; Acts 13:27), has a serious consequence for the individual and for the nation. According to levitical law a sin committed unwittingly still required retribution (Lev 4:1-35; 5:14-19; Num 15:22-28); and if the unwitting sin were not atoned for, it would become a witting sin which was more culpable and led to the sinner being cut off from Israel[125] (Num 15: 29-36). These levitical principles appear to lie behind the commands of repentance and baptism in Acts 2-5. In 2:40 Peter's listeners are exhorted to save themselves from their corrupt generation (cf. Deut 32:5). Like Jesus, who similarly characterized his compatriots who refused to accept the witness of his miracles and teaching and consequently consigned themselves to God's judgment and rejection,[126] Peter is said by the exhortation to consider his contemporaries who have denounced Jesus and their need for repentance already under condemnation: they are a source of perdition from which one must dissociate oneself in order to escape the coming judgment. The precarious position of the Jews is explained further in 3:22-23, in a quotation based on material from Deut 18:15-20 and Lev 23:29 which

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[124]The connection is spelled out in chap. 2, the exhortation "repent" replying to the listeners' question "What should we do?" (2:37) which in turn stems from the convicting power of Peter's speech about Jesus' life, death, and exaltation. In 3:19 the inferential οὖν forges the link.

[125]There is a discussion of נכרתה הנפש ההוא מעמיה on p. 188.

[126]Luke 9:41; 11:29-32; cf. 11:50-51; 13:34-35; 19:41-44.

identifies Jesus as the messianic prophet who has been raised up by God for Israel.[127] The thrust of the citation lies in verse 23. There the subject of the verb changes from the corporate ὑμεῖς to the singular πᾶσα ψυχή qualified by μὴ ἀκούσῃ τοῦ προφήτου ἐκείνου (i.e. τοῦ Ἰησοῦ), and the harsh sentence ἐξολεθρευθήσεται (= כרת ה:) is delivered on the Jew who refuses to listen to the prophet. The sense of the words is clear: (1) it is necessary to listen to Jesus (i.e. to accept Jesus) in order to fulfil God's will; (2) while the command to listen applies to all Israel, obedience is the individual's responsibility; (3) refusal to listen does not mean the obliteration of God's people; but (4) the Jew who does not listen no longer belongs to God's people.[128]

A distinction then appears within Israel. The privilege of birth no longer guarantees the right to receive the promises of God. Instead, there is suggested, along prophetic lines, the idea of a righteous remnant, indeed, even the idea that the people of God is now defined as only those accepting Jesus the Messiah. The Israel of the Old Testament covenants without the belief that Jesus is the messiah is distant from God. It may also be correct to ask, does the Israel of the Old Testament covenants even not exist?

5.3.2. Participation in the last days

Repentance is also correlated with participation in the last days, the former making the latter a reality for the individual and the nation. This is stated in two ways.

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[127]The quotation makes its connection in the first place not with v. 21a but with v. 19a: the ἀναστήσει of v. 22 refers to Jesus' first coming. The link gives the exhortation to repent its biblical authority. The original sense of Deut 18:15-20 may have been that God would raise up prophets on different occasions as required, but the singular προφήτην seems to have led Jews to expect *one* prophet (cf. John 1:21, 25; 6:14; 7:40; 1QS 9:10-12; 4QTestim 5-7) and to conjecture that the messiah would be a second Moses (J. Jeremias, "Μωυσῆς", *TDNT* 4:849-64).

[128]Knowling (118) lessens the severity of the words: "in their original meaning in the O.T. they need not refer to anything more than the penalty of the death of the body, and it is not necessary to see in them here any threat of eternal punishment in Gehenna". However, it is significant that כרת (מהעם) is synonymous with breaking God's covenant (Gen 17:14) and the antithesis of inheriting the land (Ps 37:9, 22), two acts deciding one's relation to God.

The first is brought out by 2:38: the person who repents and is baptized in the name of Jesus will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.[129] In Acts the Spirit's presence in the Christian community not only marks Jesus' triumphal enthronement at God's right hand (2:33) and the church's endowment with power to continue the mission of Jesus effectively (1:8; cf. Luke 24:47-48); it also signifies that God's redemptive plan approaches completion. The point is made when, in the citing of Joel 3:1-5a(ET 2:28-32a) to explain the supernatural events at Pentecost, the μετὰ ταῦτα (אחר־כן) of the Old Testament passage is changed to ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις in Peter's speech (2:17).[130] The result is an unmistakable indication that the outpouring of the Spirit confirmed the present realization of the final period of salvation history and possibly, too, the imminent actualization of the day of the Lord bringing judgment and salvation.[131] To have the Spirit is to experience in the present the blessings of the last days.

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[129]The order of the clauses suggests that the receipt of the Spirit was consequent to and dependent upon repentance and water baptism. But if this is the correct understanding of the grammar of 2:38, it cannot be used to claim that in Luke's view baptism conferred the Spirit. The apostles in the upper room received the Spirit (2:1-4) without there being any record of a concomitant experience of water baptism in the name of Jesus. In 5:32 the Spirit is described as God's gift to those obeying him, not to those being baptized. For further discussion, particularly concerning the experiences of the Samaritans (8:12-17), Cornelius (10:44-48; 11:15-17), Apollos (18:25-26), and the twelve disciples at Ephesus (19:1-7), see pp. 43 n. 13, 77-80, 246-53.

[130]B 076 (C *pc*) sa^{mss}, though, retain the μετὰ ταῦτα of the LXX. E. Haenchen ("Schriftzitate und Textüberlieferung in der Apostelgeschichte", *ZTK* 51 [1954] 162 and in his commentary p. 181) argues for the originality of this reading: "nach der lukanischen Theologie bricht mit der Geistausgießung noch nicht die Endzeit an!" (Haenchen 181). Disagreeing with Haenchen's interpretation on both textual and theological grounds is, for example, F. Mußner ("'In den letzten Tagen' [Apg 2, 17a]", *BZ* n.s. 5 [1961] 263-65). The following arguments can be cited. As far as the text is concerned, it is probable, as shown by the other changes made to the OT passage, that Luke is not citing the received text of the LXX verbatim. Admittedly, D has variations which are clearly secondary. As for the theology, that Luke reckons both with a delay in the parousia and with an early expectation of the end time and that this two-pronged approach was probably part of the pre-Lukan tradition are demonstrable (cf. Fitzmyer, *Luke* 1:231-25). Furthermore, "the last days" can represent an extended epoch (compare 2 Tim 3:1; Jas 5:3; 2 Pet 3:3 [thus, Schneider 2:268]). Another consideration is that ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις may well give the sense of μετὰ ταῦτα in the OT context. There, as in Acts 2:20, the day of the Lord is mentioned.

[131]Determinant in this regard is the reference of the supernatural events described in v. 20. If the cosmic signs are those which will herald the end of the world, the day of the Lord is still future (Haenchen 181, 188). If the reference is to the cosmic signs which accompanied the crucifixion (Luke 23:44-45), the day of the Lord is a present reality (cf. Bruce [NIC] 69).

The second comment, 3:19-22, has repentance for the corporate sin of murdering the messiah leading to the return of the messiah[132] and thus to corporate redemption.[133] Frequently it is suggested that in these verses the thought is entirely of redemption in the future: καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως (v. 20a) and χρόνοι ἀποκαταστάσεως (v. 21) are understood to describe the same event, the former expressing the subjective side of the messiah's advent, the latter the objective side.[134] Yet , given the use of ἀνάψυξις

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[132]It exceeds the present discussion to inquire whether Jesus is thought to have been the messiah during his ministry, to have been messiah at his resurrection and exaltation, or, as J. A. T. Robinson ("The Most Primitive Christology of All?", *JTS* 7 [1956] 177-89) seeks to argue, is to become messiah when he is sent again. For other discussions of the Christology of this passage, see Bauernfeind 473-83 (originally "Tradition und Komposition in dem Apokatastasisspruch Apostelgeschichte 3,20f", *ZTK* 52 [1955] 205-25) and the bibliography mentioned by Schneider (1:310-11, 323-27).

[133]The connection of thought is not unfamiliar in Judaism; see *b.Sanh.* 97b-98a and other similar passages mentioned in Str-B 1:162-65.

[134]See A. Oepke, "ἀποκαθίστημι", *TDNT* 1:391; E. Schweizer, "ἀνάψυξις", *TDNT* 9:664-65; Haenchen 207; and Bruce (Greek) 111. C. K. Barrett ("Faith and Eschatology in Acts 3", in FS W. G. Kümmel [1985] 11-13), for one (see also n. 136), disagrees.

and ἀποκατάστασις elsewhere,[135] it is more probable that the two subjunctive clauses of v. 20 are sequential[136] and are to be distinguished in the sense that καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως refers to moments of relief during the time people spend in waiting for the coming of the messiah (such as individual conversions, endowments with the Spirit, the grace of the gospel)[137] whereas χρόνοι ἀποκαταστάσεως means the time when God through Christ (for τοῦ κυρίου is the implied subject of ἀποστείλῃ) restores the fallen world (πάντων) to the purity and integrity of its initial creation. Repentance based on faith in Jesus then has a twofold effect on future events: on the one hand, it brings for the penitent the

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[135]The relation of the clauses in vv. 19-22 is obviously at the heart of the uncertainty. On grammatical grounds alone it is not possible to decide (a) whether the ὅπως ἄν clause is dependent on εἰς τὸ (p^{74} A C D Nestle-Aland^{26}; cf. πρὸς τὸ ℵ B Nestle-Aland^{24}) ἐξαλειφθῆναι or is directly connected to μετανοήσατε καὶ ἐπιστρέψατε and (b) whether the coming and sending of v. 20 are coincident (see the comments by Barrett ["Acts 3" 9]). Nor are the attempts to interpret the clauses by distinguishing between καιροί and χρόνοι constructive (compare Acts 1:6, 7); the words seem synonymous in biblical usage (J. Barr, *Biblical Words for Time* [1969] 21-49, esp. 22-23, 42-44). Attention may be drawn, though, to the plural καιροί which becomes difficult to explain if the word denotes the single time of messianic salvation (Barrett, "Acts 3" 11).

As for the crucial expressions themselves, ἀνάψυξις is an exceptional word, occurring only one other time in the Greek Bible. Its replacement of πνεῦμα in Isa 32:15σ′ and θ′ in a phrase worded similarly to Acts 3:20a makes for a tempting parallel between ἔλθωσιν καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως and λήμψεσθε τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος of 2:38 (cf. Zehnle, *Pentecost Discourse* 57), the more so since Jesus' exaltation effected the advent of the Spirit (2:33). The idea, though, must remain no more than conjecture. The natural meaning of ἀνάψυξις is a *temporary* relief (Exod 8:11[15]; compare ἀναψυχή in Ps 65[66]:12 and Jer 30:26[49:31]). This is borne out by the secular use of the word (e.g. Philo, *Abr.* 152; Plato, *Smp.* 176A) and by the use of ἀναψύχω in the Greek Bible (Exod 23:12; Judg 15:19; 1 Kgdms 16:23; 2 Kgdms 16:14; Ps 38:14[39:13]; 2 Macc 4:46; 13:11; 2 Tim 1:16; compare Homer, *Od.* 4.568).

The precise meaning of ἀποκατάστασις in the sentence is more difficult. The noun is not repeated in the Greek Bible. The cognate verb, which occurs often enough, denotes a return to the previously existing state or position, a restoration which may be political, cosmological, physiological, etc. Thus, ἀποκαθίστημι is used of YHWH's restoration of Israel (Jer 16:15; 23:8; 24:6; 27[50]:19; Hos 11:11; Acts 1:6; cf. Amos 5:15; Isa 44:22), miraculous healings (Matt 12:13; Mark 3:5; 8:25; Luke 6:10), the eschatological work of Elijah (Mal 4:5-6; Matt 17:11; Mark 9:12), and the meeting of friends (Heb 13:19). From the use of ἀποκατάστασις in extrabiblical literature (e.g. *Ep.Arist.* 123; Josephus, *Ant.* 11:63, 98; Philo, *Quis Her.* 293), we may surmise that the meaning of ἀποκατάστασις in Acts 3:21 is linked with the meaning of the cognate verb (cf. NIV). F. F. Bruce ("The Speeches in Acts--Thirty Years After", in FS L. L. Morris [1974] 66-68; cf. Bruce [Greek] 112; Lake and Cadbury 4:38; RSV), however, disagrees. He maintains that "establishment of what was predicted" is more intelligible in the context and is in keeping with Lukan language elsewhere (cf. Luke 1:70; 24:25-27, 44). But the references Bruce cites in support (Ps 15[16]:5; Job 8:6; 2 Macc 12:39; 15:20) do not use the noun, nor do they, except perhaps for 2 Macc 15:20, actually disallow the translation "restoration".

[136]Barrett, "Acts 3" 11-16; Bengel 2:544-46; W. L. Lane, "Times of Refreshment. A Study of Eschatological Periodization in Judaism and Christianity" (1962) 178-80, cited by Zehnle, *Pentecost Discourse* 58 n. 121.

[137]Bauernfeind (68) sees καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως as moments of relief in the distress of the messianic woes but the context seems to view the seasons of refreshment in more positive terms.

eschatological future in part into the present and, on the other, it seemingly hastens the days of the messiah still to come.[138]

To sum up. The debate in Jerusalem is set in the context of a community, with its roots in Jerusalem and in a mission to the Jews, which has recognized and adopted the manifestation of the promised messiah and the commencement of God's final act of redemption that have been Israel's privilege to receive. It is also a community divided by a two-pronged approach to these experiences. There is the predominant conviction that despite the realization of Israel's promised eschatological blessings, it is not a person's Jewish birth or conversion which decides membership in the people of God and, by consequence, participation in the realized and anticipated blessings of the last days. Determinative is the Jews' individual and corporate acceptance of Jesus which is manifested by the willingness to repent and be baptized and by the / of the Spirit [bestowal upon all who believe. There is an equally strong and legitimate conviction of the necessity, indeed, of the obligation, to live as responsible people of God in the light of the commencement of the messianic age. According to some members of the community this meant to retain the marks of YHWH's covenants with Israel, namely, circumcision and obedience to the law. What does Luke say the rest of the community thinks?

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[138]Thus, Haenchen 207. Schweizer (*TDNT* 9:664-65), for one, disagrees: the sentence contains "simply the warning that this redemption will not come at all for Israel unless it repents now". Whether the idea is Luke's as well as the primitive church's is debatable (see Bruce, "Speeches--Thirty Years" 68).

CHAPTER I. PETER

The first to address the question "What is necessary to belong to the people of God?" in the course of the council proper is Peter.[1] That he should occupy this place is not surprising given his prominence and his experiences recounted in Acts 1-12. During the earliest days of the Christian community, he serves as both the principal Christian apologist and the representative leader within the Jerusalem church.[2] It is Peter who explains to the Jewish populace and leaders the facts about Jesus the Messiah and the miracles performed in his name (2:14-40; 3:12-26; 4:8-12; 5:29-32), who prompts the selection of a successor to Judas (1:5-22), supervises the disciplining of Ananias and Sapphira (5:1-10a) and of Simon Magus (8:18-24), under mandate from the apostles investigates and approves the spread of the gospel to Samaria (8:14, 25), and defends the Gentiles' right to hear the apostolic proclamation (11:1-18).

In chapter 15 this importance is reinforced by the impact of Peter's speech on the assembly. His comments follow a protracted debate (πολλῆς ζητήσεως γενομένης, 15:7a) which was at times probably intense and alarming[3] and was, as ἀναστὰς Πέτρος εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς implies, in need of correction, even probably in what the church leaders

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[1]The best known study of Peter is that by O. Cullmann (*Peter: Disciple.Apostle.Martyr. A Historical and Theological Study* [ET 1962], on the Jerusalem council see pp. 49-54). More recent works include those by W. Dietrich (*Das Petrusbild der lukanischen Schriften* [1972]); R. E. Brown, K. P. Donfried, and J. Reumann (*Peter in the New Testament. A Collaborative Assessment by Protestant and Roman Catholic Scholars* [1973]); and F. Mußner (*Petrus und Paulus--Pole der Einheit. Eine Hilfe für die Kirchen* [1976]).

[2]To draw attention to Peter's leadership role is not to deny Luke's equally important concern to demonstrate the non-authoritarian nature of the primitive church: John frequently accompanies Peter (3:1, 3-4, 11; 4:1, 3, 7, 19; 8:14); all of Jesus' followers gathered in the upper room select Matthias (1:23, 26); all the apostles perform miraculous deeds, are arrested by the temple authorities, and are made to appear before the Sanhedrin (5:12, 17-32). On the significance of ἀπαγγείλατε Ἰακώβῳ καὶ τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ταῦτα in 12:17 and of the subsequent ascendancy of James in the Jerusalem community, see Chapter III.2.

[3]Without the coordinate στάσις (cf. 15:2 [see p. 10 n. 19]) and thus without the accompanying pejorative meaning, ζήτησις may simply continue the notion of ἰδεῖν περὶ τοῦ λόγου τούτου (v. 6) and refer to the speech and counterspeech associated with an investigation into a matter on which there is a division of opinion (Greeven, *TDNT* 2:893-94). At the same time, it should be noted that πολλῆς does indicate that the debate was extensive and that agreement was not a foregone conclusion.

were saying.[4] In contrast is the attitude of the council at the end of the address (v. 12): ἐσίγησεν δὲ πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος καὶ ἤκουον Βαρναβᾶ καὶ Παύλου.[5] The Western text prefaces these words with συνκατατεθεμένων δὲ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τοῖς ὑπὸ τοῦ Πέτρου εἰρημένοις, indicating that the assembly's silence represented the elders' agreement with Peter's argument. The inference may reflect the prejudices of its textual tradition, in particular an interest in early church unity and, more importantly, in a unity over against the viewpoint of Judaism and the Judaizing position.[6] Yet, as we have noted, it can be shown that the D text does have "a general tendency to explain and simplify, to emphasize and often to exaggerate" what is already found in the underlying text.[7] It is also significant that there is no further reference to disagreement in the story, that the force of ἐσίγησεν is underlined by the inclusive πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος[8] (rather than the representative "apostles and elders" [cf. v. 6]) and by the equally suggestive ἤκουον, and that σιγάω in Luke 20:26 (cf. Acts 13:41D)[9] likewise designates the response to a weighty comment which cannot be answered immediately. In light of such evidence, we are no doubt correct in assuming that the Western insertion probably has not introduced a new idea but simply has highlighted Luke's own intention, though arguably to excess. The silence and the audience of the entire assembly then may be said to testify at least that a turning point had come:[10] Peter had restored calm to the extent that even if the apostles and elders were not in full agreement with all of his statements, they were sufficiently

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[4]Haenchen (427 n. 6) takes πρὸς αὐτούς to refer to the Pharisaic believers in v. 5 rather than to the apostles and elders. But the latter group being the closer antecedent is more logical and is not excluded by Luke's use of οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς in 11:2 (see pp. 210-11).

[5]This editorial comment has been described by Dibelius ("Council" 95-96) as "a colourless transitional statement" corresponding to μετὰ δὲ τὸ σιγῆσαι αὐτούς (v. 13) and intended merely to introduce the report given by Barnabas and Paul. Such an assessment is in my opinion inadequate.

[6]Epp, *Codex Bezae* 96-98, 102-3. The additions in the D text of Acts 15 could also be intended to enhance the leadership and the control of the Jerusalem church (Lake and Cadbury 4:169; Ropes 3:138-39) or the prestige of Peter (Metzger 429). With regard to Metzger's suggestion, it is relevant that the same textual tradition reads ἀνέστησεν τῷ πνεύματι Πέτρος καὶ κτλ in v. 7.

[7]Barrett, "Codex Bezae" 25. See p. 13.

[8]On the meaning of πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος, see Introduction 4.1.

[9]The other occurrence of σιγάω in Luke-Acts, Luke 9:36, being the apparent parallel of διεστείλατο αὐτοῖς ἵνα μηδενὶ ἃ εἶδον διηγήσωνται in Mark 9:9, does not belong here.

[10]This much is the case whether ἐσίγησεν means "became silent" (ingressive aorist [thus, NIV; NEB; JB; Moulton 3:71; Burton §41; Lake and Cadbury 4:175]), as though the cut and thrust of the debate either had continued while Peter was speaking or possibly, though unlikely, had recommenced after he had finished speaking, or whether the verb means "were silent" (constative aorist [thus, KJV; RSV; Robertson 834]), as though the assembly did not want to speak or could not reply at the moment.

appeased by the arguments to have no immediate reply and to be able to listen to Barnabas and Paul.[11]

The significance of Peter's argument is conveyed also by the fact that the argument refers to an event, the conversion of the Roman centurion Cornelius and of his household through the ministry of Peter, which is given epic treatment beyond any other narrative in Acts, being in effect told twice over in great length and detail in Acts 10:1-11:18.[12] Thus, to understand Acts 15:7-11, we must begin with an examination of Acts 10:1-11:18.[13]

1. The Conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10:1-11:18)

Acts 10:1-11:18 is a composite of several interwoven, mutually dependent events[14]--the appearance of an angel to Cornelius, instructing him to summon Peter from Joppa so that he could hear the gospel (10:1-8, 22, 30-33; cf. 11:13); the descent from heaven of a large sheet containing all kinds of animals which a voice tells Peter to eat (10:9-16; cf. 11:5-11); Peter's journey, at the Spirit's prompting, to Cornelius in Caesarea and his preaching of the gospel, at Cornelius's invitation, to relatives and close

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[11]Scholarly opinion on the implication of ἐσίγησεν πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος varies. Those who believe that the words indicate not agreement but temporary appeasement include Schneider (2:181) and seemingly Bruce ([NIC] 309). Representative of those who understand the silence to signal without a doubt that Peter's speech puts an end to all conflict are Haenchen (429), Marshall (250), and Roloff (231). Bauernfeind's (190-91) opinion is interesting. For him ἐσίγησεν signals that the opposition ceased and that the customary agreement did not materialize. In other words, instead of restoring calm, Peter's speech contradicted the expectations of the audience and thus created an unforgettable moment of embarrassed, stunned silence which represented the audience's need for reflection on Peter's words.

[12]In 15:7-11 there is no definite confirmation that Peter's encounter with Cornelius does provide the base; but the words "in the early days God chose that through me the Gentiles should hear the gospel" (v. 7) and the occurrence in both 10:1-11:18 and 15:7-11 of διακρίνω and καθαρίζω, terms found nowhere else in Acts, suggest some connection.

[13]It may be observed that nothing is said about another nodal event in Luke's story: the conversion of the Samaritans (8:4-8, 12, 14-17) who are led to faith in Jesus and to baptism by Philip, one of the leading Hellenists, and who do not receive the Spirit until Peter and John arrive from Jerusalem and lay their hands on them. The incident not only involves Peter and must have influenced his understanding of the Christian mission; it also introduces questions about the chronological and conceptual connection between receiving the Spirit and being baptized, about the necessity of the apostles' laying hands on converts, about the theological and administrative relation between the Jerusalem community and the daughter churches--all of which affect in some way Luke's presentation of membership in the people of God. Some of these matters will be touched on elsewhere in our study (see primarily Chapter V.4.3-4), but a detailed examination of the incident itself will be omitted as there is no reference to it in Peter's speech at the council. From this silence we may infer that for Luke the incident has no bearing on the situation in Acts 15.

[14]Foakes-Jackson (87) believes that while in some respects the story "appears to be a free composition of the author, it bears the stamp both of probability and truth". M. Dibelius ("The Conversion of Cornelius" [1947], in *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* [ET 1956] 109-22) and Haenchen (343-50) take a different position. See the discussion on pp. 52-55.

friends assembled in the centurion's house (10:17-20, 23b-28, 34-43; cf. 11:12, 14); the Gentiles' baptism (10:44-48); and Peter's subsequent defense of his actions before the apostles and other believers in Jerusalem (11:1-18). All these events lead to the crucial conclusion, expressed by the Jerusalem Christians, that God has granted Gentiles repentance unto life (11:18), that the conversion of Cornelius forms the precedent for the extension of salvation to the uncircumcised. It is within the step-like progression to this climax that we can identify three matters which influence the argument in 15:7-11: the claim that God shows no favouritism (10:34-35), the proclamation of faith in Jesus (10:36-43), and the bestowal of the Spirit (10:44-48; 11:15-17).

1.1. *The lesson of the qualified impartiality of God (10:34-35)*

The first matter concerns Peter's lesson regarding God's relation to those outside of Israel. This is summed up in the two-part contrasting statement of 10:34-35. Central to these verses is the notion that God is οὐ προσωπολήμπτης. Προσωπολήμπτης and its cognates are unusual terms,[15] but they are not without a traceable origin. They are derived by the New Testament writers from several synonymous Old Testament expressions,[16] which when used in a bad sense ("be unduly influenced by", "show favouritism towards"),[17] as the New Testament writers do, refer to decisions made with respect to outward circumstances. It is against this negative attitude that Israel's judges especially are warned (e.g. Lev 19:15; Ps 81[82]:2; Prov 18:5), being charged to judge righteously and thereby reflect the attitude of God,[18] the supreme judge, whom they represent. For the judged as well as the judge there are consequences because of God's impartiality. It means that evil-doers cannot depend on birth or wealth, for example, to

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[15]The adjective occurs only in Acts 10:34, but NT instances of the cognates are Rom 2:11; Eph 6:9; Col 3:25; Jas 2:1, 9; 1 Pet 1:17.

[16]The most common of the expressions is נשׂא פנים, which the LXX translates λαμβάνειν πρόσωπον or θαυμάζειν πρόσωπον.

[17]The Hebrew expressions originate from the respectful oriental salutation in which the greeter humbly turns his face to the ground (cf. Gen 32:21); the person thus greeted signifies recognition and esteem when he raises the face of the greeter (E. Lohse, "πρόσωπον", *TDNT* 6:779). Clearly then the expressions can be used in a good sense (e.g. Deut 28:50; 2 Kgs 3:14; Lam 4:16) as well as in a bad sense.

[18]Deut 10:17; 2 Chr 19:7; Sir 35:13; *Pss.Sol.* 2:18; *Jub.* 5:16; *m.ʾAbot* 4:22.

erase their well-deserved divine punishment; therefore, the chosen people of God are warned and motivated to love and obey the God who has acted on their behalf (Deut 10:12-22; *Pss.Sol.* 2:15-18). At the same time, the claim asserts that no person need fear that because of favouritism God will not receive him; and as proof, the law states that God executes justice for the orphan and the widow and loves the גר (Deut 10:18; cf. *Jub.* 5:15-16). Thus, when Peter says that God is impartial, he sets the comment against the background of God's judgment at which there is no respect of persons, neither for the disobedient nor for the social misfortunate or outcast in Israelite society.

We can identify more precisely what is meant in Acts 10:34 by God's impartiality. Influencing the concept in the context are Peter's vision of a sheet descending from heaven and containing all kinds of animals (10:9-16; 11:5-10), the interpretation of the vision (10:28), and the contrasting side of Peter's opening statement (10:35).

1.1.1. The vision

The vision of 10:9-16 and of 11:5-10 assumes a knowledge of the levitical purity laws recorded primarily in Leviticus 11-16 and Numbers 19,[19] which were part of the Mosaic covenant and essential to the survival of Israel as the people of God.[20] Specific reference is to the clean animals which could be eaten and the unclean animals which were forbidden for food (Lev 11:1-46; 20:25; Deut 14:3-21).[21] The concepts associated with these laws are complex, even elusive in meaning, and there is hardly space or need to discuss the many conflicting and contradictory elements; but by way of a very simplistic summary to facilitate the understanding of Peter's vision and in particu–

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[19]See also Deut 14:3-21; 23:10-15; 24:8; and 26:14.

[20]The purity laws are in no way unique to Israel; but the particular expressions of them may be distinctive: Israel's overall system is distinguished by the nation's relation to YHWH.

[21]These dietary regulations rescind those given to Noah (Gen 9:8; compare 1:29-30). The criterion determining the classification, though, is debatable. Current explanations include the animals' role in pagan sacrificial rites or idolatry (M. Noth, *Leviticus. A Commentary* [ET 1965] 92), hygiene (R. K. Harrison, *Leviticus. An Introduction and Commentary* [1980] 120-33), Israel's witness to the surrounding nations, and the symbolic application of moral and physical perfection to divisions among people (M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger. An analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo* [1966] 41-57). See also H. Rabinowicz, "Dietary Laws", *EncJud* 6:42-45 and G. J. Wenham, "The Theology of Unclean Food", *EvQ* 53 (1981) 6-11.

lar of Peter's objection (10:14; 11:8) and the voice's rejoinder (10:15; 11:9), four points can be made.[22]

(1) In Hebrew society under Moses's law, everything--people, places, animals, foods, and objects--is classified, independently of the actual physical conditions, according to one of four categories: holy, common, clean, and unclean. According to Lev 10:10 (cf. Ezek 22:26; 44:23; CD 6:17-18), where the responsibility for maintaining the classification is given to the priests, "holy" (קדש = ἅγιος) is the opposite of "common" (חל = βέβηλος) and "clean" (טהור = καθαρός) is the converse of "unclean" (טמא = ἀκάθαρτος). This double contrast, however, should not be considered an exact, synonymous parallel. More precisely, holy denotes that which belongs to God. Its antithesis, common, is a wider notion than the corresponding unclean. Everything is common which is not fitted for the sanctuary, even what is allowable for daily use and enjoyment and is regarded as clean. Therefore, common things can be divided into the categories of clean and unclean: if חל is ritually clean (טהור), it is free for use; if חל is ritually unclean (טמא), it is taboo. Cleanness refers to purity and normality. It is the ground state of most people, places, and objects in Israel. It is also the condition of being obedient to the statutes and ordinances of the law. It is non-transferable.

(2) Fundamental to the classification is a theological principle. The unclean and the holy are two states which must never come in contact with each other (e.g. Lev 7:19-21; 22:3). They are utterly distinct in theory and must be kept equally distinct in practice. This separation is mandated by God's character. God himself is intrinsically holy and all that belongs to him must be holy (Lev 11:45; 20:26; cf. Exod 29:43-45; 40:9; Lev 23). It follows then, as a corollary, that Israel must exclude every form of uncleanness and must protect with special zeal the tabernacle, the seat of God's most holy presence, and its institutions.

(3) While people and objects are assigned to one of the four categories, under certain circumstances they may change state. Clean things become holy when they are

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[22]There are fuller discussions, for instance, in J. E. Hartley, "Clean and Unclean", *ISBE*-rev 1:718-23; L. E. Toombs, "Clean and Unclean", *IDB* 1:641-48; and G. J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus* (1979) 18-25; and "Purity and Impurity, Ritual", *EncJud* 13:1405-14.

sanctified, as a result of either a divine act (Num 16:7; Lev 21:8, 23) or a person's obedience to the law (Exod 24:3-8) or contact with certain holy things (Exod 29:37; 30:29; Lev 6:18, 27). Unclean things, on the other hand, cannot be sanctified. Clean things may be made unclean if they are polluted by coming into contact with unclean things (Lev 11:39-40; 14:36; 15:4-12). Holy things may be defiled and become common, even polluted and therefore unclean, by idolatry and other sins (Lev 18:21; 19:12; 20:3).

It is evident from this series of relationships[23] that the state of uncleanness can be either temporary or permanent. Something or someone intrinsically clean may be made temporarily unclean through natural causes (e.g. diseases) or human actions or contact with the unclean. All temporary uncleanness requires cleansing. Permanent uncleanness, on the other hand, refers to things that are unclean in themselves: the uncircumcised (Isa 52:1), other countries besides Israel (Josh 22:19; Amos 7:17), sexual offenses (Lev 18), and idols (Gen 35:2-3; Isa 30:22). This state cannot be altered nor is it contagious; hence, no rites are prescribed to cure it. Contact is simply forbidden.

(4) Only God, who deals with the source of impurity, can bring the clean person or thing out of the category of unclean.[24] Explicitly this act concerns the removal of temporary uncleanness. But since it was God who set the levitical categories in the first

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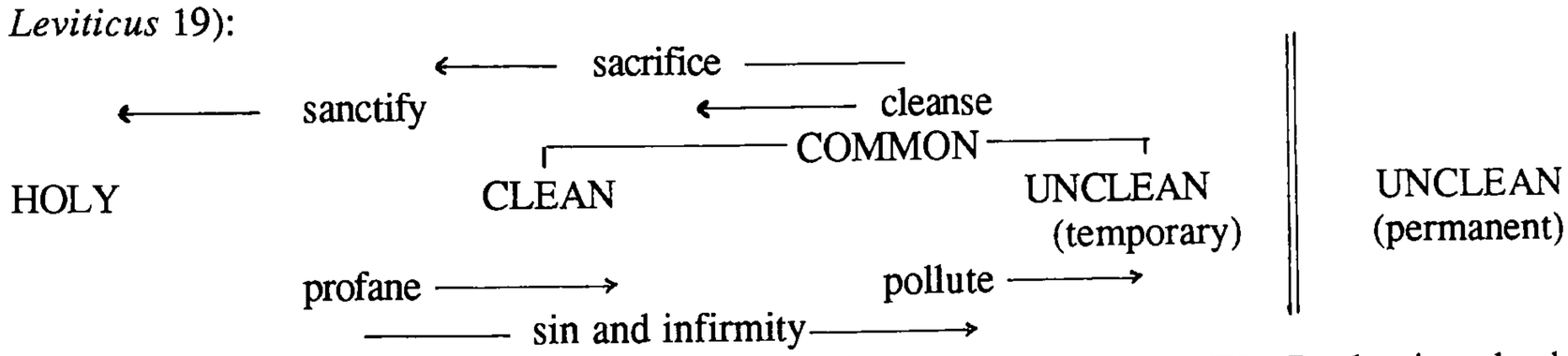
[23]The relationship between the four categories can be diagrammed as follows (cf. Wenham, *Leviticus* 19):



[24]This is borne out in the use of καθαρίζειν (טָהֵר) in the LXX. Predominantly the verb occurs in the passive voice (e.g. Ps 50[51]:9; Jer 13:27). When the active voice is used, the person doing the cleansing may be a priest (e.g. Lev 13:6-8) or individuals like Moses (Lev 8:15; Num 8:15), Job (Job 1:5), or the Maccabeans (1 Macc 4:43; 13:47, 50); but most often it is God (e.g. Exod 34:7; Ps 50[51]:4; Jer 40[33]:8). Further, the addition of ἔναντι θεοῦ either directly to the verb (Lev 16:30; Num 8:15) or in the immediate context (Lev 12:7-8; 14:11, 18, 23, 29, 31; 16:18) makes clear that the cleansing is mediated before the Lord in the sanctuary. Also instructive is the combination of καθαρισθήσεσθε and καθαριῶ ὑμᾶς in Ezek 36:25: from the explicit statement that the sinner will be cleansed because God will cleanse him can be read into other occurrences of the passive voice of καθάριζειν the idea that God is the principal cause of cleansing.

place, undoubtedly we are correct in inferring that latent in the Old Testament is the idea that God could, should he choose to, effect the cleansing of the permanently unclean.[25]

That is in brief the Old Testament background. In Peter's vision the application of the levitical classification as set forth in Lev 10:10 is less than straightforward. Both verse 14 (11:8; cf. 10:28) and verse 15 (11:9) include a concept unfamiliar to the standard Old Testament categories. Peter's objection (v. 14) coordinates κοινόν and ἀκάθαρτον to describe the animals in the sheet which Peter rejects for food; the voice's reply (v. 15), again with reference to the contents of the sheet, opposes ἐκαθάρισεν and κοίνου. According to the descriptive πάντα (10:12) and the inclusion of ἑρπετά (10:12; 11:6), a class of completely unclean animals, the sheet contains clean and unclean animals.[26] If κοινόν in verse 14 takes the place of βέβηλον, which in the New Testament does not bear a cultic sense,[27] it refers merely to objects not set apart for God; and, hence, since κοινόν quite correctly would cover both the clean and the unclean contents of the sheet and would not stipulate that all the food necessarily belonged to a prohibited category, there is no legal reason for Peter to refuse. Similarly, though possibly less crucial, in verse 15 κοίνου as the synonym of βεβήλου does not really oppose ἐκαθάρισεν; according to Lev 10:10 the positive should be ἡγίασεν. Given such apparent confusion, it has been suggested that the Old Testament categories do not apply, perhaps because Luke, being (presumably) a Gentile, did not understand them or because he was thinking of the rabbinic idea that the clean objects through their association with the unclean would themselves become unclean.[28] However, several factors indicate otherwise.

To begin with, there is the use of κοινός and κοινόω in a cultic sense. Κοινός never translates חל despite there being instances when κοινός is used to supplement

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[25]Cf. *Midr.Ps.* 146.4 quoted on p. 55.

[26]Contra Marshall 186.

[27]In 1 Tim 1:9; 4:7; 6:20; 2 Tim 2:16; Heb 12:16 βέβηλος characterizes people and ideas which are far from God and thus is the opposite of εὐσεβής. The cognate verb, though, does retain a cultic sense; see Matt 12:5 and Acts 24:6. The lexical shift of the noun reflects the general trend in NT religion to distinguish no longer ritually between clean and unclean. Compare the infrequent occurrences of μιαίνω.

[28]C. House, "Defilement by Association: Some Insights from the Usage of KOINÓΣ/KOINÓΩ in Acts 10 and 11", *AUSS* 21 (1983) 143-53.

βέβηλος as the antonym of ἅγιος.[29] Predominantly a distinct negative nuance is conveyed.[30] Three good examples[31] are 1 Macc 1:62-63, which connects the eating of κοινά with being defiled (μιανθῶσιν) by food and with profaning the holy covenant (βεβηλώσωσιν); Josephus, *Ant.* 11.346, where κοινοφαγία along with the violation of the sabbath is labelled a sin characteristic of the Jewish apostates who joined the Samaritans during the Diadochian period; and 4 Macc 7:6, the only Septuagintal occurrence of κοινόω, which parallels ἐκοίνωσας μιαροφαγίᾳ and ἐμίανας, the principal verb translating טמא,[32] and places these acts in opposition to godliness (θεοσέβεια) and cultic purity (καθαρισμός). Such evidence, while acknowledging the flexibility of meaning, allows κοινός and κοινόω in Acts 10:14, 15 two possible meanings: like μιανθῶσιν in John 18:28, the sense of טמא, the state or act of being (certainly) unclean or, as may be more likely, given Luke's synonymous usage of κεκοίνωκεν in Acts 21:28 and βεβηλῶσαι in Acts 24:6, the neutral idea of חל, things which are not set apart for God.[33] It also challenges the need to resort to the idea of suspect objects (סתם) developed by Pharisaic Judaism.[34]

Second, although καί connects the adjectives in 10:14 and ἤ is the conjunction in 10:28 and 11:8, it is likely that the copulative coordinate informs the disjunctive one. That is the order in which the reader would encounter the compound object, seeing κοινὸν καὶ ἀκάθαρτον first. Moreover, ἤ can function like a copulative coordinate, especially in negative sentences and with related terms, and according to the

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[29]For example βέβηλον...καὶ κοινὸν τόπον in Josephus, *Ant.* 3.181 denotes the sections of the tabernacle which were separate from the one reserved for God. See also *Ant.* 12.320.

[30]F. Hauck ("κοινός", *TDNT* 3:791) seemingly overlooks this fact when he makes all occurrences of κοινός substitutes for βέβηλος in the sense of חל.

[31]The other instances are *Ep.Arist.* 315; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.112; and 1 Macc 1:47-49.

[32]Μιαίνω renders חלל (Gen 49:4; Exod 20:25; Isa 43:23; 47:6; Ezek 7:22, 24; Dan 11:31ϑ) and various other words a total of twelve times. By way of comparison βεβηλόω, the principal equivalent of חלל, translates another verb twice (טמא in Ezek 43:7, 8). The exceptions do warn, however, that there was overlap in meaning.

[33]Cremer, s.v. κοινός; W. Paschen, *Rein und Unrein. Untersuchung zur biblischen Wortgeschichte* (1970) 167-68. This is the sense of the word group in Heb 9:13; Rev 21:27; and probably in Heb 10:29.

[34](ידים) סתם may be, however, the correct sense of κοιναῖς (χερσίν) in Mark 7:2 (M. Smith, *Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels* [1951] 32) although the above discussion shows that ἀκαθάρτιας could be a plausible substitute. Cf. κοινός in Rom 14:14.

grammarians does so in this instance.[35] This syntax opens the way for the two adjectives to form a hendiadys,[36] ἀκάθαρτον explaining which aspect of חל is meant ("common, that is, unclean"); κοίνου in verse 15 becomes a synecdoche for the compound adjectives.[37]

A third factor is the Old Testament legal statements concerning ritual defilement from animals. Unclean animals, unless they are dead, do not pass their uncleanness on to people, objects, or other animals.[38] They are unclean by nature, they are not to be eaten; but there is no notion of defilement by association,[39] otherwise the ritual purity of clean beasts could never be certain. Noah's ark is a stated example of such a mixture (Gen 7:1-3, 8-9, 13-16).[40]

When these three points are applied to the dialogue in Acts 10:14-15, we note that Peter's objection ignores the fact that the apostle could have eaten one of the clean animals in the sheet. The focus falls on the unclean and in the case of 11:8 quite emphatically as the objection is recast structurally to give the adjectives more promi-nence. Further, since κοινός does not mean "suspect" material which has been or can be defiled through contact with the unclean and since clean and unclean animals co-existed without fear of contamination, the reason for Peter's protest cannot be due to an unholy mixture of clean and unclean animals.[41]

If the combination of clean and unclean animals was not the cause of Peter's objection, what was? The voice's command in verse 13 yields a useful clue. The sense of θῦσον καὶ φάγε is not that Peter was told to eat animals killed contrary to levitical prescriptions, for the emphasis in verses 14 and 15 falls on the contents of the sheet and

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[35]BDF §446; Moulton 3:334; cf. BAGD, s.v. ἤ 1aβ. Significant examples of this syntax are in Acts 1:7, χρόνους and καιρούς being synonyms, and particularly in John 8:14.

[36]Haenchen 335; cf. Jacquier 318. Compare καθαρὸς καὶ ἅγιος (Josephus, *J.W.* 6.425) characterizing the worshippers at Passover. Alternatively, if κοινός means טמא, the two adjectives may serve to reinforce each other, similarly to the way in which βέβηλον καὶ κοινήν (Josephus, *Ant.* 12.320) describing Antiochus's desecration does. The end result is the same.

[37]Longenecker 388.

[38]The prohibition in Lev 11:26b should be read in light of the reference to carcasses in vv. 24-25, 27-28. However, Noth (*Leviticus* 95) thinks differently.

[39]Haenchen (335 n. 3) dismisses this possibility quite appropriately: it "versagt".

[40]According to Jewish legend, though, in the land of the Sons of Moses (the Levites) during the exile there were only clean animals (L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* [ET 1913-66] 4:317-18).

[41]Contra Bruce (NIC) 218 n. 15.

not on the manner of preparation; rather the imperatives make no distinctions between clean and unclean and therefore confront Peter with the prospect of contradicting his ancestral conscience. The unexpected injunction recalls God's command to Ezekiel (Ezek 4:1-17) to enact symbolically the coming exile of Israel by eating unclean bread (v. 13). Ezekiel registered an equally horrified reaction (μηδαμῶς...ἡ ψυχή μου οὐ μεμίανται ἐν ἀκαθαρσίᾳ...οὐδὲ εἰσελήλυθεν εἰς τὸ στόμα μου πᾶν κρέας ἔωλον, v. 14), although for him God altered the instructions. The rabbinic discussion in *b.Sanh.* 59b about the food permitted to Adam (cf. Gen 1:29-30) is also suggestive. During the discussion the question is posed whether flesh does descend from heaven and then, since it does, whether it is fit to eat. The sages' answer cited in support states that nothing unclean (טמא) comes from heaven, the implication being that if the impossible did occur the meat would be fit for food.[42] This thought--that heaven would have contact with the unclean--along with the unexpectedness of the implied permission to eat unclean animals is a likely component of Peter's reaction.

The voice's reply to Peter (10:15) asserts that a divinely-effected, unalterable change in the state of the food which Peter rejected has occurred: the previously unclean is now clean and cannot again be considered unclean. In this regard the syntax of the two verbs is important. Ἐκαθάρισεν points out, from the notion that God's word is and causes God's action, that God is there and then declaring what he had done.[43] The use of the aorist was hardly avoidable: it simply expresses the fact of God's act of cleansing at a particular point in time without stating *when* the cleansing took place.[44] For its part, κοίνου probably anticipates the paraphrase κοινὸν ἢ ἀκάθαρτον λέγειν in 10:28,[45] and the present prohibitive aspect, reinforced by the emphatic σύ, indicates that Peter

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[42]H. Freedman ("Tractate Sanhedrin", *The Babylonian Talmud* 59b n. d3), commenting on R. Abbahu's derogatory dismissal of R. Zera's question whether an ass could descend from heaven, draws this inference.

[43]That καθαρίζω stresses both declarative and factitive ideas is implied not only by the synergism of divine word and action developed in the OT but also by the use of טהר particularly in Leviticus. For example, in Lev 13 the priest pronounces the leper clean (or unclean); in Lev 14:11 he performs the right of cleansing and makes the man clean.

[44]While we could speculate that the reference may be to Jesus' achievement on the cross or, because of Mark 7:14-19, possibly to a saying of the historical Jesus (Lake and Cadbury 4:115; Bruce [NIC] 219), the conjecture has no grammatical or contextual support in Luke's account. The aorist tense does not even force the impression that the cleansing occurred during the vision (though Conzelmann [63] and Stählin [152-53] attempt to make this point).

[45]Lake and Cadbury 4:115.

should stop doing what he had been doing, namely, that he should no longer treat the objects as unclean.

To sum up: the vision of the sheet, drawing attention to the unclean animals, associates both the holy God and the holy people of God with what was under levitical law considered unclean and argues that there is no contradiction, for cleansing has occurred, changing irrevocably the state of the unclean animals into that of the clean.

1.1.2. The interpretation of the vision

The interpretation of the vision is stated in 10:28b. Peter announces to the uncircumcised Gentiles gathered in Cornelius's house that to him God has shown that *no person* (the Greek sentence bringing out the emphasis quite plainly) should be called unclean. In other words, Peter is saying that the formerly intrinsically unclean which now are to be considered intrinsically clean are the Gentiles.

This abrupt change from a vision which deals with the eating of food previously prohibited under Moses's law to an interpretation which speaks of the purity of the Gentiles has led to speculation about the original event behind Luke's story. It is often thought that one or both of the above issues--dietary regulations and the acceptability of uncircumcised Gentiles--are authorial additions intended to argue a theological principle. To cite two opinions only: M. Dibelius[46] posits a repositioning of the vision of the sheet. He thinks Peter's experience actually belonged to a later period of the church when the conflict about eating with Gentiles was fierce, possibly the confrontation related in Gal 2:11-14. Luke, however, has amalgamated the incident with a legend of a non-momentous conversion of a God-fearing Gentile by Peter which took place sometime between Stephen's death and the beginning of Paul's mission. Combined and editorially enriched, the two traditions defend the principle that the church's acceptance of uncircumcised Gentiles was the direct revelation of God's will. E. Haenchen,[47] on

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[46]Dibelius, "Cornelius" 109-22, esp. 111-13, 122. For the response to this explanation, compare, for instance, F. Bovon ("Tradition et rédaction en Actes 10,1-11,18", *TZ* 26 [1970] 22-45), who argues for two independent traditions with a historical basis, and K. Haacker ("Dibelius and Cornelius. Ein Beispiel formgeschichtlicher Überlieferungskritik", *BZ* 24 [1980] 234-51), who points out the weaknesses of Dibelius's form critical presupposition and holds to the historical integrity of the incident as recorded in Acts.

[47]Haenchen 347-50.

the other hand, thinks Luke "beschreibt nicht unmittelbar ein wirkliches Geschehen, sondern stellt eine Glaubensüberzeugung... im Gewand der Historie dar".[48] For him the account of the conversion of Cornelius and his household is Luke's representation of the Caesarean community's tradition of its founding, abbreviated to coordinate Peter's apostolic dignity and the Antiochenes' founding of a mission to uncircumcised Gentiles, whereas the apostle's vision was invented to illustrate the lesson of 10:28b. As constructed, the vision joins a series of supernatural interventions which compellingly proves that God alone instigated the mission to the Gentiles and which makes the human participants little more than marionettes--a theologically unsound presentation of obedience from faith.

It is certainly true that the church's mission to the Gentiles was not initiated by human decision. Luke's stressing of God's clear guidance and of the dramatic confirmation of divine will cannot be ignored, as we shall continually observe. Yet Haenchen's thorough-going scepticism is hardly warranted,[49] and even the simplicity introduced into the analysis of the text by identifying two themes and linking them with separate sources is deceptive.

In this regard--that is, the recognition of distinct traditions--the nature of visions is relevant. A vision which is intended to teach does not necessarily contain the same ingredients as its physical referent. Visions do have parabolic significance.[50] This could well be the case in Acts 10 since in certain Judeo-Christian apocalyptic literature (e.g. *1 Enoch* 85-91; Dan 7-8) animals stand in for people. Jewish legend also has God endowing animals with admirable moral qualities as a pattern for humans, thereby paralleling the teaching of the Torah.[51]

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[48]Haenchen 349.

[49]Haenchen correctly challenges Dibelius's assumption that the church's admission of an uncircumcised Gentile would have generated little excitement. But Haenchen himself oversteps the mark, I think, when he doubts the collection of conversion-stories by a community imminently expecting the eschaton (the Gospels are a good example of a community interested in preserving its tradition even though throughout the first century the end was expected), when he queries Paul's lack of appeal to such stories over against the Judaizers' arguments, and when he implicitly rejects the miraculous element in the story.

[50]Wilson, *Gentiles* 174.

[51]Ginzberg, *Legends* 1:43. Other applicable correspondences between animals and humans are *Barn.* 10, where the whole food law is explained as referring to various types of people and *Ep.Arist.* 128, 142-69, where the rules are allegories of virtues and vices. Cf. Philo, *Spec.Leg.* 4.106-15.

At the same time the vision does not *require* an allegorical interpretation in order for it to have happened with or at least have been placed traditionally with the conversion of an uncircumcised Gentile. Jewish dietary regulations and the church's acceptance of uncircumcised Gentiles may be two distinct subjects, but they are not wholly unrelated. The latter is merely a wider application of the former. For the covenant people of God table-fellowship was determined by the levitical food laws and ultimately by the question of circumcision and observance of the law. Gentiles, being uncircumcised, were classified unclean in every way: they ate levitically unclean food; they touched levitically unclean objects; they performed levitically unclean acts. Avoid–ance of such uncleanness, thereby fulfilling God's legal demands, forced a simultaneous separation from people who were outside of Israel.[52]

Admittedly total segregation from non-Jews was impossible. From the days of the exodus people of other nations had lived in Israel (2 Sam 22:45, 46; 1 Kgs 8:41, 43; cf. Josh 8:33, 35); and with the loss of political independence, neither in the diaspora communities nor in Palestine could Jews be hermetically-sealed from Gentiles, the possible sole exception being the Qumran settlement.[53] Commerce and matters of government (e.g. *m.ʿAbod.Zar.* 2:7; 4:11) at least necessitated some association. Even social segregation was forfeited at times (Josephus, *Ant.* 20.34-35; *m.ʿAbod.Zar.* 5:5; compare 5:7-8). All the same, there is ample evidence from Judeo-Christian and classical sources[54] that ingrained in first-century Jewish law and custom was the levitical separation of the clean and unclean (of course, how uncleanness was defined and to what extent varied among the Jewish groups). The reason for the differentiation is often idolatrous intent.

This last observation is important. The potential for disobedience seems to be a principle undergirding the Jews' separation from the unclean. Lev 20:22-26 implies that

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[52]"The first without the second--in the Levitical concept of purity--is not possible, since impurity adheres to persons" (Schürer-Vermes, *Jewish People* 2:396).

[53]In light of the detailed attention to the organization of the community, the scarcity of references in the Qumran literature to Gentiles, even as converts to Judaism (4QFlor 1:4; CD 6:21; 14:4, 6), suggests the exclusion or at least the non-participation of Gentiles.

[54]John 18:28; *m.ʿAbod.Zar.* passim, Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.5; cf. Dan 1:8; 2 Macc 6:18-31; 3 Macc 3:4-7; Tob 1:10-11; and the references mentioned in Str-B 4:353-414. In extreme applications of the purity laws, Jews did not even have contact with less scrupulous Jews (*m.Dem.* 2:3; cf. Schürer-Vermes, *Jewish People* 396-97).

the distinctions between clean and unclean animals were imposed to remind Israel of her divine calling as a people separate unto the holy God. The Gentiles' abominable practices and idolatry were a reason for God's abhorrence of them, driving them from Canaan and giving their land to Israel. This divine act served as a strong warning to Israel not to behave similarly. *Midr.Ps.* 146.4 is also instructive: "But why did God declare the flesh of some animals forbidden? In order to see who would accept His commandments and who would not accept them".[55] The levitical laws protected Israel's worship of YHWH and the people of God's unique identity. They served as marks of commitment.

It follows then that to speak of nullifying the categories of clean and unclean is to speak concomitantly of removing the divinely-imposed barrier between the circumcised and the uncircumcised, between God's people and the other nations. It is therefore also quite conceivable that the issues of Jewish dietary laws and the church's acceptance of uncircumcised Gentiles not only were fused at the time of Luke's writing[56] but also that they arose in concert when the Christian community first faced the problem of a mission to the Gentiles.[57]

We shall return to the correlation of the Jewish dietary laws and the acceptability of the uncircumcised several times before our study is concluded. For the present it is sufficient to understand in what context Peter's assertion that no person can be called unclean is placed.

Acts 10:28b stands in opposition to and serves to correct 10:28a:[58] Peter's experience (κἀμοί) emphatically sets off common knowledge (ὑμεῖς ἐπίστασθε); God's recent revelation (ὁ θεος ἔδειξεν) answers to the established practice and law (ἀθέμιτον);

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[55]The continuation of this text is noteworthy: "In the time to come, however [according to some rabbis], God will again permit the eating of that flesh which he has forbidden" (brackets mine). Cf. Clement Alex., *Paed.* 2.1 and Justin, *Dial.* 20.

[56]Conzelmann 61.

[57]E.g. Hanson 119-20. Scholars who accept this probability disagree, though, about the extent of the editorial colouring in Acts 10:1-11:18, whether Luke is combining two different stories or faithfully reproducing the received tradition.

[58]Κἀμοί is adversative (BAGD, s.v. κἀγώ 2) although, because of the use of καί rather the expected ἀλλά, there is the temptation to stress Peter's role and translate "to me in particular" (cf. Rom 3:7 [BAGD, s.v. κἀγώ 4]). Knowling (257) weakens the contrast to "'and yet', *i.e.*, in spite of all these prohibitions and usages".

the equality of people (μηδένα...λέγειν ἄνθρωπον) counterbalances the levitical separation of Jews and non-Jews (ἀλλόφυλοι). The central point of the corrective, Ἰουδαίῳ κολλᾶσθαι ἢ προσέρχεσθαι ἀλλοφύλῳ, presents the theoretical application of Moses's law and thereby suggests that the verse speaks of the reversal of the principle--that association with all the uncircumcised could and did lead to idolatry--rather than the abrogation of any specific regulation. This is true whether ἀθέμιτον, the contextual meaning of which is unclear,[59] describes an act contradictory to Jewish legal prescriptions (2 Macc 6:5; 7:1; Josephus, *J.W.* 1.650; 4.99) or expresses more basically an action which defies custom (Josephus, *Ag.Ap.* 2.119; cf. *J.W.* 2.131) and the divinely-constituted order of things (cf. Josephus, *J.W.* 6.209; 1 Pet 4:3), the breaking of a taboo, a profanity.[60] Κολλᾶσθαι is the telltale word. Used of social (Acts 8:29), business (Luke 15:15), and religious (Acts 9:26; 17:31; cf. 5:13; 1 Cor 6:17) commitments and of the permanence of marital relations (Matt 19:5; cf. 1 Cor 6:16), it connotes close and firm attachment, the kind of intimacy which would have marred the divinely-imposed distinctions between Jews and other peoples and possibly would have led to idolatry and rejection of God's covenant.

Apparently, then, the lifting of the distinction between the law-conscientious Jew and the uncircumcised Gentile is presented so as to stress the fundamental change which has been effected in the law: an alteration in the idea that association with uncircumcised Gentiles meant disobedience to God's will.

This reading of verse 28 gains support, I think, from the Spirit's directive to Peter (10:19-20; cf. 11:12), in particular from πορεύου σὺν αὐτοῖς μηδὲν διακρινόμενος ὅτι ἐγὼ ἀπέσταλκα αὐτούς. The words address Peter's perplexity about the vision (10:17a, 19a) and anticipate the interpretation of the vision by presenting the situation for which the vision was meant to prepare Peter. In light of the uncertainty whether the New

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[59]Wilson, *Law* 69-70. Wilson discusses the implications which the different meanings of the adjective have for Luke's view of the law.

[60]Lake and Cadbury 4:117; cf. Bruce (Greek) 222.

Testament writers used the different voices of διακρίνω synonymously[61]--thus, (a) whether μηδὲν διακρινόμενος is influenced by μηδὲν διακρίναντα in 11:12 (if that is the correct reading)[62] and οὐδὲν διέκρινεν in 15:9 and means "making no distinction [between Jew and Gentile]" or (b) whether the middle participle influences the active participle and means "without hesitation"--it would be artificial to make μηδὲν διακρινόμενος the direct paraphrase of μηδένα κοινὸν ἢ ἀκάθαρτον λέγειν ἄνθρωπον.[63] Μηδὲν διακρινόμενος is better interpreted by the inferential διὸ καὶ ἀνατιρρήτως ἦλθον μεταπεμφθείς of 10:29a, in which case it conveys the sense of unquestioned willingness, not of human equality. Nonetheless, a reference to levitical distinctions appears not to be entirely absent from verse 20. If ὅτι there is taken as declarative, as Nestle-Aland[26] does,[64] rather than in the customary causal sense, to the fore with ὅτι ἐγὼ ἀπέσταλκα αὐτούς comes the content of Peter's doubt, namely, the holy God's association with the unclean. The clause then not only affirms the supernatural superintendence of the events, serving to spur Peter to obedience; it also draws attention to the cleansing of the Gentiles.

1.1.3. The qualification

The third influence on the idea of God's impartiality is verse 35, the second part of the opening statement of Peter's address to Cornelius. On one level this statement concerns ἐν παντὶ ἔθνει, which picks up the thought of verse 28b and explicitly locates the operative sphere of God's impartiality, claiming, since παντί in this case probably should be stressed, that God's just treatment of people is no longer founded on national

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[61]The evidence seems to disclaim synonymity (cf. BAGD, s.v. διακρίνω 1b, 2b; Bruce [Greek] 232; Jacquier 319, 321): the use of the active voice for the sense "to distinguish, separate" in Matt 16:3; Acts 15:9; 1 Cor 4:7; 6:5; 11:29, 31; and 14:29 and of the middle voice (with the aorist passive) for the sense "to doubt, hesitate" in Matt 21:21; Mark 11:23; Rom 4:20; 14:23; Jas 1:6; 2:4; and Jude 22 appears certain.

[62]The words are omitted in p^{45vid} D l p^{*} sy^{h}, but the possibility that μηδὲν διακρίναντα in א(*) A B 33 *al* is an interpolation from 10:20 is eliminated by the use of the active and not the middle voice in the earliest witnesses (Ropes 3:104).

[63]Undue attention should also not be given to the fact that Peter follows up the Spirit's direct - ive by inviting Cornelius's emissaries to be his guests (10:23a). Giving a Gentile Jewish hospitality, particularly in a tanner's house, would not infringe any written or oral law, except for the extremely scrupulous Jew. It differs little from allowing the גרים or נכרים into the Israelite camp.

[64]Also Knowling 255.

distinctions. God accepts Gentiles as well as Jews.[65] On another level the ἀλλά clause as a whole serves to correct any possible inference that God views either Jews or Gentiles unconditionally. With δεκτὸς αὐτῷ ἐστιν are twinned the thoughts of God's judicial decision and of a person's conformity to a standard. The expression has its roots in the Old Testament cultus. By the pronouncement "it is (not) acceptable" the Israelite priests made known the acceptance (or rejection) of offerings presented to YHWH (e.g. Lev 22:19-25) and at the same time YHWH's attitude towards the people bringing the offerings,[66] whether they merited admission into God's presence (e.g. Job 33:26-30; Isa 56:6-8) or separation from Israel (Lev 19:5-8). The expression thus should be understood also to describe both the state of the subject (acceptable) and an act of God (accepts).[67]

As we have said, acceptance for both the offering and its presenter depended upon their adherence, without mistake or blemish, to certain rules. Acts 10:35 mentions two conditions: φοβούμενος αὐτόν (i.e. τὸν θεόν) and ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην. With one article governing the compound participles, fearing God and doing righteousness, whatever they mean, are to be regarded as a unified whole,[68] in the sense at least that *both* conditions are mandatory for gaining God's positive verdict. Furthermore, the participles are in the present tense, an *Aktionsart* which expresses durative action, thereby making acceptability and acceptance contingent on the continual manifestation of the conditions.[69] The meaning of the phrases is a more complex matter.

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[65]Ἔθνος in Acts is used primarily of the non-Jew (see the discussion of 15:14 in Chapter III.1.1), but there is a fair number of instances when the Jew or the Jewish nation is the specific reference (10:22; 24:2, 10, 17; 26:4; 28:19). Since in most of these texts (28:19?) ἔθνος is employed by Gentiles or by Jews before a Gentile audience, the situation which prevails in 10:35, ἐν παντὶ ἔθνει may well be inclusive. The same expression in the plural in Luke 21:24, though, has only Gentiles in mind.

[66]H.-G. Link, "Take/δέχομαι", *NIDNTT* 3:745.

[67]Bruce (Greek) 204 and W. C. van Unnik, "The Background and Significance of Acts X 4 and 35" (1949), in *Sparsa Collecta* (ET 1973) 1:255. To be avoided are the suggestions that δεκτὸς αὐτῷ ἐστιν indicates that the conditions are simply preparatory (Knowling 259) or complete in themselves. Either of these inferences may be correct (see the discussion in sec. 1.4 below), but the meaning of δεκτὸς αὐτῷ ἐστιν alone does not yield such information.

[68]Moulton 3:181-82; cf. Moule 109-10.

[69]The need for constancy can be illustrated by Ezek 18:5-24: from the premise that only the righteous man shall live (v. 9), the prophet argues that repentance, a rejection of sin, and a commitment to doing what is right brings life, even for the formerly wicked person (vv. 21-23); conversely, indulgence in sin eradicates all previously committed righteous deeds and ends in death (v. 24).

Leaving aside for the present those instances in Acts when [οἱ] φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν (or the synonym [οἱ] σεβόμενοι τὸν θεὸν) could arguably be a technical term for the uncircumcised Gentiles who attended the Jewish synagogues,[70] we notice that "fearing God" for Luke can mean the servile fear which is generated by an unexpected, often dramatic encounter with the miraculous or supernatural.[71] This hardly correlates with the idea of being accepted by an impartial God. Better is another Old Testament nuance: the recognition and reverence of God's sovereignty. This thought is developed in Luke 12:5 and 23:40 (cf. 18:2, 4) in terms of God's final authority over people, not only his ability to destroy them physically (as can also the devil), but more seriously his right to pronounce sentences of condemnation on unrepentant sinners, casting them into hell. In Luke 1:50, on the other hand, reverence of God becomes the proper response to God's display of his covenant love when he mightily destroys Israel's enemies in the cause of righteousness and mercy. Since it is demonstrable from, for instance, Exod 14:31; 34:6; Pss 32(33):18-19; 144(145):19; and Mal 3:20-21 LXX that God acts for those who love him completely and do his commandments, we may assume, carrying through the Old Testament idea by virtue of Luke's use of δεκτὸς αὐτῷ ἐστιν, that φοβούμενος αὐτόν refers not only to a serious appreciation of the judgment of God but also to the active observance of God's will and demands. In other words, reverence of God is a piety centred in the fulfilment of God's covenant.[72]

Ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην is less explicit. While the verb probably is synonymous with ποιῶν and should be translated "doing"[73] rather than "producing", the precise meaning of δικαιοσύνη is the greatest difficulty in the sentence. The noun appears infrequently in Luke-Acts, and only in Acts 10:35 does it modify ἐργάζεσθαι.[74] Concomitant with holiness (ὁσιότης) as the required attitude before God (Luke 1:75),

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[70]Acts 13:16, 26, 43, 50; 16:14; 17:4, 17; 18:7. See p. 65 and Appendix.

[71]E.g. Luke 2:9, 10; 5:10; 8:25; 21:26; Acts 5:11; 19:17.

[72]Cf. Exod 20:6; Deut 6:2; 10:12; Pss 103:17; 112:1; Sir 19:20.

[73]BAGD, s.v. ἐργάζομαι 2a.

[74]The combination occurs elsewhere in the NT in Heb 11:33 and Jas 1:20 and in the relevant Jewish literature only in Ps 14(15):2 and Philo, *Congr.* 31. The usage in Heb 11:33, establishment of just government, is irrelevant to the current discussion. So is probably Jas 1:20, where the expression is slightly different, the noun being qualified by θεοῦ. As for its meaning, see the conspectus by M. Dibelius and H. Greeven (*James* [ET 1976] 110-11) and the conclusion reached by P. H. Davids (*The Epistle of James. A Commentary on the Greek Text* [1982] 93).

with self-control (ἐγκράτεια), the future judgment (Acts 24:25), and the right ways of the Lord (Acts 13:10) and opposed to deceit and trickery (Acts 13:10), δικαιοσύνη as a human attribute in Luke-Acts[75] seemingly conveys the sense of right and fair conduct, both before God and with people, which follows the will of God and is pleasing to him.[76] It appears likely therefore that ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην is to be translated "doing what is right (in God's sight)".

Septuagintal usage verifies this translation. Ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην in Ps 14(15):2 is juxtaposed with an avoidance of evil and with a manifestation of positive actions--walking blamelessly, speaking truthfully, not harming neighbour or friend, honouring the God-fearing--which gain a person permanent residence in God's holy mountain. Likewise, the more frequent synonym ποιεῖν δικαιοσύνην presents the idea of behaviour which is in keeping with God's character (Jer 9:23; cf. 1 Sam 2:10 LXX) and standard (Ezek 18:18, 21): the correct administration of justice (e.g. Gen 18:19; 2 Chr 9:8; Ps 105[106]:3; Isa 56:1; Jer 22:3); the avoidance of idolatry, adultery, ritual uncleanness, robbery, and social and economic oppression (Ezek 18:6-8); and the observance of the sabbath (Isa 56:2). Such actions link ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην not merely with fulfilling the will of God generally but with fulfilling the will of God as specifically defined in the Torah.

There is cause to pause before accepting this as the meaning of ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην in Acts 10:35. As the language of verses 2, 4, 22, and 31 anticipates and underscores the content of verse 35, Luke obviously means the reader to understand the conditions in terms of his description of Cornelius's religious standing prior to the encounter with Peter.[77] Cornelius is pious (10:2) and righteous (10:22), fears God

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[75]In Acts 17:31 the noun characterizes the (just) judgment of God exercised by Christ at his return.

[76]Luke-Acts therefore appears to contain none of the saving δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in the forensically eschatological sense which is developed in the Pauline letters.

[77]The connection is substantiated by ἀνέβησαν εἰς μνημόσυνον ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ θεοῦ (v. 4) and its parallel ἐμνήσθησαν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ (v. 31) anticipating δεκτὸς αὐτῷ ἐστιν. Like δεκτὸς αὐτῷ ἐστιν, the two earlier expressions seem to belong to a sacrificial setting, either in a literal sense--Bruce ([Greek] 216; cf. Lake and Cadbury 4:113) sees a direct reference to Lev 2:2, 9, 16, where μνημόσυνον is used of that part of the meal offering which was presented to God--or a spiritualized sense--Marshall (184) points to passages like Ps 140(141):2 and Tob 12:12. Alternatively, van Unnik ("Acts X 4" 213-53, esp. 246-47) argues that unlike δεκτὸς αὐτῷ ἐστιν the expressions in vv. 4, 31 have no cultic reference.

(10:2, 22), prays to him regularly[78] (10:2), and gives charitably to the Jews[79] (10:2); although not circumcised, he is respected by the Jews (10:22), not merely, so it seems, because of his ranking in the Roman army (cf. 10:1).[80] And his prayers and almsgiving have led God to act on his behalf (10:4, 31). Such a characterization could affect the meaning of the conditions in verse 35 in one of three ways. (1) It may indicate no more than that Cornelius was an intensely religious man, "a Gentile who, having realized the bankruptcy of paganism, sought to worship a monotheistic God, practice a form of prayer, and lead a moral life, apart from any necessary association with Judaism".[81] (2) Φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν could be a technical, rather than a generic term, defining an uncircumcised Gentile who, drawn by the beliefs and practices of Judaism, attended the Jewish synagogue but refused for some reason to take the decisive step of actually becoming a Jew. If so, εργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην may denote specifically the fulfilment of the so-called Noachic commandments,[82] the regulations which appear to have been required of the uncircumcised Gentiles who attended the synagogues. (3) Since the Septuagint uses δικαιοσύνη and ἐλεημοσύνη to convey the twofold nuance of צדקה (just conduct and benevolent activity) and sometimes δικαιοσύνη to translate חסד,[83] since, accordingly, walking in the ways of (truth and) justice is concomitant with

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[78]NIV. The content of this prayer (the plural of v. 4 being no different in intent from the singular of v. 31) can only be conjecture. It may be a desire to see the salvation of God (cf. Luke 2:25) or simply praise to God (cf. *Midr.Ps.* 100.1; 147.2). The notion "die volle Eingliederung in die Gemeinschaft des Gottesvolkes" (Roloff 169) is arbitrary.

[79]On ὁ λαός meaning specifically the Jews, see Chapter III.1.1.

[80]On the identity of the military unit, called by Luke the Italian cohort, to which Cornelius belonged and thus the matter of the veracity of Luke's account, see the suggestions of W. M. Ramsay ("Cornelius and the Italic Cohort", *Exp* 5th series, 4 [1896] 194-201) and Schürer (cf. Schürer-Vermes, *Jewish People* 1:362-65) which are summarized by T. R. S. Broughton ("The Roman Army", in *Beginnings* 5:441-43). The point at issue is the insufficient evidence to confirm the presence of an Italian cohort in Caesarea much before A.D. 69. Compare the solutions offered by Bruce ([Greek] 215) and Haenchen (333 n. 2). A. N. Sherwin-White's discussion of Cornelius's name (A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament* [1963] 160-61), demonstrating that the designation by *nomen* only was archaic even in the early Julio-Claudian period, is also relevant.

[81]Longenecker 385. As far as I know, Longenecker's interpretation is exceptional among the commentators.

[82]Williams 136. The seven Noachic commandments were directed against blasphemy, idolatry, fornication, blood-shedding, the use of meat containing blood, robbery, and civil disobedience. On these commandments see pp. 193-94.

[83]Δικαιοσύνη is the most common translation of צדקה whereas ἐλεημοσύνη/ἔλεος is that of חסד. However, ἐλεημοσύνη and ἔλεος render צדקה in Pss 23(24):5; 32(33):5 (cf. ἔλεος for חסד); 102(103):6; and Ezek 18:19, 21 (where משפט = δικαιοσύνη). Δικαιοσύνη is used for חסד in Gen 19:19; 20:13; 21:23; 24:27; 32:11; Exod 15:13; Prov 20:28b (cf. חסד = ἐλεημοσύνη in 20:28a); and Isa 63:7b (cf. חסד = ἔλεος in 63:7a).

almsgiving (Tob 1:3; cf. 2:14),[84] and since in later Judaism prayer, fasting, and especially almsgiving (cf. Acts 10:4, 30D, 31) were recognized as ways to atone for sins,[85] ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην may reiterate ποιῶν ἐλεημοσύνας.[86] This could be case even if φοβούμενος τὸν θεὸν were a technical expression. Four observations suggest some answers.

First, Luke's description of Cornelius's religious stance is backed up by the centurion's comments and actions in the incident recorded. Cornelius's piety has had an effect on his household and his military staff; they too are pious and God-fearing (10:2, 7). Without knowing the entire reason for summoning Peter (10:5; cf. 10:22; 11:14), Cornelius responds promptly and obediently to the angel's directive, sending two of his servants and a pious military aide to Joppa (10:7-8, 33a). He is shown eagerly awaiting the apostle's arrival,[87] having called together his relatives and close friends (10:24b). Although he originally misunderstood who Peter was, apparently perceiving him to be another angelic messenger (10:25-26), he knows that Peter had come with a message ordered by God and acknowledges that he and his household were gathered in God's presence[88] to hear this message (10:33). Most significantly, Cornelius seems to have observed the Jewish hours of prayer, having been saying the evening prayer when the angel appeared to him (10:30; cf. v. 3).[89] These editorial statements suggest that

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[84]Doing δικαιοσύνην is nowhere defined as doing ἐλεημοσύνας; nevertheless, they are demonstrably similar. Both acts honour God by signifying the subject's commitment to God (Tob 4:5, 7, 11); along with fasting they give tangible substance to one's worship of God (Tob 12:8; cf. 14:7); and they result in the possession of the fulness of life (Tob 12:9).

[85]E.g. Tob 4:10; 12:8-10; Sir 3:30; 7:8-10; cf. Ezek 18:21; 33:14b-16.

[86]Williams (136) and Bruce ([Greek] 224) entertain this possibility. If this is the meaning of ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην in 10:35, an interesting parallel is the rabbinic discussion recorded in *b.B.Bat.* 10b of "the kindness of the peoples is sin" (Prov 14:34). R. Joḥanan b. Zakkai is said to concede his original interpretation "so charity makes atonement for the heathen" to the superior one of R. Neḥuniah b. ha-Kanah, that charity makes atonement for Israel, sin-offering for the nations.

[87]D (gig sy$^{h\ mg}$ mae), which has skillfully rewritten vv. 24-27 in order to present a more continuous narrative, has a servant watching for Peter and running ahead to inform Cornelius of the apostle's arrival. Also, in v. 33 D* (it sy^{p}) has ἀκοῦσαι βουλόμενοι instead of πάρεσμεν ἀκοῦσαι.

[88]Ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ (p^{74} ℵ A B C) has better attestation than ἐνώπιόν σου (D* 629 lat sy^{p} sa mae). A scribe may have thought that ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ could mislead after Peter denied that he was supernatural. Ropes (3:98), Lake and Cadbury (4:118), and Bengel (2:605), though, accept the Western reading.

[89]See Schürer-Vermes, *Jewish People* 2:303 n. 40. The comment does not mean that Cornelius had been praying constantly for four days. That is the superficial impression gained from the unusual conjunction of ἀπό...μέχρι (v. 3). In whatever way the Greek wording is explained (for suggestions see Metzger 375-77), the sense is "Four days ago, about this hour, I was keeping the ninth hour of prayer" (RSV; cf. NEB; NIV).

Cornelius is to be understood as more than a religious pagan worshipping a monotheis - tic God. He seems to be associated with or at least influenced in some way by Judaism.

The second observation concerns the choice of εὐσεβής and δίκαιος to character- ize Cornelius. Despite the fact that Cornelius was a Gentile, the exceptional εὐσεβής[90] cannot have a secular reference (cf. Acts 17:23); rather, as the context suggests, in view must be the meaning conveyed by the σέβω word group in Jewish writings. There, as in the case of Cornelius, the word group is associated with fearing the Lord (Isa 26:7).[91] More particularly, it describes the reverence of God which is taught by Moses's law (4 Macc 5:23-24; *Ep.Arist.* 131; Josephus, *Ag.Ap.* 1.60), which in turn is manifested through the keeping of the law (4 Macc 5:18, 31; Sir 37:12; cf. 2 Macc 3:1), and which governs all actions and speech,[92] both ritual (1 Esdr 1.21[23]; Sir 49:1-3; 4 Macc 5:31; 13:1-2; *T.Levi* 16:1-5) and moral (*Ep.Arist.* 190), both towards God (*Ep.Arist.* 13, 210) and towards other people (Josephus, *Ag.Ap.* 2.291).

Given such nuances, it is conceivable that εὐσεβής in Acts 10:2 may express a rigorous precision to follow the law in everything. Luke's use of εὐλαβής, for which εὐσεβής sometimes serves as a variant,[93] certainly would suggest so. That term, which originally meant "circumspect" and later denoted the religiously scrupulous (cf. 4 Macc 4:13),[94] aptly describes Simeon (Luke 2:25), who was waiting for the messianic salvation and who was endowed by the Spirit; the witnesses from the Jewish diaspora on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:5), some of whom had gone to Jerusalem specifically for the festival and others of whom had apparently moved to the city to live out their days near the temple; and Ananias in Damascus (Acts 22:12), whose piety was κατὰ τὸν νόμον. Nonetheless, because the basis of the interpretation is tenuous--indeed, Luke

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[90]Luke's employment of the entire σέβω word group, except for the participle σεβόμενος, is limited to Acts 3:12; 10:2, 7; and 17:23. In this Luke is no exception among the NT writers. The word group occurs mainly in the Pastoral Epistles.

[91]Εὐσέβεια translates יראת יהוה (Isa 11:2; 33:6) and synonymously parallels φόβος θεοῦ (Prov 1:7).

[92]In this regard Josephus's understanding of εὐσέβεια differs significantly from the Greeks': for him εὐσέβεια is not a virtue but the source for the various virtues (Josephus, *Ag.Ap.* 2.170-71; cf. 1.181).

[93]Besides the variants of Mic 7:2 and Sir 11:17, Luke 2:25 א* has εὐσεβής in place of εὐλαβής. Instructive also is the juxtaposing of τοῖς φοβουμένοις τὸν κύριον and εὐλαβουμένοις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ in Mal 3:16 LXX (cf. Jer 5:22; Sir 7:29, 31).

[94]R. Bultmann, "εὐλαβής", *TDNT* 2:751-54.

may have deliberately chosen εὐσεβής, in distinction from εὐλαβής, in order to avoid the sense of circumspection and exactitude--we do best to say no more at this point than that εὐσεβής claims that Cornelius's religion was Jewish, not pagan.[95]

Δίκαιος,[96] for its part, is used in Luke-Acts predominantly for the person who consents to and fulfils the will of God. This orientation on the divine standard, which is implied by the addition of ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ to the adjective in Acts 4:19, is clearly stated in Luke 1:6. There, with the adjective being qualified by πορευόμενοι ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐντολαῖς καὶ δικαιώμασιν τοῦ κυρίου ἄμεμπτοι as well as by ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ,[97] the meaning of δίκαιος goes beyond pure ethical content and external, legal righteousness. It is grounded in the religious sphere and particularly in constant and circumspect obedience to the commandments and ordinances stipulated in God's covenant with Israel. The δίκαιοι are the people ποιοῦντες δικαιοσύνην (cf. Ezek 18:5, 9; 1 John 2:29; 3:7). Or, to state the idea in another way, the righteous are a people who as a consequence of being righteous are prepared and looking for the coming of the Lord (Luke 1:17; cf. 2:25; 23:50) and for God's acts on their behalf.

Besides their reference--obedience to the covenant will and demands of God--the attributes εὐσεβής and δίκαιος are significant for comparing and associating Cornelius with key Jewish characters in Luke's story.[98] Elizabeth, Zechariah, and Simeon, who serve to prepare for and announce the messiah's birth, are described as righteous before God (Luke 1:6; 2:25), punctiliously obeying God's commands and ordinances (1:6),

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[95]This inference even goes beyond what Jacquier (312), for example, would allow: "La piété de Cornélius ne peut être cependant entendue comme indiquant un homme pieux, observant la loi mosaïque. Luc appelle un homme de ce caractère εὐλαβής".

[96]The following discussion depends in part on the studies by G. Quell and G. Schrenk ("δίκη", *TDNT* 2:174-78, 182-90), C. H. Dodd (*The Bible and the Greeks* [1935] 42-65), D. Hill (*Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings: Studies in the Semantics of Soteriological Terms* [1967] 82-139), and J. A. Ziesler (*The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul. A Linguistic and Theological Enquiry* [1972]). See also A. Descamps, *Les Justes et la Justice dans les évangiles et le christianisme primitif hormis la doctrine proprement paulinienne* (1950) esp. 31-33.

[97]The prepositional phrase probably belongs with δίκαιοι (cf. Gen 7:1) rather than with the participial phrase.

[98]In this the description of Cornelius differs from that of the unnamed centurion in Luke 7:1-10, whose encounter with Jesus exemplifies and foreshadows Cornelius's conversion. The centurion in Capernaum is said by local Jewish elders to love the Jewish people and to have built them a synagogue. Luke records nothing about his attitude towards the demands of the covenant. Nevertheless, that the centurion in the Gospel had at least a reverence for God is attested by his action in sending a group of Jews to speak on his behalf to Jesus and is confirmed by Jesus' assessment of the man's response (v. 9) which stands over against the Jews' response.

devout (2:25), and looking for God's salvation. So are Joseph of Arimathea (Luke 23:50-53), a member of the Sanhedrin, who had followed Jesus (cf. Matt 27:57) and had disagreed with the council's verdict, and Ananias (Acts 22:12), a Jewish Christian highly respected by the Jews in Damascus, whom God appointed to restore Saul's sight (9:10-17). In being pious and righteous Luke's characters resemble leaders of Israel like Ezra (Josephus, *Ant.* 11.139), Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Josephus, *Ant.* 11.169), Abel (Matt 23:25) and especially Noah (Josephus, *Ant.* 1.75, 99; Philo, *Leg.All.* 3.77-78). As the only non-Jew in Luke-Acts bearing such virtues, Cornelius is given an exceptional place in an exemplary tradition; and his piety becomes unquestionably Jewish, oriented on obeying God's covenant.

Third, while there is evidence, admittedly fragmentary, that attached to the Jewish synagogues was a fringe of uncircumcised Gentiles, parallel to Jews and proselytes, it is debatable that the expressions (οἱ) φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν and (οἱ) σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν automatically denote this sociological group.[99] In Acts, the primary source of the linguistic evidence (Acts 10:2, 22, 35; 13:16, 26, 43, 50; 16:14; 17:4, 17; 18:7), the syntax of the phrases is quite diverse; and the curious οἱ σεβόμενοι προσήλυτοι in 13:43, which combines the assumed terms for uncircumcised Gentile sympathizers and Gentile converts to Judaism and which textual evidence implies to be correct, confirms the need for caution: we must be prepared to say that the participles may be used in more ways than one. Consequently, while the care which Luke gives to developing the religious stance of Cornelius, an attention which is unparalleled in Acts and certainly places Cornelius within the sphere of Judaism, suggests that Cornelius does belong to those Gentiles who were loosely affiliated with the synagogue, it would be incorrect to take the expression φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν/αὐτόν in a technical sense to validate Cornelius's status; and, hence, a reference to the Noachic commandments is removed from the idea of ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην.

Fourth, Luke's variable arrangement of the characteristics in 10:2, 4, 22, and 31 implies that to make ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην mean specifically ποιῶν ἐλεημοσύνας is an

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[99]See Appendix for a fuller discussion of the evidence and the current debate.

unintended precision. It is quite conceivable (a) that prayers and almsgiving in verse 4 (cf. v. 31) could correspond to ὁ φοβούμενος αὐτόν and ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην or (b) that ὁ φοβούμενος αὐτόν represents devout and God-fearing and that ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην stands for almsgiving and praying to God (thus, in parallel with Matt 6:1-18[100]) in verse 2 or (c) that ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην refers to δίκαιος in verse 22, in which case, because of the meaning of δίκαιος in Luke-Acts, the participial expression must have a wider reference.

Given these four observations, we are led to the conclusion that each of the above suggestions for explaining ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην by means of Luke's characterization of Cornelius is deficient in some way. Does this mean that the characterization is irrelevant for the present purpose? Not necessarily. The analysis in the fourth observation, while questioning the rightness of restricting ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην to ποιῶν ἐλεημοσύνας, does bring out a uniformity in Luke's arrangement which recalls a tendency observable in Jewish writings, that is, to juxtapose εὐσεβής and δίκαιος, or comparable expressions, and distinguish them something as follows: εὐσεβὴς μὲν τὰ πρὸς τόν θεόν, δίκαιος δὲ τὰ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους.[101] The consequent combination gave expression to the Jewish religion, and the law which epitomized that religion, in its most succinct form. A clear example is *T.Gad* 3:2, where τις φοβεῖται κύριον καὶ θέλει τὸ δίκαιον parallels τις ποιεῖ τὸν νόμον κυρίου. An alternative form is ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου (Deut 6:5)...καὶ τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν (Lev

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[100]Τὴν δικαιοσύνην...ποιεῖν in Matt 6:1 is the heading for the teaching about almsgiving (ἐλεημοσύνη, vv. 2-4), prayer (vv. 5-15), and fasting (vv. 16-18); it should not be limited to introducing only the subject of almsgiving. External evidence confirms that the variant ἐλεημοσύηνη... ποιεῖν (L W Z Θ 𝔐 sy$^{p\ h}$) is secondary. Compare the juxtaposition of the concepts in 1 Pet 4:7-9; *Did.* 15:4; *2 Clem.* 16:4; and Acts 10:30D.

[101]E.g. Josephus, *Ant.* 9.236; 12.43; 18.116-17; Philo, *Abr.* 208; *Spec.Leg.* 2.63; *Ep.Arist.* 131; cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 15.375-76; *b.Ber.* 17a.

19:18).[102] Sometimes the second part of the summary was represented or clarified by a few basic ethical demands (e.g. Josephus, *Ag.Ap.* 2.291-94; *T.Dan* 5:1-3).

Luke may intend the criteria in Acts 10:35 to be a similar summation of the law.[103] His pairing of the characteristics in verse 2 and his coordinating of δίκαιος and φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν in verse 22 seem to point in that direction (despite "respected by all the Jewish people" possibly disturbing the juxtaposition). There is also Luke's conspicuous attention to almsgiving as an important dimension of Cornelius's character and behaviour, meriting the Jews' affirmative testimony (10:22) and God's acceptance (10:4, 31). The emphasis could reflect no more than Luke's special interest in the poor and other misfortunates in society, but it could also serve to explain by concrete illustration the second part of the legal summation. A further consideration is Luke's use elsewhere of tradition containing similar two-pronged statements which are related by him to both the law and acceptance with God. "Manifest love for God and for one's neighbour" in Luke 10:27 answers intentionally from the law the question "What must I do to inherit eternal life?"; and the subsequent parable of the good Samaritan expounds, endorsing the broadest possible definition of neighbour and asserting that the law is fulfilled when mercy is shown. This sounds very much like the legal summations in Jewish literature with an accompanying ethical expansion. So, to a lesser extent, does

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[102]Mark 12:29-31; Matt 22:37-39; Luke 10:27; *T.Iss.* 5:2; *T.Dan* 5:3; *T.Jos.* 11:1; cf. *T.Benj.* 3:1, 3. Whether the combination of Deut 6:5 and Lev 19:18 in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* is pre-Christian is debatable. R. H. Charles ("The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs", in *APOT* 2:291, 93) argues affirmatively; H. Greeven ("πλησίον", *TDNT* 6:316) is more reserved in his judgment, conjecturing that the strong emphasis on the unity of the two commandments could be attributed to Jesus. Philo, *Decal.* 110 could support Charles.

On the rabbinic tendency to see Lev 19:5 as the fundamental ethical ruling, see *b.Šabb.* 31a, citing Hillel, and the discussion in Str-B 1:353-64.

[103]Thus, van Unnik, "Acts X 4" 236 and Wilson, *Law* 70-71.

τὴν κρίσιν (in the sense of social relationships)[104] καὶ τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ θεοῦ[105] in Luke 11:42.[106]

This evidence suggests that ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην may refer generally to circumspect covenantal behaviour, illustrated concretely by Cornelius's almsgiving, his prayer to God, and the respect he held among the Jews, and that combined with "fearing God" it may reflect a contemporary Jewish epitome of the law. In other words, with ὁ φοβούμενος αὐτὸν καὶ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην , Peter may be claiming that God accepts those who keep his law. Even if for lack of conclusive evidence we must back away from this legal interpretation, leaving it as no more than a remote possibility, there still remains the idea that the conditions are explicitly linked with obedience to the will of God which has been set forth in concrete form in the law. We cannot overlook the fact that Luke has described Cornelius's behaviour and attitude with language which he reserves for the behaviour and conduct of pious and law-abiding Jews.

What then is the effect of such a definition, together with a vision which illustrates God's altering of the status of the Gentiles, on the assertion that God is impartial? The remarkable similarity of the conditions of verse 35 to the summaries of the law found particularly in the writings of diaspora Judaism has led S. G. Wilson to conclude, "The effect of the vision is thus that Peter abandons his conservative (Palestinian?) position for a more liberal (diaspora-Jewish and Christian?) stance".[107] The condition for acceptance with God, an opportunity which is now extended to the

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[104]B. S. Easton, *The Gospel according to St. Luke. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary* (1926) 189.

[105]The words could mean the kind of love demanded by God (see I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke. A Commentary on the Greek Text* [1978] 498), not the love directed towards God. In that case, since both direct objects could refer to social relationships, there would be no twofold summation of the law.

[106]In this passage the expression seems intended more to pinpoint the correct priority of the legal prescriptions than to serve as shorthand for the law in its entirety: as the Pharisees are already fulfilling the OT practice of tithing, Jesus' criticism is directed not at a total disregard for the law but at a legalism which neglected social relationships and a love for God. S. Westerholm (*Jesus and Scribal Authority* [1978] 90) sees Jesus as turning an illustration of ritual purity into a more widely applicable principial statement about moral purity and thereby radically denouncing the observance of the cleanliness laws, scriptural or scribal, as necessary for one's standing before God. This may be true if the statement is read in light of Luke's later comments, like Acts 10:14-15 (cf. Blomberg, "Law" 60); but in the immediate context the thought is seemingly not developed.

[107]Wilson, *Law* 71. Wilson at this point follows the thesis developed by K. Berger (*Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu. Ihr historischer Hintergrund im Judentum und im Alten Testament* [1972] esp. 1:165-66 on Lukan usage).

Gentiles as well as the Jews, is a manifestation of the principles of God's covenants with Israel void of ritual prescriptions.

This interpretation could be persuasive did it not overlook four important facts. (1) The summation of the law recorded in Luke 10:27 comes not from the lips of Jesus, as is the case in Mark 12:29-31,[108] but from the lips of a Jewish lawyer who most certainly would not have intended to convey by such words that he was abandoning his conservative, ceremonial position. (2) While a concentration on the moral commandments and values of the law is all the more conspicuous in hellenistic Jewish sources, it does not follow that such an interest is either representative of a liberal stance or indicative of diaspora Judaism. Similar summaries of the Jewish law do appear outside this literary corpus, as in the Old Testament in passages like Deut 10:12-11:1 and Mic 6:6-8.[109] (3) A summation of the law which vigorously emphasizes the theological and moral commandments to the virtual exclusion of or to the allegorical interpretation of the ritual law does not necessarily imply a reduction of the law. The silence about the ritual law could be attributed to a desire either to demonstrate unoffensively to the Gentiles the grandeur of the Jewish religion or to strengthen a sense of national identity for Jewish readers struggling to live in an alien land that what was valued in the Gentile environment was already found in the Torah.[110] (4) Following on from the third point, it is noteworthy that Luke and the Jewish writers employ language which is commonly paralleled in the pagan world: εὐσέβεια, right conduct towards the gods; δικαιοσύνη, right conduct towards one's neighbour; and, to complete the picture, σωφροσύνη or ἐγκράτεια, right conduct towards oneself[111] (cf. Acts 24:25). Right conduct towards the gods would include cultic practices. Given these four points (and there may be more), it seems incorrect to claim that by "law" in verse 35, if that is

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[108]The question in Mark's account (cf. Matt 22:36) is also different. We need not inquire, though, whether the difference is to be attributed to Luke's reworking of the Marcan tradition or to a different conversation (cf. T. W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus. As Recorded in the Gospels According to St. Matthew and St. Luke* [1937/1949] 259-61). The relevant commandments are similar in both settings and really have nothing to say on the matter.

[109]The OT prophets may have attacked the abusive cultic practices of their day, but they never said that the cultic law was void.

[110]I follow in essence Räisänen's astute critique of Berger's thesis (Räisänen, *Paul* 34-41).

[111]W. Foerster, "σέβομαι", *TDNT* 7:176.

indeed the right reference of ὁ φοβούμενος αὐτὸν καὶ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην, we mean to exclude the ritual prescriptions. The whole law seems to be in view.

A more tenable idea, suggested by what the word order of the sentence shows to be Luke's interest in verses 34-35, is to highlight the radically-altered sphere of God's attention. There then follow two implications. The first is brought out by setting the antithetical clauses of verse 28 and those of verses 34-35 side-by-side. Previously through the election of Israel God showed a preference for the Jews, restricting the application of his impartiality to them and denoting the uncircumcised, because of their idolatrous practices, unclean and therefore unfit for association with the holy God and the holy people of God. Now God has expanded the sphere of the application of his impartiality. Going outside of Israel, he has made and declared the Gentiles, like the Jews, intrinsically clean. The Gentiles are no longer excluded as an invariable and inevitable temptation to idolatry; they are eligible to receive the gospel and to become part of the people of God; there are no favourites between one nation and another. The second point is that uncircumcised Gentiles who display a piety and conduct indicative of the law are as acceptable as Jews and on the same terms as Jews. Given the fact that Cornelius is assigned traits used elsewhere by Luke to demonstrate the exemplary piety and conduct of law-abiding Jews and Jewish Christians and may even be set a standard epitomizing the law, Peter apparently is expecting Cornelius to be placed within Israel's covenant.

1.2. *The message of faith in Jesus (10:36-43)*

The rest of Peter's address to Cornelius and his household (10:36-43) contains the essential elements of the early apostolic proclamation on a pattern similar to that of Peter's previously recorded addresses (2:14-39; 3:12-26) and of Paul's speech at Pisidian Antioch (13:16-41): a résumé of Jesus' earthly life and work (10:37-41), a verification from Scripture (10:43a), and a reference to the reason for and means of repentance (10:42, 43b). Our concern is primarily with the last part of the speech, in particular with the words which speak of faith in Jesus and repentance, conditions

delivered to Jews in the earliest days of the church. Before we investigate verse 43b in detail, two aspects of the speech demand comment.

1.2.1. An evangelistic address?

U. Wilckens[112] has proposed that this speech, unlike the preceding ones attributed to Peter, is not evangelistic; instead, the exceptionally detailed concentration on the life of Jesus and the commencement of the story at the point of Jesus' baptism rather than at the point of his rejection by the Jews show that the author intends to present his own understanding of what the *Gattung* "gospel" is, namely, an expansion and arrangement of the primitive kerygmatic material. An examination of the relation of the speech to Luke's Gospel exceeds our purposes,[113] but Wilckens's thesis carries with it the proposition that Cornelius and his household were already converted by the direct intervention of God before Peter spoke. This corollary is quite crucial for understanding the significance of verse 43b for the immediate situation. If Cornelius and his household were already Christians, is the reference to faith in Jesus to be considered as having no relevance to Cornelius's salvation?

Wilckens's argument is based on three observations. (1) Ὑμεῖς οἴδατε τὸ γενόμενον ῥῆμα in verse 37 confirms that Cornelius and his household already knew and understood the kerygma about Jesus and had become a community prepared by God. Moreover, since the words also concern Peter's Jewish Christian companions, they can be said to indicate the construction of a Christian community from Jews and Gentiles. This interpretation of ὑμεῖς οἴδατε, we note, differs from that of Dibelius.[114] He maintains that the words are scarcely appropriate of Cornelius, who knew something about the Old Testament but nothing about Jesus; they must refer to Luke's readers and show that the speech, which was designed to exemplify Christian preaching, did not appear here originally. (2) Whereas 10:44 states that Peter was *still* talking when the

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[112]U. Wilckens, "Kerygma und Evangelium bei Lukas. (Beobachtungen zu Acta 10:34-43)", *ZNW* 49 (1958) 223-37 and *Missionsreden* esp. 63-70. The article is a more detailed discussion of Wilckens's thesis.

[113]For an alternative opinion to Wilckens's and for works criticizing Wilckens's approach to the speeches in Acts in general, see G. N. Stanton, *Jesus of Nazareth in New Testament Preaching* [1974] 19-30, 67-85.

[114]Dibelius, "Cornelius" 111.

Spirit fell on those present, 11:15 says that the Spirit was given as Peter *began* to speak. The discrepancy, according to Wilckens, substantiates that Cornelius was converted not through an evangelistic sermon but through the direct and decisive intervention of God. (3) The speech lacks any exhortation to repentance or reference to conversion.[115]

These observations and their application can be challenged.[116] To begin with, Wilckens is certainly correct in his assessment that the speeches in Acts have a better relation to their immediate contexts than Dibelius allowed[117] and that ὑμεῖς οἴδατε can support the connection. All the same, the words need not imply that Cornelius was already a believer before he met Peter. Peter's address to the crowds at Pentecost contains a similar expression (2:22).[118] Καθὼς αὐτοὶ οἴδατε, like ὑμεῖς οἴδατε, joins a recital of various events in Jesus' earthly life (vv. 22-24). It refers, further, not only to Jews and proselytes from the diaspora communities but also to Jews who were permanent residents in Jerusalem and Judea, who, as οἷς ἐποίησεν δι' αὐτοῦ ὁ θεὸς ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν (v. 22) pointedly asserts, would have personally witnessed many of the incidents in Jesus' life and who, as the unquestionably evangelistic content of the address indicates (2:37-39), had not previously accepted the Christian proclamation. Cornelius's situation could easily have been no different from that of the audience at Pentecost. Geographically Caesarea was not far from Jerusalem, Galilee, and Judea, the area of Jesus' ministry; and as the political capital of the Roman province of Judea, the city certainly heard of happenings throughout the region, particularly those which posed a political threat.[119]

As for the discrepancy concerning the timing of Cornelius's receipt of the Spirit, again Wilckens's observation is partially valid. God's direct intervention in effecting

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[115]This observation leads Conzelmann (65) to a similar conclusion: a call to repentance "ist bei dieser Hörerschaft überflüssig".

[116]Cf. Stanton, *Preaching* 20-26, 28.

[117]Similarly, Foakes-Jackson (93) thinks that the speech is "peculiarly appropriate to the occasion"; C. H. Dodd (*The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments* [1936] 37, 53-56), that the speech represents the form of kerygma used by the primitive church in its earliest approaches to a wider audience. To criticize Dibelius on this point, however, does not imply a corresponding rejection of his idea that with a pastoral intent in mind Luke aims to demonstrate various styles and contexts of early Christian preaching.

[118]Curiously, Wilckens completely overlooks this parallel.

[119]Acts illustrates this proximity (8:40; 21:8, 16; 23:23, 33; 25:1, 4, 6, 13) and also implies Caesarea's awareness of the events of Jesus' ministry and death. Paul, when he appeared before Agrippa in Caesarea, assumed that the king had some prior knowledge about the origins of Christianity (26:26).

the unexpected conversion of an uncircumcised Gentile, not Peter's preaching, is primarily what Luke aims to highlight. Yet such an emphasis, which is sustained throughout the passage, does not necessarily eliminate the need for human participation or for an evangelistic address. As plausibly the theme can reflect the circumstances of the occasion: irrefutable proof that God had accepted *uncircumcised* Gentiles was required; otherwise, as the objection in 11:3 shows, the significance of the event might have been dismissed.

Nor can Wilckens's inference about 10:44 and 11:15 be supported grammatically. In 10:44 ἔτι draws attention to the continual aspect of λαλοῦντες and confirms the simultaneity of Peter's speech and of the Spirit's arrival;[120] but the participial phrase in no way stipulates whether Peter was at the beginning, at the end, or in the middle of his speech. Further, it is arguable that the use of ἄρξασθαι in the ἐν τῷ temporal construction in 11:15 in place of the usual present infinitive shifts the force of the infinitival phrase from subsequent action ("before Peter began to speak") to antecedent action ("after Peter began to speak").[121] The result is a contradiction of form rather than of thought.[122]

Third, at several points Luke intimates that the speech is evangelistic. The bestowal of the Spirit is presented as an exceptional event which leaves Peter and his Jewish Christian companions astonished (10:45-47). If Cornelius and the members of his household were already believers, we would not expect the event to have had such a dramatic impression (compare 8:14-16). In 11:1 the events of chapter 10 are editorially summed up as the Gentiles' accepting of the word of God. Whether absolute or qualified by τοῦ θεοῦ, τοῦ κυρίου, or the appropriate personal pronoun, ὁ λόγος is used in Acts to capture the content of the apostolic proclamation[123] which is delivered

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[120]BAGD, s.v. ἔτι 1aβ.

[121]BDF §404.2 and Zerwick §390. BAGD (s.v. ἐν II3), Robertson (1073), and Burton (§109) disagree.

[122]Lake and Cadbury 4:123-24, 126; cf. Jacquier 342. To draw this conclusion is not to ignore or explain away the inclusion of ἄρξασθαι as Bruce ([Greek] 233) does. The infinitive emphasizes the divine initiative over against human action.

[123]Τὸν λόγον in 10:44 (cf. 2:41) probably bears this meaning, though linguistically a reference to Peter's speech is not impossible (cf. Lake and Cadbury 4:122).

primarily, but not exclusively (cf. 20:8, 32), in evangelistic situations.[124] To accept this word is an act not of mere intellectual agreement but, as 2:41; 8:44 (cf. 8:12); and 17:11-13 show, of decisive appropriation of belief in Jesus which is dependent upon hearing the apostolic preaching (cf. 10:44). Similarly, in 11:14 Peter's message is claimed to contain the means by which Cornelius's salvation would be effected; in 15:7 the Gentiles' (that is, Cornelius's) hearing of the gospel (τὸν λόγον τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) is said to result in faith.

Fourth, there is admittedly a marked difference between the peroration of Peter's address at Pentecost (2:38) and the concluding words of the speech to Cornelius (10:43): the latter lacks an explicit exhortation to repentance. Nonetheless, the thought of repentance is not entirely absent. The Jerusalem believers' evaluation of the entire incident, "God gave repentance" (11:18), takes on both the sense that God has created in the Gentiles the penitent attitude required for salvation (cf. 2 Tim 2:25) and, because God has commanded everyone to repent (17:30) and because through the apostolic preaching the opportunity to obey this command has been presented (20:21; Luke 24:47),[125] the sense that Cornelius has repented.

It follows from these four points that the address to Cornelius should be understood to be evangelistic,[126] intended to incite repentance and lead to faith in Jesus,

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[124]This assessment is borne out by other qualifications of ὁ λόγος, such as σωτηρία (13:26) and εὐαγγέλιον (15:7) and by the various results of "speaking the word": as belief (4:4; 6:7; 13:48; cf. 16:32), growth of the Christian community (6:7), and eternal life (13:46).

[125]Schneider 2:84; 1:396 n. 94; Marshall, *Luke* 906. Calvin (1:464) and Conzelmann (*Theology* 100, 228 n. 2) would restrict δοῦναι μετάνοιαν to God's work in a person and the gift of salvation; but the same cooperation between God and the penitent is conveyed elsewhere when διδόναι μετάνοιαν is used of an act of God. In *Sib.Or.* 4.168, for instance, God's gift of repentance comes in response to the human request for forgiveness and pardon (ll. 166-67). See also Wis 12:10, 19 in the light of v. 20; *1 Clem.* 7.4-5; *Herm.Sim.* 8.6.1-2; cf. *Barn.* 16.9.

[126]To say that this message is evangelistic in its present setting is not to deny that the same message could not be catechetical in a different context. In this regard I part company with Stanton. In arguing against the comparison between Theophilus and Cornelius which Wilckens ("Kerygma" 228-29) makes in order to support his claim for a catechetical intent, Stanton (*Preaching* 29-30) gives κατηχήθης λόγων in Luke 1:4 the meaning "'reports' about the Christian message" rather than "specific doctrinal instruction" and therefore seems to eliminate the probability that the *Gattung* "gospel" is both evangelistic and edificatory.

and, thus, that the apostolic proclamation about Jesus is a necessary addition to Cornelius's situation.

1.2.2. The reference of πάντα τὸν πιστεύοντα

Also in regard to the applicability of verse 43b, it needs to be confirmed that πάντα τὸν πιστεύοντα does indeed refer, as is generally assumed, to Gentiles as well as to Jews.[127] The doubt is interjected partly by the occurrence of τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραήλ in verse 36 and of ὁ λαός, meaning Jews, in verses 41 and 42 and partly by the relation of verse 43 to the rest of the address.

To begin with the relation of verse 43 to its immediately preceding context. Since the logical antecedent of τούτῳ is Jesus of Nazareth (v. 38a), which is the same as that of οὗτος in verse 42, it becomes possible grammatically for τούτῳ to be indirectly dependent on ὅτι in verse 42.[128] In this case, as τῷ λαῷ is presumably the indirect object of "to testify" as well as "to preach", the reference of πάντα τὸν πιστεύοντα becomes Jews only. A more careful reading of the speech yields a different conclusion. The address is composed of a series of conceptually related but grammatically independent clauses introduced by relative and demonstrative pronouns, all of which relate to Ἰησοῦν τὸν ἀπὸ Ναζαρέθ, which itself has been placed in front of its clause for clear reference and emphasis.[129] It would not be unexpected for τούτῳ to begin a new, yet thematically related thought, thereby breaking the connection between "to the people" and "everyone who believes". Indeed, ὅν in verse 39 sets a precedent.

As for the matter of the specific address to the Jews (vv. 36, 42), W. C. van Unnik [130] solves this difficulty by claiming that because this uncircumcised non-Jew lives like a true Israelite--God-fearing and righteous--terms like "sons of Israel" and "the people" apply to him. This may be so as a result of the vision of 10:9-16, although the lack of explicit mention of God-fearers in synagogue inscriptions and the fact that even

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[127]Marshall (193) alone among the commentators, as far as I know, mentions this fact.

[128]Schneider 2:79.

[129]"Jesus of Nazareth" is best taken as the logical object of ἔχρισεν, redundant to αὐτόν (e.g. Bruce [Greek] 226; Haenchen 339-40). Were the appellative the appositive of τὸ γενόμενον ῥῆμα (Bengel 2:607) and thus the object of ὑμεῖς οἴδατε, the words could claim misleadingly that Cornelius knew Jesus personally.

[130]van Unnik, "Acts X 4" 256.

the circumcised Gentile, unless his mother was an Israelite, could not say "O God of our fathers" (*m.Bik.* 1:4) would question it. A better answer which depends on a less tenuous assumption is gained by appealing to verse 36, in particular to οὗτός ἐστιν πάντων κύριος. Οὗτός ἐστιν πάντων κύριος is a syntactically awkward statement, yet the harshness underlines its importance. Outside of the obvious link to its referent Jesus Christ,[131] the clause erupts emphatically into the line of thought, picking up the idea of universal salvation revealed in verses 34-35 and serving to redress the restriction of God's announcement to the sons of Israel. We suggest that πάντα τὸν πιστεύοντα εἰς αὐτόν in verse 43b does the same thing, crashing through the barrier still intact in verse 42[132] and signalling a move from particularism to universalism.

The implication is clear. By virtue of Peter's evangelistic address which is intended to incite repentance and lead to faith and of a universal reference of πάντα τὸν πιστεύοντα, fulfilment of YHWH's covenant with Israel does not cover all the conditions for a non-Jew's acceptance with God. Faith in Jesus is also required.

1.2.3. Faith as a condition of acceptance

Several observations bring out what faith as defined in verse 43b signifies. (1) Faith means a human act of commitment to Jesus. This is more than an intellectual acceptance of the facts about Jesus. There is as well, as the accompanying εἰς αὐτόν implies,[133] the need for trust and adherence. (2) A person's commitment is met by a divine act of forgiveness which becomes operative or effective through Jesus' name, that is, through Jesus (διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ).[134] (3) Faith in Jesus in conjunction with repentance guarantees future salvation. This cause and effect relationship, which

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[131]Lake and Cadbury 4:120; Haenchen 339-40; M. Wilcox, *The Semitisms of Acts* (1965) 151-52. C. C. Torrey (*The Composition and Date of Acts* [1916] 35-36) thinks otherwise, translating the words "As for the word *which the Lord of All sent* ". In reply, compare the same grammatical construction used parenthetically in Acts 8:26b. Moreover, other titles belonging according to Jewish usage to YHWH are given a new application in the NT.

[132]Haenchen 340; Longenecker 393.

[133]See p. 34.

[134]Probably, since 11:18 identifies God as the source of repentance and 10:36 has God as the author of the peace brought about by Jesus (though, Conzelmann [64] would have διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ modify εὐαγγελιζόμενος, not εἰρήνην [thus, Bengel 2:606-7; Haenchen 339 n. 3]), διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ expresses predominantly efficient cause, not principal cause, mediation rather than agency. See the discussion of the connotations of the preposition in Zerwick §113 and Harris, *NIDNTT* 3:1182.

makes faith in Jesus a condition for membership in the people of God, is not explicitly stated in verse 43, but it can be deduced from the context in two ways. First, forgiveness of sins is (implicitly) the result of the divinely-created and divinely-bestowed repentance which leads to life (ὁ θεὸς μετάνοιαν εἰς ζωὴν ἔδωκεν, 11:18). Second, as a consequence of his death and resurrection Jesus has been appointed by God the eschatological judge of all people (10:42) and thus is granted the prerogative to dispense forgiveness; therefore, the penitent who receives the divine pardon, the forgiveness of sins, by means of Jesus has the confidence to face the divine judge without fear of condemnation.

In short, believing in Jesus means a personal allegiance to Jesus, God's appointed agent, which requires a correlative act of repentance which, in turn, effects the forgiveness of sins and thus the assured fact of future salvation.

1.3. *The fact of the gift of the Spirit (10:44-48; 11:15-17)*

The third matter in the story of Cornelius which is applicable to Peter's argument at the council is God's bestowal of the Spirit upon the uncircumcised Gentiles. The twice-recorded account of this divine act--in 10:44-48 the event itself and in 11:15-17 Peter's evaluation of the event--connects the gift of the Spirit with faith, salvation, the relation of Jewish and Gentile believers, water baptism, and acceptance into the Christian community. We shall look at each of these concepts.

Faith. Acts 10:44 implies that God's act of bestowing the Spirit presupposes and acknowledges personal faith generated through hearing the Christian proclamation. The two participial phrases ἔτι λαλοῦντος τοῦ Πέτρου τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα and ἐπὶ πάντας τοὺς ἀκούοντας τὸν λόγον locate the descent of the Spirit temporally during Peter's proclamation of the gospel. Specifically the plural τὰ ῥήματα qualified by the near demonstrative pronoun, in contrast to the singular τὸν λόγον, seems to point the reader to the immediately preceding words (v. 43b), especially to the emphatic πάντα τὸν πιστεύοντα εἰς αὐτόν. As the text now stands, it was while Peter was speaking of belief in Jesus and forgiveness of sins being available to all peoples that the Spirit came upon the Gentiles. This conjunction of Peter's words and God's act leads naturally to the

inference that when Cornelius heard the words, the universal application of which must have struck like a thunderbolt into the consciousness of a person previously excluded from the promises and privileges of Judaism, he "reached out in faith to God for *forgiveness* and received, as God's response, the Holy Spirit,"[135] presumably not instead of the promised forgiveness but as the validation of it. Similarly in 11:17a the simultaneous, or possibly antecedent, πιστεύσασιν ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, modifying ἡμῖν and indirectly αὐτοῖς,[136] characterizes respectively the Jews and Gentiles to whom God gave the Spirit and seemingly identifies faith in Jesus as the concomitance or prerequisite of both the Jews' and the Gentiles' receipt of the Spirit.

Salvation. To receive the Spirit is to experience God's acceptance. This idea which is implied by the conjunction of the gift of the Spirit which testifies to faith and the divine forgiveness which is the result of faith (10:43-44) is spelled out in 11:14-15. Since Peter's message which Cornelius had been told would result in his salvation in the event resulted in his receipt of the Spirit, legitimately it can be inferred that the gift of the Spirit means salvation.[137] In other words, to possess the Spirit, the symbol of the last days (2:17-21), is to enjoy God's presence and to know eschatological salvation which, as we have seen, is both a future hope (σωθήσῃ) and a present experience.

The relation of Jewish and Gentile believers. The bestowal of the Spirit establishes the equality of all believers regardless of birth or race or any external standard. Running through the verses is an obvious refrain--τούτους οἵτινες...ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς (10:47); ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ὥσπερ καὶ ἐφ' ἡμᾶς (11:15); τὴν ἴσην δωρεάν...αὐτοῖς...ὡς καὶ ἡμῖν (11:17a)--which compares uncircumcised Gentile believers and Christian Jews on the basis of their possession of the Spirit. The expressions are backed up in the narrative by parallels between the experience of Cornelius and his household and the experience of the Jewish Christians, that is, between Cornelius and in particular the original group

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[135]Dunn, *Baptism* 80; cf. Marshall 193-94; Bruce (NIC) 230.

[136]That the participial phrase qualifies αὐτοῖς as well is supported by the Western redactor's redundant, indeed, contradictory addition to the end of 11:17--τοῦ μὴ δοῦναι αὐτοῖς πνεῦμα ἅγιον πιστεύσασιν ἐπ' αὐτῷ. Most commentators accept this interpretation (e.g. Bruce [Greek] 233; Bauernfeind 152; Knowling 265). However, Preuschen (71) limits the reference to αὐτοῖς; Wendt (249), to ἡμῖν.

[137]Dunn, *Baptism* 80-81.

of believers on whom at Pentecost the Spirit had descended also suddenly and dramati – cally (2:1-13).[138] The Spirit-filled Gentiles manifested the same supernatural gift of glossolalia and also proclaimed the mighty acts of God (10:46a; cf. 2:4, 11). There occurred a similar reaction from the witnesses: like the Jewish crowds in Jerusalem, Peter's companions were astonished (ἐξέστησαν, 10:45; cf. 2:7, 12). The experience is related, further, to the promise of the resurrected but not yet ascended Jesus to his disciples (11:16; cf. 1:5), that in contrast to John's baptism with (merely) water, the disciples would be baptized (not only with water but also) with the Spirit:[139] in this word of the Lord, ὑμεῖς is visibly shown to include the Gentiles. These comparisons assert that the bestowal of the Spirit on Cornelius and his household is to be considered both as indicative of God's acceptance as the Jewish believers' receipt of the Spirit and as equally decisive as Pentecost.

Water baptism. The act of water baptism becomes the logical consequence of receiving the Spirit. In the rhetorical δύναται κωλῦσαι of 10:47 (cf. 11:17), the Gentiles' receipt of the Spirit is interpreted by Peter as a divine *fait accompli* which led unquestionably to the conclusion that the Gentiles should be baptized.[140]

Acceptance into the Christian community. Baptism confirms acceptance into the Christian community. This is hinted at by ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς in 10:47, baptism having symbolized the cleansing also of the Jewish believers (2:38, 41). Verse 48 makes the point clearer. Αὐτούς may function as the direct object of προσέταξεν, making the Gentiles the recipients of the command ("he ordered them to be baptized");[141] alternatively, anticipating the objection of the believers in Jerusalem, the pronoun may

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[138]Εν ἀρχῇ in 11:15 appears to specify the disciples of the upper room (Bruce [Greek] 233) rather than the first converts from Judaism (2:38-41), although the ἡμεῖς of 10:47, referring to Peter's Jewish Christian companions from Joppa, suggests that the experience of other Jewish converts could be in view.

[139]Marshall 197.

[140]The point is enhanced by οἵτινες τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔλαβον ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς qualifying the "subject" of βαπτισθῆναι. Οἵτινες is probably used in the sense "inasmuch as" (Robertson 728; cf. Moule 124) and establishes the causal relationship between the Gentiles' eligibility for water baptism and their receipt of the Spirit. The correlation is not expressed in chap. 11; but because of the similarity of language in 10:47 and 11:17 and the influence of Peter's recollection of Jesus' saying (11:16) on his rhetorical question (11:17), it could be inferred.

[141]RSV; cf. NEB; KJV; Bruce (Greek) 228. This translation is substantiated by 2:38 and 22:16.

be the "subject" of βαπτισθῆναι and thus Peter directs the order at an unexpressed group, presumably the Jewish Christians ("he then gave orders for them to be baptized").[142] Perhaps both ideas are intended, though Peter's later seemingly confident appeal to the eyewitness testimony of his companions (11:12) to corroborate his actions suggests that Luke aims to highlight the participation of all Jewish Christians. Whatever, whether Peter or the Jewish Christians conducted the baptism (which we can only presume happened), the command, on the one hand, identifies baptism as a sign of entry into the Christian community and, on the other, attracts attention to the rightful place of the Gentiles, at least as far as Peter was concerned.

The idea of acceptance is expressed also by the final comment of chapter 10. D adds the words πρὸς αὐτούς and plainly states what otherwise could be avoided in ἠρώτησαν αὐτὸν ἐπιμεῖναι: Peter stayed for a few days with Cornelius and his household (Peter's acceding to the request being implicit in the context) and thereby demonstrated that he regarded the uncircumcised Gentiles as "clean" and believers in the full sense. It is noteworthy as well that the invitation was initiated by Cornelius. Obviously the centurion felt accepted.

Further and very significantly, there is no suggestion that Cornelius's acceptance involved circumcision. Indeed, the Jerusalem church's question in 11:3, if taken to refer to Peter's entire visit with Cornelius and not just the initial contact, disallows the possibility entirely.

1.4. *The extent of Peter's revelation*

One further matter about Acts 10:1-11:18 requires our attention before we turn to Peter's argument at the council. What is the extent of Peter's revelation? That is to say, how is the reader to understand the relation of the Christian community and the traditional people of God at this time in Luke's story, particularly in light of God's act of bestowing the Spirit on the uncircumcised who, without being circumcised, have been declared clean? Has the law been set aside? Have the links with Israel been

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[142]JB; cf. Phillips; NIV; Haenchen 341. The attraction of this translation is the assumption from John 4:2 and 1 Cor 1:14, 17 that it was unusual for the apostles to perform baptisms.

broken? The questions can be approached from two angles. From the one we may ask whether by the end of the story all three characteristics discussed above--the observance of God's covenantal will summed up as loving God and doing what is right, faith in Jesus, and the receipt of the Spirit--are thought necessary for identifying the people of God or whether each characteristic qualifies or even displaces that (those) preceding. From the other the inquiry can be phrased in terms of what is implied by a speech delivered to uncircumcised Gentiles which speaks of salvation coming to Israel even though it may include rare references to universalism. We shall start with the second angle which is in some ways more readily defined.

1.4.1. Particularism and universalism

At the centre of the concomitance of particularism and universalism are verses 36-38a, especially verse 36. This is a section of Acts notorious for its grammatical complexity. Besides the emphatic displacement of Ἰησοῦν τὸν ἀπὸ Ναζαρέθ (v. 38a) and the dangling but equally emphatic οὗτος ἐστιν πάντων κύριος (v. 36) already mentioned, there are the unexpected case of ἀρξάμενος (v. 37c) which sets the *terminus a quo* for the events in Judea which the speech aims to cover[143] and more critically in verse 36 the absence of a connecting particle, the initial τὸν λόγον, and an abrupt change in thought which give no clear indication how verse 36 relates syntactically or conceptually to the immediate context.

There are three main explanations of verse 36. The sentence could start a new subject and be translated "You know the word which he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), the word which was proclaimed throughout all Judea...: how God appointed Jesus of Nazareth".[144] Implied in this translation is the idea that Cornelius knew the content of the evangelistic message.

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[143]The nominative case has been attributed (a) to the direct influence of the same construction in Luke 23:5 (cf. the accepted reading in Luke 24:47; Acts 1:22 [BDF §137.3]); (b) to an Aramaic idiom (Torrey, *Composition* 25-28; compare J. W. Hunkin ["'Pleonastic' ἄρχομαι in the New Testament", *JTS* 25 {1924} 390-402] and Wilcox [*Semitisms* 148-50], who question the rightness of this solution); and (c) to the quasi-adverbial sense found in contemporary Greek (Lake and Cadbury 4:120; cf. MM, s.v. ἄρχομαι; Moulton 1:240).

[144]RSV; cf. KJV; TEV. The doubtful reading τὸν λόγον ὃν is retained, τὸν λόγον is the object of ὑμεῖς οἴδατε, and τὸ γενόμενον ῥῆμα is resumptive, in apposition to τὸν λόγον. (see n. 153)

Why, then, was Cornelius not already a believer? From τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραήλ it could be inferred that Cornelius had been excluded previously from receiving the gospel because he, an uncircumcised Gentile, was not part of Israel. Now Cornelius could receive the good news. God had shown Peter that circumcision no longer mattered, that the marks of Jewishness were abrogated. This was what the new age meant: discontinuity with the Israel of old.

Alternatively, verse 36 may serve as the epitome or heading of verses 37-43: "He sent his word to the Israelites, proclaiming peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. You know what has happened..."[145] or, when the disputed relative pronoun is retained, "This is the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all: you know...".[146] In both instances ὑμεῖς οἴδατε begins a new thought, contrasting Cornelius's limited knowledge about Jesus with the message of salvation which the sons of Israel had received. Cornelius had yet to learn the theological implications of the historical events. By preaching the gospel and extending to the Gentiles the message which had been sent to the sons of Israel, Peter eliminated that deficiency. The expansion is justified because salvation has been shown to be universal (οὗτός ἐστιν πάντων κύριος). Thus, in distinction from the previous interpretation when the idea was that the gospel *could* be given to the Gentiles, the novel thought is that the apostolic message *should* be proclaimed to the Gentiles.

A third interpretation has verse 36 apposed to verses 34-35 and ruled by καταλαμβάνομαι, allowing τὸν λόγον its natural syntactical force: "Truly I realize that God does not show partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him; (this is) the word which he sent to the children of Israel, proclaiming good news of peace through Jesus Christ--he is Lord over all. You know

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[145]Cf. NEB; JB; Haenchen 338-39; Bruce (Greek) 225.

[146]Cf. NIV; Calvin 1:440-41.

what took place throughout all Judea...".[147] On this view, what is being made clear is that the gospel which had been addressed to the Jews (by the message and ministry of Jesus) from its inception implies the fact that the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles, not merely of God and his creation, has been established by the mission and achievement of Jesus Christ. So understood, verse 36 has been pressed to suggest further that the message of universal salvation is to be given to the world through and in terms of Israel,[148] thereby explaining the need for so much delay and divine prompting to commence a mission to the Gentiles. According to Jervell, "the Cornelius story does not narrate the basic decision that includes the Gentiles in the sharing in salvation. Here the question is: In what way and at what time do the Gentiles receive a share in the promises to Israel?"[149]

The first reading of verse 36 really does not fit. The long and heavily-loaded appositive beginning τὸ γενόμενον ῥῆμα aside, an incongruity develops when ῥῆμα is taken to refer to λόγος. Τὸ γενόμενον is hardly a phrase which adequately expounds and elucidates the significance of λόγος, the good news. Does not τὸ γενόμενον ῥῆμα mean instead "the event which happened"?[150] Furthermore, the implication conveyed by the grammatical interpretation--that God through the vision had demonstrated that Cornelius could not be excluded--contradicts the surprise manifested by Peter and the other Jewish Christians (10:45-47) when the Spirit descended on Cornelius and his household, signifying that God had accepted uncircumcised Gentiles. If, by simply giving Cornelius the opportunity to accept for himself the gospel which he already knew, Peter intentionally abrogated the preconditions of Judaism, God's bestowing of the Spirit should not seem so unexpected or remarkable.

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[147]H. Riesenfeld, "The text of Acts x.36", in FS M. Black (1979) 193. He is followed by Marshall (190 n. 1) and Schneider (2:75-76). The same position is taken by Jervell ("Divided People" 57, 73 n. 35), who develops the theological ramifications, and by Bengel (2:606). For a historical survey of this not uncommon solution, see F. Neirynck, "Acts 10, 36a τὸν λόγον ὅν", *ETL* 60 [1984] 118-23.

[148]Jervell, "Divided People" 64-67. Bengel (2:606) makes a slightly different application: "so as to say, 'That good thing which has been vouchsafed to Israel through the Messiah, the same I say is yours'".

[149]Jervell, "Divided People" 65.

[150]BAGD, s.v. ῥῆμα 2; Lake and Cadbury 4:120. When translating ῥῆμα we should not be misled by the use of the same noun rendered "words" in 10:44. For a similar variation of meaning within a paragraph, compare Luke 2:15 ("event"); 2:17 ("word"); and 2:19 ("matters", "events").

Of the other two explanations, the linking of verse 36 with what precedes (interpretation 3) is certainly attractive. The abrupt change in subject disappears. Verses 34-37 now make a continuous line of thought, connecting the proclamation of the gospel to the Gentiles with the decisive and justifying event, namely, that God has displayed his impartiality. The scribes' later insertion of γάρ[151] at the beginning of verse 36, while not really improving on the awkwardness, does strengthen the possibility that verse 36 is dependent on καταλαμβάνομαι (v. 34). In addition, Luke's account of Jesus' post-resurrection commissioning of his disciples (Luke 24:47-48; cf. Acts 1:8) makes the point not only that a mission to all nations was inherent in God's will and promise[152] but also that the disciples' responsibilities included such a mission.

The strength of these arguments notwithstanding, other data point quite convinc – ingly towards placing verse 36 with what follows.

(1) Nothing is really gained by citing the originality of ὅν ($\mathfrak{p}^{74}$ ℵ* C D).[153] There are plausible grammatical explanations which allow the pronoun to be retained and verse 36 to go with verses 37-43.[154]

(2) Throughout 10:37-43 are several harsh grammatical transitions (e.g. ὃν καὶ ἀνεῖλαν κρεμάσαντες ἐπὶ ξύλου, v. 39b). It is as if in seeking, on the one hand, to emphasize the focal point of the address (Jesus of Nazareth) and to be faithful to his source and, on the other hand, in the interests of space to avoid needless repetition, Luke is ticking off in outline the major points of the Christian kerygma. Such overall conciseness challenges the necessity of expecting verse 36 to represent a grammatical continuum with its preceding and succeeding contexts.

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[151]C* D 614 *pc* l p t sy^{p} h**.

[152]Jervell ("Divided People" 56) makes this Gospel passage the basis of his interpretation of Acts 2:39; 3:25-26 (see Introduction 5.1.2-3); and 10:36. For an extensive critique of Jervell's thesis see Wilson, *Gentiles* 228-33, esp. 230, 231.

[153]The transcriptional change could have worked in either direction through dittography or haplography with the preceding -ον. Metzger (397) suggests that τὸν λόγον ὅν, being the more difficult reading, may be original. Lake and Cadbury (4:119) think otherwise. Though lat omits the pronoun while D retains it, Metzger may well be right.

[154]Torrey (*Composition* 35-36) may be correct that τὸν λόγον ὃν ἀπέστειλεν is a literal translation of an Aramaic original, giving the suspended construction "As for the word which...". Or the accusative could be an example of inverse attraction of the antecedent to the case of its relative pronoun (Moulton 3:324).

(3) The wording of verse 36 incorporates allusions to two Old Testament texts, Ps 106(107):20a ("he sent forth his word and healed them") and Isa 52:7 ("the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace"; cf. Nah 2:1 LXX).[155] Whether the texts were at one time actually cited as part of the argument or not,[156] as the text now stands, echoes of these and other Old Testament passages appear in most of the events in Jesus' life which are mentioned,[157] suggesting that verse 36 belongs with the verses following.

(4) This speech corresponds to the other speeches in Acts not only in content but also in composition.[158] In Acts 2:22 there is an abrupt call to attention (ἀκούσατε τοὺς λόγους τούτους), the emphatic suspension of the main theme of the speech in the accusative case (Ἰησοῦν τὸν Ναζωραῖον), and an argument for the reliability of the claims about Jesus based on the audience's personal experience (ἐποίησεν...ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν, καθὼς αὐτοὶ οἴδατε). Likewise, in 13:26 ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος τῆς σωτηρίας ταύτης ἐξαπεστάλη captions the main part of the speech.[159]

(5) Verse 43 may speak of an inclusive mission which is inherent in the will and promise of God; nevertheless, verses 42-43, like the proleptic statements in 2:39 and 3:25-26 earlier, do not reproduce the entire programme of Luke 24:47-48, if that programme is indeed interpreted sociologically and not just geographically with reference to the Jews. In the speech to Cornelius Jesus' charge to his disciples focuses on their responsibilities to the Jews, and to this charge is appended in an emphatic and revelatory way the fact that the Gentiles are included. What happens at the end of the speech could be presumed to happen at the beginning: οὗτός ἐστιν πάντων κύριος is brought forward as a new revelation to occupy central place.

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[155]Stanton, *Preaching* 70-71; cf. J. Dupont, "Apologetic Use of the Old Testament in the Speeches of Acts" (1953), in *The Salvation of the Gentiles. Essays on the Acts of the Apostles* (ET 1979) 143. Dupont mentions only Isa 52:7. Scholarly opinion on the probability of a pre-Lukan tradition underlying Acts 10:36-43 and of the use of scriptural allusion has been reviewed recently by F. Neirynck ("Le Livre des Actes: 6. Ac 10,36-43 et l'Évangile", *ETL* 60 [1984] 109-117).

[156]Dupont ("Old Testament" 150, 151-52) and Stanton (*Preaching* 73-74) answer in the affirmative. See also Dodd, *Scriptures* 126 and J. Bowker, "Speeches in Acts: A Study in Proem and Yelammedenu Form", *NTS* 14 [1967-68] 106-9.

[157]For example, v. 38 reproduces the thought of Isa 61:1 which in turn brings together in good Jewish exegetical method the redemptive theme of both Ps 106(107):20 and Isa 52:7.

[158]Cf. Haenchen 338-39.

[159]Admittedly the introductory vocatives do ease the abruptness of 2:22 and 13:26.

(6) It is unlikely that εὐαγγελιζόμενος εἰρήνην διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ refers to the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles. The concern of the immediate context is *God's* relation to all people--*his* overlooking of birth and race both in his acceptance and judgment; *his* merciful, redemptive response to human needs and therefore *his* reconciliation with all humanity--not the peoples' relation to each other. Moreover, for the reader of Luke-Acts the participial phrase recalls Luke 2:10-14, where, when the two-membered rendering of verse 14 (which is almost certainly correct) is accepted,[160] peace on earth for God's chosen people denotes the actualization of the eschatological salvation which reconciles God and humanity and there is no notion of good will manifested by human beings towards each other.[161]

(7) If the total context of the Old Testament allusions can be assumed to be in view throughout the speech,[162] the address to Cornelius would say no more than Isa 52:7 does, that the nations are merely witnesses to the fact that God has returned to Zion and rescued Jerusalem, revising the nation's fortunes and inaugurating a new era (cf. Ps 96:2-3, 10).

With such evidence supporting the interpretation that verse 36 prefaces verses 37-43 and challenging the idea that Luke is here presupposing that a mission to uncircumcised Gentiles, apart from those committed to Judaism, had been an assumption within the primitive apostolic circle, the inference follows that Peter's speech deals with the prior question "what", that is, with the fact that the Gentiles would have a part in the salvation now defined in terms of Jesus. Such an inference does not advance the inquiry about the relation between the Christian community and the historic people of God except in a kind of negative way: the extension to the Gentiles of the apostolic proclamation which had been given to the Jews argues neither for the idea that the church and Israel are discontinuous nor for the idea that the church is to be viewed in terms of Israel. The point is simply that the same message of salvation is available to the circumcised and the uncircumcised.

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[160]Fitzmyer, *Luke* 1:410-12.

[161]However, this idea may be developed in the context of Eph 2:17. See W. Foerster, "εἰρήνη", *TDNT* 2:415.

[162]Dodd, *Scriptures* 126. See the cautionary note delivered by Stanton (*Preaching* 74).

1.4.2. Inclusive or successive criteria

As for the other question--whether the three determinative characteristics are interdependent or successively limiting--it is obvious from the application of the apostolic proclamation to Gentiles who already have some association with Judaism that the appropriation of faith in Jesus was a necessary addition to the observance of God's covenantal will. The greater difficulty is how much the gift of the Spirit contributed to Peter's attitude towards the Gentiles and to his treatment of them. Or, to state the problem in another way, at what point in the story and to what extent did Peter understand the significance of a vision which pronounced the Gentiles clean and allowed unquestionable contact between Jews and Gentiles? To be clean and yet uncircumcised would imply a change in the law, for in the Jewish point of view to separate from uncleanness was to be circumcised. Did Peter, because of his vision, envisage the law, particularly the regulation of circumcision, as being no longer valid for the Gentiles? We have already alluded to the probability that, given the covenantal connotation of ὁ φοβούμενος αὐτὸν καὶ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην, the abrogation of the law was not in view, at least not when Peter began to preach. Can we strengthen and perhaps extend this idea? Or must we reject it?

In this regard the composition of the narrative goes a long way.[163] According to 10:17a, 19a the vision leaves Peter baffled and requiring the Spirit to explicate the meaning. Even then the Spirit directs and teaches by illustration, not by word (10:20); and the puzzlement continues. In verse 21 Peter still does not know the ramifications of the directive, asking Cornelius's messengers "Why have you come?". Verse 29b, too, shows that while Peter may have understood the vision to allow him to enter the

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[163]For the following argument the mention of Peter's sojourn with a tanner is probably irrelevant (cf. Haenchen 329 and Lake and Cadbury 4:111-12; contra Bruce [Greek] 214 and Knowling 249). Although in rabbinic law tanning was listed among the contemptible trades (e.g. *m.Ketub.* 7:10; *b.Qidd.* 82a, b; cf. *m.B.Bat.* 2:9) since it involved the handling of carcasses and exposed the tanner and his associates to continual uncleanness, there was *de jure* (cf. *m.Kelim* 26:8) no stigma attached to it (J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus. An Investigation into Economic and Social Conditions during the New Testament Period* [ET 1969] 301-12, esp. 309). Luke's excessive references to Simon's trade may be for the sake of clarity since the scene does involve two Simons closely connected syntactically (10:5-6, 17-19, 32), or they may be because of authorial colouring (cf. Acts 16:14; 18:3; 19:24) or a detail of address found in the source.

centurion's house without fear of contamination or disobedience, he remains ignorant as to the reason for his presence in Caesarea. This time the question is "Why did you send for me?". Cornelius's recital of God's interest in and contact with the unclean (10:30-33) leads to Peter's acknowledgement of God's display of impartiality to all peoples who love him and do what is right. The story ends with Cornelius's invitation to Peter. This, unlike Peter's invitation to Cornelius's emissaries (10:23), is a case of a Jew accepting Gentile hospitality which could be excused if Cornelius were a God-fearer practising at least the Noachic commandments; yet according to 11:3, when the Jerusalem believers charge Peter with eating with Gentiles, Cornelius's possible link with the synagogue is overlooked. Between Peter's ignorance of the divine purpose and his (presumed) acceptance of Cornelius's invitation is positioned God's bestowal of the Spirit on the uncircumcised Gentiles, an event which left Peter's Jewish Christian companions overwhelmingly astonished (ἐξέστησαν...ὅτι καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ἔθνη, 10:45) and Peter with no option but to baptize the Gentiles without first circumcising them, thereby signalling his acceptance. Acts 11:15-17 relates what the experience meant to Peter: the fulfilment of the word of the Lord which brooked no opposition.

Such a progressive unfolding of Peter's comprehension of God's intent suggests that the full significance of the vision was not apparent to Peter until God's dramatic intervention, if even then. This is to say in terms of the conditions stipulated for a person's acceptability and acceptance with God, when viewed from one perspective, i.e. before the advent of the Spirit, ὁ φοβούμενος αὐτὸν καὶ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην may be interpreted to presuppose the Gentiles' observance of the law, ritual and ethical, including circumcision; but when viewed from another perspective, i.e. after the advent of the Spirit, circumcision becomes unnecessary with the result that the Gentiles who do what is right can be said to fulfil the law in their way while the Jews do so in theirs (compare Rom 2:11-15). The gift of the Spirit which marks the presence of faith in Jesus has overturned the definition of ὁ φοβούμενος τὸν θεὸν καὶ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην and the Gentiles' relation to the covenants given to Israel. Luke's stress on the conservative piety of Cornelius prior to his conversion nevertheless does not allow

us to say that the Gentiles' relation to Israel has been severed. There is a definite grounding of the practices of the uncircumcised in God's covenants with Israel. Beyond this the evidence does not seem to allow us to go, and we are left uncertain of the precise relation between faith in Jesus and an observance of the covenantal will of God.

2. The Argument at the Council (Acts 15:7-11)

With the background of the story of the unexpected conversion of the uncircumcised Caesarean Gentiles, a conversion which required an alteration of traditional Jewish and primitive Christian teaching and practices, which depended on an attitude and a behaviour exemplifying the covenant and on personal faith in Jesus, which was manifested and sanctioned by God's unexpected and dramatic bestowal of the Spirit, and which was ratified from the church's perspective by water baptism and table fellowship only, we now return to Peter's contribution to the church's debate on membership in the people of God. The argument of Acts 15:7-11 can be readily, though somewhat artificially, divided into two parts by the change of subject in verse 10. Verses 7-9 discuss God's past treatment of the Gentiles with reference to salvation; verses 10-11, the Jewish Christians' present treatment of the Gentile Christians in light of their own experience of salvation.

2.1. *The Gentile Christians' experience of salvation (15:7-9)*

The speech begins with a reminder, addressed to the assembly, of Peter's visit to Caesarea. Four important facts about that visit are recalled in verse 7 before Peter, in verses 8-9, develops the theological implications of the visit.

2.1.1. The illustration

To begin with, the central thought of verse 7, that God chose that the Gentiles should hear the message of salvation, identifies the origin of the Christian mission to the Gentiles. God was responsible for initiating that mission, not any of the apostles, whether it be Peter, Paul, or the Hellenists. Ἐξελέξατο underscores this emphasis: it places the Gentiles, like the Jews, within the operation of God's elective activity

because God has determined this and designates them a specific part of his plan (cf. 15:14; Rom 9-11).[164]

Ἀφ' ἡμερῶν ἀρχαίων, the second point, draws attention to the time of God's choice. The words are somewhat inexplicit, without any clear indication from either the immediate context or Lukan usage elsewhere as to their precise meaning.[165] Probably, since the conversion of the Gentiles occurred in the early days of the church and since the event was also a beginning and part of God's eternal plan (Luke 24:47; Acts 10:43), the wisest choice in this instance (at least for our purposes), and possibly what was intended, is to leave the phrase deliberately equivocal, simply but significantly impressing upon the audience that the precedent of a mission to the Gentiles had long been established.

The third fact concerns the role of the Jewish Christians, specifically that of Peter, in the incident. This is expressed by the two other prepositional phrases in the verse: ἐν ὑμῖν, whether it or διὰ τοῦ στόματός μου supplies the missing object of ἐξελέξατο,[166] specifies the sphere within which God's action occurred; διὰ τοῦ στόματός

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[164]Εκλέγομαι is used in the Greek Bible primarily of divine action which concerns Israel (e.g. Deut 4:37; 7:7; 14:2; 16:6; 18:5; 1 Kgdms 10:24; 3 Kgdms 8:16; 11:13; 14:21; Isa 41:8; 43:10; and in the NT with the subject being God [Mark 13:20; Luke 9:35; Acts 1:24; 13:17; 1 Cor 1:27, 28; Eph 1:4; Jas 2:5] or Jesus [Luke 6:13; John 6:70; 13:18; 15:16, 19; Acts 1:2]). The fact that only the verbal forms of this word group occur in the OT (the noun ἐκλογή is found seven times in the NT, chiefly in Paul) "automatically results in an emphasis, not so much on the action itself...as on the person who chooses and the one chosen" (L. Coenen, "Elect/ἐκλέγομαι", *NIDNTT* 1:537).

[165]The difficulty is due (a) to ἀρχαῖος being capable of covering a spectrum of temporal references (G. Delling, "ἄρχω", *TDNT* 1:478-87), (b) to Luke's limited use of ἀρχαῖος elsewhere (Luke 9:8, 19; Acts 15:21; 21:16) displaying this breadth of meaning, and (c) to no immediate pointers in the context, unless ἐν ὑμῖν belongs with ἀφ' ἡμερῶν ἀρχαίων instead of ἐξελέξατο and this is unlikely or unless the comparable πρῶτον of 15:14, meaning probably "at the first" (see p. 134), because of the parallels of thought and phrasing between 15:7 and 15:14, is influential. Given this uncertainty it is quite understandable that scholarly opinion is diverse. The phrase has been suggested to mean simply "of the beginning", that is, "from the time when the mission to the Gentiles started" (Lampe 792a) or to say that God's act belonged to his pretemporally formulated plan of salvation or to convey that it happened in the early stages of the church which are viewed as original or ancient (cf. Bruce [Greek] 292). If the last is the meaning of ἀφ' ἡμερῶν ἀρχαίων, such a perspective on the conversion of Cornelius could be Peter's (Bauernfeind 189-90) or, since the lifespan of the church to this point is under two decades, Luke's (e.g. Haenchen 427 n. 7; Conzelmann 83). Knowling (319) thinks a reference to Cornelius needs not exhaust the meaning of the phrase; he cites the view of some that Matt 16:13-20 is meant.

[166]Various suggestions have been made to rectify this niggling omission. Torrey (*Composition* 21-22) proposed that ἐν ὑμῖν is a mistranslation of the original Aramaic בכון (= ὑμᾶς). Lake and Cadbury (4:172) point out that the LXX frequently renders בחר ב by ἐκλέγεσθαι ἐν (e.g. 1 Kgs 8:16, 44; Neh 9:7); thus, the same translation is possible without resorting to the theory of an Aramaic original. Another option is to understand διὰ τοῦ στόματός μου to be the sense construction of ἐμέ (Phillips; Moffatt; TEV).

μου designates Peter as the means by which the Gentiles heard the gospel. That is to say, in order to realize the mission to the Gentiles, God operated *within* the context of and *by means of* the Jewish Christian (= Jerusalem) community, not within the daughter church in Antioch or among the apostles solely. It is curious, however, that Luke makes this point by using ἐν ὑμῖν instead of ἐν ἡμῖν.[167] There may be nothing more in this choice than the attempt to avoid separating the apostles (ἡμῖν; cf. v. 6) from the church rank and file (πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος, v. 12) or, given the emergence of the first person plural everywhere else in the passage, the desire to highlight Peter's responsibility as the church's representative. Yet we should not overlook the possibility that Peter himself is being singled out from the main body of Jewish Christians, perhaps in order to show that for political or ministerial or even theological reasons he was no longer an integral part of the Jerusalem community.

Fourth, the reason for Peter's visit to Caesarea is clear. The compound ἀκοῦσαι ...καὶ πιστεῦσαι implies that Peter was to preach the gospel in order that the Gentiles may come to faith.[168] Nothing is said explicitly or implicitly which would suggest that Peter's action contradicted or annulled the law.

2.1.2. The theological implications

In verses 8-9, in parallel clauses recalling two aspects of the story of Cornelius, Peter develops the theological implications of God's decision regarding the Gentiles. Verse 8 obviously refers to the event eliminating in Peter's opinion the need to circum-cise Cornelius: the miraculous outpouring of the Spirit which resembled Pentecost (10:44). Peter reiterates that through the gift of the Spirit[169] God had signified his approval of the Gentiles, that God had so acted in response to the Gentiles' inner worthiness which he alone knew (καρδιογνώστης), and that God's way of testifying to the Gentiles matched the experience of the Jewish Christians.[170] Verse 9 alludes to the

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[167]Εν ὑμῖν (p^{74} ℵ A B C 33) is better attested than ἐν ἡμῖν which is located variously in the Western tradition.

[168]Πιστεῦσαι is inceptive (Schneider 2:180 n. 47).

[169]Δούς is a simultaneous modal participle (NEB; NIV; JB; cf. Bruce [Greek] 293).

[170]Αὐτοῖς, like the correlative ἡμῖν, belongs to both ἐμαρτύρησεν and δούς (Bruce [Greek] 292).

vision of the animals descending from heaven (10:9-16) and the subsequent interpretation in terms of the Gentiles (10:28). Οὐδὲν διέκρινεν is another way of stating the lesson that God is impartial in his attitude towards people, accepting those of every nation; τῇ πίστει καθαρίσας τὰς καρδίας αὐτῶν, the lesson that however impure the Jews may try to reckon the Gentiles to be God himself has created in them an inner purity.[171] Since καθαρίσας is probably a causal participle of simultaneous action,[172] the act of cleansing, according to Peter's present argument, provides the reason for God's non-discrimination of Jews and Gentiles. Explicit is the idea that as far as God was concerned the cleansing of the heart, like the bestowal of the Spirit, had made the Jews and Gentiles now equals.

Significantly the cleansing mentioned in 15:9 was done τῇ πίστει. Although K. Lake and H. J. Cadbury have suggested for this emphatic dative the translation "for the Christian Faith" (the goal of cleansing),[173] τῇ πίστει is better taken, as most translators and commentators do, as indicating the means of the cleansing, "by faith (in Jesus Christ)".[174] Faith then is fundamental to acceptance by God and, by inference, for acceptance into the people of God.

Significant too is the uncertainty regarding the time of cleansing. The aorist tense of καθαρίσας is hardly determinative: it simply conveys the fact that the cleansing took place at a particular point in time without stating when the cleansing occurred. That the cleansing occurred by faith could suggest, though, that the person was considered clean at the moment when he professed faith. This introduces a crucial contrast with Acts 10. In the earlier passage the cleansing, illustrated by the vision of the sheet, is connected with the relationship between Jews and Gentiles and defined in terms of a change in Moses's law, from labelling the Gentiles as an unclean, idolatrous race to classifying them as clean and acceptable for contact with God and Israel provided they love God and do what is right. Here the cleansing is associated directly with personal

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[171]Cf. Haenchen 428.

[172]NEB; NIV; JB; cf. Bruce (Greek) 293.

[173]Lake and Cadbury 4:173. The translation finds support from the use of τῇ πίστει in 14:22 and 16:5 and possibly in 6:7 and 13:8.

[174]E.g. KJV; RSV; NEB; Haenchen 428.

faith and indirectly, because of the conceptual and grammatical parallelism of verses 8 and 9, with the receipt of the Spirit. Luke does not seem either to explain or resolve the difference, preferring for whatever reason, to leave intact the tension between a cleansing of position in terms of the law which appears to apply to all Gentiles and a cleansing of the heart in terms of faith which concerns the individual.

2.2. *The Jewish Christians' experience of salvation (15:10-11)*

After describing how God saved Cornelius and his household, Peter turns in verses 10-11 to the matter of the Jewish Christians' treatment of the Gentiles, in particular their insistence on the necessity of circumcision and obedience to the law for salvation; and he analyses the demand in light of the Jewish Christians' own experience of salvation.

2.2.1. The presence of the law

What the Jewish Christians were doing is summed up quite damningly by πειράζετε,[175] as a questioning of God's judgment to ascertain whether he really intended to make his will operative, as a doubting of the clarity of God's will, thereby encouraging action against that will and, in return, courting divine punishment. The gravity of Peter's accusation is strengthened by the potentially pejorative way in which the Judaizers' demand is described. From the image of the yoke placed upon the neck of a beast of burden, ζυγὸς ἐπὶ τὸν τράχηλον τῶν μαθητῶν conveys not only the neutral idea of a heavy load (Sir 40:1) but also the negative thought of suppression and affliction caused by enforced subjection and tyranny.[176] The sense of oppression is seemingly heightened by the infinitives which have a comparable lexical duality.

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[175]BAGD, s.v. πειράζω 2e. Cf. Exod 17:2; Num 14:22-23; Isa 7:12; Pss 77(78):18, 56; 94(95):8-11; Wis 1:2; 1 Cor 10:9; Heb 3:9.

[176]A good example of the resulting metaphor is Lev 26:13, when God declares that he brought the Israelites out of Egypt in order that they should not be slaves of the Egyptians and bear their yoke. See also 2 Chr 10:3-14 (compare the synonym κλοιός, the other LXX translation of עֹל, in 3 Kgdms 12:1-15); Isa 9:4, 10, 27; 14:25; 37:8; Ezek 34:27; *Pss.Sol.* 17:32. As for the NT, the idea of bondage appears in 1 Tim 6:1, where ὑπὸ ζυγόν expresses the situation of the slave who cannot do as he pleases but stands under an imposed social order and, rather than throwing it off, must bow to it. Similarly, in Gal 5:1 Paul admonishes the Galatians not to rob themselves of freedom by subjecting themselves to the Jewish law. To do so, Paul claims, was to reduce oneself to the position of the δοῦλος who lives under the ζυγός (K. H. Rengstorf, "ζυγός", *TDNT* 2:899).

Generally meaning "to lay upon, put upon", ἐπιτίθημι has also the figurative sense "to impose", or more strongly, "to inflict".[177] And since carrying requires the exertion of power, thus involving both exercise and the application of will, βαστάζω can imply discomfort and difficulty. In association with ἰσχύω the feeling of hardship appears even more prominent.

Central to understanding this apparently damning description of the Judaizers' demand is the relation of verse 10 to the rest of Peter's argument. On one level the connection is clearly expressed by νῦν οὖν τί πειράζετε: the divinely-effected and -validated conversion of Cornelius in the past had made the Jewish Christians' present actions contrary to God's revealed will.[178] On another level, Peter's whole argument, not just verses 7-9, is a justification of the use of πειράζετε. How the infinitival phrase explaining the pivotal verb functions in the argument therefore becomes quite signifi - cant. That is to say, is ἐπιθεῖναι ζυγὸν κτλ, despite the inferential οὖν, a self-contained argument inserted into the debate? Or does it state only the conclusions to verses 7-9? Or should οὖν be taken in a looser temporal sense, as summarizing what has been said already and forming a transition to a new subject,[179] and the infinitival phrase be understood in terms of verse 11 as well as verses 7-9? Let us investigate these various options.

To begin with,[180] were the infinitival phrase to constitute an independent point, the argument could be a kind of logical deduction from the nature of the law revealed by Jewish experience: "It is our experience and the experience of our fathers that the law is an oppressive, impossible burden. How can we make the fulfilment of the impossible a condition for salvation?". E. Haenchen[181] holds a view similar to this and maintains

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[177]LSJ, s.v. ἐπιτίθημι. See also Acts 15:28; 16:23; Luke 10:30; Rev 22:18b; and the middle ἐπιθήσεται in Acts 18:10.

[178]This applies whether νῦν functions as the temporal contrast of ἀφ' ἡμερῶν ἀρχαίων or as part of the conjunction, reinforcing οὖν. See the discussion in M. Thrall, *Greek Particles in the New Testament. Linguistic and Exegetical Studies* (1962) 33. Like Thrall, Lake and Cadbury (4:173) take νῦν as temporal. BAGD (s.v. νῦν 2) connects the adverb with οὖν.

[179]For this shade of meaning see MM, s.v. οὖν 2 and BDF §451.1.

[180]This discussion of v. 10 follows closely the arguments and conclusions of J. L. Nolland ("A Fresh Look at Acts 15.10", *NTS* 27 [1980] 105-15, esp. 105-12).

[181]Haenchen 429. See also P. Vielhauer, "On the 'Paulinism' of Acts", in FS P. Schubert (1966) 42-43.

that because no strict Jew would regard the law as burdensome, here we have one of the few glimpses of Luke's real view of the law, "als eine Unzahl von Geboten und Verboten, die kein Mensch erfüllen kann."[182] The Gentile Christian author is striving to demonstrate for his readers that the Gentile Christians ought to be free from the law.

So interpreted, verse 10 seems curiously situated. It is strange enough to have a hellenistic sentiment on the lips not of Paul but of Peter to whose Jewishness attention is drawn by the Συμεών in verse 14; even more incongruous is to expect such an argument to answer effectively, as Peter's apparently does, the Pharisaic Jewish Christians who show by the very demand they are making that they do not share this perspective (vv. 1, 5). The anomalies can only be explained by the author having a total disregard for the narrative situation. This Luke, in my opinion, does not have.[183]

Further, since the oppressiveness of the law is said in verse 10 to be discernible from Jewish experience, strictly speaking an argument based on the principial impossibility of keeping the law leads to the conclusion that for Jews as well the law should be abandoned, indeed, that the Jews themselves would have developed this viewpoint before the matter of the Gentiles ever arose. Not only is this deduction impossible in the immediate setting, it also does not accord with the compliant attitude towards the law or with the positive experience of the law which Luke recounts elsewhere among Jews and Jewish Christians, even Paul. As a hellenistic Christian, if he is such, Luke's own feelings about the Jewish law may well have been negative. But an awareness of another experience of the law is too pervasive in his work for the reader to attribute verse 10 to a momentary, unintentional divergence from normal practice or to an ignorance of the earlier historical situation.[184]

If the syntactical link with verses 7-9 is pressed and verse 10 is regarded as concluding the argument of the preceding verse, the infinitival phrase could be translated

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[182]Haenchen 429 n. 1.

[183]Although Luke does tend, quite rightly, to address his readers on occasions (cf. 21:25 [discussed on pp. 263-64]), he is, I think, too careful a writer to do so at the expense of knowingly creating contradictions.

[184]Contra Conzelmann (83), who states that by describing the law as an intolerable burden "Lk nicht die logische geforderte Konsequenz zieht, daß man dieses Joch auch den Judenchristen abnehmen müßte. Das Judenchristentum hat für ihn nicht mehr aktuelle Bedeutung, sondern grundsätzlich-heilsgeschichtliche".

"When Cornelius believed, God did not regard the law as necessary. Why do you want to add it now since it is only an oppressive burden?". Peter's point then is that the Gentiles should not be forced to do what has been shown to be unnecessary for their salvation (vv. 7-9) and what is abnormal for their lifestyle (v. 10).

This view is attractive. It accords with Luke's concern to portray the Jewish Christians' attention to the law. As the focus now falls on the inapplicability of the law for the Gentile converts, there need be no indication that the Jewish Christians ought also to be free from the law. The law may of course be oppressively burdensome for Jews; but burdensome as it may be, the possibility of the Jews being obligated to keep it is not excluded. Furthermore, since the law is considered still valid for Jewish practice, this interpretation can present a plausible Jewish attitude towards the law. For ordinary Jews like the Galilean Peter, the traditional law, as expounded in particular by the severe school of Shammai which was dominant at the time, could understandably have been a heavy burden under which they groaned.[185]

There are however two objections. First, the question which the assembly is debating is formulated in terms of the salvific necessity of circumcision (v. 1). Verses 7-9 describing the circumstances of Cornelius's conversion seemingly address the point. The concluding argument in verse 11 certainly states how people, in this case the Jewish Christians, were to be saved. Although conclusive proof is lacking in the case of verse 10, it does not seem arbitrary or unfounded to expect verse 10 as well to answer the question, the more so given the ἀλλά at the beginning of verse 11. That is to say, the most natural way of understanding ἀλλά in verse 11, although admittedly not the only way, is as constructing a contrast with what precedes; more precisely, the conjunction gives the sense of *sed etiam*, "not (only)...but (also)".[186] This makes for a

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[185]Bruce (Greek) 293-94. On this point Bruce follows the description of the Jewish attitude towards the law outlined by Schürer (*Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes* 2:494-96 [This section has been completely rewritten in Schürer-Vermes {*Jewish People* 2:486-87}, but the conclusion is similar, especially in the case of the Galilean Jews]). See also the discussion of Galilean Judaism in contrast to Judean Judaism in G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew. A historian's reading of the Gospels* (1973) 52-57. It should be noted that this characterization of Galilean Judaism should be viewed as a generalization: undoubtedly there were scrupulous Jews in Galilee as there were in the communities of the diaspora.

[186]Moulton 3:330. On *sed etiam OLD* (s.v. *sed* 9) states that after a negative and in combination with various adverbs, *sed* is used "to give forcible expression to a second idea as being additional to the first".

significant two-way influence between the two poles of the contrast: on the one hand, the Jew' inability to fulfil the demands of the law provides the explanatory introduction to the argument in verse 11; on the other, since the requirements for salvation are the concern in verse 11, they must be the concern in verse 10 as well. Now if verse 10 is understood as a pragmatic argument based on the personal experience of the Jews, it falls out of the sequence of Peter's speech, becoming at best only an aside. As a result, not only is the force of πειράζετε weakened, but verse 11 is left unanticipated.

The second objection is that in claiming the inapplicability of the law for the Gentile Christians but the applicability of it for Jewish Christians, this interpretation heightens the difference between the two groups. Is this not precisely what the argument is seeking to avoid? Surely καθὼς καὶ ἡμῖν (v. 8), οὐδὲν διέκρινεν μεταξὺ ἡμῶν τε καὶ αὐτῶν (v. 9), and καθ' ὃν τρόπον κἀκεῖνοι (v. 11) indicate that running through Peter's speech is an obvious interest in demonstrating the equality of the Jews and Gentiles in God's eyes?

The above criticisms point out that in formulating a tenable interpretation of ἐπιθεῖναι ζυγόν...[οὐκ] ἰσχύσαμεν βαστάσαι, we must take into consideration three points in particular. (1) The issue being debated is the way to salvation viewed from the human perspective. While it may be demanding too much of Luke (or his sources) for every comment to adhere strictly to the central argument, in the case of verse 10, sandwiched between οὖν and ἀλλά in the sequence of the argument, explaining the former and contrasting with the latter, the expectation seems warranted. Since verse 11 obviously speaks of salvation and verses 7-9 probably do, so may verse 10. (2) Despite the different foci of the address--first the Gentiles and then the Jews--running through the verses is an obvious interest in making a claim for the parity of the Gentile converts and Christian Jews insofar as the requirements for salvation were concerned. Verse 10 too portrays this concern. Though it lacks an explicit comparison, one may be inferred from the juxtaposition of τῶν μαθητῶν, obviously referring to the Gentile believers, and ἡμεῖς. (3) Luke shows himself to be aware of a positive experience of the law and is concerned to present the Jewish Christians, even the revolutionary apostle

Paul, as attentive to the demands of the law and part of this exemplary tradition. This implies that for Luke and maybe for his source the law was viewed as not *of necessity* an impossible burden.

J. L. Nolland,[187] for one, develops the idea that verse 10 should be understood as concluding verses 7-9 and setting the polar opposite of verse 11. He suggests that the infinitival phrase in verse 10 assumes the question "Was the law essential for the Jewish Christians' experience of salvation?". Quite emphatically the answer conveyed by ἐπιθεῖναι ζυγόν...[οὐκ] ἰσχύσαμεν βαστάσαι is "No! For though the law was present, the Jewish Christians were unable to bear it".

Determinative in constructing this paraphrase is οὔτε οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν οὔτε ἡμεῖς. Undergirded by the past tense of ἰσχύω, the compound subject links the Jewish Christians with the national solidarity and history of Israel. Since throughout history the nation had incorporated the paradox of commitment to the law but failure to keep it, Jewish national history demonstrated that there was a characteristic human inability to meet the expectations of the law.[188] This point Luke has developed extensively in Stephen's speech, and it is summed up by the conclusion ἐλάβετε τὸν νόμον...καὶ οὐκ ἐφυλάξατε of 7:53. In its context this analysis of Israel's actions is no criticism of the law since Stephen refers to Moses's receipt of λόγια ζῶντα (7:38), but it is a definite indication that in generation after generation the Jews as a nation had failed to experience salvation by means of the law. Instead of being salvific, the law had turned out to be accusing, underlining failure. To be sure, individuals did seek to maintain an obedient covenantal relationship with God; but the experience of the nation was otherwise.

The inference is straightforward. If an inability to keep the law was the experience of the nation throughout history, the link with that ancestry in 15:10--given that the choice and compilation of the traditional material are ultimately Luke's responsibility--suggests that the contemporary Jewish experience was a continuation of the biblical

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[187]Nolland, "Acts 15.10" 110. He is followed by Marshall (250) and possibly Wilson (*Law* 60-61).

[188]Jervell, "Law" 151 n. 55.

pattern. It follows then logically that since Jewish Christians had experienced salvation, the fact that the Jews possessed the law was not the reason for their salvation.

This interpretation fits from another perspective. The correlated themes of commitment to the law and failure to keep it provide a plausible and effective answer to the Pharisaic believers' demand, helping to produce the resulting silence. When Jewish writers spoke of the law as the "yoke of the kingdom of heaven", they referred to a privileged obligation based on God's dealings with Israel to which one gladly committed oneself:[189] "Put your neck under the yoke (τὸν τραχήλον ὑμῶν ὑπόθετε ὑπὸ ζυγόν) and let your soul receive instruction,...See with your eyes that I have laboured little and found for myself much rest" (Sir 51:26-27). Aptly expressing submission to God's will, the metaphor ζυγὸν βαστάζειν may connote the neutral concepts commitment, effort, constraint, and hard work, without necessarily implying resentment or unwillingness from the writer's perspective.[190] A similar usage is observable in Matt 11:29 (cf. *Did.* 6.2), where being Jesus' disciple is defined as assuming his yoke which, while easier than the (implicitly contrasted) heavy yoke of Pharisaism, still requires commitment and discipline. In addition to this theme, the Jewish writers acknowledged a national inability to reach the standards of the law. The idea is exhibited clearly in the rabbinic teaching that Israel's failure to repent even for one day

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[189]See the "yoke of the Torah" in *m.ʾAbot* 3:5; *b.Sanh.* 94b; *Gen.Rab.* 67.7; the "yoke of heaven" in *b.Soṭa* 47b; *b.Sanh.* 111b; the "yoke of the commandments" in *m.Ber.* 2:2; and other examples listed in Str-B 1:608-10 and Rengstorf, *TDNT* 2:900. The background to this rabbinic concept is the OT passages such as Jer 2:19c-20a and 5:4-5 which speak of Israel having been before disobedience under a yoke of service to God. Likewise, Zeph 3:9 applies the metaphor to the service to the Lord rendered by all who call on his name. Curiously, in *Pss.Sol.* 7:9 ἡμεῖς ὑπὸ ζυγόν σου τὸν αἰῶνα occurs in parallel with [ἡμεῖς ὑπὸ] μάστιγα παιδείας σου, but the context suggests that μάστιξ bears the sense of whip of discipline rather than the more normal idea of scourge of punishment.

[190]While the imagery of ζυγός does not escape suggesting that a constraint is imposed, hard work required, an obligation undertaken, etc., it does frequently evade the notion that the ζυγός is undesirable (Nolland, "Acts 15.10" 111 nn. 21, 23). Similarly, a survey of the occurrences of βαστάζω (Nolland, "Acts 15.10" 113-15) shows: (1) that except for the weakened sense where the idea of burden has disappeared completely (e.g. Gal 6:17; Acts 9:15) "the focus of the word is for the most part firmly on the effort required to carry the load, rather than on the load being something hard to put up with" (cf. Sir 6:25); (2) that where a negative connotation does appear (see Rev 2:2; John 16:12; Gal 5:10; and possibly Matt 20:12 and Rom 15:1), these are almost exclusively instances where the sense of carrying is as much as possible out of sight.

A better case for the oppressiveness of the law can be made with βάρος in Acts 15:28 (see pp. 174-76), where the imagery is applied to Gentile Christians for whom the law was culturally alien. While ζυγός and βάρος are obviously linked, the meaning of the former is not necessarily controlled by that of the lattter, as Lake and Cadbury (4:174) infer.

or to keep the sabbath correctly was delaying the beginning of the messianic age.[191] Bringing the two strands of thought together, we can speak of the failure to bear the yoke without connoting an oppressiveness or burdensomeness. That is to say, the reason for the failure need not lie with the burden to be carried. It could be due to the bearer, to the people's strength as well as to their will.

This distinction is crucial and must be stressed in the case of ζυγόν...βαστάσαι in Peter's speech. The auxiliary verb ἰσχύσαμεν does not allow us to think of the history of Israel merely in terms of the fact that the wayward nation *willed* not to carry the yoke of the covenant, as the declaration οὐ δουλεύσω claims for ζυγός (= God's covenant, cf. Jer 5:5) in Jer 2:20. It is that the Israelites never really managed to fulfil what was expected because they simply were not "strong enough to support it".[192] Peter therefore is not denouncing the law *per se*; rather, he is implying that as long as the law was not viewed as the Jewish Christians' way to salvation, the law had continuing validity and positive value in the lives of Jewish Christians as a standard for submission to God's will.

2.2.2. The presence of faith

The intent of Peter's final point, verse 11, concerns the words διὰ τῆς χάριτος τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ πιστεύομεν σωθῆναι. Because of several variables--the referent of διὰ τῆς χάριτος, the syntax of the aorist σωθῆναι, the meaning of πιστεύομεν--the crucial phrase can be rendered variously: (1) "Having the grace of the Lord Jesus, we are convinced that we are saved", the prepositional phrase stating the circumstances accompanying the Jewish Christians' conviction about their salvation; (2) "We are convinced that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus",[193] the statement expressing a confident opinion about the means of the Jewish Christians' salvation; (3) "We believe in salvation through the grace of the Lord Jesus", an intellectual assent being given to the

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[191]See the discussion in *b.Sanh.* 97b-98b and other passages mentioned by Str-B 1:162-65. The thought is not just rabbinic. Compare, for example, Acts 3:19-21, which is discussed above.

[192]JB. Nolland has not really made the significance of ἰσχύσαμεν clear, and this can mislead (see Wilson, *Law* 60, for instance).

[193]NEB; JB; NIV; and presumably BAGD, s.v. πιστεύω 1aγ.

theory that the grace of the Lord Jesus provides rescue from eternal damnation;[194] (4) "We are convinced that we have been saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus", salvation being viewed as a past experience; (5) "We are convinced that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus", the focal point being the confident expectation of eschatological salvation;[195] (6) "We believe so as to be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus",[196] with salvation accomplished by the grace of Jesus seen as the purpose (or result) of the act of faith; (7) "Through the grace of the Lord Jesus we believe so as to be saved", salvation being the purpose (or result) of the act of faith, an act effected by the grace of the Lord Jesus. The first and third renderings are improbable.[197] There is an overwhelming acceptance of the second translation, with the fifth (or fourth) translation a possible alternative, but linguistic and contextual evidence indicates that the sixth or seventh rendering should be accepted.

In spite of Luke's preference for the religious sense of πιστεύω as an act connoting trust in God or Jesus which is based on what God has done and promised through Jesus, it is arguable that πιστεύομεν simply replaces δοκοῦμεν (cf. Luke 8:18; 24:37): a comparison of the logical development of Peter's speech and that of James's invites a neat parallelism, with ἀλλά...πιστεύομεν σωθῆναι (v. 11) matching διὸ ἐγὼ κρίνω...ἐπιστεῖλαι (vv. 19-20); furthermore, Luke does not avoid the secular meaning of πιστεύω entirely (Acts 9:26; 13:41 || Hab 1:5). Yet five points object against the equation.[198]

First, whereas κρίνω is singular, πιστεύομεν is plural. It is unlikely that in concluding his argument, Peter would have someone else's opinion in mind. Second,

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[194]This is suggested and then dismissed by Lake and Cadbury (4:174).

[195]Cf. KJV; RSV; Chrysostom, *Hom.* 32; Haenchen 429; Lake and Cadbury 4:174. Curiously, in his analysis of the text Haenchen (442) says of πιστεύομεν σωθῆναι "nur der Glaube an den Herrn Jesus Christus rettet, Juden wie Heiden".

[196]Cf. Phillips; TEV; Lampe 792b; Marshall 250. Bengel (2:646) and Bruce ([Greek] 294-95) prefer this translation.

[197]Detrimental to the first option is that διά with the genitive case expresses instrumentality more often than it does attendant circumstances. The weakness of the third is that the import of the words becomes theoretical whereas Peter's argument requires that it be experiential.

[198]In addition, note should be made of the exceptional use of the present tense of πιστεύω. Of the 39 occurrences of the verb in Acts this tense appears only six times, excluding 15:11 and the variant of 8:37. Three times it describes people who are in the process of coming to faith (5:14; 10:43; 13:39); three times it denotes the acceptance of a proposition (24:14; 26:27) or of a person making a proposition (27:25). Such evidence is inconclusive.

we would expect the employment of the πιστεύω word group earlier in Peter's argument (vv. 7, 9) and in the narrative (v. 5), where the idea of saving faith is obviously expressed, to influence the meaning of any subsequent occurrence of the words, unless the context dictated otherwise. Third, since faith and the receipt of the Spirit, which is the consequence and proof of faith, are the emphases in verses 8 and 9 where the way of salvation for the Gentiles is compared with that of the Jewish Christians, it is likely that faith is the point of comparison in καθ' ὃν τρόπον κἀκεῖνοι of verse 11[199] when the way of salvation for the Jewish Christians is compared with that of the Gentiles. Fourth, if πιστεύομεν σωθῆναι were to express solely a conviction that salvation comes through the grace of Jesus, the argument would not seem to justify the silence that follows. Since the dispute is within the Christian community, all parties to the dispute should hold and be prepared to affirm such a conviction. Fifth, where πιστεύω and σῴζω occur concomitantly elsewhere in Luke-Acts, the author is intent on showing that faith in God (or Jesus) leads to salvation: Paul answers the Philippian jailer's question τί με δεῖ ποιεῖν ἵνα σωθῶ; with πίστευσον ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν, καὶ σωθήσῃ σύ (Acts 16:30-31); Luke 8:12 states that the devil takes the word from the people's hearts ἵνα μὴ πιστεύσαντες σωθῶσιν.[200] Such evidence indicates instead that in Acts 15:11 πιστεύομεν bears the customary New Testament sense, namely, "we accept and commit ourselves to what God has done and promised in Christ".

There follow two consequences. First, if πιστεύομεν has a religious sense, σωθῆναι cannot function as a direct object, stating the content of a conviction. The infinitive must be final ("we believe [in God] in order to be saved") or consecutive ("we believe [in God] with the result that we are saved"). Whichever nuance is accepted--and because the categories of purpose and result often merge, for a result is a designed

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[199]This abbreviation of the more correct expression κατὰ τὸν τρόπον, καθ' ὃν καὶ ἐκεῖνοι (BAGD, s.v. ὅς I5b) is ambiguous on two counts: (a) whether the referent is οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν (v. 10) or, as is more likely, τὰ ἔθνη (v. 7); (b) whether the verb to be supplied comes from σῴζω or πιστεύω.

[200]A third passage, Luke 8:50, where Jairus is told, on hearing that his daughter had already died, μόνον πίστευσον, καὶ σωθήσεται, is slightly different. Here σῴζω refers to physical healing as it does in the conjunction of πίστις and σῴζω in Luke 17:19 and Acts 14:9. Yet though chiefly physiological in nuance, σῴζω in these verses is not without a spiritual dimension. Compare Luke 7:50; 8:48; and 18:42.

purpose, σωθῆναι is best left deliberately ambiguous[201]--the basis of the Jewish Christians' salvation is said clearly to be faith.

In passing we should note that to translate σωθῆναι "so as to be saved" not only masks the explicit syntax of the infinitive, it also obscures the sense conveyed by the aorist tense. Probably this too is fortunate. Most commonly the action of an aorist infinitive in relation to the action of its finite verb would be viewed as past or perfect (have been and therefore are), but it also can be future and is so on occasions in Acts (cf. 2:30; 3:18; 7:5).[202] That the future sense may be meant in 15:11 is suggested by πιστεύσομεν σωθῆναι in ℵ D.[203] Nevertheless, though the hope of the parousia and of the concomitant future events is an integral part of Luke's theology, this eschatological orientation belongs, as we stated earlier, to a wider view in which the central place is occupied by the present realization of salvation;[204] and σωθῆναι therefore can not only point to the salvation which is to come but also denote the confident experience of God's acceptance in the present.

The second consequence is that πιστεύομεν σωθῆναι, meaning "we believe so as to be saved", in combination with διὰ τῆς χάριτος τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ sounds very much like "Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him" in Rom 5:9 (cf. v. 10) or like "for by grace you have been saved through faith" in Eph 2:8 (cf. v. 5). Could it be said to resemble Pauline thought? This possibility requires examination.

Χάρις sums up for Paul, its principal user, God's decisive act of salvation which was accomplished in Christ's sacrificial death and all the present and future consequences of that act, including the admission of the Gentiles (Rom 3:24-26); and thus it forms the polar opposite of justification by works and the law.[205] In Luke's

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[201]See the discussion of the English idiom in Moule 138.

[202]Bruce (Greek) 294; Lake and Cadbury 4:174; cf. BDF §350.

[203]Cf. Lake and Cadbury 4:174. Nestle-Aland[26] omits this variant but Ropes's citation is correct (Ropes 3:142).

[204]Marshall, *Historian* 178 and pp. 36-40 above. An appropriate example is the present tense of τοὺς σῳζομένους in Acts 2:47, which indicates that believers are saved now and will also be safe at the end.

[205]See H.-H. Esser, "Grace/χάρις", *NIDNTT* 2:119-22; H. Conzelmann, "χαίρω", *TDNT* 9:393-98.

writing, however, the term has a different purpose. Within the mission setting, which is the most relevant to the sense of Acts 15:11,[206] χάρις is distinctively articular (a possible exception being 6:8) and signifies the power which flows from God (ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ, 11:23; 14:26) or the exalted Christ (ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου, 15:40) and accompanies the apostles in their ministry, giving them success.[207] Also qualified by θεοῦ or the personal pronoun, the word characterizes the message of salvation (13:43) and the apostles' preaching as the message of salvation (14:3; 20:24, 32). Such usage suggests for ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ in 15:11 the meaning either "the favourable power of the Lord Jesus" or, more likely in the context, "the message of who Jesus was and of what he did and achieved", "the apostolic proclamation". And when the prepositional phrase is applied to πιστεύομεν, which can be argued since nowhere else in Luke's writing does a phrase introduced by διά qualify σῴζω,[208] the result is the idea that through the proclamation of the gospel the Jewish Christians have come to faith. The grace of the Lord Jesus, i.e. the (power or preaching of the) gospel, invites faith in Jesus which leads to salvation.

This fits with the nuance of ἡ πίστις ἡ δι' αὐτοῦ in 3:16, the only other place where Luke unquestionably uses διά with the πιστεύω word group.[209] There faith (on the part of the sick man) is the means by which the divine name becomes effective to heal physically and is itself brought into being by the name preached by Peter. The above understanding of διὰ τῆς χάριτος...πιστεύομεν also accords with another feature of Luke's mission setting: the concomitance of ἀκούω and πιστεύω. Those who hear the apostolic proclamation are those who believe (πολλοὶ...ἀκούοντες ἐπίστευσαν, 18:8; cf.

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[206]Other uses of χάρις in Luke-Acts are (a) the OT nuance of esteem shown by God (Luke 1:30; 2:52; Acts 7:46; cf. Luke 2:40) or other people (Luke 2:52; Acts 2:47; 7:10; 24:27; 25:9; cf. 4:33; 25:3), due usually to the work of God; (b) an appreciation for services rendered (Luke 17:9); and (c) a payment for something taken as a matter of course (Luke 6:32-34).

[207]In this vein is also λόγοι τῆς χάριτος in Luke 4:22, conveying the astonishing rhetorical force of Jesus' words, his authority, the boldness of his claims, and the content of his teaching (Esser, *NIDNTT* 2:118).

[208]On ἐν with σῴζω in the sense of διά, see below.

[209]Συνεβάλετο πολὺ τοῖς πεπιστευκόσιν διὰ τῆς χάριτος (Acts 18:27), describing Apollos's ministry in Achaia, may offer a remarkable parallel to Peter's conclusion if, as proximity suggests, the prepositional phrase accompanies the participle. It is also possible in that context for διὰ τῆς χάριτος to qualify συνεβάλετο and to point out the reason for Apollos's usefulness--he had (the gift of) grace. If this were the meaning, though, the use of the articular noun would be unusual. See Haenchen (529) for a conspectus of scholarly opinion.

4:4; 8:12; 10:44). A further consideration is that the same correlation is made with reference to the Gentiles at the beginning of Peter's speech. It seems a plausible assumption, given the theme of parity running through verses 7-11, that the speech could end similarly to the way it began: that through the proclamation of the gospel the Jewish Christians, like Cornelius and his household, had come to faith so as to be saved.

The significance of the evidence is plain and important. Lukan usage, while resembling Pauline meaning, disallows the χάρις-νόμος dichotomy which the soteriological language in verse 11 and the reference to the law in verse 10 are generally assumed to support. Quite simply the antithesis with the law as an unnecessary aspect of the Christian experience is missing not only because of the meaning of ζυγός but also because of the sense of χάρις. A contrast still exists--the law which did not bring salvation versus faith (in Jesus) effected by the apostolic preaching which did bring salvation--but it is not the expected polarization; and it is important to note that the fulcrum of the contrast is the way of salvation.

Certain criticisms can be levelled against this explanation. First, even if χάρις denotes the apostolic proclamation, the possibility of the prepositional phrase qualifying σωθῆναι is not excluded. Admittedly the sense would be awkward--"We have faith so as to be saved through the proclamation of the gospel"--but it is not impossible. Acts 11:14 states that salvation was brought about by the apostolic proclamation, ἐν οἷς σωθήσῃ being the equivalent of δι' ὧν σωθήσῃ (cf. 4:9, 12). Probably, since salvation in 15:11 is considered the purpose or the result of believing, the distinction is no more than academic; and ἐν οἷς σωθήσῃ in 11:14 can actually strengthen our proposed interpretation of διὰ τῆς χάριτος...σωθῆναι.

Whether the prepositional phrase modifies the finite or the infinite verb aside, a more serious difficulty is that χάρις could bear the meaning of Luke's source and therefore may have a Pauline sense, referring to God's unmerited favour which was displayed through Jesus and which brought the justification which the law did not. In 1 Cor 15:11 Paul insists that his gospel is the same as that preached by Peter and the other

apostles.[210] This is a fair comment which defies conclusive refutation, especially since τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ could be epexegetical, "the grace, that is, Jesus", and since it is hard to determine, without a literary parallel, when it is the author and when it is the source to the fore. Yet 1 Peter shows, if the epistle may be admitted as evidence of Peter's thinking, that while there is a closeness to Pauline thought, there is no specific link of grace and justification; χάρις is virtually equivalent to the salvation which is ready to be revealed at the last time (cf. *Did.* 10:6).[211]

2.3. *Summary*

With this evidence we may now return to and sum up, first, the significance of νῦν οὖν τί πειράζετε τὸν θεόν and then that of Peter's argument at the council in light of what Acts 10:1-11:18 records about the opening of the door of salvation to the Gentiles.

As the pivotal point in Peter's argument, the rhetorical question of 15:10 draws a conclusion regarding the demands of the Pharisaic Jewish Christians on the basis of the Gentiles' and Jews' experiences of salvation. Since the Jewish Christians had received salvation because they had faith and, as the positioning of verse 10 in the flow of the argument would lead us to infer, not because they possessed by virtue of birth the law and since the Gentiles had been cleansed in their hearts likewise by faith, Peter reasons that to insist on further requirements for the Gentiles was to challenge God's actions on two accounts: (1) it meant to annul what God himself had sanctioned to be the practice for the Gentiles; (2) it contradicted the Jewish believers' own experience of salvation. So far as the receiving of salvation was concerned, it appears that keeping the law was to be regarded as a trivial difference between Jews and Gentiles.

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[210]Bruce (Greek) 294; cf. Knowling 320.

[211]Χάρις in 1 Peter is salvation given through Christ, announced by the prophets (1:10), the future revelation of which determines conduct and hope (1:13; cf. 3:7; 4:10); it permits endurance of suffering to be understood as approved by God (2:19; cf. 5:10). Thus, Esser, *NIDNTT* 2:123; cf. J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and of Jude* (1969) 66-67. Interestingly, E. G. Selwyn (*The First Epistle of St. Peter* [1946], 33-36), who summarizes the parallels between 1 Peter and Peter's speeches in Acts and concludes that the connection is not literary but historical, does not cite Acts 15:11. F. J. A. Hort (*The First Epistle of St Peter* I.1-II.17 [1898] 49), however, understands χάρις in 1 Pet 1:10 primarily as "the favour shown in the admission of the Gentiles into the covenant" and sees a striking example of this sense in Acts 11:23 and *perhaps* 13:43; 14:3; 18:27; and 20:24.

Thus, given that each of Peter's comments probably refers at least indirectly to the Judaizers' demand, it is possible to say that in his response to the question "What conditions does a person need to fulfil in order to be saved", Peter develops from personal experience the thesis that the Jewish law is not salvific but faith is. He argues implicitly, by stressing in each instance the centrality of faith in Jesus, that neither the absence of circumcision precluded the Gentiles from salvation nor did the presence of the law bring the experience of salvation to the Jewish nation. Faith is the fulcrum of the various events in the experience of salvation, both prerequisite and subsequent: it is brought about by the apostolic preaching; it is the means by which God's impartiality is extended to all peoples; it is the presupposition of God's bestowal of the Spirit.

When viewed in light of the events recorded in Acts 10:1-11:18, Peter's argument leaves critical loose ends. The most obvious concerns the force of the law apart from its relevance for salvation. The criteria for divine acceptance in 10:35, fearing God and doing what is right, specify a connection with the will of God expressed through his covenant, possibly even with the observance of the law, the ritual prescriptions as well as the ethical. This connection is heightened by the fact that salvation came to the uncircumcised through the circumcised and by the fact that prior to his conversion Cornelius had manifested a piety based on the principles and practices of Judaism, albeit without full observance of the cultic dimension. In chapter 15 reference is made to the Jewish Christians' part in relaying the news of salvation to the Gentiles, but the Gentiles' own link with God's covenant with Israel is overlooked. Instead, the suggestion is left that in Peter's mind at least faith has restricted, perhaps displaced the importance of φοβούμενος αὐτὸν καὶ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην, at least insofar as salvation and the Gentiles are concerned. Could this suggest, further, in retrospect that the criteria in Acts 10 are now considered to cancel each other out?

In a similar vein is the question mark which hangs over God's act of cleansing. Besides the imprecision regarding the time of cleansing, it is curious that in 15:7-11 no explicit mention is made of the vision in which God showed and declared all things clean and acceptable. Instead, the cleansing of status in terms of the law which applies

to all Gentiles and which in turn ultimately implies a dramatic alteration of the law, even the abrogation of the law, becomes a cleansing of the heart in terms of faith which concerns the individual. Is the change merely the product of the argument or is there a theological significance? Is the thought that the implications of the vision had not been fully comprehended--a thought which seems to be anticipated in the dramatic effect of the gift of the Spirit to the uncircumcised--being confirmed?

There is the more general subject on which Peter's experiences and his argument leave the reader in suspense: the relation of Israel, the Gentiles, and the people of God. It is obvious that the prerogative of Israel has been extended to the Gentiles and that the gospel has been proclaimed to the Gentiles through the Jewish Christians. It is evident, too, that the Jewish Christians and Gentile converts are considered equals. Both exhibit faith in Jesus and possess the Spirit. Both come to salvation through faith. But, bringing these two points together, how is the privileged position of Israel as God's chosen people to be squared with the fact that God does not have favourites but accepts those from every nation provided they obey him and believe his revelation in Jesus? Or to state the question in another way, if God has accepted the Gentiles without circumci – sion and showed that they belong in the same way as Jewish believers, has the concept of the Christian community as the people of God changed?

CHAPTER II. BARNABAS AND PAUL

Peter's argument that the law is unnecessary for salvation is followed in Acts 15:12 by Barnabas's and Paul's contribution to the debate. Luke's report of their speech is very brief, indeed, merely a statement that Barnabas and Paul spoke of the signs and wonders which God had done among the Gentiles through them. Such conciseness is an astonishing and puzzling feature of the narrative to which we will return later. It is also notable that Barnabas and Paul are depicted as present at the council. In one sense their attendance is not surprising--at least for Luke--for it was their opposition to the Judaizing position being promulgated in Antioch which led to the gathering in Jerusalem, and it would be only natural to expect them to defend themselves. In another sense, though, the apostles' presence at the council is crucial not only for the verdict of the council but also for the role of the Antioch church. We will look briefly at Barnabas's and Paul's link with the Antioch church and at the significance of Paul's "first missionary journey" for that connection, before turning to the apostles' argument in 15:12.

1. Barnabas, Paul, and the Church at Antioch

Strikingly absent in name from the council debate are the Hellenists, the Greek-speaking Jewish Christians from the diaspora[1] who, according to Luke, influence the

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[1]The identity of the Ἑλληνισταί mentioned in 6:1 and 9:29 (but probably not in 11:20 [see n. 6 below]) has been the subject of much dispute. For a conspectus of scholarly opinion and the relevant arguments, see M. Hengel, "Between Jesus and Paul. The 'Hellenists', the 'Seven' and Stephen (Acts 6.1-15; 7.54-8.3)" (1975), in *Between Jesus and Paul. Studies in the Earliest History of Christianity* (ET 1983) 4-11. The growing consensus is that in distinction from Jews who spoke Aramaic (or Hebrew) as their mother tongue and who also knew some Greek (called the Ἑβραῖοι), the word designates Jews from the diaspora lands who spoke Greek and understood little or no Aramaic (C. F. D. Moule, "Once More, Who Were the Hellenists?", *ExpTim* 70 [1958-59] 100-2; he is followed by, for instance, Hengel ["Between Jesus and Paul" 11]).

theological and sociological development of the primitive church quite significantly.[2] Stephen, presumably the principal member of the Hellenist Christian community in Jerusalem (6:5, 8), makes the first incisive attack on Jewish institutionalism in the light of the true will of God revealed in Jesus (Acts 7). Philip, another of the leading Hellenists, not Peter, is in the strict sense the first preacher to the non-Jews: he preaches in Samaria (8:4-13) and among the presumed converts is the sorcerer Simon Magus, who was not an orthodox Samaritan;[3] he explains the way of salvation to the Ethiopian eunuch and baptizes him (8:26-39) although the official's relation to Judaism would have also been suspect.[4] It is the Hellenists, scattered by the persecution in Jerusalem which followed the preaching and martyrdom of Stephen (cf. 8:1),[5] who in Antioch tell the good news about Jesus first to the Jews (11:19) and then to the Greeks,

[2]Barrett ("Apostles" 20-21) can serve to represent those scholars who have noted the omission. Generally attention concentrates on Titus, who is mentioned in Gal 2:1 but remarkably nowhere in Acts. The reasons proposed for Luke's treatment of Titus are no more than conjectures. Ramsay (*St. Paul* 390), for one, suggests that Titus may have been Luke's relative; J. B. Lightfoot ("The Mission of Titus to the Corinthians" [1855], in *Biblical Essays* [1893] 281-82) solves the difficulty by denying that Titus was important enough to deserve mention.

[3]Simon's grandiloquent title, "The Great Power", whatever it means, points sufficiently to his non-Jewish status.

[4]If סריס/εὐνοῦχος denotes merely a high ranking military or political official with no sexual impairment (J. Schneider, "εὐνοῦχος", *TDNT* 2:766), the Ethiopian may have been a proselyte (Wilson, *Gentiles* 171; Longenecker 363; cf. Haenchen 303-4): he was cognizant of the OT and had been to Jerusalem for worship (8:27-28). However, it is more likely that he was a eunuch who was barred, because of his disability, from full participation in Judaism (Deut 23:1; cf. Isa 56:4-5) but who served God to the best of his ability as a "God-fearer" (Schneider, *TDNT* 2:768 n. 26; Bruce [NIC] 186-87; Marshall 162).

That Luke leaves the reader in some doubt about the Ethiopian's relation to Judaism when he could have used the term proselyte or God-fearer and that he also avoids the designation "Gentile" are thought-provoking. I disagree with Wilson (*Gentiles* 172) that the vagueness need be the result of insufficient information. Nor must the story be simply an innocuous bridge to future pericopes. It could be intended to show, on the one hand, that historically the Hellenists, rather than Peter, took the lead in evangelizing the Gentiles and, on the other, that for Luke's purposes the conversion of Cornelius to Christianity (and of Peter to the acceptability of uncircumcised Gentile believers) required more attention.

[5]Acts 8:1b, c is not easily interpreted. Who exactly was expelled from Jerusalem? If the persecution concerned the whole Christian community except the apostles, it seems strange that the ones in leadership would be exempt. Probably, given the immediately preceding narratives, Luke's often hyperbolic use of πᾶς, the reference in 9:26-30 to the existence of a full-scale church, and the broader context of Luke's presentation, we can legitimately presume that the persecution came from the same group as instigated the attack on Stephen and therefore was directed mostly against Stephen's associates in the church (M. Hengel, *Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity* [ET 1979] 74-75 and "Between Jesus and Paul" 24-25; F. V. Filson, *Three Crucial Decades. Studies in the Book of Acts* [1963] 62-64; contra G. W. H. Lampe, *St. Luke and the Church of Jerusalem* [1969] 20-21, although earlier Lampe [782a] took the other position).

that is, the Gentiles[6] (11:20). They had as legitimate a right as Peter or Barnabas and Paul or even James had to be present.

On the basis of Acts the Hellenists are seemingly present, represented by Barnabas and Paul.[7] This connection between the Greek-speaking Jewish Christians, on the one hand, and Paul and Barnabas, on the other, is presented to the reader by means of their common involvement in the development of the Antioch church. Paul joins Barnabas in contributing to the Christian witness in Antioch founded by the Hellenists (11:22-26). The two men serve the church not only as teachers (11:26b; 13:1). They also convey to Jerusalem the Antioch believers' collection for famine relief (11:29-30; 12:25), are commissioned by the church there for missionary work (13:3), and return at the end of the journey to report to the church that had sent them out (14:27-28). 15:2-3 does not quite prove but it does imply that Paul and Barnabas were appointed to represent the Antioch community in Jerusalem, and the suggestion is strengthened by the comment that the apostles return to Antioch to stay when their business in Jerusalem is concluded (15:30, 35). The foundation for this connection has been carefully laid when Paul is introduced into the story at Stephen's death (7:58b; 8:1a), and his persecution of Christians is linked in some way with the execution (8:3; cf. 9:1-3; 22:4-5) and appears to concern the Hellenist believers specifically.[8] At 22:20 Paul recalls his presence at Stephen's martyrdom. In its immediate context the recollection suggests that the event has had a profound psychological effect on the zealous Pharisee, possibly paving the way for his conversion. It is also among the Hellenist community in Jerusalem that the recently-converted Paul seeks to work when he returns

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[6]Whether Ἕλληνας (p^{74} ℵ^{c} A D*) or Ἑλληνιστάς (B D^{c} E Ψ 𝔐) is taken as the original, the contrast with Ἰουδαίοις (11:19) makes it difficult to understand those referred to as anything other than Gentiles. The above definition of Ἑλληνισταί (see n. 1 above) would indicate that Ἕλληνες fits the linguistic requirement better (thus also Hengel, "Between Jesus and Paul" 8 and Longenecker 400; contra Nestle-Aland[26]). Metzger (387-89) and Ropes (3:106), to name only two, define Ἑλληνισταί differently and believe it to be the original term.

[7]Whether this is also the historical explanation has been questioned by Barrett ("Apostles" 20). He notes that the Hellenists are not mentioned in Gal 2:1-10 either and suggests that the historical answer may well be stated in 8:1: the Hellenists were no longer in Jerusalem and could not be summoned. However, 9:28-29 may point to the accuracy of Paul's connection with the Hellenists (see also the bibliography in nn. 8, 9).

[8]Hengel, *Acts* 74, 77.

to the city (9:28-29), perhaps because he, too, came from this sociological group.[9] We have also seen that in 15:3 the Christian communities in Samaria and Phoenicia, which were established by the Hellenists (11:19) as well as by Peter and John (8:25), rejoice at Paul's news of the Gentiles' conversion to Christianity. Such evidence makes a good case for the probability that for Luke, at least, the Hellenists prepare the way for and participate in the law-free gospel expounded by Paul.

A discussion of the theology and practices of the Hellenist Christians would exceed the tolerable limits of the present investigation. It is sufficient and necessary to note, though, that the close association of this group with Barnabas and Paul seems to weld two possibly distinct strands of early Christian proclamation, presenting the strands apparently as identical at least in Acts 15 (if not earlier) and at least insofar as the way of salvation is concerned,[10] and that the point of contact for Acts 15 is the Antioch church. Antioch, the daughter church, and thus Paul and Barnabas as its representatives stand for a different evangelistic tradition: one which in a sense was born out of differences with the Palestinian Jews and Jewish Christians, which was almost from its inception actively engaged in preaching to those outside orthodox Judaism, and which envisaged and practised the seemingly improbable amalgamation of Jewish and Gentile believers.

2. Paul's Exhortation at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:38-39)

The impact of the Antioch evangelistic tradition on the council appears to be anticipated, in 15:3, when Paul and Barnabas on their way to Jerusalem tell to the Christian communities in Samaria and Phoenicia the news of the Gentiles' conversion

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[9]M. Hengel, "The Origins of the Christian Mission" (1971), in *Between Jesus and Paul. Studies in the Earliest History of Christianity* (ET 1983) 53-54; "Between Jesus and Paul" 18. The suggestion reappears in 21:8, 16.

[10]Hengel maintains (a) that Paul explicates and develops the work of Stephen and the Hellenists, drawing the ultimate theological consequences of the Hellenists' criticism of the cultic and ritual parts of the law to the point that "God's eschatological revelation in Christ once and for all excluded the law as a way of salvation" and (b) that Paul's reflection on the whole law forced him to part from Jewish Hellenistic Christianity after the council (Hengel, *Acts* 122; cf. "Origins" 56). Hengel arrives at this interpretation in part by divorcing the accusations levelled against Stephen in 6:11, 13-14 from Stephen's speech, seeing the latter as only accentuating the former (Hengel, "Between Jesus and Paul" 19). Barrett ("Apostles" 24-25) disagrees: he understands the Hellenist Christians to be *liberal* Jews who have become Christians; Paul has taken the more dramatic and revolutionary step, emerging from *orthodox*, *Pharisaic* Judaism to become a Christian.

and, in 14:27, when Paul and Barnabas report to the Antioch believers the events occurring on the journey to Asia Minor which had been commissioned in Antioch. More precisely, according to 14:27, Paul's and Barnabas's journey signified that God had created the opportunity for the Gentiles to respond to the gospel and be part of the people of God.[11] Given the virtual synonymity between ὁ θεός... ἤνοιξεν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν θύραν πίστεως in 14:27 and τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὁ θεὸς τὴν μετάνοιαν εἰς ζωὴν ἔδωκεν in 11:18, Paul's mission and Antioch's acceptance of it are set in parallel with Peter's mission to an uncircumcised Roman centurion and Jerusalem's acceptance of it. It is natural therefore not only to inquire about the events that the Antioch church endorsed but also to ask in what sense, if any, Barnabas's and Paul's preaching or mission was distinctive from that which preceded it. Does the comment in 14:27 represent a new stage in the Christian mission?

An answer to this question could draw attention to Paul's comments, first in 13:40-41 based on Hab 1:5 and then in 13:46-47 based on Isa 49:6 and, for reference, to similar statements issued in Corinth (18:6) and Rome (28:25-28); and stress could be laid on the extent of the apostolic proclamation. By this we mean not merely the geographical expansion of the gospel to other cities in the Jewish diaspora; more critical are the twinned acts of Paul's denunciation of the Jews for rejecting the gospel and his evangelization of Gentiles who were not only not circumcised but also apparently had no prior affiliation with the synagogue. This indeed is a dramatic turn of events in the Christian mission. It perhaps expounds and ratifies the earlier hint, in 11:19-20, that similar missionary practices occurred in Antioch. It sets the pattern for Paul's future ministry and no doubt gave much cause for concern particularly in the Jerusalem church. We will cite an aspect of these events in our discussion of Paul's and Barnabas's speech at the assembly. The rest will be left to those whose interest is the

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[11]In 14:27 πίστεως, which denotes Christianity in sum, may be an objective ("door leading to faith") or a subjective ("door where faith leads") genitive (Moulton 3:212). Probably both ideas are involved: God has given the Gentiles access to true piety (cf. BAGD, s.v. πίστις 2dα) and thereby the Gentiles have access to God himself (Haenchen 420 n. 6).

motive for the mission to the Gentiles.[12] While that issue, to be sure, touches on our own, our primary concern is the requirements for salvation.

In this regard Acts 13-14 has only one direct statement. Paul's speech to the Jews and God-fearing Gentiles in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch ends with the words "Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through this person [i.e. Jesus] forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Through him [Jesus] everyone who believes is justified from everything from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses" (13:38-39). Central to this peroration is the fact of Jesus the Messiah divinely appointed to bring salvation to Israel, which Paul has argued in the earlier part of his speech, and its relation to salvation. The emphatic parallel phrases διὰ τούτου (v. 38)[13] and ἐν τούτῳ (v. 39) make plain that by means of Jesus comes salvation, salvation in this case being defined with respect to the forgiveness of sins (ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν, v. 38) and an acquittal which restores the right relationship with God (δικαιοῦται, v. 39).[14]

The gist of the sentence is clear enough after the convoluted grammatical structure is sorted out:[15] the salvific efficacy of Jesus surpasses that of Moses's law.

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[12]Indeed, this question and the comments in 13:46-47; 18:6; and 28:25-28, especially the last with its citation of Isa 6:9-10, have structured most of the current discussion on the relation of Luke and his community to the Jew-Gentile dialogue. For bibliography see Introduction n. 2. Earlier discussions of the "programmatic" statements include Jervell, "Divided People" esp. 60-64; Wilson, *Gentiles* 222-33; and Nolland, "Luke's Readers" 103-28. One remark may be pertinent. Except for the citation of Isa 6:9-10, Paul's mission in Rome is no different from his missions elsewhere; the denouncing of the Jews and the turning to the Gentiles occurred in Pisidian Antioch and Corinth and is implied to have happened in Thessalonica (17:4-5) and Ephesus (19:8-9). The inclusion of Isa 6:9-10 in the last episode could reflect the fact that in Luke's time the conversation between Jews and Gentiles was less active; but the dialogue between Justin and Trypho shows that the conversation has not ceased.

[13]"Through this man" (ℵ A B^3 C D) is more appropriate in light of v. 39 than διὰ τοῦτο ("for this reason") occurring in p^{74} B* 36 (1175) *al.*

[14]The meaning of δικαιόω is somewhat niggling. Luke uses the verb very rarely and nowhere else in a Christian setting (cf. Luke 7:29, 35; 10:29; 16:15; 18:14), so that it is hard to develop a specific meaning. The best parallel to the usage in Acts 13:38-39 seems to be Luke 18:14 (the ἀπό qualifying ἐδικαιώθη in Luke 7:35 expresses agency, not motion from). Probably a forensic sense--"could not be justified from... is justified"--with its Pauline nuance is intended (BAGD, s.v. δικαιόω 3a; NEB; NIV) as it is in the δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας of Rom 6:7 (cf. C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* [1975-79] 1:311 n. 1). Thus, the translation "is freed from" (RSV), though true in part (the justified person ought to be in the process of realizing his freedom from sin [C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* {1957} 125]), is misleading in the immediate context. Παρὰ θεῷ in D adds the idea of "the ultimate standard--the purity of the divine life and the clarity of the divine vision--by which all aspects of thought and conduct... should now be assessed and will in the end be judged" (Harris, *NIDNTT* 3:1202).

[15]D adds, among other words, καὶ μετάνοιαν after the καταγγέλλεται in v. 38, omits the following καί, and thus draws ἀπὸ πάντων...δικαιωθῆναι to the last part of v. 38 rather than to v. 39. As a result the contrast between Jesus and the law as the means of justification is softened.

The grammar, though, opens the way for the comparison to have two different interpretations. P. Vielhauer,[16] resurrecting a position put forward during the past century,[17] maintains that verses 38-39 refer to a partial justification, that is, the law provides justification from some things whereas the gospel does from others. This interpretation can be faulted.[18] In the first place it contradicts the whole thrust of Luke's theology of salvation which is well summed up in Acts 4:12--salvation is possible only through Jesus--and which is implied in the πάντων and πᾶς of 13:38-39--through Jesus all sinners are absolved of all their sins. Moreover, it jars with the immediate context, for at the climax of an argument concerning the significance of Jesus we would most naturally expect a complete and not a partial claim for the power of the gospel.[19] A further consideration, if the words may be said to reproduce Pauline soteriology and they do seem to provide the clearest parallel in all of Luke's writing,[20] is that Paul's epistles locate justification solely in Jesus (e.g. Gal 2:16; Rom 3:20-22). The better sense of the contrast is that Paul is making a total claim for the power of the gospel over against the law.[21]

This denunciation of the law does not imply that the law has been abrogated or that it has no relevance for Jewish or Christian piety. Paul's statement is made--and the point needs to be emphasized--solely with reference to the Christian view of salvation;

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[16]Vielhauer, "'Paulinism'" 41-43.

[17]Often B. W. Bacon (*The Story of St. Paul. A Comparison of Acts and Epistles* [1905] 103 n) and A. Harnack (*The Date of the Acts and of the Synoptic Gospels* [ET 1911] 67-68) are cited although the idea is traced back to 1846 by P. H. Menoud ("Justification by Faith According to the Book of Acts" (1970), in *Jesus Christ and the Faith. A Collection of Studies* [ET 1978] 211).

[18]Without adopting the interpretation himself, Bruce ([NIC] 278) seeks to save it by observing "that Moses' law makes hardly any provision for the remission of sins committed 'with a high hand'"; these received nothing but the full penalty (Num 15:30-36). The argument, thus, is that Jesus assures justification from all sins, even the most deliberate. Such a rescue attempt is forced and misleading.

[19]Bruce (Greek) 271.

[20]Most would agree that vv. 38-39 reflect Pauline thought, but to what extent is disputed. Menoud ("Justification" 210-17) outlines the three main positions: (a) Luke did not understand Paul's proclamation of justification by faith and has seriously altered Paul's ideas (e.g. Vielhauer, "'Paulinism'" 42-43 and others adopting the idea of partial justification); (b) Luke has only a somewhat hazy recollection of Paul's idea of justification (e.g. Wilckens, *Missionsreden* 217; Bauernfeind 177; Haenchen 396); (c) Luke not only knows that justification by faith is a specifically Pauline expression but is also acquainted with other aspects of Paul's theology and has correctly applied from tradition the distinctives of that theology (e.g. Menoud, "Justification" 213-17; Bruce [Greek] 271). Menoud's arguments--that Rom 1:3-4; 1 Thess 1:10; and 1 Cor 15:3-11 offer traditional parallels to the speech in Acts 13--are, I think, convincing.

[21]Cf. Bauernfeind 177; Haenchen 396; Bruce (Greek) 271; and Wilson, *Law* 59, to name a few. Menoud's conclusion is apt: "In short, it is difficult to see how Luke could assign to Paul a theory of salvation which is neither Pauline nor Lucan" (Menoud, "Justification" 212).

he is urging his listeners to repent (cf. vv. 40-41). The words simply connote that the law is an inadequate vehicle of salvation.[22]

Salvation therefore according to Paul in Acts 13:38-39 and, by inference, according to the Antioch church which endorses Paul's ministry, is by means of Jesus without reference to the law. This is a new feature in Luke's narrative to date. To be sure, the thought surfaces in Peter's argument at the council, in the sense that neither the absence nor the presence of the law had influenced, respectively, the Gentiles' or the Jews' experience of salvation. But the episodes in Acts prior to chapter 13, most significantly that of chapter 10, represent situations in which people who are acceptable to God have fulfilled the requirements of fearing God and doing what was right, i.e. have had a connection of some kind with the law. Cornelius, too, Peter's implicit example at the council, attained salvation in Christ in part by way of Judaism.[23] Paul in 13:38-39, though, sees all men, irrespective of their works, as equally in need of justification through Jesus.

The salvation referred to here has two other characteristics which we have alluded to in passing but which should be underlined. First, salvation is not unconditional. Only those who believe in Jesus (πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων) can be put in the right with God. Thus, Jesus is not only the means of salvation, he is also the basis; he *is* salvation. Second, salvation is universal. Significant in this regard is the contrast between the second person οὐκ ἠδυνήθητε ἐν νόμῳ (v. 38) and the third person ἐν τούτῳ πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων δικαιοῦται (v. 39):[24] Paul's synagogue audience composed (however the vocatives in verses 16 and 26 are interpreted[25]) of persons intent on observing the law

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[22]Cf. Wilson, *Law* 59, 61. Compare, for example, the thought of *2 Apoc.Bar.* 51.3, where God is represented as speaking of "the glory of those who have now been justified in My Law".

[23]Concerning Cornelius, van Unnik ("Acts X 4" 258) states, rightly I think, "*Here a Gentile who sought the God of the Covenant and observed His will, but was excluded from the Old Covenant, becomes a member of the New Covenant* " (italics van Unnik's). Probably this explanation applies as well in the case of the Ethiopian eunuch (see n. 4 above). As for Simon Magus, whether his conversion was genuine is debatable. Luke never says that he repented. D adds to 8:24 "who did not stop weeping copiously" (though compare *Clem.Hom.* 20.21; *Clem.Recogn.* 10.63, where the tears are interpreted as tears of rage and disappointment); yet the reader is left with the comment that Simon asks the apostles to pray for him although Peter had exhorted Simon himself to pray for repentance.

[24]Bauernfeind 177.

[25]See Appendix.

offsets both the circumcised and the uncircumcised gaining salvation through faith in Jesus only.

3. The Argument at the Council (Acts 15:12)

Barnabas's and Paul's actual contribution to the council's debate is, as we have said, a report of the miracles and signs happening among the Gentiles. More precisely, the record of this report in 15:12 is a summary which brings out three points quite clearly: (1) miracles and signs happened among the Gentiles (σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν); (2) God was responsible for these miraculous events (ὅσα ἐποίησεν ὁ θεός); (3) Barnabas and Paul served only as God's instruments (δι' αὐτῶν). Further, by inference from Barnabas's and Paul's opposition, in verse 2, to the Judaizers' demand, the statement argues that since the work of these apostles involved uncircumcised Gentiles and since God, by performing miracles, had demonstrated his approval of the work, there was no reason for Gentiles to be circumcised and keep the law in order to be saved; obviously God did not require this.

3.1. *The puzzle*

This contribution to the debate provokes thought concerning what is not said. At face value the summary does not exactly address the subject of the debate. Whereas Barnabas and Paul speak of a mission to the Gentiles and God's authorization of that mission, the question being disputed by the apostolic gathering concerns the way to membership in the people of God; Barnabas's and Paul's report comments on this issue only in a roundabout way inferred by the reader. Such indirectness contrasts with the very direct approach to the problem contained in Peter's and James's contributions.

The difference between the three responses would not be overly remarkable were it not for the way in which Paul's and Barnabas's journey is highlighted in 14:27 as the opening of the door of faith to the Gentiles. There are other suggestive features in the narrative of Acts 15. In general verse 12 does not say much more than what Barnabas and Paul are reported as telling the Jerusalem community when they first arrived in the city from Antioch (v. 4b); indeed, ὅσα ὁ θεὸς ἐποίησεν δι' αὐτῶν and

variants appear to be Luke's way of capturing the essence of and of justifying Paul's apostolic activity (cf. 14:27; 21:19).[26] Moreover, given its three-point emphasis, the argument in verse 12 is in some ways assumed in Peter's speech. Peter likewise stresses that God had initiated the mission to the Gentiles and that he was only God's instrument (v. 7; cf. v. 14); and seemingly, as Peter's argument most certainly refers to his meeting with Cornelius, he also indicates that God granted supernatural occurrences in order to demonstrate his approval of pious but uncircumcised Gentiles.[27] A further consideration is the similarity of thought expressed by the editorial comments ἐσίγησεν δὲ πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος (v. 12) linking Peter's contribution and that of Barnabas and Paul and μετὰ δὲ τὸ σιγῆσαι αὐτούς (v. 13) connecting Barnabas's and Paul's report with James's speech: the result for the reader is the impression that verse 12 has been abruptly and deliberately inserted into the narrative.[28] This impression gains strength from the successive use of the relatively uncommon verb σιγάω[29] and from James's obvious reference to Peter (v. 14) but not to Barnabas and Paul.

Certainly the most conspicuous feature of the report by Barnabas and Paul is its conciseness: Luke produces an almost virtual silence on its contents. This is unusual for an author who makes Paul one of his heroes. It is even more remarkable for an author who in verses 1-5 gives considerable attention to the way the plot develops and who has in this detailed account of the background cast Paul and Barnabas among the

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[26]Acts 21:19, like 15:12, has ἐποίησεν *διά* (τῆς διακονίας αὐτοῦ) whereas 14:27 and 15:4 have ἐποίησεν *μετ'* (αὐτῶν). Probably the two phrases should be regarded as equivalent in meaning, both designating the accompanying circumstances of God's acts (on this aspect of the prepositions, see Harris, *NIDNTT* 3:1182-83). Ἐποίησεν μετ' has been regarded as translation Greek meaning "what God had done *to* (or *for*) them" and without the idea of cooperation or accompaniment (Torrey, *Composition* 38; cf. Moulton 2:466; BAGD, s.v. μετά AII1cγ; Lake and Cadbury 4:169). This may be the case in Luke 1:58, 72, where the cast of the whole phrase is Semitic; but it is questionable whether Acts 14:27 and 15:4 are examples of the same μετά (Moule 183-84; cf. Bruce [Greek] 286-87). In the Acts passages the emphasis seems to fall on God's acts rather than on his assistance. [αὐτῶν

[27]Through a vision a divine messenger directed Cornelius to send to Joppa for Peter (10:3-8, 30-33a); another vision, the large sheet descending from heaven and containing unclean animals, prepared Peter for his meeting with uncircumcised Gentiles (10:10-21, 28); the Spirit came dramatically upon the Gentiles, his presence being manifested, like at Pentecost, by the recipients speaking in tongues (10:44-45).

[28]Thus, R. Bultmann, "Zur Frage nach den Quellen der Apostelgeschichte", in FS T. W. Manson (1959) 72-73. Bultmann is replying to Haenchen's concern for authorial composition over against source criticism and to his too ready dismissal, in Bultmann's opinion, of historical content.

[29]Luke 9:36; 18:39; 20:26; Acts 12:17; 15:12, 13; cf. 13:41D; 21:40. Elsewhere in the NT the verb appears only four times (Rom 16:25; 1 Cor 14:28, 30, 34; cf. Rev 8:1).

principal actors. It was the willingness of these men to offer salvation to uncircumcised Gentiles without demanding as well circumcision and obedience to Moses's law and their insistence that these matters were unnecessary for salvation that had led to the Judaizers' appearance in Antioch and had precipitated the ensuing controversy and strife which caused a contingent from the Antioch church, including Paul and Barnabas, to seek the opinion of the church leaders in Jerusalem.

These observations invite speculation that Acts 15:12 is an example of editorial licence, Luke either conflating two different traditions, a Jerusalem source (Peter and James) and an Antioch source (Barnabas and Paul), or, as is the consensus among scholars today, having inserted the statement himself. The implications of this assessment of the evidence are critical: on the one hand, Paul could not have been involved in formulating the apostolic decree; on the other, Luke appears to have misrepresented Paul and the events of the assembly. It becomes important, therefore, to ask--whether Paul's part in the debate presented in Acts 15:12 be historical or not (and the more so if it is historical)--what Luke may intend here.

3.2. *Some proposed answers*

One explanation of what Paul's and Barnabas's brief contribution to the debate is meant to show comes from the similarity between their argument and Peter's. As we have mentioned, God also demonstrated his approval of Peter's Gentile mission by the supernatural events in the story of Cornelius which formed the basis of Peter's speech. This suggests that a report of similar acts occurring in the ministry of Barnabas and Paul was calculated to drive home Peter's argument. Viewed in such terms, the report of the two apostles could be a claim that their ministry with the Gentiles was no different from Peter's with Cornelius, the more so since Peter's encounter with Cornelius and Paul's and Barnabas's journey to Asia Minor yield the same result, namely, that God had given the Gentiles the opportunity for salvation (11:18; 14:27).

There is no doubt that Luke throughout Acts aims to parallel the ministries of Peter and of Paul, thereby asserting the equality of their apostolicity; however, in the immediate context it is not wise to pursue this theme. Σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα (and the

converse) is a common Old Testament expression meaning "miracles".[30] In Acts,[31] the words describe supernatural phenomena, healings, and exorcisms, results of the Spirit's presence; but they are never used of the sending of the Spirit.[32] And it is the gift of the Spirit upon the Gentiles which Peter appeals to during the Jerusalem debate (15:8). Such linguistic usage points out that the two arguments are in fact quite different--Peter states, among other things, that the Gentiles possess the same confirmation of salvation as the Jews, i.e. the Holy Spirit; Barnabas and Paul, that supernatural events show God's approval of the Gentiles--and that the argument concerning miracles is not intended to reinforce Peter's argument.

E. Haenchen[33] remarks that Luke, as a Gentile Christian lacking Paul's critical theological understanding of the law, is forced to justify the mission to the Gentiles by miracles. Lurking behind this comment is the opinion that Luke has portrayed Paul incorrectly as the great miracleworker since Paul himself did not see the essential of his apostolate in this way. Haenchen's perspective is, as Barrett has pointed out,[34] hardly fair to Luke, who has included in his account of the debate a number of arguments against the Judaizers' criticism of uncircumcised Gentiles: Peter's pragmatic argument that the Gentiles were given the Holy Spirit just as the Jews were and his theological argument that the Jews themselves were saved like the Gentiles by faith and not by the law; the argument attributed to Barnabas and Paul that miracles prove God's approval and, therefore, the validity of the mission; and James's argument that Scripture gives a prophetic forecast of God's intention to make the Gentiles his people. Further, as the

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[30]E.g. Exod 7:3; Deut 6:22; 29:2(3); 34:11; Ps 134(135):9; Jer 39(32):20-21; Wis 8:8; 10:16; and Dan 6:28(27) θ´. Compare Polybius 3.112.18. See further O. Hofius and C. Brown, "Miracle/ σημεῖον", *NIDNTT* 2:627; K. H. Rengstorf, "σημεῖον", *TDNT* 7:221, cf. 240-43 and "τέρας", *TDNT* 8:122-23, cf. 125.

[31]For references see n. 41 below.

[32]That miraculous signs are the result of and not the same as the gift of the Spirit is demonstrated by Luke's use of δύναμις, a term which sometimes represents σημεῖον and τέρας (19:11; cf. Luke 10:13; 19:37) and at other times describes the means by which the apostles' (and Jesus') ministry of preaching and healing was accomplished (3:12; 4:7, 33; 10:38; esp. 6:8; cf. 8:10). This is the primary sense in Luke's Gospel (e.g. Luke 1:17; 4:36; 5:17). Acts 1:8 states that power (δύναμις) would come upon the disciples when they received the Holy Spirit and that as a consequence of this gift the disciples would become Jesus' witnesses.

[33]Haenchen 120-22. Similarly, A. Schlatter (185 n.*) maintains that Luke's presentation of Paul as a servant of Jesus rather than as a Christian philosopher determined Luke's choice of proof.

[34]Barrett, "Apostles" 19.

above discussion of 13:38-39 has shown, Luke is aware of Paul's position on law, justification, and faith, that a person was justified not by the law but by faith in Jesus. The ascription of this opinion to Paul gains significance when Luke's normally high view of the law is taken into consideration.

As for the apparent discrepancy between the picture of Paul in Acts and that in Paul's epistles, Paul does refer three times to the signs, including miracles, that accompany his apostolic labours--Rom 15:17-19; 2 Cor 12:12; and Gal 3:5 (a point Haenchen concedes in the case of 2 Cor 12:12).[35] The first two passages, one coming at the end of a long theological argument[36] and the other expressed in the context of folly,[37] indicate that miracles are for Paul, on occasion, an *ad hominem* argument and that they may not be as central to his concept of ministry as was his divine calling and his teaching. However, Gal 3:5 allows a different perspective. There the reference to miracles taking place among the uncircumcised Galatian believers appears, along with a reference to the Galatians' experience of the Spirit, at the start of a theological argument and serves to pave the way for undeniable proof that Paul's gospel, justification by faith, was superior to the Judaizers' position, justification by the law.[38] Moreover,

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[35]According to Haenchen (122), though, "diese Wunder waren so wenig außergewöhnlich, daß seine [Paulus'] Gegner ihm die Fähigkeit zum Wundertun einfach abgesprochen haben" [brackets mine].

[36]Paul intends the autobiographical comment of Rom 15:17-19 to corroborate his claim to a divine commission as the apostle of the Gentiles and, thus, to give the basis of his authority for writing to the Romans, a community which he had never visited, and to prepare the ground for a future visit (cf. 15:14-16, 23-24). The crucial phrase λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ, ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων, ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος can bear various interpretations, but it is probably best to explain "λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ as describing Paul's ministry by reference to the means by which it was being fulfilled and the two following phrases as further characterizing his ministry as both powerfully confirmed and attested by accompanying miracles and also accomplished as a whole in the power of the Holy Spirit" (Cranfield, *Romans* 2:759).

[37]In 2 Cor 12:12 τὰ σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου is to be distinguished from σημείοις which should be taken as a unit with τέρασιν and δυνάμεσιν and means miracles. The compound dative probably denotes accompaniment and should be connected with ἐν πάσῃ ὑπομονῇ or τὰ σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου. Paul, borrowing words that others have used, points out that the signs that mark an apostle were indeed performed among the Corinthians, making him no less than the super-apostles. The Corinthians just failed to recognize the signs. It was because the signs, unlike most miracles in the ancient world, were wrought with fortitude and humility in realization of the power of God that Paul was distinct from his opponents. See C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (1973) 321 and "Paul's Opponents in 2 Corinthians", *NTS* 17 (1971) 245; P. E. Hughes, *Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (1961) 458.

[38]The argument of Gal 3:5 may be paraphrased: "'Miracles' (δυνάμεις) can be named as evidence for the fact that the Spirit is 'at work' (ἐνεργῶν) among them. Consequently, God must now be at work among them" (H. D. Betz, *Galatians. A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* [1979] 135) even though the Galatian believers, being uncircumcised, are outside the Torah.

since miracles are divinely enacted deeds and since miracles accompany Paul's preaching, we may rightly ask whether the concomitance of divine acts and apostolic preaching is merely coincidental or indicative of a purpose. Two things show that the latter is the case. (1) Miracles are called not merely δυνάμεις, mighty works, but also σημεῖα, a term which basically denotes a confirmatory mark that is not an end in itself but points men beyond itself to a particular person or thing.[39] In this regard it is noteworthy that Luke generally avoids the more neutral term δυνάμεις (Acts 19:11; Luke 10:13; 19:37),[40] choosing instead σημεῖα (4:16, 22; 8:6) or, as in 15:12, the combination σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα (or vice versa).[41] (2) Miraculous signs are not distributed uniformly throughout the biblical account but are concentrated in periods when the divine plan required special manifestation.[42] Thus, when Paul refers to miracles accompanying his ministry he undoubtedly understands them also as a validation of his apostolic work; and, thus, in turn, an argument based on miracles could be original to Paul.[43] It is striking, nonetheless, that at the council Paul is assigned an argument which he appeals to so rarely in his epistles.[44] The explanation for this anomaly may well lie, as I believe, with the needs of Paul's audiences[45] rather than with Luke's misinterpretation or misunderstanding of the data; yet it is hard on the basis of Paul's epistles, which frequently treat, indeed, are instigated by problems of the Jew-Gentile

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[39]Rengstorf, *TDNT* 7:204-6, 219-21.

[40]For further discussion on Luke's use of δύναμις, see n. 32 above.

[41]Acts 2:43; 4:30; 5:12; 6:8; 7:36; 14:3; cf. 2:19. Compare δυνάμεσι καὶ τέρασι καὶ σημείοις in 2:22 and σημεῖα καὶ δυνάμεις in 8:13.

[42]Hofius and Brown, *NIDNTT* 2:627. In the OT miracles are largely grouped into three main periods--the redemption of the Israelites from Egypt and their establishment in Canaan, the conflict with pagan religion under Elijah and Elisha, and the time of Daniel during the exile. At each of these, the life-and-death struggle of the people of God putting God's saving power and will to the test was answered by God's action in abnormal events which were in themselves saving acts and pointers to a greater salvation. The same can be said of the coming of Jesus and the apostolic age.

[43]J. Jervell ("The Signs of an Apostle: Paul's Miracles" [1979], in *The Unknown Paul. Essays on Luke-Acts and Early Christian History* [ET 1984] 77-95, esp. 94-95) also discusses the alleged discrepancy between Paul the miracle worker in Acts and Paul in the Epistles. He reaches a conclusion similar to my own: instead of discrepancy there is agreement on the point that Paul's life and activity were surrounded by miracles, despite the greater quantity of miracles in Acts, and that the performance of miracles is an integral part of preaching the gospel; indeed for Paul miracles validate the gospel. Jervell goes as far to say that "miracles assume a central role in Paul's preaching, almost to a greater degree than in Acts" (p. 91).

[44]Cf. Barrett, "Apostles" 19. I differ from Barrett in that he does not believe Paul uses signs as validation of his work.

[45]There is probably as well a personal reluctance to exalt his apostolic endeavours, a reluctance stemming from the conviction that he was only a servant of Jesus Christ.

dialogue similar to those confronting the Jerusalem council, to imagine that Paul made this argument his *sole* contribution to the debate.[46] The likelihood of Lukan selectivity arises and invites further thought.

M. Dibelius[47] finds an answer to the astonishingly brief and apparently uninformative nature of verse 12 in the observation that God's acts through Paul and Barnabas have already been told in the Acts; thus, allusion is now sufficient. In other words, just as Peter's speech by interpreting the Cornelius incident refers the reader back to chapters 10-11, so the remark by Paul and Barnabas is meant like a footnote to send the reader to chapters 13-14. This explanation reflects Dibelius's general disregard for the historicity of the author's account and a consequent emphasis on the literary composition of the apostolic council, but there is truth in what he posits. In 14:3 Luke seemingly anticipates the apostles' argument at the council when he comments that the Lord confirmed their witness in Iconium by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders in the city.

There is a further attractiveness in this solution: the miracles which Luke mentions in Acts 13-14, of which there are manifestly two[48]--the blinding of Elymas, the Jewish sorcerer and false prophet, at Paphos on Cyprus (13:6-12) and the healing of the lame man at Lystra (14:8-18)--not only attest the power of God in Paul's work; they also apparently demonstrate that God had opened up the door of faith for the Gentiles (cf. 14:27) and serve to back up the significance of Paul's exhortation in 13:38-39 and of the Jews' rejection of the gospel (13:46-48), thereby suggesting that Luke is illustrating the next stage in the development of the church's mission. The conversion

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[46]This thought is developed by Bauernfeind (190-91). He believes that Paul must not only have spoken of the miracles but also have pointed out that faith only is required; however, for the greater part of Paul's audience the theological argument was unclear. It is the reference to the miracles which was understood and therefore remembered. Luke has followed these witnesses.

[47]Dibelius, "Council" 95-96.

[48]Possibly a third miracle occurs at the end of the account of the mission in Lystra (14:19-20). Paul's rapid recovery after he was left for dead (v. 19) is not said to be miraculous; yet Luke's graphic description ("after the disciples gathered around him, he got up", v. 20) does have the flavour of a miracle about it. The uncertainty, though, is sufficient reason to exclude the event from the following argument.

of the proconsul Sergius Paulus,[49] which resulted from the blinding of Elymas, is more than a Pauline counterpart of the Cornelius incident. Whereas the Roman centurion was a God-fearing man closely associated with Judaism and its institutions, whose good deeds and devotion to God were responsible for him hearing the gospel, the proconsul was a Gentile who had no prior relation (as far as we know) with orthodox Judaism and whose curiosity, possibly pricked by news of Paul's activity elsewhere in the city, led him to send for Paul. As for the miracle at Lystra, contrary to all previous occasions on this journey when the work of the missionaries began in the synagogue among Jews and Gentiles who already had some knowledge of God, there is no synagogue at Lystra, or at least no mention is made of one and the pagan flavour of the story suggests that if there was a synagogue it was not relevant;[50] the emphasis lies on the response of pure heathens to the gospel. Curiously, this story ends with no explicit mention of people converting to Christianity besides the man who was healed, if indeed ἔχει πίστιν τοῦ σωθῆναι (14:9) means that he was saved;[51] but reference is made in 14:20 to μαθηταί (a Lukan term for believers) gathering around Paul's body and in 16:2 to ἀδελφοί (another term for converts) in Lystra.

The attention given to the new circumstances surrounding the mission to the Gentiles may indicate that the stories of these miracles contain the theological exposition

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[49]What exactly the narrative in 13:12 means by ἐπίστευσεν is questioned. The verb could denote mere confidence in a wonder-worker, but Lukan usage indicates some connection with the act of salvation. W. M. Ramsay (*The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament* [1920] 164-68) rather pedantically delineates two stages in the process of salvation: belief and "turning to the Lord" of which the seal is baptism. Reference to one stage, says Ramsay, sometimes describes the whole process of conversion but not always. Here the absence of baptism is significant, and ἐπίστευσεν implies no more than intellectual belief resulting from amazement. Lake and Cadbury (4:147), also noting that there is no mention of baptism, propose that the missionaries "may have mistaken courtesy for conversion". These opinions are arbitrary and misleading. Baptism is mentioned nowhere in Acts 13-14; hence, the omission in 13:12 is scarcely determinative. Moreover, the preponderant occurrence of πιστεύω meaning "to trust in Jesus" would imply that Sergius Paulus became a Christian (thus, Haenchen 385; Bruce [NIC] 265).

[50]Archaeological evidence appears to support this inference. *CIJ* and *MAMA* list no reference to Lycaonia; nor does C. J. Hemer (in private conversation) have any independent knowledge of Jews in Lystra. At the same time, we must take into consideration ἐν τοῖς τόποις ἐκείνοις in Acts 16:3, which may refer to Jews living in Lystra, and the successfully mounted opposition against Paul by the Jews from Antioch and Iconium, which *may* presuppose a local Jewish population. Neither of these qualifications, though, is insuperable. Curiously, Ramsay (*St. Paul* 116), building on the ὑπάρχων ἐν φόβῳ added at various places in the Western texts of 14:8-9, identifies the lame man as a God-fearer (so also Blass according to Metzger [422]). Where the man may have learnt Judaism is not said.

[51]In the context of miracles (Luke 7:5; 8:36, 48, 50; 17:19; 18:42; Acts 4:9; 27:20, 21; cf. Luke 6:8; Acts 4:12) σῴζω primarily means "to rescue" in the bodily sense (in Acts 4:9 "to be healed"). Even so, there may be latent the thought of spiritual and moral rescue (thus, Bruce [Greek] 280-81).

lacking in Barnabas's and Paul's report to the council, namely, that God had initiated a new policy for evangelizing the Gentiles, that now, following on from the work begun in Antioch and from the Pisidian Jews' corporate rejection of the gospel, Gentiles could be met apart from any necessary common ground as supplied by the synagogue and could be offered a gospel that placed the circumcised and the uncircumcised on equal footing before God. It is probably wise, however, to back away from this idea. It is questionable whether Luke exhibits such subtlety and, thus, whether he has actually correlated the miracles as proof of God's power at work in the apostles and the new circumstances of the Gentiles to make a theological point. Further, if Luke can be subtle, that he has chosen not to bring out this theological point implies (1) that the point was not relevant or at least not central to his purpose in Acts 15:12 and (2) that the notion of Acts 15:12 serving as a reference to the miracles in chapters 13-14, while correct, is not the entire explanation.

There is another factor against treating the verse simply as a footnote. Luke unconcernedly repeats incidents, sometimes in great detail, not only for the sake of his readers but also, more importantly, for the sake of emphasis. A case in point is the story of Cornelius which, as we have seen, is told in Acts 10, repeated from Peter's perspective in 11:1-18, and discussed, again by Peter, with reference to its theological implications in 15:7-9. By chapter 15 the incident is not so fresh in the readers' minds as Paul's tour of Asia Minor would be; nevertheless, because Luke has emphasized Cornelius in this way, his readers would not have forgotten the incident and its ramifications entirely. Luke could have easily only mentioned the significance of the incident for the question under debate. That he does not suggests that he had a purpose which required giving some details of the story. This contrasts with how Luke treats Paul and Barnabas and leads us, without rejecting Dibelius's interpretation completely, to a possible explanation for what the brevity of Acts 15:12 may signify.

3.3. *An alternative*

I suggest that Acts 15:12 not only confirms Paul's and Barnabas's participation in the Jerusalem discussion but also shows Luke's deliberate intention, on the one hand,

to push Paul and Barnabas into the background at this point in the story and, on the other, to draw attention to the Jerusalem apostles, especially to Peter and James.[52] The result need not be an indication of historical unreliability or of a theological tendency. It can as readily be due to the desire to represent the attitude of the original apostles to the Gentile question. It is as if Luke is saying "of course Paul and the believers in Antioch approved of uncircumcised Gentiles, as you all know and I have already demonstrated; but the more significant thing is that Peter and James did as well and this is what I want to show here".

The data support this solution. First, in the setting the little attention given to Barnabas is as remarkable as that given to Paul, who obviously was Luke's hero. Barnabas was from the earliest days an influential member in the Jerusalem church: he had contributed generously to the common fund of the community, donating the proceeds of a sale of property (4:36); he persuaded the understandably apprehensive church leaders to accept the genuineness of Saul's conversion, standing guarantee for the former persecutor of the Christian community (9:26-27); and he was the church's appointee to investigate the extension of the gospel to the Gentiles in Antioch (11:22). Such credentials would understandably lead the reader to expect this Jerusalem emissary's link with the Antiochian mission to the Gentiles to be stressed as an argument of persuasion. That it is not is noteworthy.

The omission seems to be made more apparent by the order of the names: whereas Paul is named first in verse 2, in verse 12 Barnabas is. The alteration may reflect no more than Luke's fondness of variety,[53] and Barnabas's name does appear sometimes to be combined with Paul's almost like a tag (e.g. 13:46). Yet it is true that since the conversion of Sergius Paulus (13:7) Paul's name has occurred first with three exceptions: 14:14, where the order of the missionaries' names is probably determined by the order Zeus-Hermes in 14:12; here; and 15:25, which is part of the Jerusalem

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[52]Cf. Knowling 320. A similar conclusion is reached by Stählin (203): "die Entscheidung in Jerusalem fiel unabhängig von der umstrittenen Arbeit des Paulus, ganz aus den in Jerusalem gegebenen Voraussetzungen heraus: auf Grund der Missionserfahrungen des Petrus und des Weissagungsbeweises des Jakobus". However, Stählin overlooks the fact that--for Luke at least--Barnabas and Paul do still contribute to the debate.

[53]Haenchen 430 n. 2. The change in the order of the names also, as Haenchen correctly points out, gives no reason for assuming different sources.

church's reply to the communities in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. If there is a reason for the exceptions in chapter 15, "it may be the greater privilege that Barnabas enjoyed at Jerusalem as a primitive Jerusalem disciple".[54] In such circumstances, it is only natural that Barnabas would assume priority, particularly since on previous occasions the Jerusalem believers had viewed Paul with suspicion (9:26-28). It may be, too, that Luke means to point out Barnabas's present theological allegiance.

Second, the editorial comment ἐσίγησεν δὲ πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος linking Peter's part in the story with that of Barnabas and Paul is not a colourless transitional statement intended merely to introduce the report given by the two missionaries; rather, the words testify to the effect produced by Peter's speech: a turning point in the discussion has come; the sharp dispute and dissension which had initiated the council and with which the debate began seems to be abating.[55] To create this result, Peter has argued not only that the Gentiles manifest the same spiritual gift as the Jews; he claims as well that salvation stands apart from the law for both those born under the law and those having the law imposed upon them: faith in the Lord Jesus is the condition of salvation. The assembly therefore is appeased by or is even agreeing to, at least in part, an argument which sounds very Pauline but which is not quite and which Luke has given, wrongly or rightly (as I believe), not to Paul but to Peter, a leading member in the Jerusalem community.[56]

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[54]Lake and Cadbury 4:175; cf. Bruce (Greek) 295.

[55]See pp. 41-43.

[56]During a seminar on an earlier version of this paper at Tyndale House, Cambridge, it was suggested that v. 12 in its entirety, not just ἐσίγησεν πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος, shows the effect of Peter's speech: Luke is saying that calm is restored, that Paul's arguments are accepted, that the audience has finally realized what Paul had been claiming for the mission to the Gentiles from the beginning of the assembly. This interpretation was arrived at by understanding Luke's arrangement of the council discussion not to represent the successive order of the speakers. V. 12 does not mean a separate speech, following Peter's and preceding James's; rather it sums up the position which Paul had been arguing throughout the debate and which the assembly had not really listened to previously. As a result there is another explanation for the brevity of v. 12: a circumlocution for the acceptance of the Pauline point of view.

Such reconstruction of the form of the council discussion requires μετὰ δὲ τὸ σιγῆσαι αὐτούς to be resumptive, with the pronoun referring back to πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος instead of Barnabas and Paul. This need not be the case. The explanation also puts undue pressure on the continuous aspect of the imperfect ἤκουον and of the present ἐξηγουμένων in v. 12. While there may be slight stress on continuous action, it is not unusual for an imperfect to follow an aorist in narrative or for it to be not inceptive in such syntax. What does seem strange is for v. 12 to be resumptive given the verbal sequence aorist-imperfect-present participle.

Third, as also mentioned above, James begins his speech with a reference to Peter's argument and ignores Paul and Barnabas completely. This feature could reflect Luke's faithfulness to his source which may not have contained information about Paul and Barnabas; however, such offhand treatment of the two missionaries does seem odd, particularly if Luke has introduced Paul and Barnabas into the debate immediately preceding James. Could it be that here Luke represents a cunning move by James to signal Jerusalem's unity of mind on the Gentile question and to carry a contrary and diverse audience with him? Possibly. Overlooking that which had aroused apprehension in the minds of the Jerusalem rank and file and drawing attention instead to the opinion of Jesus' foremost disciple, thereby establishing continuity with the past, would go some way towards achieving such aims.

Fourth, the scenario Luke portrays as giving rise to the council interestingly prepares for Barnabas's and Paul's secondary role in the record of Acts 15. The Judaizers' demand expressed quite emphatically in verse 1 provides opportunity for Luke to mention Paul's opinion; instead the apostle is presented simply as a foil for the legalists' position. Luke's depiction of the plot also highlights the centrality of the Jerusalem apostles. When contention erupted in Antioch, the Christians in that city sent representatives to Jerusalem to decide the matter. Significantly, too, the troublemakers came from Judea. Whereas in Gal 2:12 a similar group (or possibly the same group) is related in some way to James and the Jerusalem community, Luke, by avoiding this association in Acts 15:1, divorces the Jerusalem leaders from the source of the conflict and leaves them free to respond to the claims of the Judaizers. The care given to mentioning Jerusalem in verses 1-5 is manifested as well in verse 24,[57] the opening comment in the council's reply to the church in Antioch: on the one hand, Jerusalem is considered the place of authority; and, on the other, the Jerusalem apostles disclaim all responsibility for the actions of the troublemakers.

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[57]See Chapter IV.1.1.

3.4. *Summary*

The above discussion indicates that Paul's and Barnabas's part in the council introduces into the debate the argument that miracles demonstrate God's approval and thus the validity of the mission to the Gentiles. The apostles' report also functions like a footnote referring the reader back to the successes and implications of their ministry recorded in chapters 13 and 14 and thereby indirectly strengthening the apostles' link with the Antioch church which had sent them out on the journey. However, the theolo - gical argument which could come from the correlation of the miracles related and the new circumstances of the Gentiles being evangelized is not developed in the report at the council. The reader is left depending on the account of the evangelization of Pisidian Antioch, especially the peroration of Paul's speech and his subsequent denunciation of the Jews, to learn that according to Paul (and for Barnabas) salvation, for Jew and Gentile alike, is by means of Jesus without reference to the law and therefore can be offered outside the context of Judaism. Thirdly, Acts 15:12 confirms--for Luke's story, at least--Paul's and Barnabas's presence at the council. It suggests, further, Luke's deliberate intention--despite the possibility that he could have, either from oral or written tradition, recorded the apostles as saying more--to diminish Barnabas and Paul, and consequently to diminish the Antioch church and the Hellenists whom the apostles represent, in order to highlight the original apostles' opinion concerning the Gentiles. We have already seen that Peter both approved of and argued for the policy that the Gentiles' salvation stood apart from circumcision and obedience to the law. What does James think?

CHAPTER III. JAMES

1. The Argument at the Council (Acts 15:13-21)

James's opinion about the Gentiles' entrance into the people of God, which is recorded in 15:13-21, may be divided into four separate, yet interdependent remarks: a premise summarizing information already presented in the debate (v. 14); a proof from the Scriptures to show that they are in agreement with what has happened to the Gentiles (vv. 15-18); an assessment of the evidence in reply to the Judaizers' demand (vv. 19-20); and a concluding justification for the argument (v. 21).

1.1. *The premise (15:14)*

The premise refers to Peter's speech with explicit ascription and makes four points based on what Peter has said. As in Peter's opening statement, James's central idea is God's action among the Gentiles, called here a divine visitation.[1] Behind this simple description stands the whole content of God's covenant care and the radical revelations of the divine plan in the history of salvation.[2] Ὁ θεὸς ἐπεσκέψατο specifies a special intervention by God into the lives of individuals and nations and in particular into the life of Israel, in order both to manifest his responsibility and concern for the people for whom he cares, intervening to rescue them (Gen 50:24, 25; Luke 1:68, 78; 7:16), and to make known his will, frequently revising previously held ideas.

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[1]That the stress falls on ὁ θεός is the case whether ἐπεσκέψατο λαβεῖν gives the sense "God has attended to the business of acquiring" (Haenchen 430; cf. BAGD, s.v. ἐπισκέπτομαι 3), thereby drawing attention to what God did, or whether the words should be translated "God has made provision to receive" (Lake and Cadbury 4:175), thereby drawing attention to what others as God's agents had done.

[2]H. W. Beyer, "ἐπισκέπτομαι", *TDNT* 2:602. See, for example, Exod 4:31; Deut 11:12; Jdt 8:33; Ps 105(106):4; Jer 15:15; Ezek 34:11; *1 Enoch* 25:3; and *T.Lev.* 16:5.

The purpose (or result) of the visitation is λαβεῖν ἐξ ἐθνῶν λαὸν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ.[3] These words belong to the general Old Testament theme which speaks of God's action in choosing Israel out of all the nations to be his own peculiar people;[4] but here, as the follow-up citation from Amos 9:11-12 will substantiate, they are adapted to the eschatological picture when, after the Lord has gathered and re-established scattered

[3]BDF §392.3; Knowling 321. NIV paraphrases: "how God at first showed his concern by taking from...". If λαβεῖν is not taken as the complement of ἐπεσκέψατο, the complement must be inferred. The usual suggestion is to expand the syntax of ἐξ ἐθνῶν λαόν: for instance, "how God first visited the Gentiles, to take out of them..." (RSV; cf. KJV; TEV).

[4]E.g. Exod 6:7; 19:5; 33:16; Deut 4:20, 34; 7:6; 14:2 and in an eschatological context Ezek 36:24, 28; 37:21-23. See in particular J. Dupont, "ΛΑΟΣ 'ΕΞ 'ΕΘΝΗΝ (Acts xv.14)", *NTS* 3 (1957) 47-50; the response by N. A. Dahl ("'A People for His Name' [Acts xv.14]", *NTS* 4 [1958] 319-27); and the recent update by J. Dupont ("Un Peuple d'entre les Nations [Actes 15.14]", *NTS* 31 [1985] 321-35).

Dupont argues (a) that ἐξ ἐθνῶν λαὸν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ echoes, with a few changes, Deut 14:2 (σὲ ἐξελέξατο κύριος ὁ θεὸς σου γενέσθαι αὐτῷ λαὸν περιούσιον ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν); 7:6; Exod 19:5; and 23:22 LXX; (b) that the distinction between λαός and ἔθνη required by James's argument is found in the LXX but not in the MT, the latter using the same word for Israel (עם) and the nations (עמים); and hence (c) that v. 14 like the citation in vv. 16-17 is based on the Greek Bible. Dupont's study invites criticisms of its method and its conclusions.

First, in order to correlate v. 14 exactly with the four OT passages mentioned, Dupont must understand λαὸς τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ, a phrase not occurring in the OT, to have been introduced by Luke on the basis of ἐφ' οὓς ἐπικέκληται τὸ ὄνομά μου in v. 17 to replace περιούσιος λαός in the OT text. This explanation, while not impossible, is forced: equating τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ and περιούσιος is unnecessary. Dahl ("People" 320-23) demonstrates that τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ is a standard idiom in the Palestinian targum, where it is regularly used to render the Hebrew לעם (לי, ליהוה) לו, and that its use in Acts 15:14 need not be attributed to Luke's reflection on the LXX. The same assessment can be made without resorting to evidence of questionable date (and E. Richard ["The Divine Purpose: The Jews and the Gentile Mission {Acts 15}", *SBL SemP* (1980) 279 n. 33] faults Dahl for this reason): since "name" is extricably bound up with the person so identified, τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ can be the equivalent of αὐτῷ (e.g. Acts 3:15; 4:12). See Knowling (321) on the use of the dative and H. Bietenhard ("ὄνομα", *TDNT* 5:242-83, esp. 257-58) on the sense of ὄνομα. There is therefore no reason to limit the correspondence between v. 14 and the OT to the texts in which סגלה appears (cf. Conzelmann 83).

Second, Dupont has made the meaning of עם too precise. The term, designating ordinary people in distinction from rulers and upper classes (Gen 41:40; Exod 1:22), nations in general (Ezek 11:17), Gentiles (Lev 20:24; Hos 11:10), or Israel (2 Sam 7:24), is at times seemingly synonymous with גוי. The fluidity of meaning is reflected in translation. The LXX usually distinguishes between עם meaning non-Israelites (ἔθνη) and עם meaning Israel (λαός) but not always (e.g. Gen 23:7; 41:40; Exod 5:16; Ezek 20:41; cf. λαός used for גוי = non-Israelite in Isa 55:5; Jer 33[40]:9; and Zech 14:14). Other instances of עם show that its meaning is not fixed. For instance, in *b.Šabb.* 14b; 1QM 10:9 (probably alluding to Deut 7:6); and 1QH 4:26 עמים refers to Gentiles. Such evidence indicates that עם מכל העמים can mean the same as λαὸς ἐξ ἐθνῶν.

Third, in limiting himself to four OT passages, Dupont overlooks the fact that the normal usage of λαός and ἔθνη in the LXX follows an inclination in the Hebrew text to use עם for Israel and גוי for other nations. Significantly this tendency occurs in Deut 28:18, 19 (P. Winter, "Miszellen zur Apostelgeschichte", *EvT* 18 [1957] 398-406) and in 1QpHab 5:3, 4, passages similar to the four Dupont mentions. Compare also a similar practice in Aramaic in *Tg.Yer.I* Exod 19:5 (Dahl, "People" 322).

Thus, λαβεῖν ἐξ ἐθνῶν λαὸν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ in Acts 15:14 is modelled upon a general pattern rather than on any individual passage; and it contains biblical allusions which are not confined to the Greek Bible.

Israel and has come himself to dwell once more in Zion, the Gentiles are included in the people of God.[5] The result of this blending is that in striking paradox the uncircumcised Gentile converts of the last days fulfilled by the Christian community are given the designation previously reserved for the historical people of God.

Is the application of λαός to these converts meant to signify (a) that the Gentiles have been incorporated into God's people Israel[6] or (b) that the title "people of God" has been transferred from Israel to the Christian community composed of Jews and Gentiles[7] or (c) that another λαός has taken its place along with Israel but on a different basis? This is a moot point. As we stated when we introduced our study, it is doubtful that an answer can be obtained on the basis of Luke's linguistic evidence alone. In contrast to ἔθνη, which in Acts tends to denote "nations" in general (8:9; 13:19) and Gentiles specifically (that is, non-Jews [9:15] but not necessarily non-Christians [15:23; 21:25]),[8] Luke reserves λαός for Israel and the Jewish people with two possible exceptions, here and 18:10.[9]

The restricted use of λαός does not, however, immediately signify the concomitant theological sense "people of God". The meaning "Israel" is rarely expressed,[10] nor does λαός always appear as the theological opposite of ἔθνη. Accompanying references to Jewish leaders, law, history, and practices[11] and the concentrated use of the term in traditionally Jewish settings and before Paul's crucial announcement in 13:46-47 of an

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[5]Zech 2:15: καὶ καταφεύξονται ἔθνη πολλὰ ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ, καὶ ἔσονται αὐτῷ εἰς λαόν = ונלוו גוים רבים אל־יהוה ביום ההוא והיו לי לעם (Dahl, "People" 323-24).

[6]E.g. P. Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church* [1969] 160-65; Dahl, "People" 326-27; H. Flender, *St. Luke. Theologian of Redemptive History* [ET 1967] 133-34.

[7]E.g. H. Strathmann, "λαός", *TDNT* 4:54.

[8]There are exceptions which, although comparatively few, do show that Luke's application of ἔθνος like that in the OT (see n. 4) is not absolute. The use of ἔθνη to designate Jews apparently is provoked by comments ascribed to non-Jews (Acts 10:22; cf. Luke 7:5) and those made by Jews to non-Jews in a Palestinian setting (Acts 24:2, 10, 17; Luke 23:2; cf. Acts 26:4) and by statements containing a secular or political reference (Acts 28:19). The comprehensive πᾶν τὸ ἔθνος/πάντα τὰ ἔθνη may include (Acts 2:5; 17:26; Luke 24:47; probably Acts 10:35) or exclude (Acts 15:17; Luke 12:30; 21:24; probably Acts 14:16) the nation Israel.

[9]This tendency gains in import when it is noted that λαός, like ἔθνος, is predominantly a Lukan expression, over one-half of the NT occurrences being in his writings (the Gospel 37 times, Acts 48 times).

[10]Acts 4:10, 27; 12:11; 13:17, 24; Luke 1:68, 77; 2:32; 7:16.

[11]Acts 3:23; 4:8; 5:34; 6:12; 7:17, 34; 13:17; 21:28.

overt mission to the Gentiles[12] do give a preciseness to the term which is backed up by an observable preference for the articular and singular form.[13] But at times the term is used simply as a synonym of ὄχλος, referring to "people" in the collective, unspecified sense of the word.[14] The exceptions combined with the occasional anarthrous form warn the astute reader: λαός may stand technically for God's covenanted people, but it may also stand collectively for any group in a Jewish setting.[15]

As for the two places where λαός is used of non-Israelites, in 18:10 λαός...μοι πολύς, being anarthrous, is comparable to [προσετέθη] ὄχλος ἱκανὸς τῷ κυρίῳ in 11:24 (cf. 11:26). The expression simply refers to a great group of people: "there are many in Corinth who will become Christians". It does not imply that the church has replaced the Jews as the people of God.[16] James's statement λαβεῖν ἐξ ἐθνῶν λαὸν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ, also containing an anarthrous λαός, can be interpreted similarly. "The point is not that this group is 'a people' in the sense of 'a nation' or 'a cultural unit', but that it now belongs to God in the same way as Israel does, or rather: as Israel should do."[17] James implies that in addition to the people to whom the promises were given God has taken people from the Gentiles to bear his name.

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[12]In the Gentile section, 13:48-21:16, λαός occurs only at 15:14; 18:10; and 19:4; and in 19:4 the word denotes the Jewish crowds listening to John the Baptist. In comparison, ὁ ὄχλος is the usual term describing the general populace in chaps. 13-21, often with the pejorative sense of those opposing the apostles and the Christian message. This word occurs only five times before chap. 13 (1:15; 6:7; 8:6; 11:24, 26) and of these instances only two have Jews in mind (1:15; 6:7). The distribution of λαός and ὄχλος cannot be attributed to sources (note ὁ λαός in 21:28, 30, 36, 39, 40 and ὁ ὄχλος in 21:27, 34, 37); however, an explanation is suggested by the concentrated use of Ἰουδαῖοι in chaps. 13-28: as the Christian message spread outside Jewish circles there developed a corresponding need to distinguish between Jews and Gentiles.

[13]The word is anarthrous in 4:25, 27; 15:14; and 18:10 (cf. Luke 1:17; 2:32) and occurs in the plural in 4:25, 27 (cf. Luke 2:31). The anarthrous plural form in 4:27 is likely due to the citation of Ps 2:1 in v. 25 (G. D. Kilpatrick, "*ΛΑΟΙ* at Luke ii.31 and Acts iv.25, 27", *JTS* n.s. 16 [1965] 127).

[14]Acts 26:17, 23; cf. Luke 2:32.

[15]Although working from a view of Lukan editorship different from my own, Wilson (*Gentiles* 225) also warns about the use of λαός: "one has to beware of ascribing to Luke views which may not have occurred to him. The two unusual uses of λαός [15:14 and 18:10] may simply be due to Luke's carelessness. At other points Luke uses terms loosely and with no obvious theological subtleties in mind".

[16]Contra, for example, Bruce (Greek) 346 and Roloff (272). Support for λαός in this passage meaning the new covenant people of God could be found (a) in the use of ὁ κύριος in v. 9, i.e. the people belonging to the risen Christ is the church, and (b) in the fact that the converts come from Corinth's mixed population. However, since λαός refers to people not yet converted, the word seemingly loses any specifically theological sense.

[17]Dahl, "People" 326. This idea differs from the application of Exod 19:5 and similar OT texts in Titus 2:14 and 1 Pet 2:9-10 (cf. Rev 1:6; 5:9-10), where the church of Christ is explicitly designated the new covenant people of God.

The third and fourth points stated in the premise can be dealt with briefly. Whether denoting the time of God's act ("at the first", i.e. "at the beginning")[18] or its degree of occurrence ("how it first happened" or "first God"),[19] πρῶτον confirms the idea of a long-established practice based on God's initiative.[20] Καθώς conveys that Peter had reported more than the *fact* that the Gentiles were saved; with the conjunction here having the force of πῶς or the simple ὡς,[21] the sense is that Peter's speech related the manner in which the Gentiles were to join the people of God.

Compiling the pieces of verse 14 then, we note that James's argument is based on the idea that Peter has stated the facts about the Gentiles' way to salvation; moreover, these facts are to be understood as a divine manifestation expressing God's providence and his will and as a divine choice identical to God's election of Israel.

1.2. *The proof from Amos 9:11-12 (15:15-18)*[22]

The evidence for the premise that God has made Gentiles his people can be found, James claims, in the prophetic Scriptures; and in the second part of the speech Amos 9:11-12[23] is cited to prove the point. In its original context addressed to the

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[18]E.g. Haenchen 430; Conzelmann 83; Knowling 321.

[19]The translations are given by NEB and Bauernfeind (191), respectively. On the sequential force of πρῶτον compare Acts 3:26; 7:12; 13:46; and 26:20.

[20]As is the case with ἀφ' ἡμερῶν ἀρχαίων (v. 7) discussed above (Chapter I.2.1.1), the adverb may be deliberately equivocal.

[21]This is the assessment of lexicographers (BAGD, s.v. καθώς 5; Grimm-Thayer, s.v. καθώς 4a and ὡς 6; LSJ, s.v. καθώς [where *Acts.Ap.* 15:12 is presumably *Act.Ap.* 15:14]), commentators (Bruce [Greek] 297), and grammarians (cf. Robertson 968; BDF §453.2; Burton §350). On καθώς denoting manner compare *Ep.Arist.* 263.

[22]Another study of Amos 9:11-12 in the Lukan context is P.-A. Paulo, *Le problème ecclésial des Actes à la lumière de deux prophéties d'Amos* (1985). Unfortunately the work came to my attention too late to be included with anything more than a mention.

[23]The use of the plural τῶν προφητῶν in the introductory formula of v. 15 has invited speculation that while the core of the citation is Amos 9:11-12, part of Jer 12:15 ([μετὰ τὸ ἐκβαλεῖν με αὐτοὺς] ἐπιστρέψω...καὶ κατοικιῶ) and a hint of Isa 45:21 ([ἐποίησεν ταῦτα] ἀπ' ἀρχῆς) have been added (Conzelmann 84) as in a collection of *testimonia*. The interpretation is fueled by the differences between the text of Amos 9:11-12 in Acts and that in the MT and LXX (see below). It is, however, arbitrary and unnecessary. While the content of each proposed passage concerns the eschatological relationship of Israel and the other nations, there is little, if any, verbal correspondence; indeed, Zech 1:16, containing ἀνοικοδομέω, seems a more likely source than Jer 12:15. Οἱ λόγοι τῶν προφητῶν may denote a general prophetic viewpoint with Amos 9:11-12 serving as the example (Knowling 321; a possibility entertained by Marshall 252), or it may refer to the book of minor prophets (Bruce [Greek] 297; Marshall 252). The latter seems more likely. Compare Amos 5:25-27 in Acts 7:42-43 and Hab 1:5 in 13:40-41, where the same words occur in the introductory formula and yet, with minor variations, only one OT passage is followed; this contrasts with Isa 66:1-2a quoted in Acts 7:48-50, where the introduction is καθὼς ὁ προφήτης λέγει.

northern kingdom Israel, Amos 9:11-12 is a two-element unconditional oracle of weal proclaiming in its first half the Lord's salvific deed and announcing in the second the consequences of that deed. The promise comes at the end of Amos's message in which the portrayal of Israel takes the form of an indictment, "the articulation of Yahweh's categorical 'no' to the nation's life":[24] judgment is to come on Israel with the result that the nation will be annihilated except the house of Jacob. While in the background lies the fact of judgment--the fallen tent[25] and the breaches in the walls, the ruined cities (vv. 11, 14), the economic reversal (v. 14), and the exile (v. 15)--in the foreground are the promises of re-establishment, restoration, and an unprecedented fullness of life without the threat of expulsion.[26] By means of an intensified renewal God will bless his people and will show that his own rule over the nations still holds good. God's action alone effects this. The prophet does not say that guilt is forgiven, much less that the people's disobedience becomes obedience. The prophecy contains merely yet significantly the confident assertion, leaving no doubt, that God was at work.

1.2.1. The relevant phrases

Immediately obvious in the use of Amos 9:11-12 in James's speech is the difference in wording from that in the Hebrew and Greek Old Testaments. The first verse in the Septuagint is basically a translation of the Hebrew with several incidental alterations.[27] The text in Acts differs from both the Greek and the Masoretic texts: the four parallel declarations are condensed into three; the verbs in the three parallel clauses remaining are changed (ἀναστήσω καὶ ἀνοικοδομήσω becomes ἀνοικοδομήσω καὶ ἀνορθώσω); an absolute μετὰ ταῦτα ἀναστρέψω is added, possibly on the grounds of Jer 12:15,[28] thereby retaining the four-clause structure but forfeiting the parallelism; the

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[24]J. L. Mays, *Amos* (1969) 7.

[25]Ἡ σκηνὴ Δαυίδ (סכת דויד) is translated variously. We will use "tent of David".

[26]For discussions on whether the positive dénouement of vv. 8b, 11-15 is a later addition, see B. S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (1979) 405-7; Wolff, *Joel and Amos* 352-53; G. F. Hasel, *The Remnant. The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea from Genesis to Isaiah* (1972) 209-15; and G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (ET 1965) 2:138, the last two scholars defending the originality of the prophecy.

[27]These include regularizing the sequence of the pronominal suffixes (אדם דרשי־הן והרסתיו) to agree with their feminine singular antecedent סכה and removing the linguistic variation. For the textual variant κατεσκαμμένα/κατεστραμμένα see Metzger 429.

[28]The influence of Jer 12:15 is cited by Nestle-Aland[26], among others; however, see n. 23.

concluding כימי עולם is omitted. Despite these textual variations the essential thrust of the Hebrew text is preserved: God will restore the tent of David that was ruined. In the second verse Acts follows the wording of the Septuagint with minor changes,[29] and both Greek texts differ extensively from the Hebrew: יירשו is read as ידרשׁ and translated ἐκζητήσωσιν; אֲדוֹם, as the collective אָדָם; and the objects of יירשו become the subjects of ἐκζητήσωσιν.[30] As a consequence, the purpose of rebuilding the tent of David (v. 11) is no longer that the recipients of the promise, i.e. the Jews,[31] may inherit the rest of Edom and all the nations who are called by the name of the Lord; it is instead that the rest of humanity and all the Gentiles who bear the Lord's name may seek the Lord.

The changes in verse 17 have suggested that the Amos passage was applicable to James's speech (and came to mind) because of πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐφ' οὓς ἐπικέκληται τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐπ' αὐτούς in the Septuagint which recapitulates and substantiates ἐξ ἐθνῶν λαὸν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ (v. 14). The citation, so the argument goes, is intended only to show that God's action in choosing people from the Gentiles was grounded in the Old Testament

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[29]Αν is added after ὅπως; κύριος ὁ θεός is reduced to κύριος; ποιῶν loses its article in order to match the anarthrous κύριος; and τὸν κύριον is supplied as the object of ἐκζητήσωσιν. These alterations have been attributed to Luke (E. Richard, "The Creative Use of Amos by the Author of Acts", *NovT* 24 [1982] 44), to the translator of the Greek text (perhaps A) which Luke was following (Holtz, *Zitate* 23, 26-27; B. Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic. The Doctrinal Significance of Old Testament Quotations* [1961] 35), and to James himself (Wilcox, *Semitisms* 54-55).

[30]According to form πάντα τὰ ἔθνη could remain a direct object, but the context determines otherwise.

[31]This is generally unterstood to be the otherwise unexpressed subject of יירשו.

and therefore to provide proof that a mission to uncircumcised Gentiles, without a prior or subsequent association with Judaism, belonged to the will of God.[32]

The overwhelming acceptance of this interpretation[33] notwithstanding, πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐφ' οὓς ἐπικέκληται τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐπ' αὐτούς does not appear to exhaust the

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[32]There is a crucial corollary: James, a pious Palestinian Jew, is credited with citing a text which proves the point James wants to make only in the Greek version. Therefore, it is often suggested (e.g. Haenchen 430-31, 452-53; E. Richard, "The Old Testament in Acts: Wilcox's Semitisms in Retrospect", *CBQ* 42 [1980] 339-41 and "Creative Use" 52-53) that the quotation presupposes a Gentile Christian interpretation of the LXX which must come from Luke. In response the following observations have been made, not all of which I agree with.

(a) Like most Galileans James would have been bilingual. He may have spoken Greek as an act of courtesy to the non-Aramaic-speaking delegates (Neil 173; Bruce [Greek] 298) and perhaps even as an indication of his agreement with Gentile interests (cf. Knowling 322).

(b) James might have quoted the Hebrew or Aramaic text presupposed by the LXX (Alford 165-66). Torrey (*Composition* 38-39) points out that as no standardized text of the prophets had been established yet, the author was free to choose. Luke's Hebrew or Aramaic text may have contained the variation.

(c) Though sounding more nationalistic than the Greek version, the Hebrew text still fits the point of the speech as Luke gives it (Filson, *Decades* 79; Torrey, *Composition* 39; Bruce [NIC] 310). Yet, in my opinion, a subtle difference does exist which may have been desired: both texts say that the Gentiles will be included in the rebuilt house of David; but whereas in the Hebrew text the Gentiles are the possession of the reconstructed Israel, in the Greek text they (voluntarily) seek the Lord because Israel is restored.

(d) Since Acts 15:16-17 falls into two parts textually, Holtz (*Zitate* 21-27) posits that Amos 9:11 circulated without v. 12 among Jewish Christians who believed in the restoration of Israel in the Davidic form. Luke placed v. 11 appropriately in James's speech but added to it v. 12 from the LXX because of the universal promise. Similar two-stage textual traditions are proposed by L. Gaston (*No Stone on Another. Studies in the Significance of the Fall of Jerusalem in the Synoptic Gospels* [1970] 203-4) and R. Hodgson ("The Testimony Hypothesis", *JBL* 98 [1979] 369).

(e) There is no extant textual evidence of any attempts to restore the precise text of the LXX where Acts departs from it in vv. 16 and 18.

(f) That parts of Amos 9:11 are quoted in CD 7:16 and 4QFlor 1:12-13 (see below) and applied to the situation in Qumran has suggested a previous exegetical history, like a dependency on a Palestinian-Jewish text tradition which was older than the composition of James's speech (J. de Waard, *A Comparative Study of the Old Testament Text in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the New Testament* [1965] 24-26, 78-80) or the influence of a pre-Christian collection of *testimonia* stemming from hellenistic Judaism (G. D. Kilpatrick, "Some Quotations in Acts", in *Actes*-Kremer [1979] 92). This is also Lindars's assessment (Lindars, *Apologetic* 35, 279-80). Such evidence shows that the text was being reinterpreted during the NT period. See the excellent discussion by J. A. Fitzmyer, "The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and in the New Testament", *NTS* 7 (1960-61) 297-333, esp. 309-16, 328-29.

(g) B. Gerhardsson (*Memory and Manuscript. Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity* [ET 1961] 254-60) argues that Luke's use of Scripture is exactly that used in the tannaitic debates: the interpreted (*midrash*) and not the literal (*miqra*) meaning gives Amos 9:11-12 relevance. Cf. E. E. Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity. New Testament Essays* [1978] 200 and Bowker, "Speeches in Acts" 107-9. In response Barrett ("Apostles" 21) notes that when the rabbis did use other texts to support the desired interpretation, the MT appears as the base and the preferred reading is given as an alternative. Acts 15 contains no trace of this procedure.

(h) E. E. Ellis (*Paul's Use of the Old Testament* [1957] 107-12) observes that quotations containing the formula λέγει κύριος--whether the words are part of the OT text or not--consistently diverge from extant OT texts and that the OT source of such quotations often belong within a "testimony" pattern evident elsewhere.

These observations allow the possibility that the reinterpretation of Amos 9:11-12 which Luke records could stem from the tradition and even James himself. The choice of this particular text, as opposed to a more commonly quoted passage, enhances the idea of Lukan reliability.

[33]To name only one: Wilson, *Gentiles* 225.

significance of the citation of Amos 9:11-12 for James's speech. Several reasons can be mentioned.

(1) The linguistic and grammatical alterations in verse 16 (Amos 9:11),often submitted as cause for disregarding verse 16,[34] are really no more extensive than the variations found in Luke's other quotations from the twelve minor prophets.[35] And as the thought content of the verse is not changed, the overlooking of verse 16 is further discredited. The text of Amos 9:11 used in Acts could be due to a different translation of the Greek Bible.[36]

(2) It seems strange enough that Luke would quote so extensively from the passage when only one phrase, which is itself embedded in the middle of the quotation, is relevant; it is even more incongruous to assume that this is the case when it runs contrary to Luke's normal practice.[37]

(3) Excluding verse 16 from the argument more readily invites the question what commended Amos 9:11-12 in particular when other texts such as Isa 55:5; 56:3-8; 66:18-19; or Zech 2:11-12 come sooner to mind and when Amos 9:11-12, unlike these mentioned, had to be used in a modified form to bring out the desired result.[38] Perhaps the choice of Amos 9:11-12 was arbitrary. But it is equally plausible that a passage which correlated with exquisite precision God's selection of the Gentiles and his restoration of the tent of David was wanted.

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[34]Holtz, *Zitate* 24-26.

[35]Compare Joel 3:1-5(ET 2:28-32) in Acts 2:17-21; Amos 5:25-27 in 7:42-43; Hab 1:5 in 13:41; Hos 10:8 in Luke 23:30; and the conflation of Mal 3:1 and Exod 23:20 in Luke 7:16. Some of the variations show the influence of the MT over against the LXX. Others are found in different Greek recensions.

[36]Alternatively, this may represent a free translation done to suit James's or Luke's requirements. The correspondence of the NT and LXX against the MT in v. 17, though, would suggest a written Greek translation.

[37]A case for extended quotations in Acts containing superfluous parts could be made with 2:25-28 (= Ps 15[16]:8-11b). There, too, the relevance of the first verses of the citation is questionable, for the reference to Jesus' resurrection and to death's inability to contain Jesus (v. 24) draws immediate attention to vv. 27-28 (Ps 15[16]:10-11). Yet vv. 25-26 (Ps 15[16]:8-9) become relevant to the context if they are applied, on the one hand, to Jesus' earthly life in general, including his steadfastness during the crucifixion (Haenchen 183), and, on the other, to Jesus' exaltation (ἐκ δεξιῶν μου; cf. v. 34 || Ps 109[110]:1). Similar uncertainty surrounds 2:19-20 (Joel 3:3-4[ET 2:30-31]): the verses may function only to connect vv. 17-18 (Joel 3:1-2), describing the Pentecostal phenomena, and v. 21 (Joel 3:5), anticipating the evangelistic conclusion of the speech (v. 39). In this instance, though, it seems reasonable to begin with the relevant part of the OT passage and to continue the citation than to begin with an irrelevant portion and then move to the relevant.

[38]Gaston, *No Stone* 203; M. A. Braun, "James' Use of Amos at the Jerusalem Council: Steps Toward a Possible Solution of the Textual and Theological Problems", *JETS* 20 (1977) 113-21.

(4) If the quotation is intended only to demonstrate that the mission to the Gentiles was grounded in the will of God, the connection between the parts of the speech forged by διό (v. 19) is weakened. The inferential conjunction implies that James's comments in verses 19-21, where the correlation of Gentiles and Judaism is clearly expressed, are based on the citation of Amos 9:11-12, which in turn supports the point that God made Gentiles, as he had made the Jews, his people.

None of these four observations alone conclusively disproves that πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐφ' οὓς ἐπικέκληται τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐπ' αὐτούς is the sole reason for choosing Amos 9:11-12; but when combined, the arguments strongly suggest that while those particular words may have been responsible for bringing the phrase to mind, the significance of the passage, be it probative, illustrative, or structural, extends beyond this relative clause.

1.2.2. The quotation in its New Testament setting

When the entire quotation of Amos 9:11-12 is considered relevant to James's argument, it becomes important to inquire as to the reference of the event which presupposes and establishes the Gentiles' right to seek the Lord. Particularly crucial are the words "I will rebuild the tent of David which has fallen down".

Whatever סכת דויד may have meant to the original recipients of the prophecy,[39] the general impression given to the Old Testament reader is the confident expectation that the Davidic *imperium*, long since demolished, would form the focal point of the coming global reign of the Lord. When transferred to the setting of the early church, this eschatological motif is open to various applications. Obviously because of the first century political situation, the promise could not have been thought

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[39]Scholars have offered various possibilities: (1) the literal, geographical restoration and reunification of the kingdom of Israel as existing in David's reign (e.g. Childs, *Old Testament as Scripture* 407; Mays, *Amos* 164; Hasel, *Remnant* 211); (2) the re-establishment of the dynasty of David, recalling Nathan's prophecy to the king (2 Sam 7:11-16) and linking with the messiah (BDB, s.v. סכה; possibly Wolff, *Joel and Amos* 353); (3) the city of Jerusalem, cf. Isa 1:8 (Wolff, *Joel and Amos* 353); (4) the rebuilding of Succoth, a city in northern Palestine which like Jerusalem was associated with David's victories, as a symbol of the reunification of the two kingdoms under the Davidic monarchy (H. N. Richardson, "*SKT* [Amos 9:11]: 'Booth' or 'Succoth'?", *JBL* 92 [1973] 375-81); (5) the temple; (6) a metaphorical portrayal of the people of God in general; and very unlikely in the context (7) the southern kingdom of Judah as a destroyed state and therefore the counterpart of Edom (cf. Lam 4:21-22). For a survey of some of these interpretations, see Wolff, *Joel and Amos* 353 and Richardson, "*SKT*" 375-76.

to have been fulfilled literally; but a figurative sense, related to the conviction that with the advent of the Spirit at Pentecost the church was living in the last days, is well within the scope of the contemporary context.

Amos 9:11 occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, but it does appear in Jewish literature of the period. CD 7:14-18 appeals to the passage to explain Amos 5:26-27, in which the sect at Qumran saw some reference to its own history. To make the link between the two Old Testament texts, the commentator reads סוכת מלככם in the place of סכות מלככם (Amos 5:26) and then, relating the revised reading to Amos 9:11, obtains the interpretation that the tents of the king are the books of the law and that the king, David, signifies the Congregation of the Covenant. Thus, God's promise to raise up the fallen tent of David is seen to be verified in the sect's renewed reverence for the law. In 4QFlor 1:11-13 Amos 9:11 forms part of a running commentary on the dynastic oracle of 2 Sam 7:10-14: the "seed" to be raised up by God in the future, in order to save Israel, is the "branch" of David; and in him the promise of the ultimate restoration of Israel is accomplished. In *b.Sanh.* 96b-97a R. Naḥman calls the messiah בר נפלי, the appellation being appropriate, he says, because of Amos 9:11; and the occasion is used to mention the precarious religious, sociological, and economic conditions heralding the time of the messiah's coming.[40] As a control for these passages the writings of Irenaeus can be cited. In *Dem.* 38 Amos 9:11 explains the resurrection hope belonging to Christians on account of Jesus' redemptive act; in *Dem.* 62 it establishes the Davidic lineage of Jesus. Both places interpret ἡ σκηνὴ Δαυὶδ ἡ πεπτωκυῖα as the body of Christ, born of David and plainly declared as rising from the dead.

This evidence suggests two possible interpretations for "the tent of David" in Acts 15:16. The first, "the books of the law", should probably be excluded. While it is expected that for the Jewish Christians the advent of the last days carried in its wake a heightened concern to live as correct Jews, observing God's covenants and prepared to

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[40]Other allusions to סכת דויד הנפלת include *Gen.Rab.* 88.7, where the chief butler's neglect of Joseph (Gen 40:23) triggers the enumeration of unexpected deliverances which God had performed for Israel, like the raising of the fallen tent of David and the unification of the world, and *Eccl.Rab.* 3.8.2, where Amos 9:11 explains the words "And a time to build up". A. Edersheim (*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* [1900] 2:734-35) cites *Yal.* 2.80a-b as well.

face God's judgment, a reference to a renewed reverence for the law seems an unlikely fit in an argument which begins with the inference that the Gentiles became God's people apart from the law (v. 14) and which will go on to claim that because of the restoration of David's tent uncircumcised Gentiles have the right to seek the Lord. At the same time, it would be precarious to assume, without further evidence, that the revelation of Jesus the Messiah, culminating in his resurrection and exaltation, is in mind in Acts 15:16. A preferred interpretation may have circulated within contemporary Judaism, but the multiple application occuring in the Qumran writings implies that there was no standard interpretation. Nor should extrabiblical sources be used to dictate New Testament meaning. They can inform, but they cannot dictate.[41] Caution is advised further by the fact that, unlike in the other writings, the choice of Amos 9:11-12 in this instance was motivated not by the desire to establish messiahship but by the desire to prove the legitimacy of a mission to the Gentiles. We must allow therefore for the possibility that the meaning of ἡ σκηνὴ Δαυίδ in James's speech could be different.[42]

Jesus as the fulfilment of the prophecies of and promises to David is a theme in the apostolic proclamation and life of Acts which is carefully and frequently presented to the reader. It forms the backbone of Peter's speech at Pentecost (2:14-36). There David's prayer, from Ps 15(16):8-11, that God would not abandon him to Sheol but would grant him instead the path of life (vv. 25-28) is regarded as a statement about the messiah, not about David (v. 29) and thus is used to defend the fact that Jesus, being unable to be held by death (v. 24), must be the messiah who was promised to occupy

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[41]Fitzmyer ("Old Testament Quotations" 329) issues a similar warning. In this regard it is curious that the *amoraim* would continue to explain Amos 9:11 messianically when the same interpretation existed in Christian circles. It was generally the practice of the later rabbis to remove even the vaguest allusions to Christian doctrine from their teaching and writings.

[42]As a determinative of the meaning of "tent of David", μετὰ ταῦτα ἀναστρέψω is probably irrelevant beyond setting the frame of reference. The words describe one event in the logical eschatological sequence: the judgment on the nations is brought to an end, God returns, blessing for the nation follows. It is unlikely that the prepositional phrase has been included for any profound theological reason. Thus, it should not be used to support the dispensationalist viewpoint that the visitation of the Gentiles must precede God's second visitation (his millenial coming) to a regathered Israel when David's house is rebuilt, μετὰ ταῦτα in this case being futuristic with reference to πρῶτον in v. 14 (the same criticism is levelled against the dispensationalist interpretation by C. E. Hayward ["A Study in Acts xv.16-18", *EvQ* 8 {1936} 162-66]). Nor is it probable that μετὰ ταῦτα is redactionally motivated with a reference back to the theme of the exile treated in 7:43. While there is similarity between the two quotations (see below), the link is not as explicit as Richard ("Creative Use" 44-52) imagines.

David's throne (vv. 30-32, based on 2 Sam 7:10-16 and Ps 131[132]:11). Another testimony of David, Ps 109(110):1, is said to be in accordance with God's exaltation of the resurrected Jesus (vv. 34-36).[43] In the church's prayer for support and boldness during persecution, recorded in 4:24-30, Jesus' crucifixion at the hands of the unholy conspiracy of Herod and Pilate, of Jews and Romans, is identified as no more than what God through David in Ps 2:7 had foreordained would happen to his anointed one. Paul's sermon at Pisidian Antioch (13:16-43) contains a line of argument similar to Peter's at Pentecost. Paul asserts that what God promised to his people Israel about the coming of a messianic deliverer of David's line (cf. 2 Sam 7:12-16; 22:51; Pss 89:29, 36-37; 132:11-12) he has now performed in raising up from David's posterity a Saviour, Jesus (vv. 23, 32-33), and in raising up from the dead Jesus the crucified Messiah (vv. 34-37). The proof for the argument in this instance comes from extracts of Ps 2:7; Isa 55:3; and Ps 15(16):10, the Isaianic passage seemingly making the explicit connection between the holy and sure blessings to David and the first century situation.[44] Thus, there is reason to suppose that James's speech could refer to Jesus as the ultimate representative of the Davidic *imperium*.

Another indicator of the meaning of ἡ σκηνὴ Δαυὶδ ἡ πεπτωκυῖα in 15:16 is the accompanying descriptive language. Words like ἀνοικοδομέω, κατασκάπτω, and ἀνορθόω belong to the image of a building and quite understandably recall statements like Acts 4:11 (= Ps 117[118]:22), where Jesus is identified as the stone which the builders rejected and which was made (by God) the capstone of the building.[45] In this regard, however, it is noteworthy that the Old Testament text used in James's speech has ἀνοικοδομέω in the place of the ἀνίστημι found in the Septuagint. That this is a

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[43]The result, as Zehnle (*Pentecost Discourse* 27-28) has shown, is that the development of the argument proceeds in a chiastic form (viz. ABCC'B'A'). First, God made Jesus the Messiah by raising him from the dead: Ps 16:8-11 is cited (A, vv. 25-28); this cannot apply to David (B, v. 29) but it does apply to Jesus (C, vv. 30-32). Second, God has made Jesus Lord by exalting him to his right hand: the proof of Jesus' exaltation is his pouring out of the promised Spirit (C', v. 33), David did not ascend to heaven in exaltation (B', v. 34a); Ps 110:1 is cited (A', vv. 34b-35) to show that the second Lord referred to must be Jesus.

[44]The point of the quotation of Isa 55:3 is somewhat ambiguous. For a conspectus of various explanations, see Marshall 227-28.

[45]Jesus is also said in John 2:21 (cf. Matt 26:61; 27:40; Mark 14:58; 15:29; Acts 6:14) to liken his body to the temple in Jerusalem and to predict its destruction just as he prophesied the destruction of the Jerusalem temple itself (Luke 21:5-6 and parallels).

deliberate choice or change by Luke can be no more than a conjecture,[46] but the implication of such a possibility is certainly critical: ἀνίστημι in its transitive use denotes for Luke Jesus' resurrection and sometimes as well Jesus' appearance on earth in general.[47] Could Luke be aiming here to direct the readers away from a reference or a sole reference to Jesus which they would so naturally apply in the light of the other Davidic texts in Acts? We must allow for this.

How are we to explain the two sets of data, the theme that Jesus is the promised messiah and the building imagery? Along these lines the fact that the statement was made in the context of debate may be an instructive starting point. Now the idea that Jesus was the messiah would hardly be a cause of *internal* debate. The very label "Christian" meant the willingness to echo this conviction. But if it may be assumed that verse 1 (and verse 5) states the topic under debate and that throughout the entire pericope the speeches adhere somewhat strictly to addressing the Judaizers' proposition, the belief that Jesus was the promised messianic and eschatological descendant of David would gain a new dimension. Behind the immediate questions of what was required for salvation and whether the Gentiles had to be circumcised and forced to obey Moses's law--indeed, giving rising to these questions, as we said when we began our study--lies the problem of the relationship between the Christian community and Judaism. The point of controversy in that problem was the belief that Jesus was the messiah. Luke has implied this (cf. 4:18; 5:28, 33-40). He has also clearly stated that the belief in Jesus' messiahship drastically altered the significance of the Israelite religion and of the covenantal promises and that it acted as a watershed determining which Jews belonged to God's people (3:22-23): only those who responded positively to Jesus the Messiah were those who both obeyed God's covenant and realized the eschatological blessings promised to Israel. It follows then, since a king does not exist apart from a people, that the proclamation of Jesus as the heir of David meant the establishment of a Davidic

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[46]Also in the realm of conjecture is whether Luke altered the OT text himself or whether the OT text he used already contained the substitution. Richard ("Creative Use" 48, 52-53), for one, firmly advocates the importance of the redactional modifications.

[47]In Acts 2:24, 32; 13:32, 34; 17:31; and probably 3:26 the verb describes Jesus' resurrection; in 3:22 and 7:37 it refers to the advent of the Mosaic prophet whose role Jesus is said to fulfil. Only Acts 9:41 (although cf. v. 40) makes the transitive use non-theological.

kingdom within the wider scope of the historic people of God, a Davidic kingdom which met and manifested the true will of God.[48]

That James's speech may have this idea in mind seems to supported by a linguistic connection with Acts 7.[49] In particular ἡ σκηνὴ Δαυὶδ ἡ πεπτωκυῖα could recall ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ μαρτυρίου (7:44-45) which God instituted through Moses and which remained in the land until the time of David. Admittedly we must be cautious about building too much on a link which is at the most remote and tenuous. Unless Luke is considered to bear sole responsibility for the contents of the speeches in Acts and not just for their present composition, a speech attributed to Stephen would probably represent a different Jewish Christian tradition from that of a speech attributed to James. Ultimately, though--the influence of an authorial concern to be accurate (cf. Luke 1:3) not being overlooked--the choice and compilation of the tradition go back to Luke and are indicative of Luke's thought and object. For that reason and the observation that the themes of Acts 7 are not unique in Acts but represent a carefully wrought contribution to the total message of the book, the pieces of the tradition need not be viewed as completely disparate.

In Stephen's speech ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ μαρτυρίου appears in conjunction, on the one side, with ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ Μολόχ, a sign of Israelite disobedience and apostasy (7:42-43, quoting Amos 5:26-27; cf. CD 7:14-18) and, on the other, with σκήνωμα τῷ οἴκῳ Ἰακώβ (v. 46)[50] which David wanted to build and οἶκος αὐτῷ which Solomon did build (v. 47). These expressions for places of worship within Israel appear to make for a contrast between "a house (place of worship) for Israel" and "a house (place of worship) for

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[48]E. Schweizer ("The Concept of the Davidic 'Son of God' in Acts and its Old Testament Background", in FS P. Schubert [1966] 186-93) comments that the Davidic prophecies were interpreted in two ways: the one way emphasized a messianic figure; the other stressed the divine sonship of the eschatological Israel. Schweizer states quite firmly that in Acts the interpretation was in an individual sense with reference to Jesus. However, he mentions only the prophecies cited in 2:25-26 and 13:33-37.

[49]Marshall (130-31, 252) and Gaston (*No Stone* 203) hint at the relationship of chaps. 7 and 15. Richard ("Creative Use" 42-44, 48-52) sees not only a conceptual connection but also the two quotations from Amos providing the language and content for Luke's composition of Stephen's and James's speeches and for the narrative portions in chaps. 13 and 14. His argument based on structural analysis is forced.

[50]The reading τῷ οἴκῳ Ἰακώβ (cf. Luke 1:33), having good external support (p^{74} ℵ* B D) and being the more difficult reading, probably should be preferred over τῷ θεῷ Ἰακώβ, an early emendation (ℵ^{c} A C E lat) apparently following Ps 131(132):5. On this controversial variant see Metzger (351-53), who accepts οἴκῳ, and Ropes (3:72), who proposes an emendation.

God".[51] The contrast would develop as follows: the perfidious belief (vv. 49-50; cf. Isa 66:1-2a) that the transcendent God would actually live within the confines of the temple *made with hands* like any idol (v. 43; cf. Amos 5:26) opposes the idea of a place where God could be served only *in a spiritual way*.[52] A. F. J. Klijn[53] has found support for this contrast. The idea that the temple was built especially for Israel is implied in Josephus, *Ant.* 8.106-8 and Acts 17:24-25 and is in agreement with conceptions in some Jewish circles. The idea of a house within the house of Israel as a substitute for the temple and thus as the real temple of God appears in 1QS 8:5-6, where the council of the Qumran community calls itself a holy house for Israel (בית קודש לישראל) and is given priestly functions, and in particular in 1QS 9:3-6, where the whole community is called a temple within Israel (היחד בית קודש לאהרון, בית יחד לישראל). A part of Israel considers itself as the true Israel and the true temple. In the flow of Stephen's argument built upon an extrapolation from Jesus' criticism of the temple and his teaching about its replacement (cf. 6:13-14), the contrast between the two houses implies that the old cultus rejected and redefined in any case by Israel was to be outdistanced by the new dimension of fellowship with God represented by Jesus. Or to state the idea in another way, the house within the house of Israel where God would be is the community which manifests faith in Jesus.[54]

To return to James's speech, if the consequences of the Jesus event and not the Jesus event alone are in view, we can speak in 15:16 of the restoration of David's tent in

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[51]Haenchen (276) thinks otherwise: the contrast is between a tented, mobile dwelling and the solid house the building of which represented apostasy from the true service of God. Bruce ([NIC] 157-59) casts the contrast in terms of the Davidic promise (2 Sam 7:12-13): Solomon's action did not fulfil the promise that a son of David would arise and build a house for God whereas, Stephen implies, Jesus' action did (Luke 1:32-33).

It should be noted that Solomon built the temple as a house of prayer (1 Kgs 8:27); but a man-made structure, possibly made according to human rather than divine plan, could easily foster an attitude contrary to the original intent.

[52]The probability that this contrast is intended would be strengthened if the citation of Isa 66:2 had been completed. Stephen's speech omits the clear statement that God dwells in the repentant heart, and the reader is left wondering (cf. Marshall 146, 130-31). Does the concluding accusation that the Jews lack the spiritual characteristics associated with belonging to God's covenant (7:51-53) supply the vital clue?

[53]A. F. J. Klijn, "Stephen's Speech--Acts vii.2-53", *NTS* 4 (1957-58) 29-31.

[54]If this is the case, Ellis (*Paul's Use* 107; *Prophecy and Hermeneutic* 137, cf. 182-83) gives another possible reason to connect James's and Stephen's speeches: of the nine OT quotations in the NT which have the words λέγει κύριος (Acts 7:49; 15:16-17; Rom 12:19; 14:11; 1 Cor 14:21; 2 Cor 6:16-18; Heb 8:8-12; 10:16-17; 10:30; cf. Acts 2:17), a greater portion relate to the "temple" typology in which the Christian community is viewed as God's new temple.

terms of the establishment of the Christian community.[55] More precisely, since the Gentiles are to be added after the restoration of the tent of David, it is God's establishment of the community of those in Israel who have repented and accepted Jesus as their messiah which presupposes the inclusion of the Gentiles.

Two further comments should be made about Amos 9:11-12 as it stands in its New Testament setting. The first is that in the second part of the oracle--which as we have said returns to James's main subject stating that the rest of the people, that is, all Gentiles,[56] may seek the Lord--the prophet defines the new group of people who have been granted access to God as those ἐφ' οὓς ἐπικέκληται τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐπ' αὐτούς. This is a key description. It not only takes up the thought of λαὸς τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ and indicates that those so designated are placed under divine ownership;[57] it also recalls the description of repentant Jews who are baptized ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Acts 2:38; cf. 2:21; Jas 2:7). And the reader is left with the tantalizing thought that in their New Testament setting the words can be not only a synonym for "Christian" but also an allusion to baptism.

The second comment concerns the conclusion of the quotation, λέγει κύριος ποιῶν ταῦτα γνωστὰ ἀπ' αἰῶνος, the common prophetic pronouncement[58] that asserts that

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[55]Needless to say, scholarly opinion on the meaning of "the tent of David" is divided. Those seeing a reference to the Jews as the kingdom of the Davidic messiah include W. Michaelis "σκηνή", *TDNT* 7:374-75), Knowling (321), Marshall (252), Munck (*Paul* 234-35) and J. Jervell ("James: The Defender of Paul", in *Luke and the People of God. A New Look at Luke-Acts* [1972] 190; "Divided People" 51-55). Jervell, though, adds that it is not the unsuccessful proclamation to the Jews which thereby compels the proclamation to the Gentiles but Israel's acceptance of the gospel. More probably the impetus is a combination of Jewish rejection and Jewish acceptance. Representative of those who understand the words to adumbrate the story of Jesus culminating in the resurrection is Haenchen (431). Haenchen's choice is based on the presupposition that Luke's view of *Heilsgeschichte* which is exhibited in 15:16 disallows any meaning directly associated with a restored Israel.

[56]Joined by the epexegetical καί (so most commentators, e.g. Bruce [NIC] 311; Knowling 322), the compound denotes in reality one group of people; οἱ κατάλοιποι, therefore, is understood in the sense "the rest as distinct from Israel" and contains no hint of OT remnant theology.

[57]What God named, often because he had revealed himself, he possessed and protected (K. L. Schmidt, "καλέω", *TDNT* 3:498; Bietenhard, *TDNT* 5:253-54); cf. in the OT 2 Sam 6:2; 12:28; 1 Kgs 8:43; 2 Chr 6:33; 7:14; Jer 7:30; Bar 2:15; Dan 9:19; and 1 Macc 7:37.

[58]Λέγει κύριος ποιῶν ταῦτα γνωστὰ ἀπ' αἰῶνος is frequently said to reflect the addition of Isa 45:21 to Amos 9:11-12 in the style of a testimony collection (see n. 23 above). It is just as likely that the words are an amalgam of ואת עשה יאמר־יהוה from Amos 9:12 and כימי עולם from Amos 9:11, which was omitted. Alternatively, γνωστὰ ἀπ' αἰῶνος may reflect an authorial tendency to round out quotations in a biblical style (cf. Kilpatrick, "Quotations" 84).

the events just enumerated were part of the long-established plan of God[59] and that they would happen simply because God wanted them to and because God would accomplish them. The sentiment was frequently uttered in the Jewish world when the content of Scripture seemed obvious but the logical connections were obscure. This may be the case in James's argument: while the apostles and elders may remain baffled and unsure about the effect of uncircumcised Gentiles joining the people of God, they should not and could not have any doubt over the legality of a matter which bore divine authorization.[60]

In sum then, the argument which is developed on the basis of Amos 9:11-12 and which is used to verify what Peter told about God's treatment of the Gentiles runs as follows: in these last days God has reconstituted the existence of the people of God in terms of Jesus the Messiah, who is the fulfilment of the Davidic promises, in order that all non-Israelites on whom God has laid his seal of ownership (through baptism?) can seek him; these events bear divine authorization and thus are legal. This argument gives way to three significant implications concerning the relation between the repentant Jews and the people from the nations: (1) as God raised up Jesus, thereby changing the interpretation of the people of God, so he has received people from the Gentiles, thereby altering how the Gentiles should be treated; (2) the Gentiles are not presented as Israel's possession or necessarily as its responsibility for the sense of the Hebrew text which was rather conducive to Jewish pride has been altered; (3) the admission of the Gentiles as God's people is related in some way to Israel for the restoration of the historical people of God on the basis of God's appointment of Jesus is the event precipitating the Gentiles' right to seek the Lord. How are these points played out?

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[59]Unlike ἀφ' ἡμερῶν ἀρχαίων (see p. 90) and ἐκ γενεῶν ἀρχαίων (see p. 152), ἀπ' αἰῶνος bears the sense of God's predetermined plan foretold by his prophets (cf. 3:21, 24).

[60]Γνωστὰ ἀπ' αἰῶνος (א B C Ψ 33 81 cop) is so elliptical an expression that copyists made various attempts to recast the phrase. The most realistic of these alternatives, γνωστὸν ἀπ' αἰῶνος ἐστιν τῷ κυρίῳ τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ (D lat [sy]; p^{74} A omitting ἐστιν) and γνωστὰ ἀπ' αἰῶνος ἐστι τῷ θεῷ πάντα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ (E P 88), accepted by Kilpatrick ("Quotations" 84-85) and Longenecker (447), yield, according to Longenecker, the paraphrase "We cannot be in opposition to the express will of God, as evidenced by Peter's testimony and the prophets' words--but only God himself knows for certain how everything fits together and is to be fully understood".

1.3. *The response to the evidence (15:19-20)*

Verses 19-20 state the inference (διό) which James feels can be drawn from the experiential and biblical evidence. This is a two-pronged comment which appears in various forms both textually and with reference to content in two other places in Acts, namely, in 15:28-29 and 21:25. The nature of this repetition necessitates our returning to the subject several times before our study is completed and thus some untidy overlap in the discussion will result. For the present the inference will be looked at from the angle of its connection with the developing argument, in particular verse 21.[61]

Verse 19 is a statement of what the assembly should not do. It recalls the thought of verse 10 and addresses indirectly the matter under debate. By the implication that the Judaizers' insistence on circumcision and obedience to Moses's law was a means of troubling or putting obstacles into the way of the Gentiles who were turning to God, reference is made "ebenso kräftig"[62] to freedom from the law. It has sometimes been suggested that παρενοχλεῖν means "put on additional burdens", the verbal prefix allegedly conveying the sense of "extra". If this is the case, what the Gentiles are told to do in order to become people of God, apart from the Judaizers' demands, could still be viewed as a burden. However, Lake and Cadbury[63] have pointed out in their commentary on the verse that παρενοχλεῖν, though exceptional to the New Testament,[64] is a common hellenistic double compound in which παρα- has no special force. In Polybius 1.8.1, for instance, the verb refers to the military acts of political states which give no peace to the adjacent territories (cf. 16.37.3) and in Judg 14:17, to Samson's wife's persistence in seeking the answer to the wedding riddle. Luke's μὴ παρενοχλεῖν also does not indicate that what might be asked of the Gentiles in the future would be necessarily a nuisance, for the present infinitive with μή has the force of "stop annoying" rather than "do not annoy".

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[61]For the details of the prohibitions and the textual difficulties of 15:20, 29 and 21:25, see Chapter IV.2.

[62]Haenchen 431.

[63]Lake and Cadbury 4:177.

[64]Compare ἐνοχλέω used in Luke 6:18 and Heb 12:15.

Verse 20 states what the assembly should do: in an authoritative written communication[65] the Gentile believers should be instructed to abstain from τῶν ἀλισγημάτων τῶν εἰδώλων καὶ τῆς πορνείας καὶ τοῦ πνικτοῦ καὶ τοῦ αἵματος. The first of these prohibitions, τὰ ἀλισγήματα τῶν εἰδώλων, refers specifically to the consumption of food used in heathen ritual, in other words, to εἰδωλόθυτα.[66] *m.ʿAbod.Zar.* 2:3 details the first century A.D. Jewish interpretation of this concept: flesh that is entering in unto an idol is permitted (to be eaten), but what comes forth is forbidden. The term first appears in 4 Macc 5:2, where it is made plain that to force a Jew to eat such meat was tantamount to apostasy; but a link with Lev 17:1-9 is sometimes suggested. The Old Testament passage deals with the appropriate location of sacrifices, and the implication is that any meat slaughtered by a native Israelite or a גר (= προσήλυτος) "outside the camp of Israel" and is not brought to the tabernacle and dedicated to YHWH but consumed where slain is idolatrous (v. 7). The penalty for disobedience is being cut off from the people.

The third prohibition--passing momentarily over πορνεία--concerns πνικτόν. This is an odd concept which perhaps means dead carcasses or such beasts as have been killed through strangulation.[67] To obtain this meaning, reference is usually made to Lev 17:13-16,[68] where it is required of both the native Israelite and the stranger sojourning

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[65]From the usage of ἐπιστέλλω in official documents, the meaning of the verb readily passed over into "instruct" and "enjoin" as here and in 21:25 and Heb 13:22. The word indicates the authoritative, almost official nature of the communication. Thus, MM, s.v. ἐπιστέλλω and K. H. Rengstorf, "στέλλω", *TDNT* 7:593.

[66]Acts 15:29; 21:25; cf. Rev 2:14, 20; 1 Cor 8:1, 4, 10. Schneider (183 n. 89) proposes that τῶν ἀλισγημάτων depends directly on ἀπέχεσθαι while the four other genitives modify ἀλισγημάτων, thereby pinpointing the cultic sense of the commands. In reply we can note, first, that while it is true that the hapax legomenon ἀλίσγημα means simply "ceremonial pollution", its cognate verb is associated with ritual and moral defilement by food (Dan 1:8; Mal 1:7, 12; Sir 40:29) and the form συναλισγο(ύ)μενοι in *Ep.Arist.* 142 has the same context. It is difficult to understand πορνεία as modifying this concept. In addition, a comparison with other instances of the four prohibitions (15:29; 21:25), which have εἰδωλόθυτα in the place of ἀλίσγηματα τῶν εἰδώλων, weakens Schneider's proposal.

[67]For other possible meanings of πνικτόν, see the discussion in Wilson, *Law* 88-92, 98-99.

[68]So also *Clem.Hom.* 7.8; 8.19; cf. Exod 22:30 MT; Lev 7:24; 14:21. The word does not occur in the LXX or in hellenistic Jewish writings. Philo (*Spec.Leg.* 4.122) does state that the strangling (ἄγχοντες) and choking (ἀποπνίγοντες) of animals made them unfit for sacrifice, for such manner of preparation entombed the blood in the carcass. Pythagorean dietary laws (Hierocles, Commentary on vv. 67-69) forbid ἡ τῶν ἀθύτων καὶ ἀνιέρων σαρκῶν μετάληψις, i.e. meat of animals which had not been properly slaughtered. See BAGD, s.v. πνικτός, for both the meaning of the word and supplementary bibliography, and H. Bietenhard, "πνίγω", *TDNT* 6:455-57.

within the nation (although in Deut 14:21 the resident alien [גר][69] and the foreigner [נכרי] are exempt), at the penalty of being cut off, that an animal should be slaughtered in such a way so that all the blood drains from the carcass.[70] The reason for this procedure is straightforward: if the animal dies in any other way, it "chokes" since the life seated in the blood remains in the body. This regulation then is closely related to, yet distinct from the fourth:[71] that Gentile believers should refrain from blood. Although αἷμα *could* be a euphemism for murder (Gen 9:6; *Clem.Hom.* 8.19), in conjunction with τὰ ἀλισγήματα τῶν εἰδώλων and πνικτόν which refer to diet, the term seemingly is limited to a ritual sense.[72] In this regard Lev 17:10 (cf. 1 Sam 14:32-34; Josephus, *Ant.* 3.260) plainly forbids either an Israelite or a גר to eat any blood; to disobey is to be "cut off". The basis of this injunction, expressed in Lev 17:11 (cf. *Jub.* 6:7) is seemingly the levitical significance of blood: when an animal was sacrificed, its blood as the bearer of life was the means of atonement before God.

To return to the second prohibition, it does seem strange to find an injunction against πορνεία listed among food regulations.[73] The term πορνεία usually brings to mind prostitution, unchastity, fornication, and every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse in general (cf. Lev 18:20, 22-23). But the connection with food regulations seems to become clearer when πορνεία is understood in terms of mixed marriages with pagans (Num 25:1; cf. 2 Cor 6:14) which led to idolatry and rejection of God, participation in pagan worship described by the Old Testament (e.g. Jer 3:1-4:4) as spiritual adultery

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[69]The LXX translates גר there as πάροικος, not προσήλυτος. Πάροικος (or ξένος) usually occurs in place of προσήλυτος when גר bears a definite socio-economic nuance, such as Abraham's nomadic existence (Gen 23:4) or Moses's political exile (Exod 2:22) or Israel's sojourn in Egypt (Gen 15:13; cf. Deut 26:5; Isa 52:4). It is debatable, though, whether πάροικος and προσήλυτος are distinct sociological classifications, the former being the equivalent of גר תושב and the latter of גר. W. C. Allen ("On the Meaning of ΠΡΟΣΗΛΥΤΟΣ in the Septuagint", *Exp* 4th series, 10 [1894] 264-75) maintains that they are, προσήλυτος never having the meaning *advena*; Schürer (*Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes* 3:125 n. 67), that they are not.

[70]Πνικτόν may also refer to the extended regulations of the rabbis, viz., every animal which is not put to death by ritual slaughter and every animal which has a lethal blemish or dies of such a blemish are included. See Bietenhard, *TDNT* 6:457.

[71]F. J. A. Hort (*Judaistic Christianity. A Course of Lectures* [1898] 72, 209) makes πνικτόν a particular case of abstaining from blood. There are passages, though, which mention blood without associating it with strangled animals: Gen 9:4; Lev 3:17; 7:26-27; 17:10-12; Deut 12:16, 23.

[72]In *Jub.* 7:27-33 the moral and cultic meanings of αἷμα are juxtaposed.

[73]Consequently, emendations like χοιρείας and πορκείας have been proposed. See the discussion on pp. 183-84 and the bibliography in Metzger 431.

and which in fact offered opportunity in many temples for religious prostitution, and breaches of the Jewish marriage laws stipulated in Lev 18:6-18 to maintain the purity of the people of God.[74] Such practices were to be avoided by the Israelite and גר alike (Lev 18:26, 29) or else they would be cut off.

Each of these four prohibitions then can be found in some form in the levitical law, specifically in Lev 17-18. Each is an injunction imposed not only upon the native-born Israelite but also on the גר, the sojourner in the land of Israel who was in part the forerunner of the προσήλυτος. They all bear the penalty of being cut off from the people. Whether the punishment is interpreted sociologically, i.e. expulsion from the nation, or, as seems more likely, is interpreted theologically, i.e. death executed by God in his own time, the end result is separation from the people of God.[75]

1.4. *The reference to the proclamation of Moses (15:21)*

The speech ends with the observation in verse 21 that Μωϋσῆς ἐκ γενεῶν ἀρχαίων κατὰ πόλιν τοὺς κηρύσσοντας αὐτὸν ἔχει ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς κατὰ πᾶν σάββατον ἀναγινωσκόμενος. This is a difficult statement.[76] It is clear (a) that the words have a contemporary application, all the verbs being in the present tense;[77] (b) that Μωϋσῆς, an instance of metonymy, stands for "Moses's law" or "keeping the law";[78] (c) that κατὰ πόλιν ("in every [single] city")[79] alludes to the communities of the Jewish diaspora; (d) that Μωϋσῆς τοὺς κηρύσσοντας αὐτὸν ἔχει is the equivalent of Μωϋσῆς κηρύσσεται; and (e) that syntactically ἐκ γενεῶν ἀρχαίων and κατὰ πόλιν modify τοὺς κηρύσσοντας αὐτὸν ἔχει and ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς κατὰ πᾶν σάββατον belongs with ἀναγινωσκόμενος. Less definite is the purport of other words.

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[74]Some commentators would limit the meaning of πορνεία in this instance to the incestuous marriages of Lev 18:6-18 (Schneider 2:183; Roloff 232; Haenchen 432; probably Bruce [Greek] 300); others would give the term the general sense used elsewhere in the NT (Knowling 324; Rackham 265).

[75]For a discussion of נכרתה הנפש ההוא מעמיה, see pp. 188-89.

[76]Dibelius ("Council" 97) places it among the most difficult in the NT.

[77]Although ἐκ γενεῶν ἀρχαίων gives ἔχει a perfective sense, the action is still conceived as in progress (Burton §17).

[78]BAGD, s.v. κηρύσσω 2bβ.

[79]BAGD, s.v. κατά II1d.

Probably, when the present tense of the verbs is taken into consideration, ἐκ γενεῶν ἀρχαίων refers to the church's earliest days[80] and in recall of Peter's audience at Pentecost (2:5, 9-11) implies that a link with the Judaism practised throughout the Roman Empire is inherent to the Christian community. The church was founded on Judaism. In the case of τοὺς κηρύσσοντας αὐτόν (i.e. Μωϋσῆν), no doubt Jews are in view, either in the explicit sense of Jewish preachers (cf. 2 Chr 17:9; Ezra 7:10) or in the transferred sense that the Jewish lifestyle bore manifest witness to the Torah and associated tenets of Judaism. Yet the setting of the council--the Jewish Christian community in Jerusalem--and the reason for the council--the Judaizers' insistence on circumcision and obedience to the law--hint that a more precise reference for the participial phrase may be intended. The suspicion gains substance from Luke's use of the articular participle instead of the appropriate passive finite form of κηρύσσειν: this circuitous way of expressing the verbal idea places the greater stress on the person performing the action (cf. Rom 2:21; 10:14).[81] With τοὺς κηρύσσοντας αὐτόν, therefore, it is probable that attention is meant to be drawn to the fact that there were Jews outside Jewish officialdom who were teaching others to keep the law; at the same time it is possible, because of the imprecise description, that the naming of the particular group of Jews (Jewish Christians?) involved is intentionally avoided.

Saliently (and for the present-day reader unfortunately) the recipients of the proclamation are not specified. The most natural sense of κηρύσσειν would put in mind people who were unfamiliar with Moses's law. But if the preaching were concomitant with the reading of the Scriptures in the synagogues--whether syntactically ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς κατὰ πᾶν σάββατον ἀναγινωσκόμενος expresses the time, manner, or reason

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[80]A neat balance with ἀφ' ἡμερῶν ἀρχαίων in v. 7 could then result, if that prepositional phrase also denoted the early days of the community (see p. 90). It has been suggested that ἐκ γενεῶν ἀρχαίων refers to the early days of the dispersions under the Assyrian and Babylonian rulers when Jews were forced to establish satellite institutions of worship outside Palestine (Bruce [Greek] 301; Knowling 26). This seems to imply an improbable antiquarian interest.

[81]Cf. G. Friedrich, "κῆρυξ", *TDNT* 3:704.

for the preaching--as may well be the case,[82] the addressees would include not only Gentiles but also Jews, many of whom were apparently in need of such instruction (cf. Rom 2:21).

Several other inferences come from the words ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς κατὰ πᾶν σάββατον ἀναγινωσκόμενος. There is the reminder that keeping the law was a well-established tenet in the tradition of Judaism not only held by Jews in the homeland but also practised apart from Jerusalem and the temple. There is the probable warning that since through the regular reading of the Torah in the synagogue people are in a position to know better, the degree of responsibility for acting accordingly is increased.[83] And there may be the idea that the Gentiles who are the object of the preaching are (or should be) associated in some way with the synagogue.

The discussion so far shows that James's concluding comment focuses on the idea of keeping the law. It speaks of the widespread dissemination of this practice throughout the diaspora communities, seemingly alludes to the Christian community's close association with the Judaism of the diaspora communities, even since its inception at Pentecost, and implies the Gentiles' awareness of and possible inclusion in the Jewish beliefs and practices.

The greatest difficulty with verse 21 is to determine its place in the flow of James's argument. It is clear from the γάρ that the verse gives a reason, but for what? Three possibilities have been suggested.

First, verse 21 explains the positive injunctions of verse 20. The four prohibitions, it is said,[84] were matters of Judaism which caused special annoyance to those

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[82]Alternatively, since synagogue preaching by nature cannot be precisely classified as proclamation (cf. Friedrich, *TDNT* 3:705 n. 42) and since Luke is fond of expressing principal verbal concepts by means of participial phrases, ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς κατὰ πᾶν σάββατον ἀναγινωσκόμενος itself may be dependent on γάρ: "for Moses has those preaching him and is read in the synagogues" (cf. NIV; Phillips; JB; TEV).

[83]A similar notion is implied by τὰς φωνὰς τῶν προφητῶν τὰς κατὰ πᾶν σάββατον ἀναγινωσκομένας in 13:27 with reference to the Jews who killed Jesus because they did not know him and failed to appreciate the significance of the prophetic witness which they heard regularly: not only had those Jews thrown away the opportunity of salvation, they were culpable for not acting in accord with their alleged knowledge.

[84]This is Calvin's view (Calvin 2:73) which has become virtually the received interpretation. It has been represented in substance, for example, by Holtzmann (99), Longenecker (448-49), and Roloff (233).

Jews who might be thinking of turning to Christ and to Jewish Christians who still frequented the synagogue; in order to avoid possible friction within the Christian community and between Christians and Jews, Gentiles believers should respect Jewish scruples and therefore not bring the church into disrepute. From this basic statement, the interpretation has been developed in two directions. Some proponents believe that the prohibitions were in James's view and in fact matters of indifference, of sociological origin and not of theological import, over which it was inconsequential for the Gentile believers to make a contest.[85] Other scholars understand the prohibitions to be of theological necessity for verse 21 establishes that the law had a certain claim on the Gentile converts: through obedience to the prohibitions Gentile converts signified their harmony with the true Judaism.[86]

Chrysostom[87] relates verse 21 to the proposal in verse 20 in another way. For him James's closing comment addresses the objection "Why not send these four injunctions to the Jews also?". The response may be paraphrased "because they can learn all this from the law".

The second explanation treats verse 21 as stating the defence for the liberality clause in verse 19.[88] James reassures Jewish Christians and the Judaizers in particular, saying in effect, "This freedom may be safely accorded to the Gentiles: as the teaching of the Torah is attended to already by Jewish preachers and the synagogues, Jewish Christians will not neglect nor disdain the law, Jews will still turn to Christ, and, should they wish, Gentiles will have plenty of opportunity to learn more about the law, though the law will suffer no insult in failing to obtain the allegiance of those who had never been subject to it".[89] This interpretation usually carries two corollaries: (1) the Jerusalem church is relieved of the responsibility to teach the law; (2) the Gentile and

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[85]For example, R. N. Longenecker, *Paul. Apostle of Liberty* (1964) 259-60.

[86]Loisy 595; Haenchen 453-54; cf. Baur, *Paul* 120 n. 1. In Haenchen's opinion v. 21 therefore presents Luke's final argument for a mission to uncircumcised Gentiles: "sie steht im Einklang mit Mose selbst, der von den Heiden eben diese Enthaltungen gefordert hat".

[87]Chrysostom, *Hom.* 33.

[88]This is essentially the view of Erasmus which is developed variously by Bruce ([NIC] 312), Rackham (254), Friedrich (*TDNT* 3:705 n. 43), Munck (*Paul* 235), and Filson (*Decades* 82), to name but a sample. Munck's paraphrase deserves special mention: "James assumes that Israel will convert the Gentiles some day, and that therefore these particular prohibitions are necessary in order to make the synagogues all over the world missionary centres for Christ's Gospel".

[89]Rackham (254) makes the last point.

Jewish sections of the church have different standards of conduct so that Gentile freedom need not imply Jewish emancipation.

Verse 21 has also been related in various ways to verses 16-18.[90] According to J. H. Ropes the concluding comment anticipates the possible objection that Amos 9:11-12 envisaged only the restoration of the ancient Davidic kingdom and not the colonization throughout the Greek world. James therefore presents a claim which brings the whole civilized world into the phrase "the nations which have been called by my name", namely, that the Jews have synagogues all over the world.[91] M. Dibelius assumes that a little midrash has been applied to the Amos quotation to provide further proof, in addition to πρῶτον (v. 14) and ἀπ' αἰῶνος (v. 18), that long ago God planned to accept the Gentiles into the Christian community.[92] G. Stählin[93] equates τοὺς κηρύσσοντας αὐτόν (v. 21) and τὰ ἔθνη ἐφ' οὓς ἐπικέκληται τό ὄνομά μου (v. 17) and sees verse 21 expressing the daring thought that every reading of Moses also contains a proclamation about the Lord (possibly about Christ) for the Gentiles and claims them for the new people of God.

To understand verse 21 as explicating verses 16-18 cannot be susbstantiated. Ropes himself admits a weakness: the interpretation needs "confirmation from some source for the idea that the preaching of the Law in the Synagogue would be thought of as satisfying the requirement that the name of God should have been named over the

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[90]In addition, Richard ("Divine Purpose" 273) thinks that v. 21 confirms the Mosaic origin of the prohibitions and bears a structural relationship with vv. 16-18 which pinpoints the dual theme of James's speech:

a. from early generations--in every city had those who preach him	a. universal mission (v. 17) by Jewish preachers
b. in synagogues--on every sabbath being read	b. via Judaism (v. 16) divine purpose

F. Zimmer (*Galaterbrief und Apostelgeschichte. Ein exegetischer Beitrag zur Geschichte des Urchristentums* [1882] 162) also hit on linking v. 21 to the OT quotation, but he rejected the connection as "sprachlich...reineweg unmöglich" and chose instead a connection with v. 20.

[91]J. H. Ropes, "Acts xv.21", *JBL* 15 (1896) 75-81, esp. 80-81. He is followed by Lake and Cadbury (4:177-78). Though Ropes does argue this point and is usually reported by other scholars as making γάρ bear this inference, he says as well, "On this view the γάρ of vs. 21 relates to the practical proposal of vs. 19" (Ropes, "Acts xv.21" 80). Such contradictory statements illustrate the difficulty the verse presents.

[92]Dibelius, "Council" 97-98. Dibelius bases his interpretation on the observation that v. 21 (i.e "Moses is also proclaimed to the world without our assistance") is introduced by the conjunction γάρ instead of the expected ἀλλά.

[93]Stählin (206) offers this as an alternative to taking v. 21 with v. 20.

Gentiles and thus as constituting a claim".[94] Such proof is missing or at least not obvious. There are other difficulties. Although verse 21 mentions the antiquity and world-wide extension of the Jewish religion, its primary focus is not ἐκ γενεῶν ἀρχαίων κατὰ πόλιν. Does not the grammar show that the greater interest is that Moses (i.e. the law) is being preached and that Luke has avoided aiming the comment specifically at the assembly?[95] Doubt is cast further by the unlikeliness that the reader would naturally connect these particular sections of the speech.[96] No explicit indication of such a link exists except the temporal prepositional phrases (ἀπ' αἰῶνος and ἐκ γενεῶν ἀρχαίων) and if ἐκ γενεῶν ἀρχαίων does refer to the early days of the church, as we suggested above, the phrases are not identical in any case. A further consideration is that it is contrary to Luke's practice to delay stating the relevance of biblical quotations for their respective arguments[97] and that even if there are exceptions to this custom, James's speech cannot be included among them. The expressed purpose of Amos 9:11-12 is to confirm what Peter has said (καί τούτῳ, v. 15) and its implied intention (διό, v. 19), to lay the foundation for the proposal in verses 19-20. If verse 21 refers back to verses 16-18, the reference includes equally the rest of James's speech. As for Stählin's irregular equation of τοὺς κηρύσσοντας αὐτόν and πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐφ' οὓς ἐπικέκληται τὸ ὄνομά μου, the word Μωϋσῆς is never used in Acts to denote directly or indirectly the Christian proclamation; nor does the personal pronoun αὐτόν meaning Μωϋσῆς allow the idea in the context.

Before we comment on the other interpretations of γάρ--whether the conjunction signals a reference to verse 20 or to verse 19--several observations are instructive. Some of these points have already been mentioned; but the repetition is worthwhile, the more so since they are seemingly often overlooked. (1) The adversative ἀλλά[98]

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[94]Ropes, "Acts xv.21" 81.

[95]Cf. Conzelmann 85.

[96]Haenchen (438 n. 1) makes this point.

[97]The practice holds even in Acts 13:36-37 which Ropes ("Acts xv.21" 80-81) mentions particularly to prove his point. Ropes seemingly anticipates our criticism, stating that Luke postponed the application in order to express the thought most prominent in his mind, namely, the Gentiles' freedom from circumcision (v. 19). That implies, wrongly in my opinion, that v. 21, at the very least, is superfluous and possibly the OT citation as well.

[98]For further discussion on ἀλλά see pp. 198-99.

introducing verse 20 links μὴ παρενοχλεῖν (v. 19) and ἐπιστεῖλαι (v. 20), each of which serves as the object of ἐγὼ κρίνω (v. 19). Such grammar makes verses 19 and 20 form a mutually dependent, contrasting pair. Verse 19 gives the negative pole: a statement of what the assembly should not require of the Gentile converts. Verse 20 contains the positive pole: a statement of what the assembly should ask the Gentile converts to do. Thus, James's proposal is in effect double-barrelled, not two disparate thoughts. (2) While each pole of the proposal has both Jewish Christians (represented by the assembly) and Gentile converts in view, there is a difference in emphasis: in verse 19 the predominant concern is the present actions of the *Jewish* Christians towards the Gentile converts; in verse 20 it is the future actions of the *Gentile* converts which are to be determined by the Jewish Christians. (3) The reader does not know for certain whether verse 21 focuses on Jews or on Gentiles, whether κατὰ πόλιν and ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς intend ultimately a reference to the practices of the Jews in the diaspora communities or to the knowledge of the Gentiles living in the communities of the Jewish diaspora. This is unexpected and no doubt significant, for in the other statements in the debate it is generally clear who is being addressed.

With these observations in view--simplistic though they may seem--weaknesses in the accepted interpretations of verse 21 appear. Most conspicuous is the arbitrariness, indeed the fallacy, of divorcing verses 19 and 20 and requiring verse 21 to refer almost exclusively to one or the other. Is it not more natural, given the grammar and the content, to understand the comment in both verses to be that which verse 21 clarifies? An answer in the affirmative would certainly correspond to the two interests running through Luke's record of the council's proceedings. The debate presumably is conducted by the Jewish Christians; the believers from Antioch who have accompanied Paul and Barnabas (v. 2) and who themselves may not be Jews (cf. Gal 2:3) appear as silent observers.[99] At the same time the subject being debated by the council and the

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[99]This staging of the characters is obvious in Peter's speech to which James refers--ὑμεῖς ἐπίστασθε ὅτι ἀφ' ἡμερῶν ἀρχαίων ἐν ὑμῖν (v. 7), τί πειράζετε τὸν θεόν (v. 10), πιστεύομεν (v. 11). It is noticeable as well in the narrative--συνήχθησαν οἱ ἀπόστολοι καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι (v. 6), τοῖς ἀποστόλοις καὶ τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις σὺν ὅλῃ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ (v. 22). We are therefore certainly correct to assume its occurrence likewise in James's speech.

primary orientation of Acts 15, following on from the Judaizers' demand in verse 1, are not the Jews' relation to their ancestral traditions and practices; to the fore is the Gentiles' relation to the law *vis-à-vis* their membership in the people of God. The gist of Peter's speech is that as the Gentiles were saved apart from the law, they do not *have* to obey the law. The same theme of freedom is implied in Barnabas's and Paul's report of the miracles which God performed among uncircumcised Gentiles and reappears in the μὴ παρενοχλεῖν of verse 19. It is the believers in Jerusalem who have to come to terms with the irrefutable evidence from personal experience, miracles, and Scripture that God has accepted uncircumcised Gentiles as his people.

There are difficulties also with the implications carried in the wake of taking verse 21 with either verse 19 or verse 20. It is often overlooked that when reference is made to the Gentile and Jewish sections of the church having different standards of conduct because verse 21 stresses the Jews' obedience to the law, there follows the further corollary that the two groups cannot mix. This would be a strange note on which to end a paragraph purporting to resolve the very problem of ecclesiastical division. Surely verse 21 cannot be arguing for the separation of Jewish and Gentile Christians. It is also unlikely that from verse 21 can be read the idea that the preaching of Moses should be understood as establishing a claim for the Jewish religion throughout the lands of the diaspora and thus a claim on the Gentiles in such lands to belong to Judaism by means of the four prohibitions.[100] The idea contradicts James's first point with which Amos 9:11-12 is in agreement, namely, that Gentiles were now in their own right people of God and no longer aliens in the land of YHWH.

A further difficulty concerns the proposed sociological or practical import of the prohibitions. Now this may be in truth the intent of the four items;[101] but if it is, it

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[100]Ropes, "Acts xv.21" 78.

[101]See Chapter IV.2 and various discussions on Gal 2:11-14, some of which are cited on p. 227 n. 39.

cannot be determined in fact from the text as it presently stands for several reasons.[102] The injunctions are classified in the immediate context implicitly as no more than that they are not tiresome (v. 19). The Judaizers' demand, which the various comments in the chapter ultimately address, is set up not as a question whether Gentile converts must conform to the Jewish law in order to participate in Christian fellowship but as a question of the terms in which the Christian message of salvation was to be stated.[103] Verse 14 does express James's agreement with Peter as to how the Gentiles were made people of God; but while the verse may be said to sum up a theological position, there is no indication in the rest of the speech that the theological interest abates.

On the basis of these various observations we suggest that verse 21 is intended to explain how liberality can be extended and abstinences can be enjoined. Or to state the purpose in another way, verse 21 has a twofold reference: it provides a reason, in reply to verse 19, for the Jewish Christians to feel content with the proposal--the witness to the tenets and practices of Judaism was still maintained--and, in reply to verse 20, for the Gentile Christians not to be repulsed by the proposal--they must bear in mind the twinned facts of Jewish propaganda and of the church's connection with Judaism. To achieve this purpose, verse 21 points out (1) the source of the prohibitions, i.e. Moses's law; (2) the prominent place which the law and the proclamation thereof had (and had had for some time) within Judaism and, as a consequence, among Jewish Christians; and (3) the Gentiles' awareness of this emphasis. Beyond these three points James does not appear to go. He does not elaborate what purpose the four prohibitions serve. However, there may be implied the daring thought that the law of Moses and the practices of the diaspora contain the

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[102]Ropes ("Acts xv.21" 76-79) offers other objections against the notion that the prohibitions were meant to alleviate friction between Jewish and Gentile believers. (1) Justice is not done to the form of the sentence, in which the antiquity of synagogue worship in the diaspora is emphasized. The words διὰ τοὺς Ἰουδαίους (cf. 16:3) would be more appropriate. (The first part of this objection reflects Ropes's own misplaced emphasis.) (2) Κηρύσσειν is not taken naturally as referring to the repetition of familiar precepts before hearers zealous to observe them. (3) It is not clear that a legalistic Jew would have been content with the four prohibitions alone; to have been so would imply that the transition to accepting Gentiles as people of God had already been made. (4) Abstinence from licentiousness (which Ropes assumes to be the correct sense of πορνεία) is not based on Jewish law to any greater degree than any other point of Christian morals.

[103]See p. 10.

information necessary for both the "that" and "how" of the Gentiles' admission. We will return to this notion when we examine the assembly's decision. For now our task is to summarize James's argument.

1.5. *Summary*

This is a tightly-constructed argument with each of the four parts drawing attention to the Gentiles' position *vis-à-vis* Judaism. Explicitly by an appeal to Peter's comments which record the Gentiles' way to salvation and implicitly by a reapplication of indicative theological language, James argues, in verse 14, that just as God had elected the nation Israel to be his people, so God, manifesting his providence and his will, has elected people from the Gentiles to be his people. He states, further, from the observation in verses 15-18 that this election is verified and explicated by the Scriptures, specifically Amos 9:11-12, that God has reconstituted the existence of the people of God in terms of Jesus the Messiah in order that all non-Israelites on whom God has set his seal of ownership could seek him. Given that God's raising up of Jesus has altered the interpretation of the people of God and consequently the treatment of the Gentiles, given that the Gentiles' election is dependent upon the existence of the restored Israel, and given that in this schema the Gentiles are not Israel's possession, it is inferred--and this is the next part of James's argument (vv. 19-20)--first, that the Gentiles do not have to be circumcised and keep the law in order to be saved and, second, that the Gentiles should abstain from certain foods and illicit sexual practices. The proposed injunctions are those which are imposed by the law not only on the native Israelite but also on the sojourner in the land of Israel and which bear for the disobedient the penalty of divine judgment. Finally, James justifies his analysis of the evidence by pointing out, in verse 21, the prominent place which the law and the proclamation thereof had within Judaism and the Gentiles' awareness of this emphasis. In this way he provides reassurance to the Jewish Christians and explanation to the Gentile Christians that the Christian community had an indelible link with Judaism.

Thus, James, in response to the Judaizers' insistence on circumcision and obedience to the law as the way to salvation, develops the somewhat paradoxical thesis of freedom from the law and responsibility to Judaism; and in doing so, he takes "the discussion of the conversion of the Gentiles from a proselyte model to an eschatological one".[104] That is to say, this argument constructs the picture that there is connected with but not identified as Israel a group of Gentiles who, because of God's twofold act of electing people from the Gentiles and reconstituting Israel, share in the messianic blessings with Christian Jews but will persist as non-Jews.

2. The Role at the Council

Acts 15:13-21 generates one other question for our study. What was James's role at the council? Since the inference in verses 19-20 is, according to verse 21, set up as a compromise aimed to reconcile the Jewish and Gentile sectors of the church, is James presented as the great ecclesiastical mediator, mandating theological and sociological harmony? Or more precisely, in anticipation of the subject of our next chapter, since James's solution is accepted as the church's decision on the position of the Gentiles, is James presented as presiding over the assembly, serving as the dominant leader in the Jerusalem community, and representing the current theological viewpoint of the mother church? To answer these questions we will look first at what significant extrabiblical writers have to say about James, thus constructing an historical framework, for their discussions tend to be more detailed than Luke's, and then we will consider the biblical data, confining ourselves primarily to what Acts itself records and to how Luke seemingly means his readers to perceive James.[105]

2.1. *The external evidence*

Descriptions of James's life and martyrdom draw attention to his devotion to the practices of Judaism. Two passages in particular are illustrative. Eusebius, *Hist.eccl.*

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[104]Longenecker 446.

[105]Obviously, how the data of Acts 15 are related to the events recorded in Acts 11:27-30 and Gal 2:1-14 would need to be considered if our interests in the present discussion were also significantly historical.

2.23.4-18 preserves a statement of the second century church historian Hegesippus, in which James is identified as the brother of Jesus[106] and portrayed as a Nazirite held in high respect by all the Jews. The account is full of improbabilities and may be largely false: it is extremely unlikely that James would have been allowed to enter the holy of holies in the temple sanctuary (§6) or that the scribes and Phariesees would have tried to employ him to witness against the Christians (§§10-12); it is also improbable that he had been a Nazirite from birth (§§4-5) or that his death was viewed by even the Jews as the cause of the siege of Jerusalem. What is doubtless true is that James, called "The Just", was an excessively righteous and pious man, an ascetic who had great influence among the non-Christian Jews in Jerusalem as well as the more conservative Jewish Christians and who was executed by the scribes and Pharisees because of his refusal to denounce Jesus. This more moderate portrait is backed up by Josephus's comments. Devoid of an obvious Ebionite polemic to glorify James, *Ant.* 20.200-1 clearly states that the execution of James, plotted as the means by which the newly-appointed highpriest Ananus and the Sadducees could seize control, offended those in Jerusalem who were περὶ τοὺς νόμους ἀκριβεῖς.

In addition, church tradition gives James the title "bishop of bishops", that is, bishop of Jerusalem.[107] Whether and when James actually achieved that honour cannot be proven from the literature, though the unlikeliness that the second century ecclesiastical structure can be traced to the middle of the first century A.D. is offset by the pervasive view that at the time of his death James was a major and significant leader in Jerusalem.

2.2. *The internal evidence*

When we turn to the evidence in Acts, we immediately become aware of how little Luke tells his readers about James. The omission is made more conspicuous by James's valuable contribution to the council debate. His apparent importance, unlike

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[106]For the various theories regarding James's filial relationship with Jesus, see Lightfoot, "The Brethren of the Lord", in *Galatians* 252-96; J. B. Mayor, *The Epistle of St. James* (1910) vi-lv; and J. McHugh, *The Mother of Jesus in the New Testament* (1975) 200-54, 451-54.

[107]See, for example, Eusebius, *Hist.eccl.* 2.1.2; *Clem.Recogn.* 1.43; *Clem.Hom.* 1.20; and other passages mentioned by J. D. G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament. An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity* (1977) 240-41.

Peter's, is sprung virtually unexpected. His speech has no grounding in earlier events in Acts. This makes the present-day reader suspect, on the one hand, that the recipients of Acts were presumed to know the full details and, on the other, that whereas James may have had great influence on the earliest Christian community's perception of itself, he had minor relevance in the actual act of the spreading of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome which is traced by Luke.

Before Acts 15 James is mentioned twice, though only once specifically by name. He undoubtedly figures among the brothers of Jesus, in 1:14, who awaited the advent of the Spirit with the rest of Jesus' followers; and thus it would be reasonable to accept that he participated in the development of the church from its inception. Paul's statement in 1 Cor 15:7 that the risen Christ appeared to James would support that assumption and, along with James's filial relation to Jesus, justify James's later elevation to leadership.[108] The second instance in Acts is Peter's ἀπαγγείλατε Ἰακώβῳ καὶ τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ταῦτα of 12:17. This crucial instruction may imply that a transfer of leadership has occurred in the interim since Peter's arrest or since his visit to Samaria and Caesarea. James is certainly being singled out for some reason. If τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς here is the equivalent of τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις[109] (καὶ τοῖς ἀποστόλοις ?), it is tenable that he is being pictured as the chief among the church leaders. The point is still arguable even if, as is more likely, τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς refers to the Christian community in general;[110] and it would be made stronger if the meeting of Gal 2:1-10 has already occurred, for, in contrast to Gal 1:18-19, Gal 2:9 lists James first in the triumvirate called οἱ δοκοῦντες στῦλοι εἶναι. There could be import as well in the observation that the words in 12:17 imply the existence of another group of believers associated specifically with James, not present in Mary's house. However, the rapidly expanding size of the community in Jerusalem cautions us not to make too much of this idea. The reason for the absence of James and the brethren, if they were still in Jerusalem (cf. 12:1-3), is probably quite simply that the Jerusalem church was too large by now to be gathered all in a single

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[108]Compare the fragment of the Gospel of the Hebrews preserved in Jerome, *vir.ill.* 2.

[109]Cf. Jacquier 368; Marshall 211; Bruce (NIC) 252.

[110]Cf. Haenchen 371 n. 1.

home.[111] Given the impreciseness of the language, we do best to claim no more at this point in the story than that James has emerged as a Christian Jew of significance.[112]

As a kind of control, for when the readers encounter the council they do not have this information, note should be made of the characterization of James at the end of Acts. In 21:18,[113] as in 12:17, James is named in distinction from other members of the Christian community, in this case πάντες οἱ πρεσβύτεροι; and he is shown to be the person whom Paul approaches in order to give a report of his work among the Gentiles. He is also placed with those concerned for the right of Christian Jews to maintain their ancestral laws but does not appear to be a proven extremist or legalist himself. What connection, historical or linguistic, James's support of this particular theological perspective has with the words "the men from James" in Gal 2:12 exceeds the present discussion, except to comment in general on the apparent conservative bent of James's interpretation of Christianity.

As for the evidence from the immediate context of Acts 15, it is noteworthy that James makes the final speech in the debate. This narrative feature could elevate him to a position as important and influential as Peter's and possibly surpassing it. At the very least the impression is given that what James had to say was critical and could go some ways towards persuading and unifying the discordant gathering.

There are three other relevant observations. The first comes from the content of James's speech. The flow of the argument shows that James is doing more than simply summing up the debate[114] which has gone before. While James does build on what Peter has said, he also makes an assumption which Peter may share but which Peter does not state.

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[111]Haenchen 371 n. 1.

[112]However, Lake and Cadbury (4:138) claim quite conclusively, "It is clear...that he is regarded as the head of the community". A. Ehrhardt (*The Acts of the Apostles* [1962] 52) infers that the transition has occurred as early as the events in Acts 8:14.

[113]For further discussion of this passage, see Chapter V.5.

[114]Contra NEB: "James summed up". In this regard nothing should be made of ἀπεκρίθη Ἰάκωβος λέγων in v. 13. The translation "James replied" (RSV; Phillips) should intend the same as "James spoke up" (NIV; TEV). While ἀποκρίνομαι in conjunction with λέγω/φημί more commonly forms the participle, the expression, probably coming from ...לאמר ויען, can just as easily be λέγων...ἀπεκρίθη as in Matt 25:9, 37, 44, 45; Mark 15:9; John 1:26; 12:23; and Acts 15:13 (H. M. F. Büchsel, "κρίνω", *TDNT* 3:944-45). It simply means "he began".

The second observation is that James's solution in verses 19-20 is prefaced by διὸ ἐγὼ κρίνω. The verb is critical. It has been said to connote (a) no more than a contemplative νομίζω, that James was merely stating his thoughts on the issue under debate;[115] or (b) a judicial pronouncement, that James was issuing a definitive statement;[116] or (c) a non-authoritarian proposal, that James was formulating a motion which because of his influential position in the Jerusalem church would be persuasive and determinative.[117] Luke's use of κρίνειν is quite varied, spanning the range of meaning from "to think, suppose, believe"[118] to "to judge" in the legal sense;[119] it also means "to reach a decision, propose".[120] Such diversity seems of little help, except that the verb does occur elsewhere in reference to the outcome of the apostles' conference (Acts 16:4; 21:25) and in those instances, admittedly where the opinion of the whole assembly has come to bear, it does seem to specify an authoritative decision. Could the accompanying emphatic ἐγώ give κρίνω in 15:19 a similar ring? even that of final authority? This is doubtful. In the context any wider import of the pronoun beyond placing the emphasis on James's own thinking is plainly cancelled by Luke's description of the procedure for the council coming to a decision: both ἔδοξε τοῖς ἀποστόλοις καὶ τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις σὺν ὅλῃ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ (v. 22; cf. v. 23) and ἔδοξε ἡμῶν γενομένοις ὁμοθυμαδόν (v. 25) claim ecclesiastical unity and no notion of coercion. Instructive in this regard as well is the contextual similarity between διὸ ἐγὼ κρίνω and the ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν beginning each rejoinder of Jesus' six legal "antitheses" in Matt 5:21-48. Jesus' words have been linked with the rabbinic תלמוד לומר which signalled the working out of a progressive interpretation over against a conceivable narrow one[121] and, alternatively, with the rabbinic ואני אומר which introduced a predominant

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[115]Compare ὡς ἐγω κρίνω in Thucydides 4.60.

[116]Lake and Cadbury 4:177. In support is cited the Western text represented by Irenaeus and Ephraem (see Ropes 3:145, 426). However, Lake and Cadbury do admit "that the translation 'decree' does not leave room for the possibility that κρίνω means no more than recommended", a possibility which cannot be rejected outright.

[117]This is the majority position.

[118]Acts 13:46; 16:15; 26:8.

[119]Acts 7:7; 13:27; 17:31; 23:3, 6; 24:21; 25:9, 10, 20; 26:6; Luke 6:37; 19:22; 22:30.

[120]Acts 4:19; 16:4; 20:16; 21:25; 25:25; 27:1; Luke 12:57; probably Acts 3:13 and Luke 7:43.

[121]D. Daube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (1956) 55-60.

halakhic viewpoint or the opinion(s) of a learned man(men).[122] An example of the employment of the first formula is *Mek.* Yitro (*Baḥodesh*) on Exod 20:15-19:

> Rabbi says: *And the Lord Came Down upon Mount Sinai.* I might understand this literally (שומע אני כשמועו), but you shall say (as the approved translation [אמרת]): If the sun, one of the many servants, remains in its place and yet is effective beyond its place, how much the more the glory of Him by whose word the world came into being.

An example of the second is *t.Bik.* 1.2:

> R. Jose says, R. Meir used to say, The priests bring (offerings of firstfruits), but do not read because they did not receive a share of the land. But I say (ואני אומר), In the same way as the Levites received, so did the priests.

If the analogy between ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω and διὸ ἐγὼ κρίνω is tenable--and the extent of that must be treated with caution since in James's speech the first part of the exchange can only be inferred from the Judaizers' demand and, more importantly, since the statements in the Sermon on the Mount, set in a context of messianic and eschatological fulfilment, are delivered by the supreme authority[123]--ἐγὼ κρίνω will signal at least the opinion of a respected and influential leader making a progressive interpretation of Scripture over against a narrow one.

The third observation relates to Luke's structuring of the apostles' debate. Citing the Pharisaic background of the Judaizers and Paul, B. Gerhardsson[124] posits a comparison with Jewish assemblies and particularly with those of the Sanhedrin and of Qumran where participants were divided into three categories (priests/senior members, elders/Levites/rabbinic disciples, other members of the community/Israelites), deliberations were conducted by seniority, and decisions were made when the leaders agreed, the assembly as a whole serving only to give approval (Qumran/early church) or having no say whatsoever (rabbinic). In Acts 15, according to Gerhardsson, Peter and James represent the senior members, the latter evidently presiding over the session; Paul and Barnabas are the accused or the temporary guest participants and have no place in

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[122]Smith, *Tannaitic Parallels* 27-30; E. Lohse, "'Ich aber sage euch'", in FS J. Jeremias (1970) 191-96.

[123]This point marks a major difference betwen Daube's and Smith's respective understandings of ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν (see nn. 121, 122).

[124]Gerhardsson, *Memory* 245-54. Along these lines Ehrhardt (*Apostolic Succession* 29-30) sees in the D text of Acts 15 the concern to present a picture of a Christian Sanhedrin, not of a council of apostles.

the permanent order of seniority. This analogy has been challenged,[125] rightly, I think. Although there are many similarities, it is not exact. Besides the insufficient evidence for the claim that the Christian community constituted for Luke-Acts a new Jerusalem and a new temple (though it did constitute a restored Israel) and the undue stress on the importance of the Twelve as the authoritative collegium, subsidiary points that Gerhardsson makes, there is an unwarranted dependency on the D reading of 15:1-5. Gerhardsson does admit that ἔταξαν could mean no more than "that a unanimous decision to send a deputation up to Jerualem was taken", but he still insists that Luke is here describing "the way in which *an important doctrinal question is referred to the Church's highest doctrinal authority* in Jerusalem"[126] and points to Luke's use of ζήτημα and κρίνεσθαι in Acts 25:19-20. This is dubious ground. It also counters the portrait of Barnabas's well-founded association with the Jerusalem church which Luke has placed before the reader and our conclusion that Barnabas and Paul played an integral (though not highlighted) part in the assembly's debate. A better rabbinic parallel, capitalizing on Gerhardsson's essential idea but not his interpretation, may be the cases of non-capital crimes which were tried by three judges (e.g. *m.Sanh.* 4.1-2). In such cases and those of purity and impurity--the latter a likely category for the matter discussed in Acts 15--the opinion of each judge, beginning with the eldest, is asked. Whether we can cast Peter accordingly is uncertain. Nonetheless, in that scenario James, like Peter and Barnabas and Paul, would become one of the three "judges" stating their opinions.

To sum up the evidence. There is reason to know that James became eventually leader of the Jerusalem church. There is reason also to suppose that at this time in the story of the church James was an influential leader. And there is reason to think that he was closely aligned with the more conservative group in the church and that he, possibly alone of the prominent believers, would have been able to win over the Judaizers. Such data must be weighed against the significant fact that Luke nowhere

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[125]W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (1964) 464-80, esp. 469-75. Davies is criticizing principally Gerhardsson's interpretation of the origin and transmission of the tradition regarding Jesus and is arguing for a more moderate treatment of the evidence.

[126]Gerhardsson, *Memory* 251 (italics his).

claims or hints for James the role of president. The closest suggestion comes from ἐγὼ κρίνω, and those words could be paraphrased "this is *my* recommendation" as readily as "this is *the* decision". Seemingly Luke wants us to understand that a committee is at work to hammer out a decision, a committee which includes people of differing theological persuasions.

CHAPTER IV. THE CONSENSUS

Acts 15:22 states the outcome of the debate: the apostles and elders together with the rank and file of the church decide to choose men from the Jerusalem community and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; they also agree, in accordance with James's advice, to write a letter for the delegates to take with them. The letter, recorded in verses 23-29, will focus our inquiries in this chapter. We will look first at its contents, before turning to examine briefly the reaction which the letter elicited from the Antioch church and then more extensively the purpose and function of the council's decision in the Christian community portrayed by Luke.

1. The Council's Letter (Acts 15:23-29)

The periodic style of the letter[1] divides the composition into two parts, each centred on an occurrence of the impersonal ἔδοξεν and developing a particular theme. In the first section, verses 24-27, the apostles and elders express their attitude towards various people in the church. The second section, verses 28-29, sets forth the council's standards for the Gentile converts.

1.1. *The statement of unity (15:24-27)*

In relating the assembly's present attitude, the first ἔδοξεν clause, like the editorial τοῖς ἀποστόλοις καὶ τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις σὺν ὅλῃ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ in verse 22, claims that the assembly's decision represented a consensus (ἡμῖν γενομένοις ὁμοθυμαδόν,

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[1]BDF §464 and Robertson 432-33. The introductory ἔδοξεν, according to E. Nestle ("Acts xv.28", *ExpTim* 10 [1898-99] 143-44), "is quite in accordance with the manner in which religious bodies used to formulate their decisions in Jerusalem". A difficulty, though, occurs in the periodic structure with ἐκλεξαμένους appearing in ℵ C D while p^{45vid} A B have the expected ἐκλεξαμένοις. Zerwick (§394) gives several examples of similar anomalous cases (and a reasonable explanation) which could support the originality of the accusative participle. Nestle-Aland[26] adopts the reading of B. This may be correct since the accusative could have been an assimilation to v. 22. /(v.25)

v. 25).[2] How has the ecclesiastical unity been achieved? Who has won? Who has conceded? Four details in this part of the letter give some answers.

First, in the salutation of the letter (v. 23), to backpedal slightly, both the Jerusalem leaders and the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia[3] are indiscriminately called ἀδελφοί.[4] Ἀδελφοί in Acts not only denotes people who are related by blood (e.g. 3:22; 7:26; 22:5; 28:21); it also, since it refers to people who are united in mind and purpose, becomes a name for members of the Christian community (e.g. 6:3; 9:30; 11:1, 29). Indirectly, therefore, the church leaders have in their salutation signalled the acceptability of uncircumcised believers.[5]

A second indication is the description of the men who precipitated the conflict in the Antioch church (v. 24). While the letter freely admits that the troublemakers belong to the Jerusalem community (τινὲς ἐξ ἡμῶν [ἐξελθόντες],[6] v. 24a), it takes great pains to establish that the Judaizers do not represent the entire attitude in Jerusalem and to

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[2]The import of this point is enhanced by the inclusion of ὁμοθυμαδόν. Ὁμοθυμαδόν is a significant concept in Luke's depiction of the development of the church, as is clearly manifested by the fact that only one of the eleven occurrences in the NT appears outside of Acts (cf. Rom 15:6) and of the instances in Acts only in 12:20, when characterizing the unification of the people of Tyre and Sidon over against Herod, does the word have a non-Christian reference. H. W. Heidland ("ὁμοθυμαδόν", *TDNT* 5:185) defines the adverb as "the inner unity of a group of people engaged in an externally similar action". That is most likely the sense in 15:25 (MM, s.v. ὁμοθυμαδόν; LSJ, s.v. ὁμοθυμαδόν; Bauernfeind 193) rather than the weaker "together", connoting merely that a general assembly had taken place (cf. Lake and Cadbury 4:54).

[3]To question the inclusion of the believers of Syria and Cilicia in the address of the letter when the trouble, according to 15:1, originated in Antioch is to raise an irrelevance. To be sure, of the three locations only the founding of a church in Antioch has been explicitly mentioned up to this point in Luke's story (cf. 15:41; Gal 1:21); but the events in Acts imply that the Christian mission extended quite naturally into the surrounding areas of a city (compare 19:10). There appears to be some import in including Syria and Cilicia for the promulgation of the decree; see p. 204.

[4]Ἀδελφοί need not be in apposition with *both* οἱ ἀπόστολοι and οἱ πρεσβύτεροι although a number of scholars have considered that to be the case (e.g. Torrey, *Composition* 39) and in order to remove the somewhat harsh and unique construction have resorted to various emendations, such as the addition of καὶ οἱ before ἀδελφοί (later MSS [$\aleph^c$ E Ψ 𝔐 sy bo^{mss}] Ap.Const. Chrysostom) or the omission of ἀδελφοί (vg^{ms} sa $Origen^{lat}$) or of ἀπόστολοι καὶ πρεσβύτεροι (Preuschen 96) or of πρεσβύτεροι (Loisy 597-98 [compare Acts 11:1]). Bruce ([NIC] 314) and Hort (*Ecclesia* 71-72) understand πρεσβύτεροι to be adjectival. Yet as the phrase οἱ απόστολοι καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι appears consistently throughout the chapter (vv. 4, 6, 22) and as Luke often uses the address ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, "bleibt es möglich, daß er die ungewöhnliche Wendung οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ἀδελφοί gewagt hat, die sich ebenso schwer übersetzen läßt wie ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί" (Haenchen 434 n. 4).

[5]Editorially the signal has already been given when in v. 1 Luke uses οἱ ἀδελφοί of the church in Antioch. Now he apparently aims to show where the council itself stands.

[6]On the originality of ἐξελθόντες, see Metzger 436. Knowling (327) suggests that the participle could have been added to guard against the appearance that τινὲς ἐξ ἡμῶν belonged to the senders of the letter. (Ἐξ)έρχομαι is too general for that interpretation.

separate them from the church leaders. Οἷς οὐ διεστειλάμεθα makes the point, backed up by the partitive τινές (ἐξ ἡμῶν) and the pejorative language applied to the men's conduct in Antioch. The emphatic addendum stresses that the men had acted in a purely private capacity, at least insofar as their teaching about the way to salvation was concerned (the Western tradition giving the sense),[7] and that they had been issued with no official orders or precise instructions from Jerusalem. They had thrown the Antioch church into turmoil (ἐτάραξαν ὑμᾶς) and had subverted the minds of the Gentile believers (ἀνασκευάζοντες τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν)[8] by what they had said. Such a damning portrait makes very plain that any persons going from Jerusalem to Antioch and demanding, possibly even merely advocating, circumcision and obedience to the law for the Gentile converts were in no sense the official representatives of the Jerusalem church.[9]

Thirdly, the appointment of officially-commissioned delegates, Judas Barsabbas and Silas, to deliver the letter to Antioch (vv. 22, 25-27) contrasts sharply with the repudiation of the apparently self-appointed Judaizers[10] and points to the type of relationship the council aims to maintain between the churches. Judas and Silas are deliberately associated with Barnabas and Paul, the very representatives of the Antioch church with whom the Judaizers had clashed. They are given the responsibility of explaining and expounding the terms of the assembly's decision (v. 27). Being no doubt hellenized Jews,[11] they could assure the reception of the letter, not as dictatorial

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[7]Later witnesses add, on the grounds of vv. 1 and 5, λέγοντες περιτέμνεσθαι (+ δεῖ E) καὶ τηρεῖν τὸν νόμον (C E Ψ 𝔐 [gig] sy) after ψυχὰς ὑμῶν.

[8]Ἀνασκευάζω adds to ταράσσω the grapic image of armies plundering and wasting a town, "reversing what has been done, tearing down what has been built, or cancelling what has been agreed upon" (Lake and Cadbury 4:180; cf. MM, s.v. ἀνασκευάζω).

[9]It exceeds the present discussion to inquire whether the men had gone to Antioch without the authorization of Jerusalem as 15:24 states, or had visited the city on official ecclesiastical business as τινας ἀπὸ Ἰακώβου of Gal 2:12 implies, or had exceeded the terms of their official commission as Gal 2:12 in conjunction with Acts 15:24 could suggest.

[10]To highlight this contrast, Robertson (804) points to the middle form of ἐκλέγω and διαστέλλω which show the subject acting in relation to himself. A more realistic assessment of the force of the middle form here is gained from the fact that the NT does not employ the active form of ἐκλέγω (cf. BDF §316.1).

[11]Silas is usually identified with Silvanus (1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1; 2 Cor 1:9; 1 Pet 5:12). The two names--Silas is the Greek version of שׁאִילָא which gives "Silvanus" when Latinized (Haenchen 434 n. 2)--as well as his Roman citizenship imply that he moved with equal skill in both the Jewish-Aramaic and the Greek cultures and languages. Barsabbas is an apparently quite common family name in hellenistic Judaism, though admittedly it can also mean "born on the sabbath" (Lake and Cadbury 178). On names in hellenistic Judaism see Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* 1:61-65, 105.

guardians but as those who, on the one hand, would appreciate the dilemma of the Gentile Christians and, on the other, could interpret the concerns of the assembly from the Jewish and Jerusalem perspective. Furthermore, the entrusting of the communiqué to men who already were leaders in the Jerusalem community (v. 22) would go some way towards honouring the Antioch congregation as well as laying claim to the close link between the churches and the priority of Jerusalem.[12]

There is, fourthly, the letter's description of Barnabas and Paul. Pointedly, in an evident attempt at conciliation, the missionaries are referred to as οἱ ἀγαπητοὶ ἡμῶν, an expression of respect and acknowledgement which is enhanced in significance by the use of the first person pronoun; and their commitment to the Christian proclamation is singled out for praise and example (v. 26): Barnabas and Paul "have devoted themselves to the cause of Jesus Christ".[13]

These details--the application of ἀδελφοί to the Gentile believers, the public repudiation of the Judaizers and their actions, the appointment of official delegates who were leaders in the Jerusalem church, and the laudatory affirmation of Barnabas and Paul--suggest that in achieving ecclesiastical unity the assembly made every effort to satisfy the Antioch community. Indeed, the manifest attempt at accommodation gives the impression that the agreement which the assembly hammered out is one-sided. It appears that the debate concerning the requirements for membership in the people of God has gone completely in favour of Gentile freedom.

This assessment of the assembly's statement of unity is premature, however, for it is noticeable that Paul and Barnabas, despite the commendation, do not convey the letter themselves. Indeed, it is striking, particularly in the case of Barnabas. Previously in Luke's story Barnabas has been depicted as highly respected by the Jerusalem church and influential in ecclesiastical circles (4:36-37; 9:26-28). He himself at one time had been appointed a Jerusalem emissary (11:22-24). The seemingly inconsistent treatment of the missionaries may be no more than a consequence of diplomacy: the desire to

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[12]Haenchen 434 n. 2.

[13]NEB; cf. JB; F. Field, *Notes on the Translation of the New Testament* (1899) 124; Lake and Cadbury 4:180. This is perhaps a better translation of παραδεδωκόσι τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν than the stronger "who have hazarded their lives" (e.g. RSV; KJV; Phillips; Haenchen 436).

honour the daughter community and to ensure that Barnabas and Paul could not be charged with suppressing the real purport of the assembly.[14] Such possibilities cannot be ignored. Yet it is equally likely, if not more likely, since Paul and Barnabas are already shown to be committed to the idea of Gentile freedom, that we are to infer from the by-passing of Paul and Barnabas for Judas and Silas a two-pronged, almost contradictory intent: there is, on the one hand, proof of the Jerusalem believers' acquiescence to the Antiochian position and, on the other, indication that the decision is, after all, not one-sidedly in favour of Gentile freedom from the law but rather a compromise between two groups. The second part of the letter bears this inference out.

1.2. *The statement of necessity (15:28-29)*

Verses 28-29, as we said at the start of this chapter, deal with what the Christian community requires of the Gentile converts. They record that the Gentiles are to bear no burden except to abstain from εἰδωλόθυτα, αἷμα, πνικτόν, and πορνεία.[15] Thus, in deciding the central issue of the debate, the assembly follows in the detail James's analysis of the evidence. It declares the excessiveness of the Judaizers' demand--Gentiles do not have to be circumcised or forced to obey Moses's law--and it preserves certain characteristics of Judaism.

Because this decision is evidently a compromise between the advocates of the law and the advocates of Gentile freedom, there is an equally obvious need for the assembly to justify the terms agreed upon, not only to the Gentiles who are asked to observe them but also to the Jewish Christians who may have desired more. The letter meets this need in several ways. First, though probably grammatically distinct, the affirmation of unanimity in verses 24-27 gives weight to the content of verses 28-29:[16] since the Jerusalem community and the delegation from Antioch are of one mind, the freedom of the Gentiles from the whole law and the concomitant imposition of the four restrictions are arguably reasonable. Second, with ἔδοξεν τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ καὶ ἡμῖν

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[14]Chrysostom, *Hom.* 33.

[15]On the textual problem of 15:29 in relation to 15:20 and 21:25, see sec. 2.1 below.

[16]The γάρ of v. 28 probably expresses continuation or connection in the sense of δέ (Zerwick §473). If the conjunction is causal, the argument can be turned around: because the council has reached this particular two-fold decision (vv. 28-29), ecclesiastical unanimity has been restored (vv. 24-27).

(v. 28) the assembly claims divine authority for what has been decided. Third, the decision is directed towards Gentile believers. This specification is not surprising for it was the acceptance of uncircumcised Gentiles as members of the people of God that had fostered the conflict; but the addition of τοῖς ἐξ ἐθνῶν in the salutation of the letter (v. 23) does underline that the Jewish Christians' own relation to the law was not at issue.[17]

Besides these justificatory comments and the four prohibitions which we will place in a wider context in a later discussion, there are in this part of the letter two phrases which effect significantly the sense of the council's decision, marking it as more than a statement of unity. The first is μηδὲν πλέον ἐπιτίθεσθαι ὑμῖν βάρος πλὴν τούτων τῶν ἐπάναγκες (v. 28), the statement which absolves the Gentiles from having to meet the requirements of circumcision and obedience to the law and which, in refuting the policy of the Judaizers, places the Jerusalem community on the side of Antioch. The seemingly overall liberating tone of these words, μηδὲν πλέον bringing out the nuance, is subjected to uncertainty by the inclusion of ἐπιτίθεσθαι...βάρος and the force of πλήν.

Βάρος refers to a heavy weight the impact of which is variable.[18] A load curtails freedom of movement and imposes obligation and commitment; nevertheless, the restriction need not, in turn, signify oppression and irritation. Much depends on the perspective and attitude of the bearer. We have argued above[19] that the synonym ζυγός used similarly, in verse 10, of the demands of the Torah seems to convey the neutral nuance of hard work and responsibility. That was in a Jewish context. It is quite likely, though, that whereas the Jewish Christians, or at least some Jewish Christians, would view such a burden in a positive light, the Gentile believers, for whom any precept of Moses would be an alien addition to their experience, would be inclined to view it quite critically, even negatively. For the Gentiles, keeping the four prohibitions would necessitate not only commitment and hard work but also compromise. This

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[17]If the subject was discussed, Luke does not record the fact; however, 21:20-25 indicates what the outcome of such a discussion may have been (see Chapter V.5.1.1).

[18]Whereas the βάρος described in Matt 20:12 and Gal 6:2 involves adverse circumstances and suffering and in 1 Thess 2:7 (cf. ἀβαρής, 2 Cor 11:9) connotes an imposition, that in 2 Cor 4:17 refers to the eternal glory which outweighs earthly troubles. See also the pejorative sense in 2 Macc 9:10; Polybius 1.31.5; Philo, *Spec.Leg.* 2.10; 4:173; and the cognate verb βαρέομαι in 2 Cor 1:8; 5:4; and 1 Tim 5:16 and the neutral sense in Polybius 1.16.4; Philo, *Virt.* 70; *Leg.* 27; and Josephus, *J.W.* 1.461.

[19]See Chapter I.2.2.1, esp. 93-94, 99-100.

potentially negative nuance is reinforced by ἐπιτίθεσθαι. Generally meaning "to lay upon", ἐπιτίθημι has also the figurative sense "to impose upon" or, more strongly, "to inflict upon".

As for πλήν, its function is best brought out by starting with τούτων τῶν ἐπάναγκες. The adverb identifies the four prohibitions as necessary, but in what sense, for the words "can be hardly right"[20] as they now stand. If, in order to circumvent treating ἐπάναγκες as a noun, we omit the article before it, as ℵ* D 33 *pc* do, it is possible that a colon should be put after τούτων and ἐπάναγκες taken with ἀπέχεσθαι ("to lay no burden on you except these things: you must abstain..."). This construction is implied by the paraphrase of Clement of Alexandria, who writes in *Strom.* 4.15, in allusion to the assembly's decision, ἐμήνυσεν γὰρ ἐπάναγκες ἀπέχεσθαι δεῖν εἰδωλόθυτον κτλ.[21] Alternatively, a full stop can be placed after βάρος and πλήν can be taken as an adversative adverb rather than as an improper preposition. In this construction τούτων becomes the object of ἀπέχεσθαι ("to put no further burden on you. However, you must abstain from these things:...").

We then are presented with various options not only for translating ἐπιτίθεσθαι ὑμῖν βάρος πλὴν τούτων τῶν ἐπάναγκες but, more importantly, for characterizing the four injunctions. The injunctions may be labelled "necessary" and admitted by the council to be a βάρος, a commitment and a responsibility ("We impose no burden except these necessary things:..."). Or they may be considered necessary but not, according to the assembly, a βάρος in the sense of an oppression ("We impose no burden. However, we do ask that you do the necessary things..."). There is a third possibility: the injunctions could be said to appear burdensome insofar as the Gentile converts were concerned but not necessarily in the eyes of (some) Jewish Christians ("You may regard these a burden, but we think of them only as necessary"). As there is no evidence which

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[20]Lake and Cadbury 4:180.

[21]Similarly, the *Didascalia* emends the sentence to πλὴν τούτων· τὸ ἐπάναγκες ἀπέχεσθαι ("except these: the necessary abstinence from..."); and G. F. Moore (quoted in Torrey, *Composition* 39) suggests that τῶν is a dittography from τούτων and gives "to lay on you no more burden than this: it is necessary to abstain". A slightly different solution comes from the texts of Irenaeus (*Haer.* 3.12.14) and Tertullian (*De pud.* 12): τῶν and τούτων are replaced by ὧν and the result is "to put no further weight upon you, except that you should necessarily abstain from:...".

conclusively determines the nuance of πλήν, we face the fact that the council's decision, as recorded by Luke, paradoxically welds the note of freedom sounded initially by the council's denunciation of the Judaizers with a statement of necessity: as the Jewish Christians in acknowledging the acceptability of uncircumcised believers must learn to make their practice of the law more critical, so the Gentiles in becoming the people of God must learn to accept for themselves the practice of certain regulations. At the same time the language of verse 28 conveys the strong possibility that the decision leaves itself open to misunderstanding and misrepresentation.

The second phrase is ἐξ ὧν διατηροῦντες ἑαυτοὺς εὖ πράξετε[22] (v. 29c), the conclusion of the letter. The words are clearly meant to motivate the Gentiles to follow the four injunctions. The intent of the motivation is less clear. The words could express affirmation ("If you avoid these things, you will be doing right"),[23] promise ("If you avoid these things, you will prosper"),[24] or grateful request ("Please avoid these things").[25]

The third possibility does not really fit, even were the grammar and language to allow it.[26] "Please" seems too hesitant a conclusion in the context of a council which has gathered for the express purpose of handing down a decision. As for the other two interpretations,[27] it is true (a) that πράσσω elsewhere in Luke-Acts describes action rather than the state of being (e.g. ἄξια τῆς μετανοίας ἔργα πράσσοντας, Acts 26:20); (b) that εἰ μέντοι νόμον τελεῖτε..., καλῶς ποιεῖτε in Jas 2:8, where the relevant words refer to right conduct, corresponds contextually as well as linguistically to Acts 15:29; (c) that φερόμενοι ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι which is added by D after πράξετε implies the means by

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[22]The future tense (p^{33} ℵ A *al*) is preferred over the aorist imperative (p^{74} C D d [l]) on the grounds of external evidence and transcriptional probabilities (Metzger 438).

[23]NEB.

[24]Phillips.

[25]For instances of εὖ [πράσσειν] denoting a courteous request, see MM, s.v. εὖ; Lake and Cadbury 4:181; cf. Moulton 228-29. Compare καλῶς ποιήσετε in 1 Macc 12:22 and καλῶς ἐποίησας in Acts 10:33.

[26]Bruce ([Greek] 223) and C. Maurer ("πράσσω", *TDNT* 6:632-33) concur with my hesitation. While not determinative, it is noteworthy that where the comparable καλῶς ποιεῖν does mean "please" in the NT, the order is different: the participle appears to follow (see Acts 10:33; Phil 4:14; 2 Pet 1:19; 3 John 6).

[27]Scholarly opinion is divided: for example, in favour of "you will act rightly" are BAGD (s.v. εὖ), Bruce ([Greek] 304), and Haenchen (437); in favour of "you will prosper", MM (s.v. πράσσω), Rackham (256), and Marshall (255).

which right behaviour can be achieved;[28] and (d) that the harmony in the church at Ephesus which is exhorted and commended by Ignatius (*Eph.* 4) is based on right conduct[29] (δι' ὧν εὖ πράσσετε, cf. συντρέχειν and ποιεῖτε [compare *Smyrn.* 11]) recognized by God. A strong case can also be made for εὖ πράξετε to mean "well-being" rather than "doing right over against wrong". Letters of the period in profane Greek finish with a literary convention which goes something like ἐπιμελόμενος σεαυτοῦ ἵν' ὑγιαίνῃς ἔρρωσο[30] and which can be translated "taking care of yourself that you should be fit, keep well". Similarly, the lists of covenental responsibilities in the deuteronomic law are often concluded with and motivated by the statement that keeping God's commands leads to prolonged life and possession of the land (εὖ σοι ᾖ, Deut 5:33; cf. 4:1, 40; Tob 14:9); disobedience, by contrast, brings annihilation (e.g. Deut 4:26).[31] These various points notwithstanding, probably a more realistic interpretation is to understand the phrase as expressing both ideas, both the act of doing right and the state of faring well. A particular course of action will, after all, effect a corresponding state of being.[32]

When we bring the nuances of the crucial phrases together, it is clear that in connecting an obligation, i.e. abstention from certain foods and sexual immorality, with a right conduct which results in the right state, the assembly is creating a cause and effect relationship. What is not clear is(are) the implication(s) of that relationship. There may be the sense of fulfilling what God requires or a reference to the church's acceptance which is based on God's acceptance or to the blessings of the Christian life or, stressing the future tense of πράξετε, to the promise of salvation in the end times or even simply the confirmation that the injunctions were sufficient in themselves and that no further regulations were needed. That is to say, εὖ πράξετε may express the rationale

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[28]Haenchen 437.

[29]Cf. J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers* (1889-93) 2:42.

[30]Thus, ParP 63, col. 1 ll. 18-19 and other examples cited by D. Daube ("Participle and Imperative in 1 Peter", in *The First Epistle of St. Peter*, by E. G. Selwyn [1946] 467).

[31]This last argument must be used with caution. It is difficult to deny that the legal code comes to mind primarily because the four prohibitions, however they are understood ultimately, manifest a link with the Torah.

[32]This appears to be the sense conveyed by εὖ πράττειν in Plato, *Epistles* and other examples cited by MM (s.v. πράσσω).

for imposing the injunctions, the incentive to inspire obedience, the warning against censure, or the guarantee for an unopposed mission to the Gentiles. None of these possibilities excludes the others. In each case, however, the bottom line remains the idea that the four prohibitions represent a standard of acceptable conduct which restricts the Gentiles' freedom and offsets the potential one-sidedness of the council's decision.

This inference leads to further questions. What happens if the injunctions are not observed? Do the Gentile believers remain in the people of God or they expelled? In other words, what is the purpose of the four prohibitions? Are they conditions for salvation? Before we address this admittedly very complex and elusive subject, a brief, somewhat parenthetical comment about the reception of the letter in the Antioch community will round off the story of the Jerusalem council.

1.3. *The reception in Antioch (15:30-35)*

Acts 15:30-35 records the Antiochian believers' response both to the council's decision and to the people appointed to communicate it. In regard to the decison itself, the ingressive ἐχάρησαν in verse 31 sums up the atmosphere in the Antioch church:[33] there was cause for rejoicing and thus "they burst into exultant joy". Luke spends more time on the second point, detailing how the decision affected the relations between the churches of Jerusalem and Antioch.

It is significant that the company leaving Jerusalem are called οἱ ἀπολυθέντες. Possibly, since the verb is often used in Acts of the dismissal of accused persons,[34] there is in view here the scene of a trial, Jerusalem judging the Antioch missionaries. The Western reviser, who has in verse 2 stated that the men from Judea commanded Paul, Barnabas, and some other Antioch believers to go to Jerusalem in order to be judged there (ὅπως κριθῶσιν ἐπ' αὐτοῖς), certainly conceived a trial to be taking place.

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[33]Αναγνόντες in v. 31 is awkward and thus gives reason to pause about the subject of ἐχάρησαν. As far as the grammatical sequence goes, the participle would most naturally refer to the same people as συναγάγοντες and ἐπέδωκαν do, that is, the company travelling from Jerusalem to Antioch. But logically the referent of ἀναγνόντες is the same as that of ἐχάρησαν, that is, τὸ πλῆθος. This is justified by ἐπέδωκαν: the emissaries hand over the letter; the Antioch believers read it and rejoice.

[34]Cf. 3:13; 4:21, 23; 5:40; 16:35, 36; 17:9; 26:32; 28:18. Lake and Cadbury (4:182) make this observation.

Despite the indications that the Western readings often relay the intent of the original text, this seems to be an instance of excessiveness. Better is the idea that the emissaries were simply sent on their way. That is the meaning of ἀπολύω in verse 33, when Judas and Silas leave Antioch. That is also the meaning which follows from the likelihood that οἱ ἀπολύθεντες refers not only to the delegates from Antioch but also to the men appointed to represent Jerusalem: Judas and Silas were certainly not on trial.

The paragraph may not depict the conclusion to a trial, but there is an obvious attempt to show the rebuilding of ecclesiastical harmony between the mother church and the daughter church. The Jerusalem delegates, Judas and Silas, are portrayed (v. 32) as able to accomplish the responsibilities mandated by the apostles and elders (vv. 22, 27), expounding no doubt the situation of the letter in more detail but also preaching and teaching (παρεκάλεσαν τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς καὶ ἐπεστήριξαν) as Barnabas had done when, likewise an emissary of the Jerusalem church, he first visited Antioch (11:23). Furthermore, the delegates remain in Antioch for some time (v. 33). When they do leave the city, they go μετ' εἰρήνης (v. 33). This common expression of farewell stifles any question about the present state of church relations. Whether the words refer to courteous wishes for safe travel[35] or the formality of the leave-taking,[36] or, as seems likely because of the order of the accompanying prepositional phrases, the conveyance of warm greetings from Antioch to Jerusalem,[37] blessings of peace are given. A further indication is that in verse 35 Paul and Barnabas are said to be once more bending their common efforts to the task in Antioch. No doubt this remark serves as a bridge between two stories, anticipating Paul's intention to visit the churches in Asia Minor and implying that as Paul and Barnabas were not alone in the Christian work at Antioch they could leave the city without jeopardizing the ministry;[38] but it suggests as well that

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[35]E.g. 1 Esdr 5:2; 1 Macc 7:28; 12:4, 52; 16:10; Josephus, *Ant.* 1.179; 8:405.

[36]Haenchen 437-38.

[37]Cf. Deut 20:10; Heb 11:31; BAGD, s.v. εἰρήνη 2.

[38]Haenchen 438; Marshall 256.

Paul's gospel for the Gentiles and his work among them both continued and would continue unhindered by ecclesiastical opposition or interference.[39]

Each of these editorial comments contributes to building a scene of church unity and consensus on the issue of the Gentiles' admission into the people of God and a sense of spiritual consolidation in preparation for the next step in the development and outreach of the church. This picture contrasts sharply with the dissension and grave conflict with which Luke's account of the council began.

2. The Intent of the Decree

The crux of the council's decision for Acts is its relation to the question of membership in the people of God. To formulate the problem it is helpful to recall some of the findings of our study to this point. We have observed that the council's letter to the believers in Antioch begins with a statement of unity (vv. 24-27) which identifies the assembly with the more liberal arguments in the debate and therefore answers, albeit implicitly, the demand originally raised by the Pharisaic Christians (15:1, 5). That is to say in short, did Gentiles have to be circumcised and obey Moses's law? no, Gentiles were saved and considered to be equal to Jewish Christians without meeting any of these requirements. The letter also contains a statement of obligation (vv. 28-29) which, on the one hand, backs up the statement of unity, proclaiming the Gentile converts' freedom from the Judaizers' demands (v. 28), but which, on the other hand, asks the Gentiles to follow four seemingly minor yet apparently crucial injunctions out of the Jewish law (v. 29). Fulfilment of these injunctions brings to the Gentiles the confidence and blessing of living correctly in the people of God. Now if we can infer that verses 24-28 contain the answer to the central question of Acts 15, should we infer that the four prohibitions in verse 29 likewise refer to the attainment of membership in the people of God? Is the council designating the four prohibitions as the way to salvation? Is it thus imposing the law on the Gentile Christians but in a modified form?

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[39]However tempting, it is going too far to understand μετὰ καὶ ἑτέρων πολλῶν in v. 35, as Rackham (257 n. 11) suggests, as designating "preachers of the opposite (Hebraic) school" whose work is seconding that of Paul and Barnabas. While ἕτερος can represent something which is not identical to that which has been mentioned previously, the distinction in v. 35 need not be qualitative or theological. Moreover, the καί is pleonastic (BDF §442).

Alternatively, we notice that James's contribution to the debate, in which mention of the four prohibitions first appears, contains the premise that Peter's argument states how (καθώς), not just the fact that, God elected people from the Gentiles to be his people. Should we therefore consider that the four prohibitions are intended to address another question? Were they formulated in order to ease the tension between Jewish and Gentile congregations, and would the injunctions lose validity when the Christian community became predominantly Gentile?

The evidence which falls within the parameters set by the present study is not guaranteed to answer all the questions related to the Jerusalem council's solution to the problem of the Gentiles.[40] The historical background and the evidence of the Pauline Epistles are also determinative. Nevertheless, it is important to examine the available data and to ascertain the place of the council's decision, particularly the four items commonly named the apostles' decree, within the context of the Christianity portrayed by Luke. Three areas will be investigated: the precise wording of the decree, the suggested interpretations of the prohibitions, and the terminology applied to the decree. The first two points hang very much together.

2.1. *The textual variant*[41]

The text of the council's decison which is given at 15:28-29 is, as we have seen, referred to proleptically in 15:19-20 and retrospectively in 21:25. The various instances are as follows in the Nestle-Aland[26] text:

15:19-20 μὴ παρενοχλεῖν τοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν ἐθνῶν ἐπιστρέφουσιν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, ἀλλὰ ἐπιστεῖλαι αὐτοῖς τοῦ ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν ἀλισγημάτων τῶν εἰδώλων καὶ τῆς πορνείας καὶ τοῦ πνικτοῦ καὶ τοῦ αἵματος

15:28-29 μηδὲν πλέον ἐπιτίθεσθαι ὑμῖν βάρος πλὴν τούτων τῶν ἐπάναγκες, ἀπέχεσθαι εἰδωλοθύτων καὶ αἵματος καὶ πνικτῶν καὶ πορνείας

21:25 περὶ δὲ τῶν πεπιστευκότων ἐθνῶν ἡμεῖς ἐπεστείλαμεν κρίναντες φυλάσσεσθαι αὐτοὺς τὸ τε εἰδωλόθυτον καὶ αἷμα καὶ πνικτὸν καὶ πορνείαν

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[40]The apparent silence in the Pauline Epistles (is Col 2:20-23 a critical reference to the decree?) is conspicuous.

[41]For general discussions on the subject, see also Ropes (3:265-69), Metzger (429-34), Epp (*Codex Bezae* 107-12), and others cited in the bibliographies of Schneider (2:169-71) and Weiser (2:363-64).

It is immediately obvious that at each place there is variety. In 21:25 the statement of Gentile freedom is omitted. The items in 15:20 are all articular; in 15:29, all anarthrous; and in 21:25, all appear to be governed by the same article, though given the different genders it is hard to be certain. On occasion a plural noun becomes singular, or its wording is altered. Most notable is εἰδωλόθυτα (15:29): τὰ ἀλισγήματα τῶν εἰδώλων appears in 15:20 while εἰδωλόθυτον is used in 21:25.[42] The order of the items varies: πορνεία exchanges places with αἷμα.[43]

These differences in detail, however, only supplement the major textual problem: the number of the prohibitions varies. The issue falls out into three main categories. (1) The Alexandrian text, as well as most other witnesses, has four items--εἰδωλόθυτα, πορνεία, things strangled, and blood.[44] (2) The Western text omits things strangled and adds a negative form of the "golden rule" in 15:20 and 15:29. (3) Some texts (a textual tradition?) omit πορνεία from 15:20 and 15:29. The following chart illustrates.[45]

15:20	(a) τῶν ἀλισγημάτων τῶν εἰδώλων καὶ τῆς πορνείας καὶ τοῦ πνικτοῦ καὶ τοῦ αἵματος	ℵ C E P 049 Byz
	τῶν ἀλισγημάτων τῶν εἰδώλων καὶ τῆς πορνείας καὶ πνικτοῦ καὶ τοῦ αἵματος	p^{74} A B Ψ 33 81 ApConst vg syp^h sa bo arm geo
	(b) τῶν ἀλισγημάτων τῶν εἰδώλων καὶ τῆς πορνείας καὶ τοῦ αἵματος καὶ ὅσα ἂν μὴ θέλωσιν αὐτοῖς γίνεσθαι ἑτέροις μὴ ποιεῖν	(D) $it^{(d)}$ sa $Irenaeus^{lat}$
	(c) τῶν ἀλισγημάτων τῶν εἰδώλων καὶ τοῦ πνικτοῦ καὶ τοῦ αἵματος	p^{45}
15:29	(a) εἰδωλοθύτων καὶ αἵματος καὶ πνικτῶν καὶ πορνείας	ℵ* A* B C 81 sa bo` Clement $Origen^{lat}$
	εἰδωλοθύτων καὶ αἵματος καὶ πνικτοῦ καὶ	p^{74} ℵ^c A^2 E lat(t)

[42]Πνικτόν also changes form, being singular in 15:20 and 21:25 and plural in 15:29.

[43]In short,

		εἰδωλόθυτα	πορνεία	πνικτόν	αἷμα
15:20		1	2	3	4
15:29		1	4	3	2
21:25	p^{74} ℵ A (D)	1	4	3	2
	$syp^{?}$ eth^{pp}	1	2	3	4

[44]Because the meanings of εἰδωλόθυτα and πορνεία are uncertain, we will leave the terms untranslated for the present.

[45]The data come from UBS^3, which in this instance has more detail than $Nestle\text{-}Aland^{26}$.

	πορνείας	syp h ApConst
	(b) εἰδωλοθύτων καὶ αἵματος καὶ πορνείας καὶ ὅσα θέλετε ἑαυτοῖς γίνεσθαι ἑτέροις μὴ ποιεῖν	D it vgmss syh (Irenaeuslat)
	εἰδωλοθύτων καὶ αἵματος καὶ πορνείας	Tertullian
	(c) εἰδωλοθύτων καὶ αἵματος καὶ πνικτοῦ	vgms* Origenpt Gaudentius Vigilius
21:25	(a) τό τε εἰδωλόθυτον καὶ αἷμα καὶ πνικτὸν καὶ πορνείαν	(p74) ℵ A B C 33
	τό τε εἰδωλόθυτον καὶ πορνείαν καὶ πνικτὸν καὶ αἷμα	syp? ethpp
	(b) τὸ εἰδωλόθυτον καὶ αἷμα καὶ πορνείαν	D itd gig geo Augustine

Judging these variants on transcriptional probabilities primarily--admittedly a precarious business at the best of times since the "neutral" and the Western text forms probably circulated early and concurrently in the same areas and in different recensions[46]--we can make a few important observations.

The deletion of πορνεία, case (c), makes the list entirely dietetic. Πορνεία does appear, superficially at least, to be out of place among items otherwise describing food. Attempts have been made to emend the text and to retain all four items with a dietetic interpretation. Πορνεία has been proposed to have been originally χορεία[47] or πορκεία.[48] These suggestions can be no more than desperate grabs at strawmen (indeed, non-existent strawmen, for there is no known example of the use of πορκεία), in order to maintain uniformity and thus arrive at a quick solution. Although three out of the four items do concern food, there is no reason why the fourth should of necessity be interpreted along the same line; nor it is likely that the same corruption would occur in all three places, unless the alteration were deliberate. It is precisely the unexpected-

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[46]A. F. J. Klijn (*A Survey of the Researches into the Western Text of the Gospels and Acts*. Part Two. 1949-69 [1969] 64) concludes his survey of the studies of the Western text with the assertion that "the riddle of the Western text has not been solved". This conclusion obliges us to consider all early readings as potentially original and to muster as many arguments as possible to settle individual cases. For a sample of the recent trends in the textual studies of Acts, see M. Wilcox, "Luke and the Bezan Text of Acts", in *Actes*-Kremer (1979) 447-55 and C. M. Martini, "La tradition textuelle des Actes des Apôtres et les tendances de l'Église ancienne", in *Actes*-Kremer (1979) 21-35.

[47]This is the conjecture of R. Bentley which is cited by J. Rendel Harris (*Side-Lights on New Testament Research* [1908] 188) and which has been revived by M. Philonenko ("Le Décret Apostolique et les interdits alimentaires du Coran", *RHPR* 47 [1967] 165-72).

[48]Who first proposed this emendation is not known, but a dismissal of it can be attributed to J. U. Powell ("On the Suggestion πορκεία in the Acts of the Apostles, XV.,20, 29", *ClassR* 33 [1919] 151-52).

ness of πορνεία and the rare external attestation which have suggested that the word is original.[49]

When πνικτόν is excluded, case (b), the decree seems to become ethical in content and the golden rule is a logical concomitance. This is an attractive interpretation: the decree as a result resembles the twofold aspect of the ten commandments, namely, the worship of God and respect for other people, which encapsulated God's covenant with Israel.[50] It is arguable that πνικτόν, which seems to clinch the cultic interpretation of the decree, was a local, possibly Alexandrian addition.[51] In this regard we note that Philo, *Spec.Leg*. 4.122-23, one of the few Jewish witnesses to πνικτόν, lists the strangling and throttling of animals (ἄγχοντες καὶ ἀποπνίγοντες) among the pagan customs abhorent to Jews. Furthermore, the assumption that a shift from a cultic to an ethical form is more understandable is tenable only if an increasingly Gentile-oriented Christianity had left its Jewish moorings completely. This would be hard to prove for most Christian settings in the first century A.D.

We can, however, with some degree of confidence discount the originality of the golden rule, for the rule is inappropriate to a decree expressed in terms of things to be avoided. This observation weakens the argument for the originality of the Western tradition in 15:20 and 15:29. Whether a similar criticism can be directed at the Western text of 21:25 where the tradition has no trace of the golden rule and is backed up by Tertullian's comparable citation of the decree in *De pud*. 12[52] is uncertain. It may be that the insertion of the golden rule to clarify or expand the true sense of the decree did not invite the omission of πνικτόν but rather that the inclusion of the golden rule was the

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[49]In some ways, though, this inference about the originality of πορνεία can only be an argument from silence. As Metzger (430) notes, "it is not known whether the 'Caesarean' text existed for Acts, and if it did, how far it is the product of a compromise between readings of the Alexandrian type and those of the Western type, or how far it can claim to preserve variant readings which are as likely to be original as readings in either of the two main types of text".

[50]Cf. C. H. Turner, "Jewish Christianity--I. The Apostolic Decree of Acts xv and the Apostolic Church Orders" (1930), in *Catholic and Apostolic. Collected Papers* (1931) 247-52.

[51]This is the view of Bietenhard (*TDNT* 6:457-58), who cites G. Strothotte ("Das Apostelkonzil im Lichte der jüdischen Rechtsgeschichte" [1955] 128). Strothotte's work came to my attention too late to consult his argument; but he maintains that the decree in its original context had an ethical sense.

[52]In *Apolog*. 9 Tertullian speaks of the Christian practice of not eating things strangled but makes no direct reference to the decree of 15:29 as he does in *De pud*. 12. Ephraem (cited in Ropes 3:426, 266) records 15:20 without either καὶ πνικτοῦ and the golden rule; but when referring specifically to the decree, he includes the golden rule.

direct result of the lack of πνικτόν. In this case πνικτόν could have been added to a recension of the threefold decree at a later stage to eliminate any ambiguity from the cultic perspective.

The main alternative to accepting outright the "neutral" or Western textual tradition of the decree has been to argue, as P. H. Menoud[53] has done, that the original text involved a twofold prohibition. Menoud works from two points: from the principle "that the more fully developed forms of the apostolic decree must be later and should be regarded as differing elaborations of a shorter primitive text",[54] i.e. a development in the direction of expansion and not constriction, and from the presupposition that it was a question of food, of the ritual purity of food, which had to be settled. As a result the history of the text proceeds somewhat as follows. To the basic decree prescribing abstinence from εἰδωλόθυτα and blood--the fewest possible, yet completely sufficient, injunctions for permitting social intercourse between Jewish and Gentile Christians--p^{45} *al* added πνικτόν by way of explanation. The Western tradition, attested first by Tertullian (though he is probably not responsible), understood the decree about εἰδωλόθυτα and blood to be a moral injunction (i.e. idolatry and murder) and inserted πορνεία in the place of πνικτόν, thereby expanding the authority of the decree to a matter not discussed at the council. The B text appeared as a conflatory recension which united the additions of p^{45} and Tertullian. Finally the D reviser with both a conservative and an innovating tendency discarded πνικτόν as secondary, and then expanded the decree to make it a summary of Christian ethics, "to emphasize the newness of the Christian faith as regards Judaism".[55]

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[53]Menoud, "Western Text" 22-28. Menoud's major purpose in this article is to establish the theological peculiarities of the Western text. He has been answered on that point by Barrett ("Codex Bezae" 15-27, esp. 16-18 [see above p. 13 n. 30), while W. G. Kümmel ("Die älteste Form des Aposteldekrets" [1953], in *Heilsgeschehen und Geschichte. Gesammelte Aufsätze* [1965, 1978] 1:278-88) has reacted critically to his reconstruction of the textual history of the decree.

[54]Menoud, "Western Text" 23.

[55]Menoud, "Western Text" 27. Ropes (3:265-69) and K. Lake (*Beginnings* 5:204-9), without the knowledge of p^{45}, adopted a textual reconstruction similar to Menoud's: (1) the threefold text of Tertullian in *De pud.* 12, which accounts for the other variants, is to be accepted; (2) the decree originally had a dietetic sense. In other words, the Western authorities give the right threefold text; but the others give the right interpretation, correctly glossing αἷμα with πνικτόν.

Menoud's reconstruction can and should be challenged. First, there is no manuscript evidence for the existence of a twofold clause. Menoud does willingly acknowledge this weakness and is prepared to adopt the reading of p^{45} as original.[56] But that concession gains little: the problem of deletion as well as addition remains. Second, it is a fallacy to claim that the textual history *always* develops in the direction of expansion. The texts of *T.Levi* and *T.Naphtali* discovered at Qumran which are longer than the later Greek texts are evidence that the reverse does happen.[57] A third criticism is the fact that in 15:20 πνικτόν proceeds αἷμα.[58] Unless 15:20 is the Lukan reformulation of the original wording as some, pointing to τὰ ἀλισγήματα τῶν εἰδώλων, have suggested,[59] πνικτόν in an antecedent position is an unlikely addition merely to clarify and extend the meaning of αἷμα. Most deficient is the presupposition that the restriction to *kosher* foods was the thing necessary to make the Gentiles acceptable to Jewish Christians.[60] In itself this may be true, although there were in fact other practices which made the Jews suspicious. But was the question of social intercourse between Jewish and Gentile Christians *the* issue under debate in Acts 15? Have we not seen repeatedly that the council (in whatever text it is read) took place because some Jewish Christians went from Jerusalem to Antioch and insisted that the Gentiles had to be circumcised and required to obey the law in order to be saved? The question--for Luke at least--was one of salvation, not of common meals. This emphasis contrasts, for example, with a concentration on dietary laws in Origen, *c.Celsum* 8.29: in that context πορνεία would be a logical omission.

On the basis of the textual evidence alone, to sum up, it would be wrong to insist that the decree consisted of the generally accepted four prohibitions or to assert that the textual history developed necessarily from a cultic to an ethical interpretation or to say that the decree must be wholly cultic or wholly ethical in intent. Indeed, the very

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[56]Menoud, "Western Text" 24.

[57]J. J. Scott, Jr., "Textual Variants of the 'Apostolic Decree' and Their Setting in the Early Church", in FS S. J. Schultz (1983) 171 n. 4.

[58]Metzger 443.

[59]E. g. Lake, *Beginnings* 5:205.

[60]Barrett ("Codex Bezae" 17-18) makes this criticism of Menoud's reconstruction.

distinction between cultic and ethical, while a convenient way of referring to the different versions of the decree, seems arbitrary and misleading. But we anticipate.

2.2. *The proposed interpretations*

The ambiguity regarding the textual tradition of the decree leaves the way open for the injunctions to bear various interpretations. To begin with, there is the relation to the Torah. The discussion to this point has shown that James's argument, making the prohibitions part of an inference drawn from personal experience and the Scriptures, identifies the decree with God's act of restoring Israel (15:14-18) and with the law of Moses, specifically the law proclaimed in the synagogues (15:21). It has been observed as well that the items resemble both in content and in order certain of the topics in Leviticus 17-18 and that the closing comment of the council's letter--that well-being reflects right behaviour--recalls comparable exhortations in the deuteronomic law. We can go further.

Not only are the injunctions found firmly entrenched in the law which every member of the people of God under the Mosaic covenant was to uphold and fulfil, they are also regulations which applied to the strangers living in Israel, who like the native Israelites, had entered into a sworn covenant with YHWH (Deut 29:10; cf. 31:12-13; Josh 8:33, 35), who were to be added to the house of Israel when Israel was resettled in the land after the exile (Isa 14:1), and who were promised an inheritance in the land (Ezek 47:22, 23). In other words, these injunctions governed the actions of the גרים, who in later parlance were known as προσήλυτοι if they were circumcised (cf. Exod 12:43-49) and as φοβούμενοι/σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν[61] if they were not. It is therefore arguable that the choice of these injunctions was the natural consequence of a community working from the presupposition that the nation of Israel had been re-established through Jesus the Messiah and that strangers from other nations who were seeking the Lord were God's people and associated with the restored Israel, though not possessed by it. In such circumstances the uncircumcised Christian would match the uncircumcised גר of the Torah. Further, because of the common application to Jew

[61]See Appendix.

and Gentile, it is possible to infer that the chosen injunctions had the advantage of being recognized, by both Jews and Gentiles, as a long-established aspect of participating in the people of God and thus the added advantage of being able to facilitate intercourse between Jews and Gentiles.

There is a third point of contact between the apostles' decision and the Torah. In Leviticus 17-18 each of the items is accompanied by an important judicial warning which is directed to the Israelites and the גרים: the disobedient will be cut off from Israel (ונכרתה הנפש ההוא מעמיה).[62] To be cut off means to receive the curse of direct punishment by God which is visited upon the offender usually in the form of premature death and probably anticipates condemnation in the life to come.[63] Attached to deliberate violations of the levitical purity-impurity rules, the penalty of כרת was aimed at "discouraging the Israelite's participation in activities which would compromise Israel's holiness as a people separated unto God (Lev 20:26)".[64] That the assembly in formulating its decision may well have taken this penalty into consideration is suggested on two counts: (1) for the Christian community the punishment marked the difference between the Jews who accepted Jesus as the promised prophet of Moses and those who rejected him (cf. Acts 3:22-23); (2) the punishment could be said to be the converse of the positive motive clause "in order that it might be well with you and your children after you", for both incentives are applied to the regulation about blood (compare Lev 7:27; 17:10-14 with Deut 12:23-28). It therefore does not seem incorrect

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[62]On this use of כרת see the discussions in Wenham, *Leviticus* 241-42, 285-86; G. Hasel, "כרת", *TWAT* 4:362-64; and D. J. Wold, "The *Kareth* Penalty in P: Rationale and Cases", *SBL SemP* (1979) 1:1-45.

[63]Wold, "*Kareth*" esp. 24; Wenham, *Leviticus* 241-42, 285-86. Wold ("*Kareth*" 5) believes that the divine curse of extinction extends to the offender's children, should there be offspring, so that the offender is left without descendants. Wenham (*Leviticus* 242) points to the possibility that since death in the OT is often referred to as being with one's fathers (e.g. 1 Kgs 1:21; 14:31), the penalty כרת may mean that offenders are separated spiritually from their people forever.

It is sometimes claimed that כרת denotes the death penalty imposed by human agency following convictions in the courts; however, this definition does not take into consideration (a) that God himself threatens to cut people off; (b) that many of the crimes to which the penalty is attached are secret sins which would be difficult to prosecute in the court (e.g. Exod 30:38; Lev 7:20-21; Num 15:30-31); and (c) that the person who escapes judicial execution must still face the possibility of being cut off (cf. Lev 20:2-5). כרת also should not be limited to separation from the covenant community (thus, T. Frymer-Kensky, "Pollution, Purification, and Purgation in Biblical Israel", in FS D. N. Freedman [1983] 399-414), for that treatment is reserved for the unclean and not for the criminal (Lev 13:45-46; Num 5:1-4).

[64]Wold, "*Kareth*" 25.

to suggest that the maintenance of the holiness of the people of God determined the choice of the injunctions.

There is cause, nonetheless, to hesitate before adopting this explanation. Sometimes, as S. G. Wilson has pointed out,[65] the resemblance with the topics in Leviticus 17-18 has to be stretched. Εἰδωλολατρία, not εἰδωλόθυτα, would be a more appropriate classification for the act, in Lev 17:7, of slaying animals for sacrifice outside the Israelite camp and not bringing them to the meeting tent. Similarly, there is no manifest connection between πνικτόν and Leviticus 17-18 despite the common tendency to refer to Lev 17:13-16. The terms used in the Old Testament passage are "animals which die of themselves" (נבלת/θνησιμαῖα) and "animals which are torn apart by beasts" (טרפת/θηριάλωτοι). Nor does πορνεία appear in the Septuagint translation of Lev 18:6-23; the closest is the verbal form ἐκπορνεύω, with reference to spiritual adultery, in Lev 17:7. In other words, except for αἷμα, the linguistic correspondence between the prohibitions in the decree and the topics in Leviticus 17-18 is deficient.

A second reason for caution is that strictly speaking the terms in Acts 15:29 are an incomplete and possibly misleading list of the precepts imposed upon the strangers living in Israel under the Mosaic covenant. The גרים are also required to observe the sabbath (Exod 20:10; 23:12; Deut 5:14) and the day of the atonement (Lev 16:29). More puzzling, Deut 14:21 absolves the resident alien (גר = πάροικος) as well as the foreigner (נכרי = ἀλλότριος) from abstaining from eating meat of an animal that dies of itself (נבלה/θνησιμαῖον). This discrepancy between Lev 17:13-16 and Deut 14:21 could be excused if the translator's choice of πάροικος, instead of προσήλυτος, the usual equivalent of גר, was deliberate; but the application of προσήλυτοι to Israel's status in Egypt (Exod 22:20; 23:9; Lev 19:34; Deut 10:19) suggests that there is some overlap between προσήλυτος and πάροικος as the translations of גר[66] and thus the doubt regarding the extent of the correspondence lingers.

It is noteworthy as well that other regulations in the Torah carry the penalty of כרת. The sojourner, if he was circumcised (Exod 12:48), was expelled for eating

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[65]Wilson, *Law* 87-94.

[66]For further discussion and bibliography on this point see p. 150 n. 69.

leaven during the passover (Exod 12:19; cf. v. 15; Num 9:13-14). He was also sentenced to death for committing a highhanded sin and for cursing the Lord (Num 15:30; cf. Lev 24:16). To these instances where the גר is clearly in view may be added passages where there is no reference to the resident aliens but where the term "Israelites" most certainly assumes their presence. In these passages is the suggestion that the גר was to observe circumcision (Gen 17:14), the sabbath (e.g. Exod 31:14; 20:8), and many other cultic practices.[67]

In response to these difficulties, Wilson,[68] among others,[69] has sought to make a case for the ethical understanding of the decree as the one which fits most smoothly in Luke's setting. His dissatisfaction with the idea that the terms reflect Leviticus 17-18 stems not only from the lack of an explicit linguistic correspondence and the sheer strangeness of πνικτόν. Influential as well are the observation that the decree presented by Luke is not Mosaic but apostolic and inspired by the Spirit (15:28) and the supposition that by the time Luke wrote (ca. A.D. 90) the injunctions in the decree were an established part of Gentile mores and thus hardly understood exclusively as a set of levitical or cultic regulations.

Wilson cites the following. First, the Jews thought the three cardinal sins of the Gentiles to be idolatry, murder, and sexual immorality (*Jub*. 7.21-25): these three acts were those which the Jews, even under extreme duress, had to avoid (e.g. *b.Šeb*. 7b). Second, an ethical interpretation is said to make "excellent sense" of Acts 15:21 since the few basic demands could represent a summation of the law which would attract interested Gentiles, as Josephus, *Ag.Ap*. 2.291-94, for example, suggests happened. Third, πορνεία and αἷμα (= murder) would fit more naturally in the wider context of Christian literature; so would εἰδωλόθυτα and possibly πνικτόν if it is not to be excluded. Εἰδωλόθυτα becomes virtually the equivalent of εἰδωλολατρία, the idea perhaps conveyed in any case by the τὰ ἀλισγήματα τῶν εἰδώλων of 15:20; though

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[67]Exod 30:33, 38; Lev 7:20, 21, 25; 19:8, 13; 22:3; 23:29, 30 (cf. 16:29); Num 19:20.

[68]Wilson, *Law* 99-101.

[69]E.g. Harnack 248-63 and T. Boman, "Das textkritische Problem des sogenannten Apostelsdekrets", *NovT* 7 (1964) 26-36. Wilson, unlike most others, concentrates on the Lukan rather than the original context and text of the decree. I personally do not think that the two contexts and intents are necessarily disparate. The subject, though, is too large for the present discussion.

tenuous, "strangling" in connection with the prohibition of blood and in an ethical sense does appear in *Gen.Rab.* 34.14, where "the one who murders by strangling" is considered to be "a shedder of human blood".

Many of these arguments have value. There are, however, several criticisms. Wilson himself admits that a major weakness is the necessity of omitting πνικτόν: "the very coherence of this [ethical] interpretation may be precisely why an original πνικτός was quietly dropped from the text".[70] It is also plausible to question, as was done earlier,[71] that the summation of the law in terms of a few representative moral demands, a common apologetic feature in the Jewish literature of the period, is the same thing as the reduction of the law to three (four?) precepts. And surely in the case of the decree, as the μὴ παρενοχλεῖν of 15:19 and the μηδὲν πλέον ἐπιτίθεσθαι βάρος of 15:28 would maintain, it is the reduction, not the summation, of the law which is in view. A third hesitancy stems from the reconstruction of the author's setting. Even given a date of composition late in the first century A.D.--an interpretation which, though the majority opinion, still lacks conclusive proof--the issue of the church's relation to Judaism need not have died. Indeed, there is cause to suspect that after the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70 the Jewish community and the Jewish Christians who participated in and ministered to that community laid even greater stress on the aspects of Judaism like circumcision, sabbath, food laws, and sexual morality which remained and were able to set them apart from their Gentile neighbours. Where Luke's readers fit in such a situation is admittedly a moot point. It is possible to interpret Acts 28:25-28, the appointed crux text, as reflecting the fact that only a mission to the Gentiles lies ahead. But that is not the only interpretation of the passage,[72] and we do know from the exchange between Justin and Trypho that even in the second century A.D. the communication between Jews and Christians had not disappeared completely. Fourthly, there is the matter of the meaning of εἰδωλόθυτα. While it may be tempting to

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[70]Wilson, *Law* 101 (the brackets are mine).

[71]See pp. 68-70.

[72]For example, Acts 28:25-28 can be understood as representing in Rome what the earlier "programmatic" statements of 13:46-48 and 18:6 meant to the Jews and Gentiles in Pisidian Antioch and Corinth, respectively, i.e. the announcement of the extension of the gospel to the Gentiles in that area.

understand εἰδωλόθυτα (15:29) in terms of τὰ ἀλισγήματα τῶν εἰδώλων (15:20) and thereby attain for the former expression an ethical nuance, it is more reasonable to suppose that Luke understood τὰ ἀλισγήματα τῶν εἰδώλων in the sense of εἰδωλόθυτα which he gives as the text of the decree itself: Gentile believers must abstain from using food which has been offered in sacrifice in idolatrous worship.[73]

There is another way to approach the criticisms of a correlation between the decree and the topics in Leviticus 17-18. We could inquire how the Torah regulations regarding the גר/προσήλυτος were transposed to the political and religious environment of the dispersion when Israel was no longer a political entity and Judaism faced the matter of interested Gentiles. What did the Jews in the first century require of Gentiles who were "sojourning in the land" as God-fearers in the synagogue?

An answer to this question could go some way towards explaining the origin and the choice of the prohibitions in the decree. There is in Acts an obvious interest in the God-fearers.[74] That sociological group seems to constitute the greater number of the people converting to Christianity as a direct result of Paul's preaching in the synagogues and thus to have formed the link between the Jewish and the Gentile sectors of the mixed congregations in the diaspora communities. It is noteworthy as well that James, who proposed the implementation of the prohibitions as the proper response to God's electing of the Gentiles, takes the premise of his address from Peter's contribution to the debate, that Peter takes his from his meeting with Cornelius, and that Cornelius's religious experience illustrates what it means to be a God-fearer who converts to Christianity. Such a chain of argumentation suggests that the council's decision depends upon Judaism's treatment of those Gentiles who, for whatever reason, refused to become full converts to Judaism but who were sufficiently attracted to the monotheism and ethical practices of the Jews to want to maintain some connection.[75]

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[73]The usual connotation of the cognates of the hapax legomenon ἀλίσγημα, ritual and moral defilement by food (see p. 149 n. 66), is also indicative.

[74]On this expression see Appendix.

[75]The proposed grounding of the terms of the decree in the regulations of the synagogue can be backed up, with caution by *Gen.Rab.* 98.9. There R. Ḥanin, a Palestinian *amora* of the fourth generation, answers the question "for what purpose will the royal Messiah come, and what will he do?" with "He will come to assemble the exiles of Israel and to give them [the Gentiles] thirty precepts". In support of this answer R. Ḥanin cites Zech 11:12, a text which seems to have been applied by R. Joḥanan to the precepts which the Gentiles will observe when messiah comes. See also *Midr.Ps.* 21.1.

The Noachide laws,[76] the name given to the regulations governing the גר תושב (= God-fearer), are for the rabbis the minimum of the laws necessary for the maintenance of civilization. Traditionally they number seven (e.g. *b.Sanh.* 56a; *Gen.Rab.* 34.8): the injunction of social laws (i.e. the establishment of a legal system) and the prohibitions of idolatry, sexual sins, bloodshed, blasphemy, theft, and eating the flesh from living animals. To these seven, which are clearly accepted as the standard in the amoraic period, were added others during the tannaitic period (e.g. observance of the sabbath, honouring one's parents, abstention from emasculation and sorcery [*b.Sanh.* 56a-60a; cf. *b.Ḥul.* 92a-92b]), indicating earlier a lack of complete agreement as to the number of items and the specific norms to be included.[77] It is not impossible, admittedly, that the regulations were devised at a time when Israel no longer had a land which could be polluted and that they may represent simply a hypothetical projection into the future. Even so, Jewish officialdom still had to provide for the reality of Gentiles who expressed a general interest in Judaism. Moreover, there are hints that the regulations may contain or at least reflect the historical memory of a pre-70 A.D. existence.[78] Josephus, *Ag.Ap.* 2.281-86 and *Jub.* 7.20, which records a substantially different list of injunctions,[79] verify an early awareness of and interest in (indeed, observance of) Jewish practices and laws among non-Jews. The passage in *Jubilees* also traces the items to Noah and specifically to the instructions in Gen 9:4-6.

If the Noachide laws can be considered admissible evidence for the situation of the Judaism of the first century A.D., and I think it likely,[80] several observations follow.

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[76]For further discussion on these laws see S. S. Schwarzschild and S. Berman, "Noachide Laws", *EncJud* 12:1189-91; E. L. Dietrich, "Die 'Religion Noahs', ihre Herkunft und ihre Bedeutung", *ZRGG* 1 (1948) 301-15; L. Finkelstein, "Some Examples of the Maccabean Halaka", *JBL* 49 (1930) 21-25; R. Loewe, "Potentialities and Limitations of Universalism in the *Halakhah*", in FS L. Roth (1966) 125-32, 136-44.

[77]As a result, later sources, manifesting this disagreement, refer to thirty precepts.

[78]Finkelstein ("Halaka" 22-23, 25), in fact, maintains that the commandments were formulated during the Hasmonean era.

[79]These are to observe righteousness, cover the shame of the flesh, bless the creator, honour parents, love the neighbour, and guard against fornication, uncleanness, and all iniquity.

[80]This is also a suggestion entertained by Lake (*Beginnings* 5:207-8) and the contention of M. Simon ("The Apostolic Decree and Its Setting in the Ancient Church", *BJRL* 52 [1969-70] 437-60, here 439-45).

(1) The laws imposed by the Jews on interested uncircumcised non-Jews, manifest a significant juxtaposition of various kinds of regulations. There are two of a specifically religious character (idolatry, blasphemy), three of an ethical nature (homicide, theft, social laws), one of a dietary character (eating the flesh of living animals), and one that is both ritual and ethical (sexual sins). The combination in fact should not be surprising. It is observable not only in Moses's law but also in Gen 9:3-6, where the eating of blood and the shedding of blood are the prescriptions given to Noah.

(2) The statement "only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood" in Gen 9:4 on which the regulation about eating the flesh of living animals is based is extended by R. Ḥanania b. Gamaliel in *b.Sanh*. 59a to cover blood drawn from a living animal.

(3) It is discernible that the *amoraim*, who received a clear tradition of the Noachide laws, had difficulty in explaining why other pre-Sinaitic laws were not included, such as procreation (Gen 9:1), circumcision (Gen 17:12-14), and the law of sinew.

(4) There is a divergence of opinion among the rabbis whether the Noachide laws constituted a formulation of natural law or were intended solely to govern the behaviours of the non-Jewish resident living under Jewish jurisdiction.[81] The natural law position is expressed most clearly by the assertion, as to five of the seven laws, that the laws would have been made mandatory even had they not been revealed (e.g. *b.Yoma* 67b) and by the insistence that six out of the seven laws (omitted is the eating of flesh from a living animal) were revealed to Adam (*Gen.Rab*. 16.6; 24.5). Supportive of the other side of the debate is the observation that the entire content of the talmudic discussion of the Noachide laws concerns the actual enforcement by the rabbinic courts (*b.Sanh*. 56a-59a): the punishment for each crime is enumerated, and the standards of procedure and evidence are discussed.

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[81](Schwarzschild and) Berman, *EncJud* 12:1190-91.

From these observations it might not be right to claim that the decree is an abbreviated form of the rabbinic rules.[82] Indeed, not only does the list in Acts alone bear any systematic relationship to the laws which the Pentateuch makes obligatory upon the resident alien, but the decree and the Noachide laws breathe a different spirit: fulfilment of the Noachide laws does not make the resident alien or the God-fearer a member of the Jewish community in full standing; only the act of circumcision yields that status. Nevertheless, the observations do point out some similarity between the apostles' decree and the Noachide commandments--the heterogeneous composition, the clarifying commandments, the consequent bafflement about the laws excluded--which suggests that the two sets of regulations had a comparable development. That is to say, the apostolic council and the Jewish leaders started from the same point--the instructions to Noah, the levitical purity laws, and possibly the commands addressed to Adam--and they derived exegetically the taboos applicable to their respective situations.

The implication of such a correspondence is clear. Coming to terms with the prospect of Gentiles belonging to the people of God in light of the fact of the church's Jewish heritage, the Jerusalem council through the decree expressed not only the Gentiles' acceptability in the people of God without the requirements of circumcision and obedience to the law but also a concern to protect the distinctive root of the covenantal relationship between the holy God and his chosen people. It is therefore not simply a case of the Gentiles abandoning their pagan gods to worship the living and true God (cf. 1 Thess 1:9); it is also, since idolatry was the hallmark of the Gentiles (cf. Acts 14:15), being both their principal shortcoming and the basis of all other forms of Gentile immorality (e.g. Wis 12-14; *Sib.Or.* 4.27-34), perhaps more critically a case of the Gentiles representing a potential source of Jewish and Christian apostasy. The prohibitions of Acts 15:29 serve as a prevention against the breaking of the covenant by the people going after strange gods.

There is a qualification. The practices selected are not a metaphor for idolatry--the probability that εἰδωλόθυτα gives meaning to τὰ ἀλισγήματα τῶν εἰδώλων and not the

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[82]Contra Simon, "Decree" 444-45.

converse disallows this--but as the law maintains and the history of Israel verifies, they are a dangerous route to that end. To illustrate, sexual defilement and idolatrous practices such as offering children to Molech, thereby profaning God's name, are the reasons mentioned in Lev 18:24-30 for God's rejection of the original inhabitants of the promised land; and such condemnatory reaction to iniquity serves as a warning to Israel not to follow the practices of the people of Egypt or Canaan (cf. 18:2-5). The wickedness of the people brought the flood upon the earth in the days of Noah (Gen 6:5-7; *Jub.* 7.21-25), and the regulations to Noah against the eating of blood and murder lead into the promise not to allow such destruction again (Gen 9:1-17). The exiles in the lands of Assyria and Babylonia were, as the prophets repeatedly warned, a direct result of the Israelites' chase after foreign gods (e.g. Jer 3-6; 2 Kgs 17:1-18; 24:1-4), which was instigated usually by marriages to non-Israelites (e.g. 1 Kgs 11:1-8).

From the perspective of the mandated holiness of the people of God it seems natural, despite the fact that the language of the decree does not match the topics of Leviticus 17-18 precisely,[83] for a Jew to put abstention from εἰδωλόθυτα and abstention from blood and things strangled together. Food was forbidden if it was idolatrous even though it was correctly slaughtered; and equally, food was forbidden if though untainted by idolatry it had been improperly slaughtered. And with abstention from εἰδωλόθυτα goes not surprisingly in the long run abstention from πορνεία.

In this regard attention is often drawn, rightly, to the statements in Rev 2:14, 20,[84] where the eating of εἰδωλόθυτα is connected with πορνεία, with the Old Testament precedents of Balaam and Jezebel, who led her husband into idolatry (3 Kgdms 16:31; 18:19; cf. 4 Kgdms 9:22), and in case of the letter to Thyatira, in the οὐ βάλλω ἐφ' ὑμᾶς ἄλλο βάρος of 2:24, a probable allusion to the decree of Acts 15:29.[85] Another

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[83]On this point, in my opinion, Wilson (*Law* 87-94) errs, demanding a linguistic precision which exceeds the evidence of the church's use of the OT.

[84]E. g. C. K. Barrett, "Things Sacrificed to Idols", *NTS* 11 (1964-65) 139-40.

[85]This is the opinion of many commentators, but note the hesitation of Lake (*Beginnings* 5:212 n. 1).

frequently cited text is the Pseudo-Clementine literature[86] which shows that the coupling of the eating of εἰδωλόθυτα and πορνεία persisted in the primitive church[87] and which retains, independently of Acts, the substance of the decree, a suggestion of Leviticus 18 without the use of πορνεία, and the probable interpretation of the prohibition of εἰδωλόθυτα, that is, to have fellowship with the table of demons. These later examples can be backed up by others of an anticipatory nature. To cite two: Exod 34:13-16, stating plainly the need for Israel to remove from the land the idolatrous practices of its neighbours in order that the nation might fulfil undistracted the worship of God, identifies the route to idolatry as the eating of the idol sacrifices and marrying the daughters of non-Israelites. Ezek 18:5-6 (compare 22:6-12) defines the righteous person who does κρίμα καὶ δικαιοσύνην as the one who does not eat upon the mountains, the site of idolatrous sacrifices,[88] or looks to idols for help, or defiles (μιάνῃ) his neighbour's wife.[89]

2.3. *Luke's terminology*

The third indication of the significance of the apostles' decision is the language which Luke applies to the decree. We have already noted that in 15:29 the four prohibitions are labelled ἐπάναγκες, a term which, whether used of law (e.g. Demosthenes, *Orat.* 34.7; Josephus, *Ant.* 16.365) or custom (e.g. Plato, *Smp.* 176e), denotes an obligation, and that, depending on the way the verse is punctuated, the four prohibitions could be a βάρος. As a burden, the prohibitions can be viewed positively as an implement requiring hard work and discipline yet demonstrating commitment, or they may be viewed negatively as a source of oppression and an infliction.

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[86]E. Molland, "La circoncision, le baptême et l'authorité du décret apostolique (Acts xv, 28 sq.) dans les milieux judéo-chrétiens des Pseudo-Clémentines", *ST* 9 (1955) 1-39; A. F. J. Klijn, "The Pseudo-Clementines and the Apostolic Decree", *NovT* 10 (1968) 305-12.

[87]The evidence for this juxtaposition has been set forth and collected by A. Ehrhardt ("Social Problems in the Early Church: 1. The Sunday Joint of the Christian Housewife", in *The Framework of the New Testament Stories* [ET 1964] 276-90).

[88]M. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20* (1983) 328-29.

[89]W. Eichrodt (*Ezekiel* [ET 1970] 237-41) understands these injunctions to represent a legal norm which is derived from the old covenant law and which can provide a firm basis for the Israelites' relations with their neighbours in a foreign land, and he implies that they anticipate the decree of Acts 15:29. Greenberg (*Ezekiel* 1:341-43) disagrees: nothing in the grammar or selection of behaviours "implies a shift in focus from national community to individual souls, or even from a homeland perspective to an exilic one".

Attention should be drawn as well to an idea in James's argument, referred to earlier in passing. The two parts of verses 19-20 are cemented together by an unexpected ἀλλά.[90] If ἀλλά is exceptive, taking back or limiting the preceding statement,[91] it precipitates a value judgment on the four prohibitions. On the one hand, they are designated as necessary for salvation. This follows since the purpose of verse 19, which verse 20 is said to qualify, is to imply that what the Judaizers were demanding was not necessary for salvation. On the other hand, the Gentile converts may consider the prohibitions not simply voluntary concessions for the sake of ecclesiastical unity and practice in self-discipline; they could treat them as irksome burdens which could deter them from turning to God. The first implication may be valid. The second is undoubtedly also true in some instances, but in the present setting it is an unlikely fit. While the Gentiles for the most part probably treated the Jewish law as an excessive and oppressive addition to their faith, it would be very strange to find such sentiment in a response intended to answer the Judaizers and on the lips of James, who represented, or at least was sympathetic towards, the more conservative wing of Jewish Christianity.[92] It is better to understand the ἀλλά as indicating a transition to something new or introducing a contrast.[93] This is frequently its force when it comes after a negative clause. The logical opposites would be made by μὴ παρενοχλεῖν (v. 19) and ἐπιστεῖλαι (v. 20)--how the Jewish Christians should not treat the Gentile converts and how the Jewish Christians should treat the Gentiles. That is to say, the contrast is most naturally one of content.

If stress were placed on the expansive τοῖς τῶν ἐθνῶν ἐπιστρέφουσιν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, ἀλλά may in addition set forth a contrast of purpose. Such a contrast could be spelled out as follows: whereas the Gentiles do not need to be circumcised and to obey the law before they are considered people of God (v. 19), they should be instructed to make certain sacrifices in their way of living, sacrifices which ever since the institution of Moses's law (cf. v. 21) Gentiles have been required to make in order to live among the

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[90]Haenchen 443.

[91]Moulton 1:241; 3:330 and Zerwick §§468-71.

[92]See Chapter III.2.

[93]BAGD, s.v. ἀλλά.

people of God. Verse 19 then speaks of entering the covenant of the people of God; verse 20 refers to staying in that covenant. There is an immediately obvious weakness in this notional distinction between the two parts of James's conclusion. It is questionable that the definition of what constitutes and guarantees salvation, the issue which the various speeches in Acts 15 are set out to address, can be compartmented in that way. Does not admission by the very nature of the act involve the acceptance of the beliefs, the practices, the rules, etc. which are necessary for remaining? If so, the implication is rather that the four prohibitions are meant to define for the Gentiles their membership in the people of God.

These comments which point to the idea that the decree was an obligation, but not necessarily an infliction, needed to identify the Gentiles as the people of God, can be supplemented by Luke's other references to the decree. There are three.

2.3.1. ἡ παράκλησις (15:31)

In 15:31 where the council's letter is read for the first time in the church at Antioch, the decree is called ἡ παράκλησις.[94] The thrust of this description is not explicit. The term could mean "comfort",[95] marking the letter as a cause for relief; or it could be translated "exhortation",[96] marking the letter and thus the terms of the decree as pastoral admonition. In other words, ἡ παράκλησις could allude to what was not imposed on the Gentiles ("comfort") or it could allude to what was asked of the Gentiles ("exhortation").

Crucial and almost alone in giving παράκλησις some preciseness of meaning, since Luke's use of παράκλησις elsewhere would allow either of the above

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[94]Here παράκλησις could refer to Christian edification in general if the noun were understood to anticipate παρεκάλεσαν τοὺς ἀδελφούς in v. 32 (cf. Lake and Cadbury 4:182). The sequence of the action in vv. 30b-31, though, makes a stronger case for a reference to the decree: ἐπέδωκαν τὴν ἐπιστολήν; ἀναγνόντες, with the object τὴν ἐπιστολήν to be understood (BAGD, s.v. ἀναγινώσκω 1; cf. Acts 23:34); ἐχάρησαν ἐπὶ τῇ παρακλήσει.

[95]BAGD, s.v. παράκλησις 3; Haenchen 437; Knowling 329; Lake and Cadbury 4:182.

[96]O. Schmitz, "παρακαλέω", *TDNT* 5:796; Grimm-Thayer, s.v. παράκλησις; Marshall 255.

interpretations[97] and since the early translations of the verse manifest a similar ambivalence,[98] is the immediate context. The ingressive ἐχάρησαν ("they burst into exultant joy"), the action which the παράκλησις effects,[99] conveys a positive attitude which would result more naturally from the solace that the conflict which the Antioch believers had inadvertently started had ceased and that the desired conclusion had been reached than from an exhortation that certain demands were to be met.[100] This argument, however, is offset by Luke's use of παρακαλέω in verse 32. While it is not mandatory for cognate words in close sequence to bear the same meaning,[101] this is to be expected unless definitely proven otherwise. If this linguistic tendency may be assumed here, παρεκάλεσαν τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς καὶ ἐπεστήριξαν (v. 32), characterizing the ministry of Judas and Silas who brought the παράκλησις to Antioch, would give ἐπὶ τῇ παρακλήσει the sense "at the encouragement".[102] Παρακαλεῖν with τοὺς ἀδελφούς or a comparable object is in Acts almost a stereotyped expression which encapsulates the task of instructing and encouraging believers in a life worthy of their faith;[103] and the occasional combination with ἐπιστηρίζω or στηρίζω,[104] an act of spiritual reinforcement which aims to effect the impregnability of the Christian faith against trouble, can only support the idea that words of exhortation have been given. In this regard as well it is

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[97]In Acts 13:15 Paul's evangelistic address in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch is labelled by the synagogue rulers λόγος παρακλήσεως, a message intended to encourage and exhort. But παράκλησις reflects its more common OT sense "comfort" when in Luke 2:25 παράκλησιν τοῦ Ἰσραήλ refers to the fulfilment of the messianic hope and when in Luke 6:25 Jesus warns that those who are rich in this life cannot expect the consolation of God (ἀπέχετε τὴν παράκλησιν ὑμῶν) in the life to come (cf. Luke 16:25).

[98]Gig and d use *exhortationis* and *orationis*, respectively, whereas Jerome uses *consolationis*. There is no extant African evidence (Lake and Cadbury 4:182).

[99]This is the force of ἐπί (BAGD, s.v. ἐπί II1bγ).

[100]The same cause and effect relationship is evident in the juxtaposition of χαίρω and παράκλησις in 2 Cor 7:7, 13. This differs from Acts 11:23, where ἐχάρη καὶ παρεκάλει describes Barnabas's reaction to the evidence of God's grace being extended to all men without distinction: the object πάντας τῇ προθέσει τῆς καρδίας προσμένειν τῷ κυρίῳ gives παρέκαλει the meaning "he exhorted, encouraged" (cf. 14:22; 15:32; 16:40; 20:1, 2).

[101]Compare φυλάσσων in Acts 21:24 and φυλάσσεσθαι in 21:25, though here the active and middle verbal forms could account for the difference.

[102]Lake and Cadbury (4:182), though, turn the same argument around and arrive at the conclusion that παράκλησις means "comfort": "it follows that the same meaning must be given to παρεκάλεσαν..., though 'comfort' is less usual with the verb than with the substantive".

[103]Acts 11:23; 14:22; 16:40; 20:1, 2. Cf. the use of the same expression in the paraenetic passages of the Epistles, for example, Rom 12:1; 1 Cor 1:10; 2 Cor 10:1; Phil 4:2; and Heb 13:22.

[104]Acts 14:22 (1 Thess 3:2; 2 Thess 2:17); cf. Luke 22:32; Acts 18:23.

noteworthy that παραδιδοὺς τὰς ἐντολὰς τῶν πρεσβυτέρων in 15:41D states how the churches in Syria and Cilicia were strengthened and that in 16:5 there may be a correlation between the spiritual and numerical growth of the church and Paul's dissemination of the council's decision (cf. 16:4).[105]

The evidence appears well-balanced. In spite of the weighty effect of the cognate παρεκάλεσαν, the influence of ἐχάρησαν cannot be overlooked. Given the equally plausible exegetical alternatives, it is probably best to have παράκλησις, as is often the case, bear a double meaning,[106] with perhaps, because of the proximity of ἐχάρησαν, slightly greater stress on the idea of comfort. In this instance then the council's decision is presented as a source of relief, presumably (though this is not stated) because the attitude toward the Gentiles which was displayed by the believers at Antioch had been approved and authorized by the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. At the same time, the contents of the letter are an exhortation designed to incite the Gentile believers to conduct worthy of the gospel and thus designed to avoid trouble.

2.3.2. τὰ δόγματα (16:4)

In 16:4 the decree is called τὰ δόγματα. Δόγμα is "one of those curiously elastic words which vary in sharpness of meaning according to the persons to whom a thing is said to seem good, and the circumstances of the case".[107] Several examples will illustrate. The word appears in Luke 2:1 and Acts 17:7, the other occurrences in Luke's writings, to denote imperial edicts which tolerate no disobedience. Another usage, common in classical and biblically-related literature, is the set of beliefs which define a

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[105]The report in 16:5 represents a regular feature of Acts, appearing most obviously, though not solely, at the interstices of the narrative (e.g. 6:7; 9:31; 12:23; 16:5; 19:20; 28:31) to record the progress of the church in various geographical locations as the gospel advances from Jerusalem to Rome. Such summaries serve a double purpose: to divide Acts into definite episodes and to connect the events to give continuity and a historical perspective. As a transition therefore the verse does not have to have a logical connection with what immediately precedes; but the changes in 16:4 in the Western text, making the Christian proclamation responsible for the church's development, may support a link. On the frequency and function of these summary statements, see C. H. Turner, "Chronology of the New Testament", HDB 1:421; H. J. Cadbury, "The Summaries in Acts", in *Beginnings* 5:392-402; F. J. Foakes-Jackson and K. Lake, "The Internal Evidence of Acts", in *Beginnings* 2:175-77. For a recent study of the structure of Acts, see C. H. Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes, and the Genre of Luke-Acts* (1974).

[106]Bruce (Greek) 304; Rackham 257. On the close connection between exhortation and comfort, see Schmitz, *TDNT* 5:795-97, 799.

[107]Hort, *Ecclesia* 82.

school of philosophical thought gathered around an authoritative teacher-figure, to which followers assent, and by which their lifestyle is governed. Probably this nuance was in mind when the post-apostolic church fathers used δόγμα for, among other things, the teaching and prescriptions of Jesus and the apostles (e.g. *Barn.* 1.6; *Did.* 11.3; Ignatius, *Magn.* 13.1) and when the Jewish writers applied the term to the divine truths and especially to the precepts of the law.[108] The same possibility applies in the Pauline Epistles, where δόγματα designates the ordinances of the law cancelled by Jesus' death (Eph 2:15; Col 2:14).[109]

To return to τὰ δόγματα in Acts 16:4, the reference to Moses's law is certainly suggestive for our understanding of four prohibitions which have at the least their source in the Torah. Does the immediate context support such a reference?

Attempts have been made to draw some significance in this regard out of Luke's use of φυλάσσειν and παρεδίδοσαν; however, the proof is missing. Φυλάσσειν, though frequently accompanied by νόμος ([τοῦ] Μωϋσέως),[110] does not automatically refer to the attitude and action God requires of those belonging to the covenant outlined by Moses;[111] at times the object of the verb is the words of God spoken by Jesus (Luke 11:28; cf. John 12:47), the apostolic instruction (1 Tim 5:21), or the spiritual heritage entrusted to orthodox Christians (1 Tim 6:20; 2 Tim 1:14; cf. 1:12). Φυλάσσειν cannot convey to τὰ δόγματα the idea of obeying Moses's law unless τὰ δόγματα means the ordinances of Moses's law, and this is precisely what needs to be proved. Similarly, just because παραδιδόναι sometimes has as its object "Jewish tradition" (Acts 6:14; Mark 7:13), we cannot assume that Luke's use of παρεδίδοσαν αὐτοῖς in Acts 16:4 connotes instruction in the law or gives τὰ δόγματα the specific meaning "Moses's law".

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[108]3 Macc 1:3 (τῶν πατρίων δογμάτων; cf. 5:40); Josephus, *J.W.* 2.42; *Ag.Ap.* 1.42; Philo, *Leg.All.* 1.54-55, 108; *Spec.Leg.* 1.269; *Gig.* 52.

[109]Cf. Col 2:20, where the cognate verb δογματίζω is applied to regulations of human invention to which the Christian who had died with Christ is no longer subject. Is there here a negative reference to the decree? Space and the parameters of our study will only allow us to raise the question. It may be of some relevance, though, that the church fathers use the same terminology in a pejorative sense when they comment on Eph 2:15 (e.g. Chrysostom, *Eph.Hom.* 5.2 [see LPGL, s.v. δόγμα B4, C3, D3]).

[110]Luke 18:21 and parallels (Matt 19:20; Mark 10:20); Acts 7:53; 21:24; Rom 2:26; Gal 6:13; and elsewhere, for example, in Exod 19:5; Judg 2:22; 1QS 5:2, 9; 1QpHab 5:5; Josephus, *Ant.* 4.318; 19.283, 288; *m.* *'Abot* 1:1-2, 4; 4:5, 11.

[111]Contra Jervell, "Law" 144.

In the New Testament alone the verb refers as well to the passing on of the Jesus tradition (Luke 1:2) and the confessions of faith and rules for the conduct of the church's life.[112]

What is relevant is that the use of τὰ δόγματα is backed up by the twice-repeated ἔδοξεν in the council's letter (15:25, 28; cf. v. 22). This verb which introduces the different clauses of the assembly's deliberations perhaps anticipates the later application of the cognate δογματίζω to resolutions of church councils.[113] Significant as well is the qualifying τὰ κεκριμένα ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων τῶν ἐν Ἰεροσολύμοις. With the participle probably referring to judicial determinations[114] and the prepositional phrase denoting an authoritative body, the qualifier gives τὰ δόγματα two ideas. There is the sense of principles developed by a community to meet a specific need--principles which may be based on and equal to but not necessarily the same as those already established. There is also the notion of a decision which reflects authority and demands obedience. That is to say, although the terms of the decree have their roots in the Torah and although the decree was formulated in the context of a disagreement over the enforcement or non-enforcement (depending on one's perspective) of the law, it is unlikely that so restricted a sense can be imposed on δόγματα in 16:4. At the same time, the description implies more than a set of philosophical beliefs.[115] Can we say that the decree consisted of regulations which while not in form imperatival were intended to have a binding force? that the regulations were to be observed as law is to be observed without being *the* law? This is certainly possible. The Western text (D[c] [sy$^{h\ mg}$]), giving another view of the church's decision, uses τὰς ἐντολὰς τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων in the place of τὰ δόγματὰ τὰ κεκριμένα ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων . A similar phrase is appended by the same textual tradition (D [gig w vg^{cl} sy$^{h\ mg}$]) to the

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[112]Rom 6:17; 1 Cor 11:2, 23; 15:3; 2 Pet 2:21; Jude 3.

[113]For examples see G. Kittel, "δόγμα", *TDNT* 2:232 and LPGL, s.v. δογματίζω. Post-apostolic usage does not determine Luke's choice of δόγμα, but it can reflect Luke's intention and thus guide how we define δόγματα in v. 4.

[114]Compare the meaning of κρίνω in 15:19 (see pp. 165-66).

[115]Haenchen (461 n. 6) thinks an element of the meaning "imperial edict" is retained. Hort (*Ecclesia* 83), following his interpretation of ἔδοξεν and κρίνω, sees in these expressions "more than advice" but "less than command" and translates δόγματα as "resolutions". Similarly, Bruce ([Greek] 308) uses "decisions".

end of 15:41: Paul and Silas strengthened the churches in Syria and Cilicia (how?) παραδιδοὺς τὰς ἐντολὰς τῶν πρεσβυτέρων.

Acts 16:4 allows a further observation about the decree which, while not germane to the immediate question, is relevant to the wider issue of the use of the decree in the early church and thus is best dealt with here. Paul is shown delivering the decree to the churches in Asia Minor which he as a representative of the Antiochian church had established during his first missionary journey; yet the council's letter is addressed to the believers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia (15:23) specifically. An easy explanation for Paul's act can be found in the evangelistic link between the church at Antioch and the churches in Asia Minor:[116] what regulated the mother church should regulate the daughter churches. This is backed up on two counts. (1) The address of the letter mentions the believers in Syria and Cilicia which were likewise daughter churches of Antioch. (2) The problems precipitating the crisis in Antioch had spread or were in the process of spreading, according to one's interpretation of the date and destination of the Epistle to the Galatians, to the communities in Asia Minor. Nonetheless, the link between Antioch and the Pauline churches may not be the entire explanation. We must allow as well for the possibility, which the τοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν ἐθνῶν ἐπιστρέφουσιν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν in 15:19 may anticipate, that the apostles in Jerusalem (or Luke) meant the decree to have a universal application or, at least, that for Luke the decree was to be implemented in all Pauline communities. [117]

2.3.3. ἐπεστείλαμεν κρίναντες (21:25)

The last mention of the decree, Acts 21:25, occurs in comments made by James and the Jerusalem elders when Paul visits Jerusalem after his extended ministry in Ephesus. We will return to examine the significance of the setting of this episode in the next chapter.[118] For the present our purpose is the language applied to the decree.

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[116]Bruce (Greek) 308 and Knowling 340.

[117]Haenchen 461 n. 6.

[118]See Chapter V.5.

Here the decree is identified as an official written communication (ἐπεστείλαμεν; cf. 15:20)[119] of an authoritative decision (κρίναντες; cf. 16:4). Note should also be taken of the unqualified τὰ πεπιστευκότα ἔθνη, denoting those to whom the decree was directed. It is no doubt true that the lack of modifiers registers the consequence of the spread of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire. But it is also significant that the unrestricted phrase supports Paul's distribution of the letter to the churches in Asia Minor and seems to make the decree applicable in principle at least to all Gentile believers.

2.4. *Summary*

Now to bring together the observations gained from the above investigation of the intent of the decree in its setting in Acts. Two points emerge. The first concerns the relation of the decree to the law. The decree is not stated to be written Torah. Its origin is attributed to the guidance of the Spirit and the rational deduction of the apostles. It is also not a minimal ethics or an abstract of the law obligatory in place of the whole law: this is ruled out by the selection of four conditions which do not reproduce precisely in content or number the regulations imposed on the גר and by the Jewish holistic view of the law in general. At the same time, however, the decree is presented as equivalent to Torah and related to Torah. To it is applied key official and legal expressions such as δόγματα, ἐντολάς, and τὰ κεκριμένα ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων; and, while not exact, there is sufficient conceptual and linguistic resemblance to the Old Testament covenantal regulations, a resemblance which is backed up by an association with the preaching of the law in the synagogues and a correspondence with the Noachide laws composed by rabbinic Judaism for the גר תושב. Such characteristics leave behind the impression that the decree represents the end product of a typically Jewish pragmatic reapplication of the law to a new situation. Here the need for change is prompted by the election of Gentiles to the people of God. This divine act had to be coordinated, on the

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[119]In B C* (D) Ψ bo and other texts ἀπεστείλαμεν replaces ἐπεστείλαμεν. The internal evidence is likewise divided: ἀπεστείλαμεν may have been altered to the more elegant ἐπεστείλαμεν in order to agree with 15:20 (Ropes 3:207; Meyer 2:193); alternatively, ἀπεστείλαμεν, being the more usual word, may have replaced ἐπεστείλαμεν (Metzger 484-85). Nestle-Aland[26] opts for ἐπεστείλαμεν.

one hand, with the fundamental tenet of the Sinaitic covenant which makes the Gentiles and their way of living the route to apostasy which Israel as the holy people of God had to avoid and, on the other, with the conviction that Jesus the Messiah fulfilled the promises of the covenants and the law and brought Israel an altered but rightful orientation. The result of the apostles' deliberations is, in other words, a piece of Christian *halakhah* based on the Jewish covenants: it is not *the* law but it is to be obeyed as law is to be obeyed.

Following on from this point is, secondly, the function of the decree in light of its necessity. The decree, as formulated in the council setting of Acts, is a two-barrelled reply to the question of the way to salvation. It releases the Gentiles from the burden of circumcision and obedience to the whole law and it imposes the obligation and responsibility, though some may say burden, to abstain from certain foods and from sexual immorality, which was for the Jew the summation of the pagan way of life. Obedience brings the confidence and promise of life in the land. It seems therefore that the four prohibitions are more than an inconsequential practical solution to ease social tension between Jewish and Gentile believers. The prohibitions carry as well a theological import: they are not *the* way to salvation--James's acceptance of Peter's argument has made that point clear--but they do define for the Gentiles their membership in the people of God. The decree is, in short, a down-to-earth practicality which is "simultaneously feasible socially, defensible jurisprudentially,... maintainable ethically,"[120] and mandated theologically.

3. The Admission of the Gentiles and Social Intercourse

That is the conclusion about the Gentiles' membership in the people of God which is reached by the council in Jerusalem. It is a considerable conclusion which has significant implications for Luke's story, as well as for the portrait of Paul in the Epistles. One implication which falls within the parameters of our study is the relation between the council's decision and the events in Acts 10:1-11:18.

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[120]Loewe ("Universalism" 117) makes this comment in reference to *halakhah* in general.

Luke, as we have seen, invites the reader to make a connection between the two passages specifically in Peter's contribution to the debate (and implicitly in James's) and in the similarity between the terms of the decree and Cornelius's status as a God-fearer. In Acts 10-11, as in Acts 15, the acceptance of uncircumcised Gentiles leads to an ecclesiastical investigation, perhaps even a trial.[121] Issue is taken by the believers in Jerusalem on Peter's fellowship with uncircumcised Gentiles. On hearing an account of God's superintendence of Peter's actions, however, the interrogators lapse into silence, having no further objections, and give glory to God (ἡσύχασαν καὶ ἐδόξασαν τὸν θεόν being inceptive); they recognize that "to the Gentiles God has granted repentance leading to life" and thus confess that Peter was right in his actions. The conclusion to the story of Cornelius suggests that the results of the council in Acts 15 were actually agreed upon earlier. What need was there then for the council? Why is the subject of the Gentiles and their admission to the people of God reopened in chapter 15 when it was apparently settled in chapters 10-11? Or, to state the problem in another way, central to Acts 10:1-11:18 is a vision which in the immediate context is interpreted in terms of the relationship between Jews and Gentiles, legitimating Peter's full acceptance of Cornelius without circumcision, but which does contain the suggestion that the dietary regulations of the Torah were to be set aside. "How, then, could St. Luke have related, without turning a hair, that regulations concerning meats were nevertheless imposed upon Gentile Christians?"[122]

One answer, mentioned earlier,[123] which has been adopted by many scholars is that Luke has unintentionally blended two related but distinct issues. Luke may have

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[121]Ὅτι Εἰσῆλθες πρὸς ἄνδρας ἀκροβυστίαν ἔχοντας καὶ συνέφαγες αὐτοῖς in 11:3 can be translated as an interrogative, the speakers seeking an explanation, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?" (RSV; JB; Lake and Cadbury 4:124; cf. Moule 132, 159) or it can be rendered as a declarative, the speakers levelling an accusation, "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them!" (Phillips; TEV). There is a third possibility if the reading λέγοντες ὅτι εἰσῆλθεν ...συνέφαγεν in p^{45} B $sy^{p\ h}$ is adopted. The weight of the evidence supports the interrogative: (1) v. 4 states that "Peter explained" (Πέτρος ἐξετίθετο) as if in answer to "why?" (cf. Acts 18:26; 28:23); (2) the words resemble the grammatical construction in Mark 9:28 which is introduced by ἐπηρώτων; (3) ὅτι is used in Mark 2:16 where the parallel in Matt 9:11 and Luke 5:30 has διὰ τί; (4) the Vulgate translates ὅτι with *quare*. Generally the variant in B is rejected on the grounds that it represents a scribal failure to recognize that in later Greek usage ὅτι may stand for τί (Ropes 3:102-3; Metzger 384).

[122]Harnack 255 n. 3.

[123]See pp. 52-55.

known that the inclusion of the Gentiles presented many difficulties for the early church, but he was insensitive to the concomitant legal problems, in particular the regulations against Jews eating with the uncircumcised. Consequently, he has confused, even misrepresented, according to some, the proceedings of two or three meetings and as a result has left the impression that the decision to admit the Gentiles to the Christian community was taken in one crisis event.

The investigations in Acts 11 and Acts 15 could certainly be read in this way. There is between the two passages a conspicuous thematic chiasm. The investigation in Acts 11 is initiated by a concern over Peter's eating with the Gentiles (A, 11:3) and concludes with the acknowledgement that God has granted to the Gentiles repentance unto life (B, 11:18). That in chapter 15 begins with a question about the way to salvation (B', 15:1) and ends with a decision which in part concerns social interaction between Jewish and Gentile members of the people of God (A', 15:29).[124] We note further that Luke follows the story of Cornelius with the story of the founding of the church at Antioch and of Paul's and Barnabas's visit to Jerusalem with the collection from the Antiochian believers. The practices in Antioch were not unlike the recent events in Caesarea, perhaps even more critical. In Antioch the Hellenists scattered by the persecution after Stephen's death had deliberately presented the gospel to the Gentiles (11:20) and, according to Gal 2:11-14, had engaged openly in unrestricted table-fellowship with the uncircumcised converts. Why was the matter of Jew-Gentile interaction not dealt with during that visit instead of being reserved until Acts 15? This is a legitimate question on whatever showing of the relationship between Paul's visits to Jerusalem recorded in Acts and Gal 2:1-10 and is the more so if Acts 11:29-30 corresponds with Gal 2:1-10. Obviously the church in Jerusalem was aware of what was happening in Antioch; indeed, they had sent Barnabas to investigate (11:22).

Such features of the narratives notwithstanding, we do Luke a disservice if we ignore the pattern of history. The history of any movement, be it political,

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[124]The chiasm, admittedly, is not exact: the council's decree is more extensive than the four prohibitions, a point often overlooked, and does contain at least implicitly a reply to the Judaizers' demands; the social intercourse spoken of in chap. 15 (four prohibitions) is more restrictive than that taking place in chaps. 10-11 (free interaction). But in general the chiasm still holds.

philosophical, religious, etc., rarely manifests a straightline development. There are dialectic collisions, divergences, and stalemates. History is also repetitive. As people's expectations change, as internal and external circumstances alter, as opinions are formulated, and as reform is attempted, problems seemingly resolved reappear for reassessment and new application. Could this aspect of history not provide a more accurate explanation of the narrative tension between Acts 10-11 and Acts 15? Could not the problem of the Gentiles, despite the close link between circumcision and social segregation, have received different emphases in different places? While one locality may have dealt with the question "can we as Jews who are experiencing the promises of the messiah eat with Gentiles?", could not another community, or even the same community at a different time, have debated whether Gentiles, unless they were circumcised, had a right to be associated with the people of God? This approach would certainly accord with the fact that Acts does depict a church evolving, reflecting an inconsistency in its characters and no cut-and-dried policy. It would also fit with the nature of the problem, the more so given that Luke records little if any evidence for further evangelism by the Jerusalem church among the Gentiles. A momentous decision like the overturning of the long-established perception of the people of God would undoubtedly be subjected to constant review and evaluation and would foster a great variety of opinions.

The narrative, even after we allow for the author's influence on the tradition, gives support to this explanation. The question about Peter's actions in Caesarea did not appear until Peter returned to Jerusalem, after a considerable time (διὰ ἱκανοῦ χρόνου, 11:2D) according to the Western tradition, although, according to the other witnesses, the news had reached the believers in Judea before then. The question about the way to salvation faced by the church in Antioch arose more slowly, indeed, not until after the mission to Asia Minor and then by believers from Judea, even though the church from its inception had engaged in a mission to Greeks (11:20). Along these lines, too, is the likelihood that the question of social intercourse between Jews and Gentiles did not die. It is obviously an issue in the community which the author of the

Gospel of Mark addresses with the editorial "In saying this Jesus declared all foods 'clean'" (Mark 7:19). Similar battles over ritualistic and libertine dietetic practices bothered the believers in Rome (Rom 14:1-23), Colossae (Col 2:20-23), Pergamum (Rev 2:14), and Thyatira (Rev 2:20), at least.

Given these ingredients, a couple of historical reconstructions could be proposed. H. Diehl[125] has argued that the conversion of Cornelius was viewed as an exception: what was appropriate in his case was not necessarily appropriate for all Gentile believers; nor did the small group in Caesarea pose the same problems as a much larger influx of Gentiles through Paul's ministry, not all of whom were God-fearers. The uniqueness of the story's beginning, the visions which effected the meeting between Peter and the centurion would certainly point in the direction of this explanation. Yet, while not disparaging the weight of these observations, we cannot get around the fact that the conclusion reached by the Jerusalem church in 11:18 is set up not in terms of an exception but in terms of a principle. This seems to be the force of τοῖς ἔθνεσιν,[126] which is anticipated by a shift in objective from Cornelius in particular to Gentiles in general in 10:35 and 10:45; and it is backed up by Peter's argument in 15:7-11 which makes the conversion of Cornelius in some sense normative.

A more fruitful approach is to develop the reconstruction on the basis of the descriptions of the people initiating the confrontations. In 11:2 those who raise the matter of table-fellowship with the Gentiles are called οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς; in 15:5 those who demand circumcision and obedience to the law are labelled τινες τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς αἱρέσεως τῶν Φαρισαίων. Are the two phrases identical? Does οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς refer to the Judaizing party in Jewish Christianity? It seems unlikely.[127] Outside the two occurrences in Acts (10:45; 11:2) οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς bears a variety of meanings. It denotes Jews as distinct from non-Jews (Rom 4:12), Jews or Jewish Christians who (probably) insist on circumcision as the

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[125]H. Diehl, "Das sogenannte Aposteldekret. Ein Beitrag zur Kritik von A. Harnacks 'Apostelgeschichte'", *ZNW* 10 (1909) 286.

[126]Haenchen 342.

[127]Scholarly opinion leans towards making the two groups different (e.g. NEB; Haenchen 341 n. 4; Marshall 195; Jacquier 338). For the alternative interpretation see RSV; Ramsay, *St. Paul* 44 n. 1; Knowling 263; Foakes-Jackson 97; and Wikenhauser 125. E. E. Ellis (*Prophecy and Hermeneutics* 116-28, esp. 116-17) does not think οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς denotes Judaizers but the expression does refer "to a particular kind of Jewish believer. For it alludes to a dispute not between Jewish and Gentile Christians but between two groups in the Jerusalem church".

way to salvation for Gentiles as well as Jews (Gal 2:12; cf. Titus 1:10), and Jewish Christians in general (Col 4:11). In the context of the accusation against Peter in Acts 11:2-3, οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς is probably influenced by οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς πιστοί in 10:45. There the expression is used of Peter's Jewish Christian companions without any notion of Judaizers being in view, for the men enter Cornelius's house (11:12). Both occurrences are juxtaposed with a reference to the Gentiles, τὰ ἔθνη in 10:45 and ἄνδρας ἀκροβυστίαν ἔχοντας in 11:3. The opposites draw attention implicitly and explicitly, respectively, to the peculiar characteristic of the Gentiles, but they need not transfer to οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς the meaning "Judaizers". Further, the question in 11:3 about eating with Gentiles need not convey an extraordinary zeal for legal obedience; it is a natural and logical response to years of conditioning by a fundamental/in the Torah (cf. 10:28): stay away from /principle Gentiles to avoid sin and rejection by God. A third factor to take into consideration is that at this point in Luke's story the issue of the uncircumcised had not arisen in such a way as to lead to people taking sides,[128] though there are hints, in Stephen's speech and Philip's mission in Samaria, that certain Christians were willing to entertain and practise a more liberal interpretation of the people of God.

If οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς in 11:2 does refer merely to those of Jewish birth, i.e. to the whole Jerusalem congregation who had heard the news of Peter's meeting with the uncircumcised Cornelius (11:1), then we may assume that in the interval between that investigation and the council in Acts 15 the church experienced a great influx of converts from the Pharisees or a strengthening of the conservative position which was sufficient to warrant and to necessitate the reopening of the question. But even if οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς does represent the same minority as τινες τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς αἱρέσεως τῶν Φαρισαίων, a plausible scenario can still be reconstructed. It is possible that the Judaizers' silence and acceptance of the Gentiles in 11:18 was temporary and tactical or (and the ideas are not mutually excluding) that through the influx of Pharisaic converts and of Gentiles who had no connection with the synagogue they felt confident to introduce the matter again.

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[128]Cf. Jacquier 338; Marshall 195. Ellis (*Prophecy and Hermeneutic* 116-28) would disagree. He connects the Ἑβραῖοι of Acts 6:1; 2 Cor 11:22; and Phil 3:5 and sees in the use of that designation for the Jews and Jewish Christians with a strict attitude toward the Jewish cultus and customs the foundation of conflict as early as the disagreement over the distribution of the church funds (Acts 6:1), if not from the beginning of the church.

These points explain how it is possible for an issue which had been apparently settled to be reopened for debate. But what about the other, somewhat knottier question of the relation between Peter's vision regarding clean and unclean--the implication of which may or may not be contained in the Jerusalem believers' announcement of the Gentiles' acceptance with God in 11:18, Luke simply is not clear--and the four prohibitions which emphasize the obligation of holiness? There is cause to know that the implications of the vision were eventually seen by the early church. Καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα in Mark 7:19b and οἶδα καὶ πέπεισμαι ἐν κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ ὅτι οὐδὲν [βρῶμα] κοινὸν δι' ἑαυτοῦ in Rom 14:14a could not be clearer in denouncing the levitical distinctions between foods. It is also obvious that the release from levitical regulations was both abused by some and denied by others. These diametrically-opposed reactions may provide the key. Could not the answer lie simply in the fact that the church was composed of Jews and Gentiles united by faith in Jesus but divergent when it came to the implications of that faith for the church's Jewish heritage and the privileges of Israel?

CHAPTER V. AFTER THE COUNCIL

Having recorded the momentous decision of the Jerusalem council, the Book of Acts does not forsake the matter of membership in the people of God; instead, it periodically, though perhaps not so fully or systematically, returns to the subject and illustrates how, as the Christian proclamation moved progressively away from the Jewish religious centre in Jerusalem and away from the daughter church in Antioch and encountered new and sometimes similar problems, the church welcomed Jewish and Gentile converts. Our brief discussion of Acts 15:30-35 showed the immediate result of the council: concord between Jerusalem and Antioch believers and harmony within the Antioch church were restored when uncircumcised Gentiles were accepted as members of the people of God.[1] Four other events--the disagreement at Antioch between Paul and Barnabas (15:36-41); Paul's circumcising of Timothy (16:1-3); the treatment of Apollos and Paul's "baptizing" of (about) twelve disciples at Ephesus (18:24-19:7); and Paul's reception by the Jerusalem church just prior to his arrest at the hands of the Roman authorities in Jerusalem (21:17-26)--as well as isolated evangelistic statements in Acts 16-28 attributed to Paul will complete the picture. We will begin with the comments on Paul's message of salvation.

1. Paul's Message of Salvation

The most direct statement on the matter of entering the people of God outside the debate of Acts 15 is found in 16:30-31: τί με δεῖ ποιεῖν ἵνα σωθῶ;...πίστευσον ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν, καὶ σωθήσῃ σὺ καὶ ὁ οἶκός σου. What the inquirer in this exchange, the Philippian jailer, seeks from Paul and Silas is not merely deliverance from the calamitous effects of the earthquake or rescue from the disciplinary action of his supervisors (v. 26); through a confession which is linked, at least for the reader, with

[1]This is Luke's opinion. The chronological relation of the episode in Gal 2:11-14 to the various events in Acts could indicate a different conclusion.

the fortune-teller's announcement that Paul and Silas, the servants of the Most High, were proclaiming ὁδὸν σωτηρίας (16:17), the jailer admits to having a spiritual need.[2] Paul's and Silas's reply states that faith is the condition for deliverance from divine judgment and thus for eternal life for each person.[3] The faith to which the missionaries refer is, however, no all-encompassing, vague notion. It focuses on the person of Jesus in a specific way. Ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν recalls the early Christian confession κύριος Ἰησοῦς (1 Cor 12:3; cf. Phil 2:11; Rom 10:9) with all the concomitant claims of the Christian proclamation and draws attention to the necessity of accepting the assertions regarding Jesus' death, resurrection, and exaltation: Jesus is saviour to those to whom Jesus is Lord.

This clear explanation of the way to salvation, which is substantiated in 18:8; 20:21; 22:19; and 24:24 when faith in Jesus appears as the characteristic of the people of God and as the summation of the apostolic message, is followed in its context by five events, three of which qualify Paul's imperative in 16:31 in a notable way.

(1) Paul and Silas speak the word of the Lord[4] (v. 32). We can only speculate what the message contained. It may have been preparation for baptism, as the sequence of events in verses 31-34 has been thought to suggest,[5] or instruction in the apostles' decree or, as seems most probable, since a message from the Lord can also be a message about the Lord, the details of the Christian proclamation.[6] What is indicated in any case is that faith is concomitant with and possibly in this case even brought into being by hearing the word of the Lord.[7]

(2) The jailer and his household are baptized immediately (v. 33b). From the placement of this act in the sequence of events, it is reasonable to infer that baptism

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[2]Most commentators take this position.

[3]Despite the singular imperative and the compound subject of σωθήσῃ, logically σὺ καὶ ὁ οἶκός σου is to be understood with πίστευσον as well as with σωθήσῃ (cf. 18:8). It then follows, since the condition of faith must be met by each person, that it would be perverse to argue, as some have (see p. 31), that οἶκος here and in 11:14; 16:15; and 18:8 includes infants.

[4]There is for our discussion little difference between τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου, which most MSS have, and τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ used by ℵ* and B and preferred by Ropes (3:158).

[5]Haenchen 479; Conzelmann 93; Knowling 352.

[6]Jacquier 504.

[7]There is a noteworthy pastoral admonition in Luke's words: to confront people with the gospel without adequate instruction adapted to their particular situation is not sufficient.

is the logical consequence of commitment to Jesus--which in this instance is confirmed by the jailer attending to the missionaries' wounds (v. 33a) and by the celebration in response to God's act of salvation with which the story ends (ἠγαλλιάσατο πανοικεὶ πεπιστευκὼς τῷ θεῷ, v. 34b)[8]--and that baptism signals visually the power of the divine word to lead to faith and accomplish salvation. The latter thought can be backed up by the inclusion of the emphatic παραχρῆμα, a favourite of Luke.[9] The adverb claims most naturally that the jailer and his household were baptized there and then, but it also is found generally in the context of miracles where it points both to the suddenness of the miracle and to the miraculous actualization of the word of Jesus issued directly or indirectly, often in response to faith, and with the promise of healing.[10]

(3) The jailer prepares a meal for Paul and Silas (v. 34a). The import of this event centres on the difficult words παρέθηκεν τράπεζαν. The argument that the meal

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[8]Since the passage contains no explicit reference to the new converts' receipt of the Spirit, Bruce ([NIC] 338 n. 53; cf. Knowling 338) has suggested, by analogy with Φίλιππος...ἐβάπτισεν αὐτόν...[ὁ εὐνοῦχος] ἐπορεύετο...τὴν ὁδὸν αὐτοῦ χαίρων in 8:38-39, that ἠγαλλιάσατο implicitly supplies the obvious omission. It is no doubt right to assume that the jailer received the Spirit when he believed, but it is asking too much to obtain the idea from ἠγαλλιάσατο. To be sure, ἀγαλλίασις and its more common synonym χαρά are emotions generated by (Gal 5:22; 1 Thess 1:6) or connected with (Acts 13:52; Luke 10:21) the presence of the Spirit, and the gift of the Spirit as the sign of the last days (Acts 2:17) is part of the messianic redemption. But Luke's idea of ἀγαλλιάομαι represents the human response to the whole event of messianic redemption (Luke 1:14, 44, 47; 10:21; cf. Acts 2:26), not one particular aspect. It "characterizes the consciousness of the community that it is the community of the last time constituted by the saving act of God" (R. Bultmann, "ἀγαλλιάομαι", *TDNT* 1:20). For another connotation of ἀγαλλιάομαι in 16:34 see n. 11 below.

[9]Παραχρῆμα also occurs in Luke 1:64; 4:39; 5:25; 8:44, 47, 55; 13:13; 18:43; 19:11; 22:60; Acts 3:7; 5:10; 12:23; 13:11; 14:20D; 16:26; and elsewhere in the NT only in Matt 21:19, 20. The significance of this adverb for Luke can be illustrated by Luke's treatment of Mark's favourite adverb εὐθύς: Luke either eliminates Mark's occurrences of εὐθύς or inserts εὐθέως (Luke 5:13 || Mark 1:42) or παραχρῆμα (Luke 8:44 || Mark 5:29; Luke 8:55 || Mark 5:42; Luke 18:43 || Mark 10:52). Only once does εὐθύς occur (Luke 6:49) and then without a corresponding passage in Mark (cf. Matt 7:27) and only once does εὐθέως characterize a miraculous healing (Luke 5:13 || Mark 1:42; cf. Acts 9:18, 34 and τῇ ὥρᾳ in Acts 16:18; 22:13). For further discussion on these and similar adverbial expressions, see D. Daube, *The Sudden in the Scriptures* (1964).

[10]The correlation between παραχρῆμα and the word of the Lord is more consistent and direct than that between παραχρῆμα, πίστις, and σῴζω. See Luke 5:19-25; 8:43-48, 49-55; 18:41-43; Acts 3:7, 16.

described is the observance of the eucharist notwithstanding,[11] it is unlikely that the words mean any more than that the jailer hospitably gave Paul and Silas "ein höchst nötiges Mahl".[12] The mention of a meal does raise the interesting point that here is recorded no hesitation nor reluctance on Paul's and Silas's parts to eat with presumably uncircumcised Gentiles and to accept their food. It would be farfetched to assume that the jailer had at his disposal the necessary *kosher* foods or that he could acquire such foods at midnight; and although not every meal with Gentiles was a meal of forbidden foods, it would be mere speculation to hold that the meal consisted of no more than bread and water. No, this seems to be a meal that may not have satisfied the requirements of the decree, and neither Paul nor Silas (nor Luke) makes any comment about the failure or seeks to apply the decree.

Beside the condition of believing in the Lord Jesus, Paul's evangelistic statements after the council mention the need for repentance. In the address delivered to the Athenian Areopagus (17:22-31) it is argued (a) that whereas God previously overlooked the Gentiles' ignorance of him, now he as creator and sustainer of the world is making a claim on his creation and (b) that this decisive change in God's behaviour is due to God's having set a day when he will righteously judge the whole world through the man whom he has appointed, i.e. through Jesus[13] (v. 31). The result is that now all people everywhere must repent.

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[11]P. H. Menoud ("The Acts of the Apostles and the Eucharist" [1953], in *Jesus Christ and the Faith. A Collection of Studies* [ET 1978] 84-106) has written the most comprehensive defence of the eucharistic interpretation of παρέθηκεν τράπεζαν (see also B. Reicke, *Diakonie, Festfreude und Zelos. In Verbindung mit der altchristlichen Agapenfeier* [1951] 216-17; Rackham 290; Jacquier 505). He supports his case by comparing the use of ἠγαλλιάσατο in 16:34b with the use of ἀγαλλίασις in a similar context in 2:46 (see also Bultmann, *TDNT* 1:21). Against this interpretation can be made several points. (1) The passage is analogous with 9:18-19, where Paul, after being baptized, λαβὼν τροφὴν ἐνίσχυσεν, an obvious reference to the breaking of the fast mentioned in v. 9. (2) Τράπεζα refers to the eucharist in 1 Cor 10:21, but it does so because it is modified by κυρίου, as distinct from τράπεζα διαμονίων in the same verse, and because it occurs in the context of definite eucharistic language (ποτήριον κυρίου πίνειν, v. 21a). Τράπεζα never has this qualification in Luke-Acts: besides the literal meaning "table", the word denotes simply the distribution of food (Acts 6:2). (3) The appeal to ἠγαλλιάσατο in Acts 16:34b is also questionable. In Acts 2:46 ἀγαλλίασις occurs with τροφή and subsequent to κλῶντές τε κατ' οἶκον ἄρτον, the usual expression for the eucharist (cf. Luke 22:19; 24:30, 35; Acts 2:42; 20:7, 11; 27:35), as though it were expressing another idea.

[12]Haenchen 479. Compare Tob 2:2S, where παρετέθη μοι ἡ τράπεζα is coordinate with παρετέθη μοι ὀψάρια πλείονα; Josephus, *Ant.* 6.338; and Thucydides 1.130.

[13]From 10:42 and the reference to resurrection in 17:31b the reader would identify Jesus as the man appointed to be judge; but in case the connection is missed, D adds Ἰησοῦ.

The twinned thoughts of universalism and necessity are brought out by the piling up of terms like πάντας πανταχοῦ (v. 30), τὴν οἰκουμένην (v. 31a), and πᾶσιν (v. 31b), which stress that Gentiles, as well as the Jews, are included in the plan of God, and by παραγγέλλει (v. 30) which in governing μετανοεῖν identifies repentance as a divine demand imposed on all peoples. The meaning of repentance is influenced by τούς...χρόνους τῆς ἀγνοίας ὑπεριδών, God's former response to the Gentiles.

The semantic relation between the Gentiles' ignorance and their need for repentance has engendered much scholarly discussion. Basically there are two positions. M. Dibelius,[14] representative of the viewpoint that the address is a positive assessment of Greek religiosity, believes ἡ ἄγνοια means primarily an intellectual state and μετανοέω, an act of turning from ignorance to a consciousness of one's natural kinship to God. B. Gärtner,[15] on the other hand, works from the background of the Old Testament and takes ἡ ἄγνοια to be almost synonymous with ἡ ἁμαρτία, denoting a strong condemnation of Greek idolatry and religion, and μετανοέω to designate an act of turning from sin to grace. It exceeds the present discussion to examine the philosophical and theological stances of the entire speech which lie behind the two interpretations,[16] but a couple of observations will help to determine a working definition of μετανοεῖν if not its exact definition.

While the language of verse 30 may not be able to carry the full weight of the Old Testament idea of guilt,[17] it does, given the context, imply some form of condemnation. Ἄγνοια recalls the beginning of the address where attention is drawn to the Athenian altar inscribed ἀγνώστῳ θεῷ (v. 23a) and to Paul's desire to rectify the Athenians' deficient knowledge (v. 23b). In the intervening verses the notion of the Greeks worshipping God but not knowing him is reinforced by a demonstration that

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[14]M. Dibelius, "Paul on the Areopagus" (1939), in *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (ET 1956) 26-77, esp. 55-62.

[15]B. Gärtner, *The Areopagus Speech and Natural Revelation* (ET 1955) esp. 232-41.

[16]Another question too large for the present study is the relation between God's seemingly tolerant attitude towards the Gentiles mentioned here and the idea of divine condemnation developed in Rom 1:18-32. For the various arguments see, on the one hand, Dibelius, "Areopagus" 58-62, 72-73 and Vielhauer, "'Paulinism'" 36-37 and, on the other, Gärtner, *Areopagus* 248-52 and C. J. Hemer, *The Historicity of Acts* (forthcoming).

[17]As Wilson (*Gentiles* 209) points out, if Luke had meant sin, there is a perfectly good Greek word he could have used and does use in 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 7:60; 10:43; 13:38; 22:16; and 26:18.

their chosen expression of worship is false and dishonouring to the creator who does have a rightful claim on their lives. This knowledge now makes former ignorance culpable.[18] Furthermore, in light of God's appointment of the day of judgment (v. 31a), the act which altered God's treatment of the Gentiles, τοὺς χρόνους...τῆς ἀγνοίας ὑπεριδών cannot connote that God necessarily viewed the conduct of the heathen with indifference but simply that until a time of judgment had been established a verdict could not be pronounced (cf. Rom 3:25-26).

These observations suggest that while μετανοεῖν represents a progression from ignorance to an awareness of God it is more than this; it involves as well the acceptance of moral and religious responsibilities. There is the need to acknowledge that one's treatment of God is wrong and that a change of devotion is required, expressed by repentance, in order (by inference) not to face in the future a negative verdict at the judgment. In other words, repentance brought about by understanding ends in salvation.

The closing phrase of verse 31, including the word πίστις, also needs clarification. In spite of Luke's consistent use of πίστις elsewhere to denote "saving faith" in God or Jesus, the noun here combined with a form of παρέχειν probably means, as the combination frequently does in extrabiblical literature, "to furnish proof", "to give a pledge";[19] and the natural reading of the Greek order of the words places ἀναστήσας subordinate to παρασχών and the whole phrase emphatically qualifying verses 30-31a. The resulting sense is that God's resurrection of Jesus verifies not only Jesus'

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[18]The idea comes through in other occurrences of ἄγνοια and ἀγνοέω in Acts. In 3:17 and 13:27 the terms refer to the Jews' failure to recognize Jesus to be the messiah; and they suggest a tolerance on God's part, for the reference to ignorance is placed in the context of evangelistic preaching and is followed by the command to repent (3:19; 13:38-41). The implication is significant and illuminatory for the meaning of 17:30: ἄγνοια and ἀγνοέω represent a past state which the hearing of the apostolic proclamation does not allow to be carried into the present.

Epp (*Codex Bezae* 41-50) attempts to differentiate in the D text between the ignorance of the Gentiles which God overlooks and that of the Jews which God does not overlook, and he claims that this difference illustrates the anti-Jewish tendency of the Western text. This is misleading. The reader can hardly draw this inference, from such widely-spaced material, simply on the grounds of ταύτης added to ἀγνοίας in 17:30.

[19]E.g. Josephus, *Ant.* 2.218; *Ag.Ap.* 2.18; Polybius 2.52.4; Euripides, *Hipp.* 1037 and others cited in LSJ, s.v. πίστις II. Luke's unexpected choice of πίστις may be due to the alliteration on π observable throughout the speech. Bengel (2:670), though, for one, combines the meanings "faith" and "pledge" and translates πίστιν παρασχών "*affording faith* [who *gives* the assurance which is the object of *faith*...]".

appointment as the agent of judgment and by inference the establishment of the day of judgment, it is also proof of the decisive change in God's treatment of the Gentiles.[20] Thus, God's demand for repentance, to which Gentiles as well as Jews are now subject, is based on the fact both of God's future judgment and of Jesus' resurrection from the dead; and implied is the idea that to repent means to accept Jesus, the personal intervention of God on behalf of all peoples.

The two concepts, faith and repentance, are brought together in Paul's address to the Ephesian elders gathered at Miletus (20:21) and in Paul's defence before Agrippa and Festus (26:17-18, 20).

In 20:21, where μετάνοια and πίστις are characterized as things that are expedient and beneficial (οἱ συμφέροντες, v. 20), it has been suggested because of the word order that the two pairs, Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἕλλησιν and τὴν εἰς θεὸν μετάνοιαν καὶ πίστιν εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν, form a chiasmus.[21] Πίστις εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν is said to be the message preached to the Jews because they had to recognize Jesus and the efficacy of faith alone; ἡ εἰς θεὸν μετάνοια, that proclaimed to the Gentiles because they had to reject their heathen ways and acknowledge God. This is a quite arbitrary ascription. Ἰουδαῖοι and Ἕλληνες joined by τε καί inevitably form a unit,[22] and without any alteration in sense πίστις may as easily share the article with μετάνοια as be anarthrous.[23] It is relevant, too, that earlier in Acts Jews have been exhorted to repent (2:38; 3:19) and Gentiles have been told to believe in Jesus (16:31). Moreover, this particular juxtaposition of μετάνοια and πίστις recalls the twofold summary of the Christian proclamation in Rom 10:9 which is announced without distinction to Jews and Gentiles (cf. Rom 10:12-13).[24]

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[20]Most commentators take this position although they may disagree about what is being verified. Compare, for instance, the suggestions of Marshall (290) and those of Knowling (379).

[21]Roloff 303. The idea is also entertained, though not held with firm conviction, by Lake and Cadbury (4:260) and Marshall (331).

[22]Moulton 3:339; BDF §444.

[23]Compare τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν πίστεως in 24:24 and πίστει τῇ εἰς ἐμέ in 26:18.

[24]C. K. Barrett, "Paul's Address to the Ephesian Elders", in FS N. A. Dahl (1977) 112; Marshall 331. A comparison with Rom 10:9 is better than Conzelmann's reference (Conzelmann 117) to the first and second articles of the creed.

Acts 26:17-18, 20, summing up the commission given to Paul by the risen Jesus outside Damascus and confirming Paul's fulfilment of his task, makes several comments about the concepts of faith and repentance (here expressed in terms of the synonym ἐπιστρέφειν [vv. 18, 20] as well as μετανοεῖν [v. 20]). The first is the results of repentance. To the promise of the forgiveness of sins for the person who repents is added that of a share with those who have been made holy (by the holy God) to be God's people (κλῆρος ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις; cf. 20:32; Deut 33:3; Wis 5:5). The two promises are God's response, as the passive ἡγιασμένοις suggests, to the negative and positive sides of repentance stated in verse 18b: ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν eradicates the deeds committed while in the tyrannical dominion of Satan; κλῆρος ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις is another way of expressing life among the people of the holy God.[25]

The second point concerns the emphatic πίστει τῇ εἰς ἐμέ at the end of verse 18. In such a position the phrase may qualify τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις[26] and express the means by which the sanctification has been accomplished, or it may refer to τοῦ λαβεῖν[27] and specify the means by which sins are forgiven and a share in God's people is attained, or it may give the instrumental cause of all three infinitival phrases in verse 18[28] and indicate that spiritual sight comes by faith in Jesus. The last option is unlikely. For Luke spiritual sight generally seems to be the result of hearing and accepting the apostolic proclamation. The apostolic proclamation also brings about faith. As for the other two possibilities, there is very little indication which is better nor is there probably any reason to make a distinction: to become by faith God's people is the same thing as to have received by faith the results of repentance. Hence, as the basis of inclusion in the people of God faith in Jesus and repentance are placed on the same level.

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[25]Luke's thought echoes, without necessarily claiming dependency, Col 1:12-14, where sharing the inheritance allotted to God's people means that God has delivered believers from the domain of the power of darkness and placed them in the domain of his Son and where new life received in Christ signifies release from moral and spiritual bondage, i.e. the forgiveness of sins. This is a better parallel than Acts 2:38: since the Spirit is the guarantee that the believer will inherit salvation (Eph 1:14; cf. 2 Cor 1:22), it cannot be the κλῆρος ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις. It is also relevant to note that Wilcox (*Semitisms* 35-37) has challenged the usual assumption that the phrase comes from Deut 33:3, 4; he suggests instead the possibility of "a piece of independently circulating traditional material". Richard ("Old Testament" 337-38) disagrees, overstressing (in my opinion) the idea of dependence.

[26]Marshall 397.

[27]Knowling 507; NEB; TEV.

[28]Rackham 470.

Third, according to verse 20 repentance is to be accompanied by ἄξια τῆς μετανοίας ἔργα πράσσοντες. The action expressed by the present participle is probably subsequent to that of the compound μετανοεῖν καὶ ἐπιστρέφειν. Probably, too, the definite article should be stressed.[29] So explained, the participial phrase does not refer to deeds which effect a repentance (objective μετανοίας) but instead to deeds which result from the repentance that has already occurred and which are "consistent with" that repentance[30] (subjective μετανοίας). This suggests that ἄξια τὴς μετανοίας ἔργα πράσσοντες should not be considered a condition of salvation on the same level as faith and repentance. Equally, this concomitance of works and repentance does signal that membership in the people of God is not simply an intellectual decision; it must be supported by visible proof. In other words, it is as if Paul were saying, Show by your actions and your conduct that an inner revitalization has taken place. What deeds, such as baptism or obedience to the law, provided sufficient proof or what guidelines, such as the Torah or the apostles' decree, determined propriety, the text does not say. In this regard, though, we note with interest that John the Baptist, when exhorting his Jewish audience to produce καρποὺς ἀξίους τῆς μετανοίας (Luke 3:8; Matt 3:8) in order to escape the coming judgment, warns that without conduct consonant with an inner reform of life, a claim to or boast in an Abrahamic descent has no value as protection against God's wrath. Similarly, the Ephesian believers in Acts 19:18-19 not only realize the need to confess privately the sinfulness of their practices; going further they burn their books of magic and openly demonstrate their change of heart.

The fourth comment concerns the recipients of Paul's message. The identity of the recipients is not as clear as may be thought from a quick reading of verse 17. It is possible for εἰς οὓς ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω σε (v. 17b) to refer to Gentiles specifically (ἐκ τῶν ἐθνῶν)[31] or to Jews and Gentiles, i.e. to all people in general (ἐκ τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῶν

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[29]Lake and Cadbury 4:320. Μετάνοια is articular in five out of 22 occurrences (Matt 3:8; Luke 3:8; Acts 11:18; 20:21; 26:20), and in each instance the article seems to connote definiteness. Compare, for instance, the narrative description of John the Baptist's message, βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν (Luke 3:3), with the later exhortation ποιήσατε οὖν καρποὺς ἀξίους τῆς μετανοίας (Luke 3:8).

[30]BAGD, s.v. μετάνοια.

[31]E.g. Haenchen 656; Schneider 2:374-75; Rackham 469.

ἐθνῶν).[32] The evidence in favour of the specific referent is strong. There is the repetition of ἐκ before each member of a regimen, a grammatical construction which can enforce a distinction between λαός and ἔθνη.[33] A reference to the Gentiles alone, furthermore, picks up the wording of Paul's commissioning in 22:21, ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰς ἔθνη μακρὰν ἐξαποστελῶ σε; and it could be thought to accord better with the characterization of people who are in mental and moral darkness (26:18), who live in the power of Satan. It is presumably the understanding of the Vulgate, which translates εἰς οὕς by *in quas*, the feminine pronoun matching the feminine plural *gentibus* and not the masculine singular *populo*. Equally strong in the immediate context are data pointing firmly in the opposite direction. Verse 17 occurs in the context of God's promise to Israel (vv. 6, 22b-23); verse 20 looks at God's appointment of Paul from the viewpoint of Paul's accomplishments and in language parallel to verse 17 states that Paul preached to the people in Damascus, Jerusalem, and all Judea (presumably Jews) and to the Gentiles;[34] and verse 23 says that Christ's message is aimed at both Jews (τῷ λαῷ) and Gentiles (τοῖς ἔθνεσιν). Going further afield, we note that Luke consistently shows Paul preaching to Jews and Gentiles, thereby fulfilling the divine plan recorded in 9:15, and that he establishes the blindness of both Jews and Gentiles and their consequent need of sight, the Jews because though seeing they saw not (28:27; cf. Matt 13:13, 15; Rom 11:8) and the Gentiles because though worshipping God they did not know him (17:30). The wider evidence seems to give more weight to οὕς in 26:17 being general. In other words, while the Gentiles may have been Paul's special responsibility, his

[32]J. Dupont, "La Mission de Paul d'après Actes 26.16-23 et la Mission des Apôtres d'après Luc 24.44-49 et Acts 1.8", in FS C. K. Barrett (1982) 290-99, esp. 292; Knowling 507; Conzelmann 139; cf. Marshall 396-97.

[33]As the construction is not so common in Luke-Acts, occurring 16 out of 56 times (Moulton 3:275), its appearance here carries some weight.

[34]Καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν may, of course, be epexegetical, limiting the reference to the Gentiles in Damascus, Jerusalem, and Judea; but the evidence in Acts 9 is against this sense of καί: 9:20 states that Paul preached in the synagogues in Damascus and 9:29 that he debated with the Hellenists in Jerusalem. As for the grammatical and historical difficulties associated with πᾶσάν τε τὴν χώραν τῆς Ἰουδαίας--though it has strong external attestation, it is interjected into a series of datives and conflicts with the reports of Paul's early ministry recorded elsewhere in Acts and negatively in Gal 1:22--see the solutions offered by Ropes (3:237), Haenchen (656-57) and Longenecker (553), and Blass, who is cited by Ramsay (*St. Paul* 382).

message of repentance, faith, and doing deeds in keeping with repentance applied to Jews and Gentiles equally.

This interpretation of the force of the relative pronoun has an interesting implication for the identity of the people of God expressed by ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις in verse 18. If both Jews and Gentiles are the designated recipients of Paul's message, then both repentant Jews and repentant Gentiles receive through faith a place in God's domain. Consequently, it could be inferred that οἱ ἡγιασμένοι represents a distinct group to which both Jews and Gentiles are added.

The idea comes from the participle itself, though the connection is not immediately obvious (neither here nor in the earlier occurrence of the participle in 20:32). Ἡγιασμένοι is related semantically as well as etymologically to ἅγιοι; the sole difference, and it is slight, is that whereas the adjective denotes the state of holiness, the perfect participle stresses both the fact of having attained and the act of remaining in the state of being holy. This relationship allows the relatively exceptional participle to assume the nuances of the more common adjective. In the Old Testament and other Jewish writings the concept of holiness forms the basis of the covenant which the holy God makes with Israel (Lev 19:2; Deut 7:6; 14:2), and ἅγιοι and ἡγιασμένοι become, *inter alia*, appellatives, albeit infrequent ones, for the people who follow God's commandments (Deut 33:3; 1 Macc 1:46; Pss 15[16]:3; 33:10[34:9]; cf. 4 Macc 17:19, 20).[35] The Book of Acts, like the Pauline Epistles, transfers οἱ ἅγιοι to the members of the Christian community. In Acts 9:13 τοῖς ἁγίοις σου (*sc.* κυρίου) describes the people in Jerusalem whom Paul persecuted before his conversion, and πάντας τοὺς ἐπικαλουμένους τὸ ὄνομά σου in verse 14 leaves no doubt as to who is meant. The same can be said of οἱ ἅγιοι in 26:10 and probably in 9:32 and 9:41. The application becomes more distinctive and significant since Luke never uses the term for Jews specifically. Now because of the semantic relation between ἅγιος and its cognate participle, it may be assumed that for Luke οἱ ηγιασμένοι is the equivalent of οἱ ἅγιοι and thus is synonymous with οἱ πιστεύοντες. Both participles are names for God's people: πιστεύων refers to a

[35]See also Str-B 2:691-93 and the use of קדש in the Qumran texts, especially in the expressions of self-designation (1QM 6:6; 14:12; 1QS 8:21).

positive human response to the gospel; ἡγιασμένος connotes God's reply to the person's commitment.

There follows from this argument a very pertinent question: how do the people designated οἱ ἡγιασμένοι relate to the historic Israel chosen by God in the Old Testament?[36] The immediate context in all honesty does not say. The participle in including Jews and Gentiles but excluding Jews who do not believe in Jesus *could* suggest that the church is here presented as an entity separate from its connections with Judaism. Yet because of what we have observed so far about Luke's view of the people of God, observations which would treat this reference (and the analogous 20:32) as an exception, there is cause to hesitate. It may be that Paul understood the people of God in this way; he does in Gal 6:16 use the expression ὁ Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ. It is more tenable, though, as far as Acts at least is concerned, that here Luke has picked up and employed the conditional nuance associated with the Old Testament use of ἅγιος--God's holy people are not (and have never been) all Israel but only those who love him and follow his commandments and now following God's commandments involves as well (and primarily) accepting Jesus. In other words, Luke creates the picture that to the Jews who repent and believe in Jesus are gathered in Gentiles who repent and believe in Jesus to have an equal and rightful share in the heritage of the holy people of God.

2. The Quarrel at Antioch (Acts 15:36-41)

Acts 15:36-41, the second of the three incidents linking the story of the Jerusalem council with the story of Paul's second missionary journey, describes a curious yet important quarrel between Paul and Barnabas. This quarrel became so severe that the missionaries separated, Barnabas taking John Mark and going to Cyprus (v. 39) and Paul choosing Silas, one of the emissaries of the Jerusalem decree, and travelling to Syria and Cilicia (vv. 40-41) as he had proposed to do with Barnabas. Thus, shortly after the satisfactory settlement of the question of the Gentile converts, disagreement once again appears. This time the victim is the long-established

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[36]Surprisingly, J. Jervell, to my knowledge, does not comment on the meaning of τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις πίστει τῇ εἰς ἐμέ.

partnership of Paul and Barnabas which in Acts began when Barnabas commended the newly-converted persecutor of Christians to the disciples in Jerusalem (9:26-27), which had weathered the storm of the Judaizers' attack, and which was seemingly in existence when Paul mentioned to Barnabas the prospect of another trip. To be sure, the consequence is not completely harmful or irreparable. In one sense the church actually benefits, for the parting doubles the evangelistic outreach; and despite the acrimonious conclusion to the partnership, there is evidence outside Acts that those involved remained sympathetic to each other's abilities and spheres of influence.[37] Nonetheless, the quarrel does blot the copy-book.

The reason for the parting according to Acts 15:36-41 is clear enough on the surface: Barnabas's willingness to have John Mark accompany them on the proposed journey and Paul's unwillingness to do so. Thus, the stage is set for illustrating the humanity of the church leaders and for showing that disagreements were caused by conflicting personalities as well as by theological differences. The episode also explains why Barnabas does not accompany Paul on the second missionary journey,[38] thereby helping to distinguish significantly the first journey to Asia Minor from the second.

These pastoral, historical, and literary intentions are manifestly central. Instruction of his readers is always uppermost in Luke's mind; and the rapid reporting, in Acts 15:30-16:5, of three successive episodes with little or no dialogue and detail does give the sense of transition, the more so after the care spent on the apostles' debate. Nevertheless, the reader cannot help speculating that the quarrel and its

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[37]In 1 Cor 9:6 Barnabas is cited as an example of an apostle, like Paul, who has the right to maintenance from the church; in Col 4:10 Barnabas's relation to Mark is mentioned as a means of identification. Both references illustrate the extent of Barnabas's reputation in the Pauline churches, and 1 Cor 9:6 has further significance since according to Acts 18:1-18a Paul founded the Corinthian church soon after his quarrel with Barnabas. C. K. Barrett (*A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* [1968] 204) thinks 1 Cor 9:16 is probably to be taken as evidence that Barnabas rejoined the Pauline mission; A. Robertson and A. Plummer (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians* [1914] 182) trace the reference to a possible agreement made during Paul's first missionary journey.

John Mark, who is generally assumed to be the Mark of the Epistles, is commended in the letters ascribed to Paul to be a welcomed addition to the Christian community in Colossae (Col 4:10) and a faithful Christian worker (2 Tim 4:11; Phlm 24); cf. 1 Pet 5:13 and Eusebius, *Hist.eccl.* 3.39.15, quoting Papias. However, Haenchen (456 n. 2, 457 n. 3), for one, treats this evidence more sceptically.

[38]Haenchen 459-60. In making this observation, I, unlike Haenchen, think that the incident is part of the tradition and not authorial fabrication. Scholars like R. Pesch ("Das Jerusalem Abkommen und die Lösung des Antiochenischen Konflikts. Ein Versuch über Gal 2, Apg 10,1-11,18, Apg 11,27-30; 12,25 und Apg 15,1-41," in FS F. Mußner [1981] 120) and others mentioned above (p. 7 n. 13) have understood the first two missionary journeys to be already connected in pre-Lukan tradition.

inclusion in Luke's story have a cause and a purpose beyond those immediately evident. Indeed, conjecture is readily projected into the realm of fact when the incident is viewed as the analogue of Gal 2:11-14. That passage records a confrontation, likewise at Antioch, which was initiated by the arrival of men from James who insisted that the Jewish Christians and the Gentile converts must conform to Jewish customs (whether these be interpreted as circumcision and observance of the law or simply adherence to the apostles' decree[39]). While that confrontation concerned Paul and Peter specifically, even Barnabas was drawn in; and to Paul's bitter disappointment he took the side represented by the Jerusalem believers and Peter.[40] The problem with supporting our suspicions about Acts 15:36-41 by the episode in Galatians is that we are forced to depend upon a particular historical reconstruction of the events surrounding the apostles' council which is far from certain even if it is adopted by a large number of scholars today. To avoid this criticism without engaging in extensive historical argument, we must confine ourselves to the account in Acts and see if the suspicion that the cause of the quarrel is more than personal can be given any substance by that source.

To begin with, the episode is, as we have said, one of three events bridging the council and Paul's second journey to Asia Minor. This *suggests* that the story of the

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[39]J. D. G. Dunn "The Incident at Antioch [Gal. 2:11-18]", *JSNT* 18 [1983] 25-37) discusses three ways of understanding the demands of the men from James: (1) Peter had completely abandoned the Jewish laws for table-fellowship; the men from James insisted on a greater observance of the law, possibly bringing with them the decrees of Acts 15:29 to prove their point (e.g. Catchpole, "Decree" 441-43; Lietzmann, *The Beginnings of the Christian Church* [ET 1953] 107-9); (2) the table-fellowship in Antioch had involved a fair degree of observance of the dietary laws; the men from James insisted that the Gentile believers were to be circumcised and required to obey the whole law (e.g. Betz, *Galatians* 112); (3) the Gentile believers in Antioch were already observing the basic food laws prescribed by the Torah; the men from James called for a more scrupulous observance of what the dietary laws involved, especially with regard to ritual purity and tithing.

Dunn opts for the third interpretation, but his argument may be faulted. In brief, he points to the linguistic breadth of the antithesis ἐθνικῶς/Ἰουδαϊκῶς and the infinitive ἰουδαΐζειν but then for the use of the words in Gal 2:14, he insists on a linguistic preciseness which the language cannot bear. Ἰουδαΐζειν refers to that which characterized the Jewish way of life *including* circumcision and obedience to the law. See also the reviews by J. L. Houlden ("A Response to James D. G. Dunn", *JSNT* 18 [1983] 58-67) and by D. Cohn-Sherbok ("Some Reflections on James Dunn's: 'The Incident at Antioch [Gal. 2.11-18]'", *JSNT* 18 [1983] 68-74).

[40]Although the explicit recipient of Paul's criticism is Peter, the defection of Barnabas becomes in a way the climax of Paul's comments (cf. W. Schmithals, *Paul and James* [ET 1965] 71): the adverbial καί signals Barnabas's action to be out of the ordinary (Robertson 1181); the exceptional NT use of the indicative mood (συναπήχθη) with ὥστε draws special attention to the actual fact resulting from Peter's hypocrisy, namely, Barnabas's defection (Zerwick §350; Moulton 1:209; Burton §236; Robertson 1000; contra BDF §391.2). According to the wording of v. 13, Barnabas's situation was different from that of Peter and of the other Jews: Barnabas did not manipulate but was the victim of manipulation (συναπήχθη αὐτῶν τῇ ὑποκρίσει [cf. Betz, *Galatians* 110]).

quarrel, like the stories in 15:30-35 and 16:1-5, where the Jerusalem decree and the conditions of membership in the people of God are a stated theme, may look backwards as well as forwards. The story may be intended to comment, ever so subtly, on the twinned issues of the church's presentation of the Christian message of salvation to the world and of the Gentiles' membership in the people of God.

More indicative is the strength of the controversy. The difference of opinion may have begun quite reasonably, as a hesitant request from Barnabas and a gut-level reaction from Paul.[41] But if it did begin mildly, it proceeds to a level and to a consequence, especially as far as Luke's whole story is concerned, which seem unwarranted by the stated cause. Παροξυσμός[42] describes the outburst of rage, like the emotion Paul justly experienced when he saw the idolatry in Athens (Acts 17:16), and provocation which is the opposite of love (1 Cor 13:5). Basically it is an irritation. Such intensity suggests that much was at stake.

We note further that while the stress in verses 37-38 falls firmly on τοῦτον,[43] i.e. on John Mark, the problem is explained to be not John Mark himself but having John Mark participate in the proposed trip. The tense and parallelism of συμπαραλαβεῖν and συμπαραλαμβάνειν bring this out. The consecutive use of the verb in the same context, first in the aorist and then in the present, highlights the present tense[44] and makes a "decisive contradiction"[45] between the definitive act which Barnabas proposed and the continuous fact which Paul refused. That is to say, the force of the present infinitive does not lie in Paul's unwillingness to subject himself to the continual peril of

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[41]This perhaps could be inferred from the use of two imperfects having the same meaning and qualifying infinitive (Barnabas ἐβούλετο συμπαραλαβεῖν; Paul ἠξίου μὴ...συμπαραλαμβάνειν), a construction which may add to the conative notion a durative force. Turner (95) explains the exchange as follows. Barnabas's suggestion to take John Mark was but a tentative one, at first: "'Barnabas wanted' must mean 'Barnabas was desirous'; or better still, 'Barnabas had half a mind to'"; similarly, ἠξίου means that Paul merely "requested", and not even pressingly, at first. Turner could be charged with overtranslating here. BAGD (s.v. ἀξιόω 2a) would indicate so. It renders ἠξίου...μὴ συμπαραλαμβάνειν τοῦτον "he insisted that they should not take him along".

[42]H. Seesemann, "παροξύνω", *TDNT* 5:857.

[43]As Lake and Cadbury (4:183) comment, "It is impossible to bring out fully the emphatic position of τοῦτον at the end of the sentence". The alterations in D weaken considerably the force of the pronoun (Metzger [439] concurs) and highlight the disagreement itself rather than its ultimate cause.

[44]Against Turner (95), it is the present, the less frequently used tense, which demands attention. The aorist infinitive can have a constative force without necessarily being punctiliar. This is where Turner makes his mistake (see Moulton 3:71).

[45]Knowling 331.

desertion or to endure the daily companionship of a man who has shown himself unreliable.[46] That would be stressing the idea of continuation too much. Rather, συμπαραλαμβάνειν suggests that Paul refused on principle, that he regarded Barnabas's proposal as the sort of thing he was not prepared to undertake *at all at any time*.[47] Again there is the hint that the disagreement may exceed the matter of personality.

According to verse 38 Paul's stand on principle is related in some way to John Mark's apparently sudden and unexpected return to Jerusalem during the journey of Acts 13-14, and the crux of the quarrel seems in a sense to turn on the way in which John Mark's earlier act is meant to influence Paul's current reaction. The mention of Pamphylia points to the possibility that Paul's objection was based on pastoral prudence. The plan was to visit the cities of Asia Minor where the missionaries went after John Mark had left the company (13:13). In order to avoid offending those churches, which no doubt were aware of John Mark's actions, by bringing along the person who had committed the offence, Paul considered it best to refuse Barnabas. Personal reasons may also be represented by the expansive description of John Mark in verse 38: Paul thought the man's departure was unjustified, and he was too impatient to superintend an assistant lacking in maturity.[48] Both suggestions are valid, and both probably go some way towards determining Paul's decision. But there seems to be more.

Τὸν ἀποστάντα ἀπ᾽ αὐτῶν ἀπὸ Παμφυλίας καὶ μὴ συνελθόντα αὐτοῖς εἰς τὸ ἔργον draws attention to two closely related implications of John Mark's abrupt return to Jerusalem: his dissociation from Paul and Barnabas and his unwillingness to participate in their work. It would be pressing τὸν ἀποστάντα too much to have it bear in this

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[46]This is the understanding of Robertson (857), Moulton (1:130), and most commentators. The inference may be correct (see below); but it is not, I think, obtained from the tense of the verb.

[47]Zerwick §249. This sense of συμπαραλαμβάνειν is supported by the Vulgate. Translating at a time when biblical Greek was a living language, Jerome was sensitive to some difference between the two infinitives. He makes ἐβούλετο συμπαραλαβεῖν *volebat...adsumere* but ἠξίου...μὴ συμπαραλαμβάνειν *rogabat ...non debere recipi*. The paraphrastic *non debere recipi* brings out the sense of obligation and thus the matter of principle (I am indebted to C. J. Hemer for this observation). d, though, has in v. 38 *nolebat...non adsumerent.*

[48]Bruce (NIC) 319.

context a religious sense,[49] i.e. that John Mark was apostatizing, rejecting God's revealed plan. But a case may be made for τὸ ἔργον to be for the reader a cryptic reminder not only of earlier events but of what those events signified. Εἰς τὸ ἔργον recalls, in 13:1-3, the Holy Spirit's commissioning of Barnabas and Paul for a divinely-appointed ministry. As this commissioning instigates the first journey to Cyprus and Asia Minor, the prepositional phrase points to a correlation between John Mark's departure and Barnabas's and Paul's designated mission,[50] a mission which was shown during the journey to include preaching the gospel to Gentiles who were not previously associated with the synagogue (13:44-48; 13:7 [?]) and a mission which is later defined as εἰς ἔθνη (22:21; cf. Gal 2:9).

We may take this point further by examining the passages in Acts which refer to John Mark. Surprisingly for a person influential in determining the direction of Paul's ministry, John Mark receives comparatively little attention. He is introduced somewhat incidentally in Acts 12:12 as a means of identification (suggesting that he was better known than his mother), in 12:25 to locate him in Antioch with Paul and Barnabas,[51] in 13:5 as the assistant of Paul and Barnabas on their travels, and in 13:13 to show that Paul and Barnabas continue on without him. In spite of the apparent casualness, the references to John Mark come in oddly, especially as Luke does not usually name the secondary members of Paul's missionary entourage,[52] and seem more than anticipatory.[53] What the additional import may be could perhaps be inferred from the

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[49] Ἀφίστημι does refer to spiritual truth in Luke 8:13; 1 Tim 4:1; and Heb 3:12 (cf. Luke 13:27; Acts 5:39; 2 Tim 2:19), and it is the cognate of ἀποστασία, a term in the LXX for Israel's disobedience (see pp. 261-62). The meaning in Acts 15:38, though, is probably void of religious overtones (thus, Knowling 330-31; however, compare H. Schlier, "ἀφίστημι", *TDNT* 1:513 and Rackham 203).

[50] This correspondence between Acts 15:38 and 13:2 gains in importance since τὸ ἔργον bears the sense "apostolic ministry" nowhere else in Acts except when Gamaliel describes the ministry of Peter and the other early disciples (5:38).

[51] On the difficulties caused in Acts 12:25 by the well-attested reading εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ, see the summary in Metzger 398-400.

[52] Compare the mention of Timothy only in Acts 16:1; 17:4, 5; 18:5; 19:22; and 20:4.

[53] Admittedly such perfunctory treatment may represent Luke's tendency to interject the names of people seemingly unimportant to us into his narrative for no apparent reason other than to acknowledge them. Or it may indicate Luke's desire to mark John Mark's secondary status in comparison with that of Paul and Barnabas: given the subsequent events it would have been all the more important to introduce John Mark in a way which showed that he was not essential to the expedition (Ramsay, *St. Paul* 71).

placing of two comments about John Mark either side of the account of the mission on Cyprus. Now that story, which concentrates on the conversion of Sergius Paulus, probably represents an advancement in the logistics of the Christian mission. Introduced are the presentation of the gospel to and the acceptance of the gospel by someone who had no prior experience with orthodox Judaism and who, if the confrontation between the Judaizers and Paul in Acts 15:1-2 is any indication, was not required to be circumcised. Therefore, again, as with the expression τὸ ἔργον, it is suggested that John Mark's departure may convey his uncertainty and reluctance about Paul's mission to the Gentiles and hence his rejection of it.[54]

This possibility is backed up[55] by the fact that John Mark returns not to Antioch, where the church was actively engaged in evangelizing the Gentiles, but to Jerusalem which was both his home and the centre of (conservative) Jewish Christianity. It may also be conveyed by the D text's depiction of Silas, whom Paul does accept as a co-worker. According to verse 34D, as understood by E. J. Epp,[56] Silas betrays his sympathies by preferring to remain in Antioch rather than return to Jerusalem.[57]

There may be something for our argument that the quarrel was ultimately theological in Barnabas's travel arrangements (v. 39). The choice to go to Cyprus was in one sense only natural: Cyprus was after all Barnabas's home. In another sense, though, it conveys some import: it was the place where Barnabas and Paul had

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[54]Rackham 203; Longenecker 421; R. A. Culpepper, "Paul's Mission to the Gentile World: Acts 13-19", *RevExp* 71 (1974) 488. Admittedly Luke does not state the reason for John Mark's departure from Paul's company but leaves the reader to gather the connection. The facts have been interpreted as representing as well an abandonment of the original itinerary (Lake and Cadbury 4:148; cf. Ramsay [*St. Paul* 84-94], Schille [292, 331], and T. J. Pennell ["Acts xiii.13", *ExpTim* 44 {1932-33} 476], who have John Mark refusing to go to Pisidian Antioch [most logical], Pamphylia, and Ephesus, respectively), a change in leadership with Barnabas falling into second place, homesickness (Holtzmann 87), or cowardliness. Knowling (289) lists other possibilities. No one reason needs exclude another, but what evidence there is seems to point mostly to a theological reason.

[55]Along this line have been cited also Luke's use of the single Jewish name Ἰωάννης in 13:5, 13 (cf. G. A. Deissmann, *Bible Studies. Contributions Chiefly from Papyri and Inscriptions to the History of the Language, the Literature, and the Religion of Hellenistic Judaism and Primitive Christianity* [ET 1901] 317 n. 1), no mention of preaching in Perga (cf. 14:24-25), and the fact that John Mark was not selected by the Holy Spirit for this work and consequently was having trouble overcoming his prejudices. The third point is doubtful since there are reasonable explanations for John Mark not being named in 13:1-3 (see Marshall 218).

[56]Epp, *Codex Bezae* 112.

[57]How much can be built on this variant, though, is questionable. It is quite likely that the Western reviser simply wanted to explain why Silas, in verse 40, was suddenly in Antioch and available to accompany Paul.

preached prior to John Mark's desertion and hence a place where John Mark could serve without embarrassment to himself or the mission. More significant than the destination is the fact that Barnabas leaves Antioch, the place where he had concentrated his evangelistic efforts for a considerable time. Indeed, Barnabas's leave-taking is not even marked by the church. This contrasts with the send-off Paul is given: παραδοθεὶς τῇ χάριτι τοῦ κυρίου ὑπὸ τῶν ἀδελφῶν (cf. 13:3; 14:26). It may be that because of his row with Paul Barnabas wanted to keep out of the way and to avoid attracting criticism on Paul's journey and bringing insult to the churches Paul planned to visit, churches which knew Barnabas personally. It may be that the row represented not only Barnabas's willingness to give John Mark a second chance, just as earlier he had sponsored Paul before the Jerusalem leaders, but also that, despite the support he gave Paul at the Jerusalem council, he himself could not concur fully with the possible direction of Paul's mission,[58] specifically with the policy of evangelizing Gentiles apart from the synagogue. Barnabas may have foreseen the dangers in such a policy--the possible forfeiting and forgetting of Christianity's indebtedness to Judaism through the inclusion of Gentiles who were not as carefully instructed in these matters and the almost certain jeopardizing of the church's claim before the Jews to be the fulfilment of Judaism--and may have been hesitant to be as theologically innovative as Paul.

These are only conjectures which lack the necessary historical or literary documentation. The available evidence, however, by implying that the quarrel over John Mark may have represented not simply a reaction to a particular personality but ultimately a different perspective on mission strategy and a variance in mission theology, does leave behind the picture of Jewish Christians caught between the two worlds, the world of presenting the gospel to the Jews and the world of presenting it to the Gentiles; and it does appear to place a question mark, without emphasizing the point, over the extent of the church's unanimity on the matter of the way to salvation.

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[58]R. Bauckham ("Barnabas in Galatians", *JSNT* 2 [1979] 61-70), who equates Gal 2:11-14 with Acts 15:1-2, has argued that the partners' concord at the Jerusalem council was only temporary; the argument over John Mark shows that the memory of the previous disagreement lingered.

3. The Circumcising of Timothy (Acts 16:1-3)

Acts 16:1-3 records that during the return visit to Derbe and Lystra Paul encountered an uncircumcised man named Timothy and that because he wanted to enlist Timothy as a missionary he circumcised him. Such behaviour on Paul's part is remarkable. It appears to contradict Paul's refutation of the Judaizers in his letter to the Galatians, going against his theological argument that circumcision as a requirement for salvation renders salvation in Christ alone insufficient and thus invalid (Gal 5:2) and his emphatic appeal to experience that in spite of the Judaizers' demands the church leaders did not force Titus, a Greek, to submit to circumcision nor did he or Titus comply (Gal 2:3).[59] More critical for the immediate study, Paul's treatment of Timothy seems opposed to the adamant stance against circumcision which the apostle is portrayed as taking in Acts 15. Since the exemption of the Gentiles from circumcision and the equality of Jews and Gentiles insofar as salvation and their positions in the church were concerned had just been acknowledged, what sense would there be for Paul, setting out on a new mission to the Gentile world, to have his companion circumcised and thus give force to the claim that believers who were circumcised were superior to or more acceptable (perhaps even in God's eyes) than those who were not, "that ordinary Christians might be free from the Law, but that those who were to be worthy of a higher dignity must comply fully with its requirements"[60]?

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[59]This seems to be the most natural meaning of Gal 2:3-5 (E. D. Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* [1921] 75-86; J. Bligh, *Galatians. A Discussion of St Paul's Epistle* [1969] 160-61; Betz, *Galatians* 88-92). However, it has been argued that while Titus was not *compelled* to be circumcised, he was indeed circumcised, either on his own initiative as a conciliatory gesture (A. D. Nock, *St. Paul* [1960] 107-9) or on Paul's initiative as a demonstration of his freedom in Christ (D. W. B. Robinson, "The Circumcision of Titus, and Paul's 'Liberty'", *AusBR* 12 [1964] 24-42).

[60]W. M. Ramsay, *Pictures of the Apostolic Church. Its Life and Teaching* (1910) 176.

Whether Paul did in fact proceed as Luke describes, we need not decide[61]--I personally think that the account in Acts is true--but we do need to ascertain whether this episode is indeed intended to revise, even to overturn, the decision of the Jerusalem council and to argue for a two-tiered Christianity. Granted, that aim would certainly be strange. Even if Luke was dependent on his sources for most and perhaps all of his information,[62] even if the sources or his understanding of the sources was limited, and even if he had constructed the episode himself, as the whole summary character of 15:30-16:5 has suggested to some, the details of the apostolic council and Paul's selection of Timothy are too well-stated for the events to have been placed virtually side-by-side without an explanation. We would expect therefore to find embedded somewhere in the story a reason for Paul's action. This explanation may not prove the historicity of the incident, but it may uncover a motive which may support authenticity.

One hint at an explanation comes when Luke characterizes Timothy as a μαθητής (v. 1), ὃς ἐμαρτυρεῖτο ὑπὸ τῶν ἐν Λύστροις καὶ Ἰκονίῳ ἀδελφῶν (v. 2). Both μαθητής and ἀδελφός are Lukan terms for a Christian.[63] Since Timothy is already called a believer and since he carries the recommendation of other believers in the churches of Lystra and Iconium, the words suggest that as far as Luke is concerned this circumcision was not undertaken as a way to salvation.

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[61]The data did lead the Tübingen tradition to refute quite vehemently the truth of the episode. It belonged, according to Baur (*Paul* 1:129 n. 1; cf. Overbeck 248 [cited by Haenchen 463]) "undoubtedly to the incredible side" of Acts. Similarly, Conzelmann (88-89) and Haenchen (462-65) view the story as unreliable tradition based on false and malicious rumours about Paul's practice of circumcision (cf. Gal 5:11) which Luke unwittingly included since the story fitted the portrait of a law-abiding Paul. Lake and Cadbury (4:184) are sceptical on other grounds: the "incident seems to be editorial, and arouses the suspicion that it is a confused and perhaps erroneous memory of the story of Titus". A more positive assessment is reached, for example, by Wendt (339-40) and Longenecker (*Paul* 246-52), who regard Paul's action as falling under the apostle's own principle stated in 1 Cor 9:19. Wilson (*Law* 64-65) also claims the historicity of the event, but he believes that Luke has misplaced the incident. In immediate response to Wilson, where would the incident fit more naturally? during Paul's first journey to Asia Minor? If that were the case, the incident would seemingly have made mockery of Paul's stance at the council--an attitude which would have been hard to mask--and would have added more cause to the Judaizers' claim.

[62]Lake and Cadbury (4:185), for instance, speculate that the story may have come from a Jerusalem source.

[63]The exceptions in meaning are ἀδελφός used of fellow Israelites (3:22; 7:2, 23, 25, 26, 37) and Jews (22:5; 23:1, 5; 28:17, 21), of the crowds in Jerusalem (2:29; 3:17; 22:1; cf. 2:37) and in the synagogues (13:26, 38; cf. 13:15), and of familial relations (1:14; 7:13; 12:2) and possibly μαθηταί in 19:1 (see pp. 246-48). For ἀδελφός meaning Christian, see, for example, 1:5; 6:3; 9:30; and 12:17; and for μαθητής with the same meaning, 6:1, 7 and 11:26.

Luke says, further, that Paul so acted because of the Jews in that region (διὰ τοὺς Ἰουδαίους τοὺς ὄντας ἐν τοῖς τόποις ἐκείνοις, v. 3b); and he expands the explanation by adding ᾔδεισαν γὰρ ἅπαντες ὅτι Ἕλλην ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ ὑπῆρχεν (v. 3c). In fact, there are two comments about Timothy's family and his social and religious background. The first, υἱὸς γυναικὸς Ἰουδαίας πιστῆς πατρὸς δὲ Ἕλληνος (v. 1), makes clear that Timothy was the product of a mixed alliance. What is the significance of the second comment, that the Jews of the region knew his father to be a Greek?

D. Daube has pointed out against the general assumption that the natural reading of verse 3b-c is that the Jews of the region knew Timothy to be a Gentile.[64] This interpretation would certainly follow from the covenantal instructions in the Torah: Jewish males were circumcised (Lev 12:3); the Jewish male who was not circumcised was cut off from the people of Israel (Gen 17:14); thus, Timothy was not a Jew. The interpretation also concurs with the mishnaic provision, in *m.Bik.* 1:4, that a proselyte with a Jewish mother may praise "the God of our fathers". While this proselyte is above one with a Gentile mother, he is nonetheless still a proselyte: but for his conversion, he would not be part of Israel. Daube's interpretation also eliminates a problem which is encountered in this instance when it is assumed that a child of a Jewess is Jewish. We know from 2 Timothy that Timothy was very much brought up by his mother (1:5) and that she appears to have been a pious Jewess who had trained or had had Timothy trained in the Scriptures (3:15).[65] Given his mother's [it is surprising [zeal that *if* Timothy was considered a Jew he was not already circumcised. Remarkably, though, Daube's interpretation fails to answer two obvious questions. Why, given his training, had the Gentile Timothy not been led to become a proselyte? Moreover, why would Paul, who takes such a strong stand against circumcision as the way to salvation for Jews and Gentiles and who sees no real necessity for Gentiles to undergo the rite for any other reason, act in a manner which not only would contradict his teaching and

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[64]D. Daube, *Ancient Jewish Law. Three Inaugural Lectures* (1981) 21-32, esp. 25-26. A similar idea is voiced by Baur (*Paul* 1:129 n. 1): Timothy chose to be reckoned a Gentile like his father.

[65]These biographical details would hold true on any view of the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles.

usual practice--even as recorded in Acts--but also would *exceed* the requirements of the law. It seems better to say that the words ἦδεισαν γὰρ ἅπαντες ὅτι Ἕλλην ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ ὑπῆρχεν (v. 3c) refer not to Timothy's religious status but to the source of the objection to his being circumcised.[66] Three observations are relevant.

To begin with, the Western text of verse 3c has ἦδεισαν γὰρ πάντες τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῦ ὅτι Ἕλλην ὑπῆρχεν. The rearrangement of the word order certainly puts the word "father" in a prominent position. It may also capture the intended purport of the generally accepted reading[67] and therefore indicate that Timothy's father, apparently a Greek of high social and economic standing,[68] had forbidden the rite. Possibly, too, it could be argued from the use of the imperfect ὑπῆρχεν instead of the present ὑπάρχει following ἦδεισαν that Timothy's father had died[69] and that the obstacle against Timothy expressing his rightful religious status was now removed.

A second consideration is the style of Judaism practised in Lystra.[70] Documentation for the Jewish settlements in this region of Asia Minor is scarce (which may be a revealing fact in itself), but from what is available[71] we learn that the

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[66]Excluded for lack of firm evidence is C. Spicq's idea (*Les Épitres Pastorales* [1969] 1:706) that Timothy's mother may have already been converted to Christianity before her marriage and thus would have been exempted from the law. In Luke's story, at least according to the data in Acts 14 (though see 2:9-11), it seems unlikely that Christianity reached Lystra before Paul's visit.

[67]Nestle-Aland[26]. Ropes (3:150) states that a decision between the reading of p^{74} ℵ A B 33 81 1739 *al* and that of $p^{45\ vid}$ D E H L $sy^{p,\ h}$ Chrysostom *al* depends on the general estimate of the two types of text. Metzger (440-41) accepts the Alexandrian reading for grammatical reasons.

[68]This is implied at two points. (1) The term Ἕλλην probably refers to the Greek-educated class which constituted the well-to-do of the native population (W. M. Ramsay, *The Cities of St. Paul. Their Influence on His Life and Thought. The Cities of Eastern Asia Minor* [1907] 417-18). (2) The Phrygian Jews were largely rich (cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 12.151-52), and there is little doubt that they would have married into dominant families (Ramsay, *Trustworthiness of the New Testament* 357-59).

[69]This is "eine naheliegende Vermutung" (Haenchen 461 n. 4 and other commentators). For the grammatical explanation see BDF §330. The idea is also suggested by the inference in 1838 gig p (cf. Origen, *Rom.* 10.39) to Timothy's mother being a widow. However, *viduae* could be due to a confusion with *iudeae* (cf. Lake and Cadbury 4:184), and the imperfect ὑπῆρχεν need not indicate a time previous to the time of perception (Zerwick §58; Robertson 1029).

[70]Whether Timothy came from Lystra or from Derbe is not certain. Most commentators for good reasons opt for Lystra. Lake and Cadbury (4:184), though, choose Derbe and interestingly have the circumcision occur in Iconium.

[71]For further discussion of the archaeological data of Asia Minor, see G. Kittel, "Das kleinasiatische Judentum in der hellenistisch-römischen Zeit. Ein Bericht zur Epigraphik Kleinasiens", *TLZ* 69 (1944) 9-20 and W. M. Ramsay, *The Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia* (1895-97) and *Cities of St. Paul.* For studies of the Jews in the diaspora lands in general, see Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*; V. Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (ET 1959); and M. Stein, "The Jewish Diaspora", in *CRINT* 1.1:117-83.

foundation of the Jewish diaspora in Asia Minor in general was early and extensive.[72] The Jewish position was firmly established when around 200 B.C. Antiochus II, imitating his predecessors and anticipating his successors, transported 2000 Jewish families from Babylonia to Phrygia. Josephus (*Ant.* 12.147-53) records that in exchange for the Jews' loyalty to the Seleucid empire Antiochus granted them land, temporary exemption from taxes, opportunity for public service, and freedom to observe their own laws. These royal concessions situated the Jews well into the local culture, perhaps too favourably, so that assimilation to hellenism was a relatively easy process. The apparent result was the entire abandonment of the public use of the Hebrew language and names[73] and the development of Jewish-pagan syncretic cults[74] as well as mixed marriages.[75] As W. M. Ramsay[76] astutely observes, "A humble and poor population clings to its distinctive religion, whereas a rich or aristocratic caste adapts itself to circumstances and refrains from blazoning the distinguishing marks of religion, even when it still retains the religion".

In the case of Derbe and Lystra in particular the process of assimilation would only have been accelerated by the location of the cities. Situated on a secondary route constructed for military purposes and standing apart from the main roads traversing the country and from the natural paths of trade, the Jewish population in Lystra and Derbe would have had little easy contact with the homeland or even with much Judaism outside the immediate area.[77] Paul's ministry in Lystra mentioned in Acts 14:8-20 illustrates the effect of this geographical location. There the mission does not follow the

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[72]Josephus, *Ag.Ap.* 2.39; *Ant.* 12.125-26; cf. *Ant.* 14.214, 225-64; 16.6; Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 28, 68; 1 Macc 15:22-23; Act 2:9-11.

[73]Ramsay, *Phrygia* 2:669.

[74]Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* 1:263; Kittel, "Das kleinasiatische Judentum" 14-17. For example, an Acmonian inscription mentions one Julia Severa, a high priestess of the pagan cults of Nero's time, who gave proof of her pro-Jewish sentiments by building a synagogue (*CIJ* no. 766).

[75]Compare the problems mentioned in Ezra 9:1-2, 10-10:44 and Neh 13:23-27 which were due to Israel having to live in close contact with the peoples of pagan cultures. State alliances and other political motives were notorious excuses, although it is questionable that the Herod family would qualify as exemplary Jews. It is interesting, nonetheless, that the marriages of the ruling family did on occasion manifest an element of Jewish conservatism (Josephus, *Ant.* 20.139-44).

[76]Ramsay, *Trustworthiness of the New Testament* 357-58.

[77]Compare with Lystra and Derbe the situation in more accessible cities described by S. Safrai ("Relations between the Diaspora and the Land of Israel", in *CRINT* 1.1:184-215) and Kittel ("Das kleinasiatische Judentum" 14).

normal pattern of preaching in the synagogue-rejection-preaching to the Gentiles-expulsion; instead, a strong pagan sentiment replies to the miraculous healing of the lame man, and it is the Jews from Iconium and Antioch who disrupt Paul's stay.

It is important to note, though, that as a general rule the relaxation of practice does not mean total disappearance of a religion nor does it make absolute that all adherents would adopt a liberal attitude; moreover, geographical separation from the religious centre often forges a conservative interpretation and a stricter application of the religion. Could this observation suggest that a more realistic picture of the religious situation in Asia Minor is that a Judaism concerned for the maintenance of orthodox beliefs and practices existed side-by-side with a lax Judaism? Possibly. There may be some import in this regard in Luke's indication that the Jews from Iconium and Antioch had sufficient influence among the Lystran population to effect Paul's stoning and that they had the desire to do so. But we cannot do more than conjecture, for the existence of a conservative Judaism in this area cannot really be verified.

Third, there is evidence in rabbinic law that a change occurred on the point whether a child takes the nationality of the mother or that of the father. In the second century A.D. concessions were granted, initially perhaps to accommodate the negative consequences of life under foreign domination and of sexual abuses, which acknowledged the children of all mixed alliances, forced and willing, to be legitimate and Jewish. It is not impossible, the less so in a Judaism already inclined to be lax and open to legal changes, that the deviation from the law had already begun in the first century A.D., perhaps in the Jewish circles in which Paul was educated and travelled. As Daube[78] himself points out, "A striking adumbration of the Rabbis' concessions regarding the status of offspring is contained in Paul's teaching...about conversion of one of two spouses": against traditional practice Paul admits marriage with a heathen when the marriage was transacted before conversion and the convert's capacity (whether it is the wife or the husband) to consecrate the spouse.

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[78]Daube, *Ancient Jewish Law* 29.

There is cause, then, to expect that Timothy should have been circumcised and to attribute his uncircumcised state to paternal objection and to the lax practices of Judaism in the region. There is also cause to explain Paul's act of circumcising Timothy not in terms of salvific necessity but in terms of a pragmatic acknowledgement of the existence of a conservative strand of Judaism and possibly by way of a safeguard for Timothy and the Christian mission against a growing tendency in Jewish circles to recognize the offspring of a Jewish mother and a Gentile father to be Jewish. In other words, circumcision is not the means of Timothy's salvation; rather, Paul's act proposes to strengthen Timothy's rightful identity, in the eyes of some Jews, with Judaism, as a Jewish Christian.

Thus, Timothy apparently represents a different case from Titus, the Jew as contrasted with the Gentile; and his experience sets no precedent for what a Gentile should do. Indeed, Luke's description of Timothy's background and the extended explanation of the reason for Paul's action hint that Luke may have considered Timothy's circumcision an exception in Pauline and early church strategy. The above explanation of the evidence, secondly, weakens the notion that Timothy's circumcision supports a two-tiered Christianity (an ordinary level, those free from the law, and a higher level, the circumcised), for the essential way to salvation is not questioned; however, there is implied the idea that faith was to be expressed through the cultural forms which the Christian inherited.[79] There is a third implication of the evidence. The action appears to be intended to protect Paul on three fronts: for the Jews, in anticipation of the accusation in Acts 21:21 that Paul was denouncing the practices of circumcision and observance of the law,[80] it provided proof that Paul had not discarded the heritage of Judaism; for the Jew who was also a Christian it indirectly demonstrated a loyal adherence to the decision of the Jerusalem council; and for the Gentile it showed that freedom in Christ did not signify a disregard for the historic people of God to whom they had been joined.

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[79]Longenecker (455) comments: "being a good Christian did not mean being a bad Jew. Rather, it meant being a fulfilled Jew".

[80]See pp. 262-64, 273-74.

4. Baptism at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7; 18:24-28)

A salient aspect of the early church's missionary proclamation and practice is the act of baptism. Baptism in the name of Jesus constitutes along with repentance the response required from Peter's audience on Pentecost (2:37-38). In the accounts of the conversions of Cornelius (10:44-48), Lydia (16:14-15), the Philippian jailer (16:30-34), and the Corinthians (18:8), it is correlated with hearing the apostolic proclamation and believing in Jesus: baptism represents the visible sign of God's miraculous effecting of a person's faith in Jesus through the power of the gospel. In 22:16, one description of Paul's own baptism,[81] βάπτισαι compounded with ἀπόλουσαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας σου implies that baptism accompanies and symbolizes (but does not necessarily denote or effect)[82] an inward spiritual cleansing, a forgiveness of sins; and the concomitant act ἐπικαλεσάμενος τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, pinpointing the manner in which the act ἀπόλουσαι in particular is accomplished, grounds the forgiveness of sins directly and baptism indirectly in a certain attitude, namely, an appeal to God which signifies both an attribution of worship and a personal commitment (cf. 2:21; Rom 10:13).

The conjunction of the act of baptism with faith and the forgiveness of sins, fundamentals of membership in the people of God, introduces the notion that even though the act of baptism is not always recorded in Acts as part of the process of conversion, the most conspicuous example being the silence in Acts 13-14, it could still be understood to have taken place and therefore could be considered essential to mark the believer in Jesus.

A celebrated test of this hypothesis, of the indispensability of baptism for the Christian community, is the account of the baptism of the disciples of Ephesus, Acts 19:1-7. The story as told by Luke revolves around a dialogue between Paul and (about) twelve μαθηταί[83] whom he encountered on his return visit to Ephesus (v. 1). It makes four important points.

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[81]Compare 9:17-18.

[82]In accord with 2:38 (see pp. 32-33), καί should be given its most natural meaning.

[83]Verse 7 has ὡσεὶ δώδεκα. On the implications of the men being called μαθηταί, an appellation used elsewhere in Acts only of believers, see below.

(1) The initial remark in the dialogue--εἰ πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐλάβετε πιστεύσαντες; (v. 2a)--appears to place the act of believing simultaneous with the reception of the Holy Spirit[84] and implies that the presence of the Spirit attests the genuineness of faith.

(2) Εἰς τί οὖν ἐβαπτίσθητε; (v. 3a), Paul's follow-up question evoked by the twelve men strangely denying any knowledge of the Spirit, links by implication the reception of the Spirit with a specific baptism.[85]

(3) The discussion of the purpose of John's baptism[86] (v. 4), which follows from the men admitting to having experienced only that baptism, points out the difference between John's baptism and Christian baptism and thereby indicates the significance of Christian baptism. John's baptism is related to repentance (βάπτισμα μετανοίας;[87] cf. 13:24; Luke 3:3 and parallels) and was accompanied by a message to the Jewish people that they should believe in the one coming after John, that is, in Jesus (εἰς τὸν ἐρχόμενον μετ' αὐτὸν ἵνα πιστεύσωσιν, τοῦτ' ἔστιν εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν).[88] This contrasts with baptism εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ[89] (v. 5). Luke's language is concise as he tries to compress several thoughts into a small compass; but however indirectly, the word order of verse 4 brings out the point of

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[84]RSV; NEB; NIV. The translation "Did you receive the Holy Spirit *after* you believed?" (cf. KJV) is certainly a possible understanding of v. 2; but it is not the required meaning since the aspect of the action denoted by the aorist participle, which may be antecedent, coincident, or subsequent to the action of the main verb, is not determined by the position of the participle in relation to the main verb (BDF §339).

[85]This is the force of οὖν (Knowling 403). Given its use with βαπτίζω earlier in Acts, εἰς may be telic ("in order to obtain") or consecutive ("resulting in"); but, anticipating the answer εἰς τὸ Ἰωάννου βάπτισμα (v. 3b), it is probably either simply referential ("in relation to") or instrumental, taking the place of ἐν (Moulton 3:255; Zerwick §101).

[86]Τὸ Ἰωάννου βάπτισμα (v. 3b; cf. 18:25) should be understood to refer to the baptism that John proclaimed and practised (10:37; 13:24; cf. 1:22) and not to the baptism of Jesus by John or to Christian water baptism without the Spirit.

[87]Μετανοίας is a descriptive genitive (BAGD, s.v. βαπτίζω 2a).

[88]This summation of John's preaching goes beyond the tradition in the Synoptic Gospels, which speaks of the Coming One who was judge; but it is in thorough accord with the testimony to Jesus in John 1:26-31; 3:26-28; and Acts 13:25 (cf. Luke 7:19). Thus, Bruce (Greek) 354 and compare Haenchen 530 n. 6.

[89]D expands εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ by continuing Χριστοῦ εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν (cf. 2:38). The addition seems meaningless (however, see Rackham 346) since v. 4 has already made the point that the men had received John's baptism which carried the same qualification, and it blurs the contrast. There is also no cause to read out of v. 5 that the people baptized by John were baptized into the name of Jesus. While v. 5 may continue Paul's remarks and the plural ἀκούσαντες ἐβαπτίσθησαν may refer to τῷ λαῷ (v. 4) as a noun of multitude, αὐτοῖς must refer to the same persons; and these are the twelve men (Beasley-Murray [*Baptism* 111 n. 4] replying to M. Barth [*Die Taufe--ein Sakrament? Ein exegetischer Beitrag zum Gespräch über die kirchliche Taufe* {1951} 166-70]).

difference: John's baptism is only preparatory, directing Jews to believe in Jesus; in Christian baptism the person is actually identified with Jesus.[90]

(4) The twelve men receive the Holy Spirit (v. 6) when they are baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus[91] and when Paul lays his hands on them.

These four points establish a close relation between faith in Jesus, reception of the Spirit, baptism in the name of Jesus, and the laying on of hands:[92] since the possession of the Spirit is concomitant with faith, since the Spirit comes with baptism in the name of Jesus and the laying on of hands, and since that baptism, like faith, signifies commitment to Jesus, it is presumably correct to say that baptism identifies and witnesses to faith and therefore is a necessary characteristic of members of the Christian community, perhaps even a condition of membership.

This inference, however, comes into serious questioning when the experience of the twelve men is compared with that of Apollos recounted in the immediately preceding paragraph (18:24-28). In both pericopes on a cursory reading the people in question represent the same theological stance. The twelve men are μαθηταί (19:1) and know only John's baptism (19:3b). Likewise, Apollos is introduced in terms which could imply that he is a Christian (18:25a, b), and he knows only John's baptism (18:25c). Despite the apparent similar spiritual conditions of the main characters, the conclusions of the two stories are different. Whereas the twelve men are baptized in Jesus' name by Paul (19:6), Apollos is instructed more accurately in the way of God by Priscilla and Aquila (18:26). The discrepancy seems to defy reason,[93] particularly because it concerns adjoining events taking place in the same location; and it challenges, among other things, the significance and necessity of Christian baptism. Why was baptism in the name of Jesus necessary when the twelve men were already disciples? Why correct

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[90]For further discussion on βαπτίζειν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, see Introduction 5.2.2.

[91]See Dunn, *Baptism* 90-102, esp. 96-101, on the conjunction of baptism and the receipt of the Spirit.

[92]On the act of laying on hands, see sec. 4.4 below.

[93]Ramsay (*St. Paul* 267, 270) confesses quite frankly to a total lack of comprehension. He thinks that 18:24-28 was introduced not so much for its own intrinsic importance but for the sake of making the reference to Apollos in 1 Cor 1:12 clear. As for 19:1-7, he wishes that there were manuscript evidence for omitting the entire episode.

the theological aberration in one case with baptism but not in the other? The matter is only exacerbated by ostensible paradoxes within each paragraph. For instance, how could the twelve men be Christians and not know that there was a Spirit? Or, how could the men have experienced John's baptism and not know what John's baptism signified? Why was their faulty knowledge not corrected by the ἀδελφοί in Ephesus (18:27) or by Priscilla and Aquila or even Apollos? In the case of Apollos, how could such a learned man accurately know the Christian proclamation and have experienced only John's baptism or need further instruction? Was he at the beginning of the story a Christian or not?

Needless to say, there are manifold resolutions of the discrepancies, manifesting varying degrees of credibility; and by way of introduction several will be cited.

E. Käsemann's explanation,[94] for one, has found much support. His main premise is that Luke "reads back into the past as a historical reality the postulate of an *Una sancta* grounded on the apostolic fellowship and then, conversely, uses this postulate to validate the claims of the orthodox Church of his own times".[95] Only when this fact of authorial intent is recognized can a true understanding of the passage and of the historical circumstances underlying Luke's source be ascertained. It is Luke's conception of Christian history, not the sources, that determines the disjunction between baptism and the bestowal of the Spirit which occurs in 8:14-17; 10:44-48; and 19:1-7: Luke has painted over the tradition to show that the gift of the Spirit is the seal of incorporation into the organized church. In the case of 18:24-19:7 specifically he has fabricated ἐπιστάμενος μόνον τὸ βάπτισμα Ἰωάννου (18:25c) as a characteristic of the much celebrated, otherwise independent evangelist Apollos, who then, because Luke did not dare report the rebaptism of such a gifted missionary, receives supplementary instruction from Paul's co-workers; the twelve disciples of John the Baptist have been made into embryo Christians who have to be taught by Paul that John is the forerunner

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[94]E. Käsemann, "The Disciples of John the Baptist in Ephesus" (1952), in *Essays on New Testament Themes* (ET 1964) 136-48. Käsemann is responding in part to H. Preisker's thesis that the Spirit is the mark of a community without cultus or ministry (H. Preisker, "Apollos und die Johannesjünger in Act 18_{24}-19_6", *ZNW* 30 [1931] 301-4).

[95]Käsemann, "Disciples" 148.

of Jesus and who need Christian baptism and the Holy Spirit. As a result, the two incidents inform each other (a *communicatio idiomatum*),[96] making Apollos guilty by association, and emphatically demonstrate to the readers, on the one hand, the primitive church free from schisms and heresy and, on the other, the unacceptability of Christian freelances and sectarian communities like the gnostics operating outside the auspices of and presumably in competition with the organized church. "The living context of the passage" then becomes "the reception of ecclesiastical outsiders into the *Una sancta catholica*".[97]

Another explanation is that of E. Schweizer.[98] He maintains that Luke's main concern is to show the temporal unity of the church's connection at all times with the original community in Jersualem as the only legitimate continuation of Judaism. This motif of *Heilsgeschichte*, not that of *Frühkatholizismus*, determines the events in 19:1-7, as it probably does in 8:14-17.[99] The pericope betrays a primary interest in the Spirit and in the replacement of water baptism by Spirit baptism, although historically the twelve μαθηταί were not Christians but disciples of John the Baptist. The story of Apollos is a different case. While it does not relate the incorporation of an outsider into the *Una sancta catholica*, the tradition does record the conversion of a Jewish evangelist. Luke has unintentionally altered the details, mistakingly understanding ἡ οδὸς τοῦ κυρίου as τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ and τὸ πνεῦμα as τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον. Hence, there is no need in this instance to feature the bestowal of the Spirit or the act of baptism. Such reinterpretation of the tradition, in Schweizer's opinion, can be attributed to Luke's inability to find a place in his theological stance for a Jewish missionary working "in the Spirit" and a group of men remaining loyal to John the Baptist.

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[96]Käsemann, "Disciples" 148.

[97]Käsemann, "Disciples" 141.

[98]E. Schweizer, "Die Bekehrung des Apollos, Apg 18,24-26" (1955), in *Beiträge zur Theologie des Neuen Testaments. Neutestamentliche Aufsätze (1955-70)* (1970) 71-79.

[99]In the case of 8:14-17, Schweizer ("Bekehrung" 74-75, 79) thinks that it is difficult to say whether the temporal unity or the local unity of the church is central.

C. K. Barrett[100] states a third solution. He notes that both stories contain like themes, i.e. the work of John the Baptist and the Holy Spirit.[101] He mentions further that there is good reason to maintain that groups of John the Baptist's followers did persist well into the first century and that they could have presented the early church with a real problem as to how they should be incorporated into the church. Combining these observations, Barrett proposes that a divergence in practice accounts for the difference between the treatment of Apollos and that of the twelve Ephesian disciples, some members of the church maintaining that belief in Jesus was sufficient for acceptance and others arguing for the necessity of baptism. However, because of the era in which Acts was written (a period when the clash between Christian and non-Christian groups had subsided), Luke, for whom Paul's version of the faith was normative and victorious, does not understand that he is dealing with diverse reactions to a church problem; and in order to circumvent the contradictions manifested in the reliable tradition, he makes the twelve Ephesians less Christian and Apollos more Christian.

Käsemann's solution, as we have said, has gained wide acceptance; it has also attracted notable and damaging criticism.[102] The most obvious weakness is the presuppositional conception of an official ecclesiastical structure with an established apostolic succession which Luke has read back into the tradition. This theory of Lukan *Frühkatholizismus* can and should be challenged at point after point. To illustrate from the present passage, although these are not the strongest criticisms,[103] 18:26 says that Priscilla and Aquila, not Paul, instructed Apollos. This unexpected choice of teacher may signal little difference so far as the content of the teaching is concerned, for, as

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[100]C. K. Barrett, "Apollos and the Twelve Disciples of Ephesus", in FS B. Reicke (1984) 1:29-39, esp. 35-39.

[101]Barrett ("Apollos" 36 n. 26) believes ζέων τῷ πνεύματι denotes the Holy Spirit, not a personality trait (see below).

[102]E.g. Schweizer, "Bekehrung" 71-79; Barrett, "Apollos" 35-36; Marshall 303-6.

[103]Stronger arguments include the following. (1) Acts 20:17-35 is allegedly evidence of the existence of a teaching office guaranteeing the *una sancta*, but it does not even hint at the notion of apostolic succession. (2) Acts 8 and 10 cannot contribute to the understanding of 18:24-19:7 the sense of a rigid sacramental scheme operated by an apostolic authority since their main drift is that the gift of the Spirit and his activity are not under any human control (cf. Barrett, "Apollos" 35; Marshall 304). (3) The separation of Paul and Barnabas (15:36-41) and the discordant rumours about Paul's teaching (21:21) question the extent of ecclesiastical unity (Schweizer, "Bekehrung" 72-73).

Käsemann notes, Priscilla and Aquila were Paul's colleagues and thus represented Paul. But the choice does have significance in that if Luke had freely invented or altered the tradition the instruction would surely have been given by Paul, a leading apostle; the mention of the co-workers Priscilla and Aquila implies that Luke has retained tradition. Again, ἐπιθέντος αὐτοῖς τοῦ Παύλου χεῖρας in 19:6 (cf. 8:17), signifying the imparting of the Spirit, may denote a symbolic action which is intended to demonstrate quite clearly that sectarians were becoming part of the universal church;[104] but in no way do the words represent a *frühkatholisch* tendency. If they did, it would not be unreasonable to expect Luke to have reported the act elsewhere, such as when Barnabas, who is implied, in 14:4, to be an apostle, is sent by the Jerusalem church to verify the admission of uncircumcised Gentiles into the Antiochian church (11:22-24), or to have selected someone more official than the spontaneously and divinely appointed Ananias to "lay hands" on Paul (9:12, 17).[105]

There is much to commend in Barrett's proposal. For one thing, that 18:24-19:7 could represent a divergence in practice fits logically. At the beginning of any movement, whether it be political, philosophical, or religious, before issues are defined and positions are solidified, there is great variance in opinion and much discussion about self-definition, let alone about the assimilation of people who are closely but not exactly aligned ideologically; and the debate would only be exacerbated if the new movement had schismatical foundations or connections as was the case with Christianity.

However, there is, I think, in the three solutions a fundamental disadvantage which stems from their perspectives of Luke as editor. Admittedly it does seem unusual that two different opinions about baptism would be ascribed to Paul and Priscilla and Aquila, who in Acts belong to the same party. Yet if Luke's sources did mention the early church's diverse reactions to the disciples of John, it is equally strange that Luke

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[104]See also sec. 4.4 below.

[105]Ananias's act was probably for the purpose of restoring Saul's sight (ἐπιθέντα αὐτῷ [τὰς] χεῖρας ὅπως ἀναβλέψῃ, 9:12; cf. Luke 4:40; 13:13; Acts 28:8). However, if ἐπιθεὶς ἐπ' αὐτὸν τὰς χεῖρας in 9:17 is to be connected as well with Saul's reception of the Spirit (Haenchen 312, 317 and Bruce [Greek] 202; compare Daube, *Rabbinic Judaism* 242-43 and Marshall 172), the choice of Ananias to perform the deed can only strengthen the idea that Luke has retained tradition.

could mask the disagreement without realizing that that was the intent of the tradition. The editorial modification would suggest in and of itself that Luke understood at least some of what his sources said. It is also hard to imagine, especially if Luke were willing to adjust the tradition, that he would locate two incidents he did not fully understand in the same city and, moreover, juxtapose them. It is, further, a reasonable assumption that a divergence in teaching and practice no doubt would develop not only within Christianity but also within a movement associated with John the Baptist,[106] especially as time from the master lengthened and as people with diverse, possibly non-Jewish,[107] backgrounds were added, causing an imprecision in the transmission of John's teaching. Some followers of John may have been well-acquainted with their master's teaching and practices, appreciating John but looking forward and finding the greater fulfilment of which John spoke; others may have received a very garbled account of John's teaching and may have gone no further in their devotion than John himself, perhaps making John equal or superior to Jesus.

These observations question how extensively, if at all, Luke modified the tradition; and they introduce the possibility that the two incidents may be, if not harmonious, at least complementary and that they may have been deliberately combined to inform each other. The comments, though, are made simply in passing. Our concern is to examine the crucial passages as they now stand and ask ultimately whether baptism in Luke's story is a condition or mark of membership in the people of God.

4.1. *The case of the twelve disciples of Ephesus (19:1-7)*

The meaning of μαθηταί in 19:1 is crucial for understanding the experience of the twelve men in Ephesus. Luke's usage elsewhere in Acts makes the noun

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[106]Beasley-Murray, *Baptism* 109-10.

[107]Note the emphatic τῷ λαῷ meaning "to the Jewish people" in 19:4. Do the inclusion and placement of this term imply that these twelve disciples of John were not Jews initially?

synonymous with οἱ πιστεύσαντες, that is, with Christians.[108] Obviously this causes difficulty, for the men's deficient knowledge of Christianity hardly gives them reason to bear the appellative. But the problem may be one of our making rather than one of Lukan usage. Although to us a different sense of the noun may seem unexpected and unusual, μαθηταί in 19:1 may be a case of Luke varying his usage,[109] similar to the way he treats the term ἀδελφός. The intended meaning could be μαθηταὶ τοῦ Ἰωάννου, though that may be going too far in Acts without an explicit qualification.[110] Perhaps more reasonable is the notion that the word represents a loose conferral of the status of disciple[111] or (and the two notions are not incompatible) Paul's perception of the men, in the sense "Er begegnete einigen Leuten, die er für Christen hielt".[112] In this regard it is notable that there are other examples in Acts of people who are thought to belong but who really do not. Luke portrays the spiritual conditions of these people without always evaluating it[113] and even uses the same language to develop the characterizations. He speaks of the seven sons of Sceva (19:13-16) as exorcising demons in the name of Jesus and then records the disastrous consequences which hint at the spuriousness of the men's acts. He refers to Simon Magus of Samaria (8:13, 18-24) as having believed and then raises doubts about the genuineness of Simon's faith.[114] The

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[108]Οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ in 9:25 p^{74} ℵ A B C vg, which speaks unambiguously of the disciples of Paul, may be a notable exception. The words and their reference, though, are doubtful, despite strong external attestation, because of Luke's use of μαθητής in Acts and because of the awkward Greek of 9:25. K. H. Rengstorf ("μανθάνω", *TDNT* 4:459) assumes that the words refer to people who accompanied Paul to Damascus and who were converted through his witness. Probably it is better to attribute the words to scribal inadvertence, αὐτοῦ being misread early for the original αὐτόν, just as κυκλωσάντων δὲ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ appears in certain Western MSS at 14:20 (Haenchen 320).

[109]Luke's use of μαθητής in his Gospel, denoting the Twelve (e.g. 8:22; 9:18, 54; 18:15), the disciples of John the Baptist (5:33; 7:18; 11:1), the people who follow Jesus (e.g. 6:17; 9:37), and a pupil in general (6:40), is more fluid than that in Acts. That variety cannot dictate the meaning of μαθητής in Acts 19:1, but it does give precedent for a meaning other than "Christians".

[110]Chrysostom (*Hom.* 40) posited that μαθηταί in 19:1 means John's disciples, and the idea has been picked up, for example, by A. C. McGiffert (*A History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age* [1897] 286) and Rengstorf (*TDNT* 4:456-57). In Luke 5:33; 7:18; and 11:1 the translation "John's disciples" is confirmed by the accompanying qualifiers.

[111]Williams 215, 291; Beasley-Murray, *Baptism* 111-12; Dunn, *Baptism* 85.

[112]K. Haacker, "Einige Fälle von 'Erlebter Rede' im Neuen Testament", *NovT* 12 (1970) 76.

[113]Longenecker 493. Some of Longenecker's examples, however, do not follow. For instance, the πεπιστευκότες applied to Pharisees in 15:5 is shown by 6:7 to be able to bear the expected meaning.

[114]The Western text of 8:24, though, certainly thinks Simon was genuinely penitent and presumably a believer since v. 13.

analogies do not prove conclusively that μαθηταί in 19:1 could *not* mean "true Christians"; but they do allow for the possibility that Luke may have wanted the reader to recognize, on the one hand, that these men were not on the level with genuine disciples and, on the other, that they were not to be classed with non-Christian Jews or pagans. Furthermore, the reader is offered a reasonable explanation, given that the twelve men were presumably not newcomers to the Ephesian community, why the ἀδελφοί had not themselves corrected the disciples' knowledge.

Also important for determining the men's relation to Christianity is εἰ πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐλάβετε πιστεύσαντες; (v. 2). The obvious sense of the question is that Paul understands the men to be genuine believers and that he asks merely, out of interest, whether they had received the Holy Spirit or (refining the purport of the words slightly) whether they had experienced the Pentecostal phenomena. This certainly would fit. It cannot be denied that Luke is interested in demonstrating how the outward manifestations of the Spirit prove the faith of the church; and undoubtedly, as the emphatic πνεῦμα ἅγιον in verse 2a and the drift of the narrative suggest, this theme is supposed to emerge in 19:1-7. We note, for example, that the reply to the question is ἀλλ' οὐδ' εἰ πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἔστιν ἠκούσαμεν (v. 2b). These words are puzzling, to be sure, for it hardly seems probable that anyone cognizant of John's baptism, let alone the Old Testament, would not know of the Spirit; but the paraphrase in the Western text may have captured the sense of the response accurately.[115] If so, ἀλλ' οὐδ' εἰ πνεῦμα ἅγιον λαμβάνουσίν τινες ἠκούσαμεν, like δεδομένον and ἐπ' αὐτούς added by B and D(*) respectively to the equally awkward οὔπω γὰρ ἦν πνεῦμα in John 7:39,[116] places the emphasis on the Spirit as manifested at Pentecost. Again, verse 6 states that the bestowal of the Spirit on the twelve men was accompanied by glossolalia and prophecy, supernatural phenomena associated with Pentecost and the last days (2:4, 17; cf. 10:45-46).

Despite the development of this theme, it is conspicuous that the bulk of the conversation seems to go beyond a concern for a group of believers to speak in tongues

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[115]Lake and Cadbury 4:237; Knowling 403; Bruce (Greek) 354; contra Haenchen 530 n. 4.

[116]There is, however, a notable difference between Acts 19:2D and John 7:39. Whereas the context of John 7:39 gives the certain knowledge that the experience of the Spirit was still a future reality for all people, the context of Acts 19:2, after Pentecost, does not allow such certainty.

and prophesy. The climax and the heart of the dialogue given in verse 4 draw attention to the content of John's message in order to contrast John's baptism with Christian baptism; the main interest, though, is not John nor John's baptism but the one to whom John pointed, namely, Jesus. Luke makes his point through emphasis. He places εἰς τὸν ἐρχόμενον μετ' αὐτόν before the governing ἵνα and then, in case the reader has not understood, states even more assertively what he means by adding and suspending τοῦτ' ἔστιν εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν. And it is probably not without relevance that he includes the word πιστεύσωσιν as if to draw for the reader a line between verse 4 and verse 2a and to say, This is what Paul's question is really driving at: John's followers must believe in Jesus. The repetition of πιστεύω, the careful placing of the emphasis, and the explicit reference to Jesus as the goal of faith suggest that Paul's question in verse 2a should be understood ultimately (however Paul may have viewed the men initially) as inquiring not only about the men's receipt and experience of the Spirit but also and more importantly about their personal trust in Jesus.

A third hint that at the beginning of the story the twelve men were not genuine disciples comes from ἀκούσαντες δὲ ἐβαπτίσθησαν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ in verse 5. This record of the men's response to Paul's comments seems to assume more than a baptism to rectify the defectiveness of John's baptism. The statement recalls similar situations in 2:37; 10:44; 13:48; 17:32; and 18:8 where hearing the gospel proclamation forces the decision to believe or reject the claims about Jesus. Baptism in the name of Jesus appears to represent for the twelve disciples of Ephesus a sign of initial commitment to Jesus as Lord.

4.2. *The case of Apollos (18:24-28)*

In the case of 18:24-28, the discussion concentrates on verses 25 and 26, particularly the latter where Apollos comes into contact with Priscilla and Aquila. Verse 26 says that when Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollos speaking in the synagogue, they took him aside and ἀκριβέστερον αὐτῷ ἐξέθεντο τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ θεοῦ. What exactly did Paul's co-workers do for Apollos?

The key to unlocking this question lies with ἀκριβέστερον. It is possible for the comparative adverb[117] to replace an elative superlative (cf. 24:22; possibly 23:15, 20), thus indicating that Apollos received a very detailed explanation, or for it to function as a positive (cf. 23:15, 20), thus implying simply that Apollos received accurate instruction; but since the adverb cannot fail to recall for the reader Luke's use of ἀκριβῶς in verse 25b,[118] it should be taken rather as a genuine comparative, pointing to the idea that Priscilla and Aquila gave Apollos more accurate knowledge of what he knew accurately already. The meaning of ἀκριβέστερον αὐτῷ ἐξέθεντο τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ θεοῦ then relates to that of ἐδίδασκεν ἀκριβῶς τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ.

Ἐδίδασκεν ἀκριβῶς τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, a difficult clause to interpret,[119] is perhaps best approached by first eliminating what is not determinative for its meaning. It is wise not to build on Luke's inclusion of ζέων τῷ πνεύματι (v. 25b) in the description of Apollos. The meaning of that phrase is suspect.[120] Whereas the reference of τῷ πνεύματι ζέοντες in Rom 12:11 (the only other New Testament occurrence of ζέω) to the zeal which the Holy Spirit kindles in the hearts of Christians may indicate that Apollos was inspired by the Holy Spirit, Luke's employment of τὸ πνεῦμα for the human spirit (7:59; 17:16)[121] and his scattering of references to Apollos's personality in theological contexts throughout the paragraph[122] suggest as equally plausible a reference to Apollos's ardent temperament. An analysis of the passage may indeed lead us to prefer

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[117]On the uses of the comparative degree, see BDF §244 and Moulton 3:29-31; and on that of ἀκριβέστερον in particular, see Lake and Cadbury 4:233-34.

[118]Bruce (Greek) 352.

[119]For a conspectus of opinion on the extent of Apollos's theological knowledge before meeting Priscilla and Aquila, see Haenchen 531-32. To these should be added Marshall's view that Apollos was instructed in distinctive Pauline doctrine (Marshall 304). Many of the suggestions exceed the plain sense of the words.

[120]Haenchen (528 nn. 1, 2) gives a good survey of opinion on the meaning of ζέων τῷ πνεύματι.

[121]Admittedly, an accompanying genitive may be required for τὸ πνεῦμα to bear this meaning (see also Luke 1:7, 47; 8:55; 23:46); but the use of πνεῦμα in 19:21 and 20:22, where the noun has no qualifier, could suggest otherwise (see Lake and Cadbury 4:244; Schneider 2:274).

[122]For example, δυνατὸς ὢν ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς (v. 24), εὐτόνως... διακατηλέγχετο ...ἐπιδεικνὺς διὰ τῶν γραφῶν (v. 28), and possibly συνεβάλετο...διὰ τῆς χάριτος (v. 27). Thus, the placement of ζέων τῷ πνεύματι does not require the meaning "fervent in the Holy Spirit" (contra A. Oepke, "ζέω", *TDNT* 2:876).

one meaning over the other; but it would be precarious, I think, to make that choice the foundation of an interpretative structure.

There is also good reason not to explain the extent of Apollos's theological knowledge in terms of τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ meaning the story of Jesus or Jesus' public teaching about himself and hence offsetting ἡ ὁδὸς τοῦ θεοῦ meaning the saving action of God through Jesus (cf. 13:10; 16:17).[123] Luke does tend to employ synonyms freely even within a small verbal compass and appears to follow that penchant here when he progresses from ἡ ὁδὸς τοῦ κυρίου (v. 25a) to τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ (v. 25b) to ἡ ὁδὸς τοῦ θεοῦ (v. 26)[124] and relates ἀκριβέστερον αὐτῷ ἐξέθεντο τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ θεοῦ to ἐδίδασκεν ἀκριβῶς τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ. Furthermore, the application of τὰ περὶ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, in conjunction with ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, to the content of Paul's evangelistic teaching in Rome (28:31; cf. 23:11) and of τὰ περὶ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ Ναζαρηνοῦ to the subject of the post-resurrection conversation between the Emmaus disciples and Jesus (Luke 24:19, 27)[125] substantiates the notion that both "the things about Jesus" and "the way of God" refer to the apostolic proclamation, that is, to the way to and benefits of salvation in Jesus the Messiah.

The best determinative for the sense of ἐδίδασκεν ἀκριβῶς τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ is ἐπιστάμενος μόνον τὸ βάπτισμα Ἰωάννου. The inclusion of μόνον marks the participial phrase as concessive (cf. 8:16) and thus as summing up Apollos's theological inadequacy in terms of his knowledge of the baptism proclaimed by John the Baptist.

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[123]Lake and Cadbury (4:231-32) offer two interpretations of the passage based on a differentiation of τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ and ἡ ὁδός. One explanation understands Christian baptism to be part of the ὁδός but not of τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ. Thus, Priscilla and Aquila did for Apollos what Paul did for the twelve Ephesians and the two passages together illustrate the evolution of Christian baptism as a Hellenist Christian phenomenon and the replacement of John's baptism. The other, building on the statement that Apollos moved to Corinth and preached that Jesus was the messiah (v. 28), takes τὸ βάπτισμα Ἰωάννου to mean the baptism of Jesus by John, ἡ ὁδὸς τοῦ κυρίου to be synonymous with ἡ ὁδος τοῦ θεοῦ but not with τὰ περὶ Ἰησοῦ, and κατηχημένος to include the sense of imperfection despite the inclusion of ἀκριβῶς in 18:25b and despite the fact that the NT sense of κατηχέω assumes no value judgement apart from what the context gives (compare κατηχέω in Luke 1:4; Rom 2:18; 1 Cor 14:19; and Gal 6:6 with the verb in Acts 21:21, 24).

[124]Nothing can be made of ἡ ὁδός τοῦ θεοῦ as opposed to ἡ ὁδὸς τοῦ κυρίου. The free alternation between ὁ λογὸς τοῦ κυρίου and ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ in 13:44, 46, 48, 49 and the omission of τοῦ θεοῦ in D gig, which may be original (Ropes 3:178; compare Metzger 467), indicate an equivalent reference.

[125]In this case τὰ περὶ (τοῦ) Ἰησοῦ is explained in terms of the disciples' understanding of Jesus' prophetic ministry as the hope of Israel, his death, and the reports about his resurrection (vv. 19-24), to which Jesus gave proof and enlightenment from the Scriptures.

If, as we have argued, ἀκριβῶς τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ means that Apollos taught the apostolic proclamation accurately, ἐπίσταμαι cannot connote factual knowledge, that is, that the sole extent of Apollos's knowledge of Christianity was his awareness of John's preaching and baptism. Rather, ἐπίσταμαι must mean Apollos's experiential knowledge, in which case the concessive participial phrase identifies the one area in which Apollos's Christian experience did not conform with his Christian knowledge, that is, he had not been baptized.

The implication is clear. Ἐδίδασκεν ἀκριβῶς τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἐπιστάμενος μόνον τὸ βάπτισμα Ἰωάννου claims that Apollos was a member of the people of God both by birth and by faith in Jesus before he encountered Priscilla and Aquila. This can be substantiated. Apollos's act of preaching in the synagogue (v. 26a) is designated παρρησιάζεσθαι, a term which Luke reserves for the rhetorical skill given by the Spirit (and not necessarily due to training or personality) to the apostles and other members of the Christian community for an effective public witness.[126] Priscilla and Aquila then did not take Apollos aside in order to direct him to faith in Jesus the Messiah; they perfected his knowledge, informing him of Christian water baptism. Whether after this instruction Apollos was baptized into the name of Jesus, the text does not say nor can ἐπιστάμενος with the sense of experiential knowledge be pressed to convey the idea. It may be that Apollos's situation should be viewed like that of the Twelve or of the other followers of Jesus experiencing Pentecost for whom there is no record of nor allusion to their having undergone water baptism; their confession of Jesus the Messiah is apparently sufficient to mark them as members of the Christian community. Alternatively, Apollos's situation may parallel in part that of Cornelius, whose receipt of the Spirit, an unexpected, spontaneous gift from God, preceded the act of water baptism.[127] Whichever the better analogy, and to me the former seems more likely, the

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[126]See 2:29; 4:13; 9:27-28; 13:46; 19:8; 26:26; 28:31; and especially 4:29-31 and 14:3. Lukan usage elsewhere indicates that παρρησιάζεσθαι here is not merely illustrating ἀνὴρ λόγιος (v. 24) or anticipating εὐτόνως...διακατηλέγχετο δημοσίᾳ (v. 28).

[127]That Apollos may have been "rebaptized" by Priscilla and Aquila offers H. Montefiore (*A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* [1964] 106) an ingenious but very tenuous explanation for the exceptional plural βαπτισμῶν in Heb 6:2.

evidence shows that if baptism did occur, it would not have represented for Apollos entry into the people of God.

4.3. *Baptism: a condition of membership?*

Combining the results of the above examination of 18:24-28 and 19:1-7, we note a significance difference in the theological stances of the principal characters: whereas the twelve disciples at Ephesus, despite their previous experience of John's baptism and their loose and apparently deceptive association with the Christian community, needed to be directed by Paul to faith in the Lord Jesus, Apollos, though he too had undergone only John's baptism, already had made and bore witness to a confession of faith in Jesus. Or, to state the distinction from the viewpoint of the conclusions of the paragraphs, whereas for the twelve men baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus initiated their commitment to Jesus, in the case of Apollos, Christian water baptism would have only corroborated his Christian commitment. Faith in Jesus then features here as the fundamental condition of membership in the people of God, and baptism is viewed as no more than marking that faith. The essential point is not the rite of baptism but that to which baptism points.

This more general observation requires clarification at four points.

(1) The framework of 19:1-7--Paul's initial question εἰ πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐλάβετε πιστεύσαντες (v. 2a) being answered by the men's positive response to their hearing of the message of faith (v. 5)--underlines the primacy and singularity of faith in Jesus. The act of believing, which in accordance with the syntax of πιστεύσαντες in verse 2 could be coincident or antecedent to the other aspects of conversion, is implied by the sequence of hearing the gospel, baptism, laying on of hands, and receipt of the Spirit in verses 5-6 to be antecedent. Without personal faith there is no experience of the Spirit. At the same time it must be acknowledged that the literary construction of the paragraph argues for the importance of the Spirit for demonstrating faith in Jesus and warns against forming a false dichotomy which, in stressing the cardinal significance of faith in Jesus for membership in the people of God, would devalue the reception of the Spirit as a guarantee of that salvation. The

two concepts are correlative: faith in Jesus as a person's acceptance of God, the gift of the Spirit as God's acknowledgement of a person's faith.

(2) The bestowal of the Spirit adds to baptism in the name of Jesus an element not found in John's baptism; but it should not be viewed as dependent upon or communicated through Christian baptism, perhaps more precisely, in some circles the experience was that the receipt of the Spirit was not dependent upon Christian baptism. Christian baptism is marked distinctive by the gift of the Spirit only in reply to the confession of faith. The receipt of the Spirit and the experience of baptism are conceptually, not consequentially, linked.

(3) The thrust of the comments on John's baptism in 19:4 when interpreted in the light of those in 18:25 is not that the men's experience of baptism *per se* was wrong; it was the interpretation that the men gave to John's baptism. As Acts shows Paul pointing out and as the Gospels portray John the Baptist himself proclaiming (Luke 3:15-17 and parallels), John's baptism for repentance was intended not just to prepare John's reluctant hearers for the coming judgment; it also pointed them to that baptism prophesied by the prophets and to the person who would effect it. John's baptism may not have related the whole story explicitly and it may have been misinterpreted, but it seemingly did not prohibit the experience of faith and of the Spirit.

(4) It can be inferred that Priscilla and Aquila considered it essential to supplement Apollos's knowledge on the particular point of baptism. This action in and of itself suggests the significance placed on baptism as a characteristic of the Christian community, a commitment to Jesus having to be confirmed by a human as well as a divine act.

Baptism into the name of Jesus, not as a condition of membership but as a mark of the people of God, confirming faith in Jesus and complementing God's bestowal of the Spirit, therefore becomes arguably normative as Apollos is brought into line--if not actually by being baptized at least by being taught about baptism--with the practice not

only of the Pauline community but also of Peter representing the apostles and the original Jerusalem community and of Philip representing the Hellenists.

Is the follow-up question valid, that is, do Apollos's lack of a personal experience with Christian baptism and Priscilla and Aquila's desire to rectify that deficiency hint at a divergence in practice, that baptism as a norm belonged to certain sectors of Christianity? The answer which can be inferred from the evidence of 18:24-19:7 is very likely "yes", the more so *if*, as the Western text of 18:25a suggests, Apollos was converted to Christianity in Alexandria and since Judaism itself debated the necessity of proselyte ablution for conversion.[128]. It is possible that water baptism had less importance in some areas of the Roman Empire where Christianity had taken root and was developing. Whether these areas can be said to include some in the path of Christianity from Jerusalem to Rome traced by Luke is questionable. Baptism is not mentioned at all during Paul's first missionary journey recorded in Acts 13-14, nor does it feature in the discussion of Acts 15 unless "all the Gentiles who bear my name" (15:17) in the quotation from Amos 9:11-12 is a veiled allusion to the act. Yet while the silence is without a doubt puzzling, it would be wrong to attribute it to Paul, who himself had been baptized, and precarious, without further proof, to attribute it to the practice of the Antioch church, for that church was founded by the Hellenists who, if Philip's example is any indication, did practise baptism.

4.4. *The laying on of hands*

The story of the twelve men at Ephesus necessitates one further comment. The men's reception of the Spirit is grammatically dependent on Paul's act of laying his hands on them (19:6a). We have stated above that ἐπιθέντος αὐτοῖς τοῦ Παύλου χεῖρας is not an indication of *Frühkatholizismus*, as if Luke wanted to stress the sacramental indispensability of the apostles;[129] yet because of the grammatical dependency,

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[128]See the discussion on *b.Yebam.* 46a-b in Introduction n. 58.

[129]See pp. 244-45. S. New's well-known dictum--"Belief in Jesus (or in his Name), baptism, the remission of sins, the laying on of Apostolic hands, and the reception of the Spirit seem to have formed a single complex of associated ideas, any one of which might in any single narrative be either omitted or emphasized" (New, *Beginnings* 5:134)--is open to the same criticism: to insist that the apostles personally conducted every baptism in the primitive church is an exegetical, let alone a physical absurdity (Beasley-Murray, *Baptism* 113-14).

implying that the Spirit is mediated through the laying on of hands, we should rephrase the question and ask whether ἐπιθέντος...χεῖρας should be considered an essential part of the general process of entering the people of God.[130]

Where in Acts the expression occurs in the context of initiation[131]--besides the story of Paul and the twelve Ephesian disciples (19:6), there are the stories of Peter and John and the Samaritans (8:17) and of Ananias and Paul (9:12, 17)--the laying on of hands and the bestowal of the Spirit are juxtaposed, the latter act being made subsequent to the former. Only in 9:17, though, can it be imagined that the grammatical relationship of the two acts is more than coincidental and even there the possibility that the reception of the Spirit is the purpose or the result of the laying on of hands is slight: while the gift of the Spirit came presumably simultaneously with the restoration of sight, the more *exact* explanation of Ananias's laying on of hands seems to be an act of healing (cf. 28:8; Luke 4:40; 13:13).[132] Furthermore, in the case of the Samaritans Peter's and John's laying on of hands is preceded by a prayer implicitly acknowledging God as the giver of the Spirit (8:15; cf. 9:11), and Simon Magus's request for the power to bestow the Spirit in the same way (8:18-19) is forthrightly and judicially denounced by Peter on the grounds that God's gift cannot be bought (8:20). The prayer and the denunciation demonstrate that the bestowal of the Spirit lies solely within the divine sphere and has not been delegated to humans or human stimuli.[133]

As for the question whether the laying on of hands is normative, setting aside the more doubtful occurrence in 9:17 (though even this instance could be pressed to fit), we note a distinct similarity between the circumstances of the Samaritans and those of

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[130]For a conspectus of scholarly opinion, see G. W. H. Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit. A Study in the Doctrine of Baptism and Confirmation in the New Testament and the Fathers* (1967) 66-71 and F. Bovon, *Luc le théologien. Vingt-cinq ans de recherches (1950-1975)* (1978) 244-54.

[131]For the other uses of ἐπιτίθεσθαι χεῖρας, see Daube, *Rabbinic Judaism* 224-46 and J. K. Parratt, "The Laying on of Hands in the New Testament. A Re-examination in the Light of the Hebrew Terminology", *ExpTim* 80 (1968-69) 210-14.

[132]This is suggested by εἰσελθόντα καὶ ἐπιθέντα αὐτῷ [τὰς] χεῖρας ὅπως ἀναβλέψῃ in v. 12 and is backed up by the mention in v. 18 of Paul's restoration of sight but not of his reception of the Spirit (though we may assume that this did happen) and by the fact that ὅπως ἀναβλέψῃς καὶ πλησθῇς πνεύματος ἁγίου in v. 17 is directly dependent on ὁ κύριος ἀπέσταλκέν με and only indirectly, by reference to v. 12, on ἐπιθεὶς ἐπ' αὐτὸν τὰς χεῖρας.

[133]Such evidence questions Daube's unsubstantiated assignment of סמך, signifying a transmission of personality, to the laying on of hands associated with the conveyance of the Spirit (Daube, *Rabbinic Judaism* 241-43).

the disciples of John the Baptist. Both groups are outsiders, suspect in the first instance to Jews conditioned by racial prejudice and in the other to Christians who doubted the genuineness of their faith. These outsiders' unequivocal acceptance of the Christian proclamation and full admission into the Christian community would have to have been made especially clear to themselves and established church members alike. Given such circumstances, it is logical to infer that the laying on of hands signifies a special act of fellowship, incorporating the people concerned, who might otherwise be excluded, into the fellowship of the church.[134]

Support for this inference could be found in 19:6, at least, in the comment that the twelve men subsequently speak in tongues and prophesy. The manifestation of these charismatic phenomena verifying the presence of the Spirit is likewise exceptional. They appear elsewhere in Acts only at Pentecost, when the apostles' glossolalia bore witness to the partly mocking, partly spellbound Jewish audience of the dawn of a new era in the history of salvation (2:12-21), and at the conversion of Cornelius and his household, when the Gentiles' speaking in tongues left Peter and the other Jewish Christians no option but to accept a group of outsiders as people of God (10:45-48). The implication of this evidence must be weighed, however, against the possibility that despite the omission in Acts other conversions may have been confirmed in the same way. Indeed, Paul's discussion of ecstatic gifts in 1 Cor 12 and 14 suggests that this may well have been the case. Furthermore, although the Pauline Epistles are completely silent on the matter of the laying on of hands, the act is enumerated with βαπτισμῶν διδαχή[135] in Heb 6:2 as foundational to the Christian faith and occurs as regular practice in the second century, being understood as the normative mediation of the Christian experience of the Spirit (cf. Tertullian, *De bapt.* 8).

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[134]Note, however, the hesitations of Lampe (*Seal* 70-79) and Beasley-Murray (*Baptism* 117-20). Lampe prefers to think that in Acts the laying on of hands is for the ordination of prophets. Beasley-Murray suggests that the act in Acts 8 has an intent different from that in Acts 19: whereas in Acts 19 the laying on of hands accompanied the administration of Christian baptism, in Acts 8 it brought the manifestation of the charismata of faith.

[135]It exceeds the present discussion to inquire whether βαπτισμῶν διδαχή refers to varieties of baptism, denotes ceremonial washings, or separates water baptism from Spirit baptism. See the extended discussion in P. E. Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (1977) 199-202.

In essence, therefore, it is difficult to deny that by Luke's time, and probably earlier, there was a double-barrelled event of baptism and the laying on of hands. At the same time the evidence does not allow us to claim that the laying on of hands is indispensable, either as the conveyance of the Spirit or as the sign of ecclesiastical acceptance. Together these two observations suggest that the laying on of hands is a circumstance, not a condition, of conversion which is not on the same level as baptism or as vital.

5. Paul and the Jerusalem Community Again (Acts 21:17-26)

We conclude with a look at the account of Paul's final visit to Jerusalem which, according to Acts, marked the end of his itinerant missionary career and the beginning of his experience as a prisoner in the hands of the Roman authorities. The relevant passage, Acts 21:17-26, deals primarily with the reason for Paul's arrest, a plan of cultic observance which was designed by James and the Jerusalem elders to conciliate the increasingly disparate sections of the church but which only served to inflame the Jewish opposition to Paul. In developing this subject, however, Luke touches upon the expectations of and regulations for the Christian community and raises some interesting and critical implications concerning the agreement of the Jerusalem council.

5.1. *The acceptable practices*

Central to what this paragraph says about belonging to the people of God is the elders' speech (vv. 20-25) and in particular verses 21 and 25. The first verse speaks of the practices of the Jews; the second, of those of the Gentiles.

5.1.1. For the Jews

What is said about the Jews is to be understood in terms of the contemporary religious climate depicted in verses 20-22. Verse 20 has the elders pointing out to Paul that thousands of Jews had become believers and that all of them were zealous to

preserve the law as the accepted religious standard.[136] Such a characterization of the primitive church may seem inconceivable given the comparatively small and theologically diverse Jewish population[137] and the increasingly extensive Jewish rejection of the Christian proclamation manifested in Acts 4:18; 5:40; 8:16; 13:50; 14:2, 19; 17:5, 13; 18:6 and by the New Testament writers in general. But attempts to circumvent the inclusion of πόσαι μυριάδες and of πάντες as well as the noticeably awkward phrasing of πόσαι μυριάδες...ἐν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τῶν πεπιστευκότων by accepting the variant ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ[138] and deleting τῶν πεπιστευκότων, thereby shifting the focus from believing Jews everywhere to unbelieving Jews in Judea and anticipating the Jews' Torah-based attack on Paul (v. 28),[139] are unwarranted for several reasons.

(1) The existence of a significant, often aggressive, traditionalist Jewish group in the church, both within and apart from the Jerusalem community, is firmly attested.[140] It has already been noted that Jewish believers criticize Peter for meeting and eating with uncircumcised Gentiles (11:3) and that the Jerusalem council is due to the Christian Pharisees' insistence that all believers be circumcised and required to keep Moses's law (15:1, 5). The foundation of this legalist position is laid in the earliest days of the church when in great numbers the Jewish populace (2:41; 4:4; 5:14) and priests (6:7) in Jerusalem accepted the gospel.

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[136]B. Reicke's suggestion that ζηλωταὶ τοῦ νόμου includes an indirect reference to the Jewish political party the Zealots (B. Reicke, "Der geschichtliche Hintergrund des Apostelkonzils und der Antiochia-Episode, Gal. 2,1-14", in FS J. de Zwaan [1953] 185) may follow historically but it cannot be supported linguistically. The meaning of ζηλωτής here is closer to that in 22:3 and Gal 1:14.

[137]J. Jeremias ("Die Einwohnerzahl Jerusalems zur Zeit Jesu" (1943), in *Abba. Studien zur neutestamentlichen Theologie und Zeitgeschichte* [1966] 335-41 and *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* [ET 1969] 27, 78-84, 205, 252), whose calculations are the generally accepted norm, estimates, for example, a population in Jerusalem of 25,000-30,000, excluding about 18,000 priests and Levites, which increased greatly during the festivals.

[138]Εν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ read by D gig sy^{p} sa clearly seeks to smooth the awkwardness of ἐν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις (A B vg cop^{bo}). Ἰουδαίων (P sy^{p}) is also secondary. The omission of the prepositional phrase from ℵ is probably accidental (Ropes 3:204).

[139]In deleting τῶν πεπιστευκότων, Munck (*Paul* 240-42) follows the suggestion of Baur (*Paul* 1:202) and E. Schwartz ("Die Chronologie des Paulus", *Nachrichten von der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, Philos.-hist. Klasse* 3 [1907] 289-90). See also K. F. Nickle, *The Collection. A Study in Paul's Strategy* (1966) 71-72. Luke's use of μυριάδες is for Munck only an ancillary reason for deleting τῶν πεπιστευκότων. For the full extent of Munck's argument, particularly the relation between James and Paul and that between James and the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem, see below.

[140]Besides the evidence in Acts there is, for example, Gal 2:12; 6:12; and 2 Cor 11:19-22.

(2) The importance of this strong Jewish contingent is not completely overturned in the second part of Acts by Luke's almost stereotyped audience-response. It is noteworthy that Paul's preaching to the Jews was not a complete failure (13:43; 17:4; 18:19-20; 19:8-10; 28:24); indeed, in some places like Iconium, since the πολὺ πλῆθος of 14:1 doubtlessly qualifies Ἰουδαίων as well as Ἑλλήνων, and Berea (17:12) many Jews, even those faithful to the Scriptures, responded positively. Furthermore, it would be foolhardy to assume without proof that Paul's ministry, upon which Luke chooses to concentrate, exemplifies the work of other believers. That could have been crowned with greater success among the Jews.

(3) Because of their hyperbolic usage elsewhere by Luke, the problematic adjectives, while containing an element of truth, can arguably be a case of idiom or rhetorical overstatement.[141]

There is then good reason to maintain that Luke's description in verse 20 refers to the church, stressing both the sociological character--that the Jewish contingent was large--and the theological viewpoint of some members--that they were ardently committed to the law.

There may be some cause, however, to view the variant ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ as correctly explaining ἐν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, not in the sense of expanding the sociological compass of the legalist position but in the sense of contracting the geographical compass to fit the more comprehensible setting of Jerusalem and Palestine.[142] Admittedly, if ἐν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις denoted "Jewish Christians in Judea", πόσαι μυριάδες would be required to assume greater hyperbolic force, unless the elders were counting all the Jewish Christians attending the feast. Admittedly, too, given the follow-up occurrence of Ἰουδαῖοι in verse 21, the meaning of ἐν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις may be simply the Jewish people. Yet the mention of the diaspora in verse 21 (τοὺς κατὰ τὰ ἔθνη πάντας Ἰουδαίους) does suggest that the Jewish homeland is in view in verse 20, for the Christians who have

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[141]This is often the case with Luke's use of πᾶς (cf. Acts 3:9, 11; 13:24; 19:10). Similarly, μυριάδες can be used of a large, innumerable quantity (Luke 12:1; 1 Cor 4:15; Jude 14; Rev 5:11; compare Acts 19:19); and that meaning fits the text quite well here (Lake and Cadbury 4:271; Haenchen 582), a point which Munck (*Paul* 241 n. 4) concedes. Πόσαι μυριάδες εἰσὶ τοῦ λαοῦ in Josephus, *Ant.* 7.318 provides a instructive parallel.

[142]Lake and Cadbury 4:271; cf. Epp, *Codex Bezae* 114.

heard the rumours about Paul's teaching in the diaspora (κατηχήθησαν), presumably from diaspora Jews (cf. vv. 27-28),[143] are the same as those who are zealous for the law (v. 20) and as those who will learn of Paul's arrival in Jerusalem (v. 22).[144] Perhaps it is best to put these various exegetical pieces together by assuming that while πόσαι μυριάδες...ἐν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τῶν πεπιστευκότων may carry a broad geographical reference, lying behind the phrase is the notion that the Jerusalem elders' primary concern was the development and care of the local Christian mission to the Jews (compare Gal 2:9).

The comment about the Jerusalem Christians' zealous application of the law is followed in verse 21 by one about the Christianity practised in the diaspora communities. There were disturbing reports that Paul was instructing the Jews to rebel against the precepts delivered by Moses, in particular to abandon the practices of circumcising children and of living according to the law.[145] This instruction is emphatically labelled ἀποστασία,[146] a concept summing up Israel's state of wilful departure from God and her scorn of God's gifts of land and law[147] which culminated on Israel's part in disobedient idolatry and on God's part first in the condemnation of Israel and then in her eventual rescue (Deut 32:15-43; Jer 39[32]:40; 40[33]:8; cf. 2 Thess 2:3). The connection between the law of Moses and apostasy is quite simple. Since fulfilment of the Torah requirements signified for the Jew the nation's and the individual's commitment to the holy God of the covenant and Israel's means of maintaining that covenantal relationship, instructing Jews to disregard the law would mean leading them astray from the correct theological foundation (cf. 1 Macc 1:15; 2:19-21; 2 Macc 2:3; Josephus, *Ant*. 8.229): disregarding the Torah resulted ultimately in

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[143]With κατηχήθησαν Luke avoids identifying the source. D, however, has κατήχησαν and makes the Jewish Christians the culprits. Κατηχέω may mean oral instruction and thus here connote the idea of careful inculcation on the part of Paul's opponents (Lumby 375).

[144]Support could also come from θεωρεῖς (v. 20), were the verb understood literally.

[145]On Luke's use of ἔθος and νόμος, see pp. 15-16.

[146]Compare the Alexandrian variant ἀποστάτης νόμου in Jas 2:11 (p^{74} A) and also the metaphorical use of ἀφίστημι in Luke 8:13; 1 Tim 4:1; and Heb 3:12.

[147]Neh 9:26; Isa 30:1; 59:13; Ezek 20:8; 2 Chr 28:19; Jer 2:19; cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 1.114; 8.1, 313.

rejecting God and annulling the covenant.[148] Such strong language combined with the Jerusalem elders' sense of urgency to counter this evaluation of Paul's teaching (τί οὖν ἐστιν, v. 22) conveys a serious desire, indeed, a necessity to confirm, respect, and uphold the law as an accepted part of the Christian proclamation to the Jews even in the diaspora communities where increasingly greater exposure to the Gentile culture both within and outside the church threatened the Jewish distinctives.

This understanding of verses 20-21 is backed up by the Jerusalem elders' proposal, in verses 23-24, that Paul undergo ceremonial cleansing and pay the expenses of four men under a vow.[149] The stated reasons for the strongly recommended course of action (τοῦτο οὖν ποίησον, v. 23) are notable: to dispel the accusations against Paul (v. 24b); to demonstrate Paul's loyalty to the law (v. 24c). To express the second idea, Luke uses στοιχέω, a well-known military term which conveys generally the figure of marching in a straight line and thus of following a certain standard, here the law of Moses. An alternative meaning of the verb is the more basal notion of standing in a row, thus, in this instance, signifying conformity to the law. The difference in meaning may not be great (and often is not noted by commentators). But "follow" places the accent on an active pursuit and on the priority of the law, not simply on an acquiescence to concrete ethical and cultic conduct; and, in light of the corresponding περιπατεῖν in verse 21 and the intensifying adverbial καί in verse 24 combined with the emphatic

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[148]The judgement pronounced by R. Eleazar of Modiim on the person who "makes void the covenant of Abraham...and discloses meanings in the Law which are not according to the *Halakah*, even though a knowledge of the Law and good works are his" (*m. 'Abot* 3:12) shows the seriousness of apostasy: he has no share in the world to come. In the Qumran literature, by comparison, apostasy denoted the act of turning away from the community and its rules (1QS 7:18-25).

[149]It exceeds the demands of the present discussion to inquire whether the proposed cultic act, the identification of which is far from clear, refers to levitical purification before the termination of the Nazirite vow (Str-B 2:757-61), to purification of ceremonial uncleanness during the Nazirite vow (Bruce [NIC] 430-33), to the removal of ritual uncleanness (Haenchen 585-86), or to the terminal sacrifice of the Nazirite vow begun, according to Acts 18:18, in Corinth (V. Stolle, *Der Zeuge als Angeklagter. Untersuchungen zum Paulusbild des Lukas* [1973] 76-78; A. Isaksson, *Marriage and Ministry in the New Temple. A Study with special reference to Mt. 19.3-12 and 1 Cor. 11.3-16* [ET 1965] 189-96).

αὐτός, it seems to capture the purport of στοιχέω.[150] Paul then is apparently being told to do more than signify his awareness of the law or assent to the lifestyle of other Jewish Christians or display his Jewish background; he is to give evidence that his own conduct was controlled by the law. In other words, Paul's fulfilment of the cultic act would demonstrate that Paul himself as a Christian Jew behaved in accordance with his cultural and religious heritage.

5.1.2. For the Gentiles

Verse 25 brings up the matter of the Gentile believers. As we have seen, it recites the Jerusalem council's decision, omitting the liberality clause (though this is retained in the Western text) but listing the four prohibitions--*eidolothuton*, blood, strangled things, and illicit sexual relations--which the council had judged necessary for Gentiles to fulfil in order to participate in the people of God.

The repeat of the second part of the apostles' decision in such detail has engendered speculation as to its purpose. To J. Weiss,[151] and H. Lietzmann,[152] and F. Hahn,[153] to name three, the almost verbatim reference suggests that the Jerusalem elders were officially informing Paul for the first time of a decision formulated in his absence.[154] This interpretation, generally rejected as *the* interpretation of verse 25 by present-day scholars, is arbitrary. The emphatic ἡμεῖς may not include Paul, referring simply to the Jerusalem elders--it is hard to say--but neither does the exclusion prove

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[150]Cf. Betz, *Galatians* 293-94. The commentators on Acts mentioning the word choose this meaning (e.g. Chrysostom, *Hom.* 46; Bruce [Greek] 393; Knowling 450); likewise, the Vulgate has *ambulare* although *ingredior* is used for περιπατέω in v. 21. G. Delling ("στοιχέω", *TDNT* 7:668) prefers the translation "that you too are in the ranks as one who keeps the law", arguing that if στοιχέω in the NT was a synonym of περιπατέω the NT usage would be an exception. That may be the case. LSJ (s.v. στοιχέω II), though, thinks otherwise and cites in support *SIG* 708.5, one of Delling's examples. It is important to note, further, that extrabiblical usage does not always determine biblical usage. Admittedly, the NT evidence is hardly convincing and the uncertainty is compounded by the Lukan usage, in contrast with the Pauline, being absolute. But the metaphor of soldiers walking in a file, which seems the natural sense of the verb in Rom 4:12 (cf. Gal 5:25; 6:16; Phil 3:16; and συστοιχέω in Gal 4:25), appears to apply as well in Acts 21:24.

[151]J. Weiss, *Earliest Christianity. A History of the Period A.D. 30-150* (ET 1959) 1:260-61, 338.

[152]Lietzmann, *Beginnings* 109.

[153]Hahn, *Mission* 85.

[154]Nickle (*Collection* 55-56, cf. 92) offers a variation: v. 25 "could well represent a clue unwittingly provided by the author of Acts" that the decree was constituted at this meeting in direct response to and as a sign of acceptance of Paul's collection.

Paul's absence from the council. Moreover, even *if* it were true that Paul was not present at the council, that is, even *if* 15:12 were an authorial insertion into the tradition,[155] the above interpretation does not fit the story line of Acts. At every instance (15:22, 25, 30-35; 16:4; cf. 15:41D) Luke has associated Paul with the decree.

It is suggested that the detail should be regarded as instruction for Paul's companions (assuming that they were still present; cf. ὁ Παῦλος σὺν ἡμῖν, v. 18) who according to 20:4 were not from Palestine and thus may have been unfamiliar with the theological emphases and concerns of the Jerusalem church.[156] This, too, is unlikely since εἶπάν τε αὐτῷ in verse 20 explicitly addresses verse 25 to Paul and since news of the decision, just like the debate about dietary practices (Rom 14:1-23; 1 Cor 8-10; Col 2:16, 20-21), surely had reached Asia Minor and Europe.

Another explanation is that this was the first mention of the decree in the we-source, if verses 20-26 (at least) may be presumed to belong with 20:5-21:18, and that Luke has failed to edit the source with respect to his earlier mention of the decree.[157] Or, without denying or necessarily confirming the historicity of verse 25 or the possibility of its inclusion in the we-source or the possibility of Paul's presence when the decrees were formulated, the detailed reference to the decree may be designed by Luke to instruct and remind the reader of the situation.[158] This suggestion would fit, especially since so much material has intervened since chapter 15, and would not be exceptional since the same thing happens, for example, in the case of Agabus, whose introduction in 21:10, possibly part of the same source, is as though he had not been mentioned in 11:28.

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[155]See Chapter II.3.

[156]Marshall (346) offers this as one of three possibilities.

[157]Bauernfeind 243; Marshall 346. If 21:19-26 is due to a source, the source seems to show, or has been edited to show, features similar with the one used in chap. 15. Compare not only the details of the decree but also 21:19 and 15:4, 12: the idea of Paul delivering a report occurs elsewhere only in 14:27.

[158]E.g. Haenchen 584; Conzelmann 123; Schneider 2:311; Marshall 346. Bultmann ("nach den Quellen" 72-73) takes exception, seeing instead a written source which found its way into chap. 15. The expressed or implied assumption of most scholars holding this position is that the reference comes from Luke himself. This need not follow. As Bauernfeind (243) notes, Luke has been silent on the subject of the decree since 16:4. Was the decree an issue which concerned only (the relation between) Paul and the Jerusalem church?

But whatever, whether an expressed part of Luke's source or an editorial reminder to the reader, the repetition of the terms of the decree in the long run becomes to the reader more than a literary device to fill in details possibly forgotten. This is the third time the details have been stated, and the three-fold repetition underlines the great importance the decree held for Luke.[159] The inclusion of the decree here is as noteworthy (perhaps even more so) as when it was first formulated.

In this version two aspects in particular stand out for our argument. There is, as we said earlier, no mention of the liberality clause, that part of the assembly's decision which renounced circumcision and the keeping of the law as the way to salvation for the Gentiles. Second, the opening words of verse 25 are conspicuous. Only occasionally does Luke start a sentence with the absolute περί (τινος),[160] and the abrupt opening stops the reader.[161] Περὶ δὲ τῶν πεπιστευκότων ἐθνῶν parallels πόσαι μυριάδες...ἐν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τῶν πεπιστευκότων (v. 20) and in constructing a comparison by means of the adversative δέ, draws attention to the situation of the Gentile Christians over against that of the Jewish Christians.[162] Whereas Jewish Christians are to practise circumcision and obey the law, Gentile converts need only abstain from eating *eidolothuton*, blood, and things strangled and from illicit sexual relations. And we may note in passing that if the decree was not adequately disseminated and employed the unqualified περὶ τῶν πεπιστευκότων ἐθνῶν, extending the application of the decree beyond the addressees of the council's letter, appears to imply that it should have been.

To sum up: the elders' speech shows the establishment of two separate standards of practice. For the Jews who became Christians, circumcision and the observance of the law are the expected distinguishing practices to be followed by Jewish Christians both in Palestine, where awareness of the law was well-insulated by constant reinforcement, and in the diaspora communities, where the Jewish distinctions were

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[159]Compare the emphasis placed on Cornelius's and Paul's conversions by the same method.

[160]Cf. Acts 23:6; 24:21; 26:2, 7. For a somewhat sophisticated use of the expression, see 1 Cor 7:1, 25; 8:1, 4; 12:1; 16:1, 12, where περί τινος moulds in part the outline of the epistle.

[161]The mention of believing Gentiles recalls ὧν ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν διὰ τῆς διακονίας αὐτοῦ in verse 19, thus providing coherence between the narrative and the speech.

[162]Lake and Cadbury 4:273; Bruce (Greek) 394-95. This is one of the meanings of v. 25 in its context; for others, see below.

continually threatened by increasingly greater Gentile influence. As for the Gentile converts, the four prohibitions formulated at the Jerusalem council are still to apply. Despite the disparate contents of the two standards, there is an identical locus, that is, the cultural and religious heritage of the historic people of God; and this extremely Jewish identity for Gentiles as well as Jews appears to be made even stronger by the omission, in expression but presumably not in practice, of the liberality clause of the Jerusalem decision.

5.2. *The identity of the people of God*

Remarkably this pericope includes no explicit theological exposition on the relation between circumcision and salvation or between abstaining from *eidolothuton*, blood, and strangled things and from unlawful sexual practices and belonging to the people of God; nor is the subject of salvation even referred to. The elders are recorded as reporting merely the fact that the church consisted of a strong traditionalist Jewish contingent and as instructing Paul to fulfil a cultic oath and thus dispel the rumours about his teaching. Such starkness and the consequent silence about other details leave the reader inquiring as to the reason for the practices expected of the Jewish and Gentiles believers. Are we to interpret the standards in the light of Acts 15? Or do they serve another purpose? Indeed, why should the question of the practices of the people of God be raised at all, especially in the case of the Gentiles? Was the council's decision not conclusive? That is to say, is this a reassessment of the way to salvation or a reaffirmation necessitated by disagreement in the church?

In this regard the application of the label ἀποστασία (v. 21) to teaching which advocated the abandonment of the observances of circumcision and other practices prescribed in the law may be of some relevance. To view such liberal instruction as disobedience against God connotes that the law is considered a fitting means for Jewish believers to express their commitment to God and a crucial way for them to guard against rejecting God and his covenant. The notion of obligation and propriety comes through as well in ἐπεστείλαμεν κρίναντες (v. 25), which gives to the Jerusalem decree the sense of an officially written communication of an authoritative decision, and

perhaps in the elders' instruction to Paul, στοιχεῖς (v. 24) possibly conveying the notion of a life controlled by the law. Likewise, the omission of the liberality clause from the reference to the council's decision seems indicative. It is that statement which in responding to the Judaizers' demands eliminates the stress on the keeping of the law as the way to salvation. These observations suggest that a concern to affirm the church's relation to the Judaism which is both expressed in the law and extrapolated in the apostles' decree is being pinpointed.

Another consideration is the employment of τῶν πεπιστευκότων with reference to both Jews (v. 20) and Gentiles (v. 25), claiming that the stated practices were actions acceptable to and expected of people who were already believers and not of people in the process of embracing salvation. If so, the participle may allow us to distinguish in part between the means for entering the people of God and the standards for expressing one's position in, or simply additional characteristics of, the people of God, identifying obedience to Jewish tenets and practices--whether in their entirety (as was the case for Jewish believers) or simply in principle as circumscribed in the four prohibitions (as was the case for Gentile believers)--as belonging at least to the second category.

Important also are the sociological dynamics which Luke builds into the narrative and dialogue in order to picture the current religious climate. Admittedly these indicators are imprecise, making the attitude of the Jerusalem leaders and that of the Jerusalem church as a whole toward Paul at this time in the story of Acts something of a puzzle. Significant information which would have served to clarify the relationship is curiously absent. Most particularly, there is no manifest answer to Paul's prayerful wish that the monetary collection from the churches which he had founded in the diaspora lands--the reason for his visit to Jerusalem in highly precarious circumstances--would be willingly accepted in Jerusalem as an expression of gratitude to and solidarity

with the Jerusalem believers (Rom 15:25-32).[163] If Luke has reported the facts correctly, as could be inferred from the detailed reference in 20:4 to Paul's companions on the journey and from the mention in 24:17 of almsgiving and worship as reasons for Paul's visit, the silence in and of itself is quite expressive, the more so since there is no record of the church conducting an all-night prayer meeting on Paul's behalf as there is on behalf of Peter earlier (Acts 12:5). In light of Luke's obvious paralleling of the careers of Peter and of Paul, this is significant. But before we accept the conclusion that the Jerusalem church wanted no further contact with Paul, that Paul was preaching a gospel antithetical to that being preached in Jerusalem, that his locus of the people of God had moved away from the fulfilment of Israel in Jesus to the separation of the church from its Jewish foundation, and thus infer that since Paul was Luke's hero, Luke's locus may also have shifted, several comments in the passage must be examined.

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[163]There is little doubt among scholars that Paul's visit to Jerusalem recorded in Acts 21 was historically for the purpose of delivering the collection. The frustration and consequent disagreement are caused in part from not being told the answer to Paul's prayer. Thus, for example, Nickle (*Collection* 70) confidently conjectures "that the collection was well received" whereas A. J. Mattill ("The Purpose of Acts: Schneckenburger Reconsidered", in FS F. F. Bruce [1970] 116) concludes that the Jerusalem church refused to accept Paul's collection, "thereby symbolizing their break with the Pauline mission".

The proposed reasons for Luke's silence are manifold: (a) personal--Titus and Luke were administrators of the collection (Ramsay, *St. Paul* 58-59, 390; A. Souter, "A Suggested Relationship Between Titus and Luke", *ExpTim* 18 [1906-7] 285 and "The Relationship Between Titus and Luke", *ExpTim* 18 [1906-7] 335-36); (b) theological--Luke's account of the collection occurs in 11:29-30 in order to shape the theology of the Gentile mission (Lampe, *Church of Jerusalem* 24-26) and to show long-established peace in the church (Knox, *Life of Paul* 70-72); (c) political--the collection could be viewed as an encroachment on the annual temple tax and a charge of malpractice might be raised against Paul (F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Free Spirit* [1977] 296-97; cf. Nickle, *Collection* 149-51); (d) pastoral--the Gentile readers would not understand the theological significance of the collection or Paul's doubts regarding its acceptance (Longenecker 519) or the need for Paul to pay for the four Nazirites, having just handed over a considerable sum of money (Haenchen 588).

First, if Mnason (21:16) is understood to be Paul's host in Jerusalem, as he should be,[164] Luke's introduction of him, like many of Luke's seemingly superfluous yet carefully constructed characterizations, can relay some consequence to the narrative. Mnason is labelled a Cypriot and an early disciple (ἀρχαῖος μαθητής). Such characteristics suggest an affiliation, on the one hand, with the primitive Jerusalem church, possibly as a foundation member,[165] when the interests of the church were solely Jewish and, on the other, with the hellenistically-minded Jewish Christians from the dispersion.[166] The fact that Mnason was residing in Jerusalem whereas a leading Hellenist, Philip, was not (21:8; cf. 6:5) implies (but does not prove)[167] that we should probably place Mnason with Barnabas rather than with any of the Hellenists, that is,

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[164]This would be the case whether the ambiguous contraction ἄγοντες παρ' ᾧ ξενισθῶμεν Μνάσωνι is resolved into ἄγοντες Μνάσωνα, παρ' ᾧ κτλ (KJV; NEB; cf. Robertson 719) or, as seems more likely, into ἄγοντες ἡμᾶς πρὸς Μνάσωνα, παρ' ᾧ κτλ (RSV; NIV; Phillips; BDF §294.5; Lake and Cadbury 4:269). The Western text, however, locates Mnason in an unnamed village between Caesarea and Jerusalem where Paul and his party spent the night. It is wholly probable that the sense of the paraphrase is implied in part in ἀνεβαίνομεν (v. 15) since, whether the inland or the coastal route was taken, the journey from Caesarea to Jerusalem would have required more than one day; but the specific details of the paraphrase are probably incorrect (Ropes 3:204; Bruce [Greek] 389-90; Chrysostom, *Hom.* 45; contra A. C. Clark, *The Acts of the Apostles. A Critical Edition with Introduction and Notes on Selected Passages* [1933] 377-79; Ramsay, *St. Paul* 302-3; Metzger 483; Jacquier 630-31): v. 16 is parenthetical to, not sequential with, vv. 15 and 17; ἄγοντες, replacing a future participle of purpose (BDF §339.2c), does not indicate an immediate arrival at Mnason's house but the destination of the journey reached in v. 17 (Haenchen 581 n. 2); and it seems unlikely that Luke--in spite of his interest in the hosts of the houses where Peter and Paul stayed and in spite of his penchant for detail on what to the modern reader appear to be unimportant matters--would mention Paul's host on the way to Jerusalem and not in Jerusalem itself (Loisy 791). Also in support of Jerusalem as Mnason's place of residence is the reading of a Palestinian Syriac palimpsest (M. Black "A Palestinian Syriac Palimpsest Leaf of Acts XXI [14-26]", *BJRL* 23 [1939] 211-12), dated no later than the sixth century, which makes Paul and his companions the referent of ἄγοντες.

[165]Haenchen (581) translates ἀρχαῖος μαθητής, rightly I think, "Christ aus der Anfangszeit der Gemeinde". To be more precise than this exceeds the evidence. Thus, since in Luke's story Pentecost denotes the beginning, we cannot prove that Mnason had a personal knowledge of Jesus or was one of the 120 mentioned in 1:15.

[166]The concomitance with ἀρχαῖος μαθητής eliminates alternative applications of Κύπριος, as that Mnason was converted by Paul (13:4; cf. 9:29) or by Barnabas (15:39). W. L. Knox (*St Paul and the Church of Jerusalem* [1925] 206 n. 3), though, suggests that Mnason's Cypriot origin may have been mentioned in order to include in Paul's party a representative of all the Pauline churches.

[167]Blurring Mnason's precise identity is the fact that the Caesarean believers who escorted Paul to Mnason's house may have been the fruit of the Hellenists' (8:40) or Peter's ministry (9:32-43; 10:23-24).

with the Hebrew/Aramaic-speaking section of the Christian community.[168] In any case, whatever Mnason's exact sociological circumstances, two facts are clear. (1) Paul would have required a place where he could stay unmolested with his uncircumcised companions. Thus, Mnason must have been supportive of the Gentile Christians' freedom from the constraints of circumcision and the law as the way to salvation, and he must have been committed to Paul's mission to the Gentiles. (2) Paul and his companions stay with someone whose link with Christianity and the mother-church had been long-established and was apparently without doubt.

Second, there is the identity of the brothers (v. 17) who warmly welcomed Paul when he arrived. Since the expression οἱ αδελφοί in Acts usually refers to the whole body of believers in general in a given locality (e.g. 9:30; 11:29; 18:27; 21:7), it would be reasonable to assume that verse 17 signifies the Jerusalem believers' overall favourable acceptance of Paul, with ἀσμένως anticipating ἐδόξαζον τὸν θεόν in verse 20. If this assumption is maintained, though, the future ἀκούσονται in verse 22, the subject of which is presumably the same as κατηχήθησαν (v. 21), i.e. πόσαι μυριάδες...ἐν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τῶν πεπιστευκότων, does not fit. As the church rank and file do not yet know of Paul's arrival, they cannot be included among the brothers of verse 17. A discrepancy also develops beween verse 17 and the point of the elders' speech. From the stress in verses 20-21 on the extremely Jewish ethos of the church and on the comments about Paul's teaching, the reader gains the impression that the church's rank and file took exception to Paul and to his association with uncircumcised Gentiles; and the elders' proposal in verse 22 to anticipate the possible deleterious effect of Paul's arrival when it became known implies that the apostle's proclamation and practice would require some explanation. Such innuendoes hardly fit the picture of a church giving Paul a warm welcome.

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[168]Hengel, *Acts* 101-2; cf. Lake and Cadbury 4:270. The possible similarity between Mnason and Barnabas allows a futher comment. Given the close connection which Acts develops between Barnabas and the Antioch community founded by Stephen's circle (see Chapter II.1), the desire to differentiate between Mnason's being a Ἑλληνιστής and his being a Ἑβραῖος may in one sense be no more than pedantry. The result does illustrate a fallacy in the dialectic reconstruction of early Christianity which presents the categorical opposing of Hellenistic Jewish Christianity and Palestinian Jewish Chrsitianity and which allows no sociological, geographical, or theological fluidity across those rigid boundaries. See the critique of this position given by I. H. Marshall ("Palestinian and Hellenistic Christianity: Some Critical Comments", *NTS* 19 [1972-73] 271-87, esp. 277-79).

J. Munck circumvents the contradiction by deleting τῶν πεπιστευκότων in verse 20, despite the total lack of textual evidence (freely acknowledged by him) to support the omission, and thus identifies the Jews in Jerusalem as Paul's opposition, shows the Jerusalem church united in its support for Paul and his mission, and allegedly saves James's reputation as a responsible, sincere, thoroughly consistent church leader.[169] The fallacies of this solution are readily apparent. Not only has Munck built quite openly on dubious texutual ground and has seemingly allowed his thesis regarding harmony in the primitive church to determine his interpretation of the evidence, he has also started from an incorrect premise, "that οἱ ἀδελφοί is a constantly recurring expression for the whole body of Christians in a place",[170] a premise which does not allow a word to gain meaning from its immediate context. It seems more tenable to argue the opposite, that is, that from the innuendoes and language of the elders' speech we may surmise that οἱ ἀδελφοί here is not intended to denote all the believers in Jerusalem but only those who were favourably disposed to Paul.[171] This occurrence of οἱ ἀδελφοί would then, to be sure, be the exception when the word is used in Acts of believers; but as Luke does assign the term other meanings, such as non-Christian Jews (22:5; 28:21), the objection is weakened considerably.[172]

The sequence of events in verses 17-18 also counters the inclusiveness of οἱ ἀδελφοί. Τῇ δὲ ἐπιούσῃ seems to draw a line between Paul's welcome by the brothers and his visit with James and the elders, marking them as unrelated by more than the

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[169]Munck, *Paul* 238-42 (see also n. 139). This emendation lets v. 20 fit Munck's thesis: according to Acts Paul and James, Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians, always lived and taught in perfect harmony; the church in Jerusalem outwardly conformed to Judaism but actually was distinct from it so that relations were strained between Jewish Christians and Jews; the demand made on Gentiles for circumcision and observance of the law was improbable within Jewish Christianity. Schmithals (*Paul and James* 87-90) likewise believes that the historical issue of this conference was the reaction of the Jews, not the Jewish Christians, to Paul. He, however, prefers to have the contradiction between vv. 17-18 and vv. 20-22 remain, ascribing it to Luke, who has not quite aligned the source material admitted in vv. 17-18 (possibly v. 19) with the historical facts rearranged in vv. 20-22 to maintain his bias that the Christian church is the true Judaism. For Schmithals then οἱ ἀδελφοί denotes "the Jerusalem church as such...through its members present in Mnason's house" (Schmithals, *Paul and James* 87).

[170]Munck, *Paul* 240.

[171]Wendt 441; Holtzmann 130.

[172]Another point which could be brought against οἱ ἀδελφοί meaning other than the whole body of believers is the present tense of θεωρεῖς in v. 20. The verb, though, need not convey knowledge gained through firsthand experience.

matter of time.[173] It is plausible that the two meetings may differ no more than an unofficial reception does from an official one[174] or a general assembly does from a representative one, thereby possibly including the elders among the οἱ ἀδελφοί.[175] Yet the parallel emphatic positioning of οἱ ἀδελφοί with οἱ πρεσβύτεροι at the end of their respective sentences gives cause for suggesting that we may understand the relation between the two words not as one of a general category to a specific (cf. οἱ ἀδελφοί-οἱ πρεσβύτεροι, 11:29-30) but instead as one of distinct categories (cf. οἱ μαθηταί-οἱ ἀπόστολοι, 9:26-27). Οἱ ἀδελφοί then, as well as denoting "believers favourably disposed to Paul", may exclude the church elders as a class.[176]

The third point concerns ἐδόξαζον τὸν θεόν (v. 20), James's and the elders' reception of Paul and his party. The words are straightforward enough--a response owed to God's glory which recognized God as guide and Lord of the church and which, as the imperfect tense suggests, continued for some time and in various ways--but they gain in import in the context.

Verse 18 sets a scene of solemnity and tension. The emphasis falls on πάντες τε παρεγένοντο οἱ πρεσβύτεροι, and in particular on πάντες.[177] Underscored by the third plural ἐδόξαζον and εἶπαν (v. 20) rather than the representative singular, the adjective

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[173]Cf. Conzelmann 121.

[174]Lake and Cadbury 4:270; Schille 413.

[175]Indeed, we really cannot definitely reject on linguistic grounds alone the possibility of οἱ πρεσβύτεροι being included in οἱ ἀδελφοί unless there is explicit coordination like οἱ ἀπόστολοι καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοί (11:1; cf. 12:17) or ἡ ἐκκλησία καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι (15:4; cf. 15:22). Luke's practice is to underline the non-authoritarian character of the church; and thus, while by analogy with 14:23 (cf. 20:17) elders are presumably appointed in every church, Luke rarely separates the office of elder from the body of believers. The other side of the argument is, of course, that when the church leaders *are* mentioned we cannot categorically deny the presence of other Christians (Jacquier 632). The plain sense of 21:18, though, is that this gathering was limited to Paul, his companions, James, and the elders.

[176]It is unlikely that we can be more precise than this. As it cannot be maintained with any certainty that Mnason was a Hellenist or that Stephen's circle ever returned to Jerusalem, notable supports for Haenchen's interpretation that οἱ ἀδελφοί denotes Hellenist Jewish Christians (Haenchen 581) are removed.

[177]The exceptional word order seems to heighten the emphasis: nowhere else in Acts is the verb interjected between πᾶς and the noun it modifies.

claims the unanimity of the elders as they assembled to meet Paul.[178] Such language composes no casual encounter between friends. In the potentially explosive atmosphere οἱ ἀκούσαντες ἐδόξαζον τὸν θεόν brings relief to the narrative, resolving the question of acceptance and suspending the prospect of church conflict, at least on the part of the elders;[179] and it imparts to πάντες new significance: as the elders are united in their examination of Paul, so are they also united in their praise to God. The import of ἐδόξαζον is reinforced by Paul's being addressed as ἀδελφός (v. 20b).[180]

The reason for the elders' positive response is stated in verse 19. Ἐξηγεῖσθαι...ὧν ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν διὰ τῆς διακονίας αὐτοῦ is, as we have seen (cf. 14:27; 15:4, 12), Luke's way of summing up the essence of and of justifying Paul's apostolic activity, that is, an ongoing mission, the design and success of which are attributed solely to God.[181] The implication is clear: the positive acknowledgement of the divine source and affirmation of Paul's ministry among the Gentiles, contrasting with the controversy issuing in chapter 15 from a similar report delivered by Paul, indicates that the issue of the Gentiles, at least as far as the elders were concerned, was not at stake.

Fourth, there is the elders' instruction to Paul (vv. 23-24). It was motivated partly by the need to prevent church conflict and partly by the desire to have answered visibly the rumours about Paul's attitude to traditional Jewish practices[182] which Luke

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[178]The plain sense of εἰσήει ὁ Παῦλος...πρὸς Ἰάκωβον suggests that Paul assumed the initiative, though it is wise not to build much on this. For a conspectus of opinion concerning the elders' relation to James, see Haenchen 581. Probably, as εἰσήει ὁ Παῦλος...πρὸς Ἰάκωβον suggests, James was resident leader of the Jerusalem church (see Chapter III.2), the elders sharing with him the administrative responsibilities (cf. 11:30). The whereabouts of the original apostles, quite plainly assumed to be present in the transactions of chap. 15, can only be speculation. The usual assumption is that those who were still alive had undertaken missionary responsibilities elsewhere.

[179]Lake and Cadbury 4:270; Bruce (Greek) 391.

[180]Chrysostom, *Hom.* 46. Ἀδελφέ and ἀδελφοί are common enough forms of address between fellow Jews and fellow Christians in Acts, but Luke tends to reserve the words for when the speaker desires to establish or confirm rapport between himself and his audience. See 2:29, 37; 3:17; 7:2; 9:17; 13:15, 26, 38; 15:7, 13; 22:1, 13; 23:1, 5, 6; and 28:17.

[181]It is possible--because of the exceptional inclusion of διακονία, a term used by both Luke and Paul for the gathering and transmission of financial aid for the Jerusalem church (Acts 11:29 [cf. 12:25]; Rom 15:31 v.l. [cf. 15:25]; 1 Cor 16:15; 2 Cor 8:4; 9:1, 12, 13) and here probably backed up by ὁ Παῦλος σὺν ἡμῖν and καθ' ἕν ἕκαστον hinting that Paul's companions verified the particulars of a detailed report--that this time the summary may contain as well an allusion to Paul's collection project.

[182]Cf. ὁ λαός, ὁ νόμος, and ὁ τόπος οὗτος in v. 28.

and seemingly James (the elders) disbelieve.[183] If the reference to Jews in verse 21 is taken literally, the rumours are patently false: Paul nowhere teaches Jews to abandon circumcision or other laws of Moses. If the reference is to Jewish Christians, though, the validity of the charge is less certain. Yet to teach that circumcision avails nothing for salvation (Gal 5:6; cf. 2:16; 5:4) and that Christ is τέλος νόμου (Rom 10:4) is not quite the same as to teach people *not* to circumcise their children or to denounce the law.[184] Paul's circumcising of Timothy (Acts 16:3), if, as we have argued,[185] he is to be considered a Jew, and not of Titus (Gal 2:3) is a case in point. Indeed, Paul's attitude on this and other questions so far as the *Jews* were concerned seemingly gave his opponents a pretext for various insinuations (cf. Gal 5:11). The distinction between Jew and Gentile, between salvation and indifference, is backed up in Acts 21 by Paul's willing acquiescence to the elders' plan.[186] His openness and the Jerusalem elders' licence to make the suggestion not only portray harmony between the apostle and the church leaders at least, they also imply that the legal practices could in no way be viewed as requirements for salvation, without Luke introducing a major contradiction in his story, for it is precisely the matter of the law's relation to salvation which had been disputed, debated, and decided at the council.

A final consideration concerns verse 25. D adds after περὶ δὲ τῶν πεπιστευκότων ἐθνῶν the words οὐδὲν ἔχουσι λέγειν πρὸς σέ· ἡμεῖς γάρ .... The insertion, readily grasped as a way to interpret the unexpected reference to the decree, has been understood variously.

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[183]Cf. Bruce, *Paul* 347. Besides the following argument, we may cite πάντας πανταχῇ in v. 28 and the plural Ἕλληνας when only Trophimus had been seen (vv. 28, 29). Both show, for Luke, the exaggerated nature of the accusation (Knowling 452).

[184]Many commentators take this position. Haenchen (583 n. 1) lists some exceptions, to which may be added P. Richardson ("Pauline Inconsistency: 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 and Galatians 2:11-14", *NTS* 26 [1980] 347-62). Richardson ("Pauline Inconsistency" 354) thinks "We must infer, however, from Paul's letters that he is guilty of contributing to his Jewish Christian friends' failure to walk according to the customs....What may have happened in this situation, though I have no proof for the suggestion, is that Paul at times when faced with the logic of his own position privately encouraged Jewish Christians to cease circumcising their children as the only way to solve the growing difficulties over fellowship together. If so, the accusation in Luke's account could be correct, even though Luke himself implies that it is false".

[185]See Chapter V.3.

[186]Paul's conduct here is perhaps another example of the application of 1 Cor 9:20. Yet, although Paul is an innovator, he is not a rebel; and his previous vow, if it does apply to Paul (cf. Acts 18:18), shows that there is no reason to suppose that Paul was merely acting a part. Lake and Cadbury's comments are appropriate (Lake and Cadbury 4:273).

As a note of reassurance: (1) The elders reassure Paul that his behaviour with respect to the Gentile mission was not suspect; there was no cause for accusation here (by the Jewish Christians) since he was promulgating the decree as they had agreed earlier. (2) The elders say that Paul need not fear that the cultic act would offend the Gentile believers whereas it would do much to allay Jewish suspicions; after all, he was a Jewish, not a Gentile, Christian.[187] (3) The decree protected Paul's ministry; the Jewish Christians therefore have no case against the Gentile believers' freedom from the law nor against Paul's gospel; despite the growing legalist attitude, the Jerusalem leaders were not going back on their word and imposing the Jewish customs on the Gentile converts.[188]

As a note of concession: (4) James on his part was quite prepared to adhere to the council's decision and he expected Paul to show the same consideration toward the Jerusalem church's position.[189]

As an indication of the attitude of the Jerusalem Christians: (5) The Jewish Christian leaders are dissociating themselves from the aggressive non-Christian Jews and have gone to great lengths to meet the wishes of the mission to the Gentiles. (6) The Jewish Christians in Jerusalem want to be able to coordinate loyalty to other Jews and acceptance of uncircumcised Gentile converts.[190] (7) The conflict of the Jewish Christians here was with Paul and Paul alone, not with uncircumcised Gentile believers.[191]

It is also suggested (8) that the reference tells the historical truth about the decree, that it was intended for table-fellowship.[192]

Explanation (8) is plainly a case of reading into the context. (1) and (5) are also speculative. (2) and (4) do not really fit with what Acts or Paul's letters tell us of the apostle's attitude and practices: it is more attractive to think that his principle of

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[187]Chrysostom, *Hom.* 46; cf. Neil 220.

[188]Munck, *Paul* 238-29; Geyser, "Decree" 136; and Bruce (*Paul* 347-48) with qualification: "The possibility should be recognized that they perhaps [*sic*] insufficiently informed about Paul's increasing reservations about the Jerusalem decree".

[189]Knowling 250-51.

[190]H.-H. Esser, "Law/νόμος", *NIDNTT* 2:450-51; cf. Calvin 2:280-81.

[191]Epp, *Codex Bezae* 112.

[192]Munck 210.

"accommodation" would have been self-imposed and not due to the instigation of the Jerusalem elders. There is no doubt truth in Paul's being the cause of the conflict (interpretation 7) and probably an element of the church's need to harmonize the circumcised and uncircumcised sectors of the church (interpretation 6), but the best option is (3). In other words, the position of the Gentiles with respect to the law as the way to salvation, as decided at the council, is viewed to be without reproach. That matter was closed. Although the Gentile believers' position may be in need of reaffirmation, perhaps even reassessment, concern focuses on the Christian Jews.

Combining these various points, it seems that Luke wants this paragraph not only to explain Paul's subsequent arrest and imprisonment but also to identify and certify the way the Christian message of salvation was stated and presented to the world in two crucial areas. The first is the terms of membership in the people of God. Just as it was decided at the council and confirmed by inference here that it is fitting, indeed obligatory, for a Gentile who becomes a Christian to adopt the regulations and attitude in the law which protected against the idolatrous lifestyle of the pagan, so it is now asserted that it is fitting, and in the opinion of some Christians obligatory, for a Jew who is a Christian to practise circumcision and to obey the other prescriptions of Moses's law. In neither case, however, should the fulfilment of the relevant practices be considered as the *only* fitting thing. The covenantal distinctions of the traditional people of God are not said to be *the* way of salvation; they presuppose for Jews and Gentiles faith in Jesus. The second area concerns the unity of the people of God. There is an attempt to reconcile Paul's proclamation and practice and the zeal for the law exhibited and demanded by the theologically more conservative believers. Paul and the mission to the Gentiles are accepted by James and the elders, and neither Paul nor the Gentiles believers are charged with watering down the concept of the people of God. The Jerusalem elders feel free to extend orders based on Moses's law and apostolic deliberation. Paul, for his part, willingly attempts to fulfil a cultic act. That the Gentile converts are to demonstrate their link with Israel in a way similar to that of the Jewish converts, by acknowledging the principle behind God's covenants, the mandated

holiness of the people of God, is not disputed. At the same time, while the real opposition to Paul comes ultimately from the Jews, particularly the Jews of the diaspora communities, it is possible that certain sections of the Jerusalem church remained suspicious of Paul, of the content of his teaching, and of the implications of an increasing number of Gentile converts for the conception of the people of God. It is conspicuous from Luke's silence, in a context where we could plausibly argue that Luke knows more than he tells, that the Jerusalem church avoids further contact with Paul.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING COMMENTS

According to the church council recorded in Acts 15, then, the answer to the dilemma how the gospel was to be preached and presented to the world is that Gentiles do not have to meet the requirements of Moses's law as given to Israel but are to abstain from certain foods--εἰδωλόθυτα, blood, and things strangled--and from illicit sexual relations (πορνεία).

To reach this decision the assembled group of apostles, elders, and other church members consider four arguments. There is the contention of the men from Judea (15:1), originally set forth in Syrian Antioch and argued in Jerusalem by some of the Pharisaic believers (15:5), that non-Jews who want to be saved must first become Jews, being circumcised and committed to keeping the law. Behind this conviction lies the impact of the realization of the last days which brought into the present the opportunity to experience the messianic blessings and imposed upon Jews, individually and corporately, the heightened obligation, given the imminent day of the Lord, to live as the responsible, holy people of God, fulfilling the covenant, avoiding all contact with idolatry and temptations to idolatry, and through repentance hastening the days of the messiah still to come. Also determinative for this particular viewpoint is a growing concern for the increasing number of Gentiles firmly associating with the Christian community. That sociological factor brought with it a reminder of the consequences of hellenism, a kind of idolatry which had permeated the tenets and practices of Judaism and had distracted the Jews from their commitments to the covenants. Most certainly the force for the Judaizers' claim was widely acknowledged by Jewish Christians, but the claim itself is rejected.

Peter's point (15:7-11), on the other hand, seems to go a long way towards influencing the decision of the council. Peter maintains that faith, specifically faith in Jesus, not the law, is the way to salvation. This conviction stems not from a concession

to the lax observance of Judaism in the diaspora communities; indeed, it is extremely doubtful that any strand of Judaism ever really recognized the right of an uncircumcised person, Jew or Gentile, to be a true member of Israel. The basis is rather the experience of an unexpected, divinely-superintended meeting between Peter and the uncircumcised Roman centurion Cornelius (10:1-11:18) which countered much of Peter's ancestral conscience, in particular the idea that association with the uncircumcised outside the regulations of the law of necessity meant disobedience to God's will. The meeting bore witness to what God had ordered to be sanctioned as the practice for the Gentiles and dramatically altered the early church's conception of the Christian mission. By bestowing the Spirit on the uncircumcised,God demonstrated his acceptance of Cornelius and the other Gentiles in Caesarea without their first having to be circumcised. That divine act signifies, according to Peter, that the faith brought into being through the preaching of the gospel had effected the necessary cleansing of the Gentiles' hearts. The singular importance of faith for salvation in the case of the Gentiles is backed up by the emphatic assertion that in reality God's treatment of the Gentiles had not entailed a concomitant differentiation between the non-Jew and the Jew. It was the appropriation of faith brought about by the apostolic proclamation, not the presence of the law, which had given the Jewish Christians the experience of salvation. The law may have relevance for purposes other than as the way of salvation, but the keeping of it for those purposes is to be regarded as a trivial difference between Jewish and Gentile Christians.

The third argument comes from a report of the miracles which God had done among the Gentiles through Barnabas and Paul (15:12). The brief editorial comment which astonishingly and remarkably constitutes Barnabas's and Paul's entire contribution to the debate serves in part to send the reader back, in this case, to the events of the missionaries' journey to Asia Minor recorded in Acts 13-14. There, while not allowing us to reconstruct with any certainty the theological content of Barnabas's and Paul's speech at the council, it is nonetheless made clear through the apostolic proclamation (13:38-39) which is explicated by the conversion of people who have no

manifest association with the synagogue, by the warning to the Jews not to ignore the exhortation to repent of their heinous treatment of Jesus, and by the denunciation of Jews who rejected the gospel message that justification is the right and consequence neither of birth nor of faithfulness to the law. The sole determinative of salvation is personal faith in Jesus.

The final argument belongs to James (15:14-21). Like the Pharisaic believers he stresses the Gentile converts' position *vis-à-vis* Judaism, but he develops the somewhat paradoxical thesis that salvation for the Gentiles should be defined in terms of freedom from the law and responsibility to God's covenants with Israel. From Amos 9:11-12, which according to James concurs with what Peter said, it is claimed that God's restoration of ransacked and destitute Israel, that is, God's establishment of a community of Jews who have repented and accepted Jesus the Messiah, paves the way for the Gentiles, whom God has elected to bear the divine name, to seek the Lord. Because the inclusion of the Gentiles is related to God's act of re-establishing Israel but in no way signifies that the Gentiles are possessed by the restored Israel, it is also argued that the Gentile converts should not have to become Jews first through circumcision and obedience to the law in order to be people of God; however, they should abstain from certain practices, namely, the eating of εἰδωλόθυτα, blood, and strangled things and the participation in πορνεία. These injunctions are not a substitute for the Jewish law; but as the four items are denounced in God's covenants with Israel, being explicitly forbidden, at the penalty of death, of anyone who sojourns in Israel, native Israelite and resident alien, and as they are antithetical to the worship of the holy God, being identified as classically Gentile practices, they could be said to be ecclesiastical *halakhoth*. In other words, the four injunctions represent a reapplication of the law to meet the sociological and theological tensions and dangers fostered by the increasing number of mixed congregations, with the purpose of protecting the purity of the people called to serve the holy God. James justifies his analysis of Peter's argument and of his own scriptural proof with a reference to the Jewish Christians' commitment

to the law promulgated in the synagogues throughout the diaspora communities and to the Gentiles' awareness of the law as an integral part of Jewish life.

The council's decision therefore in essence takes it cue from James's contribution to the debate which in turn has built upon Peter's contribution. Rejecting forthrightly the Judaizers' interpretation of the way to salvation and their conduct in Antioch, the assembly decries the necessity of circumcision and of keeping the whole law for salvation; it affirms clearly instead--at least for the Gentiles--the necessity of faith in Jesus. Furthermore, it connects the Gentile converts and the Christian community which they are joining firmly with the promises and privileges of Israel and with YHWH's covenants which govern the distribution of those promises and privileges. While the Gentile believers do not have to observe the law in order to be saved, they are told to observe the principle which lies at the heart of the covenants. Personal commitment to God's plan, now interpreted with reference to Jesus' proclamation as messiah and Lord, is to be manifested in terms of the holiness of the people chosen to worship the holy God. Orthodoxy was not to be divorced from orthopraxy. The practical is concomitant with theology. Faithfulness belongs with faith.

The conclusion to the council's discussion is substantiated and highlighted by the events taking place in Acts after the council. Personal commitment to Jesus, professing him as saviour and Lord, is manifestly the determinant of salvation. "Believe in the Lord Jesus" constitutes the sum total of Paul's reply to the Philippian jailer's question "What must I do to be saved?" (16:30-31). It is the means by which both Jews and Gentiles are being made holy (26:18), more precisely, by which they can attain and remain in the state of holiness. It is the prerequisite of receiving the Spirit (19:2, 5-6), God's gift of the last days being shown by the contrasting experiences of Apollos and the twelve men of Ephesus to come only in response to faith and to attest the genuineness of that faith. It is concomitant with the command to repent (cf. 20:21) and appears even to be assumed therein, for God's appointment of Jesus as the eschatological judge, altering God's treatment of non-Jews, has imposed on all peoples

everywhere the need for repentance (17:30-31). As for the Christian community's relation to YHWH's covenants with Israel, it is significant that though on occasions the covenantal connection is rumoured to be threatened, the Jewish Christians are still said to be and shown to be keeping the law. This goes even for Paul. He circumcises Timothy (16:1-3), the child of a mixed alliance, and by his act gives to Timothy the religious status apparently considered by some Jews to be his right within Judaism. The apostle pays the expenses of four believers in the Jerusalem community who were completing a cultic oath and attempts himself to fulfil a similar oath in order to illustrate to the community, perhaps without much success, his own alignment with the law and his acceptance of the belief that all Jews, even the Jewish Christians in the diaspora communities, should hold the tenets and practices of Judaism (21:23-24, 26). Less is said in the second half of Acts about the Gentile Christians' observance of the assembly's decision. During Paul's final visit to Jerusalem (21:25) attention is drawn by James and the Jerusalem elders to the four prohibitions, reaffirming that the position of the Gentiles as agreed upon by the council was without reproach; but a reference to the application of the same prohibitions is conspicuously, though perhaps not unduly, absent when the newly-converted Philippian jailer, whom we may presume had no prior association with Judaism, serves Paul and Silas a meal (16:34).

Given the overall clarity of these findings, it is surprising to observe that a firm conclusion about the purpose of the assembly's twofold agreement and thus about the conditions for membership in the people of God which the agreement seemingly sums up for Luke is somewhat hard to pinpoint.

It is quite obvious that there are certain characteristics which distinguish the Christian from both the non-Christian Jew and the pagan. In the first place there is the act of repentance. To repent of the nation's and the individual's rejection of God's plan expressed through Jesus, who was indeed the long-awaited prophet predicted by Moses, separates the penitent Jew from a corrupt generation already on its way to divine condemnation (2:38-40) and prevents exclusion from the people of God (3:22-23). In the case of the Gentiles, their former ignorance of the divine will has been turned,

through God's resurrecting of Jesus, into an opportunity for knowledge and into an obligation to accept through repentance their moral and religious responsibilities (17:30-31). And for Jew and Gentile alike the change in dominion from darkness to light, from Satan to God, is to be visibly manifested by a conduct consonant with repentance (26:20). The fact of divine forgiveness and the receipt of the Spirit, guaranteeing personal salvation and participation in the promises to Israel and the blessings of the last days, attest the equality of all believers regardless of birth, race, or any external standard. Although referred to in Acts 15 at the most by association from Amos 9:11-12, baptism in the name of Jesus--identifying the content of Christian faith, signifying personal commitment to God's plan in Jesus, and accompanying individual repentance and divine forgiveness--is made a suspiciously essential aspect of the admission process traced by Luke when Apollos (18:26) is brought into line--if not actually by being baptized at least by being taught about baptism--with the practice of Peter and the earliest Jerusalem community, Philip and the Hellenists, and Paul.

The Book of Acts also makes quite plain that not all the distinguishing characteristics should be classified as requirements for membership in the people of God. Faith in Jesus is arguably the concept on which the various events in the experience of salvation depend, being the goal and the result of the apostolic preaching, the means by which the hearts of the Gentiles are cleansed and God's impartiality is appropriated by all peoples, and the prerequisite of God's bestowal of the Spirit and of the Christian community's acceptance of new believers through the act of baptism and the laying on of hands. This is evident in spite of Luke's somewhat variant ordering and often (for us) imprecise recording of the events in the initiation-conversion process. Members of the Christian community are, after all, called οἱ πιστεύσαντες, not "the baptized" or "the Spirit-filled".

The difficulty arises when attention is drawn to the second clause of the agreement, that representative of the church's relation to the Old Testament covenants with Israel, and an attempt is made to determine how, given the fact that the assembly is denouncing the salvific necessity of keeping the law, both parts of the decision are to be

correlated with the fact of belonging to the people of God. It is evidently wrong to claim that obedience to the law and by analogy the four prohibitions for the Gentile Christians are firmly obliterated by faith in Jesus. The Jewish Christians continue to have a compliant attitude towards the law. God's dramatic bestowal of the Spirit on Cornelius, marking the centurion's personal commitment to Jesus, may have altered the extent to which Cornelius had to fulfil the Torah regulations and negated the necessity of circumcision; however, it does not set aside, apparently insofar as the consensus of the council is concerned, the fact that Cornelius's acceptability to God was determined in the first place by Cornelius's display of a piety which was indicative of the Old Testament covenants and perhaps represented the law itself. Faith may be primary but it is also--for Luke, at least--concomitant with the idea of obedience to God's will and standard.

The temptation therefore is to distinguish between the two clauses of the agreement and between their respective significances for membership in the people of God. Faith and its correlative repentance, as the commanded response to the apostolic exhortation, could be considered the condition for *joining* the people of God; the abstention from εἰδωλόθυτα, blood, strangled things, and πορνεία, the means of *maintaining* membership in the people of God. This inference may be justified on several grounds.

First, "believe in the Lord Jesus" and "repent" sum up the exhortation of the missionary proclamation. The injunction to conduct oneself in a manner consonant with an inner revitalization is subsequent to the initial acts of faith and repentance. Second, keeping the law may be viewed as the way salvation did not come to the nation of Israel, but it is not presented as an unnecessary and negative aspect of the Jewish Christian experience. There is no χάρις-νόμος dichotomy. Third, the aim of Paul's circumcising of Timothy may be, if the evidence from the second century A.D. of a change in the Jewish law whether a child takes the nationality of the mother or of the father can apply, to establish Timothy's rightful identity *vis-à-vis* Jewish law; what it is definitely *not* is an act to make Timothy a Christian. Timothy clearly already belongs to the Christian

community. Fourth, the four prohibitions are set forth in the Jerusalem elders' later discussion with Paul (21:20-25) as the Gentile Christian analogue of circumcision and obedience to the law; and significantly both standards are identified as acts performed by those who already are believers (τῶν πεπιστευκότων).

There is, however, evidence undermining the application of the proposed categories. One consideration is the obvious but significant implication of the employment of the appellatives οἱ πιστεύσαντες, οἱ πιστεύοντες, and οἱ πεπιστευκότες: Christians are those who take the step of trusting in Jesus *and* continue to believe in Jesus. We note, secondly, that the two parts of the council's decision, being conceptually as well as grammatically linked, address the same question. That question is not whether the Gentile converts must conform to the Jewish law in order to enjoy the privileges of Christian fellowship. The assembly's discussion is set up to answer "What is necessary for salvation?", and the subject of the debate is not altered by James's observation that Peter's argument has related how (καθώς, 15:14) the Gentiles become God's people, for the citation of Amos 9:11-12 from which James's opinion and ultimately the council's decision are developed aims to provide the scriptural validation for Peter's account of God's work among the Gentiles. Furthermore, while the gift of the Spirit makes salvation for the recipient both a present experience and an eschatological hope, salvation cannot be interpreted as being, respectively, the result of entering the people of God ("are saved") and the result of maintaining a position in the people of God ("will be saved"). Quite simply, Luke does not compartment the act of salvation. His use of σωθῆναι implies that the attainment of the experience of salvation in the present carries with it the confidence to enjoy in the future the experience of salvation. One application will illustrate: according to some Jewish Christians salvation was determined (δύνασθε σωθῆναι, 15:1) both by circumcision, which by virtue of its generally irrevocable nature is an act of initiation, and by keeping the law, which is in essence an act of maintenance. Fourth, a distinction in classification could be inferred from a comparison based on the initial positions of the Gentiles and Jews--for the Gentiles, who begin from outside the people of God, the commitment to Jesus

marks the entry into the people of God; for the Jews, who are by birth inherently part of the people of God, personal repentance and the concomitant expression of faith in Jesus determine whether they will continue in the people of God--but we should not overlook that the determinant of salvation in both cases is the same.

We are left with the impression that it is demanding too much of the evidence when we attempt to separate the terms of salvation related by Acts into the categories "attaining a special relation with God" and "maintaining that relationship with God". Luke may well be aware of the distinction or that some Christians may have maintained a distinction and, moreover, may have viewed many Jewish practices, even the four prohibitions, as conciliatory measures for sociological and not theological reasons. But he does not stress it. His point is simply but critically that the Jewish and Gentile Christians' public manifestation of their relation to the Old Testament covenants was just as vital for their membership in the people of God as their personal commitment to Jesus. This conclusion may appear an evasion to some, but it is--I think--a fair assessment of the evidence. Indeed, there is arguably a fine line, perhaps even an imaginary line, between the proposed categories not only as far as the evidence of Acts specifically but also in general: to maintain one's position after entering by meeting a certain standard is, after all, to presuppose that at the time of entrance a commitment was made to fulfil the required standard.

Now the basic driving force through the preceding pages has been the contention that the decision of the Jerusalem council and the various arguments leading to it bear witness to Luke's conception of the people of God. Where, then, does the study lead us? Four observations are pertinent.

(1) The Christian community's relation to the Israel established by the Old Testament covenants is shown to be made disjunctive by the person and work of Jesus. The watershed for a position in the people of God is now whether a person trusts in Jesus, the culmination of God's plan for Israel and the nations. No longer do birth and race predetermine God's attitude or limit the display of his impartiality. The Jews who reject Jesus the expected Mosaic prophet, just as the Gentiles who ignore Jesus the

eschatological judge, are not, in spite of their filial relation to Abraham and their obedience to the law, part of God's people; they have already sentenced themselves to condemnation. The Gentiles who seek the Lord are divinely chosen people in their own right: they do not have to become Jews in order to be Christians; they share in the messianic blessings and belong to God in the same way as the Jews do or, rather, as the Jews should.

(2) The church's relation to the Israel established by the Old Testament covenants can also be characterized as continuous, for the Christian community displays not simply an awareness of an inheritance from the past but an identity expressed in terms of that inheritance. God's message of peace through Jesus originally addressed to the Jews is extended to the Gentiles by means of repentant Jews. More precisely for the argument of the council, it is God's restoration of the fallen tent of David, that is, his establishment of a faithful community, defined in terms of the person and work of Jesus, within disobedient Israel, which is the presupposition of the Gentiles' opportunity to belong to the people of God.

Given this foundation and orientation, the concern to protect the root of the Torah persists. There were τὰ ἐπάναγκες, things of necessity in the covenants which, despite the possible nuance of discomfort and oppressivenes, showed how to avoid idolatry and maintain the holiness that the holy God required. Paul and the other Jewish Christians, therefore, affirm the various regulations of the law although there is sufficient evidence to show that neither circumcision nor obedience to the law alone had brought the Jewish nation the experience of salvation. The law *per se* is not imposd on the Gentile converts but the four prohibitions are formulated on the basis of legal regulations against classically Gentile acts and are designed primarily to preserve the purity of the people elected for the worship and service of God and only by implication--though Luke does not state this--to ease the social tension within the mixed Christian communities. It is indicative, further, that there is no development of the correspond–ence between Peter's vision of the sheet from heaven and the irrelevance of the law in

every respect; indeed, Cornelius's acceptability with God is based in part on his loving God and doing what was right.

(3) The assembly brings agreement out of conflict, producing tolerable rather than intolerable conditions of membership in the people of God, and allows the Christian mission, i.e. the Pauline mission in particular, to go on more powerfully. It is a unity which comes through compromise, bringing together the various strands of the apostolic preaching, and concentrates on the attitude of the Jerusalem community. The Jerusalem apostles and elders are divorced from the source of the conflict: they neither commission nor commend the men from Judea. Barnabas, Paul, and the other emissaries of the Antioch church founded by the Hellenists, who feature so prominently at the start of the story as the opponents of the Judaizers, are placed during the debate conspicuously in the background. Peter and James are left free to respond to the Judaizers' demand and to show quite emphatically that they approve of the Gentiles' salvation apart from circumcision and obedience to the law. The decision is not one-sidedly in favour of the theological position advocated in Antioch; nevertheless, the Antioch believers accept the decision with gladness. The assembly's decision is presented as the approved and expected code of Christian practice not only by Judas and Silas, the emissaries of the Jerusalem assembly, to the Christian community in Antioch but also by Paul and Silas, Antioch's missionaries, to the churches in Asia Minor founded during Paul's earlier journey. The resolution of the dilemma concerning the Christian message of salvation brings spiritual and numerical strengthening to all the churches.

(4) The ecclesiastical unity which comes from diversity may itself presuppose a diversity of belief and practice. It is suggested at various places--and it may only be a suggestion since Luke as an author tends to be more adept at developing characters than at expounding theological systems--that in recognizing the central importance of establishing a message of salvation as the foundation of all Christian existence, the council may have operated with the principle that not every different gospel was

necessarily a false gospel. The aim of the council may have been to establish the limits within which variety might exist.

In this regard it is noteworthy that Peter's argument at the council comes quite close to Paul's; indeed, it seems to be anticipated by Paul's statements at Pisidian Antioch. Yet there may be difference between them. It could be said that Peter points to the non-necessity of the law for salvation but leaves open, even for the Gentiles, the possibility of the law fulfilling other purposes, whereas Paul may claim more radically the irrelevance of the law for the Gentiles in the light of Jesus' death and resurrection. Or, to state the possible difference in another way, both Peter and Paul locate salvation in faith in Jesus. But Peter's understanding of the centrality of faith over against the law is based on personal experience: pragmatically it stems from God's dramatic act on behalf of a person who prior to his conversion had fulfilled in his own way God's covenantal will. To Paul is attributed the theological connection between Jesus' death and resurrection and the law, the former fulfilling the latter. Again, to James, the historically most conservative of the four contributors to the debate, is left the task of reconciling the privileged position of Israel as God's chosen people and the extension of God's impartiality beyond Israel. He claims more than Peter, more than that the prerogative of Israel has come to the Gentiles through Israel and that salvation for Jew and Gentile is only through faith in Jesus. He says that God's election of the Gentiles is dependent on the restoration of Israel, and he implies that while the Gentile converts are not Jews they are related to Israel. James and the Jerusalem elders also assume, against insinuations from Jews and Jewish Christians and doubts regarding Paul's ministry and personal practice, the responsibility of ensuring the continuation of a commitment to the covenants and of protecting the Jewish Christians' zeal for the law. We note, further, that the quarrel between Barnabas and Paul over John Mark may have represented not simply a reaction to a particular personality but ultimately a different perspective on mission strategy and a variance in mission theology. The circumcising of Timothy in no way claims the superiority of the circumcised believers, but it does suggest a variety in the application of the gospel, namely, that Christian commitment was to be expressed

with relation to the cultural forms which the Christians themselves inherited. Baptism in the name of Jesus as a concomitant act of receiving the Spirit is arguably a practice overlooked in some circles of Christianity, for Apollos's instruction in Christian water baptism appears to have served only to corroborate his Christian commitment.

The way to salvation stated at the council of Jerusalem recorded by Luke and substantiated by related events in the Book of Acts argues, therefore, that the people of God manifests, on the one hand, a continuity with the Israel established by the Old Testament covenants which is interpreted in terms of the disjunctive effect of God's revelation in Jesus and, on the other, a diversity of belief and practice which is governed by a unity expressed uncompromisingly in terms of faith in Jesus and faithfulness to God's covenants. It suggests, since Luke is not merely recording history but has selected his historical material with the intention of addressing the theological and pastoral needs of his readers, that Luke's people of God is a community caught between two worlds: on the one hand, there is the world of presenting to Gentiles, both pagans and those loosely affiliated with Judaism, the Christian message of salvation and its Jewish inheritance of monotheistic worship, the prophecies and their fulfilment, and a code of living; on the other, there is the world of legitimating its own existence within the Jew-Gentile dialogue as the Pauline interpretation of the gospel in the midst of various interpretations of the gospel, not as the replacement of the people of God but as part of the greater entity called the people of God.

APPENDIX. "GOD-FEARERS": A LUKAN CONCEPT?

During the Hellenistic and early Roman periods some Gentiles were so strongly attracted to Judaism that they willingly became converts and undertook to observe Jewish laws and customs in the same manner as the Jews themselves. These converts are usually called גרים (an adaptation of the Old Testament term for non-Israelites living within Israelite territory) in the Hebrew sources and προσήλυτοι in the Greek.[1] The Jewish synagogues are also thought to have attracted a fringe of Gentiles who, though drawn by the beliefs and practices of Judaism, refused to take the decisive step of actually becoming Jews. These Gentile sympathizers, erroneously on occasion named semi-proselytes,[2] are usually associated with the expressions φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν and σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν, *metuentes*, and יראי שמים[3] in the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew sources, respectively.

The hypothesis that this second group of Gentiles existed and that it was they, not the Jews, who gained Christianity its foothold in the Greco-Roman world has much to be said for it because of Acts. There is found the preponderance of the linguistic

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[1]It is debatable whether the change in the meaning of גר from foreigner in Jewish territory to foreigner in the Jewish religion is noticeable in the OT and also whether this lexical development occurred before or after the translation of the OT into Greek. In other words, does προσήλυτος in the LXX imply "sojourner" or "convert"? See Str-B 2:715-17; Moore, *Judaism* 1:328-29; K. Lake, "Proselytes and God-fearers", in *Beginnings* 5:80-84; Allen, "ΠΡΟΣΗΛΥΤΟΣ in the Septuagint" 264-75; and Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes* 3:125 n. 67.

[2]In terms of Jewish law the idea of a second class of proselytes is meaningless (Moore, *Judaism* 1:326-27); but because Billerbeck (Str-B 2:715) and J. Juster (*Les Juifs dans l'Empire romain. Leur condition juridique, économique et sociale* [1914] 1:274) unfortunately used the expression "semi-proselyte", it appears in many writers. L. H. Feldman ("Jewish 'Sympathizers' in Classical Literature and Inscriptions", *TAPA* 81 [1950] 200 n. 2) prefers the simple "sympathizers". H. A. Wolfson (*Philo. Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* [1947] 2:369-74) introduced into the discussion the expression "spiritual proselyte". Though perhaps relevant for Philo, this translation becomes somewhat confusing in other literature where sympathizers are mentioned observing certain Jewish customs without necessarily accepting the moral and philosophical tenets of Judaism.

[3]יראי שמים may be related to גר תושב, the rabbinic designation for an unconverted foreigner living in Israelite territory. In other words, it may bear the meaning originally applied to גר. The expression is not, however, as was suggested by S. Deyling and advocated by Schürer initially (see Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes* 3:126-29), synonymous with גרי השער: the latter expression probably was coined by the medieval rabbis.

data, the participial form of φοβέομαι in 10:2, 22, 35; 13:16 and 26 and of σέβομαι in 13:43, 50; 16:14; 17:4, 17; and 18:7 being cited; and it is Acts which traces Christianity's route to the pagan world through the Jews and the synagogues, specifically through the Gentiles who heard the apostolic preaching in the synagogues and readily welcomed a monotheism which was credible but did not require the stigma of circumcision (cf. 14:1; 17:2-4, 12, 17; 18:4).

1. The Hypothesis in Trouble

Periodically the generally accepted "God-fearer" theory[4] has been challenged. A. Bertholet[5] posited that degrees of adherence to Judaism did not exist: "Für die damaligen Juden gab es nur Proselyten (גרים) schlechthin, die offiziell Proselyten waren: wer nicht so Proselyt war, war heidnisch".[6] Consequently for Bertholet φοβούμενοι and σεβόμενοι in Acts are other names for Gentiles who converted to Judaism. K. Lake,[7] on the other hand, affirmed that Gentiles who were not converts to Judaism went to the synagogue and that these Gentiles were naturally called "God-fearing"; indeed, this was for Lake "so intrinsically probable that the *onus probandi* would be on those who maintained the opposite".[8] But he denied that they were a clearly defined group parallel to Jews and proselytes. Φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν and σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν are merely honourable epithets applicable to Jew, Gentile, or proselyte as the context decides:

> the reason why these words were used was because they were appropriate to a vague class, not because they were the recognized title limited to a specific group with a definite place in organized Judaism. The epithets by themselves could have been given to a pious Jew, and it is only when they are applied to a non-Jew that the context gives them special meaning.[9]

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[4]For example, R. Marcus, "The *Sebomenoi* in Josephus", *JSocS* 14 (1952) 247-50; K. Romaniuk, "Die 'Gottesfürchtigen' im Neuen Testament. Beitrag zur neutestamentlichen Theologie der Gottesfurcht", *Aegyptus* 44 (1964) 90-91; J. Bernays, "Die Gottesfürchtigen bei Juvenal", in FS T. Mommsen (1877) 563-69; Str-B 2:716; Juster, *Juifs* 1:274-88; Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes* 3:123 (Schürer-Vermes, *Jewish People* on this section has not been published); K. G. Kuhn and H. Stegemann, "Proselyten", PWSup 9:1253; and many commentators on Acts. Notable exceptions among the commentators are Marshall (183 n. 1), Schneider (2:75, 131), and Longenecker (363); see also F. Siegert, "Gottesfürchtige und Sympathisanten", *JSJ* 4 (1973) 109-64.

[5]A. Bertholet, *Die Stellung der Israeliten und der Juden zu den Fremden* (1896) 328-31.

[6]Bertholet, *Stellung der Israeliten* 328.

[7]Lake, *Beginnings* 5:84-88.

[8]Lake, *Beginnings* 5:87.

[9]Lake, *Beginnings* 5:88.

L. H. Feldman,[10] too, claimed from a survey of the relevant expressions in classical literature and inscriptions that the terms were widely used in the first century A.D. merely to designate people as "pious" or "religious", whether they be Jews or Gentiles. To be sure, the expression, that is, יראי שמים did become technical later but only in response to the rabbinic desire to clarify the relationship between Jew, גר, and נר תושב.

Recently Lake's argument has been revived and elaborated upon by M. Wilcox[11] and A. T. Kraabel.[12] Wilcox notes (1) that in the New Testament the two participial phrases at issue appear only in Acts, (2) that (οἱ) φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν is confined to the first part of the book while (οἱ) σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν is used from Acts 13:50 onwards (13:43 being a special case), (3) that Luke-Acts has no less than four terms to describe devout people, none of which need bear a technical sense,[13] and (4) that οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν is a frequent form in the Septuagint, especially the Psalter, for the pious in Israel. Faced with such data, he questions "how far if at all do they [οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν and οἱ σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν] refer to different classes of people belonging to or supporting Judaism, and how far is their use rather more a matter of Lukan redactional interest?".[14]

In his answer Wilcox places a lot of weight on the use of οἱ φοβούμενοι αὐτόν (i.e. τὸν θεόν) in Luke 1:50. He thinks the evidence, supported by instances of יראי שמים, יראי אלהים, and יראי אל in the Qumran and rabbinic literature,[15] demonstrates, first, that the participial expressions ought to be interpreted with reference to members of the Jewish community whether Jewish through birth or through conversion. Second, even if οἱ σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν signifies a class of Gentile synagogue adherents, οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν reflecting its Septuagintal usage (cf. Luke 1:50)

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[10]Feldmann, "'Jewish Sympathizers'" 200-8. Feldman's argument, which replies to Bernays's attempt to equate *metuentes*, φοβούμενοι, σεβόμενοι, and יראי אדוני with Gentile "God-fearers" (Bernays, "Die Gottesfürchtigen" 563-69), has been challenged by Marcus ("*Sebomenoi*" 247-50).

[11]M. Wilcox, "The 'God-Fearers' in Acts - A Reconsideration", *JSNT* 13 (1981) 102-22.

[12]Kraabel, "'God-fearers'", 113-26.

[13]In addition to the two participial phrases under question, Wilcox ("'God-Fearers'" 103) mentions εὐλαβής (Luke 2:25; Acts 2:5; 8:2; 22:12) and εὐσεβής (Acts 10:2, 7).

[14]Wilcox, "'God-Fearers'" 103.

[15]1QSb 1:1 (to be compared with CD 10:2 and 20:19, 20); 1QH 12:3; *Siphre* on Deut 32:33; *Mek.* Mišpatim (*Neziqin*) on Exod 22:20. See also Wilcox, "'God-Fearers'" 122 nn. 55-56.

cannot; in Acts οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν represents the especially devout in the Jewish community whether Jew or Gentile, proselyte or "adherent". Thus, Wilcox doubts that the two participial expressions are synonyms. They also cannot be used to determine the sociological composition of the synagogues in question or of the churches which developed from these synagogues. Finally, the linguistic shift from οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν to οἱ σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν "corresponds to the shift in emphasis from the basically Torah-centred piety of the earlier part to the Gentile mission of the later section".[16] Perhaps this exchange may be attributed to the sources, "but the fact that both terms qualify as lukanisms suggests that their use and distribution matches Luke's intention in his portrayal of events".[17]

Whereas Lake and Wilcox maintain that the point at issue is linguistic, Kraabel bases his argument on the lack of convincing historical verification. The archaeological evidence from six synagogues (Dura Europos, Sardis, Priene, Delos, Strobi, and Ostia), most of which are dated at least from the second century A.D., though earlier buildings are attested, shows nothing "to suggest the presence of a kind of Gentile 'penumbra' around the Diaspora synagogue communities."[18] Moreover, Acts, the major source of data, is in actuality "theology in narrative form" and not an historical record. This feature, illustrated by the abruptness with which the God-fearers vanish from Luke's story line, determines that the relevant terms in Acts can only be a literary motif correlative to the theme of missionary preaching in the diaspora synagogues. The terms are intended

> to help Luke show how Christianity had become a Gentile religion *legitimately* and without losing its Old Testament roots. The Jewish mission to Gentiles recalled in the God-fearer is ample precedent for the far more extensive mission to Gentiles which Christianity had in fact undertaken with such success. Once that point has been made Luke can let the God-fearers disappear from his story.[19]

Several implications for the history of Judaism and Christianity follow. In particular, Judaism did not stoop to constant and ultimately untenable compromises by

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[16]Wilcox, "'God-Fearers'" 118.
[17]Wilcox, "'God-Fearers'" 118.
[18]Kraabel, "'God-fearers'" 117.
[19]Kraabel, "'God-fearers'" 121.

acknowledging uncircumcised adherents in order to make a place for itself in an alien Greco-Roman world; the Christian missionary activity conducted from the Jewish synagogues is not as extensive as previously thought.

The observations of these five scholars prompt five questions. (1) Are ὁ φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν and ὁ σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν (and their equivalents) technical terms for a special class of Gentiles associated with the synagogue, or are they generic descriptions of extremely religious people? (2) Do the phrases characterize only Gentiles, or do they refer as well to Jews or proselytes, according to the context? (3) Do the distribution of these expressions and the manner of their occurrences suggest that they are lukanisms? (4) Are ὁ φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν and ὁ σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν synonyms? (5) Is there any explanation for Luke's abrupt shift in usage from ὁ φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν in the first part of Acts to ὁ σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν from Acts 13:43 onwards? Such questions call for a survey of the actual instances of ὁ φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν and ὁ σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν and their equivalents.

The following comments are primarily limited to the New Testament linguistic evidence. This is the point most relevant to our purpose, which is a redactional study of the perspective of admission to the people of God recorded in Acts. Obviously the total picture is not complete without the linguistic, historical, and archaeological data from the extrabiblical sources; and at the end of our study we will briefly set the New Testament evidence in the wider context.

2. The New Testament Data

2.1. *φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν*

Φοβέομαι qualified by θεόν or its equivalent (αὐτόν, τὸν κύριον, τὸ ὄνομά σου) appears fifteen times in the New Testament. Nine of these occurrences are in Luke-Acts.[20] Outside of Luke's writing the word combination quite clearly denotes the attitude of reverential fear, described in the Psalter, which is required of Christians (Col 3:22; 1 Pet 2:17), pious people (Rev 11:18; 19:5), and all nations (Rev 14:7; 15:4)

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[20]Luke also uses the verb frequently to denote physical and emotional fear: Luke 1:13. 30; 2:9, 10; 5:10; 8:25, 35; 9:34, 45; 12:4-5, 7, 32; 19:21; 20:19; 22:2; Acts 5:6; 9:26; 16:38; 18:9; 22:29; 23:10; 27:17, 24, 29.

before the righteous and holy God.[21] Among these passages there is perhaps a notable exception. Rev 11:18, specifying those whom God will reward, has τοῖς δούλοις σου τοῖς προφήταις καὶ τοῖς ἁγίοις καὶ τοῖς φοβουμένοις τὸ ὄνομά σου. Since it could be assumed quite naturally that God's prophets are ἅγιοι and that God's prophets and saints fear him, "those who reverence your name" may form a distinct, third category of people who merit God's reward.

As for Luke's usage, first in his Gospel:

i. Luke 1:50. Τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν in Mary's Magnificat expresses the Israelites' proper and expected response to God's covenant mercy: the recognition and reverent acknowledgement of God's sovereignty. The reference of the participial phrase is to the pious in Israel. This is indicated not only by the hymn's similarity to Old Testament poetry (cf. Ps 103:17) but also by the explicit mention of God's servant Israel in verse 54 and of God's eternal promise to Abraham and his descendants in verse 55.

ii. Luke 18:2. In the parable of the persistent widow, τὸν θεὸν μὴ φοβούμενος joins ἄνθρωπον μὴ ἐντρεπόμενος to depict the attitude of the unjust judge, underlining his corruption and self-confidence which carelessly spurned divine judgment and human need. The characteristics are reiterated in verse 4, there with a different grammatical construction: τὸν θεὸν οὐ φοβοῦμαι οὐδὲ ἄνθρωπον ἐντρέπομαι. From parallels in, for instance, Josephus, *Ant.* 10.83; Dionysius 10.10.7; and Livy 22.3, it appears that the description is idiomatic.

iii. Luke 23:40. This verse includes the expression in the rebuke by one of the criminals being crucified with Jesus--οὐδὲ φοβῇ σὺ τὸν θεόν, ὅτι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ κρίματι εἶ;--and the question bears great similarity to Jesus' own exhortation, in Luke 12:5, to fear the one who has power to commit the soul to gehenna.

None of these instances comes close to being the identifying characteristic of Gentiles who have a loose affiliation with the Jewish synagogues: sometimes the grammar denies such a meaning; at other times the context is determinative. The idea in

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[21] See also ὁ φόβος with θεοῦ or κυρίου in Acts 9:31; Rom 3:18; 2 Cor 5:11; 7:1; Eph 5:21; 1 Pet 1:17; 3:2.

view is an attitude which comes in response to the holy God's authority, righteousness, and benevolence and which is the basis of YHWH's covenantal relationship.

In Acts the instances of φοβέομαι with τὸν θεόν or an equivalent are clustered in the story of the conversion of the Roman centurion Cornelius (10:1-11:18) and in the account of Paul's and Barnabas's mission in Pisidian Antioch (13:13-52).

iv. Acts 10:2, 22. Εὐσεβὴς καὶ φοβούμενος τὸν θεὸν σὺν παντὶ τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ, ποιῶν ἐλεημοσύνας πολλὰς τῷ λαῷ καὶ δεόμενος τοὺ θεοῦ διὰ παντός in 10:2 and ἀνὴρ δίκαιος καὶ φοβούμενος τὸν θεὸν μαρτυρούμενός τε ὑπὸ ὅλου τοῦ ἔθνους τῶν Ἰουδαίων in 10:22 describe Cornelius. From such a characterization it is obvious that Cornelius (and his household) is not pagan. He exhibits conduct similar to that of pious Jews--generous almsgiving, a regular habit of prayer, doing righteousness (however that is defined)[22]--and which would have been taught at the synagogue. He is known and respected by the Jewish people. And his piety is expressed in language (i.e. εὐσεβής || εὐλαβής, δίκαιος) reserved by Luke for Jews whose devotion to God is exemplary and in keeping with the Old Testament ideal (compare Luke 1:5-6; 2:25-26; 23:50-52; Acts 22:12).[23] At the same time it is quite clear that Cornelius (and his household) has not converted to Judaism. He is a Gentile. This is manifested by Peter's clarification that if God had not shown him otherwise, Jewish purity laws which forbade intimate association between Jews and Gentiles would have stopped him from visiting Cornelius (10:28-29a), by the astonishment of Peter's Jewish Christian companions when they witnessed the bestowal of the Spirit on Cornelius (10:45), and by the Jerusalem believers' criticism of Peter for having eaten with uncircumcised people (11:3). Thus, the pious, uncircumcised Cornelius, benefactor of the Caesarean Jews, could well fit the portrait of a Gentile who is attracted by many beliefs and practices of Judaism, attends the synagogue, but never took the final step to become a convert.

The syntax of φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν here, though, is noteworthy. The expression occurs without the article and is embedded in the middle of a list of characteristics, some

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[22]See the discussion in Chapter I.1.3 (pp. 59-68).

[23]Wilcox ("'God-Fearers'" 105-6) makes much of this comparison and as an interesting parallel draws attention to the second century A.D. saying in *b.Soṭa* 31a ascribed to R. Meir in which Job's "God-fearingness" is related to that of Abraham.

of which are likewise participial. It is also coordinated with εὐσεβής, a term which is never assigned a technical nuance but always means "pious". In such a combination, perhaps serving to indicate the specific kind of piety Cornelius exhibited, it could designate monotheistic belief as plausibly as the name God-fearer.

v. Acts 10:35. Ὁ φοβούμενος αὐτὸν καὶ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην in 10:35 is identified as the person in every nation whom God accepts. Again the grammatical construction is relevant: the one article governing compound participles implies the mutuality, not the distinctiveness, of the two actions, and the combination could represent a summation of the Jewish law.[24] Moreover, ἐν παντὶ ἔθνει seemingly means that both Jews and Gentiles who manifest these characteristics are in mind.[25]

vi. Acts 13:16, 26. In Paul's address in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch the crucial phrase occurs twice. It forms part of Paul's initial salutation (13:16)--ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλῖται καὶ οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν--and part of the resumptive appeal when Paul comes to the heart of his sermon (13:26)--ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, υἱοὶ γένους Ἀβραὰμ καὶ οἱ ἐν ὑμῖν φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν. Comparison with the other compound vocatives in Acts, especially with ἄνδρες Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οἱ κατοικοῦντες Ἰερουσαλὴμ πάντες in 2:14[26] which captures the sense of pious Jews and proselytes from all nations who are resident in Jerusalem (2:5, 9-11), suggests that Ἰσραηλῖται/υἱοὶ γένους Ἀβραάμ and οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν could be regarded as attributes applied to the same persons;[27] and the vocative use of ἀδελφοί elsewhere in Acts (cf. 2:29, 37; 3:17; 22:1), limited to Jewish speakers who were seeking to establish a point of contact with crowds in Jerusalem or in distinctly Jewish settings, would support the Jewish background of Paul's audience.

Yet it is arguable that the salutations designate Jews and Gentiles respectively, that is to say, that Paul is addressing Jewish and Gentile worshippers. Several reasons can be cited. (1) The anarthrous state of the other vocatives in the compound highlights the article modifying the participle. Such grammatical construction suggests two separate

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[24]See the discussion of this phrase in Chapter I.1.3 (esp. pp. 66-68).

[25]See p. 58 n. 65.

[26]Σκληροτράχηλοι καὶ ἀπερίτμητοι καρδίαις καὶ τοῖς ὠσίν in 7:51 is similar, but the salutations in 4:8; 7:2; and 22:1 are different. For other examples see Moulton 3:35.

[27]Lake, *Beginnings* 5:86.

groups. (2) Ἐν ὑμῖν qualifying οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν (v. 26) in a speech aimed to appeal can hardly connote that some Jews in the audience were more pious than the rest. A more natural purpose for the prepositional phrase is to draw a distinction of race: ὑμῖν is the whole congregation, "sons of Abraham" are the Jews, and "those who fear God" are the Gentiles who worshipped in the synagogues but who were not proselytes.[28] (3) Οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν is combined with terms indicating status, specifically that in relationship to the Old Testament covenants. None of these points alone nor the sum total of them clinches the argument that οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν has a technical sense here, but the assertion that οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν does not refer to Gentile worshippers in the synagogue is undermined.

2.2. *σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν*

Σέβομαι appears only ten times in the New Testament, and eight of these appearances are in Acts. The two exceptions, Mark 7:7 and its exact parallel Matt 15:9, are in the quotation from Isa 29:13 illustrating Jesus' criticism of the Pharisees' hypocrisy (μάτην δὲ σέβονταί με). Of the other occurrences, Acts 18:13 and 19:27 are non-participial and thus generally considered to be irrelevant for the current discussion. 19:27 does show, though, that σέβομαι can bear various meanings for Luke. There the verb refers to the worship of Artemis, the patron goddess of Ephesus.[29]

The six relevant instances of σέβομαι are associated with Paul's ministry in the communities of the Jewish diaspora.

vii. Acts 13:43. Τῶν σεβομένων προσηλύτων is frankly puzzling. In the first place, the words introduce proselytes unexpectedly into the story. This is a sociological group

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[28]In a different way Lake and Cadbury (4:153) point out the value that the prepositional phrase has for determining the meaning of οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν. According to them ἐν ὑμῖν in p^{45} B fits better if οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν means devout; ἐν ἡμῖν in A D 81, if the participial expression means Gentile God-fearers. This proposed correspondence is irrelevant. Whether ἡμῖν or ὑμῖν is original, the pronoun has the present company in mind and still draws a distinction (perhaps sociological) between υἱοὶ γένους Ἀβραάμ and οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν. Interestingly, this prepositional phrase leads Lake (*Beginnings* 5:87) to admit that the probability seems on the side of our interpretation of οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν; but he maintains also, rightly I think (see below), that "the passage is not enough to prove that φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν would have meant this if the context had not suggested it".

[29]Compare εὐσεβεῖτε in 17:23. This meaning is exceptional in NT usage, but the application is common in Judeo-Christian literature elsewhere (e.g. Wis 15:6, 18; Bel 3, 4, 23; *Diogn.* 2.7).

which was not previously mentioned but which may have been included under the heading Ἰσραηλῖται in 13:16.[30] More saliently the expression juxtaposes two supposedly technical terms: Gentiles who have converted to Judaism (προσήλυτοι) are differentiated by virtue of the act of circumcision from Gentile sympathizers who fail to take the decisive step for admission to Judaism (i.e. σεβόμενοι).[31] Even if there were evidence to show that the Jewish diaspora communities were lax in their interpretation of what conversion to Judaism entailed and thus cause to argue that the vital distinction between proselytes and Gentile sympathizers was sometimes ignored, the grammatical construction cannot simultaneously expresss two technical ideas. To circumvent this anomaly, it has been suggested that προσηλύτων is a gloss or a careless editorial slip[32] or that a καί may have fallen out;[33] yet the fact that *no* extant manuscript evidence points this way certainly weakens these possibilities. A simple explanation, but a completely logical one, would be to remove the technical status of σεβομένων and let the participle function as an adjective denoting the piety of the proselytes.[34] Viewed from this syntactical perspective, σεβομένων may serve to place these Gentile converts on equal footing with the Jews.[35]

viii. Acts 13:50. This verse, the concluding incident of the apostles' ministry in Pisidian Antioch, states that the Jews stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas by means of τὰς σεβομένας γυναῖκας τὰς εὐσχήμονας καὶ τοὺς πρώτους τῆς πόλεως. Luke's wording, distinguishing between the instigators of the persecution and the executors of

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[30]Siegert, "Gottesfürchtige" 130.

[31]In this regard mention can be made of a fragmentary epitaph from the Jewish catacomb on Via Appia which is restored as Ἰο]υδέα προσή[λυτος...θ]εοσεβ(ή)[ς (E. M. Smallwood, "The Alleged Jewish Tendencies of Poppaea Sabina", *JTS* n.s. 10 [1959] 331). Here the difficulty is not only the juxtaposition of two technical terms (if θεοσεβής can be so understood) but also the feminine gender.

[32]E.g. Haenchen 397 n. 5; Conzelmann 77; Roloff 209; U. Becker, "Conversion/ προσήλυτος", *NIDNTT* 1:361.

[33]Neil 160; Hanson 146.

[34]E.g. Lake, *Beginnnings* 5:88; Marshall 229; Bruce (Greek) 272-73.

[35]If this interpretation is correct, it is curious, admittedly, given that the synagogue audience *may* have included Gentile "God-fearers" (cf. 13:16, 26), that only Jews and proselytes are recorded as responding to Paul's message. A common reply (and the reason that προσηλύτων is often supposed to be an early scribal gloss) is that the specific mission to the Gentiles does not occur until v. 47. This *heilsgeschichtliche* interpretation of the sequence of events--a mission to the circumcised followed by a mission to the Gentiles--is the essence of Bertholet's argument equating יראי שמים and גר and making one class of Gentiles associated with the synagogue, namely, the circumcised Gentile (Bertholet, *Stellung der Israeliten* 330).

the persecution, implies that whereas the former were Jews, the latter (the women and the leading men of the city) were Gentiles. It is suggested, further, since the Jews were able to elicit the help of the "God-fearing" women, that the women were known to the Jewish community.[36] Yet there is nothing in Luke's choice of words nor in the immediate context which would require τὰς σεβομένας γυναῖκας to refer to women who had no more than a loose affiliation with Judaism. The women could have been known to the Jews because they were converts to Judaism.[37]

ix. Acts 16:14. Σεβομένη τὸν θεόν characterizes Lydia, a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who becomes the first convert in Europe mentioned in Luke's story. She is obviously a prosperous business woman, for she is able to invite Paul and his companions to stay in her home during their sojourn in Philippi. Whether she is also a Gentile is less certain. It is generally presumed so, and her name which was well-known especially in Latin literature *could* point in that direction.[38] What is definite is that she has had some contact with Judaism for Paul encounters her at a Jewish gathering for prayer. Given these details, σεβομένη τὸν θεόν may be no more than the most natural way to describe Lydia's presence at Jewish prayer--because she feared God--without delineating what her precise relationship with Judaism was. Yet it is salient that the participial phrase is the sole comment on Lydia's piety, and as such the phrase appears to presuppose a definition which the readers would know and may imply status.[39]

x. Acts 17:4. Among those responding to Paul's teaching in the synagogue at Thessalonica are τῶν σεβομένων Ἑλλήνων πλῆθος πολὺ γυναικῶν τε τῶν πρώτων οὐκ ὀλίγαι. The background of those called σεβόμενοι seems plain enough. Although the Bezan text

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[36]Josephus provides evidence of prominent Greek and Roman women who financially and personally assisted the Jewish synagogues. Celebrated examples are Queen Helena of Adiabene (*Ant.* 20.51-52) and probably Nero's wife Poppaea (*Ant.* 20.195).

[37]Haenchen 399.

[38]Alternatively, the name of the woman could be connected with the fact that Thyatira was a Lydian city. See Lake and Cadbury 4:191 and Bruce (Greek) 314.

[39]Wilcox's objection to σεβομένη in this instance bearing a technical sense--"In view of the reserve towards dealings with women expressed in certain of the Jewish sources, it seems somewhat surprising that Paul is shown as staying at her house, all the more so if she were a mere 'adherent' and not a full member of the synagogue" (Wilcox, "'God-Fearers'" 111)--has no basis. It misrepresents, first, Paul, who affirmed the equality of men and women "in Christ", and, second, the order of the events which clearly shows the invitation to stay in Lydia's home to have been issued after Lydia became a believer and was baptized.

(and also p^{74} A 33) blurs the description by inserting a καί between σεβομένων and Ἑλλήνων, according to the wording of the generally accepted text (ℵ B E Ψ vg^{mss}),[40] σεβομένων qualifies Ἑλλήνων, the common opposite of Ἰουδαίων in Acts,[41] and shows that in addition to some Jews (the assumed antecedent of τινες ἐξ αὐτῶν),[42] God-fearing Greeks who had some kind of a connection with the synagogue accepted Christianity.

xi. Acts 17:17. In 17:17 τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις καὶ τοῖς σεβομένοις defines Paul's audience in the synagogue at Athens. Since the two articles seemingly make two distinct groups,[43] the juxtaposition of Jews and σεβόμενοι, comparable to the Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ Ἕλληνες describing Paul's audiences in the synagogues at Iconium (14:1) and Corinth (18:4), probably marks the second group as non-Jews.

xii. Acts 18:7. Σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν describes Titius Justus, in whose home next door to the synagogue Paul strategically based his mission in Corinth after being evicted from the synagogue. The sequence of events in verses 4-7 suggests that Titius Justus became a Christian through Paul's preaching in the synagogue. The double name[44] shows that he was also a Roman citizen and possibly, although the names do not conclusively prove so, a Gentile.

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[40]Arguably the coordinate could be retained (see Ramsay, *St. Paul* 235-36 [he opts for the reading of the Western text]); but as σεβόμενοι is found nowhere else joined to Ἕλληνες, it does present the more difficult reading (Ropes 3:162). In any case, separating the participle from the restrictive Ἑλλήνων only *suggests* that the Western reviser thought οἱ σεβόμενοι were Jews; it does not *prove* this (Lake and Cadbury 4:204).

[41]Acts 14:1; 18:4; 19:10, 17; 20:21; 21:28.

[42]While it is possible for τινες ἐξ αὐτῶν to be qualified by τῶν τε σεβομένων Ἑλλήνων πλῆθος πολὺ γυναικῶν τε τῶν πρώτων οὐκ ὀλίγαι, it would be exceptional (though admittedly not impossible) for *no* Jews to respond positively to Paul's message, the more so since in this instance the mission does follow the Lukan pattern of partial acceptance-jealousy-persecution-expulsion.

[43]Wilcox ("'God-Fearers'" 112-13) interprets σεβομένοις in light of the theatre inscription from Miletus which reads τόπος Εἰουδέων τῶν καὶ θεοσεβίον and therefore reserves judgement on the meaning of the participle here. But surely does not the marked difference in grammatical construction make this analogy and thus Wilcox's conclusion false? On the Miletus inscription, see L. Robert, *Nouvelles Inscriptions de Sardes* (1964) 1:39-45, esp. 41-42; B. Lifshitz, "Du nouveau sur les 'Sympathisants'", *JSJ* 1 (1970) 77-84; and H. Hommel, "Juden und Christen im kaiserzeitlichen Milet. Überlegungen zur Theaterinschrift", *IM* 25 (1975) 167-95; cf. H. Bellen, "Συγαγωγὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ θεοσεβῶν. Die Aussage einer bosporanischen Freilassungsinschrift (CIRB 71) zum Problem der 'Gottesfürchtigen'", *JAC* 8 (1965) 171-76.

[44]There is cause from the reading of A D^{gr*} Ψ (preferred by Ropes 3:173) to omit Τιτίου (or Τίτου, ℵ). This makes for the interesting possibility that σεβομένου τὸν θεόν explicates Ἰούστου, just as υἱὸς παρακλήσεως in 4:36 could be said to expound Βαρναβᾶς. But the possibility remains no more than remote, for the textual evidence (p^{74} B*) is in favour of retaining Τιτίου (for the arguments see Metzger 462-63) and the telltale μεθερμηνευόμενον or the like (cf. 4:36; 13:8) is missing.

3. The Evaluation of the Data

The above survey of the linguistic evidence in Luke-Acts demonstrates why the technical sense of φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν and σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν has been challenged. First, the syntax of the participles is diverse. Theoretically, to express the technical sense "Gentile God-fearer", the participles should function substantivally, having an accompanying article and the accusative τὸν θεόν or, if the point be stretched, the equivalent pronominal accusative. Such combinations occur only in Acts 10:35; 13:16, 26; and Luke 1:50. Otherwise, Luke employs the anarthrous participle combined with the nominal accusative (Acts 10:2, 22; 16:14; 18:7), once negated (Luke 18:2); the articular participle without the accompanying accusative (Acts 17:17); and the anarthrous participle without the accompanying accusative in an attributive position modifying an articular noun (Acts 13:43, 50; 17:4). The missing article in Acts 10:2, 22; 16:14; and 18:7 could be attributed to the fact that in these verses the expression accompanies a proper noun; and given the composite set of data, the omission of the identifying accusative may represent an abbreviated form of the expressions.[45] However, the curious combination οἱ σεβόμενοι προσήλυτοι in Acts 13:43 advises caution. We must be prepared to say that the participles may be used in more ways than one.

This is borne out by the second observation. The significance of the expressions varies. Φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν in Acts 10:2, 22, 35 occurs in a list of qualities, mostly participial; and synonymous with εὐσεβής (εὐλαβής), it seems to describe character, namely, the attitude of reverence detailed especially in the Psalter. Similarly, σεβόμενοι in Acts 13:43 must mean devout. These are in contrast with σεβομένη/σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν which could describe the status of Lydia (Acts 16:14) and of Titius Justus (Acts 18:7) in relation to the *proseuche* or the synagogue. Besides the difference in content, there is a variation in application. The phrases refer to different kinds of people, although, with the exception of Luke 1:50 and Luke 18:2, Gentiles associated with Judaism in some way seem to be in view. This is clearest in the case of Cornelius but can be backed up by τῶν σεβομένων Ἑλλήνων (if that is the correct reading) in Acts 17:4

[45]Siegert, "Gottesfürchtige" 137.

and by the resemblance between the more common Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ Ἕλληνες, when used with reference to the synagogue (Acts 14:1; 18:4), and οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οἱ σεβόμενοι (Acts 17:17), perhaps even ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλῖται καὶ οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν (Acts 13:16; cf. v. 26).

It is noticeable also that Luke's deployment of the two participial phrases does not appear like the free intermingling of synonyms; instead, there seems to be a conscious switch of terms at a very awkward place: the changeover occurs after Paul's message in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch but before the Jewish rejection there. Examination of the usage of φοβέομαι and σέβομαι elsewhere does show, however, that attempts to disclaim the synonymity of these verbs do not follow. Although compared with the frequency of φοβέομαι and its cognates the biblical instances of σέβομαι are relatively rare (this contrasts with secular Greek usage where the converse prevails), the meanings of the two verbs overlap and in some texts the verbs are even variants.[46] To cite three examples only : in 3 Macc 3:4 σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν, occurring in parallel with "living according to the law", refers to the practices of the Jews in Alexandria and resembles φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν in the Psalter; in Isa 66:14 τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν appears in B *L* in the place of τοῖς σεβομένοις αὐτόν; and the version of Isa 29:13 cited in Matt 15:9 translates יראא, the primary equivalent of φοβέομαι in the Septuagint, with σέβομαι.

The location of the linguistic shift at such an awkward place in Acts seems to suggest that the cause is one of authorial intent rather than of source material. If so, the preference for σέβομαι among secular Greek authors may hint at the reason for the alteration: when the preaching of the gospel moved to the uncircumcised Gentiles (though not necessarily away from a Torah-centred piety), Luke "made the nomenclature appropriate to the setting".[47] The attractiveness of this explanation notwithstanding, it is strange that the change would occur before Paul's pronouncement of missionary intent in 13:46-47. And this, in turn, allows for the great probability that

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[46]Cf. W. Mundle, "Fear/φόβος", *NIDNTT* 1:622 and W. Günther, "Godliness/σέβομαι", *NIDNTT* 2:92-93.

[47]H. J. Cadbury, *The Making of Luke-Acts* (1927) 225. See also Moulton 4:61.

Luke's general fondness for synonyms and his irregular deployment of them, a feature easily demonstrated,[48] are the real cause of the lexical shift.

Finally, the distribution and application of φοβούμενος and σεβόμενος suggest that the participles are a function of Luke's purpose. With the exception of the Cornelius episode, they are found only in the accounts of Paul's missionary journeys. Furthermore, they belong to the initial stages of these missions and form part of a stereotyped pattern detailing Paul's approach to new areas: the preaching in the synagogue; the Jews, Gentiles, proselytes, or "God-fearers" converted by the preaching; the Jews' jealousy; Paul's subsequent ministry to the Gentiles; and his eviction from the synagogue or the city. There are conspicuous deviations from this pattern. The accounts of the missions in Iconium, Berea, and Ephesus do not include the relevant expressions, although on those occasions the omission probably reflects Luke's abbreviated reporting or his fondness for synonyms rather than the absence of Gentiles. More importantly, at the mission in Pisidian Antioch, in 13:50, σεβομένας qualifies the people who follow not Paul but the Jews in their persecution of Paul.

4. The Terms: Descriptive or Technical?

From these details what can we conclude? First, the synonyms φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν and σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν and their equivalents as used by Luke cannot be automatically assumed to designate a particular religious class. The assumption becomes valid only when the context hints that the people so designated cannot be Jews or considered to be Jews, either by birth or by conversion, but are Gentiles and Gentiles who are associated in some way with Judaism. There are instances when these criteria are met, and there are instances when they are not and the expressions mean simply "devout". Second, given the unity of Luke's story and his way of telling it, it is probable that when the expressions are used of Gentiles, their frequently abbreviated form and the suspected descriptive meaning" religious" or "pious" can be explained by Luke's having used Cornelius to set the paradigm for the particular group of

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[48]H. J. Cadbury, "Four Features of Lucan Style", in FS P. Schubert (1966) 87-102.

uncircumcised Gentiles who feared God in the way the Jews were commanded to. Third, despite their irregular syntax and application, the expressions cannot be dismissed as having no historical basis. Even if Luke's choice and deployment of the terminology are not based on his source material, his information for such characters, however much he has refashioned their role and recast their identities, comes from earlier tradition. In this regard it is noteworthy that the pattern of the Pauline mission is not always consistent: sometimes the God-fearers follow Paul; at other times they join forces more firmly with the Jews.

These inferences, though seemingly quite obvious, are often overlooked both by those who blindly accept that every occurrence of φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν and σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν in Acts denotes an uncircumcised Gentile who attends the synagogue and by those who outwardly reject the hypothesis. The inferences can also be backed up linguistically and historically from extrabiblical data. Briefly, since this is not our stated purpose, a few examples will illustrate.

Linguistically, Josephus's sole use of σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν, in *Ant.* 14.110, provides an excellent control for Lukan usage: "But no one need wonder that there was so much wealth in our temple, for πάντῶν τῶν κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην Ἰουδαίων καὶ σεβομένων τὸν θεόν, even those from Asia and Europe, had been contributing to it for a very long time". The crucial words have been translated (a) "all the Jews throughout the inhabitable world and those who worshipped God", σεβομένων τὸν θεόν marking a class distinct from the Jews[49] and (b) "all the Jews worshipping God throughout the world", σεβομένων τὸν θεόν being a further description of those who are called Ἰουδαίων.[50] For two reasons, namely, the logic of the context and the matter of Greek idiom, the second translation can be rejected in favour of the first, as R. Marcus[51] has shown. While the appositional "even those from Asia and Europe" could qualify the entire compound subject, a better balance is made in the nominative phrase when the appositive refers only to σεβομένων τὸν θεόν. This implies that the determinative καί is better understood

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[49]Loeb Library edition of Josephus translated by R. Marcus.

[50]Lake, *Beginnings* 5:85.

[51]Marcus, "*Sebomenoi* " 248-49.

as coordinate than as epexegetic. In the case of grammar, the omission of the article before the participle need not be the result of a hendiadys; it may indicate two different classes associated in the same activity or state.[52] Obviously Josephus could have distinguished between Ἰουδαῖοι and σεβόμενοι more precisely by writing τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ τῶν σεβομένων. But, equally, it must be admitted that had he wanted to identify σεβόμενοι with Ἰουδαῖοι, a clearer grammatical phrasing would have been something like τῶν Ἰουδαίων τῶν σεβομένων τὸν θεόν.

Various classical authors manifest an awareness of two groups of Gentiles associated with Judaism: the uncircumcised who are attracted by the monotheistic beliefs and ethical practices and who observe some regulations; the circumcised who have fully adopted the Jewish way of life. The classical sources also indicate that often the preliminary step leads in subsequent generations (or in the same generation) to the second step. A celebrated example of this two-stage process is Juvenal's *Satire* 14. Among the illustrations of the deleterious influences of paternal example on offspring, Juvenal mentions the Roman father who worships the Jewish God on the sabbath, observes some dietary prescriptions (notably abstinence from pork), and whose son eventually becomes a proselyte, even to the point of abandoning Roman law for Jewish law (*Sat.* 14.96). He calls such a father "Sabbath-fearer" (*metuens sabbata pater*). Although Juvenal's label can be no more technical than Luke's, it does indicate the existence of two distinct classes of Gentiles associated with Judaism.

As for the archaeological evidence, this is probably an argument from silence for both those claiming the existence of God-fearers and those disclaiming it.[53] Once this is acknowledged, a main support for Kraabel's argument is removed. The evidence from the synagogues cited (if indeed they all are synagogues)[54] is from periods later than the

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[52]Κύρος δὲ συνκαλέσας τοὺς στρατηγοὺς καὶ λοχαγοὺς τῶν Ἑλλήνων in Xenophon, *Anab.* 1.7.2 is a case in point. Marcus ("*Sebomenoi* " 248) also states, "Lake is correct in saying that we may assume that Josephus follows the rules of Greek grammar in this passage, but this supposition does not support his translation. *Au contraire*, it helps to refute it".

[53]However, Dr. J. Reynolds of Newnham College, Cambridge has strengthened her belief that the θεοσεβεῖς in the recently discovered inscription from the Aphrodisias (Asia) synagogue designates a group distinct from proselytes and ethnic Jews and probably refers to Gentile God-fearers.

[54]See the discussion and bibliography in T. W. Finn , "The God-fearers Reconsidered", *CBQ* 47 (1985) 78-79.

respective histories of the buildings. The building at Dura may date back into the second century, but the inscriptions do not. Further, the overriding concern for Jews, to the exclusion of Gentiles, which is manifested by the extant evidence may easily reflect, on the one hand, the dire political and social consequences of the Jews of the first and second centuries A.D. which produced an inward-looking Judaism concerned with survival and, on the other hand, the theological consequences of strict adherence to the Torah which recognized only the circumcised as part of Judaism.

In conclusion then, while we must be circumspect with our interpretation of the occurrences of φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν and σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν in Acts, there is cause to affirm the existence of a group of Gentiles who, though drawn by the beliefs and practices of Judaism, refused to take the decisive step of actually becoming a Jew and the employment of the expressions φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν and σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν on occasion to designate this group (although the meaning comes from the context, not from the expressions themselves). There is also cause to think that some of these Gentiles (or their offspring) became Christians just as some became proselytes or members of the syncretistic cults and that these converts could have formed the link between the Jewish and pagan sectors of the early church. Our response to those scholars challenging the "God-fearers" hypothesis is aptly summed up by T. M. Finn: the hypothesis "calls for revision but not outright rejection".[55]

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[55]Finn, "God-fearers" 84. This appendix was compiled before the publication of Finn's article. Although our primary intents differ--his being historical in response to Kraabel, mine being more linguistic in response to Wilcox--it is reassuring to have one's conclusions verified.

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